ELDORADO

Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

1 La Hacienda Loop, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508 ▼ (505) 466-4248 ▼ www.eldoradocommunity.org

IM Digs and Residents Question

NM IS AN ACRONYM that all residents that pay gas and electric bills should be familiar with. It stands for "Public Service Company of New Mexico," and when you talk to PNM officials you get the impression that they care about the public they serve.

To enhance that service a recent, major project of PNM involved the digging of a mile-long trench on the south side of Avenida Vista Grande in Eldorado. This operation had some residents puzzled. A call to PNM in Albuquerque by the ECIA cleared up the questions. According to company officials, there had been a failure on the now replaced main feeder cable that serves our community. Because that cable had been the cause of three short circuits that put our local electricity substation out of commission, the County of Santa Fe had approved the project some months ago.

Addressing resident concerns that with the arrival of gusty spring winds there might be erosion and much more dust than usual to contend with, PNM has informed the ECIA that come warmer weather in the spring, it plans to restore the land disturbed by its recent dig and properly reseed the entire now denuded area.

According to Mr. Steve Alger, PNM's local chief engineer, the cable replacement project was a matter of simple, regular maintenance. The buried electric power cables in our community were laid down over 25 years ago and according to Mr. Alger are approaching the "end of their effective life spans." Because of this, he said, we are likely to see more digging and work on cables in the next several years.

PNM is the successor to a company that has undergone several transitions and name changes since founded as the "Albuquerque Gas and Electric Company" in 1917. Today it is the largest utility in New Mexico and serves nearly 500,000 power and natural gas customers in over 100 communities in the state.

The gas lines are not as visible as the 10,000 miles of power lines that PNM operates in the state, but they are more extensive and include some 12,500

miles of surface and buried pipeline and nearly 11,000 miles of distribution and service piping.

For the gas side of its business, PNM bills customers in "therms." In this way, a customer pays for the heating value of the natural gas he buys, not the volume of gas used. Therm billing is the standard throughout the natural gas industry because it provides consistent billing units as gas flows from the production well to the individual customer's meter.

Keeping our lights on and natural gas flowing to our homes in Eldorado and New Mexico is PNM's

24/7 challenge. As with most power and fuel systems, the infrastructure the company depends upon has been built up and expanded over time. Such a system with components of differing age and capability is constantly in need of upgrade and that is what PNM was recently doing Avenida Vista Grande.

A changed procedure for future PNM digs may help answer residents questions when they see major projects involving digging anywhere Eldorado in the future: in addition to keeping the county informed, PNM is going to tell the ECIA what they are doing and when they feel they will have the job completed. That's an important public service that all in Eldorado will appreciate.

-Frank Schober

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ECIA Board Work Study Meeting,

Community

Center, Mon.,

Feb. 14, 7 pm



PNM employee, Greg Hanks, working on a buried cable.

LETTERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Off Leash and Out of Hand

Share your comments with us!

For policy and deadline, see below

Editorial Policy

Vistas invites opinions, ideas, stories, photos, and art from the community at large. Please include checking purposes. The newsletter will not inflammatory. Material will be printed at the discretion of the editors. Letters over 150 words will be edited for fit. Community announcements are welcome; accompanying photos are welcome, too. DEADLINE: Newsletter deadline is the 3rd day of each month. Submissions can be dropped off or mailed to the ECIA office or info@eldoradocommunity. org. Please include "Attn:

Mission Statement

Vistas" in your message.

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

AM CONCERNED WITH THE CONSTANT unleashed dogs that run around. On 11/16/04, I was attacked by two dogs from Casa Del Oro Lane while I was on the bike path. One bit through my pants and left a large bruise on my leg. They were off leash. I reported that issue to Charles Smith who sent

the owners a letter. The house was just sold, so those people moved.

Today I was walking past the same house on the Casa Del Oro bike path and a new dog at that property came after me and chased me half way home. I also reported this incident to Charles. He is going to go up to see the new owners. Maybe they don't know that unleashed dogs are against the covenants of the

I am discouraged that I cannot walk on community bike paths without encountering these problems. Unleashed dogs are common in Eldorado. Charles does what he can, but it doesn't seem that homeowners care or listen. He suggested that a group of concerned citizens or perhaps the Conservation Committee could take this issue up with more success.

