

VISTAS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ELDORADO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

1 La Hacienda Loop, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508 • 505 466-4248 • www.eldoradosf.org

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Why Your Board Chose to Continue with HOAMCO

Since early 2015, Eldorado has been managed by a professional Homeowners' Association (HOA) Management Company—HOAMCO. As most residents know by now, the ECIA Board recently completed a procurement to re-compete the management of our HOA. This action was required by our Procurement Policy and also by due diligence to ensure we continue to receive the best service and value for our community. We issued a RFP (Request for Proposal) in May and by June we received offers from four firms, three of which had extensive experience in managing large-scale communities like ours. A panel of two Board members and three residents independently evaluated and scored the proposals. The panel unanimously found that HOAMCO supplied the best overall response and the best value for our Association. There was no close second-place finisher and the other proposals were considered non-responsive to our needs. As a final step in the process of having a new contract in place before the end of the year, a small team is in the process of developing and negotiating a three-year contract. We expect a draft contract will be completed by the time of this publication. It will then be presented to the full Board for review before discussions with HOAMCO. Once both parties agree to the contract, it will be reviewed by our Finance Committee and then by our general counsel before signing.

Independent of the RFP, volunteers conducted a survey of residents to ask about concerns regarding HOAMCO as the

current management company. The survey results were shared in a virtual Town Hall meeting on July 6 and a recording of that meeting is available from our office for those interested. The results indicated what residents liked or disliked about HOAMCO and, although we did not know that HOAMCO would be the winner when we issued the survey, we used some of that information to develop the new contract. As an example, residents were clear that they want to be able to pay assessments in-person at the ECIA office. We will ensure this is allowed in the new contract. Other issues that were raised may not be appropriate to implement. For example, some residents asked that we bank locally. Although we have an account with the local Sunflower Bank (First National) branch in Eldorado, the majority of our investments (about \$750,000) are in CDs (we are required to invest in only federally insured instruments) and out-of-state rates are considerably higher than those in New Mexico. Investing locally would mean a loss of several thousand dollars a year and would be inconsistent with the Board's obligation to the community to get the best financial returns possible.

Once the contract is completed and signed, it will be available for any member who wishes to review it. We will also answer any questions members may have at the Fall Budget Forum.

—Sal Monaco,
Treasurer, ECIA Board of Directors

Follow the Money—It's Yours



The budget season for 2021 is in full swing. The Finance Committee will review Operations, Replacement/Repair, and Capital Improvement budgets during September and October. A budget recommendation will go to the Board by end of October.

No Assessment increase will occur in 2021. However, the allocation of funds from the 2021 assessment of \$550 will affect all of us. Operating the ECIA is big business, approximately \$1,270,000 annually.

All ECIA property owners are invited to attend Finance Committee meetings, being held via Zoom. Upcoming meetings are **Sept. 15, 9:30 AM; Oct. 13, 9:30 AM; Nov. 10, 9:30 AM.**

To receive materials for review before meetings, contact FinanceChair1@gmail.com.

—Dan Drobnis,
Chair, Finance Committee

Board Actions and Summary August 24

The August ECIA Board of Directors Meeting was held via Zoom. President Nancy Sulzberg, Vice President Melicent D'Amore, Secretary Carol Sanguinetti, Director David Sorkin, and Treasurer Sal Monaco, were present and a quorum was met. HOAMCO staff including GM Julie Navarro, Facilities Manager Mike Rogers, Executive Assistant Rachel Turnbough, Compliance Office Mark Young and Office Assistant Sarah Skagen, and Nigel Burgess, HOAMCO Executive Team, attended.

The Board approved the posted agenda with two amendments and approved the Consent Agenda as shown.

The Board reviewed and approved the following variances:

- To allow for an existing small accessory structure to be located more than 15 feet from the home and to allow for the existing home to remain encroaching 2.5 feet into the 20-foot side setback at 9 Chusco Road.
- To allow for the addition of a portal with a metal roof and exceeds 30% of the length of the façade at 16 Camerada Road.
- To allow for a new greenhouse to be located 34 feet from the home at 29 Chapala Road.
- To allow for the existing fences, which exceed the maximum enclosure space of 4,000 square feet, to be repaired on site [the fencing was approved 10 years ago] at 15 Reno Place.
- To allow for encroachment of an existing wood slat fence 15 feet into the 20-foot setback at 12 Reno Road.

