

# ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME XVI, ISSUE 2  
February 2014

## IN THIS ISSUE

ECIA News.....	2-3
In the Community.....	4-5
Roads .....	6
Ring-necked Pheasant.....	7
Mountain Lions & Juniper..	7

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

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# What Is the ECIA? It's All of Us!

The ECIA is the Eldorado Community Improvement Association, the association of home and lot owners in Eldorado at Santa Fe.

### WHAT IS ELDORADO?

Eldorado is a formal subdivision, Eldorado at Santa Fe. Many use the term "Eldorado" to refer loosely to both sides of US 285 between I-25 and Lamy. However, Eldorado has very definite boundaries, and those owning property within them have in their property deed the specific reference to "Eldorado at Santa Fe" and the requirement to abide by its Protective Covenants and Building Restrictions.

### WHAT IS AN HOA?

A homeowners association (HOA) is a private corporation. It is needed to manage a community's common properties and amenities and to administer Protective Covenants and Building Restrictions, which take the place of zoning regulations in a municipality. Covenants control the development and appearance of individual houses and structures and establish other rules that a municipality would handle with ordinances.

### WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE ECIA?

All owners of lots or homes in Eldorado are ECIA members and are required to pay an annual assessment to fund amenities and Covenant enforcement, currently \$400 per lot per year. Residents who rent their homes are responsible to the property owners for also knowing and following the community's rules, and may, with the owner's written permission registered at the ECIA office, enjoy the Association's amenities.

### HOW IS THE ECIA GOVERNED?

In addition to Articles of Incorporation, which created the ECIA as a New Mexico Corporation, there are Corporate Bylaws to establish how the Corporation is governed by its members, Architectural Covenants to set standards for development, and Architectural Guidelines to provide detailed guidance for consistent interpretation of the Covenants. All are available on the ECIA website at [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org) and at the ECIA office.

### WHO RUNS THE ECIA?

A volunteer Board of Directors, currently composed of seven members, is elected for a term of three years. Elections occur in March, with terms beginning at the end of the Annual Members' Meeting in early May. Terms beginning in 2014 are staggered. Vacancies between elections are filled by vote of the remaining Board members. Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7 PM at the Community Center and are open to all Association members.

The Association has a full-time staff of six, including a general manager, who is responsible for implementing Board policies and managing the staff. The staff performs maintenance, clerical work, security, covenant enforcement, member service, and financial tasks. Three regular part-timers assist with maintenance and in the office, and in summer there are up to 15 part-time lifeguards and maintenance workers.

The Board recruits dozens of volunteer ECIA members for its committees, who provide expertise and advice. All committee meetings are open to all ECIA members, and each committee may nominate new members from those who have attended at least three meetings. The Board votes to approve new committee members. The committees are Architectural Review, Finance, Conservation, Information, Roads, Stable, Election, Sustainability Planning and Education, and Facilities and Grounds.

### WHY IS ELDORADO NOT AN INCORPORATED MUNICIPALITY?

A lively debate took place 15 years ago on this topic, with the community voting by almost 2-1 to remain unincorporated. A principal argument was that the services provided by volunteers would be expensive to replace on a professional basis, and the opportunity for close personal involvement would be diminished.

### SO WHO IS OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

Santa Fe County is our local government, and the Board of County Commissioners is our local legislative body. Traffic violations, animal control, noisy neighbors,

Continued on page 5

*ECIA Board  
Meeting,  
Community  
Center  
Railroad Bldg.  
Thurs.,  
February 20,  
7 pm.*





**Share your  
comments  
with us!**

*For policy and  
deadline, see  
below*

### Editorial Policy

Vistas invites ideas, stories, photos, and art from the community at large. 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; 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 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.

## Board Director Elections

The ECIA Board elections are fast approaching, and all seven positions are up for election. Board directors act as trustees for our Association and our members. Every month, directors attend two work sessions and a formal Board meeting. In addition, each director serves as liaison to one of Eldorado's committees. Candidates should anticipate spending ten hours per month in meetings. Other duties include communicating with members, maintaining relations with other agencies along the 285 corridor, and holding informal discussions with other Board directors. According to current ECIA President, **Dag Ryen**, these obligations can "easily double the monthly time commitment."