Are there any suggestions about how this problem could better be approached to get homeowners to care enough about their neighbors that they keep their animals restrained?

—Sheila Burke



Candidates for the ECIA Board must file a petition before March 1 2005. Petitions are available beginning February 1 (more info on page 7).

Water Board Election

N JANUARY 11, Eldorado residents elected their new Board for the Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District. Those elected were Ray Nichols for a six-year term, Jerry Williams for a four-year term, and Mary Raynard for a two-year term. (These results are as of the final tally on 1/11/05.)

On the Road

HE ECIA ROAD COMMITTEE is looking for volunteers to join our group. The mission of the Road Committee is to advise, assist and recommend to the ECIA Board of Directors policies involving the maintenance and repair of roads in Eldorado. Eldorado has evolved from initial development into a maturing community with an increasing level of community support for roads that improve the quality of life in Eldorado. Recognizing the roads in Eldorado are the property of Santa Fe County, it is imperative the community have an effective interface with the County Roads Department. This is one of the most important tasks of the Road Committee.

We are looking for concerned residents to serve on this important committee. We meet bi-monthly at the Community Center, usually for about an hour, to conduct our business. Would

you like to be involved in the community you live in? If so, please contact the Chairman, Ed Benrock, at 466-2088 for more information.



2004 In Review

TOTAL NUMBER OF ARCHITECTURAL **PROJECTS SUBMITTED FOR 2004:**

▼ Projects submitted
▼ Projects approved
▼ Variance requests
Types of projects submitted for 2004.
▼ Fences
▼ Walls
▼ Additions
▼ Small accessory building36
▼ Large accessory building32
▼ New homes

The Architectural Committee reviews all applications when they meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7 pm. Plans must be delivered to the ECIA office by the Monday before the meeting (2 copies required). All submissions must be clear, concise and legible, and must include a site plan with

setbacks, elevation views, materials and dimensions. Incomplete or illegible applications will not be submitted to the committee.

Covenant compliance violations for 2004:

▼ V10	olations new through Dec. 31, 2004106
▼ Vio	olations corrected through Dec. 31, 2004 115
▼ Vio	plations outstanding as of Dec. 31, 200432
▼ Vio	olations requiring legal action12
The m	nost common covenant violations:
▼ No	permit for construction32
▼ Ext	terior lighting (not shielded)
▼ RV	Screening

I want to thank everyone for your support and efforts in making Eldorado a place to enjoy all of the great New Mexico "enchanted views." Suggestion: try compliance, first!

—Charles Smith, the ECIA CCR

From the President's Desk

HE HOLIDAY SEASON is now a memory, but most of us still remember the joy of giving and the gratitude for gifts received. No matter how large or how small, when we give a gift we always get something in return.

I am now asking you to consider giving a gift to your community: a gift that is only yours to give, a gift that will affect the future. The gift I am asking you to consider giving is the gift of your time by becoming a member of an ECIA committee. It is a precious gift because most of us have so little of it to give. The return for giving is great; the time spent is small.

We have committees to match your interests and expertise. The Road Committee works with the county to keep our roads graded, faded signs replaced and, in high traffic areas, roads paved. Preserving our four thousand acre wilderness for Eldorado residents is the responsibility of the Conservation Committee. The committee is also reviewing its mission for other community projects it needs to consider. The work of the Finance Committee is to be sure that the association is in good financial health and that our fiduciary responsibility to the community is being met. Building construction from fences to new home construction is the purview of the Architecture Committee that could use your expertise in that area. The Neighborhood Watch Committee ensures that our community is safe in regards to traffic and other community safety issues. A new committee,



Community Events will sponsor programs, gatherings and events to bring members together in a social or educational venue. To be a member of the Stable Committee, you must be a barn owner, and that expertise is also sought. The Information Committee that publishes the Vistas monthly is a small committee that is in great need of writers who can contribute monthly or occasionally.

