

# ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME VIII, ISSUE 3

March 2006

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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.eldoradocommunity.org](http://www.eldoradocommunity.org)

## What is the ERA?

*Editors Note: I must admit that I hadn't fully realized the extent of the work the Eldorado Residents Association (ERA) has done on behalf of the community over the past 31 years. The following article not only clears it up, it also gives me newfound respect for the group.*

**I**N 1975, SOME OF THE RESIDENTS of Eldorado decided that they needed to speak with one voice to AMREP, the developer of Eldorado, who controlled the Eldorado Community Improvement Association (ECIA) Board at that time. Unlike the ECIA, the ERA's members are all residents, (i.e., not just homeowners, but renters are also welcome) and no dues are required.

The first challenge was to establish a fire department since the closest station was in Santa Fe. Next on the agenda was a new pool and poolhouse to replace the original pool at the ranch, and the beginning of a children's center that later became the Montessori School.

A series of committees were formed to keep the community informed and involved: welcome, recreation, architectural, roads, and wilderness committees, and The Eldorado Sun. These committees now fall under the supervision of the ECIA, and The Sun is under private ownership.

From the beginning, the ERA served as a voice of the community on issues of concern to the residents. They would hold a meeting, take a vote, and form a position accordingly.

### ERA has opposed:

- ▼ A 120,000 foot equestrian center to seat 6,500
- ▼ Plans for townhouses in what is now Dos Griegos
- ▼ Leasing wilderness land for a microwave tower

### ERA has supported:

- ▼ Incorporation of Eldorado
- ▼ The purchase of the water district
- ▼ The Vista Grande Public Library

### ERA has participated in:

- ▼ Planning for the 285 Corridor Master Plan
- ▼ Lobbying during the legislative session and hearings at the County Commission
- ▼ Hosting Candidate Forums for Eldorado elections

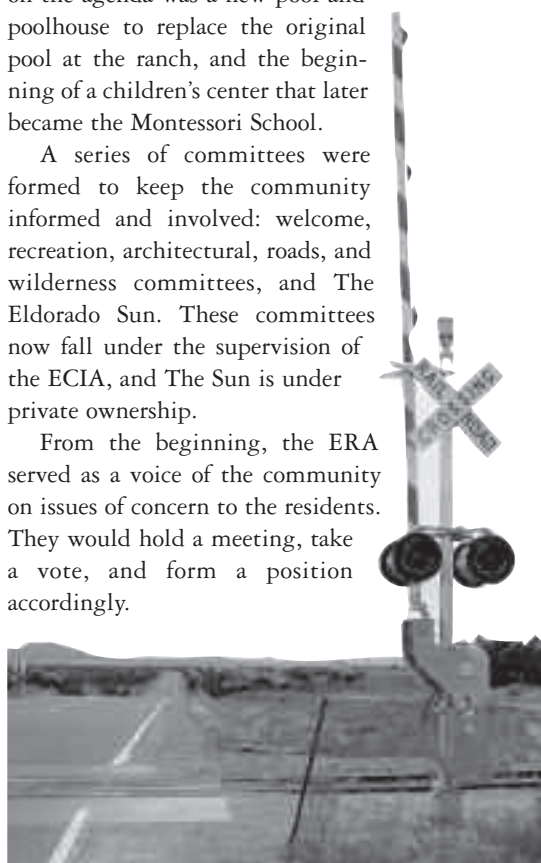
Representatives from the ERA have successfully lobbied the legislature and County Commission for funding for the railroad crossing gates at Avenida Eldorado, money for the Vista Grande Public Library, support for the purchase of the water district, paving for the fire department and building funds for the Senior Center.

Currently, instead of the ERA lobbying for funding for different groups' interests as it has in the past, the groups themselves are going directly to the legislature, leaving the ERA to operate as a social group, carrying on their long tradition of having fun. There are the TGIF (Thank Goodness It's Friday) parties and the coffee socials at the Community Center, (always an open invitation to Eldorado residents—they'd love to have you), arts and crafts shows, flea markets, and a special visit from Santa. The space fees at the popular biannual ERA Flea Markets underwrite the cost of these socials.

