

# ELDORADO at SANTA FE VISTAS

VOLUME XVII, ISSUE 1

January 2015

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Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

1 La Hacienda Loop, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508 ▼ (505) 466-4248 ▼ [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org) ▼ Problem calls 204-2945

## A New ECIA Management Approach

The ECIA Board has voted to hire the Home Owners Association Management Company (HOAMCO) to provide general manager and bookkeeping services for the Association. The Association has been without a professional general manager (GM) since May 2014. The Board launched a national search for a new GM, open to both individuals and management companies, and extensively interviewed the best-qualified respondents, including HOAMCO.

HOAMCO is a full-service community association management firm that works with a number of communities in New Mexico, and specifically in Santa Fe County, some with as many as 3,400 homes. HOAMCO will initially supply three main services: management of the existing Association office and staff; administration and reporting of finances; and assistance with maintenance of community amenities and assets. The general manager, starting with an interim GM when the contract commences on February 1, will report to the Board on staff supervision and implementation of existing policies and practices, and will advise on administrative matters.

The two-year agreement allows the Board to request a change of general manager at any time. The entire agreement with HOAMCO may be canceled for any reason by either party with 60 days' notice.

The Finance Committee has analyzed the financial terms with HOAMCO and concludes that in the first year there will be little overall financial impact. A 1.5% increase in HOAMCO's fee in the second year is well within the usual inflation assumed for budget planning.

After meeting with HOAMCO, the Finance Committee developed the 2015 Operating Budget based on changed costs and savings offsets. At the same time, a transition plan for accounting and bill paying was developed. This leaves to the ECIA staff the tasks of collecting assessments and handling revenues, interest, and associated costs for 2015, as well as permitting and en-

forcement of the Architectural Covenants. Accounting, payables, and reporting will transition to HOAMCO during the first half-year. Future years could see a transition of some or all remaining collections and revenues channeled through HOAMCO to the ECIA. Provisions will also be made to resume ECIA direct collections, payables, and bookkeeping if ever needed.

In meetings with leaders of ECIA committees and interested community members, HOAMCO emphasized their reliance on and support of volunteers within the communities they manage. All present and future ECIA committee activities will continue under the direction and support of the ECIA Board. These will include (in no particular order) financial review, budget development, and long-range planning under the Finance Committee; architectural review and enforcement under the Architecture Committee and staff; *Vistas* and website creation and distribution under the Information Committee; advice and oversight on amenities and assets from the Facilities and Grounds Committee; greenbelt and preserve maintenance/coordination and upgrades from the Conservation Committee; advice and supervision from the Stable Committee; and oversight and recommendations from the Roads and Election Committees.

The ECIA Board will continue to make all decisions regarding policies and finances, including assessments. HOAMCO's job will be to implement those decisions.

HOAMCO feels that they can bring to the ECIA their experience with best management and financial practices from their other communities; economies of scale in contracting for services such as maintenance, repairs, and insurance; and access to legal advice over multiple areas and issues. They will furnish ongoing training and support for the general manager. They can also provide Board members with training in areas such as governance, legal responsibilities, risk management, rule and policy enforcement, strategic planning, and best practices from similar communities throughout New Mexico. —Dan Drobni

*ECIA Board  
Meeting,  
Community  
Center  
Railroad Bldg.  
Thurs.,  
January 15,  
7 PM*





Share your  
comments  
with us!

For policy and  
deadline, see  
below

### Editorial Policy

Vistas welcomes your letters on ECIA issues and activities, as well as your ideas, stories, photos, and art. Please include full name and contact information. The newsletter will not publish material deemed inflammatory, biased, or inappropriate. Submissions will be selected and edited at the discretion of the editor. Community announcements are welcome as well, along with accompanying photos.

**DEADLINE:** Newsletter deadline is the 5th day of each month. Submissions can be dropped off or mailed to the ECIA office or e-mailed to [DiAna@eldoradosf.org](mailto:DiAna@eldoradosf.org). Please include "Attn: Vistas" in your message.

### Mission Statement

The mission of *Vistas*, the monthly newsletter of the ECIA, is to inform the Eldorado community about issues before the ECIA Board and the membership at large. By so doing, the publication seeks to foster increased neighborhood pride and community participation in the decision making process.

