

Out & About with Lori Sunflower

What brought you to Crestone?



Glider

I needed a place to go that was laid back. That was a long time ago. It actually was the mountain range that brought me here. I had been down in Flagstaff, and knew these were sacred mountains. I came here to an artists' commune, but eventually ended up building my own house. The mountains here are special. Obviously, you see it right there as you drive up Road T, but you can also get up high fast. You hit a trail and can get up there, and then you're up where you want to be—or where I wanted to be! I also came here because I knew there'd be a lot of artists and different kinds of people, and I think that's great. Additionally, I had come to a sweat lodge here with a Lakota medicine man. Adding all that together, why would I not move here? I appreciate that I got to be an owner/builder, and I think the people here are beautiful.



Mattie Belle Lakish

I first visited Crestone when my older son had a youth retreat at North Crestone campground. I came to visit him and ended cooking for them all weekend! While they were off climbing mountains, I walked around Crestone and just loved the old buildings and wonderful small town feel. I came back 2 years later in 1992, really searching for a solution to my

son's education. I needed a school, a job, and a place to live; and I had \$115 and an old car. I came anyway and Joyce Weiss took me to a homeopathic retreat at Rainbow B&B, where I met great people. Joyce and Carlos owned the White Eagle and offered me a room for \$125/month. I got a job cleaning the floors after the Desert Sage Halloween party, and after that, a waitressing job. I met Karen Acker, who had a son the same age with similar educational issues. She wanted to homeschool and said she'd include my son. All that happened in one day! So I said, "Ok, Lord, I accept. You're telling me I should be here." I went back to Missouri, got my car, packed up, and moved out here. Prior to that, I'd asked for some sign, because I'd tried 3 other places that hadn't worked. This all came together so fast I figured it had to be right. It's been a good choice. Later, after the legislation passed, I helped other parents in Crestone start the Charter School.



Heather D'Alessio

I had been living primitively for four years—going beyond the homesteading lifestyle I loved so much from my childhood, away from the urban or professional options I saw after college. I didn't want to keep working as a taxi driver, bike mechanic, or barista either. I wanted to be true to myself and get away from Walmart, TV, and politics, and achieve peace-of-mind though learning to live simply and close to the earth, giving my 3-year-old that gift of a feeling of belonging, knowing that she can find all she needs without lots of gadgets or money, and growing up true to herself. Over and over, I'd found us living in less-than-desirable circumstances. I felt my intended goals could be achieved in a town, if only I found the right town. One day, as I was gardening at Black Bear Ranch in northern California, two visitors said—"what you're saying sounds just like Crestone!" The Charter School sounded perfect, and it seemed like a place I could be

myself without too much judgement, and where I could continue to raise goats, too! In "real" civilization, I'd always felt out of place, and like I'm paying for more than I need. For some reason, even though it was so hot that summer, six years ago, Crestone felt like a good home—so I went back for all my things!



David Lindsey

I first visited in 1979 and snuck into Mineral Hot Springs (MHS), loved it, and fantasized about being at a place like this. I'd come to Crestone in the early 80s and just drive around in this weird subdivision getting lost, having spiritual experiences and wishing my life was such that I could actually be here. In early 2000, a friend of another architect was meeting with Elaine Blumenhein, who owned MHS, and I said, "Oh my God, we have to meet!" We had lunch and I said, "Please, if ever you ever want anyone to run your place, just call me!" Two months later she called and asked if I was serious. Lock, stock and barrel, I packed up, left Boulder, and ran MHS for 2 years, lived there. It was glorious! And then of course I moved to Crestone. How could I not? Over the 20 years I'd visited before moving here, I'd developed interesting relationships with many locals, so moving here felt completely natural. Once I was here, it felt like, "Oh, this was meant to be."



Marv Mattis

I lived in Sante Fe where the train came thru once a day. I took the train once, as a passenger, and it was fantastic. I had all that sh*t and I loved it all. Naomi discovered this tiny city in the valley. I wrote about it in my first book. I didn't want to fall in love with Crestone. What the f*** do

you do here!? I was in middle of heavy duty Hollywood stuff and loved it! There was something here that felt like home, though. People gave me free rubble, which I used to build a house for Naomi. I love Crestone and I love the Buddhism. I'm Jewish. Every year I go to Meryl Ennis'. I love that woman. Her dedication keeps the Jewish impulses alive. Crestone allowed my daughter and son to fulfill me, by allowing them to be what I wanted them to be. My son was so rebellious. He cut off relationship with me for a long time. Only recently, gave his old man dubious pleasure. I stopped at the Road Kill Café, 17 years ago, and I decided to live in this town that would have a restaurant called the Road Kill Café!



Holly Hosner

I'll start with how I first heard of Crestone. Sometimes, things we see make such an impression. I was at the little dinette in Villa Grove in the early 90s. As we were waiting for breakfast, I picked up an *Eagle* and the Carmelite Monastery was on the front. At that time, after working with the Course of Miracles in Boulder, I was looking for a healing path to my birth religion, which was Catholic. Seeing this monastery there really piqued my interest. It was 10 years later that I actually moved to Crestone. In Boulder, as I built a treasure map with visuals of things I'd wanted, I came across a magazine with pictures of Crestone—the iconic Ziggurat with 2 or 3 Carmelites. It so called to me. Over the years, I've been in and out of many spiritual practices here, but certainly the strongest changes that have taken place for me have been through the Catholics. Connie, Eric and Suzie have been really wonderful. In fact, they took me to see the movie *Spotlight* a couple years ago, which started me on a journey to healing from childhood abuse from the Catholic Church. All this healing has led me to where I will be applying for reconciliation and compensation with the Roman Catholic diocese of Brooklyn later this year. It's a huge part of who I am, and that came through Crestone.

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