A thank you to those past presidents who have led the ERA through the years: Mark Cotner, Dolores Brock, John Di Janni, Jordan Weills, Betty Platts, Fred Raznick, John Spears, Lou Seig, Harvey Dunn, Leslie Dunn, Arlene Mayer, Dannette Shirley, Keith Gray, George Blinn, Jack Forrer, Ruth Jacobs, Mary Sheppard, Barbara Mooney, Gene Hagburg, Pat Kulhoff, Jerry Bradley, and, presently, Joe Auburg.

— Dolores Brock

*ECIA Board  
Work Study  
Meeting,  
Community  
Center, Mon.,  
Mar. 13, 7 pm*



**Photo Caption:**  
ERA successfully lobbied for funding for the railroad crossing gates at Avenida Eldorado.

**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 emailed to [info@eldoradocommunity.org](mailto:info@eldoradocommunity.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.

## No Perfect Solution

**T**HE FACT THAT AN UNACCOMPANIED dog injured our own leashed dog, "Lucy," ripped open Arnold's hand, severed a tendon and sent him to the emergency room has not driven us to adopt a polarized position concerning leashed or unleashed dogs. That attacker was running unsupervised. And, of course, no dog who is aggressive should be off leash. But we don't live in the city nor do we all own lap dogs. We have large properties and huge greenbelt areas that invite freedom. Not to allow Lucy, a border collie, supervised time off leash would be a crime against nature.

There is no perfect solution. People must use good judgment and be called to account when they don't. Not incidentally, in the late '90s a group of us worked hard to establish a dog park adjacent to the Compadres play area. We extensively researched location, fencing, finances, maintenance and legal concerns but were brushed off by the ECIA. Perhaps the time has arrived to convene a committee and reconsider all the issues.

—Arnold Meardon and Nancy Ormsbee



## Reply

**YES, YES! A DOG PARK!**

—Marcia and Larry Coben

## ECIA Seeks General Manager

**F**OLLOWING THE DEPARTURE OF BOB Pritchard, who served the Eldorado Community Improvement Association (ECIA) as General Manager (GM) for over six years, the ECIA Board has initiated a formal search and selection process for his replacement. Advertisements are appearing in *The Albuquerque Journal North*, the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, and online at the Community Associations Institute job bank.

The position reports to the ECIA Board, and is responsible for a \$750,000 annual budget, which includes management of finances, security, maintenance/construction, covenant enforcement, and relations with homeowners and local governments. Additional responsibilities include thorough knowledge and implementation of governing documents, including Bylaws, Covenants, Architectural Guidelines, and Board policies. The GM supervises an additional full-time staff of four, and over a dozen part-time employees.

## Want DSL ???

**N**OW IS THE TIME FOR US TO speak up. Qwest is currently in negotiation with the PRC, and decisions are being made about where to spend their DSL money.

Qwest wants to know who in Eldorado would like DSL. The manager I spoke with encouraged us all to write to her so that she can add our names to their 'Want DSL' list. So, please email your request for DSL to **Melinda Young** at [melinda.young@qwest.com](mailto:melinda.young@qwest.com).

Ask her to have your name & address put on the list for DSL when it becomes available. Ask Qwest for DSL to be made available in ALL of Eldorado ASAP. And then, ask your neighbors to also email Melinda Young, if they, too, want DSL.

—Kate Greenway

## No Brainer

The February edition of *Vistas* contained a notice that EAWSD would start enforcing late fees and disconnection of delinquent accounts. This is appropriate but not sufficient for good customer service. EAWSD needs to put in place the capability for automatic electronic bill payment which almost every other utility on the planet has. This should include automatic credit card payment and automatic EFTS from checking accounts. EAWSD made much of the fact that the management firm which runs the utility was a Malcom Baldrige Award winning organization. If so, this should be a "no brainer" as a way to solve an important customer service issue.

