

Out & About

Column
& Photos
by Lori Nagel

with Lori Sunflower

This Month's Topic:
Why Do You Stay in Crestone?



Ara MacDonald

When I moved here, I had a sudden horrible revelation, which was “I’m not a desert person.” And I wasn’t sure if I made the right decision and so I went through a number of months of not knowing if I had done the right thing. Over time, slowly, I’ve grown to love the people here and the land here, even though it’s not my usual surrounding. What’s kept me here is the people. And I feel like my daughter has a good group of friends that she really loves, and that she feels safe and comfortable and loved here, and the more that I’ve lived here, I’ve grown to love everyone. I can’t imagine leaving because that would mean I would have to start all over and I wouldn’t quite find as many magical spirits anywhere else as I do here, in these numbers. And we’re all crazy and we’re all freaky and we all come from different backgrounds, but when it really comes down to it, I feel comfortable here.



Elianna Krakauer

Deep question Lori—why am I still here? By the grace of God I’m still here. One moment I am awed by the magnificent glory of life and friendships and another moment I want to run away where no one knows me. And then I remember that I can choose to have a forgiving heart always and a good attitude no matter what happens.

I love Crestone’s mountains, creeks, piñons, deer crossings and driving slowly while following wacky bunnies chasing headlights.

I feel so honored and grateful to participate with so many awesome groups here like Crestone End of Life Project, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Shumei Taiko drumming, music festivals, and on and on.

After only 11+ years here—which is actually the longest I’ve lived anywhere—people, places and things have come and gone and some come back again. And even if you don’t like me, I still like you. And if you don’t perceive that I like you, know I’m working on it. Oh yes, and that Deputy Wayne is radically cool. I feel like my life is so full that I really don’t have time to move somewhere else, and I don’t know where that would be. So here I am, here and now. For now!



Peter May

When I first got here, I was wondering where all the people were, because I had a different idea, conceptually, of what it meant to live where not many people were. For instance, everyone who lives here in town could fit into my dorm at the University of Michigan. And there’s way more deer and elk than people here. So my first year was really challenging in terms of, “where’s all the people?” I grew up in the Detroit area, and then Seattle. I was used to living close to people.

And why do I stay, as I’ve been here for now over 20 years? I really enjoy the space and I really enjoy the silence and the opportunity to not only discover things in general but learn things about myself, as well as nature. And this place. Some people are suited to live in a place where there’s not a lot of energetic things going on—that’s probably most people, that’s where most people live. And for me, this place happens to be really energetically active at times. And yes, it is difficult for everybody, I know that. It’s not the easiest place. To live here you have to really wanna be here. My first winter, I was building my house and I didn’t have a front door and it was 20 below. I knew I could drive away—I could go down to New

Mexico or go back to where I came from. There’s an adventure here and that’s what we’re sharing. And for the most part, there’s enough openness here where I can freely exchange ideas, even if people don’t believe them. There’s a certain kind of space or openness here and an awareness that I think we could all stand to increase. There’s been a lot of things that have gone on here way before us and there’s still things going on.



Darlene Yarbrough

I would say that staying here is because of connections. It’s the connections to the place and the sense of having a place in the world that actually feels safe. And because I work, I stay very focused here, which allows me to focus on my life—what I have to do. And I like the quietness that comes at the end of the day when I just sit at my place and see the mountains, the sunsets—and I love the animals and the plants. I never felt that before I lived here, because I lived in the city. A lot of people have had me always leaving, but honestly, in the last 13 years, since David passed, I have never once gone out and sought another place to live. Nothing has ever arisen to make me want to go. Living here feels like it’s hard to go back out to other places in the world. I’ve seen so many people leave and come back. So I would say this: there would have to be a draw. And I have not experienced that. I do my work, I do my life, I have my quiet time. And I think that is the reason I’m here.



Tedd Brumm

20 years ago, I came here to help my sister in her transition when she had cancer. She was a mover and a shaker in Crestone, back in the day, with the library and that sort of stuff. My niece grew up here. And I when I first got here, I thought, “Yeah,

this place is for me—I’m runnin’ away!” And I did! I gave my ex-wife everything and ran up here with just what I could carry in my truck, most of which was musical equipment.

I stay because of the energy here—the energy of these mountains—and I have some really good friends that I’ve made here in the last 20 years. We’re the old timers here now I guess, cuz the other old timers here are all dead! (laughing) I’ve still got my health, knock on wood, and this is the most creative place I’ve ever lived, because there’s so much artistic energy going around—people doing all kinds of things. Some of ‘em are crazy and spontaneous and some are well-rehearsed and thought out, but it’s still part of the whole deal. Crestone had a lot of characters when I moved here at first, and it still does, a lot of characters. People who just sorta do their own thing, and that’s the beautiful thing about it—to be allowed to do that. I’ve lived in town and out in the Baca, but I prefer living out in the Baca where I am cuz I’m tucked away in my cul de sac and it’s very quiet—me and my 2 husky dogs that I’ve raised here. You’ll never get me outta here!



Sage Brown

I stay in Crestone because of my friends. I have so many wonderful friends, including Aliyah, who I love dearly, and then there’s my hiking friends, and my birthday party friends (she was attending a birthday party that night). I also stay here now because I have a bed & breakfast. I just started an AirBnB and am quite excited about all the new guests that are coming in. And I stay here because I’m selling my house. It’s hard to decide what I’ll do when it sells, because all my friends are here and I love being here, so I’m not sure yet.

I love the energy here. It’s like no other place. I haven’t gotten involved with any particular spiritual center, but I like going to hear a Rinpoche that comes into town or taking an astrology class or going to my Non-Violent Communication group, or I even have a Wisdom Circle that I love. So, that keeps me here.

But really why I’m here in Crestone is because all the men are good looking. Crestone reminds me of Garrison Keillor’s Lake Wobegon, where all the women are strong, all the men are good looking, and all the children are above average.