

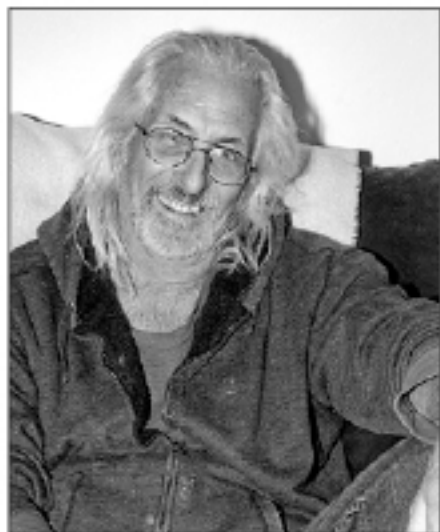
# Out & About with Lori Sunflower

Plans to contribute to our community in 2018?



**Erin McGrath**

Right now we're working on meeting people's needs in the moment and there's a lot of people here who are hungry or in transition, trying to build their homes, undergoing hardship or sickness. We're devoting right now Saturdays to create a space for people to come and feel the comfort of family and community and have warm, nourishing food and a lot of beautiful music. We're just having people come and contribute music if they want to, and their time, and it's been really uplifting. I think throughout the year, we're going to continue to do that on Saturdays and we're excited to be offering a choir. We're actually going to be starting a church choir for the Feel Free Ministry, and this is an opportunity for all musicians and people who love to sing to come and be a part of something really beautiful. So, we're just going to continue to create unity and show ourselves how we can give and receive love and care for one another. So that's how we'll be contributing in 2018!



**Rodney Volkmer**

This year, the big push for me, and I've already started it, is the Neighbors Helping Neighbors phone book. I've rebuilt it from scratch and put that back together, but working for NHN is my primary contribution to the community and that'll be all year, every year, until I get off the Board! NHN is a non-profit organization that is designed to help people in crisis. It's not meant to pay your rent all the time and to baby you the rest of your life, but if you need a little bit, we can give a little bit and get you out of that pressure so you can get on with your life and figure it out

so that you can help yourself. I think that's probably the main thing, is to enable people to help themselves and not become dependent on us. My personal contribution to NHN, other than a little bit of money and stuff like that, is most of their print and web and media stuff. Plus I'm the President of NHN, so, the Board meetings and figuring things out and working with people and their crises. I'm always available to help anybody with anything, given the time. I help people individually more than as a large group. And I'm working with the Crestone End of Life Project and the Town of Crestone and different things, too, so always doing something!



**John Milton**

One of the things that draws people to Crestone is the sacredness of this land. I'm lucky enough to have come here over 40 years ago, and early-on, one of the things I discovered were a number of the rather remarkable sacred sites in the form of seats or meditation chairs, built of stone and up to 20,000 years old, according to the Smithsonian. Not too many people know about these, but they're spread throughout Crestone. I've taken much of my retirement savings and used that to preserve the 300-400 acres at Sacred Land Sanctuary, dedicated to the preservation of the sacred sites. One of the things I've been offering to the community is to take people onto the land. We walk through the sacred sites and I introduce them to how they work, what they look like, and try to give them a sense of how they function so when they build a road or a parking lot or are putting up a building, they can have some idea of where these sacred sites might be located, or they can call on us. I've worked with Bonpo community here. They asked me to come in and do a survey, so I did, and then when they built their community, we worked together to help develop the location where the retreat cabins and their main retreat center would go in a way that would not disturb the sacredness of the land and the sacred sites. Archaeologists don't know about this. I've introduced it to the Smithsonian and they're working with us now to authenticate and certify all this stuff. I'd like to introduce new people coming to our community to how these things function, and

why they contribute to producing a field that almost everybody feels when they come here. Part of that is this amazing array of thousands of meditation seats that are throughout the community and the energy meridians, like the meridians in your body, that link them all together. And that provides a lot of the foundation of that feeling of sacredness that we have here. And it goes back 20,000 years, at least.



**Stephen Futral (aka Ish)**

I would imagine I'd be very involved with the artistic community here. I also mentor kids at the Charter School; this is the first semester I've done calligraphy for the last 4 years, plus I've been doing encaustic painting, painting with beeswax and pigment. I offer workshops to the community, in both encaustics and calligraphy, Japanese brush stroke style. I'm an admin on 7 different Facebook pages, and I started Crestone Poets and Writers group, so I keep rather busy. CrestoneArtists.com has started open live model drawing a couple times a month. We've sponsored the Open Studio Tour every year and now they're going to have a featured studio-of-the-month. I'm the first guinea pig, so I'm welcoming the community to 117 Skyview Way, it's set up for January 14, 2-4pm. I probably will demonstrate the calligraphic brush stroke and also maybe the encaustic monotype print. We'll have wine and such, of course. I paint and I write, so I'm working on my memoir; I continually write poetry and when I can, I cook. I've actually thought of giving cooking lessons on Indian food. Other than that, I do "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly" in the newspaper and that keeps me up til 3, 4 in the morning watching movies, and I totally enjoy that.



**Patti Jackson**

Thankfully, Crestone has quite a number of non-profits and grassroots organizations here, so finding somewhere to plug into to contribute to the community is very easy. In 2018, I am thrilled to continue serving as Co-Manager of the Crestone Food Bank, along with Wendy Chanden and our wonderful group

of volunteers: Stuart, Alex, Marge, Nan, Claudia, Cherie, Nick, Marie, Isaline, Carmin, and Joan. Working in the Food Bank comes so natural for me. You see, my grandparents—with whom I lived a number of years during my late childhood and early teen years—lost their 265-acre farm in rural Mississippi in the Depression. After WWII, their little house that sat along the railroad tracks was "marked" as a stop for soldiers returning home who needed a warm meal. Preserving and sharing food was always a central theme in my grandparents' home, so I understood early-on the importance of food supplementation, especially in rural communities where jobs are scarce and incomes are limited. As a nutritional health coach, the Food Bank is a perfect match for me and I am working to do what I can to improve the quality of food available. Also, when people come into the Food Bank, it is important to me that they feel loved and supported. Food is so much more than nourishment for our physical bodies, because, as Paul Wellstone so simply stated, "We all do better when we all do better." Yes?



**Stephanie Gaines**

There's a poem by Rumi that exemplifies the way in which I aspire to be available to this life, this community, and this world. It goes: "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world's too full to talk about ideas, language—even the phrase 'each other' doesn't make any sense." Some of the ways I hope to contribute to our collective well-being in 2018 is by cultivating gratitude for everything, learning from what's difficult, and supporting the wonderful service provided to this community thru the selfless commitment of the CEOLP volunteers. I began establishment of the Crestone End of Life Project (CEOLP) in 2006, it was legally approved in 2007, and the first cremation was in 2008. Over the years, so many have stepped up to really get involved and help the services run as seamlessly as possible while making both local & visiting families feel comfortable during the transition process of their loved ones. I have really treasured doing this work, although lately, I've really been redirecting people's focus from me as founder/director towards the incredible service provided by our volunteers, because without them, we wouldn't exist.

If you have feedback or suggestions for future topics, please email [peacelori@love@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.sunflowerstudios.us.com)