## Rooftop Satellite Dishes

Over the past year, the ECIA has noted an increase in the number of Eldorado homes that have more than one satellite dish on the roof. Under Article II, Section 13, paragraph C of the Eldorado Covenants, it is clearly stated that Eldorado homes shall have no more than one satellite dish on a roof, unless the homeowner has received specific approval from the ECIA Board. This covenant reads as follows:

### ARTICLE II, SECTION 13:

c) No more than one satellite dish in excess of 24 inches shall be permitted on a lot without the prior written approval of the E.C.I.A. Board of Directors or its designees. All satellite dishes shall be located so as to minimize their visual impact on the surrounding neighborhood and roads, and shall be obscured by screening in some rea-

sonable manner, for example, by the dwelling house and/or with plantings or fencing.

Residents we have spoken with about this issue have explained that in the process of changing satellite television carriers, installers from the new satellite vendor will not remove the previous companies' dish(es) from the roof. In this case, it is incumbent on the homeowner to contact their previous satellite dish company and ask them to remove their now non-functioning equipment from the roof.

Should there be a justifiable reason why you require more than one satellite dish on your roof, we ask that you communicate this need to me at the ECIA, and I will work with the ECIA Board of Directors to have your special request reviewed.

—Mark Young, Covenant Compliance Representative  
[mark@eldoradosf.org](mailto:mark@eldoradosf.org), 466-4248

## Rebooting the Vistas Opt-Out

The Information Committee has learned that, in the wake of the change to allow *Vistas* recipients to opt-out of receiving the printed edition of this monthly newsletter, many individuals have not opened the e-mail to take advantage of the electronic version. In addition, some readers have changed their mind and would like to return to receiving the print version of *Vistas*. To address this, we have decided to reboot the opt-out process.

With our next email notification announcing the availability of the latest online issue of *Vistas*, anyone

who would like to *continue to receive Vistas through PDF only* must now *opt-in* to that choice, confirming it by return email, as provided in the e-blast. Only from this request will *Vistas* readers ensure that they will *not* receive the mailed, printed edition. Anyone who does not send this response will be restored to the regular postal mailing list. In this way, we can ensure that all ECIA members and Eldorado residents are receiving the important notices and information published in the monthly newsletter, *Eldorado Vistas*, in accordance with the obligations of the Association.

## 2015 ECIA Board Election

Happy New Year, Eldorado! The Election Committee wants to remind you that the 2015 ECIA Board Election process is about to begin. There will be two Board of Director positions open for election, with three-year terms that will expire in 2018. As of January 5, 2015, the Nomination Petition and its accompanying Information and Instructions Sheet are available online at [eldoradosf.org](http://eldoradosf.org), under the "Resident Resources" tab > "Forms and Applications," or at the ECIA office. The completed petition must be submitted to the Community Center Office no later than 5 PM, Monday, March 2.

Every petitioner needs to be aware of two requisites: (1) The petitioner must be a Member in Good Standing (his or her ECIA account, including assessments, must be up to date by March 2) and (2) must be able to certify that he/she will be eligible to vote in

the Election (requiring that the 2015 assessment be paid by the deadline).

Each petition requires a minimum of 25 signatures of other Members in Good Standing. This means that the signers must have paid their 2014 assessment as of the date they sign the petition.

Ballots will be mailed at the end of March. The new directors' terms will begin on May 5, following the Annual Meeting on May 4, where election results will be announced.

Remember that to vote and support the candidate of your choice, your 2015 assessment must be paid by the deadline. We hope that you take this opportunity to play an active role in your community.

—The Election Committee: Kathie Graham, Joe Loewy, Bette Knight, Mary Cassidy, Carol Lachman, and Jean Crawford (Alternate)

## Message from the ECIA Board

### A CALL TO SERVICE

**V**olunteering, at its core, is an act of generosity by which individuals can donate a measure of time, energy, and expertise and, while doing so, effectively contribute to the stability and quality of life in their community. It is a pursuit that benefits both those who volunteer as well as the recipients of community service efforts.