For all of you who already give your time by participating on a committee, we thank you and appreciate you. For more information contact the chair of these committees (see the calendar on page 5 for contacts), check the website or call a board member. Your interest and the gift of your time will be greatly appreciated.

> —Jeanne Klein ECIA President

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Finance: Gisela Knight Architecture: Bill Schwent **Conservation: Steve Wust** Stable: Dina Sassone **Election: Nancy Dayton** Road: Ed Benrock **Information: Vacant** Neighborhood Watch: Sandra Vreeland

VISTAS NEWSLETTER

Ken McPherson kenzwork@hubwest.com Designer: Hope O. Kiah hope@webdesignbyhope.com **Editorial Assistants:** Lynn McPherson Debby Padilla 466-4248 Photographer: whitewolfvision.com

466-2273 COMMUNITY RESOURCES Vista Grande Library 466-READ Security 204-2945 Fire and Rescue





"Designing with Nature" is a two-part workshop on natural garden design being offered on February 5 and 12 by the Master Gardeners. The workshop is for novice and seasoned gardeners wanting to plan gardens using environmentally sound principles, incorporating site observation, visioning, planning and plant selection, design development and implementation.

Dr. Ann McEntee, Master Gardener and Landscape Designer, will teach the course from 8:45 am to noon both days. Cost is \$30, or \$15 for SFMGA members. For information/registration, call 471-4711. The workshop site is the County Extension Annex, 3229 Rodeo Rd. Participants should be prepared for brief outside activity.

The Art of Talk

The Artists' Shoptalk will take place on Wednesday, February 9, from 10 am to noon at the home of Joretha Hall (4 Camino Teofanio). Interested artists (all media) are invited to each other's homes to discuss any and all art topics. Joretha does clay sculpture. Call 466-6245 for directions.

Recycling Volunteers

Interested in helping improve the quality of Eldorado's recycling? Join a group of volunteers who will assist recyclers to recycle more efficiently.

Auralie Ashley-Marx, Santa Fe County Solid Waste director, will train volunteers to assist at the Eldorado Transfer Station 4-6 hours each Saturday or Sunday. Two volunteers will work each shift, probably not more than once every two months, answering questions, providing handouts and helping users understand the importance of putting the correct item in the correct bin. Contaminated loads of recycling often end up in the landfill.

A new materials processing facility is being planned for Santa Fe in 2006. This will enable Santa Fe and Eldorado to recycle greater quantities and perhaps more categories. In the meantime, we need to improve the sorting of our materials.

Training will begin soon. If you are interested in assisting with this effort and learning more about recycling, contact Karen Sweeney at ksweeney99@yahoo.com or 466-9797.

Library Booksigning

Santa Fe photographer Lucian Niemeyer will



present a lecture and booksigning for his recently published book New Mexico: Images Of A Land & Its People at the Vista Grande Public Library on Thursday, February 17, 7-9 pm. Niemeyer is known for his color photography of water fowl and his documentation of African refugees. National Park historian Art Gomez wrote the text and is scheduled to appear with Niemeyer for an insightful evening.

Safe Passage

About 25 Eldorado residents showed up to celebrate the installation of the railroad crossing gates and lights on Ave. Eldorado Saturday Jan. 8th. The Eldorado Residents Association Board provided hot cider and donuts and visited with the residents as everyone waited for the 2 pm train to return from Lamy. Commissioner Jack Sullivan joined the group in time to visit with his constituents. Then we heard the whistle of the train coming up from the south and everyone gathered near the track. The warning sounded, the lights flashed and traffic stopped as the gates descended. The riders on the train must have wondered at their enthusiastic reception as the Santa Fe/Lamy train passed. Great weather for a train crossing party.

