

# ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME XV, ISSUE 2  
February 2013

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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) ▼ Security 204-2945

## Eldorado Demographics

The 2010 Federal Census offers a wealth of demographic data for Eldorado. Fortunately, it compiled data for Eldorado as a "Census Designated Place" (CDP), which provides us with localized information separate from the rest of the county. However, the census's CDP of Eldorado includes our subdivision, "Eldorado at Santa Fe," as well as the 19 other surrounding subdivisions. This Greater Eldorado community, extending from Lamy to Interstate 25, is recorded as having a gross population of 6,130 people within its 20.7 square miles. Essentially, it is the old Simpson Ranch, which was purchased in its entirety in 1973 by AMREP, the developer of Eldorado.

The census records 3,100 households with 1,868 families in Greater Eldorado. "Eldorado at Santa Fe" accounts for 90% of the CDP population. Some of the other subdivisions in the CDP are only partially developed or still undeveloped. According to the census, the population makeup of the CDP is 94.0% white; 2.1% biracial or multiracial; 1.4% other races; 1.0% Asian; 0.8% Native American; 0.7% African American; and 0.016% Pacific Islanders. Hispanics or Latinos of any race constitute 12.7% of the populace.

The CDP age distribution—

under age 20	16.1%
age 20–24	1.6%
age 25–44	12.5%
age 45–64	48.8%
age 65+	21.1%

—gives us a median age of 52.2 years. With our current senior population, together with the Boomer Generation, we see our demographics shifting increasingly more toward a retirement community within the next ten years or so. Currently, 8.3% of CDP households have an individual living alone who is age 65 or older. The census projections also indicate that by 2030, New Mexico may place fourth in the nation for the percentage of senior residents.

In contrast, we also have a significant percentage of school age population, as indicated by the 19.5% of households with children under the age of 18.

Households with married couples living together make up 56.7% of our population, while 35.3% of households are composed of non-kin. Some 25.1% of households are made up of individuals living alone; 5.8% of householders are female with no husband present. The average household size is 2.12 individuals; 4.6% of the population is below the poverty level.

In the CDP, for every 100 females age 18 or over, there are 83.2 males.

—Don Dayton

*Data sources include 2010 Federal Census, AARP Public Policy Institute, and Wikipedia*

## Your Opinion Counts!

When I served as an ECIA Committee member and chair, I took it for granted that homeowners in our community understood the procedures by which we govern ourselves, and exercised their options to communicate their opinions/positions on matter of importance to them. On becoming a Board director, however, conversations and communications with Eldorado friends and neighbors made it clear that many lot and homeowners filed away their ECIA governing documents and Welcome Kit with their other property purchase papers. So here's a quick refresher on how Eldoradoans can make their positions/opinions known.

**ECIA Operations:** "Operations" are the day-to-day management activities of the Association. Our staff is here to communicate to and receive information from lot owners and other residents, answering your questions on how things work and getting your opinions. In cases where the staff (headed by our General Manager) cannot directly respond to your input, you may be referred to one of our committees who are responsible for dealing with "issues" and "opportunities." The starting point of contact would be the committee chairs. Their contact information is listed in *Vistas* and on the ECIA website, [eldoradosf.org](http://eldoradosf.org). Every committee has a "Public Forum" item on their meeting agenda, where any lot owner or resident can offer input or get questions answered, if possible. If the

Continued on p. 4

*ECIA Board  
Meeting,  
Community  
Center  
Railroad Bldg.  
Thurs.,  
February 21,  
7 pm.*



## 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 contact numbers for fact checking purposes. The newsletter will not publish unsigned letters or material deemed 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 e-mailed to [eciadiana@aol.com](mailto:eciadiana@aol.com). 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.

## Recent Board Actions

The ECIA Board held its regular meeting on December 20, with Board members **Ed Moreno** (President), **Jeanne Calzada** (Vice President), **Nolan Zisman** (Secretary), **Todd Handy** (Treasurer), **Paul Jacobs**, and **Jan Pietrzak**. The following formal actions were taken unanimously, unless otherwise noted:

- ▼ March 15, 2013, was established as the date for Members in Good Standing (all assessments and other obligations paid) to be eligible to vote on issues before the Annual Members Meeting in May. Because of appointments, no Director terms expire in 2013.