Anyone interested in becoming a Board director must be in good standing with the Association, which means paying the 2014 assessment by March 1. It is also helpful to have strong communication skills because directors regularly interact with lot owners. Experience with association management, budget preparation, or staff management is always desirable.

Prospective candidates need to gather twenty-five signatures on a petition from lot owners—not renters—in good standing. Owners of multiple lots are entitled to an equal number of signatures. Petitions are available at the ECIA office from January 2 and on Eldorado's website from January 6. Completed petitions must be returned to the ECIA office by 5 PM on March 3, along with a resume and concise statement outlining the candidate's goals for Eldorado.

For the first time, two forums will be held before the election, as an opportunity for voting members to learn more about the candidates. ECIA members will receive their ballots by mail. The final date to return ballots is May 1. The Election Committee will count the votes the following day at 10 AM in the ECIA Conference Room, and candidates are permitted to quietly watch the proceedings, although they may only interact with the chairperson. Election results will be announced on May 5 at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

*—Juliet White*

## Garden Structures

As the temperatures begin to warm, and with days getting longer, many residents will be thinking of gardening at this time of year. And given Eldorado's arid environment, with its unique set of challenges, our local gardeners often begin to think of different ways to protect their young, fragile plants from the sun, wind, and a host of predators. To help with this process, we thought that listing some of the Eldorado Guidelines relative to garden structures would be appropriate, and below are some of the applicable guidelines.

### SECTION 15, PAGE 11: GARDEN FENCES

A blanket approval is given to these types of enclosures provided they meet the following requirements:

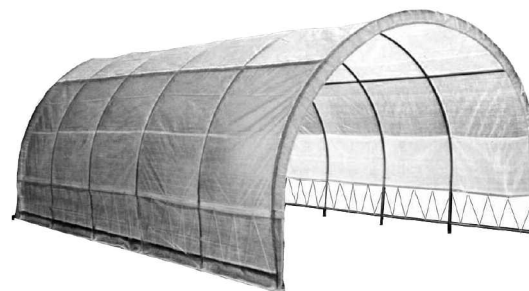
1. Garden enclosures are not to be higher than 3 feet enclosing only the garden area.
2. Garden enclosures are not to exceed 1000 square feet.
3. Garden enclosures are considered to be temporary in nature.
4. Materials shall be wood post and wire.
5. All property line setbacks specified in the Covenants shall be observed for fences and walls. The exceptions include trees, hedges, or other plantings on or near the property line.

For building requirements on permanent greenhouses or shade structures, please refer to the Small

Accessory guidelines on page 10 of the Eldorado Guidelines for Protective Covenants at this web link: [http://eldoradosf.org/images/document/ecia\\_guidelines\\_for\\_protective\\_covenants\\_final\\_draft\\_april\\_21\\_2011.pdf](http://eldoradosf.org/images/document/ecia_guidelines_for_protective_covenants_final_draft_april_21_2011.pdf).

Residents should also be aware that the Architectural Committee in 2013 had worked on drafting additional Guidelines language that would more appropriately address permanent garden structures in Eldorado. This wording, which will be brought before the ECIA Board for review in 2014 (as part of a more comprehensive Guidelines update), will address greenhouse and hoop-house structures in more detail. In the interim, residents should call or e-mail me, Mark Young, at the ECIA for any specific garden structure questions. Happy Gardening!

*—Mark Young, Covenant Compliance Representative*



## Message from the ECIA Board

It has been 41 years since the first lots in Eldorado were sold by AMREP, the American Real Estate and Petroleum Company. Through four decades, growth and change have been constants for the community. Many of the first homes in the development have undergone extensive modifications or expansions. Roads have been improved year to year. Utility coverage has expanded. Even today, our cable, telephone, and electricity providers are completing major upgrades within Eldorado. Retail opportunities at the Agora and La Tienda have increased, and we've seen the addition of a library and a senior center. Just last year, a major renovation and expansion project at the El Dorado Community School was completed.

The changes have been sporadic. Because of the national recession, new home construction came to a halt in Eldorado over the past few years. Today, however, a new home is under construction near Avenida Vista Grande, and realtors report increased interest in the score of undeveloped lots in the community.

Change will continue to be a factor for Eldorado's residents. For the members of your Association's Board, the challenge will be to balance the inevitable change with the covenants and traditions that make

Eldorado unique. We have always treasured our semi-rural environment, our environmentally friendly profile, our night skies, our respect for quiet and privacy.

