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How to Reach Us

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Our Mission
The purpose of Lama Foundation is to be a sustainable spiritual community and educational center dedicated to the awakening of consciousness, spiritual practice with respect for all traditions, service, and stewardship of the land.
A Radical Us

By Kestrel Alexander
Coordinator

An epic summer completed, the
mountain now dons its
patchwork mantle of
ochre, rust, and citrine. Already snow has
dusted the ridge,
reminding us of the
approaching winter
quietude. Ours is a
potent time of
transitions, great and
small, within and
without. A new circle
takes form as another
dissolves. Leaves shed
with the expectancy of
tender green shoots in
spring.

Megan, Pema, and
Bobby have
departed—though,
thanks, they’ve not
strayed far. Julia, Jordan,
Lynn, Daniel, and Olivia
have joined us. We turn
our attention from the
fires of summer
service—perhaps with
crispy edges—to the task
of building community,
deepling
relationships, and
listening for what Lama
will express through
this unique
constellation of beings.

This summer we
have marked the (near)
completion of Murshid
Sam’s Dargah, and look
now for how we may
fully integrate this
change into our
community. And of
course, we have
celebrated our 50th
year, with a turnout
greater than any event
since the ‘96 fire.

Admittedly, the idea
of hosting more than
250 people for the better
part of a week seemed a
nearly insurmountable
undertaking for a
modest circle of seven.
However, the 50th
Anniversary was carried
out with such incredible
joyfulness and ease that
it bordered on the
miraculous. This is
because of you—or
rather, because of us.

The 50th was a
testament to the power
and potential of
community and so too
of Lama’s impact on the
lives of so many. We fed
one another, sang and
practiced together, and
spoke and listened from
our hearts. For in so
doing, we were
reminded of the beauty
and possibility of us and
the world as it could be.

Dear friend, it is no
small thing that we are
bound together by this
place and our love for it.
For Lama points to the
bond between us that is
greater than connection
to place and time.

On the other side of
50 years, we look back
with a sense of awe, and
look forward with deep
curiosity. What will
Lama offer in the next
50 years?

Alive in the hearts
and minds of this
resident circle is the
question of how to
better bridge the
distance between this
community, nestled
high in the Sangre de
Cristos, and the world.
How can we answer the
call to take up our
soul-work with integrity
and not become
neglectful of the cries of
a world in distress? We
see the profound value
of what Lama has to
offer and seek for ways
to amplify, refine, and
deploy those gifts—we
might say they are the
gifts of a radical us.

We expect to explore
these questions, and
many others, through a
newly created
inter-community
exchange project which
Megan has taken on in
partnership with the
resident circle. We are
most excited to see what
comes of this.

Again, I am
reminded that our time is a
time of transitions. We
exist in the liminal
space between what has
been and what is yet to
be. We ask our
questions and listen for
the hints and cues. All
the while, we wash our
dishes, write our emails,
and the bell forever calls
us to presence.

Presence. Presence.
JOIN US AS A VISITOR

Visitors Days
Opening and Closing Days are open houses. We welcome visitors for a tour, a vegetarian lunch, and Dances of Universal Peace, or other resident-led ceremonies.

Solo Visits
Let us know you’re coming and we will welcome you to walk the land, share a meal, or even stay a night or two.

Shabbat
We offer a public Shabbat service and dinner weekly on Fridays during the summer.

Zikr
Sufi Ceremony of Divine Remembrance, or Dances of Universal Peace are open to the public on most Thursday evenings.

Darhah
The grave sites of Murshid Samuel Lewis and Murshida Vera Corda are always open to their followers for day visits.

Hermitage
Two private hermitages offer rustic seclusion. We provide food and guidance when needed, and support hermits for personal retreats extending from 2 to 40 days.

Retreats
Lama offers a variety of retreats and workshops with inspiring teachers throughout the summer months. See the back cover for our 2018 schedule.

