



A Different Kind of October

The month of October always ushers in crisp air and beautiful landscapes of changing colors of reds, oranges and greens. Adams County in October traditionally starts with the National Apple Harvest Festival held the first two weekends of the month (just down the road in Thurmont, Color Fest is held). Bus tours would come into Gettysburg all month so people could see our beautiful fall landscapes on the battlefield and around the county.

This October is very different. With events, like the National Apple Harvest Festival being cancelled and bus tours not coming to town, I feel that I crave some sense of normalcy. I'm not one of those pumpkin spice everything people when it comes to my food and drinks, but I do love the colors, the pumpkins, hay bales and scarecrows. Everything that says "Happy Fall Y'all". I love the inflatable Frankenstein's in the yard and cobwebs in the trees (I can do without the spiders in the cobwebs though). I love seeing the lights on in neighborhoods for Trick or Treaters. As a kid, Stratton Street was the best for trick or treating in town. There was a house on Water Street that always gave out homemade caramel popcorn balls. If we couldn't visit any other houses, we at least made sure we visited that one.

So this year I'm decorating. I have always loved decorating for holidays, especially Halloween, but haven't done any of it for quite a few years. I realize that I can still have a sense of normalcy even when things aren't so normal. I can still put out pumpkins, hay bales and scarecrows. I can still look out my window and see the leaves changing colors. I can still drive on the battlefield and see the landscape in all its fall glory. I can still have a cup of hot tea while sitting on my back porch talking to my herd of animals (3 dogs, 4 cats – don't judge me, I volunteer at animals shelters). I can still do so much that I hold near and dear to me.

In this crazy year, don't forget to still do those things you hold near and dear to you that can still be done. Decorate for the holidays. Turn up the volume when you hear a favorite song come on the radio and sing along. Go to your favorite restaurant for dinner, or order takeout. Do something that makes you smile. Pay it forward when you're in line at getting your morning coffee. Do something that makes someone else smile. Practice random acts of kindness. We're all in this crazy boat called 2020 and we need to get through it together.

On a personal note, I struggled with what topic I was going to write about this month. I always write about and promote our wonderful GARMA businesses (www.gettysburgretailmerchants.com) and encourage shopping local. However, I just felt I needed to express myself this one time. Please, everyone stay safe, do what you need to do to get through in these times and yes, shop local and explore our wonderful little town and what all there is to offer.

Jennie Dillon is the VP of GARMA and owner of Artworks on York St.