—George M. Henke

Requirements include a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field, a minimum of three years experience in community management, excellent verbal and writing skills, and public speaking and computer skills. An applicant must have demonstrated abilities to:

- ▼ Manage staff, resources, and budget
- ▼ Deal tactfully with people with varying views
- ▼ Communicate effectively
- ▼ Maintain physical infrastructure, for instance, pool, roads, playing fields, and buildings
- ▼ Manage procurements, for instance, bid and RFP process, and contractor selection/management

Salary is negotiable, depending upon qualifications. If not an Eldorado resident already, the new General Manager will be required to become one within six months of hire. Applications are due by March 31, 2006 to the ECIA office, Attention: **Jeanne Klein**. Interviews will be scheduled in April, with selection finished by May.

# A Summary of 2005 Activity

## ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATIONS SUMMARY FOR 2005

### Total number of projects submitted for 2005

Projects submitted .....	279
Projects approved .....	233
Board reviewed .....	18

### Types of projects submitted for 2005:

Fences .....	76
Walls .....	59
Additions .....	65
Large accessory .....	35
Small accessory .....	20
New homes .....	27

All applications (two copies required) are reviewed each month on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 7 pm. Plans must be delivered to the ECIA office by the Monday before the meeting. All submissions must be clear, concise and legible and include a site plan with setbacks, elevation views, materials and dimensions. Incomplete or illegible applications will not be submitted to the committee.

## Eldorado Sunshine

### IN 2002, AN ARTICLE IN THE BERKLEY

Daily Planet said of Eldorado "...this community...near Santa Fe has the nation's highest percentage of homes heated mainly by solar power – 13.2 percent. Two Hawaiian villages rank second and third. Back in the '70's, a billboard at the entrance to Eldorado had touted the new development as a solar community, attracting idealists who wanted to put solar power into practice and families looking for affordable housing."

Eldorado remains a great location to take advantage of solar power, as does most of New Mexico. According to the winter 2006 newsletter put out by The New Mexico Public Interest Research Group, (NMPIRG), "New Mexico ...is second in the country for solar potential." Now PNM is taking steps to do something with that potential, and to provide some economic incentive to customers by launching a "performance-based customer solar energy program."

According to a December 28, 2005 PNM press release, "the... program would increase the value of the customer's PV (photovoltaic) system by paying the customer for the environmental attributes of the solar energy generated—known as a renewable energy certificate (REC). For PNM's program, one REC equals one kWh. PNM will pay participants 13 cents per kWh for the environmental attributes of the total energy produced.

"PNM estimates a customer with a typical 1 kilo-

### 2005 Covenant Compliance Activity Summary

2005 Summary of covenant violations	
New through Dec. 31, 2005 .....	106
Corrected through Dec. 31, 2005 .....	106
Outstanding as of Dec. 31, 2005 .....	33
Requiring legal action .....	8
Summary of the most common violations:	
RV Screening .....	37
No permit for construction .....	19
Exterior lighting (not shielded) .....	15
Trash – Nuisance .....	14

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

Solar panels on Eldorado home.



Photo by Ken McPherson

watt AC (kW) photovoltaic system could receive about \$3,650 during 12 years by participating in the program. Any customer with a 10 kW PV system or smaller will be eligible to participate. Customers will also be able to benefit by participating in PNM's net metering program.

"The program is among the first in the country to be based on the actual performance of PV systems—most customer-owned programs offer incentives based only on the installation of generating systems. The program is expected to begin on March 1, 2006."

Consider going green this spring. Visit PNM's website at [www.pnm.com](http://www.pnm.com) for more information.