- ▼ The transfer of funds exceeding \$150,000 from the Unallocated Fund to the Replacement Reserve fund, previously approved in November, was reconsidered and canceled (Handy abstained).
- ▼ A variance was approved for 8 Laguna Lane to place a small accessory building 12 feet into a required 50-foot setback, with stipulations.
- ▼ **Dag Ryen** was appointed to the Board to fill an existing vacancy.

Board meetings are scheduled monthly on the third Thursday at 7 PM at the Community Center and are open to the public. An open forum, community announcements, and reports from ECIA committees are normally included. Complete minutes and meeting agendas are available at the ECIA office and website: <http://eldoradosf.org>.

## Vista Grande Public Library

Eldorado is fortunate in being the home territory of the Vista Grande Public Library (VGPL), which serves southeast Santa Fe County. If you visit or take a look at the VGPL website, [www.vglibrary.org](http://www.vglibrary.org), you will easily conclude that it is *public* in the best sense of that word. Our local library is totally devoted to community service, stays up-to-date and in tune with the latest elements in information technology, and relies mainly on the financial support of the people who take advantage of its services. The library's annual Ice Cream Social/Silent Auction and Bucks for Books are major funding events. Individual donors are few but generous, and local businesses help. A donation box at the circulation desk silently reminds visitors that they too can help maintain the services they are using.

Thank to VGPL's very motivated group of volunteers, which includes everyone who works there, with the exception of its one paid employee, the library director, the VGPL maintains programs that rival those of libraries elsewhere that have larger staffs and much more in the way of taxpayer funding.

The library has expanded once since it first opened its doors. Thanks both to Santa Fe County taxpayers and local donors, new construction that will double its square footage is in the final stages of approval and should begin in the spring. The expansion, which will take place on the west side of the building, will include not only greater space for regular library services but a large meeting room with its own entrance for community events.

The Library's many and varied programs are examples of imaginative service to users, designed to appeal to all age groups of the reading and computing public. The programs and services include:

- ▼ A collection of approximately 28,000 books and audio-visual materials
- ▼ Digital audiobooks for loan on iPods
- ▼ Access to VGPL's catalog from anywhere via the Internet; patrons are able to renew their checked-out materials, see what they have checked out, and place books and other circulating materials on hold for later pick-up
- ▼ Wi-Fi Internet access for personal laptops brought to the library
- ▼ Personal computers with access to the Internet, the library catalog, and Microsoft Office 2007 (for spreadsheet, word processing, and desktop publishing applications)
- ▼ Selected workstations for children.
- ▼ iMac computers with graphics and video editing capabilities
- ▼ Neighbors-in-Print listing of publications by local authors
- ▼ Links to websites related to our area
- ▼ Local events calendar of community activities
- ▼ Ask-an-expert sessions and reference services
- ▼ Access to interlibrary loan services for materials not in VGPL's collection.

### PROGRAMS

- ▼ Summer and After School Reading Programs
- ▼ Author talks
- ▼ Book groups

What else is left for VGPL to provide the people of this area? For most of us who live here, VGPL is

**Continued on p. 5**

## What the Future May Hold

Shortly after the John Brooks Supermarket opened in Eldorado in the mid-1990s, we got a call at home from a resident who was opposed to the supermarket. "It's people like you that are ruining Eldorado," the voice said, echoing the opinions of a number of residents who opposed the Agora and any other development that might change the "rural" character of the community.

Eldorado's history is very short. Land was platted, houses were built, style rules were adopted, and new residents moved in, mostly seeking an affordable home and a quiet neighborhood away from the city.

The population of Eldorado has about doubled since that time, and it is hard to imagine the community without the Agora and the La Tienda Complex on Avenida Vista Grande, and the many amenities, services, and community-building activities available in the commercial center.

In the 1990s, a number of residents decided that in order to make progress as a community, Eldorado should become an incorporated municipality and

chart its own independent course. Although that initiative failed, a dozen residents formed the Long Range Planning Committee of the ECIA and produced the 1998 Eldorado Master Plan.

Upon its creation a couple of years ago, the ECIA Sustainability, Planning and Education Committee was given the task of updating the Community Master Plan, which is now more complicated, influenced by Santa Fe County through its Sustainable Growth Management Plan, its ownership of Eldorado's roads, and substantial infrastructure investments in the Adam Senior Center, Vista Grande Library, fire department, as well as the Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District.

