

## Patriotic Roses

Over the last several years I have browsed plant catalogs and every now and again run into roses that have a patriotic theme. I was reminded of this with the 4<sup>th</sup> of July upon us, and I thought it may be appropriate to find out more about them.

The first and by far the most popular rose I will mention is the Peace rose. The name, in and of itself, does not sound very patriotic, but its history could be considered so, as it easily could have been lost to the ravages of war. It was originally developed in France just before the start of World War II (WWII) by a famed rose breeder named Francois Meilland. Meilland was poised to introduce it and originally named it after his mother. However, he foresaw the invasion of France and sent cuttings of the rose to friends in several countries, including the United States. The rose was given its trade name the day Berlin fell to the Allies and was given All American Rose Selection honors (AARS) the day Japan surrendered. AARS designation is a top honor roses can receive in the United States, and is given to only a few roses a year. According to Wikipedia, these roses were later given to all members of the newly formed United Nations with a note attached to the stem saying, "We hope the 'Peace' rose will influence men's thoughts for everlasting world peace." To this day, Peace rose has remained the most popular rose in the world. Wikipedia also states that by 1992, over 100 million Peace roses had been sold. Peace rose is one that all other roses are judged by and is still so popular that several similar roses carry Peace in their names. Some of the more common names include Chicago Peace, Desert Peace and Glowing Peace. Interestingly, Glowing Peace is also an AARS winner.

Peace rose blossoms open to a light pink color and, as they open further, also contains hues of yellow and white; a very beautiful rose. The rose can be grown in Cache Valley, but may require extra winter protection such as mulching.

Other roses with patriotic names do not have such a storied past as Peace but are still very beautiful. One called Fourth of July, a climbing rose, was developed almost 10 years ago by Weeks Roses. It repeat blooms all summer, is fragrant and its blossoms are somewhat reminiscent of fireworks, as the flower color is a mix of bright red and white. It grows 10-14 feet high and wide and is relatively disease resistant. This rose was also an AARS winner. If you are looking for a climbing rose to use in your yard, this one has potential.

Another climbing rose, called America, was introduced on the United States' bicentennial in 1976. Its blossoms have a bright coral to salmon pink color, is fragrant and it repeat blooms from spring to fall. It can grow 10-12 feet high but can also be pruned to form a large shrub. It is cold hardy in most parts of Cache Valley and is readily available in the spring. Other roses with patriotic names worth trying include Mister Lincoln and John F. Kennedy. Mister Lincoln, named after President Lincoln, is the most popular red rose and one by which other red roses are judged. John F. Kennedy is almost pure white and is considered one of the easier white roses to grow.