

I believe the Rose Festival will bring hope to the community in its reopening, because it will give us a sense of normalcy in comparison to what have been some extremely abnormal times. The Rose Festival has always been an event to bring us together to celebrate its accomplishments and establishments. Its week-long highlight of the city of Portland has always been a vibrant and beautiful way to express what the Portland community is made of.

For me it's always been a way to celebrate and share my city with others, a reason to gather with my family and my friends for all the activities happening throughout the week. The festival's return will bring so much excitement and put smiles on so many faces. It's something we missed out on last year, which in this year's reopening will double the thrill. I, for one am looking forward to Starlight Parade and CityFair. Both will provide fun and fellowship. The Starlight Parade is a sight to see with all the lights and decorations on floats and crowded streets through downtown streets. It has always been neat to see Portland all lit up and decked out for one special night. The fair is also a place for friends and family to have fun. People ride rides, and play carnival games, eat good food, and walk around to be in the mix. I'm most excited for these two events because it'll be a chance for me and my friends to come together for one last hoorah before graduation and leaving for college in the fall. And one of the best parts is there's something for people of all ages. The festival really includes everyone.

The reopening will present an opportunity to reconnect in person. Everyone will finally have an opportunity to come together. It will be a time to showcase all the new honed activities learned and mastered in our year of quarantine.

I believe the Rose Festival Court specifically will bring a lot of hope and joy through their travel. Last year not only did the court miss out on opportunities, but so did the communities that anticipated their visit. It wasn't possible to safely take trips to places like the VA, Doernbecher Hospital, and retirement homes to spend time with its residents. It will bring hope to the children at Doernbecher because it will be a new friendly face they don't get to see as often. Same for the veterans and elderly because it will be someone new they can share their stories and journeys with. It was the absence of in person activities like these that put a damper on things throughout the year.

It just so happens that the Rose Festival lands during a time that would be considered a kick-off to summer. The reopening of the Rose Festival will put so many smiles and create numerous memories that it will get people excited again. That is the hope I believe the reopening of the festival will bring to the community.