



A Love Letter to Lincoln Hills

*By Dr. Jeanette R. Patterson
Executive Director, Lincoln Hills Cares*

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Dear Lincoln Hills,

From the moment I saw you, I knew you were something special.

You are more than land –

You are a sanctuary.

A place where safety turned into hope,
where joy, love, and courage took root for generations.

You are liberation.

You are a promise kept.

When Black families were shut out of parks and resorts,
you opened your arms and welcomed them.

You gave us room to breathe, to laugh, and to belong.

I still hear the laughter of children in your fields,
the songs of Camp Nizhoni girls echoing along South Boulder Creek,
the music drifting from Winks Tavern under the stars.

I smell Melba's cooking in Winks Lodge –
fried fish, collard greens, rhubarb pie –
and feel the prayers lifted from Denver's Black churches,
giving thanks for your sacred space.

You gave Winks and Naomi a vision –
and with it, you became the first Black-owned Mountain resort west of the Mississippi.
You opened a world of possibility.

Today, through our youth programs,
we still feel your spirit –
your peace, your promise, your joy.

You've taught us that stewardship is an act of love.
And I promise to keep loving you –
with my voice, my work, and my heart.

Thank you for being a place where we remember, reconnect, and rise.

With love,
Jeanette