There is no better time than the onset of a new year to consider jumping into an activity that is, at its best, a “feel good” thing to do. Volunteerism is a long-standing American tradition and is, happily, very much alive and well in our beautiful community of Eldorado! The ECIA Board of Directors and a multitude of committees are stellar examples of how volunteers make things happen and are representative of ways in which residents can get involved and make a difference in the community.

Now is the time to consider the possibility of getting involved. The 2015 Board of Directors election will determine who fills two vacancies on the Board, each for a term of three years expiring in 2018. As El-

dorado moves forward with an eye toward greater efficiency and effectiveness resulting from an increased awareness of and commitment to “best practices,” less time will be required to accomplish even more. Service on the Board is an opportunity to do good things for your family, your neighbors, and the extended community.

If you have experience in governance or community service work and would like to contribute your talents to the future of Eldorado, please consider running for the ECIA Board of Directors. Nomination Petitions and Instruction Sheets are available at the ECIA Office. Petitions must be filed at the ECIA Office no later than 5 PM on Monday, March 2, 2015. See the article on page 2 for further details.

—Jeanne Calzada, Director

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Jim Tunney,

Retired NFL Referee and Motivational Speaker

## Recent Board Actions

**T**he ECIA Board held its regular meeting on December 18, 2014, with all seven Board members present: **Dag Ryen** (President, presiding), **Pam Henline** (Vice President), **Todd Handy** (Treasurer), **Gershon Siegel** (Secretary), **Jeanne Calzada**, **Greg Colello**, and **David Yard**. The following formal actions were taken unanimously, without the Chair voting, unless otherwise noted:

- ▼ The Board Director Nominating Petition deadline date was set at March 2, 2015.
- ▼ The Employee Manual was amended regarding employee contributions to health costs.
- ▼ A variance was approved for 6 Verano Drive for a small ground-based solar array located more than 15 feet from the house, with screening conditions.
- ▼ A contract was approved for general manager and bookkeeping services with HOAMCO (Handy abstaining).
- ▼ The 2015 Operating and Maintenance Budgets were approved; details to be posted on website and mailed to property owners with January assessment invoice.
- ▼ A policy was adopted to charge \$50 for each check returned for insufficient funds.
- ▼ A fee was adopted for placing a lien for overdue

assessments of \$150 plus County charge, a current total of \$200.

- ▼ Instructions were given to the bookkeeper/auditor for transfer of 2014 year-end Operating funds to Capital and Replacement Reserve funds.

Regular Board meetings are scheduled on the third Thursday of each month at 7 PM at the Community Center and are open to the public. An open forum and community announcements are normally included. Complete minutes and meeting agendas are available at the ECIA office or website: [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org).

In addition, two informal (no votes) Board working sessions are held in the Community Center Conference Room each month. Work Session 1 is held at 7 PM the first Thursday of each month, and Work Session 2 is held at 7 PM the Monday before the third Thursday of each month. ECIA members are welcome to attend, and may request to place, and speak on, particular items on the agenda by calling the ECIA office at 466-4248 72 hours in advance.



### ECIA OFFICE

#1 La Hacienda Loop  
Santa Fe, NM 87508  
466-4248, 466-4249  
[www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org)  
Problem calls  
204-2945

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President**  
**Dag Ryen**  
[D.Ryen@eldoradosf.org](mailto:D.Ryen@eldoradosf.org)  
**Vice-President**  
**Pam Henline**  
[P.Henline@eldoradosf.org](mailto:P.Henline@eldoradosf.org)  
**Secretary**  
**Gershon Siegel**  
[G.Siegel@eldoradosf.org](mailto:G.Siegel@eldoradosf.org)  
**Treasurer**  
**Todd Handy**  
[T.Handy@eldoradosf.org](mailto:T.Handy@eldoradosf.org)  
**Director**  
**Jeanne Calzada**  
[J.Calzada@eldoradosf.org](mailto:J.Calzada@eldoradosf.org)  
**Director**  
**Greg Colello**  
[G.Colello@eldoradosf.org](mailto:G.Colello@eldoradosf.org)  
**Director**  
**David Yard**  
[D.Yard@eldoradosf.org](mailto:D.Yard@eldoradosf.org)  
**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**  
**Architecture:**  
**Katherine Mortimer**  
**Conservation:** Jim Daniel & Cherry Payne  
**Election:** Kathie Graham  
**Facilities & Grounds:**  
**John Calzada**  
**Finance:** Dan Drobnis  
**Information:** Frank Schober  
**Roads:** Felicia Probert  
**Stable:** Open