All of this leads back to questions that have come up in the past year about what kind of community we want to have in the future, and how we can evolve into it. For a preview, I recommend that you read Don Dayton's article on the census data from 2010, and reflect on what it means for Eldorado's future.

—Ed Moreno, ECIA President

## Choosing a Contractor

Every year, we hear from residents who had a bad experience with a building contractor. Problems cited include contractors who abandoned projects to those whose workmanship was shoddy. To help prevent such possible headaches, we encourage all residents to do the following before selecting their contractor:

1. Check to see that the contractor you are considering is properly licensed and has no complaints against lodged against him or her. You can verify contractor licenses at the New Mexico Construction Industries website, [www.rld.state.nm.us/construction/](http://www.rld.state.nm.us/construction/). This same website can be used to file a complaint against a contractor.
2. Verify that the prospective contractor has a current New Mexico liability insurance policy.
3. Get a list of references from the contractor for other work done in the Eldorado area, and follow up with these references to be sure that they were pleased with the work performed.
4. Ask for written estimates from multiple contractors, but think twice before automatically going for the one with the lowest price. Better contractors may charge more, but they probably offer greater value. Be skeptical of extremely low bids.
5. Make sure the contractor you choose certifies that his or her work will conform to state and local regulations and codes.

6. Verify that the contractor carries New Mexico Workers Compensation Insurance.

For further information on choosing a contractor, here are some relevant websites:

▼ US Small Business Association:  
[www.sba.gov/content/choosing-contractor](http://www.sba.gov/content/choosing-contractor)

▼ Consumer Reports:  
[www.consumerreports.org/cro/home-garden/resource-center/choosing-a-contractor/overview/index.htm](http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/home-garden/resource-center/choosing-a-contractor/overview/index.htm)

▼ For Heating and Cooling Contractors:  
<http://aceee.org/consumer/how-choose-contractor>

By doing your homework, you will be much less likely to run into disreputable contractors, and the work will be done right and in a timely manner. If you need a copy of the Covenants or Guidelines, please give me a call and/or visit the "Architectural Info" page at our website, [www.eldoradosf.org/architecture/index.html](http://www.eldoradosf.org/architecture/index.html). If you have any questions, please call me at the ECIA at 466-4248.

—Mark Young, Covenant Compliance Representative

### ECIA 2013 Budget Available

The 2013 ECIA Operation Budget is available online at [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org). Copies are also available at the ECIA office. If you would like a copy sent to you, call **Bill Donohue** at 466-4248.

### ECIA OFFICE

#1 La Hacienda Loop  
Santa Fe, NM 87508  
466-4248, 466-4249  
[ecommunity@aol.com](mailto:ecommunity@aol.com)  
[www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org)

Security  
204-2945

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Ed Moreno  
466-1183  
[edmoreno@newmexico.com](mailto:edmoreno@newmexico.com)

Vice-President

Jeanne Calzada  
[mygoodomi@gmail.com](mailto:mygoodomi@gmail.com)

Secretary

Nolan Zisman  
[pnzisman@aol.com](mailto:pnzisman@aol.com)

Treasurer

Todd Handy  
466-3785

Todd Gilliss@yaho.com

Director

Paul Jacobs  
[jacobsedsvcs@comcast.net](mailto:jacobsedsvcs@comcast.net)

Director

Jan Pietrzak  
[jpptprnt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jpptprnt@sbcglobal.net)

Director

Dag Ryen  
[dryen@heliconwest.com](mailto:dryen@heliconwest.com)

### COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Architecture:

Katherine Mortimer  
Conservation: John Parker

Election: Kathie Graham  
Facilities & Grounds:

Jean Crawford

Finance: Dan Drobnis

Information: Open

Neighborhood Watch:

Marilyn Walker

Roads: Michael Chester

Stable: Gretel Underwood  
(Interim Chair)

Sustainability, Planning, &  
Education: Steve Rudnick

### ECIA STAFF

General Manager

Bill Donohue

466-4248, [gmbill1@aol.com](mailto:gmbill1@aol.com)

Covenant Compliance Rep

Mark Young

466-4248

[mark@eldoradosf.com](mailto:mark@eldoradosf.com)

Community Services Mgr

Raven Hicks

204-2945, [eciasm@aol.com](mailto:eciasm@aol.com)

