

## Anne Montague's Speech at Embassy of the Netherlands, Washington, Sept. 3, 2020 Why Rosies Chose The Dogwood to Express Their Legacy

Our being together today has important meaning to the past, the present, and the future of our human family. Our group is small because we are taking great care to protect each other. At the same time, we're showing the world our commitment to the deep, far-reaching meaning of Rosies. Why are Rosies important? After 12 years of learning from and working closely with Rosies and veterans, we see many reasons. Most important, when we look at the whole of what Rosies mean, we see that their legacy is this:

“To pull together to do high-quality work for freedom, and to do it a cooperative spirit”.

Over a decade “Thanks!” has found, interviewed and worked with Rosies and searched for partners who show a common bond. Throughout this time, a quote by Margaret Meade has inspired us. She said, “Don't ever think that a small group of committed citizens cannot change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Can we, a small group of committed citizens, make positive change for the world? I believe we not only can, but we that many people are uniting in a new way. Projects this Embassy has done with Rosies are visible proof.

In a few minutes, we will be outside at the dogwood tree this Embassy planted at Victory Europe Day in May, 2015. At that time, a staff member of this embassy had the idea to plant this tree at the same moment another dogwood tree was planted in Nijmegen, Holland at the National Liberation Museum. A significant moment for unity around quality work for freedom occurred when two trees were simultaneously dropped in the ground on two continents that early May day, with Rosies participating.

Before bells are rung on these grounds today at 1:00 and a plaque is unveiled at the dogwood tree in the garden, soon after, let me tell you how the dogwood tree came to be a symbol of Rosies. In early 2010, we asked Rosies and Veteran to choose the species of tree that best represents Rosies. They quickly chose the dogwood tree. Their reasons were Christian at first. Then, after thought they added these reasons:

- First, the dogwood is both beautiful and enduring. Rosies like that it is feminine as well as strong.
- Second, the dogwood tree grows in many countries, including in both WWII's Allied and Axis nations. Thus, it shows we are finding ways to connects peoples across boundaries that divide us.

As time progressed, Rosies and their advocates realized that:

- Rosies like that the dogwood is useful:
  - In the past, the tight-grained wood was used to make needles, arrows, and tool handles.
  - Today, because its leaves and blossoms replenish the soil, the dogwood is planted widely, from urban parks to strip mines. Roses know they were – and still useful in quieter ways.
- Finally, the leaf of the dogwood is oval, which represents democracy:

When Rosies realized Geo. Washington designed the oval office for people to feel equal, they designed a park around a prominent oval. In St. Albans, WV, it is the only park designed and built by Rosie, so far.

Beautiful, lasting, thriving across boundaries, replenishing, useful, and democratic – all are precious values. However, for these values to survive in the real world, we must communicate the meaning of Rosies' work to the human family.

This Embassy and the Dutch people have consistently communicated these values to Roses. Thus, “Thanks!” has designated this Embassy as one of five founding collaborators in the American Rosie Movement.

Worldwide, we are living through a defining moment in human history – a virus attacks us across boundaries. This has brought the human family to a time of reflection – people ask how to create a world that we both want and can achieve. For sure, adapting to big change requires us to pull together.

I know we can do it. You know we can do it. Yet, doubters say, “Just because we can does not mean we will. Today, this small group of committed citizens has already started doing it.

Now, let's go to the garden to ring a bell and unveil a plaque at the dogwood tree that was planted five years ago at the same moment that a dogwood tree was planted on another continent.