

ELDORADO at SANTA FE VISTAS

VOLUME XVII, ISSUE 3

March 2015

IN THIS ISSUE

ECIA News	2-3
In the Community	4-5
At the Library	6
American Kestrel	6
Ferrets & Weasels	7

Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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

HOAMCO Takes on GM Job

Paul Skojec, vice president of Home Owners' Association Management Company (HOAMCO) client relations for New Mexico, is presently serving as interim general manager (GM) for the ECIA. HOAMCO has been contracted by the ECIA Board to provide management and accounting services. Paul, in addition to providing professional GM services, is interviewing candidates for the permanent GM position and hopes to have a suitable candidate available for the Board to interview and possibly approve in the next 30 days or so.

In the meantime, Paul is commuting to Eldorado almost every day from his home in Albuquerque. He confesses that the drive north in the morning is spectacular—while the drive home in the evening against the setting winter sun is not so.

Paul heads an operation with 110 associations in New Mexico, with full-time and part-time general managers and portfolio managers, accounting, and support staff. He supervises five offices in New Mexico.

HOAMCO itself has its main office in Arizona, with headquarters support in areas such as information technology, legal, and legislative services. Overall, HOAMCO manages 235 community associations with 65,000 homes in Arizona and New Mexico.

Paul himself was recruited to HOAMCO after seven years as general manager at Tanoan, a high-end gated community of almost 700 homes in Albuquerque. Prior to that, he grew up in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, served five years in the Coast Guard, including three with the U.S. President's Honor Guard, and his final two as an Admiral's aide and driver in Hawaii. Following his Coast Guard service, he earned a degree in health care administration at the University of Scranton. Afterward, he moved to Albuquerque to be with members of his mother's extended family, and transitioned from

health care management, assisted living management, and Medicaid administration, to community association management.

Paul is confident that HOAMCO can attract a wider field of GM applicants from among people who find, as he did, that a larger organizational structure can provide a better long-term career path for highly qualified professionals.

—Dan Drobniś

*ECIA Board
Meeting,
Community
Center
Railroad Bldg.
Thurs.,
March 19,
7 PM*



Paul Skojec, HOAMCO VP for New Mexico, is serving as the ECIA's interim general manager while a permanent on-site GM is recruited.





**Share your
comments
with us!**

*For policy and
deadline, see
below*

Editorial Policy

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

DEADLINE: Newsletter deadline is the 5th day of each month. Submissions can be dropped off or mailed to the ECIA office or e-mailed to DiAna@eldoradosf.org. 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.

Clarification on Rooftop Satellite Dishes

In the January 2015 issue of *Vistas*, I reported on ECIA's covenant that stipulates that no rooftop can have more than one satellite dish larger than 24 inches without ECIA approval. This covenant is detailed as follows:

ARTICLE II, SECTION 13:

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

However, under current FCC Over-the-Air Reception Devices Rules (OTARD), residents are allowed to have whatever number of antennas are required to receive the services they want. This is detailed in a FCC document (<http://www.fcc.gov/guides/over-air-reception-devices-rule#QA>), as follows:

Q: Can a restriction limit the number of antennas that may be installed at a particular location?

A: The Commission's rule covers the antennas necessary to receive service. Therefore, a local rule may not, for example, allow only one antenna if more than one antenna is necessary to receive the desired service.

This rule applies only to satellite dishes or antennas that are actively receiving broadcast signals, not just devices remaining on the roof but no longer in use. This has been clarified with the FCC by ECIA staff. Under current FCC rules, residents can have more than one satellite dish on their roof, and up to one meter (39.27 inches) in diameter, so long as it is for a desired service and is being actively used. If there are two or more satellite dishes on a roof but only one is in use, the second, non-functional dish must be removed.

Due to the difficulty of revising the Covenants, the ECIA will be updating Section 18 (Antennas for Video Programming Service) of the Eldorado Guidelines for Protective Covenants and Building Restrictions, hopefully sometime in 2015.

—Mark Young

ECIA Covenant Compliance Representative
mark@eldoradosf.org, 466-4248

Of Water and Other Things

The world's oldest Water Board is called "The Tribunal of the Waters." Somewhat older than the EAWSD, it has met monthly in Valencia, Spain, since 960 AD.