### VISTAS NEWSLETTER

Editor & Designer

Carol Leyba

466-1158

[chsleyba@comcast.net](mailto:chsleyba@comcast.net)

Webmaster:

Jack Arnold

[jwellsarnold@gmail.com](mailto:jwellsarnold@gmail.com)

Editorial Assistant:

DiAna Gutierrez

466-4248

[diana@eldoradosf.com](mailto:diana@eldoradosf.com)

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Vista Grande Library

466-READ

Fire and Rescue

466-1204

[eldoradofirerescue.org](http://eldoradofirerescue.org)

County All Purpose

820-CNTY (2689)



**NOTE TO RESIDENTS:  
ECIA ASSESSMENTS MUST  
BE PAID BY MARCH 15 TO  
OBTAIN A POOL PASS THIS  
SUMMER!**



*In Remembrance of Martin*  
screens Feb. 8 at the Senior Center



## Senior Center News

Winter greetings from Adam Senior Center. On behalf of the members and staff, we'd like to thank our generous community for the gifts and performances that were bestowed on us during the holiday season. We were truly blessed.

We have many special activities lined up for February.

▼ On Friday, February 8 at 12:45 PM, a special presentation and film will be screened entitled *In Remembrance of Martin*. The story of America's prophet of nonviolence and justice as told by those who knew him best, this film was commissioned by Coretta Scott King for the first anniversary of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. *The Washington Post* called it "A genuine jewel."

▼ **Selene Sinclair**, a local artist, will teach a drawing class on Tuesdays, starting February 5, from 1:30 to 3 PM for four weeks. Sign-ups are required, as spaces are limited.

▼ **Marilyn Salas** will lead a Zumba-thon for seniors at 1 PM on Monday, February 11. If there is enough participation, this class will be offered permanently. Come dance and have fun while exercising.

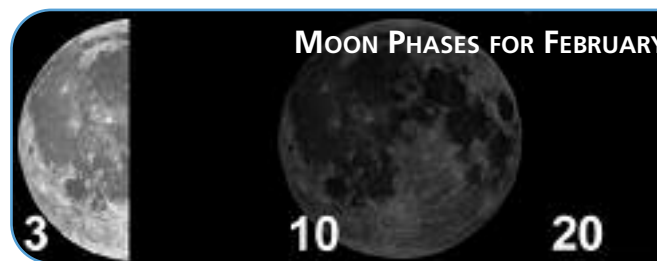
▼ Santa Fe County will hold a Valentine's Day Dance on Tuesday, February 12 at the Santa Fe Rodeo Grounds from 1 to 4 PM. All seniors are welcome.

▼ One-on-one computer training is available for both PC and Mac users. Call the Center to make an appointment.

▼ There is still room for any adults who want to go to San Antonio with the Senior Center group on April 7–13, 2013. The cost is \$570 per person. Please call Dolores at 466-3848 for more details.

The Adam Senior Center offers these activities and so many others, including a wide variety of exercise, art classes, and field trips which are free to members 60 years old and above. Delicious and nutritious congregate meals are served Monday through Friday from noon to 1 PM for a suggested \$1.50 donation. It only takes 10 minutes to become a member and it is free, so call me at 466-1039 or come on by to make an appointment. Our address is 14 Avenida de Torreon.

—Carol Branch



## Your Opinion, cont. from p. 1

committee doesn't have the answer, they may put the subject on a future agenda, giving themselves time to develop an appropriate position on the matter. If the committee cannot appropriately resolve the matter, they, or the lot owner/resident, may choose to take the matter to the Board. Starting the process in this manner produces a much smoother self-governing environment.

Another opportunity exists to have your views heard. At the end of each year, the Finance Committee conducts a public forum to review a draft of the budget for the following year. This includes a review of all the expenses planned for our next year's operations and the revenues needed to cover them (primarily from homeowner assessments).

**ECIA Projects:** Your Board and staff have an obligation to manage and maintain our existing amenities in as good a condition as existed when they were turned over by AMREP to the ECIA. There are, of course, practical considerations in doing this. For example, the ongoing drought has affected our ability to maintain a large grassy area on the athletic field. Consequently, the Facilities and Grounds Committee recommended to the Board that the turf-covered area of the field be reduced by one-third, which the Board approved. As residents can now see, the field has been regraded, the backstop and infield moved farther from Avenida del Monte Alto and, once the snow melts, a dirt surface will be visible. Grass will be planted only if and when there is enough water to support a grass field.