—Ken McPherson

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General Manager  
Vacant

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Conservation: Steve Wust  
Stable: Dina Sassone  
466-2516  
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Road: Ed Benrock  
Information: Ken McPherson  
Neighborhood Watch:  
Sandra Vreeland

### VISTAS NEWSLETTER

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466-4248

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Vista Grande Library  
466-READ  
Security  
204-2945  
Fire and Rescue  
466-1204  
Animal Control  
992-1621



## Deadline

Your Association fees are due by March 1, 2006. Don't let that one slip away.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

### Eldorado Birding

My name is **Ron Duffy** and I bought a home here in Eldorado last April. I am interested in finding others in Eldorado who share my interest in the local birds of the area and who want to watch and enjoy them together, maybe followed by a breakfast. In my opinion, one of the pleasures of bird watching is watching birds with other people who share the same interest. I enjoy the diversity of bird wildlife that I find here, which is different than Santa Fe or other areas around Santa Fe. I also am proud to be a long-time volunteer at the Audubon Center and a leader of bird walks there and at other areas in and around Santa Fe.

If you are interested in joining such a group or helping to organize such a group, please email me at [rduff@cnsf.com](mailto:rduff@cnsf.com) or call at 982-2890.

### Venus in Eldorado

Thursday, March 16, from 7-9 pm, retired educator **Martha Simonsen** will present a slide show and lecture entitled *Versions of Venus* at the Vista Grande Public Library. Simonsen, an Eldorado resident by way of Illinois, will discuss how Venus was the most celebrated goddess in the ancient world, and how Venus's persona of sexuality and beauty endures to this day via artists and writers.

### Dog Hikes

I would like to start dog hiking events for exercising and socializing dogs and owners in Eldorado. If you are interested in short hikes in the Eldorado Wilderness in Cañoncito or local trails, mornings or afternoons, call **Karen** at 995-9635 or email [karinacats@cybermesa.com](mailto:karinacats@cybermesa.com).

### Write Me

Two of us who recently moved to Eldorado from Santa Fe would like to start a writing group in Eldorado. We are both writing memoir/creative non-fiction. We prefer afternoons 2-4 pm, twice a month. We can meet at our homes or at the Community Center. I am currently in a writing group in Santa Fe but have gotten very tired of commuting all over the city. We can decide what approach, time and day works best for all of us. If

### Moon Phases for M



interested, please call **Karen Edwards** at 995-9635 or email: [karinacats@cybermesa.com](mailto:karinacats@cybermesa.com).

### March Art Program

On Thursday, March 30 at 7 pm in the El Dorado Fire Station on Vista Grande, Eldorado artist, **Jack McCarthy**, will present "When Art Offends...It's Not What You Think." The talk centers on an exhibit held at the Museum of International Folk Art in early 2001, which showcased the works of four contemporary Hispanic women artists. McCarthy's overview follows a timeline of a museum and a controversial piece of art. After a well-attended opening was deemed a success by the local community, a controversy erupted that continued for nine months. The evening, hosted by the Eldorado Arts and Crafts Association, should prove to be thought provoking. For information, call 466-6245.



### St. Patrick's TGIF

The Eldorado Residents Association will hold a March TGIF gathering on Friday, March 17 from 5 to 7 pm at the Community Center. Come celebrate St. Patrick's Day with friends and neighbors at this last TGIF until next October. Refreshments will be served. For information, call **Joe Auburg** at 466-1484.



## New Mexico

**March 11, 1925** — With the signature of Governor Warren, the state adopted the current state flag — a red Zia symbol on a white background, replacing the original flag and symbolizing the state's history and future.

More facts can be found at [www.nmmagazine.com/NMGU](http://www.nmmagazine.com/NMGU)



## Astronomy Corner

### The Plumber and the Stars

According to the plumber, "Red is hot water, blue is cold water," but in astronomy it is the opposite.

A star's temperature can be deduced from its color. Red stars are coolest (3,000 Kelvin); yellow stars are medium hot (5,800 Kelvin); white stars are hot (7,500 Kelvin); and blue stars are the hottest (50,000 Kelvin).

Therefore, all stars have some color corresponding to their surface temperature. Our eyes can only detect the color of stars of about first magnitude or brighter.