The Board approved the following motions:

- To affirm the electronic vote held August 19, 2020 to approve submission of the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Projects to Santa Fe County [the ICIP is posted on the website under NEWS and EVENTS].
- To approve the appointment of Joe Newman to the Safety Education Task Group. Subsequent to the meeting, this motion has been made null and void as Mr. Newman does not meet resident requirements for task group membership.

Mike Rogers summarized the current facilities projects and announced that the ADA Family Changing Room project will move ahead this Fall. Six vendors were sent the proposal package. ECIA's architect, Courtenay Mathey developed a comprehensive website for potential vendors that includes the RFP, a sample contract and plans. The RFP is posted on the ECIA website under NEWS and EVENTS.

Joseph Gutierrez, County Liaison for the Board, explained the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Proposal sent to Santa Fe County. The full proposal is posted on the website under NEWS and EVENTS. ECIA requested eight projects: five road repairs and three Hike/Bike upgrades. The county determined that the request for planning an Azul Road Hike/Bike trail [\$150,000] and \$300,000 for specific road upgrades were most vital. These projects will join the list

of statewide county submissions for funding consideration. On September 8, the county will announce the top five projects to move forward.

Kathy Ritschel, Chair of the Facilities and Grounds Committee presented a creative and informative overview of the committee's responsibilities. Kathy reviewed the amenities and shared the committee's focus to utilize the amenities for socializing, sporting tournaments and educational purposes. The presentation is posted to the website in the Facilities and Grounds Committee tab.

Melicent D'Amore presented a proposed Records Retention Policy that was submitted to ECIA by the association's attorney, Lynn Krupnik. This proposed policy is posted on the website under GOVERNING DOCUMENTS for member review and comment. In addition, Melicent will meet with Bette Knight, Election Committee Chair, to ensure that all records retention procedures are consistent and follow the best practices model.

Sal Monaco reported on the management company selection process. Contract negotiations with HOAMCO will begin in the upcoming weeks. Residents can review the RFP on the website and will have access to the contract once completed. The Finance Committee and the association's attorney will review the contract before Board approval will be considered. The goal is to have a signed contract ready for Board approval at the September Board Meeting.

Pam Henline updated the status of the Logo Selection process. There are 16 replies to the RFP of which 11 will be considered. Bonn Macy and Pam Henline will recruit a group of no more than 5 residents to review the submitted proposals and select those that seem most able to complete the project. When asked why ECIA is considering a new logo, Pam Henline reminded the attendees that the project was initiated in 2019 to replace or redesign any existing logo to be more contemporary. By the end of September, there should be a "short list" of possible graphic design vendors from which to select.

The President's Report and Treasurer's Report, along with Task Group and Committee reports are on the website. Please take some time to read through them. A summary of the Open Forum is also posted. Approximately 30 members of the community signed into the meeting. The meeting was recorded and copies can be requested by calling the ECIA office at 505 466-4248. They will download the video onto a thumb drive. Complete minutes and agendas are available at the ECIA office or on the website: www.eldoradosf.org.

Thank you to all who participated. We hope to see you at the next meeting, please note it is a week early due to the holiday:
Monday, September 21 at 5 PM.

—Nancy Sulzberg,
ECIA Board President

RESOURCES FOR ELDORADO RESIDENTS

UPDATE AUGUST 25, 2020. SEE A FREQUENTLY UPDATED VERSION ON ELDORADOSF.ORG UNDER NEWS & EVENTS.

The ECIA office, open only by telephone and internet. Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 8 PM; Saturday, 8 AM to 5 PM, **505 466-4248**.

Next governor's announcement end of August. Restaurant and breweries now allowed only outdoor seating and takeout. Wineries may have limited opening. El Dorado Community School starts August 20 for remote learning indefinitely.