EACA Annual Meeting

On February 24th the Eldorado Arts and Crafts Association will hold its annual meeting and election of officers for the 2005 year at 7 pm at the Fire Station. After a short business meeting, there will be a program. Now in its 14th year, the association continues to grow and provide educational monthly meetings the last Thursday of each month at the Ave. Vista Grande Fire Station at 7 pm. Monthly Shop Talks in artists' homes provide a casual atmosphere to get to know other artists in Eldorado and learn new artistic techniques.

Two annual events showcase the work of Eldorado artists. They are the Annual Studio Tour scheduled for May 14th and 15th, 2005, and the Pre-Holiday Show in November. Artists who participate in these events donate a part of their proceeds to local community organizations.



Astronomy Corner

Layer of Light

The Sun is not only our closest star, but also the most important one for us. Among many features in the Sun there is one that's clearly visible—its photosphere. The photosphere is the part of the Sun from which visible light is emitted; more generally, the region of any star that gives rise to its visible radiation. Most of the Sun's energy escapes into space from the photosphere. The effective temperature of the Sun's photosphere is around 9,900 degrees Fahrenheit. The inand-out heaving motions or oscillations of the photosphere are used in helioseismology to decipher the dynamics and structure of the solar interior.

Next month we will talk more about the Sun.

The planets in February: Mercury, Venus, Mars and the Moon will be spectacular in Scorpio in the morning sky. Saturn reaches opposition on January 13. If you have a telescope, enjoy the view, and don't forget Jupiter at the beginning of morning twilight.

> —Juan Alvarez Jalva88610@aol.com

Since 1999, over \$14,000 has been donated to Eldorado Fire and Rescue. the Community Band, El Dorado Elementary School and the Vista Grande Public Library. For membership contact George Henke at 466-4988 or Janet Amtmann at 466-3256.

February Events

Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

Email info@eldoradocommunity.org with your meeting/event information, or bring it to the ECIA office by the 8th 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.

FEBRUARY SPECIAL EVENTS						
ERA T.G.I.F.	Fri., Feb. 18, 5-7 pm			LR		
ECIA Offices Closed Mon., Feb. 21 for President's Day						
COMMITTEE MEETI	NGS					
285 Coalition	Wed., Feb. 2, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock	466-1598	CFR		
Neighborhood Watch	Mon., Feb. 7, 7 pm	Sandra Vreeland	466-6079	CR		
Road Committee	Mon., Feb. 7, 6-7 pm	Ed Benrock	466-2088	CFR		
Finance Committee	Tues., Feb. 8, 10-noon	Gisela Knight	466-2568	RR		
Architectural Committee	Tues., Feb. 8, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR		
EAW&SD*	Wed., Feb. 9, 7-9 pm	Ray Nichols		CFR		
Board Work Study	Mon., Feb. 14, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR		
ECIA Board	Thurs., Feb. 17, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR		
Information Committee	Mon., Feb. 21, 7 pm	Ken McPherson	466-4161	F		
Architectural Committee	Tues., Feb. 22, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR		
Stable Committee	Tues., Feb. 22, 7-9 pm			LR		
MONTHLY MEETINGS						
ERA Coffee Social	Tues., Feb. 1, 10-11 am	Jerry Bradley	466-4253	F		
Boy Scouts Troop 414	Wed., Feb. 2, 7:30-9 pm	Bruce Blossman	955-0880	CR		
Search & Rescue	Thurs., Feb. 10, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR		
Book Club	Sat., Feb. 12, 1:30-3 pm	Barbara Rugg	466-2559			
Book Club/Pot Luck	call for date and time	Ken Fischer	466-2537			
Library Book Group	4th Thurs., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	Lib		
Cub Scouts Pack 414	Call for date	Clay Williard	466-3909			
La Canada Wireless Club	Mon., Feb. 14, 7-9			LR		
ERA Coffee Social	Tues., Feb. 15, 10-11 am	Jerry Bradley	466-4253	F		
MOMS Club	Call for date and time	Shannon Ratcliff	986-9050			
WEEKLY MEETINGS						
AA	Tuesdays, 5:45-6:45 pm			CR		
AA	Thursdays, 5:45-6:45 pm			CR		
AA	Saturdays, 10:45-11:45 am			CR		
AA	Sundays, 5:15- 6:15 pm			CR		
Bridge	1st & 3rd Mon., 1-4:30 pm			LR		
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Marjorie Segell	466-3958	CR, LR		
Bridge	2nd & 4th Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Pat Lavengood	466-9765	CR, LR		
Bridge	Wednesdays, 9-noon	Nancy Rost	466-2832	LR		
Community Band	Thursdays, 6-8 pm	Joel Hopko	466-8412			
Fire & Rescue Training	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station		
Fire & Rescue Work Duty	Saturdays, Call for time	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station		
Senior Lunch**	Wednesdays, 12-1 pm	Therese Janowski	466-1397	CR		
Wireless Assoc.	2nd & 4th Mon., 7-9 pm	Scott Gerber	466-9333	CR		
Knitting Club 2nd & 4th Tues., 10 am-12 pm Joyce Hanmer 466-3018						
Adult Volleyball	Wed., 7-9 pm	Arlene Mayer	466-6641	School		
*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District **Reservations Required						