From hotter to cooler (bluest to reddest) there are seven major spectral types (O, B, A, F, G, K, M). Each type is divided into 9 subtypes. Our Sun is a G2 type star, medium in temperature.

### March Sky:

**Saturn**, magnificent in a telescope after evening twilight in ENE; **Venus**, high over the horizon before the sun; **Mars**, high and dimmer in SSE; **Jupiter** rises about midnight in SE. The Vernal Equinox (spring) occurs March 20, 2006, 10:06 pm MST.

Next time: *Stellar Evolution*.

—Juan Alvarez

Jalva88610@aol.com

## History

ov. Arthur Hannett, New Mexico  
symbol on a field of yellow that  
zed the Spanish royal colors.

found at  
UIDE/memorias.html

# March Events

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

Email [info@eldoradocommunity.org](mailto: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.

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

### MARCH SPECIAL EVENTS

ERA's T.G.I.F.	Fri., Mar. 17, 5-7 pm	Joe Auburg	466-1484	LR
<b>COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b>				
285 Coalition	Wed., Mar. 1, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock	466-1598	CFR
Road Committee	Mon., Mar. 6, 6-7 pm	Ed Benrock	466-2088	CFR
Neighborhood Watch	Mon., Mar. 6, 7-9 pm	Sandra Vreeland	466-6079	LR
Perform. Arts Assoc.	Tues., Mar. 7, 7 pm	Bruce Blossman		RR
Conservation Committee	Tues., Mar. 7, 7-9 pm	Stephen Wust	466-0436	LR
EAW&SD*	Tues., Mar. 7, 7-9 pm		466-2411	RR
Finance Committee	Wed., Mar. 8, 10-noon	Gisela Knight	466-2568	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., Mar. 13, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Architectural Committee	Tues., Mar. 14, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., Mar. 16, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Information Committee	Mon., Mar. 20, 7-8 pm	Ken McPherson	466-4161	F
EAW&SD*	Tues., Mar. 21, 7-9 pm		466-2411	RR
Architectural Committee	Tues., Mar. 28, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
Stable Committee	Tues., Mar. 28, 7-9 pm	Dina Sassone	466-2516	LR

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

Book Club	Sat., Mar. 11, 9-10:30 am	Joan Lamarque	466-6000	
Book Club/Pot Luck	call for date and time	Ken Fischer	466-2537	
Library Book Group	3rd Mon., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	VGPL
ERA Coffee Social	Tues., Mar. 7, 10-11 am	Joe Auburg	466-1484	F, K
Search & Rescue	Thurs., Mar. 9, 6:30-9:30 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR
Troop 414 Committee	1st Wed., 7:30-9 pm	Bruce Blossman	955-0880	CR
Venturing Crew 414	2nd & 4th Wed., 7-9 pm	Vera Hayduk	466-1726	C
Cub Scout Pack 414	4th Tues., 7-9 pm	Ty Ransdell	466-2579	Sm Gym
La Canada Wireless	Mon., Mar. 13, 7-9	lcwireless.org		LR
MOMS Club	Call for date and time	M. van Domselaar	466-3864	
ERA Coffee Social	Tues., Mar. 21, 10-11 am	Joe Auburg	466-1484	F, K
Shakespeare Group	Tues., Mar. 21	Mary Denison	466-6657	CFR

### WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tuesdays, 5:30-6:50 pm			LR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am			RR
AA	Fridays, 6-7 pm			CFR
AA	Sat., 10:45-11:45 am			LR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm			CFR
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Paul Tuck	466-4815	RR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-4:30 pm			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
Knitting Club	2nd & 4th Tues., 10 am-noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	F
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](http://www.eldoradocommunity.org)

# Soccer Epidemic



Photo by Amy Lewis

Michael Landen with several soccer players.

