

FREEDOM KEEPS DISAPPEARING

By Diane Parker

What I miss the most is outdoor open space. There is less and less of it, not by just the year nor by the month, but by the day.

Now that Denver is termed as another big, urban city, what I miss most is the early part of the morning's quiet when walking on a bike path, or sitting on a bench in a park. Even that has been taken away since the benches are covered with yellow tapes. I miss watching the youngsters play on the park playgrounds.

I miss my social coffee shop afternoon time. Now I strategically have to pick coffee shops to sit at on their patios. My aging body isn't friendly to too much cold or wind so north and east side patios won't work. If it's too hot the south patios are out of luck. Oh well...

I miss my care-free days of being able to come and go as I see fit. Retired, I don't need to buy a lot in retail ... but I still find it fun to walk around in Kohl's, TJ Max, Marshall's, Hobby Lobby and Ross's. I like to see what's new in styles and colors.

My daughter and I miss terribly being able to go to the Elvis Theater on Sundays. We probably won't get to sit side-by-side and that is a real concern between us. We have always shared a bag of popcorn with M&M's mixed in. Closeness during these altering days for me is top priority.

Anyone who knows me knows I ride a scooter. I still do ... but ... where-do-I-stop has been disrupted. My scooter friend and I will miss this year's Gay Pride ride due to the cancellation of the parade. That was always a summer highlight for the two of us.

I shop early in the mornings now ... I cannot stand outside a store waiting my turn to get inside as I see the long lines when passing the Targets and Walmarts in the afternoons. I am not willing to stand in Colorado's weather elements just to walk around the store.

Doctors tell their patients to exercise to try to stay healthy but what about that person who has an oxygen tank to deal with, joints that no longer work right and takes extra breathing energy just to take a few steps ... and the mask is required.

I didn't realize just how much of my daily social life died until this virus poked its deadly, ugly head into my life. Thanks a lot! As with many of us, I don't have years left to recuperate. At age 80 it is days and months now that count.

What I miss the most ... this is just the tip of it.