

Cultivating a garden of 'celebrities'

In his play, "Romeo and Juliet," William Shakespeare famously penned the line, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

The line suggests a name is mere convention and meaningless compared to the person behind it. Why should the lovers' family names matter when love is integral to their relationship?

Names may have been trivial to Juliet, but some argue with her logic. Names evoke powerful emotions and even physical responses, and everyone from business owners to product manufacturers to expecting parents put significant thought into choosing the right names.

The names of particular roses also carry some weight. Many consider it an honor to be named after a beautiful flower, but flowers also have been named after some memorable people.

In fact, upon visiting a rose garden you're likely to mingle with many famous names. A chance encounter with a favorite movie star is rare, but meeting his or her floral equivalent is a much more realistic possibility.

Roses weren't always named after people. The first rose ever to be named after a person was the "Dorothy Perkins." Businessman Charles Perkins became interested in roses in 1882 and asked a man



who specialized in producing hybrid roses to introduce a brand new rose to the market. The grower created the "Dorothy Perkins" in honor of Perkins' granddaughter in 1901.

Roses have been named for literary figures, musicians, actors, and other well-known personalities. There is the "Amadeus," named after Mozart, and the "Caesar," named for the famous emperor. There is a "Leonardo da Vinci" rose, as well as one named for Princess Diana.

Many roses are named after female celebrities. The "Barbra Streisand" is a rich lavender and mauve rose named after the songstress. An "Elizabeth Taylor" rose has a strong fragrance and a deep pink hue. Television favorite, Betty White even has a rose named after her.

Some roses are named after famous men, including the "Cary Grant," the "George Burns" and even former Beatle

Sir Paul McCartney.

World leaders also have been horticulturally honored. Roses are named after Napoleon Bonaparte, Abraham Lincoln and Prince William of Wales. Time will tell if Prince George will follow in the footsteps of his father, grandmother and great grandmother, Queen Elizabeth, and have a rose named after him.

Some roses are even named after fictional characters. Rose enthusiasts can delight over the "Robin Hood" shrub with small bright roses or marvel at the pure white petals of the "Snow White." "Frankly

Scarlet" pays homage to the memorable heroine from "Gone With the Wind." Shakespeare's star-crossed couple also have roses named for them. The "Juliet" is a large, peach rose, while the "Romeo" produces a small cluster of double, well-formed, deep red blooms.

Chances are you can find a rose named for your favorite actor, politician or literary character. By researching the vast array of roses, rose enthusiasts can cultivate a veritable garden of celebrities. (MCC)

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