**I F YOUR KIDS HAVE SOCCER FEVER,** Doctor Michael Landen is the man who can help. Michael is leaving his old post as President of the Eldorado Soccer Club, and lacing up his new shoes as President of the Northern New Mexico Soccer League. He has coached his sons' soccer teams on and off for the five years that he and his wife, Jenny, and sons Geran and Aidan have lived in Eldorado. It's the longest they've lived in one spot, due to Michael's rather adventurous medical career that has taken them to interesting corners of this country and beyond. First Michael completed medical school at Wake Forest University in North Carolina as a family physician. He and Jenny then lived and worked on the Tohono O'dham Indian Reservation outside Tucson, and in Belize near the border with Guatemala—he as a family physician and Jenny as a nurse practitioner.

Michael then went on to earn a Masters in Public Health as an epidemiologist from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Afterwards, he and his family spent two years in Jenny's home state, Alaska, while Michael worked for the Epidemic Intelligence Service through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in a two-year on-the-job training for physicians and non-physicians to become epidemiologists. The family has come and gone from New Mexico a few times, with Michael working as a family physician in both Las Cruces and at Acoma. Currently he is the Assistant State Epidemiologist,

working in disease control.

But how did soccer fit in that schedule? Michael started playing at age eleven, played through high school and college, and has played some club soccer since then. He first coached soccer for his sister's soccer team when he was eighteen. While in Alaska at the time his first son started playing soccer, he had his first experience in the role of dad/soccer coach. He's been President of the Eldorado Soccer Club for the past two years. Speaking of the club's current board, Michael says it's a "very solid and impressive group." Under their watch, the number of Eldorado children playing soccer in the club has increased from 125 to 400. Also, the focus has shifted more towards recreational soccer than competitive. About eighty percent of the kids play on recreational teams, while about twenty percent compete in Albuquerque and Bernalillo. With so many kids now playing in the club, one

of the challenges it faces is space. "Thanks to the ECIA", says Michael, "we have a very nice field that is kept nicely, but we're bursting at the seams using this one field. There will sometimes be six teams practicing on it at once." Senator Grubescic and Representative Wirth have been instrumental in helping the soccer club acquire some of the funding needed for an artificial field to be built at the elementary school. Being artificial, it won't require watering, which makes it an appealing option for any possible future fields in Eldorado as well.

As president of the league, Michael will be more focused on coordinating play between Eldorado's club and the Santa Fe clubs. Collaborative efforts are underway to get more soccer fields and to create a fund for scholarships to reduce the cost for kids to play. One of Michael's goals is to create recreational playing opportunities for kids over age thirteen, and more opportunities for kids eight to thirteen. Also, there will be a continued effort to improve coaching with coach trainings, and to supply referees by holding certification clinics that are certainly open to adults, but focus mainly on certifying kids over age twelve to referee. For more information or to sign up for the next clinic (March 5), email Michael at [mjlanden@earthlink.com](mailto:mjlanden@earthlink.com). Soccer registration for next season for ages four to thirteen is March 10, from 2 to 4 pm at the Agora, and March 14 and 15 from 3 to 5 pm at El Dorado Elementary School.

—Lynn McPherson



## Hanging Around

**ALTHOUGH NOT NUMEROUS,** the Northern Flicker (NF) is visible throughout Eldorado all year long. There are two varieties of NF, the Eastern Yellow-Shafted and our Western Red-Shafted. The NF is a large bird, 12.5 inches long with a wingspan of 20 inches, and is a member of the woodpecker family. The male is conspicuously marked with large dots on a light tan breast, a tan back with apparent black stripes, a startling black half-crescent moon just below his throat and a streak of red under his eye. They have a large, strong, slightly down-turned beak. Females are similar but lighter and lack the red. They are easy to identify in their undulating flight, with bright chestnut under-wings and a large white rump patch. They also have a piercing one-note call similar to most woodpecker species. I saw many of them on trees when the bark beetle was plentiful, but NFs prefer to hunt on the ground, especially for ants, using its long barbed tongue to lap them up. They also eat insects, fruits, nuts and grains.

