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What Does Rose City Reunion Mean to You?

As we all know, the pandemic has drastically changed our lives and impacted our norm. When schools and businesses began to shut down what seems forever ago in March 2020 we didn't know the impact this virus would have on us. We all had to experience new things during lockdown. For instance, students and teachers alike had to navigate online school and I had to learn things such as make sure your mic. is off when you enter the room, or your whole class may hear your rendition of "Call Me Maybe".

Because we were isolating at home, I was unable to see people I got used to seeing every day. Interactions that I had taken for granted and assumed would always be there disappeared. I began to miss small things like talking to my friends in the hall, rushing to the cafeteria to buy cookies on Wednesdays, and giggling with my friends while we watched a movie. I had to instead work so much harder to stay connected. Instead of talking in the hall before the bell rang, we scheduled zoom calls after school where we messed around with the filters and acted out the three little pigs.

It made me realize how important these little things were, and now that we are back, I really have valued these little moments more. I will never again take for granted these interactions with classmates such as defending the literary merit of Twilight to our English teacher, something that would never have happened in an online environment, and will cherish being back in the classroom. That is what Rose City Reunion means to me. Cherishing the little things that we never realized we missed and being able to come back as a community and experience everything together.

Now it is the time to look forward. It's time for us seniors to experience senior year, go to prom, have graduation, and open a new chapter in our life. It means for the Rose Festival to resume after a two-year hiatus and be an unofficial welcome back to the whole city of Portland. Rose City Reunion means a welcome back to downtown and symbolizes our resilience to what we've endured. Now it's time to celebrate. When we take the time to appreciate the little things we have lost, it ensures that we enjoy the important things in our lives so much more.