Most ECIA amenities open with restrictions: Tennis court, pool for lap swimming with reduced hours starting Sept. 1, pickleball court, basketball court, volleyball court, dog park. Some require reservations, **505 466-4248**.

As of July 1, everyone in any public place inside or outside is required to wear a mask (except medical, eating, drinking). Many businesses and restaurants are at least partially open. VGPL doing remote book lending,

505 466-READ. Anyone arriving from out-of-state must self-quarantine for 14 days, including NM residents who leave the state for longer than 24 hours (unless for medical care or parenting responsibilities).

The **Senior Center is closed** but help is available through **Santa Fe County Senior Services**, call **505 992-3069**, or email **Esperanza Salazar, emsalazar@santafecountynm.gov**. Services include grocery shopping for high risk individuals and transportation for necessary doctor visits. Meal delivery can also be arranged for shut-ins and high risk seniors.

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE COVID-19:

1-855-600-3453 before you go to an ER or MD

QUESTIONS AND NM HELP:

1-833-551-0518 for all other questions & info

Santa Fe County and Your Driveway Culvert

Most driving surfaces are sloped to provide gravity drainage of water to ditches. Ditches should be deep and wide enough to accommodate the volume of water from a large storm. Where the drainage ditch intersects with a driveway, a pipe or bridge is usually installed to accommodate traffic across the ditch. The pipe is known as a "culvert".

The longevity of the culvert depends on pipe material and inner wall surface. Because the water flowing in a ditch will necessarily move sand and gravel along as it flows, these small particles can damage pipes in many ways over time, requiring replacement. Material also can accumulate in and around these culverts.

Eldorado roads are owned and maintained by the Santa Fe County, and the SFC Public Works Department (SFCPWD). It is their responsibility to maintain the driving surface, drainage ditches, and culverts of our road system. So, if you see at your home that the road surface has wash-boarding bumps, filled ditches, or a collapsed culvert, or no culvert at all, you can go online to the SFCPWD website to report a

problem: <https://santafecountynm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/CrowdsourcingReporter/index.html?appid=a45afec5a6784ac199fe4b0857420f7c>.



These issues can be fixed at no cost to you. If you see County crews out in Eldorado performing these services, stop and say thank you. They are doing great work for our community.

—Article and photo by James Mason,
Chair, ECIA Road Committee

ECIA BOARD & MANAGEMENT

Board: President **Nancy Sulzberg**, Vice President **Melicent D'Amore**, Treasurer **Sal Monaco**, Secretary **Carol Sanguinetti**, Director **David Sorkin**. There are two Board vacancies at this time.

Management: The ECIA is managed by HOAMCO. General Manager **Julie Navarro**, jnavarro@hoamco.com
Monthly report available at www.eldoradosf.org under Resident Resources.

Windmills: Not Just for Don Quixote



Original Simpson Ranch working windmill on Highway 285.

Everyone has seen and heard the Windmill at the Community Center as it creaks and turns. This was a working windmill on the Simpson ranch. Look for another windmill just outside of the second entrance and across U.S. Highway 285 from Avenida Vista Grande. It is still working, powered by the wind and delivering water into a tank. A windmill skeleton and livestock tank stands just west

of Casa del Oro. Windmills were part of the lifeblood of ranching, providing water to cattle in our dry environment. The railroads also used windmills to pump water for steam locomotives.

Windmills have been used for many years. They were employed in Persia in 644 A.D. to “grind grain.” Europeans began using windmills around the 12th century, and the Dutch still do. In America, in 1816, John Burnham invented a windmill that automatically controlled its operation without human attention. About the same time, Daniel Halladay developed a prototype for the Halladay Standard Windmill manufactured by the U.S. Wind Engine and Pump Co. in Batavia, Illinois. Henry J. Barbour’s firm, Morse and Company, manufactured their “Eclipse” model mill which was widely used throughout the west in the 19th and early 20th century. In the late 1800s, you could order a complete windmill kit from Montgomery Ward.

Bill Dalley of Portales, NM got interested in windmills through his search for weathered wood. He discovered strange-shaped pieces of wood from windmills. Intrigued, he reports that he restored the windmill on his property and became further involved. People then began bringing him pieces of other windmills which he put together. He had, in 1991, 60 full-scale windmills by his own count.