### ECIA STAFF

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**Position Open**  
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466-READ  
**Fire and Rescue**  
466-1204  
[eldoradofireandrescue.org](http://eldoradofireandrescue.org)  
**County All Purpose**  
820-CNTY (2689)

**ECIA COMMITTEES NEED VOLUNTEERS!**

Your homeowners association operates through the efforts of its volunteers, providing expertise and many services that benefit all of Eldorado. You may be surprised how good it feels to contribute to your community! Consider joining a committee that suits your abilities. Committees in serious need of new members include:

- ▼ **Road Committee:** Helps monitor road conditions.
- ▼ **Info Committee:** Produces Vistas and ECIA website.
- ▼ **Architecture Committee:** Reviews lot owners' applications for architectural modifications.

**Call 466-4248 for more information.**

**New Year's Eve Bash**

*What:* American JeM's "New York" New Year's Eve (dinner and dancing)

*When:* 7 PM, Wednesday, December 31

*Where:* The Performance Space at La Tienda

*Tickets:* \$60/person - Includes three-course dinner with champagne, music and dancing all evening

*Reservations required:* Call 505-670-8604 or email: [triojem@outlook.com](mailto:triojem@outlook.com)

**REEL NEW MEXICO!**

Screening on Thursday, January 8, 2015, is *Mother O'Keeffe*, narrated by former New Mexico resident Marsha Mason and produced and directed by fellow Eldorado resident Richard Startzman. This hour-long film, released in 2007, offers a very different look at artist Georgia O'Keeffe.

Filmgoers are now able to order and bring food and drink from La Plancha and enjoy it in the Performance Space, offering a casual dinner-and-a-movie type of event. The \$5 suggested donation/admission at the door will go for expenses and to bring in filmmakers for other screenings.

For more information, contact Jeff Berg at 466-1634 or [nedludd76@hotmail.com](mailto:nedludd76@hotmail.com).

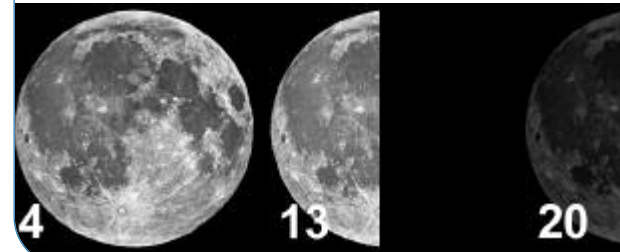
**Support Groups for Caregivers**

The Gloaming at Santa Fe, LLC, is a counseling and life coaching practice in Suite 6 of the business condominiums on 3 Caliente Road that provides mental health counseling and life coaching services. As a service to the community, the Gloaming offers free support groups in response to a need for caregiver support. Meetings are held at The Gloaming at Santa Fe.

- Support Group for Caregivers with a Family Member Who Lives with Alzheimer's or Dementia: 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, from 9:30 to 11 AM.
- General Caregivers' Support Group, 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, from 5 to 6:30 PM. Email [drkittyfallon@thegloamingatsantafe.com](mailto:drkittyfallon@thegloamingatsantafe.com) for more information.

**Changes Near You?**

Have any of your neighbors submitted architectural modification plans to the ECIA for approval? What changes to the built landscape are being considered near you? Check out the Architecture Committee agenda at <http://tinyurl.com/ldjmreo> or the ECIA Board agenda at <http://tinyurl.com/lkxxdmw>.