However, economic and demographic changes often make our task more difficult. Dependence on automobiles to reach workplaces and other destinations has led to an overabundance of vehicles in our community. Many of our homes have been built with inadequate storage for the things that modern families accumulate. As a result, we've seen a proliferation of sheds and storage facilities. And, of course, technological developments have led to a new generation of solar installations, some of which seem to mar the visual aesthetics of our community.

The bottom line is that we have to deal with these challenges carefully. There aren't always easy answers. But Eldorado was never meant to be just another bedroom suburb. Our traditions and our uniqueness are important to the majority of Eldorado residents, and the Board will work hard to make sure that individual needs are met within the covenants and other guidelines that have served us well for more than four decades.

—The ECIA Board of Directors

## Recent Board Actions

The ECIA Board held its regular meeting on December 19, with all seven Board members present: **Dag Ryen** (President and Chair), **Jan Pietrzak** (Vice-President), **Karyn Mounsey** (Secretary), **Todd Handy** (Treasurer), **Jeanne Calzada**, **Pam Henline**, and **Dave Perlmutter**. The following formal actions were taken unanimously, without the Chair voting:

- ▼ The 2014 Operating Budget of \$972,722 was adopted as recommended by the Finance Committee, including a 2014 annual assessment of \$400; a transfer to Capital Reserves of \$26,000; an Operating Contingency of \$15,000; and a transfer to Replacement Reserves of \$111,978, for a total of \$1,132,700.
- ▼ Credit cards will continue to be accepted for assessment payments, with an additional \$10 convenience fee.
- ▼ The Association's auditor was instructed to use the 2013 Replacement Reserve transfer to adjust any 2013 Operating Surplus or Deficit to \$0.

- ▼ The 2014 Replacement Reserve maintenance budget was established not to exceed \$178,261.
- ▼ March 1, 2014, was set as the Date of Record for payment of the 2014 assessment to be a Member in Good Standing (including eligibility to vote or run for office in the 2014 Board Election).
- ▼ A charter was adopted for the Elections Committee.
- ▼ A variance was denied for 23 Chusco Road for an 8-foot fence to screen a storage pod, where the Guideline height is 6 feet.
- ▼ A variance for a solar array was amended to allow the array to be 50 feet from the house, where a previous variance was for a shorter distance. (5-0-1, Henline abstaining.)

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, community announcements, and reports from ECIA committees are normally included. Complete minutes and meeting agendas are available at the ECIA office or website: <http://eldoradosf.org>.

### ECIA OFFICE

#1 La Hacienda Loop  
Santa Fe, NM 87508  
466-4248, 466-4249  
[ecomunity@aol.com](mailto:ecomunity@aol.com)  
[www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org)  
Security  
204-2945

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Dag Ryen**  
[D.Ryen@eldoradosf.org](mailto:D.Ryen@eldoradosf.org)  
President  
**Jan Pietrzak**  
[J.Pietrzak@eldoradosf.org](mailto:J.Pietrzak@eldoradosf.org)  
Vice-President  
**Karyn Mounsey**  
[K.Mounsey@eldoradosf.org](mailto:K.Mounsey@eldoradosf.org)  
Secretary  
**Todd Handy**  
466-3785  
[T.Handy@eldoradosf.org](mailto:T.Handy@eldoradosf.org)  
Treasurer  
**Jeanne Calzada**  
[J.Calzada@eldoradosf.org](mailto:J.Calzada@eldoradosf.org)  
Director  
**Pam Henline**  
[P.Henline@eldoradosf.org](mailto:P.Henline@eldoradosf.org)  
Director  
**David Perlmutter**  
[D.Perlmutter@eldoradosf.org](mailto:D.Perlmutter@eldoradosf.org)  
Director

### COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

**Architecture:**  
**Katherine Mortimer**  
Conservation: **Jim Daniel & Cherry Payne**  
Election: **Kathie Graham**  
Facilities & Grounds:  
**John Calzada**  
Finance: **Dan Drobnis**  
Information: **Frank Schober**  
Roads: **Open**  
Stable: **Gretel Underwood**  
(Interim Chair)  
Sustainability, Planning, & Education: **Steve Rudnick**