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradocommunity.org

At the Heart of Valentine's Day

T'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN when people express their love and/or affection by sending a Valentine's Day card—and, of course, flowers, chocolate, massage gift certificates and (if you believe advertisements) diamonds. As with all of our holidays, Valentine's Day has become com-

mercialized beyond the true meaning of the

day, second only to Christmas in the amount of greeting cards bought.

But I believe there still remains a desire of many to express love on this day.

There are varying opinions as to the origin of Valentine's Day. As with many holidays, there is a mixture of ancient Roman and early Christian influences on this day.

But what's it all about?

Lupercalia was a festival that began each February 15 in ancient Rome dedicated to the Roman god of agriculture, Faunus, and to the founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus. Late in the day, all the young women would write their names on slips of paper and place them in a special urn or box. Unwed young would each take their turn pulling a name out and become paired with that woman until the next Lupercalia. Often, the pairing would result in

According to some stories, Pope Gelasius declared February 14th St. Valentine's Day around 498 A.D. The Roman "lottery" system for romantic pairing was deemed un-Christian and outlawed. To replace the pagan god Lupercus, the Church needed to find a patron saint of love. They believed a priest named Valentine would be a good choice.

Valentine was captured and beheaded, supposedly on February 14, around 270 A.D. by Roman Emperor Claudius for performing marriages. Claudius had determined that men who had wives and families at home became poor soldiers, so he banned marriage. Valentine took on the plight of young couples in love and performed marriages for them. When Claudius found out about this, he had Valentine sent to prison where he was eventually beheaded. But while in prison, Valentine fell in love with the blind daughter of his jailer. Before his death he is claimed to have healed her blindness. He penned a farewell message to her that ended with "From your Valentine" which is thought to be the origin of that phrase.

Although there was no longer a lottery for women, Roman men used the mid-February holiday in commemoration of St. Valentine to seek the affection of women. It became a tradition for the men to give handwritten messages of affection containing Valentine's name to the women they admired.

Cupid, a favored Valentine icon, became associated with the holiday because he was the son of Venus, the Roman god of love and beauty.

Valentine's Day began to be popularly celebrated in Great Britain some time around the seventeenth century. By the middle of the eighteenth century, it was common for friends and lovers in all social classes to exchange handwritten notes. Near the end of the eighteenth century, once printing technology had improved, pre-printed cards began replacing handwritten letters. These cards made it easier for people to express their emotions at a time when they were discouraged from direct expression of their feelings. When postage rates dropped to a price affordable to many, there was a further increase in Valentine's Day greetings mailed. Americans probably began exchanging hand-made valentines in the early 1700s.

A Mount Holyoke College student, Esther Howland, created the first U.S.-made valentines. Her father, a stationer in Worcester, MA, imported valentines every year from England. Esther, however, decided to create her own valentine messages. Around 1830 she began importing lace, fine papers, and other supplies for her and her assistants to make Valentines with. As one of our first successful U.S. career women, her sales amounted to about a hundred thousand dollars annually--not bad for the

The Vistas and Information Committee members would like to express our appreciation to the community by wishing you a Happy Valentine's Day!