Please confirm dates, times, and fees on our website, or call ahead to arrange your visit, to check on road conditions, and to ensure that we are available to greet you.
“Everything has to do with the earth here, on some level, and it was set up intentionally that way. Many people don’t get the opportunity to live that way anymore. But even to visit here briefly, to touch that place that we all know from many generations back, of what it’s like to live close to a piece of earth and have it be where we know we belong. It’s a very unique experience.” Mary Ann Matheson

STAY ON AS A STEWARD OF THE LAND AND COMMUNITY

Summer Stewardship
Become a full-time community member for the summer months. We focus on creating and caring for community, and experiencing service as a spiritual practice. For those who may be considering longer-term residence or those who simply want a taste of life at Lama, this program offers an opportunity for full immersion.

Full-time Residency
For those interested in spending a winter at Lama and living on the land year-round, residency at Lama Foundation is a life-changing experience. Residents commit to one year of service, and may stay longer. We ask that anyone interested in residency join us first as a summer steward. Families welcome.

FOR MORE DETAILS ON HOW TO VISIT, AND LIVE AT LAMA, PLEASE GO TO LAMAFoundation.ORG

“You carry Mother Earth within you. She is not outside of you. Mother Earth is not just your environment. In that insight of inter-being, it is possible to have real communication with the Earth, which is the highest form of prayer.” Thich Nhat Hanh

“For more details on how to visit, and live at Lama, please go to LamaFoundation.org

“This is a place to save your life. Yours and everyone around you.” Elaine Sutton
Lama is a place that looks to make connection, it looks to see the "other" as "myself;" it looks to teach, not by talking and not by any particular set of beliefs, but through the natural, spontaneous presence in community, and presence in nature... this is, Lama is, essential.  " Bird Sharples

[Lama is] A place to BE, where people can learn to be themselves."  Tui

Glimpses
By Felicia Agrelius, Summer Steward

Lama Foundation grew, cooked, and set fire to so many parts of my being.

After years of shrinking inward, Lama gave me opportunities to practice how to be seen again. I remember my first heart club, when I was shaking so much that I dropped the talking piece. It was rare for me to be with people who were willing to be present to the truest truths of my heart. I was encouraged to share my most real self and to keep deepening into who that real self might be. I was surprised at what I could see when others were willing to see me, too.

And how I was able see at Lama! The folks I sat in circles with were humble, honest, and raw as they spoke of profound struggles and wisdoms, bookended by a quick “Mmmm, I woke up feeling...,” followed by, “...now we move into practical tunings.” I learned how to listen without taking on what others were experiencing, and learned how connected I feel by simply being present with someone’s truths.

I went to Lama with the intention of grounding, picking up pieces of myself that I had left in the past, and finding a place of refuge. These things happened, but the summer unfolded in such unexpected ways that the intentions I had set only came to fruition after I circled through work that I did not know I needed to do.

The work was right in front of me, in the people I interacted with, the way I moved through the days, the way I narrated the stories that played through my head.

I could not be more thankful for the chance to experiment with different ways of living, in a place that both made me feel safe to mess up, and accountable for the impacts of my actions.

Lama gave me the space to put my attention really into moving purposefully in each moment. The moments of each day were both spacious and filled, filled with bits of everything imaginable: all the good feelings of bliss, peace, and connection, and also the rawness, the bruised parts of my being, stories of the past and dreams of the future, stories of what people carried with them to Lama and how they were able to set some things down to rest.

It is difficult to explain the details of the paradigm shifts I experienced at Lama, because the very way of thinking of through questions of who I am and how I move through the world have been re-framed. I am still realizing the subtle, and deep, ways that Lama has changed me.

To attempt to put simply an experience that is everything but simplistic (yet, maybe, just so simple), I quote a page from my journal, on which I wrote to myself, “I love you, dear one, we are safe,” as well as a Bean’s phone number, and the recipe for the salad dressing I was making that night for dinner. I would say that summarizes my experience of myself, at Lama Foundation.
Inter-Community Outreach Project

By Megan White
Former Resident

At the end of September, Lama Council approved a resident-proposed experimental, exploratory, Inter-Community Networking Project. Having just left Lama after 6 years of residency, I will be leading this venture, with collaboration from the residents and the interest of Beans, like you.

The project kicked off with a fantastic start: a visit to Hummingbird Community in Mora, New Mexico.