Windmills remain a symbol of the American West—the signature of the hard-working rancher.

—Pam Henline, photo by Jack Arnold

Adapted from *Windmills and Dreams* section by Dorothy Shubart; *Windmills and Dreams* available at Community Center or on Amazon.com

RELAX WITH HOMETOWN RADIO: 1660 AM

Fall programming on Eldorado’s local, low-power hometown radio outlet includes interesting short talk features mixed into its signature endless restful musical medley. Mid-morning *BreakTime* at 10:30 weekdays highlights history, storytellers, artists, poets and comedy. *History in Sound*, every Monday, often includes the voices of newsmakers from the past. Although ELDORADIO 1660 AM steers clear of political ads and opinions, elections are in the news these days. This series lets listeners relive the past as they respond to today’s history-in-the-making.

Every morning, *Good Morning Eldorado* wakes listeners at 7 AM with gentle songbirds, music, weather and headline news, plus local events for the day. It’s the only radio source for Eldorado information, and is free of commercials. Weekends feature performances recorded live at noon on *Saturday Matinée*. At noon Sundays, *Retro Radio* is a time-warp to the Golden Age of Broadcasting in the last century; here, too, history comes alive once more in old news and commentary, as well as radio’s music, drama and topical comedy from 1930 to 1950.

Restricted by Federal Communications Commission rules to extremely low power, ELDORADIO’s signal covers the community in daylight, but is audible after sunset only in the center of Eldorado.



Traditional Hues Enhance Eldorado Trim and Doors

Frequent calls come from residents concerning whether they need approval of colors for door and window trim. ECIA **requires approval of all stucco colors and stucco work on the exterior of homes** and works actively to enforce this requirement, Eldorado is known as a community of creative and talented artists, however, and the ECIA has historically allowed for some creative license with door and trim colors.

The *Eldorado Guidelines for Protective Covenants* addresses this issue in Section 6 as follows:

6.2.6. Doors and Trim: The ECIA does not regulate the colors of doors, window casings or other non-stuccoed areas of the home, but encourages residents to use colors that complement the design and architectural style of their home. Traditional colors often used in northern New Mexico homes include turquoise and red.

The ECIA encourages residents to use colors that complement the design and architectural style of their home. Turquoise and red, along with other colors, can be seen on Eldorado home doors and gates.

Matching or contrasting colors on windows and doors are acceptable. It is preferred that residents do not choose trim



Turquoise trim and gate complement this Eldorado residence.

colors that are reflective or so bright that the color could be considered a visual nuisance and a violation of the nuisance clause of the Covenants. Some colors that might be considered a visual nuisance are bright pink, fluorescent green or orange.

Should you have any questions on a color, please contact Mark Young at the ECIA, **505 466-6248** or email him at myoung@hoamco.com.

—Article and photo by Mark Young

Flowers Bloom for Eldorado's Pleasure

You saw that lovely flower on your walk or drive around Eldorado. What is it? To help you identify our local beauties, some pictures and description will occasionally be published in *Vistas*.

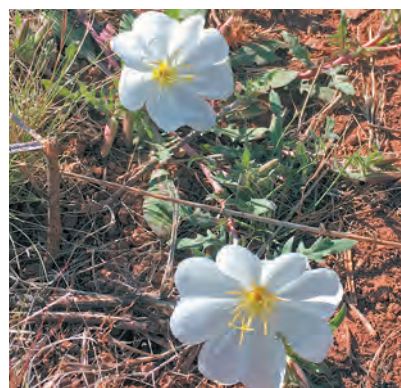
Late summer, the **New Mexico Sunflower** (*Helianthus Asteraceae*) is easy to spot along the side of the road.



