

*The Trust for Public Land
conserves land for people to enjoy
as parks, gardens, and other natural
places, ensuring livable communities
for generations to come.*

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THE TRUST *for* PUBLIC LAND
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Andrea Waitt Carlton

Giving to the Santa Fe Railyard Park and Plaza

Each summer, Santa Fe resident Andrea Waitt Carlton, along with her husband and two children, visits Lake Okoboji, in northern Iowa, where Andrea grew up. The family spends two months there, grounding themselves in the Midwestern landscape and values. For Andrea, this time also allows her to reconnect with her childhood, when she acted on an early interest in conservation and wildlife by sending her allowance to the World Wildlife Fund and Greenpeace.

Andrea's allowance has grown since then—she is president and founder of the Santa Fe-based Messengers of Healing Winds Foundation—but her giving is guided by the same principles. The foundation gives generously in support of conservation, wildlife protection, education, environmental education, and the arts. Last year, the foundation made an important lead gift in support of TPL's efforts to create the 12-acre Railyard Park and Plaza in downtown Santa Fe.

Andrea's love of nature is evident in the time she spends outdoors with her sons, aged 4 and 13. Together they explore favorite places around New Mexico, such as Acoma Pueblo and the ancient cliff dwellings in the Gila Wilderness. She credits these explorations with the children's growing understanding of their world. To bring similar experiences to other children, the Messengers of Healing Winds Foundation has given generously to nature and outdoor education centers across the nation. Its conservation efforts stretch from New Mexico and Iowa to



JOHNNY SUNDBY

Florida, South Dakota, and other states nationwide.

In several of their funding efforts, Andrea and the foundation have been among the first donors to support a project. "I don't want to wait for others to act," she explains. "I even prefer projects that are original, a calculated risk, where our giving can make something happen that otherwise would not."

This was the foundation's approach to its support for TPL's Santa Fe Railyard Park and Plaza. The multiyear project will create 12 acres of parkland in the heart of downtown, on a former railyard

that TPL helped the city acquire in 1995. In leading the project, TPL knew it had to pull together funding from multiple public and private sources, including millions in private donations. The foundation not only helped support the design competition for the park but also gave the first of two large donations for its construction.

"I like this project very much, and I like TPL's entrepreneurial spirit," Andrea says. "It took vision for TPL to imagine this park all those years ago and then make it real, when everyone else said it couldn't be done. The park will be a gathering place everyone in Santa Fe can share.

"With hard work, timing, and a little luck we have enjoyed success in business," she goes on, "and have been able to put money into things we care about. I feel a great responsibility to 'give right,' which is well worth the effort. It doesn't matter what your situation is—giving to things you care about is something everyone can do." ☘

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