Again, the committees responsible for our amenities and roads hold public forums at their meetings, allowing lot owners/residents to express their views on how our amenities and roads should be managed. Any time a new amenity is considered—even a transformation of an existing amenity into a different type of amenity (e.g., the Dog Park)—a public forum is scheduled by the Board to get public input. An annual public forum is held when budgets for the following year, including expenditures on amenities, are being finalized. Another opportunity for airing your views is lot owner/resident participation in periodic surveys. A major survey on paving our roads was conducted in 2010, and a survey on the use of our



amenities was conducted in 2012. Results are posted in *Vistas* and on the ECIA website.

In connection with our roads, which are owned by and the responsibility of the county, the starting point is our Road Committee. Our county commissioners and legislative representatives also hold periodic open meetings to capture public input on topics of interest. While I have seen a slight increase in attendance at these meetings, the number of attendees is very small in relation to the size of our community.

And then there are our elections. We are required to conduct votes whenever we have candidates running for the ECIA Board, as well as when there are proposed changes to our governing documents (i.e. by-laws and covenants). Similarly, the county is required to hold votes whenever funding county facilities (including roads) are planned via bond issues, as was the case in November 2012.

—Nolan Zisman

To be continued; Part 2 of this article will appear in the March issue.

## VGPL, cont. from p. 2

not the library we remember from our youngest days, with its solemn signs enjoining "Silence." Not disturbing others as they enjoy the quiet of the library is still important, but our library remains what libraries have always been: an aggregation of knowledge and culture and a place to think. What is different now is that VGPL is doing it with what might be called "full-force technology." We are fortunate to have the services VGPL provides. It deserves our support.

—Frank Schober

# February Events

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

Email [eciamarilyn@aol.com](mailto:eciamarilyn@aol.com) 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 FEBRUARY EVENTS

TGIF	Fri., Feb. 15, 5-7 pm	LR
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### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Architectural Committee	Tues., Feb. 12, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Architectural Committee	Tues., Feb. 26, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Board Work Study	Mon., Feb. 18, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Conservation Committee	Tues., Feb. 5, 7-9 pm	John Parker	466-7513	F
ECIA Board Meeting	Thurs., Feb. 21, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	RR
Facilities & Grounds	Tues., Feb. 5, 4-6 pm	Jean Crawford	466-1000	CFR
Finance Committee	Wed., Feb. 13, 9:30-11:30	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Information Committee	Tues., Feb. 26, 7-9 pm			CFR
Road Committee	Mon., Feb. 4, 6-8 pm	Michael Chester	975-6930	CFR
Stable Committee	Tues., Feb. 26, 7-9 pm	Gretel Underwood	466-7825	LR
SPE Committee	Thurs., Feb. 14, 7-9 pm	Steve Rudnick	466-1335	CFR

### MONTHLY / SEMI-MONTHLY MEETINGS

EAWS&SD*	1st & 3rd Thurs, 7-9 pm	Anna Mondragon	466-1085	RR/CR
Eldorado Camera Club	4th Wednesday, 7-9	biordi@aol.com		La Tienda
La Canada Wireless	2nd & 4th Mon., 7-9 pm	lcwireless.org		
Library Book Group	2nd Saturday 9-10:30	Joan LaMarque	466-6000	CFR
Library Book Group	3rd Mon., 7-9 pm	Pam Henline	466-4781	VGPL
Roadrunner RV	3rd Tues. of month	Pat Stewart	820-0303	
Search & Rescue	2nd Thurs, 5-9 pm	santafesar.org		CR

### WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tues., 5:45-6:45 pm			CFR/LR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am			CFR/CR
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	Every Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Jim Davidson	670-6949	LR
Bridge	Every Other Fri., 9-noon	Natalie Bernet	466-6118	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	Wed., 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Fire & Rescue Work Duty	Sat., Call for time	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Knitting Club	Tues., 10-12 noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	LR
Life Drawing	Mon. 10am -12pm	Jack McCarthy	466-9601	RR
Overeaters Anon	Mon., 7-8 pm			LR
Senior Lunch***	Mon.-Fri., 12-1 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)**

## Eldorado 285 Recycles

“Eldorado 285 Recycles” is the new name for the Eldorado Recycling Committee, a volunteer group affiliated with both the Sustainable Eldorado Residents Alliance and with ECIA’s Sustainability, Planning and Education Committee.

