

BOULDER COUNTY

# atHome

New Rock Creek enclave by Boulder Creek Neighborhoods is

## All About the Joy



At Lower-Maintenance Homes at Lanterns at Rock Creek, Neighborliness Thrives.

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# All About the Joy

At lower-maintenance homes at Lanterns at Rock Creek, neighborliness thrives.

By Sarah Huber  
At Home Colorado

One of the newest lower-maintenance communities in Superior might also be one of the most fun. Since July, as more and more residents moved into their completed paired patio homes at Lanterns at Rock Creek by the lifestyle builder Boulder Creek Neighborhoods, Lanterns homeowner Dale Mood and fellow homeowner Annie Zrubek, who lives about two blocks from Mood, have jumpstarted neighborhood gatherings and joyfully encouraged neighborly connections.

“Like everyone else, COVID changed my activities,” said Mood, a retired professor who taught integrated physiology at the University of Colorado Boulder for 47 years. “I love to travel, but that came to a halt, so the whole point was to hang out with people and get to know the people near us.”

A recent empty nester, Zrubek has likewise enthusiastically embraced what some have termed Lanterns’ “social committee” (compromised of Mood and Zrubek). “I’m single, and both of my daughters went off to college this year. I wanted a community feel where people are around and you can wave and chat,” explained Zrubek, who settled into Lanterns at Rock Creek about six months ago.

Mood, marking a year in his



Lanterns homeowner Dale Mood and fellow homeowner Annie Zrubek, who lives about two blocks from Mood, have jumpstarted neighborhood gatherings and joyfully encouraged neighborly connections. (Photo: Timothy Seibert).

new home this October, recalled, “We had an informal start to getting to know our neighbors this summer. Everyone was invited, and we held it at the end of a cul-de-sac,” where one neighbor popped open a tent and pulled out a few tables. Nearly all Lanterns’ neighbors showed up, touting snacks and drinks, and Mood prepared “delicious homemade margaritas,” Zrubek said. She added, “Everyone was talking, standing around meeting everyone and connecting.”

While some neighbors, like Zrubek, moved simply from one end of the established neighborhood of Rock Creek into Boulder Creek Neighborhoods’

lower-maintenance enclave in the same neighborhood, others hailed from out-of-state. “We talked about our houses and our lives,” Zrubek said. “We met people that I would never have otherwise connected with.”

The connections stuck, and soon Zrubek was asking a neighbor to “plant sit” and taking a few “neighbor girls to a local restaurant to sit outside and get to know each other,” she said. Other neighbors welcomed her with cookies, and one helped gather boxes for her clients, as Zrubek is a realtor with the BoulderHomeSource team by RE/MAX Alliance of Boulder.

In early September, the

neighborhood gathered in the cul-de-sac again, with even a couple homeowners who hadn’t yet moved in stopping by to share food and drinks. Mood and Zrubek are eager to keep the group going, whether that means an outdoor party around a heater next month or strolling from one yard to the next for a progressive dinner party. Zrubek said, “We’re in the same boat, the same stages of life, and people seem to enjoy the camaraderie.”

## Open-concept, intuitive homes

When not chatting with neighbors, Mood is often visiting his 18

grandchildren or reading – “I’ve read an awful lot more this year,” said Mood, who has written several textbooks and is regularly found relaxing in his den, a light-suffused space that he said may be the gem of his floor plan, the Equinox. He upped his baking during the pandemic as well and noted that “if you go with the “luxe” option in the Equinox, you also end up with a really nice kitchen; there’s a butler’s pantry and all kinds of cabinets and a big island.”

Zrubek – who said that after living in a handful of nearby homes as she raised her daughters, this home was “for me” – similarly opted for the entertainer’s kitchen. “This (is) by far the best kitchen I’ve ever had,” she said. “I love that I have a gas range and gas for a barbecue hookup on the patio. This (is) such a fabulous place to hang out, cook together and talk.”

She continued, “I love that my floor plan, the Solstice, has a finished basement with high ceilings and huge bedrooms. It’s to die for, a really beautiful space for my girls to come home to and make their own.” The finished basement includes a recreation area for hanging out and space for a home gym or crafting studio.

And since Boulder Creek Neighborhoods is always focused on creating intuitive, livable homes, halls and doorways extend 36 inches to enhance accessibility, steps are both wide and minimal and the electrical outlets are raised to reduce bending – one of the numerous nods at Boulder Creek’s attentive craftsmanship.

### Lower-maintenance equals more time for passions

Of course, as a retired professor of kinesiology and physiology, Mood

takes exercise seriously and frequently walks the trails backing to Lanterns at Rock Creek. While he sometimes stoops to pull a weed or two, despite the fact that he moved to Lanterns at Rock Creek in part to avoid lawn care, “the difference is now I don’t have to,” he said with a laugh. Mood relocated to Lanterns from a 5,600 square foot home in Louisville. Although his former home provided main-floor living, “what got to me was the yard,” he said. With a former lawn of around a third of an acre, he spent hours most summer days pulling weeds, trimming and mowing.

Mood isn’t alone in his appreciation of Boulder Creek’s lower-maintenance conveniences. He said several of his neighbors were also drawn to Lanterns at Rock Creek by the lower-maintenance lifestyle, and Zrubek, too, noted, “I’ve been a slave to broken fences, lawn mowing and sprinkler heads for years. Moving into this home (opened) up all that time I used to spend on the house.” Plus, said Zrubek, as traveling ramps back up, “Now I can head out without worrying who will shovel the snow or take care of the lawn. It’s freeing.”

### Year-round outdoor space

As much as Zrubek values her home’s lower-maintenance perks, her focus from day one has been on people and nature. “It makes me happy every day that they put solar into all these properties,” she said. As for her outdoor space, she admitted, “I was nervous to give up my yard when I moved, but I’ve been able to do all my gardening and put in plants. The back patio might be my favorite thing.” Half



of her

L-shaped patio is shaded, and she installed a heater and speakers. “I just love that,” she said. “It allows me to spend time outdoors year-round. Boulder Creek did a really good job taking this small space and making it a big feature.”

### An enduring investment in today’s market

As a BoulderHomeSource Realtor specializing in helping people discover their ideal home during life’s transitions, Zrubek believes purchasing a new home in today’s market is a winning investment. She commented, “Due to the historically low inventory that we have seen ongoing, a new home is a great choice. Many sellers are able to sell as-is, meaning your new home might need lots of work and money to be put into it. With a new home, you avoid the extra financial output and can have a home move-in ready.”

Zrubek also praised the quality of the Boulder Creek build and the personalized customer service. “I have moved into new subdivisions and sold many, many new homes over my 21 years in the real estate business, and Boulder Creek Neighborhoods has been one of my best experiences so far,” she said.

Paired patio homes at Lanterns at Rock Creek by Boulder Creek Neighborhoods finish in the \$800s to \$900s, and the builder currently has several floor plans available that are planned to deliver in early spring.

### Learn More

To learn more about the joyful atmosphere and lower-maintenance lifestyle of Lanterns at Rock Creek by Boulder Creek Neighborhoods, visit [LiveLanterns.com](http://LiveLanterns.com), or contact the Boulder Creek online concierge at 303.309.0088.



LEFT: The patio at Annie Zrubek’s home is perfect for neighborly conversations. RIGHT: Paired patio homes at Lanterns at Rock Creek by Boulder Creek Neighborhoods finish in the \$800s to \$900s (Photo: Timothy Seibert).