Three residents generously used their time off on a beautiful October weekend, during Fall Meetings, to visit the community with me.

Jordan, Daniel, Stacy and I were impressed with the 500 acre, 21 year old community. We were touched by how the community circles-up, offers 7 ya fattahs when folks leave, as well as its clear dedication to authentic, responsible communication.

We participated in a rich inter-community dialogue Saturday evening with four of the community’s core residents (three of whom were founders). I was enamored with this group of elders, whose wisdom was matched by their levity & humility. Stacy concurred in a note to me, “I would love a group of Lama’s elders to get together with this group of elders and see what happens.”

We participated in a garden project, an early meditation walk, Q&A time and a tour. We gathered many ideas for Lama Foundation just by experiencing being visitors in another community.

Jordan mentioned friction-strips on stairs so folks don’t slip. Stacy gathered ideas from reviewing Hummingbird’s registration form. We all took note of the community’s generous hospitality, and found the experience of not knowing where to go or what to do, to be eye-opening.

At the end of our time together, both Lama Foundation folks and Hummingbird folks were trusting and enthusiastic about the potential fruit of our connection.

To learn more about Hummingbird Community visit
hummingbirdcommunity.org/hbcommunity/

We’d like to connect with other communities! If you have ideas, send me an email megan@lamafoundation.org

As part of this project we plan to have an Inter-community Retreat at Lama Foundation next year, with activities and a symposium. Exact dates coming soon.

“Lama sings this song of unity, and that song is resounding through the world, at the same time that the world feels more divided than ever before. And the people on the margins are suffering more profoundly than ever before. This unitive song is more important than ever before. This is the place where spirituality and political consciousness come together. And must come together. There’s no separation between how … we treat one another and how we treat mother earth and the inner life that we cultivate. In other words, we must cultivate that inner life, but only so that we can offer the fruits of that harvest to the hungry world.”

Mirabai Starr
**Dargah Update**

*By Ravi Babcock  
Continuing Member*

On April 24th, the Dargah was a cement slab with eight metal poles reaching upwards; 120 days later, we have reached the stacked-stone facade work. The Dargah is now substantially complete.

As Lama Foundation’s Nonresident Liaison, I was privileged to participate in this entire building season. I would like to walk through the various steps accomplished this year. The Dargah as a structure is technically demanding, and many workers had to reach a little deeper to complete their piece. The resulting work is truly special.

Firstly, Beau Gano (the stone mason) crane-placed the stone columns over the metal poles. Next, Jim Stoner welded steel beams to join the eight metal poles together above the stone columns. This hexagonal metal post and beam system is the main structural support and is now completely hidden.

Next, the Wind River Timber Frame crew “WRTF” (with the leadership of Alan Bernholtz and Mat Robbins) placed the corbels, and we saw Michael Kothrade’s stunning carvings for the first time. On the Dance Circle, WRTF assembled the timber-frame Zome. On June 1st, a crowd gathered to watch a crane lift the nearly three-ton Zome frame from the Dance Circle, in a single movement, onto its resting place in the center of the Dargah. A spontaneous cheer went up when it settled peacefully into place.

After WRTF completed the rest of the roof frame, Scott MacHardy and his crew installed the herringbone-patterned ceiling. Once covered, the roof work and the stone work could happen simultaneously. Beau Gano and his stone-mason crew began their work in earnest, installing the large Heart and Wings panel in time for the Lama 50th Birthday Party.

Copper-John Nettles designed the copper roofing. I got to assist him in hand-cutting some 324 custom copper roof tiles for the Zome while Ollie Collignon installed them. The roof-overhang is standing-seam copper, and Copper-John completed the roof with custom drain gutters and canals. The stone-mason crew has had the largest task of all: all the “exposed to the elements” finish-work is stone (with the exception of the stairway’s brass banisters). While roof-work progressed, the stone mason crew set the stone-benches and floor tiles. They painstakingly assembled eight foot by eight foot sections of floor on large plywood “plates”, cutting and re-cutting the thousands of edges for just the right fit; the finished floor invites your eye to follow the geometric patterns smoothly in any direction. The mason crew sanded all the Indian stone for approximately 200 hours; everything is smooth to the touch, and the individual character of each stone pops.

