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What Does Rose Festival Reunion Mean to You?

To me, Rose City Reunion stands out as a celebration. A celebration of ourselves and our community once again. A celebration that now more than ever holds its tremendous meaning, after all the distance, and many hardships faced, both alone, and together by many Portlanders and Oregonians alike.

Just speaking personally, I can definitely testify to my own feelings of loneliness and fatigue I've faced during these times. Although, through all of this, I always do my best to stay strong and hopeful for what's to come; and the return of all the Rose Festival festivities this year, is an exciting start I'm personally looking forward to.

Traditionally the Rose Festival embodies the concept of coming together, as a city, as a community, and as much more regardless of age, background, race, gender, or anything else. It symbolizes the coming together in the warmer weather of late spring after endless overcast days to let loose, to have some fun, and to admire the city, and the people of this city, through all the activities and events held during this festive time. Whether it's the opening night with all the fireworks, or the Grand Floral Parade the Rose festival paves the way for the fun summer days soon come.

Back in my middle school days, some of the most fun I had was going to the Junior Parade with a group of friends. We'd walk down to Sandy Blvd. in the sun. We'd hang and socialize, until eventually, settling down, sitting on the curb, and anticipating the performance of our band friends in the parade. It was a time we'd just live in the present and have a good time. This is what it's like for the many who come to celebrate the Rose Festival, regardless of what events you attend the Rose Festival embodies a time of new friendships, joy, unity, and tradition.

The definition of reunion means two or more people coming together again after a period of separation. I think the idea of coming together and celebrating, especially after such a long time, is something very powerful. So the meaning of reunion, a Rose City Reunion, means the return of celebrating the art, the roses, the music, the people, and the parades. It means the return

of the traditions and memories we hold dear. It means the return of celebrating ourselves as a larger Portland community once again.