

# Out & About with Lori Sunflower



How will you reduce your carbon footprint in 2020?



## Emily Donaldson

We've actually been talking about that. We're going to try to do most of our vacationing just in Colorado. We live in one of the most beautiful parts of the world, so why spend a lot of money and a lot of energy traveling to faraway places? So we figured we'd just try to stay in the state, go camping a lot. Sometimes you have to go to visit family and there's not much you can do about that, but we're going to try to stay in the state.



## Suzanne Rouge

I'd really like to work with creating an industry for creating hemp toilet paper. And right now, I really like paper towels. They work well for me and I clean a lot, so I don't want to give them up. Now I'm only using paper products that aren't from trees. I'd like for us to be able to make use of the biomass in the valley in that way. I also am using cloth napkins and more rags.

My carbon footprint is pretty high because I live up north and travel across the valley on a regular basis, but I always try and consolidate so I make fewer trips, venturing out about 10 times a month. And I bought a motorcycle to drive to Everson Ranch or Valley View, where I work. Growing my own food is important. This will be our fifth year at Everson providing good, organic food to low income people. Last year, we had 15 food banks coming there to get food. We're now bagging everything there in reusable hemp plastic bags, and for composting, we can just toss the whole thing in. I'm experimenting to

see how long it takes them to decompose, and it's looking like 6-8 weeks. They're reusable, so I use the same bags over and over. I also heat with a woodstove and found a product called Reflectix, which is bubble wrap with silver on either side. I cut that out so it fits snugly in my poorly sealed windows, and it's made a tremendous difference every night. I eat very little red meat. I don't do dairy often. Ice cream. I cannot live without ice cream! And butter. Other than that, I've switched from dairy and cattle because I feel like that's a big piece of the carbon footprint.



## Nisa Kerr

I used to bring my chiropractor a huge box of vegetables and he'd never charge me for treatments. I liked trading and sharing and would like to get back to that lifestyle more, having enough food to have an abundance. I'm a food person for sure. Right now, for me, it's children's hand-me-downs. I'm really grateful for both getting and giving, and I shop thrift stores. I feel like this doesn't need to be said, but don't ever use plastic bags! Just carry the crap out to your car in your arms! (laughing) Passive solar is a big one for me. It feels holistic, and nice on my body, too.

Join a community supported agriculture (CSA) farm and buy a share of vegetables. I used to do vegetable shares for families, but now I'm just supporting farms, so we've bought shares the last two summers. Support your local farmers! We keep chickens, eat eggs and use their manure for the garden, which is a fast way to make some nice soil in this sandy environment. See what local indigenous foods grow on your land and eat them, grow them. We have purslane and lamb's quarters and they're powerful foods that grow here in abundance. Practice permaculture. Collect seeds. Take family baths! For me, like no more plastic ever. But I have to renew that yearly. With kids, plastic starts taking over! I only clean with vinegar and essential oils. Start feeling obligated, because this earth is our mother and a gift to us. I'm also teaching my kids about the environment and how we protect it. I'm going to continue doing things I did in the past, but as far as what I can do this year to do more is

stop shopping on Amazon! That's going to be really hard, but . . . (laughing) and we want to build a pond for the toads outside and we want to buy hemp, make hemp, grow hemp, buy hemp Legos, eat hemp, trade hemp, hemp!



## Seth Buchanan

In 2020, to reduce the carbon footprint, I mainly plan to use less plastic. Reduce, reuse, and we can't really rely on recycling that much. A lot of reduction, less buying of new things, less buying of single-use plastics, which don't make a whole lot of sense. We usually do pretty good with water, always having our water bottles. When it comes to food, we often buy in bulk, so we don't throw away so much. When you go to the landfill, it's just not a very promising picture. And especially having a little one, we see a lot of garbage in our life, and it makes us think about how much more garbage we're going to see in his lifetime if people stay on this path. So, a lot less of that. Teaching kids about a lot of re-use with clothes, less polyester, less reliance on gas and the petroleum industry and more of just being happy with simple things. Not always needing to go buy the new plastic toy that's not built to last, but having more things that are durable long term.



## Rashaun Bradley

For me, reducing the carbon footprint means being consistent, making your everyday labor part of moving forward in that. My current projects are gardening, composting, multiple hemp projects, trying to get people to stop cutting trees, start planting and building with more hemp, and teaching kids how to do all this as well. Teaching my daughter, my son, their friends when they come over—any chance I get, really! (laughing) I have to start cutting and mitigating the forest above us here. That wood will help with building materials, and it's also important to plant more trees in the spaces where all these dead trees are.

Changing people's perspective around creative sustainable housing also helps. My intention is to help people change how they feel about the world they're in. Instead of doing the ostrich-with-its-head-in-the-ground thing, saying everything's over, finding and implementing solutions. I recently saw a Facebook post that said, "If every person on earth planted one tree on their birthday, that could reforest the whole world in less than 5-10 years." That's enough to reduce greenhouse gases, lack of consciousness, and help people move forward.

I don't think everybody becoming vegan is the answer, but people's diets have a lot to do with our issues on this planet. It would help if people reduce the amount of beef they're eating and treat cows more as dairy animals instead of consumption. Also, creating organic food and liquid of any sort, and making it more accessible for people by building greenhouses. I want to start a recycling plant in the valley so we're not spending so much trying to get all of the recycling somewhere else when it could be somewhere perfect for it. Industrial Valley. Working with people who are in industry, working outside the box. We can't only be local, otherwise we won't change anything other than what we see in front of our everyday faces, and that's not enough. Working with schools, teaching others it's OK to clean up after themselves and recycle and it's not just something that hippies do. Let's be realistic. Love more, dance more and be happy!



## Whitney Gourdin

I already recycle my food and I collect other people's food to compost three different ways. I have my worms and two separate composts outside that I'm using to soil build my property because I am an avid gardener. I also recycle my glass and plastic. I recycle the plastic containers, using them to start seeds indoors and whatnot, and I often use glass to make into art projects or as storage for screws. I also have a tile saw that I use to cut glass and make art with, essentially. I walk to work even in the winter, even if it's nighttime when it gets cold early. And I definitely recycle all my paper, even my junk mail, ripping out the plastic clear window and using them to start fires. So I recycle my paper or anything like that a lot.

If you have feedback or suggestions for future topics, please email [peacelori@peacelori.com](mailto:peacelori@peacelori.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)