Project Manager Malik Braun recently went back home to California, after some six months on-site, for a much-deserved winter-break. His insightful leadership helped us to respond gracefully to the many obstacles that arose. Also, Mark Goldman, the General Contractor, has been of great support.

Finally, a special thanks to the many of you who have supported this project through prayers, donations, and visits.
The “Old Kitchen”  
*By Bird Sharples*  
*Resident*

Those of you who appreciate the beauty and special presence of the Old Kitchen may be happy to learn that the Lama Council recently approved $7000 for Myles Saigh to lead construction to internally stabilize this important structure.

This is a first step in a greater plan to re-envision the building’s purpose, renovate the space, and bring it back to useful year-round life in support of the Lama community. The road to manifest this vision is still long and will require many decisions and much financial support.

Myles estimates that the total budget to bring the kitchen into 4-season use, including a new foundation, new insulated walls and ceilings, new windows, and a new infrastructure, may require $200-250,000. All the more reason to stabilize it now and give time for a thoughtful process.

We welcome your thoughts and support. And we extend a heartfelt thank you to Myles Saigh, for all of his care and attention.

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**Ougwey Cabin/Elder Hut**


And a huge Thank You to instructors, Jade Polizzi and Stephen Eckert, and to Colorado University at Boulder’s Department of Environmental Design for its five years of generosity; for building three guest huts, the new outdoor showers, and now this beautiful, all-season cabin.

“In the beginning it was the New Kitchen. It was nineteen sixty-something, and we had walls for the central dome, and had roofed the Only Room. ... The site was obvious in relation to the Dome, and the pinion tree outside the kitchen was really fantastic. We used wood from the land, cut and milled by Abe down the road. The symmetry of the octagon expressed the 4 directions, 8 directions, stability, and the radiating spokes underpinning the second floor were like the sun.” Asha Greer
"When I dance here this place allows me to touch the core of my own spirit." Zuleikha

Lama, in its structures, is an extraordinary school of leadership. It inculcates this leadership ability that people then take out into the world." Fatima Rigsby

Contemplative Environmental Practice
By Paul Wapner
Trustee

How can we hold the immense sadness many of us feel at the unraveling of life? How can we teach and mobilize others to take action to protect our increasingly fragile planet and work for justice? How can we find greater meaning in our environmental efforts?

This summer, professors and activists gathered to reflect on these questions and share stories from the front-lines of environmental engagement. Recognizing that there is an inner ecology as well as an outer one, we explored how contemplative practice can clarify and deepen our commitment to environmental justice and protection. We used meditation, yoga, journaling, mindful walking, dancing, sitting in lodge, and ritual to open our hearts and feel into the depths of environmental despair and the heights of aspiration for all life on earth.

Our efforts led to two insights. First, we came to recognize the power of contemplative practice for enhancing environmental efforts. Sustained contemplation provides perspective, energy, and discernment into how to be more effective teachers and activists in the service of environmental wellbeing. Second, we came to see environmental action as a route to spiritual depth. Facing climate change, loss of biological diversity, environmental racism, and other challenges reveals hidden chambers of the heart and new vistas within the soul.

In short, this kind of work helps us open to each other, ourselves, and the more-than-human world to find refreshment, inspiration, and empowerment in our environmental and spiritual lives.

Once again, Lama did its magic. Residents and stewards held our group with loving care and the mountain whispered its call for authenticity. Lama helped our group “Remember”—we were brought home to ourselves, the present moment, and, although it sounds clichéd, the profundity of what it means to be alive.

The challenge of living justly, mindfully, and with connection is a never-ending endeavor. For the sixth summer, Lama offered the opportunity to open yet again to the challenge and the thrill of, as Thoreau says, “suck[ing] out all the marrow of life.”

Thank you, Lama, for electrifying our group’s environmental and spiritual efforts.
Teen Mindfulness Retreat

By Greg Weeks
Continuing Member

This past summer Lama Foundation had its first Teen Mindfulness Camp. Eleven teenagers ranging from 14-20 gathered for 2 nights and 3 days, learning basic mindfulness and meditation skills.