New Mexico Sunflower, Helianthus Asteraceae

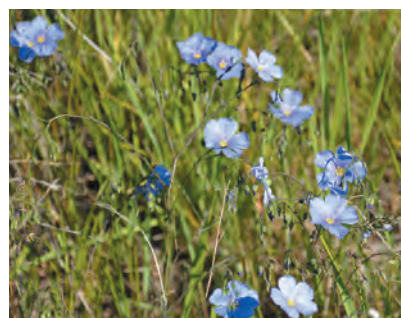
This yellow annual plant can be up to 12 feet tall and was cultivated by Native Americans as early as 2300 BC. Blooms are three to five inches wide. After the blooms have gone to seed, look for Lesser Goldfinch flitting from plant to plant harvesting the rich bounty.

There are several varieties of the low-to-the-ground **evening primrose** (*Onagraceae*). The white flowers are open for less than 24 hours and may be easiest to find in the



Evening primrose, Onagraceae

can be found along Herrada Road from spring through late summer. The plant is about a foot tall and the blooms only three-eighths of an inch across. In some places it is grown



Flax or Linseed Plant, Linaceae

early morning. The blooms of this delicate deciduous perennial are about two inches across with four petals.

Our common **flax or linseed plant** (*Linaceae*) grows along roadsides and culverts. A fine display of this small bluish-purple bloom can be found along Herrada Road from spring through late summer. The plant is about a foot tall and the blooms only three-eighths of an inch across. In some places it is grown for its seeds. This herbaceous perennial may also produce seeds for next years' growth.

—Pam Henline,
New Mexico Sunflower
photo by Pam Henline;
Evening primrose
photo by Dan Drobnis;
Flax photo via
Creative Commons

Uncommon Wildlife Creates Healthy Ecosystem

Eldorado's abundant wildlife helps keep the ecosystem healthy. Familiar wild and beneficial residents include coyotes, bobcats, raptors, snakes, rabbits, and so on. There are more uncommon animals here as well.

Virginia opossums, the only marsupial (mammal with a pouch) in North America, can sometimes be seen here. Small, gray with a pointed snout and long hairless tail, these mostly nocturnal animals eat fruit, insects, and even rattlesnakes.



Virginia opossum mother with joeys.

Like the opossums, **raccoons** are primarily nocturnal but watch out; they love bird seed and can also get inside homes via doggie doors.

Javelinas (collared peccaries) have arrived in recent years,

migrating from southern NM due to climate change. Pig-like creatures (although much smaller than pigs), javelinas have poor eyesight but superior senses of hearing and smell. They are primarily herbivores, and are typically not dangerous unless threatened.

Black bears, which can come in shades of brown or yellow, are not common here but come occasionally from the hills if there is a lack of food, especially when they are

fattening up for winter. Bears mostly eat vegetation but will prey on insects and small mammals, too. Always use caution if you see a bear, and never get between a mother and cubs.

Mountain lions (puma or cougar), pictured right, have been seen here on very rare occasions. Cougars eat deer, rabbits, rodents and birds. Not to be confused with the more common bobcat, cougars are large and solid tan with a long tail.



We sometimes have **skunks** as well as **badgers**. Badgers have a distinguished white stripe down their pointed snout and short legs. If you see a badger in your yard, consider yourself lucky! They rip into woodrat nests with impunity and eat mice, gophers, and rattlesnakes. Long-tailed weasels can also be found here. Ranging from 11 to 13 inches long, weasels eat rodents, rabbits, small birds, reptiles and insects.

Long term Eldorado residents are saddened to see less wildlife each year. Our community values our wildlife and vistas, but poisons such as herbicides, rodenticides, and certain fertilizers take a horrible toll on animals, causing death through the entire food chain. If you feel you must use such products, please be extremely mindful.

—Eldorado Flora Fauna Group



ECIA's Executive Assistant, Rachel Turnbough, continues her COVID-19 creative looks with the latest, "Cracking".

COST-EFFECTIVE WAYS TO SECURE YOUR RESIDENCE

SEPTEMBER TIP: REINFORCE DOORS AND WINDOWS



If you have older doors and/or windows, evaluate their condition to make sure they're up to the task. Consider replacing any hollow or broken entry doors with steel, fiberglass, or solid wood doors. Less expensive options include reinforcements like barricades or jamb. Determine if any windows should be replaced, along with hardware on doors and windows.

September 2020 Meetings

Community Center closed indefinitely. Meetings may be suspended or held via Zoom.

