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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Wells Fargo Aids in Funding Dogwood Arts Bazillion Blooms**

**KNOXVILLE, Tenn.,** October 6, 2009 – The housing market is bloomin’ for buyers as Wells Fargo Home Mortgage partners with the Dogwood Arts Festival’s Bazillion Blooms campaign. Wells Fargo bankers Lisa Wiles and Jeff Talman are doing their part to preserve and beautify Knoxville neighborhoods by donating a portion of every closing from September 1, 2009 – December 5, 2009 in an effort to help the Dogwood Arts Festival reach its goal of producing a “bazillion” blooms in the next three years. Each donation will support two Anthracnose disease-resistant, April-blooming Appalachian Spring Dogwood trees to be planted on city wide, December 5<sup>th</sup> Planting Day. In addition, one Dogwood tree will be presented to the new homeowners as a gift.

Wiles, Talman and the Dogwood Arts Festival are committed to the continued health and growth of the city of Knoxville. The combined efforts will work to fulfill an important part of Dogwood Arts’ mission: “to preserve and enhance the beauty of our region.” Looking to the future, Wiles says, “Partnering with the Dogwood Arts Festival

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helps to look forward to something bigger. The chance to see the trees, due to this influx of planting, in the neighborhoods and yards of our clients is rewarding.” As disease-resistant Dogwood trees begin to bloom in April along Dogwood Trails and in the yards of new homeowners, a reminder of the Wells Fargo partnership will also blossom.

Talman and Wiles are granting funds through the collaboration of the Wells Fargo “Sharing Advantage” program. The program gives consultants the opportunity to partner with 501(c) 3 organizations. Wiles comments, “It really is an avenue that allows us to contribute more fully to the community to which we are tied.”

Bazillion Blooms is an established program of the Dogwood Arts Festival to restore East Tennessee’s dogwood tree population. Though the dogwood tree has long been a symbol of environmental health and pride, the number of trees has declined due to age, disease, development and neglect. Talman says, “Improving the landscaping and natural beauty of the Garden of Eden corner of the universe in which we live by helping to plant the signature tree from our region is adding to the value of the community.” With the partnership of Talman, Wiles and the community, the Dogwood Arts Festival is leading a large-scale tree planting event. Saturday, Dec. 5 is the official planting day in 2009. Pre-ordered trees may be picked up from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the UT Gardens parking lot off Neyland Drive. On-site planting demonstrations will provide information on selection, planting and maintenance of dogwood trees. Trees may be ordered at participating Garden Centers or online at [www.bazillionblooms.com](http://www.bazillionblooms.com).

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