

Out & About with Lori Sunflower

What is your 2017 goal to help better Crestone?



Winter Ross

My Learning Exchange endeavor basically comes from Colorado Creative Industries. I was chosen to attend the Change Leader Institute, and I had to come up with a project to become certified as a Change Leader. So, my project is Learning Exchange, which is a skill share. We also have 2 other Change Leaders in the community. One is Tom Dessain, of Crestone Performances, Inc., and the other is Mayor Kairina Danforth, who has been really working tirelessly to get Crestone certified as a Creative District. So, my idea, and I like this metaphor, is that the Knowledge Exchange is going to be one more little snowflake that gets added to what becomes an avalanche once we get certified by the State. Which brings us to economics, because we know that being certified by the State will help a lot. With the Knowledge Exchange, while I understand that we're trying to build the economy here, I'd still like to promote a gift economy, like I've experienced at Burning Man and Standing Rock, where you nurture each other, rather than have that kind of prey-predator type of system that we have with capitalism.



Jason Anderson, County Commissioner

Probably my biggest personal goal in regards to the betterment of Crestone is—I'm just getting this

really strong feeling that we have to work towards taking care of ourselves; that we get better at being self-sufficient, which means we keep looking towards more of our own food, like what Nick Chambers and others are doing. For a long time, I'd say, "We need solar businesses." Now, I think more towards, "We need solar for our communities," like we need Crestone electricity for Crestone people. I just have this real pull to keep moving towards a community that really does a good job of taking care of itself and really meets its own basic needs. As far as the County goes, my first goal deals with the second road from Crestone into the Baca. We made a trade with the Wildlife Refuge and now own that road and plan to fix it up so that people have a second way to get in and out. My second goal is working on another way to travel between the Baca and Crestone that doesn't involve one person, one car—more alternative transportation. The bike trail we're trying to get in, things like that. It just feels like there's a lot of uncertainty right now. We don't know what's going to happen with our public lands, our energy, the freedoms that we have in the state of Colorado. That uncertainty is why I think we need to just really take care of each other.



John Loll

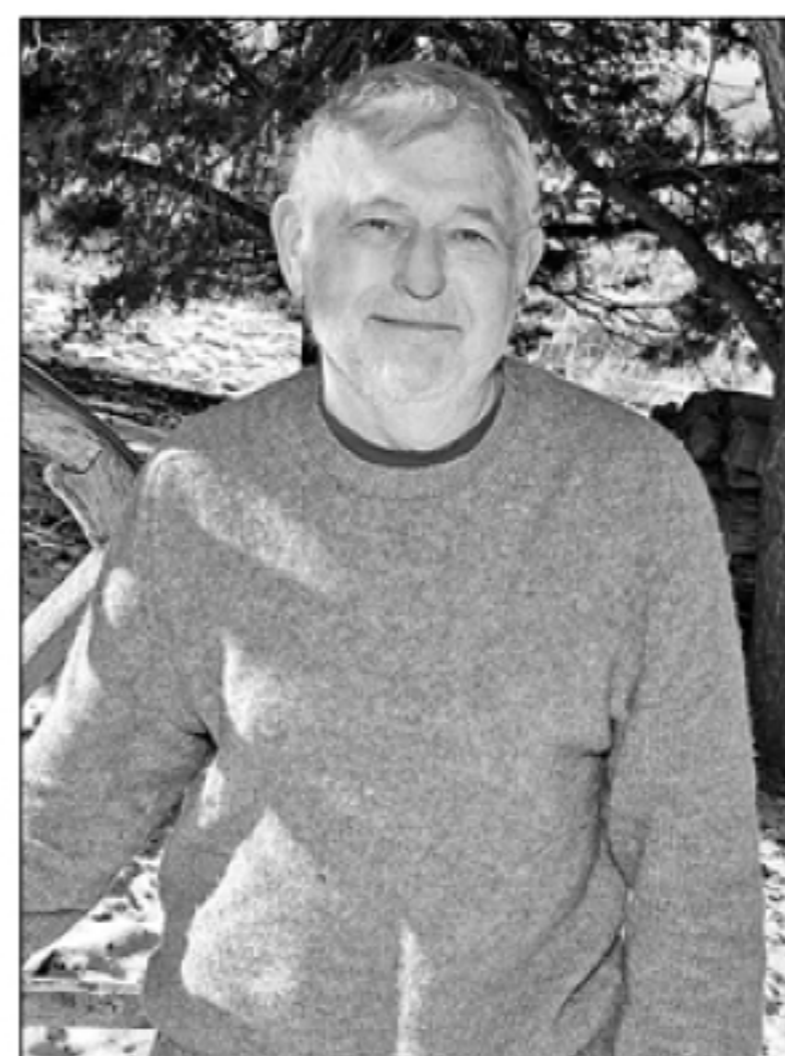
My personal goal for the coming year is to go beyond my own limitations of wanting to be insular and somewhat of a hermit type and reach across those barriers, so that I can join with others in facing the challenges that we're going to have in Crestone and the Baca. And that extends to a whole lot of different areas—environmental, political, etc. What we're going to be facing coming out of Washington is going to be a difficult prospect for us all. So if we can increase our own resiliency in our community, and if we can work together to develop local solutions and alternatives that are not dependent on outside goods or services being brought into the community, then the community itself will, I think, prosper. There'll be more opportunities for people within the community to help each other and we may even be able to

grow a local, viable economy that would work for everybody in our community. And also, most importantly, lessen our environmental footprint—not only carbon, but also the footprint of our living here and living here as lightly as we can, on the land.