The group’s primary mission is to encourage residents to recycle all the materials they can on a regular basis. In a very brief time, this committee has become the leading advocate for change in recycling in the Santa Fe area. Its representatives participate regularly in the meetings of county and city agencies dealing with solid waste and recycling, such as the Santa Fe County Solid Waste Task Force and the Joint Powers Board, which oversees the local landfill and the Buckman transfer and recycling station. They have also taken a lead in educating residents by developing recycling guides with information about what items can and cannot currently be recycled. Their guide has been adopted for use at all of the county’s transfer stations.

Within the Eldorado community, Eldorado 285 Recycles has established and maintains bins at La Tienda (in Buildings A and B) to collect the follow-

ing materials: old athletic shoes, household batteries of all types, #5 plastic containers, and old plastic writing instruments such as magic markers and ball point pens. Residents can now recycle all these materials! Committee representatives have also visited the Vista Grande Library, El Dorado Community School, the Senior Center, and local businesses at the Agora to encourage recycling and provide assistance.

They are also working with the county to improve the facilities at the local transfer station on Highway 285. Eventually, they hope to see upgrades in the roads, dumpsters, and signage there, so that the many Eldorado residents who use this facility will be better served.

Eldorado 285 Recycles is making a twofold appeal to local residents. First, recycle everything you can on a regular basis. It is the right thing to do and an easy habit to develop. Second, please consider joining the committee. Much has been accomplished by devoted volunteers, but more can be done with additional help. If you are interested, contact either **Joe Eigner** ([joseigner@gmail.com](mailto:joseigner@gmail.com)) or **Karen Sweeney** ([ksweeney99@yahoo.com](mailto:ksweeney99@yahoo.com)). Any assistance would be appreciated.

—Joe Durlak, member of Eldorado 285 Recycles

## Reel New Mexico 2013 Season

Reel New Mexico, New Mexico’s only ongoing independent monthly film series, heads into its second year on February 21 with a new film by two of last year’s most popular filmmakers.

*Still Dreaming* is a documentary feature from **Jillann Spitzmiller** and **Hank Rogerson**, makers of last year’s award-winning, standing-room-only *Shakespeare Behind Bars*. Where the 2012 film chronicled a production of Shakespeare’s “The Tempest” in a medium-security Kentucky prison, *Still Dreaming* tells the story of the high-stakes return to the stage by a group of entertainers living at a home for aging actors just outside Manhattan.

A work-in-progress, shown for audience feedback, *Still Dreaming* follows two young co-directors and

an ensemble of actors in their eighties who mount a production of the Bard’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” After six eventful weeks of rehearsals, they pull off two vibrant performances for friends and family. Along the way, the film explores hard questions about what should be asked of senior citizens and what they

should ask of themselves, whether creativity is an essential human endeavor even into old age, and what is the value of community and intergenerational projects.

Founded early in 2012 by film enthusiasts and professional filmmakers, the Reel New Mexico Independent Film Series celebrates local cinema and invites audiences to join the celebration. Formed to expand awareness of film projects involving New Mexico residents, the series is a monthly screening of films followed by audience discussions with producers, directors, writers, and others involved in the films’ production. The Board of Reel New Mexico comprises film enthusiasts who wish to promote filmmaking and viewing and to connect area filmmakers with new audiences and with one another.

With the exception of this year’s opening program, set for February 21, all screenings take place on the second Thursday of each month at 7 PM at The Performance Space in La Tienda, a comfortable 100-seat venue with state-of-the-art equipment. A contribution of \$5 is suggested at the door. More about Reel New Mexico and directions to the venue can be found at [www.reelnewmexico.com](http://www.reelnewmexico.com).