ECIA Committee	Architecture Committee	Tuesday	8 & 22	3-5 PM Zoom	Katherine Mortimer	architecturechair@gmail.com
	Board Meeting	Monday	21	5 PM Zoom	ECIA Board	505 466-4248
	Conservation Committee	Tuesday	1	7-9 PM Zoom	Paul Butt	conservationchair@gmail.com
	Election Committee	Wednesday	9	3-5 PM Zoom	Bette Knight	electionchair1@gmail.com
	Facilities & Grounds	Wednesday	2	10 AM-12:30 PM Zoom	Kathy Ritschel	fandgchair@gmail.com
	Finance Committee	Tuesday	8	9:30 AM-12 Noon Zoom	Dan Drobnis	financechair1@gmail.com
	Information Committee	Monday	14	7-9 PM Zoom	Pam Henline	informationchair@gmail.com
	Road Committee	Wednesday	2	5:30-7 PM Zoom	James Mason	roadchair1@gmail.com
	Stable Committee	Thursday	10	7-9 PM Zoom	Amelia Adair	stablechair1@gmail.com
Monthly/Semi-Monthly	Bridge	Suspended during COVID-19			DiAna Gutierrez	505 699-3555
	EACA	Suspended during COVID-19			Kim Crickard	VP@eldoradoarts.org
	Eldorado Book Club	3rd Wednesday	16	3-5 PM Zoom	Pam Henline	phenline@comcast.net
	Eldorado/285 Recycles	2nd Tuesday	8	4-6 PM Zoom	Karen Sweeney	505 466-9797
	El Dorado School Community Garden	Suspended during COVID-19			Carol Robles	info@eldoradoschoolcommunitygarden.com
	Healing Arts Practitioners	Suspended during COVID-19			Laurie Sandman	lsandman9@comcast.net
	Life Drawing	Suspended during COVID-19			Mavis Murphy	505 466-8189
	MELT	Suspended during COVID-19			Maureena Bivins	info@maureenabivinsacupuncture.com
	Neighbors Helping Neighbors	1st Tuesday	1	6-7 PM Conference Call	Nancy Merz	nmmerz@msn.com
	Santa Fe Model Railroad Club	Suspended during COVID-19			Bob 505 466-4970	santafemodelrailroadclub.org
	Spinning Group (Fiber)	Suspended during COVID-19			Ellen Higgins	casaladerabe@gmail.com
Weekly	AA	Tuesdays		5:45-6:45 PM Zoom	505 982-8932	santafeaa.org
	AA (Women Only)	Thursdays		6-7 PM Zoom	505 982-8932	santafeaa.org
	AA	Fridays		6-7 PM Zoom	505 982-8932	santafeaa.org
	Al Anon	Suspended during COVID-19			505 989-3995	nmal-anon.com
	Breathing Meditation	Mondays		10:30-11 AM Zoom	Penny Russell	505 466-3137 sprussel@sjc.edu
	Eldorado Hikers	Suspended during COVID-19			Terry Gibbs	505 466-6914 triggbs@comcast.net
	Knitting Club	Suspended during COVID-19			Joyce Hanmer	505 466-3018 joycehan@msn.com
	Overeaters Anonymous	Tuesdays		10 AM Comm. Ctr. Patio	Barb	505 954-1533
	Ukulele Class	Suspended during COVID-19			Hazel Jordon	ukehazel@gmail.com
	Yin Yoga	Mondays		5:30-6:45 PM Zoom	Julia Cairns	505 466-1935
	Yoga/Vinyasa Flow	Wednesdays & Fridays		9-10:15 AM Zoom	Julia Cairns	505 466-1935
	Yoga/Gentle Stretch	Tues., Thurs., & Sat.		9-10:15 AM Zoom	Mary Horst	505 490-2790

Zoom meeting information is online at www.eldoradosf.org > News & Events > Zoom Schedule

Events are verified as of August 24, please sign up for ECIA Newsbriefs by emailing rturnbough@hoamco.com to be notified of changes.

Send calendar event information to GM@eldoradosf.org.