Teenagers are amazing in so many ways, but it is their capacity to quickly adapt to a new environment, and willingness to learn new skills that was most impressive. After setting up camp and meeting a group of people they had not known before, our brave teens began opening themselves to the magic of Lama Mountain and our diverse group.

It was profound to watch these students go from struggling to sit still on day-one, to finding their natural, innate ability to sit as accomplished "meditators" on our last day.

Greg Weeks, Julie Tato, and Kimberlee and Jose Maresma celebrated the success of the first program, with plans for a second retreat in early June, 2018. To enable teens from lower income families to join, donations will be gratefully accepted.

“In one drop of water are found all the secrets of all the oceans; in one aspect of You are found all the aspects of existence.”

Kahlil Gibran

“What Lama has to share for young people is the sense of community and love that can be created between people, that can be communicated through being together and practicing together and working together and living together in a simple way. ... That sense of oneness that Lama has always represented, that Toward the One piece is really a good gift.”

Rameshwar Das

“If you stay here you get a taste of all different kinds of religions. That is so important ...because then, once you leave, you can’t have a prejudice toward them, you know in your heart that they’re all one.”

Natalie Goldberg
Lama’s Cottage Industries are flourishing. Under the adept hands of our Flag manager, Clif Coughlin, and with the incredible support of our growing Lama family (you!), Flag has had a record breaking year.

Retail stores around the country now carry Lama prayer flags, tee shirts, and wall hangings, helping to send the blessings of Lama Mountain out into the world.

If you know of a store in your area that would be a good fit for our products, please reach out to us at flag@lamafoundation.org
**NEW T-SHIRTS!**

Lama Foundation now offers many of our popular prayer flag designs on t-shirts! Shirts are 100% pre-shrunk heavy cotton, hand printed at Lama Foundation in our Cottage Industries studio. Available in Men’s/Unisex or Women’s fit. Including these limited edition 50th Anniversary T-Shirts, commemorating Lama’s 50th year, featuring a mandala design based on the geometry of the Dome ceiling.

**PACKAGING**

All our flags now come packaged with a card describing the prayer flag and information about Lama.
Welcome, Newly Formed Resident Circle!

Dark Cloud
Loud Clap!
Light Strikes.
This describes my life at Lama.

Holmes

Jamil escaped a Silicon Valley cubical in 2014 to return to Lama, where he had resided as a summer steward in 2005. Now in his third year as a resident, he enjoys exploring the mysterious inner workings of the school he may never graduate from, and continues to find deeper and richer connections to the mountain and its family.

Olivia is an aspiring artist who loves working within all disciplines, especially photography, painting and printmaking. She is looking forward to deepening her spiritual practice, connecting with the community, and working at Cottage Industries printing flags!

After three years as a Summer Steward, Daniel has settled into his first year as a resident. He aspires to deepen his connection to the land and his own spirituality while revivifying the Lama gardens, invigorating sustainability efforts, and developing bonds with his fellow community members.

As Stacy steps into his second year at Lama, his intention, as unwavering as ever, is to have as much fun as humanly possible while being in community.

Lynn is looking forward to immense downloads of life stories, distilled into the kind of hugs that feel like they reach out through all time and space to embrace humanity. To the many phases of the moon, the spray of the Milky Way and the Mystery of some random type of seed that, planted almost without noticing, becomes the newest plant to celebrate Creation in the secret language of beauty. And to the daily unrepeatable play of sun over the land and skies.

Kestrel is beginning his fifth year of residency at Lama Foundation and looks forward to further celebrating the gifts and challenges of community living, deepening his yoga practice, and taking time to pause and acknowledge beauty wherever it may be.

Julia has been quietly cross-pollinating with Lama and her previous community home since last winter. Now as a resident, Julia is an interdisciplinary student of the kitchen, burial gardens, as well as the undulating moon and circles of Lama. When not at a cutting board or a computer, she can be found donning many different roles while sprucing sacred alters, navigating a slithering inner-landscape, or strolling the sundry paths of the mountain under a wide-brim cowboy hat.