Anyone who has grown up or lived for a time in New Mexico cannot fail to be aware that water is a precious and often scarce commodity. Mark Twain, remarking about its importance in this part of the U.S., once quipped, "In the West, whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting over."

The Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District is a public corporation that has the duties of providing and caring for our water resources. To its customers, it is known as the Water Board. An ECIA member recently elected to that board, **John Calzada**, can justly be described as one of our community's hardest-working volunteers. He is a model of the quote from another great American, Benjamin Franklin: "If you want something done, ask a busy person." In addition to his newly assumed duties as a member of the Water Board, John serves on two ECIA committees. He is chairman of the Facilities and Grounds Committee and vice-chairman of our Association's Finance Committee.

Asked the question, What would you most like to do and see accomplished during your tenure as a member of the Water Board? John answered, "I would like to have a part in the development of a dynamic, first-rate strategic plan for our water district."

John is no stranger to planning at the city and county level. He and his wife moved here from Monterey County in California, where John served as Operations Officer of the Sheriff's Department.

John Calzada's other volunteer jobs that serve our community in the Finance and Facilities committees of the ECIA equip him well to ask the right questions and propose practical solutions during the Water Board's deliberations. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, he knows the value of keeping in mind the seven reminders that urge practical plan development, often called "the seven 'P's': Proper Prior Planning Prevents Penurious Poor Performance."

Since the EAWSD took over from its predecessor, the privately owned water company, Eldorado Utilities, much that is positive has been accomplished. Subsurface and surface water lines have been properly mapped. Water tanks are being properly maintained.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Message from the ECIA Board

It has been a productive beginning of the year for your elected representatives on the ECIA Board. Our transition to full-time management by HOAMCO is progressing smoothly. The necessary data exchanges have been made and administrative procedures are being aligned. However, these activities will have little impact on how ECIA members interact with their Association. Our office at the Community Center will continue to field inquiries and assist members with all their needs. A new and permanent general manager will be in place in a few weeks. In the meantime, HOAMCO's highly competent and affable vice-president for New Mexico operations, **Paul Skojec**, has done yeoman's duty as interim general manager. We hope you've had a chance to interact with Paul and to experience his genuine commitment to customer service.

The state Legislature is in session, and ECIA Board and committee members, in coordination with county officials, have been in contact with our senator, Peter Wirth, and district representative, Matthew McQueen, to request funding for improvements on Eldorado roads. While the budgetary outlook for the state is not very promising, we still hope that the

county will receive funds for chip-sealing some critical arteries in our community.

The ECIA continues to seek resolution of the two legal actions in which it is involved. In the "poultry" suit, a court-appointed mediator has declared mediation at an impasse, and the appellate process is ongoing. In the suit regarding ground-based solar arrays brought by an Eldorado member, a variety of motions have been filed that will come before the presiding judge, Francis Matthews, over the next couple of months.

As most of you know, ECIA Board elections are right around the corner. There are two positions up for election this year. The efficient operation of our homeowners association would not be possible without the time and effort selflessly donated by our Board and committee members. Please consider volunteering some of your time to, for example, our Information or Facilities and Grounds Committee. At a minimum, please support the Association by voting in the upcoming election. Candidate forums have been scheduled for April 15, from 7 to 9 PM, and May 21, from 10 AM to noon. For more information on the election, go to our website, eldoradosf.org.

—ECIA Board of Directors

Recent Board Actions

The ECIA Board held its regular meeting on February 19, 2015, with six Board members present: **Dag Ryen** (president), **Pam Henline** (vice-president), **Todd Handy** (treasurer), **Gershon Siegel** (secretary), **Greg Colello**, and **David Yard**. **Jeanne Calzada** was excused. The following formal actions were taken unanimously, without the Chair voting, except where otherwise noted:

- ▼ A variance was approved for 11 Sabroso Road to allow a fence to extend into the 20-foot side setback.
- ▼ Liability insurance requirements for stable owners and renters were increased from \$300K to \$1M effective April 1, 2015. (3-0-2, Henline and Siegel abstaining.)
- ▼ Check signers Ryen, Henline, and Handy were approved for a new Alliance Bank account with HOAMCO as master signer.
- ▼ A new credit card was approved from Alliance Bank with signers Ryen, Henline, Handy, with HOAMCO as master signer.
- ▼ A permanent date of record of March 1, or the first business day following, at 5 PM, was set to determine Membership in Good Standing for the following year.