**MOON PHASES FOR JANUARY****Master Gardener Certification Training**

Want to be in the company of those who share gardening interests, increasing our knowledge and sharing those skills with the Santa Fe community? In this 16-week course, taught by New Mexico's top horticultural educators, researchers, and practitioners, interns will learn best methods for composting, soil building, xeric techniques, water harvesting, growing fruits, herbs and veggies, dealing with pests and diseases, and more! Classes begin soon: evenings on February 2 at 6 PM; and mornings on February 3 at 9 AM. Registration closes soon. Class size is limited. Please visit: [sfmga.org](http://sfmga.org), or call SF County Extension: 471-4711. Offered by Santa Fe Master Gardener Association in cooperation with NMSU.

**Community Center Landscaping Update**

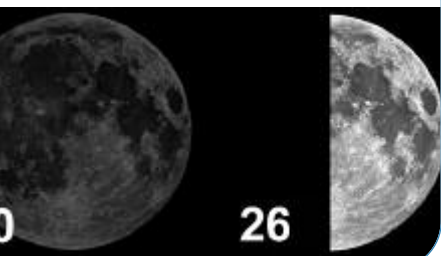
Though winter is upon us, we thought *Vistas* readers would like to know what's happening with the ECIA Landscape Project on the island between parking lots east of the Community Center. Annual rye grass planted in September as a "green manure" and as erosion control sprouted vigorously and is doing its job nicely.

The rye grass will be turned into the soil in early spring, adding nutrients and improving soil tilth before the final contouring of the land and planting of drought-hardy buffalo grass in the central basin. In fall 2015, about 20 trees and clusters of shrubs will be planted to create shady areas surrounding the grassy basin. A framed copy of the landscape plan is hanging in the hallway of the Community Center between the classroom and the living room just off the breezeway. We think you will find it interesting.

**COMMEMORATIVE TREE PROGRAM**

Any of the lovely trees scheduled for planting in the island can be dedicated to a special someone or





event. Many weddings and celebrations have been held at the Community Center over the years. Perhaps you want to remember the occasion? Or those loved and lost? The cost is \$275 per tree. Brass plaques can be placed near the tree. The landscape plan includes locust, ash, linden, and sycamore trees, all 2-inch caliper at planting. Please let someone in the ECIA office know if you are interested.

—Su Anne Armstrong

#### A Clarification from EFRS Chief Tapke

*Vistas* received a letter from El Dorado Fire Chief Stephen Tapke regarding a statement made in last month's article on the rise in property tax. Chief Tapke notes:

"The article provides examples of usages for local property taxes and mentions 'the purchase of emergency vehicles to serve Santa Fe County.' While I cannot speak to the source used to fund vehicle purchases for the Santa Fe County Sheriff's Department, I can say that property taxes are not used to fund purchases of vehicles for the El Dorado Fire and Rescue Service which is a fire district within the Santa Fe County Fire Department."



# January Events

## Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

Email [marilyn@eldoradosf.org](mailto:marilyn@eldoradosf.org) with your meeting/event information, or bring it to the ECIA office by the 3rd of the month for publication in the following month's *Vistas*. Please include "Attn: *Vistas*" and be sure to indicate:



1. **Type of Event**
2. **Location**
3. **Date & Time**

4. **A Resource Person** (one who can answer questions both about the event and the sponsoring organization) and his/her telephone number.

Photographs (digital or snapshots) are encouraged!

Note: All meetings are at the Community Center, unless otherwise noted.

*LR=Living Room, F=Foyer, CFR=Conference Room, CR=Class Room, RR=Railroad, K=Kitchen*

### SPECIAL EVENTS

ECIA Offices closed Thurs., Jan. 1

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Architecture Committee	Wed., Jan. 7, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Architecture Committee	Tues., Jan. 27, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Board Work Study	Mon., Jan. 5, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., Jan. 12, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Conservation Committee	Tues., Jan. 6, 7-9 pm	Jim Daniel	609-941-4527	F
ECIA Board Meeting	Thurs., Jan. 15, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	RR
Election Committee	Wed., Jan. 14, 2-4 pm	Kathie Graham	466-2133	CFR
Facilities & Grounds	Wed., Jan 7, 4-6 pm	John Calzada	466-1947	CFR
Finance Committee	Wed., Jan. 7, 9:30-11:30 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Information Committee	Tues., Jan. 20, 7-9 pm	Frank Schober	310-8593	CFR
Road Committee	TBA	Felicia Probert	466-1563	CFR
Stable Committee	TBA	Alice Griffin	795-6424	CFR

