

# For Immediate Release



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**Contact:** Kimiyo Naka Michaeli | Public Relations Consultant

Ph: (312) 498-6241; e-mail: [miyonaka@gmail.com](mailto:miyonaka@gmail.com) | Connect through [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

**Interviews and Photos:** Available upon request

## Anderson Japanese Gardens, Ranked One of North America's Best, Celebrates Season's Opening

**WHO:** Anderson Japanese Gardens

**SEASON:** Open Daily, May 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>

**ADMISSION:** Adults \$8 Seniors \$7 Student \$6 Children Five & Under FREE

**WHAT:** Opening Celebration for the 2015 Season

**WHEN:** Saturday, May 2, 2015, from 10 AM to 2 PM

**WHERE:** 318 Spring Creek Road, Rockford, IL 61107

**WHY:** Rated one of the highest quality Japanese gardens in North America since 2004

ROCKFORD, IL -- When guests pass through Anderson Japanese Gardens' intricately designed wooden gate, they leave their daily life behind and transcend into a world of marvelous natural beauty and profound personal enrichment. That is the magic of this beautiful site, rated by *Sukiya Living Magazine* as one of the highest quality Japanese gardens in North America since 2004.

The journey through the Gardens takes guests along winding paths and over bridges designed to slow visitors as they traverse the 12-acre garden. Low lying branches encroach pathways, causing visitors to experience the occasional brush of leaves as they leisurely stroll through the Gardens listening to the sounds of gentle streams and plunging waterfalls. A short pause at one of the koi-filled ponds provides guests a moment to appreciate the seasonal flowers, the beautifully trained pine trees and the carefully set boulders. These elements have been combined according to the principles of Japanese gardening that date back to the 8<sup>th</sup> Century.

Anderson Japanese Gardens will host its Opening Day Celebration on Saturday, May 2, from 10 AM to 2 PM. Coinciding with Children's Day in Japan, the Opening Day events will celebrate children's growth and happiness with a wide range of family-centered activities.

The day's highlights will include performances of Taiko drumming, the Koto, or Japanese harp, and from the Okinawa Music and Dance Club. Children can learn how to play traditional games called Hanetsuki and Kendama and other fun cultural activities including Japanese calligraphy and origami paper folding. Guided tours of the Guest House, which is only open to the public a few times annually, will happen throughout the day.

Anderson Japanese Gardens started as a backyard project by Rockford businessman John R. Anderson. Mr. Anderson's inspiration came from his fondness of the Japanese culture he developed during business trips and later from the Japanese garden in Portland, OR. After visiting the Portland Japanese Garden in 1978, Anderson invited Hoichi Kurisu, the former director of the Portland Japanese Garden and principal of Kurisu International, to visit his home in Rockford.

This initial visit was the beginning of what would become a 35+ year partnership that is still alive and well today. Little did anyone realize that Anderson's passion for the Japanese culture and dream of having a Japanese style garden in his back yard fused with Kurisu's vision and craftsmanship would lead to the creation of a world-renowned Japanese garden in the heart of Rockford.

Today, John's oldest son David leads Anderson Japanese Gardens. David works with a dedicated staff and volunteers to deliver first-class cultural and educational programming and community events in one of the country's premier Japanese gardens. The Garden is supported by a not-for-profit entity and saw over 60,000 visitors in 2014 from across the United States and from eighteen countries.

"In a hectic and stressful world, we offer our guests a place of peace and tranquility where they will find healing, renewal, inspiration, and a re-energized soul," said David Anderson. "It's an uplifting place that connects people, brings them together, enriches lives."

Anderson Japanese Garden is located at 318 Spring Creek Road, Rockford, IL 61107. For more info, visit the Gardens' Website at [andersongardens.org](http://andersongardens.org). Below are some videos of the Gardens:

Aerial Video: <http://youtu.be/bm44CoMzY2M>

Japanese Summer Festival 2014: <http://youtu.be/eva0NICMTnk>

Tuesday Evening in the Gardens: <http://youtu.be/OF5k-uRqpm5>;  
<http://youtu.be/zMkqzOPAxw>

Connect with Anderson Japanese Gardens on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TripAdvisor and Yelp.

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