

Red, White, and Blue Flowers

Ever so many red and white flowers are available if a gardener wishes to show love of country in a flowerbed. The navy blue that makes the color perfectly balanced in a flag isn't found in leaf or bloom but you could consider painting the container a deep rich blue. For a casual flag look there is a deep blue/purple petunia that may work and lovely lighter blues in Stokes' aster, salvias and larkspurs.

Whites gleam, waking up the greens in a garden and you want white, not off-white! Daisies, some roses, lilies and petunias will pair beautifully with reds. Roses are splendid but most of their 'reds' tend to be pink, rose, burgundy, cerise not a flag red although the first R. 'Knock Out' comes fairly close. For a red that does not lean toward purple or orange try geraniums (Pelargoniums), salvias, veronicas, verbenas. Their reds salute the flag.

A garden, like a country, is a work in progress and as a country falls short of its own ideals, a garden too, fails to achieve its promise. So gardeners pick up their tools and keep digging! For a red, white and blue community effort we applaud Woodville, Gloucester's newest park. There are many wonderful people working to develop the dream of roads, woods, playing fields, parking areas, ponds, walkways, and gardens into reality. Happy 4th to our local patriots: - county staff, volunteers, large and small philanthropists, master gardeners, -- all planning, working, digging, hauling, planting, agreeing, disagreeing, compromising, re-planning, taking the difficult steps to build a gift for everyone's descendants. We thank all the guys and gals involved!

Each July I look forward to this issue of the Gazette-Journal that gives us the opportunity to reread the timeless words from our republic's fragile founding. Perhaps because the past decades have piled on so much history, children don't have the weeks to spend on the details that made the American Revolution come alive for earlier generations.

The young at heart would enjoy "Revolutionary Summer" by Joseph J. Ellis, a book about the birth of our independence. They would discover that Thomas Jefferson was selected to draft the Declaration of Independence because of his reputation as a literary craftsman who had drafted other documents for the Continental Congress. Senior patriot, Ben Franklin reportedly declined on the grounds of the difficulty inherent in subjecting prose to the deliberations of a committee.

When the document was completed it was brought by the committee to the full Congress which then put itself into a committee-of-the-whole to debate Jefferson's draft. Over two days in the end of June, 1776 the Congress made 85 revisions or deletions and it was approved on July 4th and sent on to the printer. It was signed August 2 and became the most famous words in American history. Containing the words, 'unalienable rights', the document became the foundation of further rights. Over more than two hundred years other rights such as emancipation and voting have been gradually secured.

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