

Wren Louis – Madison

Inspiring. Tradition. Evolving. How do these three words describe the Rose Festival?

These three words remind me of watching the Grand Floral Parade as a kid and the wonder of it all. I like to compare it with what we have today. Knowing that I would be seeing graceful and colorful floats that would continue to change every year kept me at the edge of my seat, I loved to see what inspiring themes were represented in flowers! Something I still look forward to each and every year.

We keep traditions to show respect and to have the opportunity to cherish them. It is a vital part in keeping the spirit of the Rose Festival alive.

The Rose Festival has gone through big changes over the last 100 years! It started with the dedication of a parade to the beauty of a Rose in 1907. That first year they had an amazing Grand Floral Parade and also a smaller parade that has since become the “Junior Rose Parade”. It was added as an official event in 1936. They crowned the first Queen in 1931 and it has been a cherished Rose Festival tradition ever since.

Today, so many years later, the festival is in full swing! The Rose Festival has evolved from a 10 day affair to a 5 weekend run full of concerts, fun runs, added parades, and a city wide scavenger hunt!! By staying inspiring, respecting traditions and evolving while also keeping growth an option, the city has created a community event of epic proportions. This is how we keep the Rose Festival current and thriving: Parades, big and bigger, and so many other activities that bring peoples from all walks, cultures, cities, towns and neighborhoods in sync to make our festival a beacon from which Portland shines. It is about bringing the communities and the people of our cities AND the world together. Thank you.