—Diane Thomas



Bob Evans is seen as the dying Thisbe, with Noah Brody, co-director of the production, in *Still Dreaming*.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH FLORA AND FAUNA WORKING GROUP

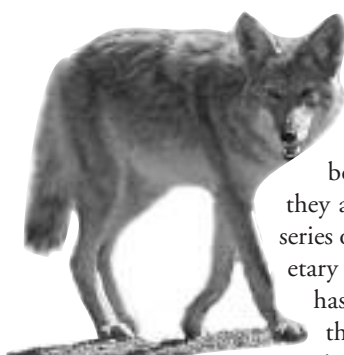
# Coyotes in our Midst

*"If all the creatures in the world were to die, the coyote would be the last one." —Native American legend*

There is so much that can be written about coyotes—versatile and enduring animals, as they are—but space limits the scope of information.

We cohabitate with the Western coyote (*Canis latrans*), which is smaller than its eastern kin. Both have long, bushy tails that hang straight down, not curling like tails of domestic dogs. Typically, Western coyotes don't form packs; however, there has been at least one report of a "pack" of nine or so coyotes south of Spur Ranch Road recently that attacked an off-leash domestic dog. When they do pack, there is one mated pair, and the rest of the pack is composed of the offspring, who do not mate with each other.

Coyotes have two levels of home ground: home range and territory. Home range is the area over which the coyote travels in a given year and may cover as much as 26 square miles, depending on gender and availability of prey. By contrast, its territory is considered private property and is marked by scent, scratch marks, and scat and fiercely defended. While home range may overlap with that of another coyote, territory does not.



The coyote has been long accused of wreaking havoc on domestic livestock. There are bona fide cases, but they are rare. Through a series of studies on the dietary habits of coyotes, it has been established that, generally speaking, small rodents

make up 70.2% of the coyote diet, rabbits 8.2%, and raccoons, opossums, muskrats, deer, plants, and insects the remainder.

Coyote tracks differ from those of the domestic dog in several ways: the front nails of domestic dogs spread out more and sometimes slant away from each other, while the side nails of the coyote tend not to register at all. The front track is 2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>–3 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches long by 1 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>–2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches wide, and the rear track is 2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>–2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches long by 1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>–2 inches wide. The heel pad of the coyote is farther away from the front toes, while that of the domestic dog is usually closer to the front toes. A dog's track is rounder, more

defined, and more splayed. The coyote tracks will more closely resemble a dog's in snow and sand because these substances tend to push between the toes, thereby causing splaying.

Stride patterns tend to be between 16 and 25 inches apart and are very regular and disciplined. On rare occasions, a domestic dog may fall into a trail like this, but won't or can't sustain it. When the coyote is in a lope, the tracks are very close together and follow a front-rear-front-rear pattern. In a full gallop, the pattern is front-front-back-back and high-speed gallops can approach 40 MPH.

Coyote scat is generally found in the middle of trails, sometimes at a high point, on a stone or some other raised object. It generally has a mild, musky odor, unlike the highly odiferous dog scat. Coyotes, like dogs and foxes, make elongated narrow scratches with their front and rear paws after urinating or defecating. With scent glands in their paws, the coyote may also be scenting the ground. Identifying a coyote by scat is somewhat difficult. Scat size ranges from <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inch (Arizona coyote) to 1 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches (Idaho) in diameter. Summer scat is the most difficult to identify reliably because foxes, raccoons, and coyote have very similar diets, whereas winter scat of wild canines contains hair and pieces of bone.

Since coyotes are so much a part of our local environment, I encourage interested folks to read up on their habits. They are true survivors!

On a separate note: Apropos of a previous article dealing in part with the Migratory Bird Act (*Vistas*, November 2013), there have since been two landmark settlements regarding the Gulf of Mexico oil spill: one with BP and a second with Transocean. In both cases, the Migratory Bird Act of 1913 was cited in the litany of violations.

—Nina Harrison, N815@aol.com

Domestic dog



Coyote



Coyote tracks (above) differ from domestic dog tracks (below) in their overall shape, being more oval than dog tracks, which are more round and more splayed.

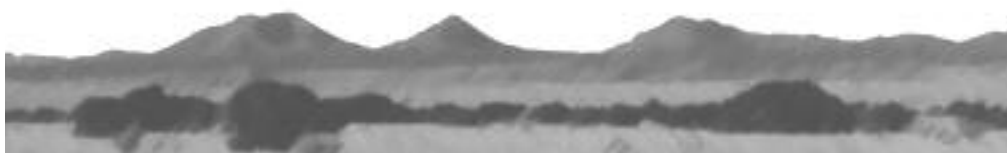


Domestic dog

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