### MONTHLY / SEMI-MONTHLY MEETINGS

EAW&SD*	1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 pm	Anna Mondragon	466-1085	RR/CR
Eldorado Arts & Crafts	Last Thurs. of month	Barrie Brown	466-3035	CC
Eldorado Book Club	3rd Wed. of month, 3 pm	Susan Aylward	shaylward@gmail.com	CC
Eldorado/285 Recycles	2nd Tues. of month, 4-6 pm	Karen Sweeney	466-9797	CFR
Library Book Group	2nd Sat of month., 9-10:30	Joan LaMarque	466-6000	CFR
Roadrunner RV	3rd Tues. of month	Pat Stewart	820-0303	
Search & Rescue	2nd Thurs of month, 7-9 pm	santafesar.org		CR

### WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tues., 5:45-6:45 pm			CFR/LR
AA	Thurs. 5:30-6:30 pm (Women Only)			CFR
AA	Fri., 6-7 pm			CFR/LR
AA	Sat., 10:45-11:45 am			CFR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm			LR/CFR
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wed., 7-9 pm	Fritz Denny	466-4070	RR, CR, LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Jackie Vaughn	466-2558	LR
Community Church**	Sun., 9:00 & 10:30 am	David McPherson	466-2495	La Tienda
Eldorado Hikers	Tues., 8:30 am	Terry Gibbs	466-6914	CC
Fire & Rescue Training	Tues., 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Fire & Rescue Duty Sections	Sat., 8-12 noon	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Knitting Club	Tues., 10-12 noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	LR
Life Drawing	Mon., 10-12 noon	Jack McCarthy	466-9601	RR
Mah Jongg	Fri., 1-4:30	Nancy Robbins	466-1780	CR
Overeaters Anon	Mon., 7-8 pm	Barb	954-1533	LR
Senior Lunch***	Mon.-Fri., 11:30-12:30 pm	Senior Center	466-1039	
Square Dancing	Fri., 6-9 pm	David Lovro	466-0540	RR

\* Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

\*\*For other religious/spiritual services, go to <http://santafe.areaconnect.com/churches.htm>

\*\*\* Reservations required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org)



## Red-breasted Nuthatch (RbN)

The seasons are surely changing. I saw my last hummingbird on October 10 (goodbye summer delight) and my first dark-eyed Junco on October 26 (the most commonly sighted winter bird around the U.S.).



Red-breasted nuthatch.  
Photo: Mick Thompson.  
Creative Commons license.

But the lovely little Red-breasted Nuthatch can be found in our area all year long. The RbN is a small, compact bird with a short tail and almost no neck. The bill is long and pointed. The head has a dark grayish cap and dark eye stripe. The back is slate gray with possibly some bluish hints. The throat

is white and the breast is an orangey-red. RbNs are 4.3 inches long with a wingspan of 7.5 inches. They are most frequently seen on tree trunks and branches, going up, down, or around in search of insects. They move quickly and seem full of energy as they zigzag around a tree. Some birds move south in winter, but the RbN pretty much stays inside U.S. borders.

The male serenades and brings food to the female during courtship. They are monogamous each breeding season. Both male and female participate in nest making. This may involve 18 or so days to make a suitable cavity, or appropriating an existing cavity, usually 2.5 to 8 inches deep. RbNs are among a few species other than woodpeckers that can excavate their own

nest, and they choose softer woods (dead trees, aspens). During nest building, the pair is quite aggressive, chasing away larger birds. Females usually choose the nest site. The nest is lined with grass, bark, pine needles, and even fur and feathers. Both then apply conifer resin around the inside and outside of the entrance hole, sometimes using a piece of bark to dab on the resin. The sticky resin may discourage ants or other predators. Mom and Dad dart through the hole without touching the sticky sides. Five or six eggs hatch in 12 or 13 days. Chicks are fairly helpless but grow quickly and fledge in about three weeks. Juveniles may stay with the parents for another two weeks.