Pairs are monogamous, with tail and wing flashings and drumming during courtship (by both male and female!). They nest in cavities that are excavated mostly by the male, or they may use existing holes. They are territorial and use a new nest every year.

Large clutches of 3 to 12 eggs are incubated by both parents. Eggs hatch in 13 days and the altricial (naked, helpless) young fledge in 25 to 28 days. Sometimes a

smaller second clutch is raised.

Woodpeckers are especially adapted to withstand the shock generated by pecking—the bones are more folded at the base of the bill to act as shock absorbers, special muscles behind the bill also act as shock absorbers and their brain case is enlarged. They have stiff tails supported by large muscles, and two toes that point forward and two that point back to facilitate moving around on trees. Worldwide there are about 217 different woodpecker species.

Following up on the Ivory-billed woodpecker, last seen in 1944 and spotted by a kayaker in February 2004 near Brinkley, Arkansas—biologists are scouring the Arkansas bayou where there have now been more than a dozen sightings,

—Pam Henline



PHOTO BY JOHN CASSADY, WWW.JKCASSADY.COM

## Greetings, Gardeners

**SPRING IS ONCE AGAIN UPON US,** even though we've barely had winter! Our gardens and landscapes are parched as we enter our driest and most windy season. Hopefully our plants have been getting regular water. If not, get those hoses out and offer some relief at least once a week throughout March. Slow, deep watering and adding mulch is now recommended.

Fruit and shade trees can be pruned now. Remove dead or diseased wood and branches that are growing straight up, inward, downwards or rubbing against each other. General shaping of trees is also best done now, since new growth will soon cover the cuts. Avoid pruning evergreens until next January. Do not use pruning sealant on fresh cuts—it is unnecessary and gives insects a place to lay their eggs. Dormant oil should be applied several times early in the season, but avoid spraying tender flowers unless the desired result is to prevent fruiting. The oil is non-toxic and effectively suffocates over-wintering insect eggs.

Many homeowners are looking for shade or screening to replace dead piñons. Choose a spot close to, but not directly over, the existing stumps (and

their root systems). Large evergreens will provide year-round cover. Containerized junipers work well. They are drought and bark beetle resistant, and grow relatively quickly. Avoid recently-dug local junipers until next fall. Spruces are colorful and grow quickly, but require lots of water. Pines, such as Ponderosa and Mugo, are also drought resistant; however, if the drought persists, they are susceptible to the beetle and its blue stain fungus.

There are quite a few deciduous trees and shrubs that can provide screening for about seven months of the year. The following trees are drought and rabbit resistant: crabapples, flowering plums, honeylocust, New Mexico and Idaho locusts, hackberry and Shumardi oak. These trees also offer wildlife habitat and food. Several large shrubs also work well, such as New Mexico privet, Buddleia, mountain mahogany, lilac and three-leaf sumac. Of course, mixing up several varieties extends color and diversity.

This coming season will be a challenge—but isn't it always?

—Michael Clark  
*Tropic of Capricorn*

*Security*  
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## *Senior Center Breaks Ground*

Left to right: Michael Spanier, Dep. Secretary NM Aging and Long Term Services; Commissioner Jack Sullivan; Patty Adam; Commissioner Virginia Vigil; Rudy Garcia; project manager for Santa Fe County; and Sheriff Greg Solano.



PHOTO BY MAUREEN RENE

There was an outstanding turnout on Saturday, February 4, for the ground breaking of the Ken and Patty Adam Senior Center in Eldorado. Over 100 folks came, including **Commissioners Sullivan, Anaya, and Vigil**. **Sheriff Solano** was there too, as well as representatives of the New Mexico Agency on Aging, Vista Grande Public Library, Eldorado Residents Association, and Eldorado Senior Board. **John Layman** of RCA Architectural Company, designer of the Senior Center, and **Juan Vigil** from Vigil Construction of Albuquerque, winner of the building contract, were present, as well as members of the community.

—Janet Amtmann