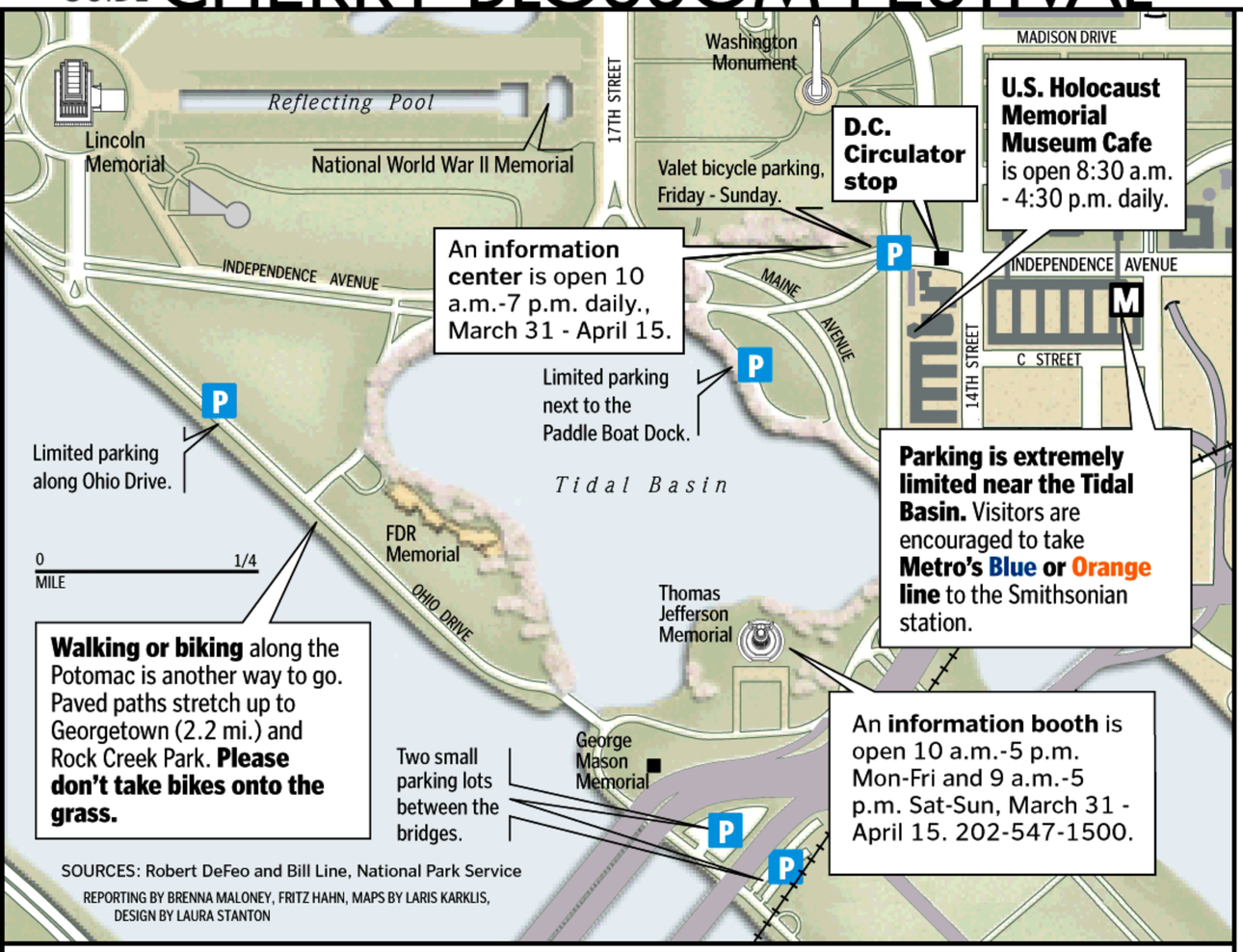

SOURCES: Robert DeFeo and Bill Line, National Park Service

REPORTING BY BRENNA MALONEY, FRITZ HAHN, MAPS BY LARIS KARKLIS, DESIGN BY LAURA STANTON

IDENTIFYING THE BLOSSOMS

Japanese cherry trees are unlike other cherry trees because they bloom for a very short time and do not bear fruit. The Japanese have cultivated more than 400 varieties. There are now more than 3,700 cherry trees around the Tidal Basin in West Potomac Park, East Potomac Park, the Washington Monument grounds and connecting parks.

WEEPING HIGAN

Blossoms with either single layers of petals or double layers of petals and range from white to dark pink.

YOSHINO

Almond-scented with single, white blossom clusters. Because the flowers bloom before the leaves appear, the blossoms create a white cloud effect around the Tidal Basin.

AKEBONO

Single pale-pink blossoms that fade to white.

KWANZAN

Deep pink double flowers up to 2.5 inches across that fade with age; grouped together in tight clusters with about 30 petals in each cluster.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

About one million people attend National Cherry Blossom Festival events and visit the Tidal Basin to see the cherry trees in bloom. The tradition began in 1912, when 3,020 cherry trees of 12 varieties were given to the United States by Japan as a symbol of peace between the nations. For more information about Cherry Blossom Festival events, call 202-547-1500, unless otherwise indicated.

MARCH

SAT MAR 31

9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Anacostia Cherry Blossom Festival
Anacostia Park
1900 Anacostia Drive SE

10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
National Cherry Blossom Festival Opening Ceremony
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW

10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Smithsonian Kite Festival
Washington Monument Grounds
15th Street and Constitution Avenue NW
202-357-3030

APRIL

SUN APR 1

8 a.m.
Cherry Blossom 10-Mile Run, 5K Run/Walk and Kids' 1K Fun Run.
West Potomac Park
West of 17th Street and south of Constitution Avenue NW
301-320-3350

FRI & SAT APR 6-7

1-5 p.m. Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday
George Washington Invitational Regatta
Thompson Boat Center
2900 Virginia Ave. NW
202-994-8603

SAT APR 7

8:30 p.m.
National Cherry Blossom Festival Fireworks Show
Southwest Waterfront
Water Street SW

SAT & SUN APR 7-8

8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Cherry Blossom Rugby Tournament
Rosecroft Raceway
6336 Rosecroft Dr.
Fort Washington, MD / 202-558-5527

SUN APR 8

2:30-4 p.m.
Lantern Lighting Ceremony
Tidal Basin
Independence Avenue and 17th Street SW

WED APR 11

7 p.m.
Grand Sushi And Sake Tasting
National Geographic Society Explorers Hall
1145 17th St. NW
202-661-7585

SAT APR 14

10 a.m.
National Cherry Blossom Parade
Constitution Avenue from Seventh to 17th Streets NW

11 a.m.-6 p.m.
Sakura Matsuri Street Festival
Pennsylvania Avenue Between 10th and 14th Streets NW
202-833-2210

11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Japanese Anime Film Marathon
Freer Gallery of Art
12th Street and Jefferson Drive SW
202-633-4880

1 p.m.
Blessing of the Fleet Ceremony
U.S. Navy Memorial and Naval Heritage Center
701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
202-380-0718