

What a year! Some good, some bad, but altogether a banner year!

The lowest low was that Marjorie and I had to shutter the artisan popcorn business we had been running out of our home kitchen. We had to close our doors, but like the Bible says, sometimes that's when God carried you after closing a door and opening a window. That's exactly what happened - what the Bible said.

In mid-May, I had accidentally left a window open in our storage room one night. The next morning, I found a crow happily munching on some Caramel Corn. I initially shooed the crow out, but thought better of it later in the day. That night, I purposely left another window open. I figured if I can't sell my popcorn, at least it would go to good use feeding a feathered friend!

Imagine my surprise the next morning, when not one, but TWO crows were having a breakfast bag of Aged White Cheddar corn! I ran to Marjorie to tell her the news, well, I didn't run because I had to postpone my hammer toe surgery, but I went to tell Marj. She said we should be donating the unused corn to a food pantry, but I really don't trust any charity besides the Salvation Army.

I made a decision that I would keep my two new crow friends fat and happy while we rode out whatever the rest of the year was going to throw at us. By the end of that first week, I had 4 regulars! Around Independence Day, I had figured out the favorite flavors of many of my corvid customers.

Obsidian would come by first thing in the morning and break into a bag of Kettle Nut Crunch corn. Jeremiah was ravenous (pardon the pun!) for Marshmallow Melt corn. Bosco would lazily fly in every other day and haphazardly sample whatever corn piles his buddy Brisco had already eaten from.

I had really started to feel good about 2020 with my growing crow family, but Marj was fighting me at every turn. She said it was gross that the birds were coming and going throughout our house as they pleased. We were spending more on electricity because of running the A/C with the windows always open. (There's that Bible quote again!) I guess the final straw was when she found out that I spent our stimulus check on a scarecrow covered in corn that I named Colonel Kernel.

It's not been all bad since she left. I've actually started to receive some gifts from my new friends. A piece of broken glass here, a rusted screw there - nothing to help me keep up with the mortgage, but I hadn't yet started to tell the crows about economics and how the human society values paper money over lovely baubles and brick-a-brack. The crows didn't care much for dry subjects, but Ember and Melody would perch on my headboard every night as I read them the fantastic tales of Charles Dickens!

Would I change anything about this year? Probably. I wish that I would have painted the house sooner. The white walls and floors really camouflage the piles of excrement that have been

building up. My biggest regret is trying to teach Samuel how to make his own bag of Pop Secret in the microwave. I thought he had the hang of it, but the one time he closed himself in the microwave was enough to cause fairly severe mutations. But once Halloween happens again, I'll have the coolest Game of Thrones costume with a three-eyed "raven" perched on my shoulder. I will probably have to wire his legs to my body, as he's a bit wobbly since his warm up by our Black and Decker.

I wish you and your family all the blessings that the New Year can bring! Like the Bible says, sometimes when a door opens, you get to be friends with a lot of crows even if your wife leaves you and the bank calls a lot it's just really important to find something that you have love and passion for. For me, that's crows now. Crows are my favorite thing and it even feels bad calling them "things" because they are not - they are living breathing family members and I would die for every one of them. Even Kathy the Crow who I'm still mad at for voting Trump.

Merry CROW-miss!

Bill