News Tid-Bits



POOL REMAINS OPEN AS HOT WEATHER CONTINUES

Weekends through September will continue to be full day sessions; the first session begins at 7:30 AM and the last begins at 6:30 PM. **Weekday** sessions begin at 8:30 AM and the last begins at 3:30 PM. The pool is open all day Labor Day, Monday, September 7. Reservations are required: online at eldoradosf.org, or by calling the office, 505 466-4248.

JOIN OR CONTRIBUTE TO INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Published authors, wannabes and everyone else in the Eldorado Community are invited to join or just contribute to the **Information Committee** and the monthly *Vistas* newsletter. Time commitment is small to help with just some of these activities: proof final *Vistas* draft; review and edit submitted articles; write an article; gather community information; take photographs of Eldorado events and places; bring new ideas to the community. Email phenline@comcast.net or informationchair@gmail.com and ask for the short *Guide to Writing for Vistas*.

COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR ELDORADO

This information will continue to change and accumulate over the foreseeable future. It will be updated online regularly with details concerning Eldorado and available services. Go to eldoradosf.org > News and Events > COVID-19 for the latest.

*Now what have we learned
from that alien virus?
together, we'll win.*

Mission Statement The mission of the monthly newsletter, *Vistas*, is to inform members of the ECIA about issues before the Board of Directors, various committees, and the office staff. Any interesting events happening in Eldorado or the surrounding areas may be included. The publication seeks to foster increased neighborhood pride and community participation in the decision-making process.

Editorial Policy *Vistas* welcomes factual and objective submissions, which will be selected and edited at the discretion of the Information Committee and Board of Directors. Community announcements and articles of interest to homeowners are welcome, along with photos. Submissions are due on the fifth of the month preceding publication. For help with any article, see the *Vistas* Style Guide posted on ECIA website, www.eldoradosf.org.

“Old-Sam-Peabody-Peabody” White-Throated Sparrow

Little brown birds are often difficult to identify, but this gem is easy if you get a good look. The White-throated Sparrow (WtS) has the typical brown back and wings (showing two wing bars) of his type. The face and head are lovely with a large white throat area, three white stripes on the head, yellow just behind the beak and above the eye, a black bar down the center of the head and a black stripe from the eye to the back of the head. The bill is short and sharp. Underneath, the sparrow is light tan and grey with mottling. Females and juveniles lack the yellow and other head marks except for the white throat. WtS is a plump bird with a wingspan of 8 to 9 inches, about 6.8 inches long. A tan-striped variety has brown crown stripes rather than white.

They are found in our area when not breeding or during migration. Most of their breeding area is across Canada. They live at forest edges and in thickets, overgrown fields and even suburbs during winter. Females build the nest, mostly in the morning, on or just above the ground in vegetation. Males aggressively chase away other males. Eggs hatch in 11 to 14 days, and by 10 to 12 days the once-naked chicks are ready to fledge. Both parents feed the nestlings insects and animal matter. Adults also eat fruits and seeds. They are monogamous during the breeding season. The tan-stripe variety usually mates with the white stripe variety and both types can be found in the same brood.



On the ground WtS hop rather than walk or run. They scratch backwards and search for food, tossing around ground debris, pouncing when uncovered. They have a lovely whistle-like call that sounds like Oh-sweet-Canada-Canada or Old-Sam-Peabody-Peabody. For bird identification and clear recordings of bird song, I recommend Merlin, a free app from Cornell.

As with many bird species, they have declined over the past ten years. A bird at least 14 years 11 months old was captured and released in Alberta Canada.

Thanks to Cornell Lab for species information.

*—Pam Henline, photo by Magnus Manske,
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en>*



NEWSBRIEFS: For the latest information from ECIA, please sign up for newsbriefs, (ECIA's electronic mailing system) by contacting rturnbough@hoamco.com.



RECYCLE: Help ECIA go green! Save on paper and mailing costs by opting out of receiving a mailed copy of *Vistas*. To sign up, email rturnbough@hoamco.com. You will be sent an email once a month with a link to the next issue of *Vistas* on the ECIA website, in pdf format, ready to view and print at home. Past issues are also available online. This paper is recyclable. Please recycle after use.