Jordan is a first-year resident at Lama, He spent the last two years dabbling in organic gardening, natural building, and activism, but his first love is music. He hopes to eventually understand his life’s trajectory, but until then he is grateful to be living the Lama Way.

Bird is beginning the fourth year of her second round as a Lama resident. She views Lama as a beyond-valuable place to connect inward and outward, and is jazzy to be party of the community.
Thank you to those who serve...

Lama Council
Mira Geroy, Diana Adkins, Kestrel Alexander, Rachel Halder, Jamil Paurel, Bird Sharples, Julie Tato,

Continuing Members

Board of Trustees
Aurora Durke, Miryam Levy, Juie Tato, Paul Wapner, and welcome to Rachel Halder and Kasey Mitchell

Summer Stewards

Free Associates
Karim Arielle, Gracy Bello Broussard, Ahad Cobb, Mia Coen, Jai Cross, Jan Cross, Jim Dixon, Heather Ferris, Frank Fox, Gary Greenstein, Ben Haggard, Charlie Hall, Ken Kalata, Jamil Kilbride, Ammi Kohn, Eva Leveton, Richard Lindley, Michela McPherson, Joseph McPherson, Chien Motto, Mary Neikirk, Shay Salomon, Dona Seay, Elaine Sutton

Teachers

Cottage Industry
Clif Coughlin

Fundraiser
Joe Brodnik (though August 2017), and welcome Tracy Cates

Ya Fattah!
With a deep bow of gratitude for their incredible service to Lama, we acknowledge the following Beans, who have retired from their posts this year:

Megan White, her daughter Pema, and Bobby Burke have left the resident circle. We wish them the utmost happiness on their journeys.

Joe Brodnik has retired as Fundraiser, after years of devoted service (but continuing to keep the books! Thanks Joe!).

Mirabai Starr, Thomas Renault, and Katie Maedke-Hall have all gracefully left our circle of Board of Trustees. You have inspired us all to grow, communicate, and heal.

Kestrel Alexander, who has left the Board of Trustees to step into the roll of Coordinator. Thank you.

continued...
“In the end, though, maybe we must all give up trying to pay back the people in this world who sustain our lives. In the end, maybe it’s wiser to surrender before the miraculous scope of human generosity and to just keep saying thank you, forever and sincerely, for as long as we have voices.” – Elizabeth Gilbert

Thank You,


This issue of Lama Alive

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Tracy Cates

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Special thanks to:
Marigold Fine for her video interviews of Lama Beans at Lama’s 50th. Quotes in this issue extracted from her interviews.

Front and Back Cover Photos:
Tracy Cates
“Most people who come to Lama have a question, or have something in their life that isn’t working, maybe they don’t know what it is, but they know it’s just not working. They need a place of refuge from the world, the larger more confusing world of having to earn money and how does that relate to who you are? This is an opportunity to find more of who we are, and also how to work with other people.” Sakina von Briesen

“Lama is a place where there is full support for spiritual practice. It’s like you’re in a cauldron of a marriage relationship with everyone here, because they’re going to keep showing up at your breakfast table, and your lunch, and your dinner, and your meetings. Your work, your communication, your prayer, all was done with this resident population of people... and you had to learn how to relate in a very aware and a loving way with each one of them. And you begin to see what’s going on inside. Whenever there was a judgment in me about something someone else said at a meeting I slowly began to know, It wasn’t about THEM, it was about ME. Where was I holding on? Where could I not open my heart to love the most difficult person to me? ...The mirror was so hot all the time, it was only because this place was so centered in the heart, it became the most happy time in our life.” Sarah Morgan
Lama Foundation Summer 2018
Subject to changes

May 21-26  Live Here Now
May 27    Opening Day
June 8 - 13 Church of Conscious Harmony (Private Retreat)
June 12 - 15 Teen Mindfulness Retreat
June 18-23  Dervish Healing Order
June 29-July 1 Annual Meeting
July 6-20  Global Youth Leadership (Private retreat)
July 24-31  Contemplative Environmental Practice
August 7-12 Women Singing in Circle
August 21-26 All Wisdom's Children: The Universal Legacy of Murshid Sam
September 23 Closing Day