



LEARNING AT HOME

SILVER LININGS

HOME SWEET HOME

FAMILY TIME

TIME OUTSIDE

ZOOM

TIME WITH MY BROTHER

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

SWIMMING

Jeanne 2021

# **Silver Linings**

**Story by: Alayna Martinek  
Eau Claire, WI**

*My family and I were on a snowboarding trip in Lake Tahoe. We heard there was a big snowstorm coming, and everyone was preparing for it. We were riding up the gondola when my Mom and Dad's phones started ringing, and it was people telling them schools were closing and there was no toilet paper at the store. We heard the President was going to make a special announcement, and we didn't know if we were going to be able to get home. We ended up being able to fly home, but the airplane was almost empty. When we got home, schools were closed.*

*Because of coronavirus, we never went back to school for the rest of the year, but my brother and I built a giant fort in my mom's office that we did schoolwork in every day. We got to spend so much time together and go on adventures outside for our recess.*

*Because of coronavirus, we could not have a birthday celebration for my day, so we found all the birthday decorations from when my brother and I were babies and decorated the whole house. Our friends sat in their cars in the driveway and sang happy birthday from their cars.*

*Because of coronavirus, we could not see or play with our friends and even family, but my mom got to get off work for awhile, and we got a pool. We went rollerblading, biking, played in the backyard, and went swimming every day.*

*Because of coronavirus, we had to wear masks, and I didn't have any friends in my class when it was time to go back to school. The classes were split in half, and some kids did all virtual or were on different days. I got to make new friends, and now they are my best friends. By not being able to go to school all the time, I learned how much I like to go to school.*

*Because of coronavirus, we only went to school two days a week and had to do virtual learning three days a week. We got to go snowboarding on Wednesdays when we didn't have any meetings.*

*Because of coronavirus, we did not get to have big Christmas celebrations like we always do, but we got to wear our pajamas, go in the hot tub, watch movies, and play with our new toys all day long.*

*Because of coronavirus, I have not been able to see my grandpa for over a year, but now we video chat more than we did before. We have even been able to video chat with friends too.*

*Because of coronavirus, a lot of things changed, but a lot of really great things happened too.*

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**Artist Jeanne Styczinski**  
**Colfax, WI**

Jeanne Styczinski is a collage artist, crafter, illustrator, and author of children's picture books. Jeanne resides in Colfax with her husband, dog, four horses, and two barn cats. Her four children live across the Midwest. More information about Jeanne's work is available on her website, [mrsjeanne.com](https://mrsjeanne.com), and you can see her latest creations and adventures on Instagram (@Jeanne\_styczinski).

*I received an email about the Mayo Healing Reflections Mural, and right away I wanted to be a part of it. I thought an art installation to document 2020 and our COVID time would be a positive way to help people in our community reflect and share their own stories with each other. I also liked the idea of writers and artists collaborating to create such a project.*

*I've always been a positive person, even in difficult times, so when I read Alayna's story, "Because of Coronavirus," I felt like we were kindred spirits! Her story reminds us all that not everything that happened during the last year was negative. It was obvious when reading Alayna's story that she is a resilient young lady! Instead of dwelling on all the negative things that were happening in her life, she chose to focus on the positives. This is what we refer to as "silver linings." I loved reading about what Alayna thought her "silver linings" were last year and tried to capture those events in my illustration. I have to admit I wasn't sure my bright cheerful paper would be able to illustrate a story about our time last year with COVID, but when I read Alayna's story I knew we were a perfect match.*

**View all the pieces in the *Healing Reflections* [online gallery](#).**