

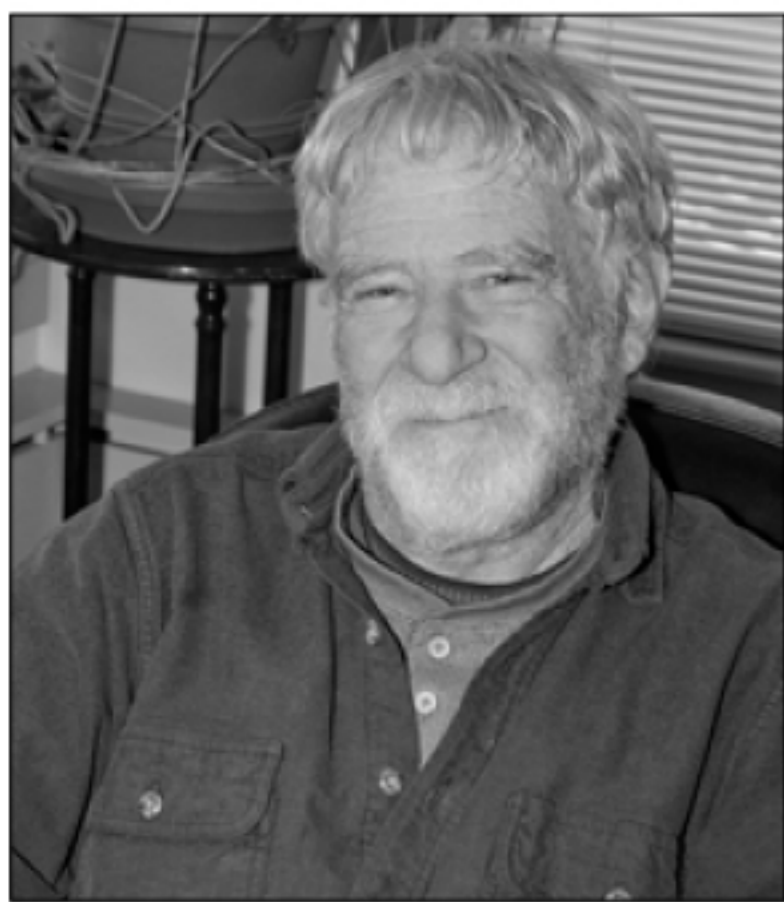
Out & About with Lori Sunflower

What's your take on the economy?



Cindy Tate, RMTNMT

No matter what they say about the economy, at all times during my life I was self-employed and I just had to keep a positive attitude, continue to do the best work I can, and draw in the work! Because I was enthusiastic. Because I was present to do it. So I don't have really a comment on the economy, other than I'm just going to keep doing the best I can, keep a positive attitude, and I don't really wanna believe it's all bad. That's just not a way to live.



Michael Bertin

It's actually quite farcical. The economy as we know it is basically a theatrical production by the Rothschilds, Rockefellers, etc. And we have this whole other entity: the petroleum war industry, who has taken over the country, and makes sure the economy supports them, to the point of fighting wars, inventing wars—it just goes on and on. It's rigged. If you've got a lot of money, you can rig the game any which way you want, including putting a total schmuck in the White House, things like that. Now, how does the economy serve the American people? It keeps them down. It makes them slaves to a big bank that owns the country. The best thing that could happen to the economy is that it would collapse, and we would all get down to something real like bartering for goods and services that mean something.

Crestone's a wonderful haven. It's a good place to get out of the mainstream and practice something more wholesome, more holistic, more meaningful not just for

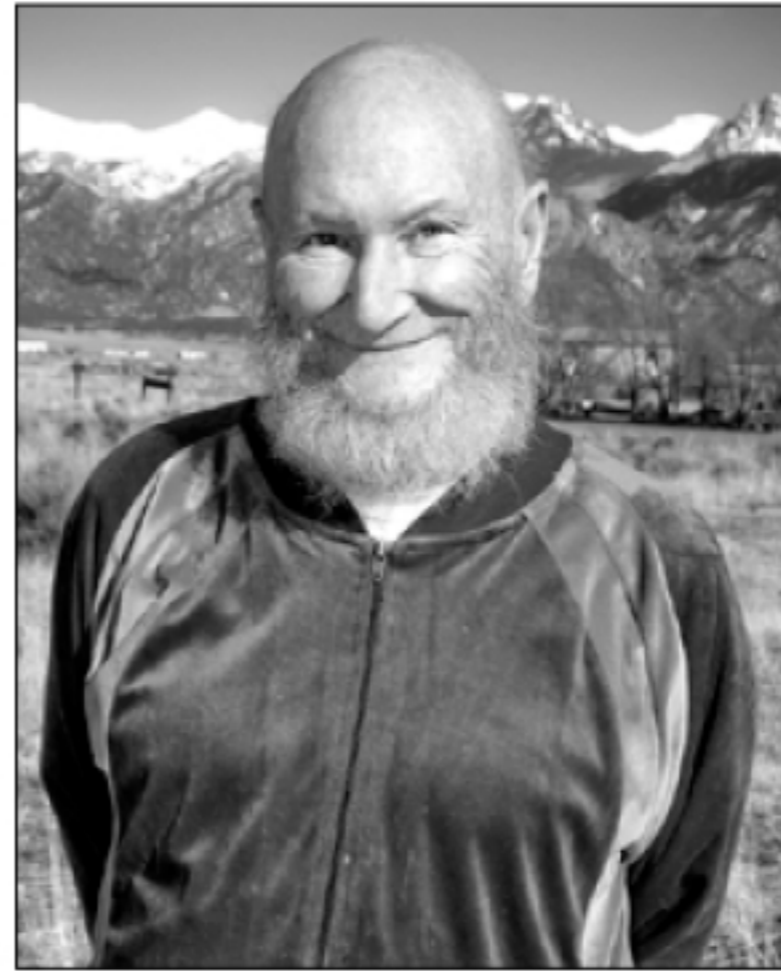
the planet and for the community, but for the individual. Anywhere in the mainstream, you first of all gotta really work hard to find some consciousness, and everybody is tied up in the old "earning a living" and "I need a bigger and faster and better car and TV," and ya know we're all junkies for consumerism. We're no longer citizens; we're consumers. So, my take on the economy? That is the system by which we are enslaved.



