

# LIVING WELL IN LOWRY

BY NEIGHBORS FOR NEIGHBORS

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## Silver Linings: A 2020 Year in Review

A year ago, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 held promise. It had a cool ring to it, *20-20*, a fresh start, a new decade. Do you remember being a kid when 2020 seemed so far away? Back then we thought life would look more like *The Jetsons* than *Contagion*, but alas, it's *finally* coming to an end.

Like many, I will not be sad to see this year fade in the rearview mirror in a few short weeks. As much as we like to say it'll be a year to remember, I'm not alone when I say I hope it's one we soon forget.

We were taught, and we try to teach our kids, to look at the bright side of things. We've had plenty of weeks and months when this felt like no easy task, but we know it's better for our psyche. And so, in the spirit of ending the year with our glass half-full (in more ways than one), we've been thinking a lot about our *silver linings*. *Silver linings* are a sign of hope in an unfortunate or gloomy situation; a bright prospect. Sounds easy enough. Here we go.

Let's start outside. The **outdoors** weren't canceled. Since no one was inviting anyone *inside* their homes, the *great outdoors* was transformed into one giant gathering place. We were no longer gathering in kitchens, over food and drinks at the counter. Instead, we sat around patio tables and fire pits, carrying our camping chairs under our arms as we wandered from yard to yard for a change of scenery. Colorado's early winter weather proved a challenge, but, when you're starved for human interaction, you dress for it and you're just fine!

**Music** wasn't canceled. How many dance parties have *you* had in your kitchen? How many road trips did you take, even if it was just from one end of Denver to the

other on the interstate just so you could *step on it* and blast your favorite song with the windows down? *Yeah*, no, I don't know anything about doing that either (*ahem*), but I'm sure someone out there can relate. Lowry even enjoyed pop-up summer concerts and fall jam sessions at community parks and green spaces. Thank you to our Lowry Musicians for keeping our feet tapping!

**Reading** wasn't canceled. At our house, we powered through some serious pages and Kindle battery-power this year. Solid murder mysteries, whodunits and biographies topped our lists. Why? For once, we had nothing but time! Just like the times we felt we'd *seen the Internet*, we also read so much we felt like we *read the library*.

**Laughing?** Definitely not canceled. Whether we got a chuckle from a television show, or had a belly laugh with the kids, we've been taking doses of laughter at every turn. Did you know laughter is said to boost your immune system *and* your mood, diminish pain *and* protect you from the effects of stress? Seriously. You have to laugh.

**Finally, family and friends?** Nope, not canceled. In fact, without our support systems in place, we would not have made it to today. Not only that, but hopefully we've gained an greater appreciation for family that (maybe) we didn't have before.

For me, losing my mother-in-law this fall, suddenly and *not* coronavirus-related, has given me pause. As much as that dear woman drove me bananas over the years, the world was truly a better place with her in it. She was in my life for almost two

decades. She definitely saw the world through rose-colored glasses, never seeing or saying a bad thing about anyone. That is no joke. Don't you think we could all take a page from *her book* as we move in to next year and beyond? It sure wouldn't hurt.

Maybe the biggest silver lining of all is having the opportunity (albeit forced) to slow down, clear the schedule and reset. With each passing week, it gets harder and harder to recall what our crazy lives were like before March 13<sup>th</sup>. Now more than ever is a perfect time to evaluate what exactly we wish to go back to and what we can forever let go of once the gates open again for us. I have a pretty clear picture of what I can do without and I know hands-down what I can't wait for...give me my packed kitchen, filled with friends and family, food and drinks, laughter and music...all the things that matter the most. All the other noise matters none.

Wishing you a happy holiday season!

*See you on the porch!*  
Julie A. Landen



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