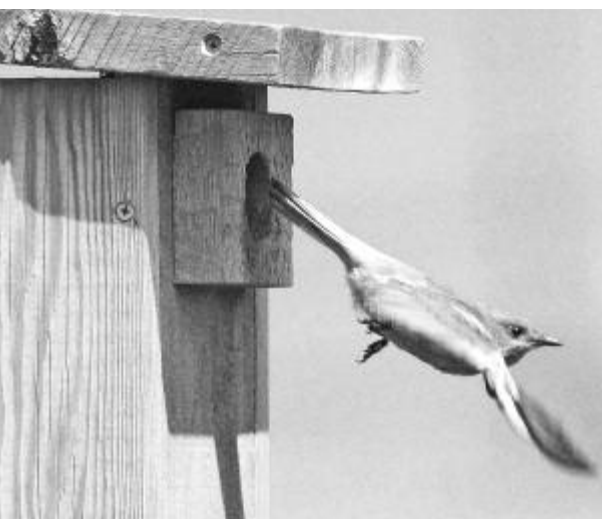
In summer, RbNs eat mainly insects, beetles, spiders, ants, and caterpillars. They switch to conifer seeds during the winter and may have stashed seeds which they later retrieve. They actively come to feeders for suet, sunflower seeds, and peanuts, so you might have more luck spotting them in the winter. You can try putting out a nesting box, although they prefer trees. See [www.shawcreekbirdsupply.com/plans\\_redbreasted\\_nuthatch.htm](http://www.shawcreekbirdsupply.com/plans_redbreasted_nuthatch.htm) for exact box details, which are different from bluebird boxes.

RbNs don't have a nice song; it's more of a nasal yank-yank-yank. The species is doing well, holding its own. However, it is important that some dead trees are left in forests and parks to provide nesting places for the RbN. They sometimes flock with other small birds. The oldest known RbN was 7 years 6 months old.

I have seen the RbN in Eldorado once, and I thank Dale Stahlecker for his documented sightings.

—Pam Henline

Western bluebird  
leaving nest box.  
Photo: Kevin Cole. Creative Commons license.



## Cleaning Nest Boxes

I am often asked about the care of bluebird boxes, or any nesting box. One of my bluebird boxes had Bewick's Wrens this year, and they left a pile of woven sticks about half the height of the box.

So here is my recommendation. Mid-fall is a good time to clean out the boxes. All material can be removed and the box wiped down with a 10% bleach solution and left to dry.

Then what? In late fall and winter, I often see four to eight bluebirds fluttering about the box on my porch in the morn-

ing. This year, I also saw two mountain chickadees investigating the box. The birds fly up and sit on the roof, perch on the hole, and stick their head inside or even enter the box. In some cases, these birds might be shopping ahead for a place to raise a family the next spring.

Under some conditions, perhaps very cold nights, several birds will cram into a box to huddle and conserve body heat. So I do not leave my nest boxes empty all winter. After they are dried out from cleaning, I add some small pieces of cut-up grass or broken-up twigs. I also add a handful of dog hair, as this is very warm. And if the birds don't like the hair, they throw it out the hole! If you don't have your own supply of Fido's fur, try asking friends with dogs or ask at the Braemarr Pet Grooming Shoppe in the Agora.

—Pam Henline



## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH FLORA &amp; FAUNA GROUP

## Wildlife at Night

Ofentimes, the people who see the most wildlife in a human community are those who are out during the night hours. Early morning commuters, before-sunrise joggers, newspaper carriers, and others recently provided some wonderful stories about their experiences with wildlife in Eldorado. While the rest of us are sleeping or just starting to think about our morning coffee, these folks are moving through the neighborhood, observing first-hand wildlife's primal drama.

"It's remarkable what goes on in the early hours," one said. "I especially see cottontail rabbits, who are always very active at night. A couple of nights ago I had to slam on my brakes to avoid hitting a rabbit. It was running faster than I've ever seen a rabbit run, and just behind it was a bobcat, intent on catching the rabbit. Neither animal paid any attention to me; they were completely focused on their life-and-death struggle!"

In addition to cottontails, some early morning people see the occasional jackrabbit. But there are fewer of them than there used to be, and jackrabbits seem much smarter than the cottontails, so there is less interaction with cars.