-Ken McPherson

Ravens and Crows—Which is Which Part 1 of 2

WAS REMINDED OF RAVENS and Crows (R&C) near sundown in January when I saw about 60 Crows between Ave. Eldorado and some houses, mostly on the ground. I have always found these all-black birds difficult to differentiate, especially from a distance. The American Crow is approximately 17.5" long with a wingspan of 39". The Common Raven is 24" long with a wingspan of 53". However, females are smaller, males larger, so that a large male Crow is close to the size of a small female Raven. There is some possibility of seeing a Chihuahuan Raven here. My closest bird list shows them in Bosque del Apache but they extend as far north as Colorado. Size-wise they are smack in the middle with a length of 19.5" and a wingspan 44". Other ways to distinguish Ravens from Crows-Ravens have slightly shaggy throat feathers and a slightly wedge-shaped tail; Crows tails are rounded. Crows have a higher pitched voice, with usual caaw sounds while Ravens are baritones, some calls reminiscent of a rusty hinge. www.naturesongs.com/pass.html choose Corvadie to compare sounds.) Ravens have thicker bills and longer nasal bristles. Up close a Raven looks really BIG!

Ravens and Crows are omnivorous. They have thick, sturdy legs and feet and walk on the ground where they eat roadkill, fruits, bread, vegetables, seeds and anything else edible. They will kill small birds and eat eggs in nests (both eject pellets.) Crows are adept at opening plastic garbage bags and often congregate at dumpsters, compost piles and other waste sites. R&C are resident with some winter sometimes with cooperative young from the previous year helping at the nest site. In cupped nests, they lay 4-6 eggs that hatch in 18-21 days. The helpless young fledge in 28-35 days. Parents may feed young as long as several months. I often see two birds flying together, doing rolls, dives and even flying upside down! These maneuvers may be part of courtship, pair bonding or done for fun. In the winter these birds congregate, sometimes 100 to a million in nighttime roosts that may be many miles from their foraging grounds. Reasons may range from protection while in a group, warmth from huddling, learning about food sources by following fatter

birds or maybe just a shortage of

movement. Pairs are thought to be monogamous

suitable trees. In 1999, the first U.S. exposure to West Nile Virus came when the R&C in the NY area started to die.

R&C are highly intelligent (at least for birds) and next month part 2 cover about their fascinating behaviors.

—Pam Henline

ECIA Board Election

HE ANNUAL ECIA BOARD election is just around the corner and there will be five vacancies to be filled. These positions provide an opportunity for interested persons to shape the community they live in.

It is important for the community and all potential candidates to understand some of the very basic requirements as outlined in the Bylaws and Election Policies and Procedures:

To run for the board, a candidate must file a petition that contains the candidate's name and the signatures of no less than 25 owners of property, each of whom must be a Member in Good Standing with the Association. These petitions will be available at the ECIA office on February 2, 2005, and must be filed by March 1, 2005.

Each candidate must file a résumé and position

statement with the ECIA office by March 1, 2005. This information is included in the ballot package sent to all Members in Good Standing.

The Election Committee will validate each candidate's petition by March 11, 2005. Election packets and the notice of the Annual Meeting of the Members will be mailed to each Member in Good Standing by March 31, 2005. The ballots have to be received at the ECIA office no later than April 28, 2005 in order to be considered valid. The Election Committee will count ballots, and announce the results at the Annual Meeting of the Members on Monday, May 2, 2005, 7:00 pm.

IMPORTANT! IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR ANNUAL ASSOCIATION FEES BY MARCH 8, 2005, YOU WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE!

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Tilda's Favorite Clothes

Tilda wears a tattered tutu everywhere she goes, with stripey tights and big black boots cut so's to fit her toes.

When Tilda passes on the street, everybody knows, it's not Halloween, they're just Tilda's favorite clothes.

She put them on some time ago, now no one knows just when, she swore she'd never take them off and that's the way it's been.

—Lynn McPherson