### ECIA STAFF

**General Manager**  
**Bill Donohue**  
466-4248  
[bill@eldoradosf.org](mailto:bill@eldoradosf.org)  
Covenant Compliance Rep  
**Mark Young**  
466-4248  
[mark@eldoradosf.org](mailto:mark@eldoradosf.org)  
Community Services Mgr  
**Raven Hicks**  
204-2945  
[raven@eldoradosf.org](mailto:raven@eldoradosf.org)  
**VISTAS NEWSLETTER**  
Editor & Designer  
**Carol Leyba**  
466-1158  
[cbsleyba@comcast.net](mailto:cbsleyba@comcast.net)  
Webmaster:  
**Jack Arnold**  
[webmaster@eldoradosf.org](mailto:webmaster@eldoradosf.org)  
Editorial Assistant:  
**DiAna Gutierrez**  
466-4248  
[diana@eldoradosf.org](mailto:diana@eldoradosf.org)  
**COMMUNITY RESOURCES**  
Vista Grande Library  
466-READ  
Fire and Rescue  
466-1204  
[eldoradofirerescue.org](http://eldoradofirerescue.org)  
County All Purpose  
820-CNTY (2689)





Get Your Garden Going!

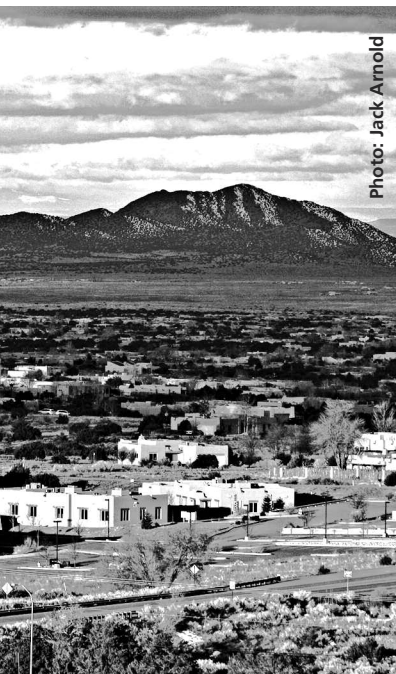


Photo: Jack Arnold

What's happening in your neighborhood?

**PROTECT OUR NIGHT SKY**

**Residents:** Please take down all your holiday lighting if you haven't already done so.

Lights carelessly left on may spoil our night skies (and waste energy).

**Town Forum Scheduled**

A town forum has been scheduled for February 26 at 7 PM in the Railroad Building at the Community Center. All ECIA members encouraged to attend.

**Gardening 101: The Basics of Gardening in Santa Fe**

On Saturday, March 8 from 8 AM to 4 PM, Gardening 101: The Basics of Gardening in Santa Fe will feature sessions designed to give new or new-to-Santa Fe gardeners a primer of knowledge to deal with the special challenges of gardening in and around Santa Fe. This class, taught by local gardening experts **Tracy Neal** and **Arina Pittman**, is ideal for beginning gardeners or those new to the area. The course fee is \$45 and the registration deadline is March 1. Space is limited, so register at [SFMGA.org](http://SFMGA.org) today. Gardening 101 is a production of Santa Fe Master Gardener Association in partnership with NMSU.

**The Web Doctor Is In!**

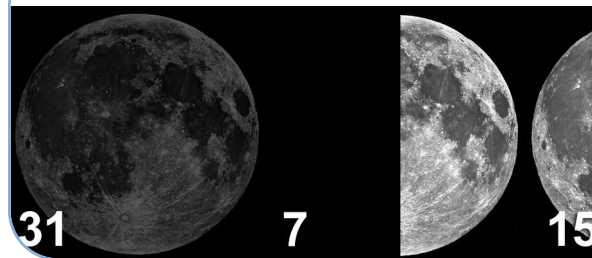
Join **Jack Arnold** every Wednesday from 10:30 AM to noon at Las Chivas Coffee for free advice on how you can use the Web and social media to promote your business or artwork!

**What's Happening on Your Block?**

Want to know what is happening regarding building and permits in and around your neighborhood? Check the requests that the Architectural Committee and the Board are considering for approval, by going to the agendas of the Board and the Architectural Committee on our website: [eldoradosf.org](http://eldoradosf.org) > Board and Committees > Board [or] Architectural Committee > Agendas.

