



**Zambelli**  
FIREWORKS

**Barbara Ehrlich**  
**2016 IFEA/Zambelli Fireworks Volunteer of the Year**  
**Nominated by the**  
**National Cherry Blossom Festival, Washington, D.C**

The IFEA and Zambelli Fireworks are pleased to announce **Barbara Ehrlich from the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Washington, D.C** as the recipient of the **2016 IFEA/Zambelli Fireworks Volunteer of the Year Award**.

As this year's winner, **Barbara** was the guest of the IFEA and Zambelli Fireworks at the IFEA's 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention, Expo & Retreat September 27-29, 2016 in Tucson, Arizona. She was recognized and presented with her award during the IFEA Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, September 27, 2016.

**Please help us congratulate our 2016 IFEA/Zambelli Fireworks Volunteer of the Year Award Winner, Barbara Ehrlich.**



Barbara Ehrlich has volunteered with the National Cherry Blossom Festival since 1991, this year celebrating a significant milestone of 25 years of service with the organization. She has fulfilled many critical roles and has provided essential support for the Festival from boots on the ground to hands-on assistance in planning and executing an event, being a sounding board and director oversight. Her support and involvement has been a priceless asset and key component to the Festival's success each year.

Barbara provides leadership as a dedicated member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee, where she has taken on officer roles and has served as a chair on many committees throughout the years. Year-round, Barbara has devoted countless hours of dedication, hard work and expertise each and every week, augmenting the efforts of the Festival's full-time staff. Understanding the importance of the evolution of the Festival, she has provided critical support and guidance as the National Cherry Blossom Festival has transitioned from an all-volunteer organization 16 years ago, to being staffed with a year-round Executive Director, to today's staff of 11 employees.

Over the years, Barbara has made it her personal mission to connect the Festival to both local as well as global communities. She has lead in the creation and management of Festival community events by directly reaching out to residents of the District of Columbia, attracting national and international visitors.

One of Barbara's most significant efforts was her ability to lead in the creation of the Southwest Waterfront Fireworks Festival. Through her dedicated engagement and strong ties to the community, Barbara worked with the Festival's staff to rally support and participation for the first-ever Fireworks Festival in 2004, which had 200 attendees. Through years of hard work, the event has earned its place as a Festival tradition that now attracts over 50,000 people annually and includes a lighted boat parade, family-friendly activities, two stages of live performances, and much more in addition to the fireworks finale. The event is attended by area residents and national and international visitors alike.

Wearing two hats, one as an active member of the Southwest Waterfront neighborhood and another as a volunteer for the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Barbara has connected the neighborhood's professionals, senior citizens, community folks, businesses, and government organizations together as one group of volunteers.

Barbara has also lead and participated in three goodwill trips to Japan, where she developed and maintained relationships with members of the Japanese government, businesses, and civic groups in order to strengthen the Festival's legacy of honoring the original 1912 gift of trees from Tokyo. One of Barbara's fondest moments was participating in one of Japan's major festivals and being a part of the community's annual parade.

Barbara has maintained wonderful relationships with the city officials and communities that she visited while on these trips. Through these relationships and the groundwork that Barbara laid, the Festival was able to build a strong foundation and flourish into a world-renowned event. Barbara encourages and inspires volunteerism to the next generation, recruiting and building a new core of Festival volunteers for the future.

Barbara exemplifies the National Cherry Blossom Festival's spirit and joy and fully embraces its cultural and historical significance. While the Festival has evolved enormously throughout the past 25 years, Barbara has always embraced these changes as an advisor and champion of the organization. Barbara consistently goes out of her way to attend all of the Festival's many events, and takes the time to soak in new and unique experiences. Although some events don't relate to Barbara's interests, such as the *Cherry Blast* dance party aimed at a millennial demographic (she is over 70 years old), she attends them anyway and has a great time trying new things. Barbara continues to grow and learn with the staff each year, and is always open to new ideas and sharing her thoughts.

Barbara's impact has been immeasurable in its contribution to the Festival, and the energy, strong relationships, and positive experiences that she has brought have provided a clear vision for the possibility for growth and grandeur of this international celebration. At its core, the National Cherry Blossom Festival is about making joyous memories and Barbara Ehrlich helps make that possible.