

## Lou Ellen Kay



Lou Ellen is our founder and a life-long teacher. Beginning in January, 2007, she organized the Board and worked on the incorporation, certification as a non-profit, siting, recruiting, engaging volunteers, getting an architect and contractor, and many other tasks. With the help of her family and friends, the school opened to classes in August, 2009. She is the Head of School, running all school operations with oversight of the Board of Trustees as their sole employee (this is the optimal structure of governance, accepted by the accrediting agencies). The mission to which she dedicates our school is on our website. Lou Ellen teaches approximately half-time, the rest of her time given to administering the school. She has taught classes in science, biogeography, Chinese history, cursive writing, reading, archery, art, and making.

As Head of School she recruits students and teachers, maintains student records, creates the extensive weekly newsletter, works with teachers and the Board to plan operations, reviews teachers, provides students with both discipline and loving support, and develops and leads field trips.

### **Biographical Information**

#### **Education**

- Ph. D., Biology, City University of New York, 1984.
- B.S., Botany, Colorado State University, 1969.

#### **Relevant Experience:**

##### **Science:**

She is an internationally published scientist with appointments at Los Alamos National Laboratory, the Plant Genetic Engineering Laboratory at New Mexico State University and Dona Ana Community College, as well as at CSIRO, Canberra, the Australian federal research laboratory, as a Herbarium Fellow at the New York Botanical Garden, and as a Consultant at the Smithsonian Institution.

##### **Teaching:**

She has taught as a teaching assistant during her Ph. D. studies, as a student group advisor (see below), as an instructor in biology and in anatomy and physiology at the university

level, for 19 years. She was awarded a Letter of Recognition for Teaching Excellence from President of NMSU, 1990. She has five years experience teaching as a parent/assistant in elementary school classrooms: two Las Cruces schools as well as schools in Canberra, ACT, Australia, Palo Alto, CA, and Arlington, VA.

Additional details are in her letter of nomination for the Purpose Prize, for people over 60 who are combining their passion and experience for social good.