**ECIA Architectural Committee Update**

To provide an additional measure of personal privacy with respect to Eldorado resident property files at the ECIA, members of the ECIA Architectural Committee have developed a new Access Authorization form. This new one-page form can be found on the ECIA website under Resident Resources/ Forms and Applications. It will be used when anyone wants to access the ECIA property files of an Eldorado resident. Such persons will be required to go to the homeowner to complete this form, which will authorize the applicant to review any house plans, approvals, correspondence, or other information contained in the files sought. Examples of persons who often come to the ECIA seeking such information include realtors, contractors, architects, and landscape contractors. With this new form, homeowners will be able to specify exactly who has authorization to access their property files and what file contents may be reviewed. For additional information, please call **Mark Young** at the ECIA at 466-4248.

**Recycling in Eldorado****NOMINATE A COMMITTED RECYCLER.**

Each spring, Eldorado/285 Recycles honors individuals and businesses who have made notable contributions to recycling and composting. This year we invite nominations from the public for these awards. To nominate an individual or business, please send name, contact information, and a statement of 100 words or less as to why they should be honored to [ksweeney99@yahoo.com](mailto:ksweeney99@yahoo.com) or 466-9797 no later than March 1.

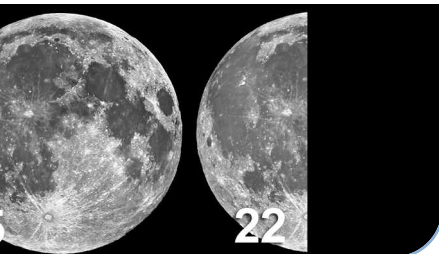
**COMPOST SETUP OFFER.** Composting food scraps can reduce solid waste by 30% or more. This simple backyard process also yields important nutrients for Eldorado soil. As part of our America Recycles Day celebration, Eldorado/285 Recycles offered six straw bale setups—including delivery, installation, instruction, worms—to any interested residents who would cover the cost of purchasing straw bales. We have three setups left. If you are interested, contact **Joe Eigner**, 570-0583 or [joseigner@gmail.com](mailto:joseigner@gmail.com).

**FREE RECYCLING.** Eldorado/285 Recycles reminds everyone that recycling at Eldorado Transfer Station (ETS) on Highway 285 is FREE. Recycling Guides, which explain what is and is not accepted, are available at Vista Grande Library, the Transfer Station, or by contacting Eldorado/285 Recycles, 466-9797.

**ELDORADO TRANSFER STATION (ETS) HAS ADDED A REUSE CENTER.**

Items with reuse potential may be dropped at the ReUse Area adjacent to the recycling bins. Dropping items at the ReUse Center requires a solid waste permit or bag tag, which can be purchased at the Senior Center on Torreon Road on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 12:15 and 4. Why? Items dropped off may be landfilled if they are not "adopted" within about two weeks. All items for landfilling require a permit or bag tag. Carrying away items for reuse does not require a permit.





## What is ECIA?

continued from p. 1

and law enforcement in general are the responsibility of the Santa Fe County Sheriff's Department, and road maintenance is the task of the County Public Works Department. Water and sanitation are the responsibility of the Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District, a citizen-owned public utility. Fire and emergency services are provided by the volunteer El Dorado Fire and Rescue Service. The Santa Fe Public School District runs the community school. The Vista Grande Public Library is operated by its own board of directors, and raises its own operating funds; the County has no public library system.

### WHOM CAN I CONTACT TO FIND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR A PROBLEM?

The ECIA staff, Board directors, and committee members try to solve residents' problems and answer questions on a neighbor-to-neighbor basis, and will refer questions and complaints outside of ECIA's jurisdiction to other organizations, as appropriate.

### WHAT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS DOES THE ECIA SUPPORT?

The ECIA Board adopted a formal policy in 2001 that the Association will not provide direct financial support to any activities except those directly sponsored by the ECIA. This minimizes annual assessments and allows members to support organizations of their own choosing.



