

Out & About with Lori Sunflower

What do you do that's energy efficient?



John Rowe

The car we travel in is a two-wheel drive and gets about 38mpg. My old pickup is small and doesn't get great gas mileage, but I budget it for 300-350 miles a month. We don't go to Salida or Alamosa often, and buy everything we can locally. We have efficient, in-floor radiant heat in the house and keep it turned down to 63. We have a fire in the morning and at night and burn very little propane. I'm a big fan of wood heat and passive solar. It *really* lowers utility bills! We buy whole, fresh foods; not canned or packaged foods. It breaks my heart to dig into a package and find more little packages in there. We recycle clothes by buying used ones. I think you can get a lot of nice stuff and it saves energy. They just opened a great new thrift store next to the Gift Horse at the Crestone Inn. I feel like the Free Box is more for people who need it, so I take stuff there, but I don't pick stuff up. These things don't sound like much, but you can cut your gasoline consumption in half by not driving a big Ford Expedition everywhere. So I think Lori, really, unless I'm going to start lyin' to ya, that's what I do!



Chi Chi Chu

We live in a passive solar home with solar panels and a wind generator. I cook some food in a solar oven. I use magnets in my washing machine which decreases the amount of water and electricity it uses by only using the rinse cycle. Living in a solar house, we realize we're using energy we don't actually need, so we have power bars to turn off all the phantom energy from toasters, the washing machine, coffee maker, etc.

I also consider it an energy savings that I don't use a lot of chemicals. For instance, I don't use Windex; I use a cloth that works better than Windex. For some laundry I do use a detergent without fillers, and the company sends me a bottle that I re-fill. I make everything from scratch. I know that's hard for most people, but I do that. We're starting to incorporate plasma energy, and we're going to be working with Edie Lee making a megrav which will supplement our energy. Hopefully we'll be doing classes here on how to make all these wonderful things. I have little energy things that I put in my dog Pica's bed, because she's 12, and it keeps her from having aches and pains.



Paul Shippee

When we explore the big picture we can learn the ultimate and immediate energy conservation strategy is to replace the burning of fossil fuels with the direct use of the sun's energy, for heating homes, buildings, hot water and making electricity. We also know fossil fuel burning is intimately tied to the cause of climate change and global warming. That's really huge! I've made a career out of energy conservation and solar applications, focusing on passive solar homes and active solar systems for hot water. I've designed and built several kinds of high performance passive solar homes that are very close to 100% solar heated. I'd lost interest in my first career in civil engineering and in 1972 became excited about sustainable energy. As a self-taught solar design engineer I experimented by heating up hot water in containers inside boxes made of glass and wood. I happily built my first passive solar home in Larimer County in 1972, then began teaching on alternative sources of energy and the human environment at CSU and Naropa. Then I put my money where my mouth was by designing and building passive solar homes in Boulder County. I moved to Crestone in 2001 and built my own 100% solar heated home. It uses three wheelbarrows of wood in the coldest winters. You can learn these magical energy conservation strategies too: sign up for a 3-day workshop at CrestoneSolarSchool.com.



Deb Schultz

I've driven a used Prius since 2010. She's a bit beat up now, but we use her for everything! It's practically our work truck, and uses less than half the fuel. It was a real step forward, but building an Earthship is the energy-efficient undertaking of a lifetime. My carbon footprint may just be in the negative after this! Even in the temporarily built portion of our home it's performing very high: passive solar gain, propane on-demand water heater, salvaged brick floor for thermal mass, and the DC refrigerator (our latest coup) runs just on solar energy. And with the solar panels outside soaking up sun rays, it's really a no-brainer. Eventually we'll also be capturing water, recycling it, and using it for food production in our home. What could be better? No need to run out for tomatoes! And *water*. Ever since I was a kid I've felt we should all be aware, like, "Hey, we're gonna run out . . . I don't know why but it came from deep inside me. Now I'm so proud to have my own well. We put in some plumbing last fall, but before that we hauled in water and whew! Was *that* ever a chore! Now, we're almost ultra-conservative with all our resources, and I really *know* we *all* can do with less, because I'm living it!



Donovan Spitzman

What do I do to be energy efficient other than building an Earthship out of 80% reclaimed materials? Last fall, the POA board asked me to start the revisions on the Energy Efficiency Guidelines from our Design Guidelines document. The original Energy Efficiency Guidelines were taken out a few years back due to their antiquated nature and difficulty of implementation. We're now starting the process to update these guidelines. The 1990s guidelines were basically congruent with what most urban/suburban communities are implementing today. Back in the early-mid 90s when the guidelines were implemented the population at large was not focused on green building. Now, we all realize how vital this effort is to

our future. So, we begin the journey of taking those original desires and updating them into an appropriate regenerative living model for the next 50 years of life in the Baca. What will the food supply line be? How will water be delivered? What happens to our waste? What types of structures support long-term sustainability? What design aspects are crucial to our location? What aspects of our surrounding environment are the most important for us to preserve? By evaluating our past, we plan our future. Welcome to one of the highest concentrations of off-grid living and natural building in the US. Let's keep the trend going for another 50 years. Stop by the booth at the Energy Fair to share ideas and input.



Annie Pace

Energy efficiency is a big subject and a big part of my life. Even my late guru would often ask, "Why wasting?" What I do could be described in three ways. First, on a gross level: What you see in front of you—solar electricity and heating, strawbale construction, adobe floors and utilization of other natural building materials; and an intentional design to meet but not exceed my needs. One of the most important homesteading decisions I made was location. Residing and working in short walking distance to the post office, credit union, and stores—not being vehicle-dependent conserves immensely. Secondly, on a personal level of lifestyle choices: keeping it simple—no clothes dryer, TV, computer or other electronic gadgets (a virtually screen free environment), seasonally growing my own produce, minimizing lighting, conserving flushes, taking bucket baths, etc. You could say "Yogic-ly old school." Lastly, on a subtle level: To have no separation of life, livelihood and lifestyle is incredibly efficient. Without compartmentalization, it all sort of mushes together and the talk is indeed walked! Maintaining my spiritual practices not only gives me more energy, it results in enhanced resiliency, capacity to serve others, and to step up in the face of adversity. And I have this idea for 2019's Energy Fair: I'd like to gather perimenopausal/menopausal women, have a workshop, How to Summon Hot Flashes on Demand, then find a way to harness and store that energy. That hasn't occurred yet at the Energy Fair, so if anyone's interested, *that's* the plan!

If you have feedback or suggestions for future topics, please email peacelirilove@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.