Amulya Dawn Beechwood

I've lived here a long time, I've done so many jobs, and I've always managed to somehow make ends meet. Many here are hand to mouth, though, and it seems like the middle class (pretty much where I've always considered myself) has switched into either you're at the lower end of needing assistance of some kind, or you're quite comfortable. The middle range is increasingly difficult. So, those who have money are hopefully generous and can hire those who need money. Keep the flow flowing (laughing)!

Years ago while I was in St. John's for a little trip, someone said, "You either have 3 houses or 3 jobs if you live on St. John's." Sometimes I feel like that's true here. We have second homeowners and then we have folks that have 2 or 3 jobs just to keep it all together. The economy here is obviously a challenge, but nationally I don't know where it's going to be any better, because here we have the resources of the beauty, fresh air, mountains and quiet. Our generous community is also a large part of the economy. If someone's ill, people really rally together to make that person feel comfortable. To me, that's a valuable exchange for a wealth economy. If you go somewhere else looking for money, you generally won't find that kind of generosity. I also shop local as much as possible, supporting the craft bazaars, Artisans Gallery, Lonny's store and grocery shopping. I think there's room for local economy to improve, definitely, but if it were too happening or lucrative, then it wouldn't still be our lovely, quiet, small town.



Ed Nagel

I think the economy is in deep trouble. We have more debt than we've ever had in our history. We have more corporate defaults than after the 2008-2009 series—all that housing collapsing. There are over 100 corporate defaults—more than there were in 2009. People's savings are not safe. They think they have money in the bank and they can get it anytime they want. But actually the bank owns their money. It's a temporary loan to the bank. It's an unsecured liability. You say, "Aww, but the FDIC insures \$250,000—I'm safe!" If one bank out of 36 in this country fails, there will not be enough money to pay back the people who lost their money in deposits. The government's about ready to confiscate IRAs and Roth IRAs, and you think your pension money is safe, but there's so much money there, the government's gonna take it and use it for other things. The Bible told us about this a long time ago. Matthew 23:29, it talks about the more you have, the more you will get; those who have less, even that which they have will be taken away. That's a prediction. And that's actually what's happening, especially under Trump's presidency, is the wealthy will be protected and the low-income people are just out of luck. So, what's my take on the economy? It sucks (laughing).



Judy Gilbert

The economy can be something quite abstract and far away from us. According to statistics, the national economy, regardless of what Donald Trump says, is actually quite robust. Unemployment keeps dropping, wages are rising. The head of the Federal Reserve has continuously had positive things to say recently, and the stock market is at record highs. However, we don't live in the national economy. We live in what I would call our own personal micro-economy. Regardless of what's happening in the world, if your personal economic sit-

uation isn't so hot, what difference does it make if everything is great or improving nationally? I was fortunate to grow up in a family that had its act together, financially. My parents were certainly not wealthy. My mother was a school teacher, and my father was a semi-employed musician. My mother just knew how to live well, and by well, I mean enjoying concerts, theatre, etc. (I grew up in New York City). She created a micro-economy for us that exceeded our actual income because of her very capable ways of managing money, so I've been able to benefit from that. I'd like to just encourage every person to be the most plan-ful they can be about their own micro-economy. Don't listen so much to all the noise around you about the larger economy because there's not much you can do about that. However, you might be able to do something about your own economic situation.



Benjamin Byer, Owner of Elephant Cloud

Regarding the Colorado economy, I feel there are a lot of jobs not able to be filled because of a lack of housing. There needs to be more economical housing, which means there'd be housing with rental caps based on percentages. In certain areas throughout the United States, where the economy's flowing, a lot of the tech jobs and various other jobs are definitely helping the economy. However, there are huge pockets of no jobs and very poor people getting poorer. I feel like the gap between rich and poor is definitely widening. I feel like the money's getting weaker and our dollar's getting weaker compared to other currencies, and there's very little people can do, because cash rules and the cash is getting sucked up by the rich.

In our store, people are definitely more on budgets and they're cutting down on the items that are more specialty items and going for more staples, which in some ways is good, and in some ways, not so good. Hopefully, people understand that when you eat, every calorie matters, and there's good calories and bad calories, and if we eat well, our own personal economy remains strong, so nutrition and what you put into your body is really important, so eating good food is part of a good economy, too (laughing)!

If you have feedback or suggestions for future topics, please email peacelori@love@gmail.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.