Some pre-sunrise people have seen a number of Great Horned Owls perched on mailboxes. Surprisingly, the owls don't fly off until a person is very close. The owls may be less jittery than other animals because they are typically on top of the food chain. On Encantado Road early one morning, an observer came across an owl on a mailbox that, when it lifted off to fly, held a big, long snake in its beak.

Opossums and skunks can sometimes be seen, although they haven't been around recently. And of course there are lots of rodents—tons of them every night. Mice, wood rats, Kangaroo rats . . . and the coyotes who chase them for food. Usually adult coyotes know how to avoid cars, but the pups play in the street and haven't yet learned to be leery of cars. One observer has also seen nighthawks sleeping on the paved streets. In winter, the pavement holds heat, which the nighthawks like.

Sadly, there are frequent sightings of the aftermath of reckless drivers. Two porcupines, for example, were walking on Avenida Azul when one was hit and killed by a car. Porcupines waddle slowly, which makes them more vulnerable to traffic. The surviving porcupine mate remained by its dead partner, apparently at a loss. "These preventable deaths are always so sad," an early morning driver said. "Drivers need to avoid speeding, especially at night, to prevent injuring or killing our wonderful creatures."

A number of years ago, an Eldoradoan noted what she thinks may have been a black-footed ferret in her yard. Because they are so highly endangered and rare, they and the more common weasel will be featured in a future article. A neighbor summed it up nicely: "The variety of wildlife in our community is amazing," she said. "It's one of the best parts of living here!"

References for this article are available upon request. Contact us at [EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com](mailto:EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com). We love hearing from you!



Cottontail rabbit.  
Photo by Ann V. Wood

## RECYCLING NEWS

## Waste Management, Inc. Waste Management, Inc. Offers Lower Rates for Eldorado

Eldorado/285 Recycles regularly gets calls from Eldoradoans, usually new residents, who are billed at rates for trash and recycling that are higher than the current rates offered to ECIA residents by Waste Management, Inc. (WMI). It turns out that Eldorado's homeowners association members have access to rates that are lower than those available to the general public in Santa Fe. Monthly rates for weekly trash collection are \$20.04, and \$4.79 for biweekly recycling. Including local taxes, your quarterly bill is \$65 for trash only, or \$80.59 including recycling. (If you have additional containers or other services, your bill may be higher.)

The reason for the overcharge appears to be that when you call the WMI customer service phone number (505-892-1200), you are connected to a WMI center in Phoenix. Personnel there may not correctly identify Eldorado addresses. They occasionally also tell callers that recycling service is not available to Eldorado customers. It is.

If you think you are being overbilled, we recommend that you call the WMI office in Phoenix (505-892-1200) and let them know you are a part of the Eldorado HOA to get your rate adjusted.

—Joe Eigner, Secretary, Eldorado/285 Recycles  
[joseigner@gmail.com](mailto:joseigner@gmail.com)

# VISTAS

Eldorado Community  
Improvement Association  
#1 La Hacienda Loop  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508  
[www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org)

PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 173  
Santa Fe, NM



Scan this code with  
your phone to take  
you to the online  
versions of *Vistas*



Scan this code to get  
to our online video  
about Eldorado by  
Jack Arnold

Road Repair (SF County) 992-3010  
[www.santafecountynm.gov/publicworks/  
road\\_concern](http://www.santafecountynm.gov/publicworks/road_concern).

Problem calls 204-2945  
Sheriff 428-3720 • Crime Stoppers 955-5050  
Neighborhood Watch: <http://eldoradoneighbors.wordpress.com>



## Wildlife in Eldorado

**R**eaders have been sending us photos of wildlife seen around Eldorado. At left is a bobcat photographed locally by **Andi Sutherland**. Below is a wild pheasant that has a habit of visiting Eldorado; locals have even named the bird “Phen” (photographed here by **Gershon Siegel**). And at right is a donkey that **Gretel Underwood** adopted from a local donkey rescue. Named Simon, he is a friendly 15-year-old, and likes attention. Originally a BLM donkey, he was born in the wild but now lives with Gretel’s horse, Juanito (photo by **Max Underwood**).

—Carol Leyba, *Vistas* Editor

