**Colorful Blooms Decorate Springtime**

**In the Verde Canyon**

 **Sedona, Cottonwood, Clarkdale, AZ -** Floating past the vibrant colors of desert blossoms, Verde Canyon Railroad passengers enjoy a springtime season seen from the rare vantage point of a train. Seasonal blooms peak out around every curve of this scenic Sedona-area canyon. A rare riparian landscape with a brilliant backdrop of a deep blue sky, red rock canyon walls and the emerald waters of the Verde River, enhances the hues of the high desert in the spring. Early flowers include low-growing purple Milkvetch and soon transition into the tall, golden Desert Marigold, bright orange Globemallow and shocking pink Penstemon waving in the warming breeze. Barrel Cactus and Prickly Pears add an additional intensity to the landscape. As summer approaches, the floral chorus is joined by the creamy white petals of Yucca throughout the Sedona area, saluting the train as it passes their rocky canyon habitat. The eccentric Ocotillo chimes in as well, when the season coaxes a covering of tiny green leaves and dazzling hot red flowers.

What better vantage point to view the wild kaleidoscope of color than from a Verde Canyon Railroad open-air car, while enjoying the warm caress of spring breezes and a prickly pear margarita in hand? Since 1990 the train has provided a comfortable, yet exciting, journey through this historic setting as it travels a leisurely four hours from the charming Clarkdale depot to the ghost ranch at Perkinsville and back. Awe-inspiring rock formations, historic trestles, ancient cliff dwellings and soaring raptors are just a few of the trip’s many highlights. Postcard-perfect scenery is only part of the magic. First-class cars boast plush seating, complimentary appetizers and a full-service bar. Coach offers vintage Pullman-style seating, panoramic windows and snack bars. Everyone has access to open-air viewing cars offering 360-degree views and spectacular photographic opportunities.

 The train generally departs at 1 p.m. on most days, but special seasonal pre-train celebrations starting at 11 a.m. include the Easter Bunny Express on Sunday, April 5, and National Train Day on Saturday, May 9. Liberty Wildlife, an animal rescue and rehabilitation center, partners with Verde Canyon Railroad for regularly scheduled educational presentations both at the depot and aboard the train throughout the year. Liberty Wildlife will be at the depot on March 18, April 3, 24 and 29, May 9 and 14, and June 18. They will be riding the train on March 7, April 11, May 2 and 9, and June 6. The popular Saturday Starlight Tours begin with a 5:30 p.m. departure on Saturday, May 30.

Verde Canyon Railroad is located in Clarkdale, 25 minutes from Sedona and two hours north of Phoenix, making Verde Canyon Railroad the perfect Arizona day trip. For an overnight stay, check out our Room, Ride and Meal packages at verdecanyonrr.com. Call 800-293-7245 or book online now.

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*It’s not the destination; it’s the Silver Anniversary journey*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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