- ▼ The above date of record was incorporated into Election Policies and Procedures for Board nominating petitions.

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

Assessments Overdue

ECIA assessment payments are overdue as of March 2. Anyone who has not paid their 2015 assessment as of that date will not be eligible to vote in the 2015 election or use the Association's amenities.

Overdue amounts will accrue interest beginning April 1 at a 15% annual rate, compounded monthly. After June 1, liens will be placed on properties and will include an additional \$200 lien fee—which will also bear interest.

If you have questions about the amount owed for your property, or if you wish consideration of unusual circumstances, contact the ECIA General Manager immediately at 466-4248.

ECIA OFFICE

#1 La Hacienda Loop
Santa Fe, NM 87508
466-4248, 466-4249
www.eldoradosf.org
Problem calls
204-2945

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
Dag Ryen
D.Ryen@eldoradosf.org
Vice-President
Pam Henline
P.Henline@eldoradosf.org
Secretary
Gershon Siegel
G.Siegel@eldoradosf.org
Treasurer
Todd Handy
T.Handy@eldoradosf.org
Director
Jeanne Calzada
J.Calzada@eldoradosf.org
Director
Greg Colello
G.Colello@eldoradosf.org
Director
David Yard
D.Yard@eldoradosf.org
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS
Architecture:

Katherine Mortimer
Conservation: **Jim Daniel & Cherry Payne**
Election: **Kathie Graham**
Facilities & Grounds:
John Calzada
Finance: **Dan Drobnis**
Information: **Frank Schober**
Roads: **Felicia Probert**
Stable: **Open**

ECIA STAFF

Interim General Manager
Paul Skojec
466-4248
Covenant Compliance Rep
Mark Young
466-4248
mark@eldoradosf.org

VISTAS NEWSLETTER

Editor & Designer
Carol Leyba
466-1158
cbsleyba@comcast.net

Webmaster:
Jack Arnold
webmaster@eldoradosf.org
Editorial Assistant:
DiAna Gutierrez
466-4248
diana@eldoradosf.org

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Vista Grande Library
466-READ
Fire and Rescue
466-1204
eldoradofireandrescue.org
County All Purpose
820-CNTY (2689)

Kids from Eldorado perform in "Adventures of Tom Sawyer": Left to right: Rowyn Bass, Emma Carter, Julianna Raiten, Troy Ettenson, Kara McGee-Russell, AnaLuiza Dallapicula, Zoe Dukeminier, and Ben Rountree.

Local Theater

Eldorado Children's Theatre is once again bringing a literary classic to life in an innovative and high-spirited adaptation of Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." This tale of mischief-making, dangerous adventure, buried treasure, and first love will be performed at El Museo, located at the Railyard, 555 Camino de la Familia, on March 19–21 at 7:30 PM, with a Saturday matinee performance at 4 PM. The ensemble cast will be performing for schools and communities in shows across northern New Mexico throughout the month of March.



With original music by the talented Lone Piñon band, this show will be sure to delight adults and children alike. Tickets may be reserved at (435) 640-4444 or purchased at the door: adults \$10, students \$5. (Due to scarier elements and themes, this show is not appropriate for children under 6 years.)

Recycling Open House at Library

Eldorado/285 Recycles will host an information open house at the Vista Grande Public Library on March 5 from 4 to 5:30 PM. They will have examples of what can and cannot be recycled and will explain *why* these rules are in place. There will also be information on the E/285 compost program, which could benefit you, Eldorado's soil, and the environment. In addition, **Adam Schlachter**, Education and Outreach Coordinator of the Santa Fe Solid Waste Management Agency, will explain new city and county recycling projects and policies. Bring your questions and ideas to this event.

Community Garden Kickoff

El Dorado School Community Garden is holding its kick-off meeting on Saturday, March 7, at 9:30 AM in the El Dorado Community School library, 2 Avenida Torreon. Come for refreshments, garden tours, information, and sign-ups for the 2015 garden season. Gardeners at all levels are welcome. For questions, contact **Carol Robles** at crobles656@gmail.com.

Reel New Mexico!