# February 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

TGIF	Fri., Feb. 14, 5-7 pm	CC
ECIA Offices Closed	Mon., Feb. 17 Presidents' Day	

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Architectural Committee	Tues., Feb. 11, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Architectural Committee	Tues., Feb. 25, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Board Work Study	Thurs., Feb. 6, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., Feb. 17, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Conservation Committee	Tues., Feb. 4, 7-9 pm	Jim Daniel	609-941-4527	F
ECIA Board Meeting	Thurs., Feb. 20, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	RR
Facilities & Grounds	Wed., Feb. 5, 4-6 pm	John Calzada	466-1947	CFR
Finance Committee	Wed., Feb. 12, 9:30-11:30 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Information Committee	Tues., Feb. 25, 7-9 pm	Frank Schober	310-8593	CFR
Road Committee	TBA		466-4248	CFR
Stable Committee	Wed., Feb. 26, 7-9 pm	Gretel Underwood	466-7825	CFR
SPE Committee	Thurs., Feb. 13, 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 Arts & Crafts	Last Thurs. of month	Barrie Brown	466-3035	CC
Eldorado Book Group	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. 9-10:30	Joan LaMarque	466-6000	CFR
Roadrunner RV	3rd Tues. of month	Pat Stewart	820-0303	
Search & Rescue	2nd Thurs., 7-9 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
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., 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	Kate	216-5302	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)



## Managing Eldorado Roads

Eldorado at Santa Fe covers a lot of territory, more than 2,700 homes spread over about 6,000 acres, not counting the 4,000 acres of our Community Preserve. Connecting these homesites is an extensive network of roads, more than 80 miles altogether and including about 20 miles of paved arteries.

There is a common misconception among newcomers to Eldorado that the ECIA, our homeowners association, is responsible for maintenance and upkeep of our road system. This is not the case. All of our roads, even the smallest cul-de-sac, have been deeded to Santa Fe County, which plows, grades, repairs, and otherwise maintains our roads. The county also makes

improvements to the road system, such as chip-sealing or paving with asphalt, when funds become available.

Many of our neighbors—for example, Dos Griegos, the Art Barns, or The Ridges—continue to have private roads, which constitutes a major expense for lot owners in these subdivisions. In Eldorado, the cost of road maintenance and improvement is covered by the property taxes we pay to the county and to the county gross receipts taxes.

Eldorado does, however, have a Road Committee, whose job is to

work closely with county officials in assessing and communicating our infrastructure needs to the county's Department of Public Works. Members of the Road Committee evaluate the condition of roads in Eldorado twice a year and establish a priority listing of those road segments where improvements should be made when funding becomes available.

From time to time, the Road Committee and other ECIA volunteers conduct surveys to gauge residents' preferences about their roads. There are residents in Eldorado who prefer the old-style charm of dirt roads, while others want paved or chip-sealed roads that make it easier to deal with winter snowstorms or summer monsoons. In past years, ECIA has lobbied county and state officials to get funding for some of the roads in the community that are frequently made impassable by inclement weather. One result of these efforts is the project that the county will begin on Herrada Road next spring.

The Road Committee has had many knowledgeable, dedicated volunteers over the years. But it is currently looking to fill a couple of vacancies. The committee meets quarterly and members also participate in occasional design or planning meetings with county officials. For anyone who is interested in road maintenance and transportation planning, this is an excellent opportunity for service to our neighbors and our community.

—Dag Ryen

Photo: Jim Daniel



## Ring-necked Pheasant (RP)

This large, mostly ground-dwelling bird can be found all year in parts of New Mexico. They are non-migratory but may move around depending on weather and food availability. Although I have not seen this bird in Eldorado, the flashy male is easily identified and has been seen by a good observer, so I am including it in our "Birds of Eldorado." The Bird List from Pecos National Monument includes the RP in its list of observed birds. The RP is a large (dare I say) chicken-like bird, 19 to 27 inches in length, which includes a long tail tapering to a point. The wingspan is 22 to 33

inches, and the wings are quite noisy when the bird explodes suddenly from the ground into the air. The male is larger than the female, with a slightly curved bill, red wattles circling the beak and eyes, a small white patch on the top of the head, and fluorescent dark greenish feathers around the neck, with white below the green. The rest of the body is a reddish

brown, with white speckles on the back, black speckles on the breast, some gray on the wings and back, and a reddish-brown tail with black bars. The RP is sexually dimorphic, and the female is rather plain—a light reddish or grayish color with dark speckles.

RPs are usually found around fields and near agriculture. They can be found in bushy areas near the edges of forests or hedgerows, where tall grasses and bushes provide cover. They forage for insects and seeds on the ground and prefer to walk or run, flying only when endangered.