Malathy Drew

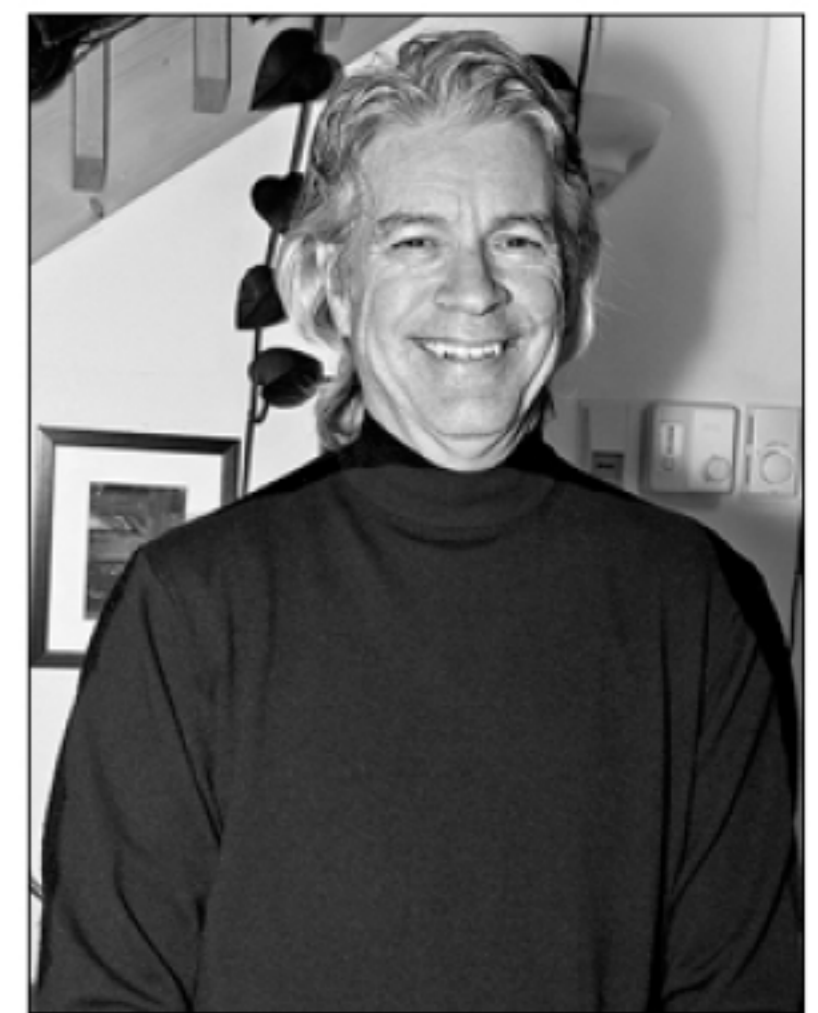
I just don't know that there's a lot I can do for Crestone, except take a look at myself. In every moment that I have the courage to really look within at my own duality and the energy I'm putting into the world, the more I open to my heart and am able to show up in community and in the world. My past life would've said, "Save the world!" but I'm learning that's not the answer at all. All I can really do is look within, and from that I'm able to really show up in a different way in community. Part of what's happening in Crestone is that so many egos have gotten in the way of us really coming together. Right now is looking pretty scary, and I'm so grateful to be in a community that stands a chance. No matter what happens on the outside of us, we have some of the most intelligent, amazing people in the world in this itty-bitty little town. And I don't think there's anything we can't weather if we come together and work together, but that has to start from within. I know it's a silly analogy, but the way I see it is that we're all pieces of a puzzle, especially in a place like Crestone, where there are so many strong puzzle pieces. If we could just let all that other stuff go, really work on ourselves, look at how we're showing up, what energy we're putting into the world, into our community . . . Crestone's unstoppable.



Thom Ontko, Chair, Friends of the Baca Grande Library

First of all, Lori, I want to thank you for writing this column

every month. Your interviews help make our community a better place to live, by sharing and learning about each other. Now for your question. Personally, I know I can't change the world, nor would I want to, but maybe I can help make our community a nicer place to be. For the past 5 or 6 years I've been working toward building a new library within the town of Crestone, which would be a state-of-the-art facility, easily accessible for everyone. Libraries are not a "thing of the past." They're the future—true learning centers. I plan to keep working to help make this a reality, and collectively it will happen. After all, the community library is the "heart of a community." The new library in the location that's chosen will really help bring the town of Crestone and the Baca Grande together. When people go in to pick up their mail or groceries, they'll go past it, and it would allow people to really see each other instead of just running errands and going back to their hermitages. It is something that, I feel, is really needed for our community, and it's going to benefit all, especially the children.



Lonnie Nichols

Well, we've had some relative success with SLVREC (San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative) concerning the new electric smart meters, and now our little group is focusing on the wi-fi in the Charter School and the dangers to the children. One of our goals is to educate the school, the staff. We've taken data and we've taken down areas in the school that have intense wi-fi. So our goal is to educate and then hopefully filter some of the wi-fi that's radiating to the children, especially the younger ones, who are more affected because of the nature of their physiology. The bigger goal next year for me personally is to be more educated in other environmental issues, and hopefully we can get away from electric meters altogether and move more towards solar, wind and renewable energy. I'd like to say thanks to the community who stood behind us when we challenged SLVREC on the smart meter issue and the dangerous radio frequencies. And I hope moving forward, as issues come up, we can engage all the various factions and address them as they arise, as we have in the past.

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