

Out & About with Lori Sunflower

Positive experiences since COVID-19 began?



Eddie High

Workload has greatly increased due to people being stuck at home on quarantine. So, spring cleaning for people started a lot sooner and a lot more people did spring cleaning this year because they're stuck at home. So, of course, getting phone call after phone call and tons of text messages for work was great. I had to buy a new van to carry that workload. I've also received a lot of new clientele—the realtors are referring me for trash and recycling pickup to all the people moving to town. So, this COVID thing has been pretty awful for many in our country and in the world, but for me it's actually been pretty nice.



Sunia Beelendorf

Back in March when everything started to shut down, I definitely found myself super despondent about the state of the world and the myriad of consequences our society would be facing as a result of the shutdowns and "new normal." And while I still find myself witness to a lot of hostility and fear in response to this pandemic (80% of which I see online across social media plat-

forms), there have absolutely been positive experiences! Here at Elephant Cloud, we have experienced a unprecedented growth spurt this summer, both in tourism and in residential traffic. With all the unemployment and businesses closing across our country, we are beyond grateful to continue to be going strong and to be able to continue to provide services that are essential for the success and prosperity of our town.

There has been so much verbal support and appreciation from so many people on a daily basis, especially as places that provide food and nourishment have been elevated to "essential frontline" status. We feel so much gratitude for our community right now.

I think many residents in the area are choosing to shop at the local grocery stores as much as possible, both out of a desire to travel as little as possible and out of a desire to support mom-and-pop businesses. This is truly amazing for our little local economy, as more dollars are going back into our infrastructure the more sales we keep in town. I've also seen more tourists and visitors than ever before and have met so many people who have newly moved here. People are much more appreciating little out-of-the-way towns and slower life.

In general, I find that people are so much more grateful for people in the service industry, are kinder and more patient, and are learning that to slow down and wait is totally ok and will not in fact hurt them! (laughing) Nature is awesome, solitude is okay, and every interaction with a friend/neighbor/loved one is a cherished moment, even if it's just asking if they "would like a receipt with that."



Chris Royer

The first good thing that happened with me after the China Virus started was: I got out of a crappy living situation in Alamosa. I

had been planning to move back to Crestone for months and finally got to a point where I could. Actually, I moved the night before the stay-at-home order went out. I have been able to find part-time work with a few different people here, which is way better for me than working full-time. I have seen many, many people starting to question the government and their role in it. I have seen people learning how they can take back control of their lives. Many people lost their jobs, which is sad, but I hope the jobs that come back will be more resilient. I have also seen and been a part of helping people garden more this year, which is great. Helping people grow their own food has always been important to me and this year more than ever has helped people realize how important it is. I hope to see more and more people becoming independent from reliance on anyone, but more importantly, I wish to see people being interdependent. Working together synergistically with barter, skill trade and giving of abundance.



Morgaine Faust

What positive things have I experienced since COVID began? When we first had a full-on lockdown throughout our state and a lot of things about COVID were unknown, I felt a bit at loose ends. After a week or so of sitting on the couch, walking my silly Yorkie more, eating way more nacho chips and enjoying different organic wines, I shifted my energy.

I signed up for French lessons on Babbel.com. I signed up for all of John Milton's new online Zoom classes with the Way of Nature. I joined Peter May's Thursday night meditative healing journeys. I started working with a multi-dimensional guide who works at the holographic level of consciousness. And I started spending more time in the woods, and meditating with all the nature spirits and beings you can only find in the silence of these mountains.

Perhaps one of the greatest gifts I have received from dealing with this COVID madness/mess is the gift of greater understanding on many levels. When I'm on social media, I try my best to encourage civil conversation and healthy discussion and debate. It's obvious many people are afraid, and I've learned to use the "pause" before replying.

I also have a couple of out-of-town friends who call me more frequently, because they are lonely or a bit scared, and they just need to connect and talk to someone. I haven't always been a good listener, so this practice is a gift. My friends chose me, and I mostly listen, not offering advice, just a lot of love and understanding.

My take away from all these experiences? I am convinced oneness is the way forward to a future we can barely imagine. This is the "Time of the Great Turning" and we all need each other.



Mike Booth

My wife, Lori and I definitely slowed down and had more time for things that we never had time for before. There was more time for reflection, quiet time, alone and together. We lost track of days and time because we were no longer controlled by societal order. We would check the calendar daily to see if we missed anything, but there was nothing to miss. We were able to invent a new routine made of calm, peace and self actualization.

We became enthusiastically devoted to Amazon (thank you to Jordan from UPS for faithfully supplying our new habit). We ordered all those books we always wanted to read! And had plenty of time to read those books from cover to cover... in one uninterrupted sitting.

We researched and rediscovered spiritual faith history, practices and rituals. We watched the world from the distance of our television as it dramatically changed from what we knew as normal, to a new and better way of life and community. As a result, we met many new people and future friends here in Crestone and far away in the virtual World of Zoom meetings.

We spent time hiking the greenbelts every day with our new puppy, Pearl. We started a major landscaping project and spent much of our waking hours outside enjoying everything Crestone.

And best of all... we cleaned our drawers and closets!

If you have feedback or suggestions for future topics, please email peacelori@peacelori.com. In addition to being the Staff Photographer for The Crestone Eagle since 2012, Lori Nagel is a freelance photographer, graphic designer & web designer. www.sunflowerstudios.us.com.