In early spring, males establish a small territory which they defend against other males by fighting: breast-to-breast hits, leaping with claws outstretched. Females (usually 4 to 8) assemble in the territory of the male. He courts them with strutting, erecting his wattles and pointing out food. This breeding scheme is termed "harem-defense polygyny."

The female scoops out a small depression in the ground and lines it with vegetation. The nest site is

**Continued on facing page >>**

American ring-necked pheasant. © Don Faulkner. Creative Commons license.



## Mountain Lions and Juniper

**MOUNTAIN LIONS**—aka cougar, puma, or catamount—are featured in various Native American myths and spiritual beliefs, representing both positive and negative forces. European explorers, settlers, and ranchers, however, have been largely unvarying in their antagonism. Bounties, sport hunting, trophy collections, and killing contests have devastated mountain lion populations in every state. Continuing to lose most of their original ranges—like the wolf, jaguar, and grizzly—they survive now in only small populations.

It's highly unlikely you would encounter a mountain lion, since they are shy and elusive, almost never seen by people. Still, we do live in mountain lion country; it's a good idea to know some things about these magnificent animals.

First, do not confuse mountain lions with bobcats! (Don't be surprised. Many people aren't sure of the difference.) Mountain lions are more than twice the size of bobcats; a mature mountain lion can be 7 to 8 feet head to tail tip, whereas a mature bobcat is typically 3 feet. Mountain lions have long tails, bobcat tails are, well, bobbed. Although attacks on humans are extremely rare, mountain lions can conceivably pose a danger to people, but bobcats typically do not (but be wary on behalf of your unattended small pets).

Mountain lions are known for their beauty, strength, agility, and amazing ability to jump (look at those strong hind legs!). They don't roar, but they make a variety of sounds: purr, chirp, snarl, growl, hiss, and scream. Most active from dusk to dawn, they are primarily dangerous when protecting their young or feeding on a kill.

For further information, including what to do if you meet a mountain lion, we recommend The Mountain

Lion Foundation site (<http://www.mountainlion.org/>) and NM Game and Fish ([www.wildlife.state.nm.us/publications/documents/predator.pdf](http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/publications/documents/predator.pdf)).

### JUNIPER TREES

Juniper trees, a member of the cypress family, have the largest geographical range of any woody plant worldwide and can live up to 120 years! The male tree produces the pollen to which so many of us are allergic. In spring, the flowers appear on the male tree as small yellow blossoms near the end of twigs; those blossoms release pollen, which is dispersed widely by our strong winds to pollinate the female tree. The female flowers then grow to become berry-like cones, green at first but ripening after 18 months into a dark blue-purple color, dispersed primarily by birds.

Juniper allergy, common in the spring, can cause itchy eyes, throat, runny nose, sneezing, sometimes fatigue and headaches, and other symptoms. Only your doctor can determine the cause of your allergy; if it's juniper, you would be wise to begin the treatment recommended by your doctor before the pollen is in the air.

References for this article are available upon request. Past articles can be found on the Eldorado Neighborhood Watch site (<http://eldoradoneighbors.wordpress.com/flora-fauna-group/>).

We love hearing from you! Contact us at [EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com](mailto:EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com).



Mountain lion at the ABQ zoo. Photo © Ann V. Wood.



## Ring-necked Pheasant (RP), continued from p. 6

usually hidden in deep and tall brush. The female may lay up to 15 eggs, usually 8 to 10. Eggs are laid individually over a two-week period, but incubation of all eggs begins at the same time and all hatch within a few hours of one another. Eggs are incubated for around 25 days. The precocial babies leave the nest immediately, staying with the female and feeding themselves.

RPs were imported from China in the 1800s and are the most successful non-native game bird in America! They have adapted to life in large fields of the western states. As a game bird, RPs are commercially bred

and many states have a hunting season for them. Mortality rates are high from predation and from nest destruction in farm fields during cultivation and harvest.

—Pam Henline

**Interesting fact:**  
RPs sometimes cope with extreme cold by simply remaining dormant for days at a time.



ELDORADO  
**VISTAS**

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



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

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

Security 204-2945  
Sheriff 428-3720  
Crime Stoppers 955-5050

## *ECIA Board 2014*



*Left to right:* ECIA Board Directors Pam Henline, Jan Pietrzak (Vice-President), Karyn Mounsey (Secretary), Todd Handy (Treasurer), Dag Ryen (President), David Perlmutter, and Jeanne Calzada