

Decision makers in Washington DC

In 2010 I lived in Los Angeles, worked 20 hour days as a commercial producer, paid \$2,400 for a 800 square foot apartment and was in debt. Then I lost my long term client. At the same time I inherited a small amount of money and found a house in the high desert that I could afford. I knew no one and had no idea what I was going to do for work, but I am creative and inventive. I picked up my camera and started to document the desert. I am now a journalist and a documentary photographer.

In the last five years I turned 65 and have a life I love living. I still don't make much money, but I am content. I also have a comfortable home that I enjoy sharing. I like company and discovered that people from all over the world wanted to be here to hike the Joshua Tree National Park and experience desert life. Having used Airbnb as a traveler, it was natural to list my house both for renting rooms and renting the whole house when I was traveling. The money helps. I don't have to rely on my savings and I can continue to improve the property. Airbnb has been a terrific resource. I rent about five to seven days a month. I love the visitors that I have met and I'm pleased with the ones I haven't met. I trust Airbnb, I trust the people that use the service and feel comfortable that if there is a problem there will be an immediate solution.

The national parks are a vital American resource for the small towns that spring up around them. Hotels are expensive and not practical for large families. Every person that visits my town spends much needed revenue on food, gas, gifts, park admission, and accommodations. This revenue source also goes to local and federal taxes. The current numbers reflect this boom in business.

The Morongo Basin has been plagued by poverty. Things are turning around. Home prices are rising and people are working again. Tourism is a big part of our survival.

Please consider all this when you make decisions about the sharing economy.

Thank you,

Hilary Sloane
Freelance Journalist and documentary Photographer.