On Thursday, March 12, at 7 PM, REEL NEW MEXICO presents *The Milagro Man: The Irrepressible Multicultural Life and Literary Times of John Nichols*. This film is a 78-minute feature documentary exploring the literary works and social activism of Taos resident **John Treadwell Nichols**, renowned author of the "New Mexico trilogy" (*The Milagro Beanfield War*, *The Magic Journey*, and *The Nirvana Blues*), Hollywood screenwriter, and author of non-fiction volumes such as *On the Mesa*, *Keep it Simple*, and *Dancing on*

the Stones. The documentary, based around the hub of an extensive interview, provides an intimate account of the creative literary process as exemplified in a gifted, determined, and unrepentantly radical American writer. Mr. Nichols has been invited to attend, along with director **Kurt Jacobsen**.

Filmgoers can now order and bring food and drink from La Plancha and enjoy it in the Performance Space during the movie. The \$5 suggested donation/admission at the door will go for expenses and to bring in filmmakers for other screenings. For more information, please contact **Jeff Berg** at 466-1634 or check reelnewmexico.com.

Artist Jill Anderson at Las Chivas

"Santa Fe Meets the Silk Road" is the next art exhibit coming to Las Chivas Coffee Roaster in Eldorado. Artist **Jill Anderson** has combined the elusive, ancient Turkish art of "Ebru" with contemporary acrylics. She calls her work "Ebrylics." On display will be "Red Mountains," winner of *The Artist's Magazine's* 2014 annual art competition. Her winning piece appears in the January/February 2015 issue. This solo exhibit is March 29–April 25, 2015 at Las Chivas Coffee Roaster at the Agora. Artist's Reception: March 29, 1–3 PM. For more info: laschivascoffees.com or jillandersonartist.com.

Get Involved with Cactus!

With spring coming, it is time to start thinking about cactus! The Cactus Rescue Project, which installed the public cactus gardens in Eldorado, will continue giving free classes and holding "weeding parties" again this spring and summer. Last year we had 8–15 people coming out to the cactus garden at the Community Center every few weeks to weed, learn about cactus, and take cactus babies home to expand their own cactus gardens. Anyone interested in participating in cactus events such as weeding parties, classes, or 2015 cactus projects, should contact **Obie** at jwo1959@aol.com. And don't forget to check out our website, CactusRescueProject.info, or visit us on Facebook.

El Dorado Community School STEAM Night

You are invited to the second annual Community STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) Night at El Dorado Community School, on Thursday, March 19, from 5 to 7:30 PM. You will have the opportunity to explore, through interactive tables and demonstrations, STEAM-based concepts. There will be raffle tickets and snacks, so bring the whole family. We hope to see you there!

If you would like to host a STEAM-based interactive table, help set up or clean up, please contact **Chari Kauffman**, Science Literacy Coach, at ckauffman@sfps.info, with any questions or to sign up to participate in or volunteer for the event. Your help will be greatly appreciated!



Reel New Mexico features a documentary about Taos author John Nichols, March 12.

Changes Near You?

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



PROTECT OUR NIGHT SKY

A house out here with a light
that blotted Orion from sight,
Complained all the neighbors . . . and
With all of their labors,
The night sky's returned to delight.



Jill Anderson's artwork will be on view at Las Chivas, March 29– April 25.

Gardening 101: Vegetables!

Want to learn how to get the most from your home garden? Join Santa Fe Master Gardener Association for two free classes and learn it all, from how to grow in raised beds, to composting, to drip system, to both cool and warm season bountiful crops. This two-part series, sponsored by the SFMGA, will be held in the large annex at the Santa Fe County Fairgrounds, 3229 Rodeo Road, on Sunday, March 15, and Sunday, March 22, from noon to 2 PM. Please sign up for both classes, as the second builds on information presented in the first. Class size is limited to 30 participants. To register online and for full information, visit sfmga.org.

Heads Up, Eldorado!

Eldorado Arts and Crafts Association is rolling toward the spring season, and out here in Eldorado that means New Mexico's time-honored and largest studio art tour is coming up. Please mark your calendars for EACA'S 24th annual Spring Tour, scheduled for the weekend of May 16–17. This year, the Artists Reception will be held on Friday evening, May 15, from 5 to 7 PM at the Community Center.

March Events

Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

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



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

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

Photographs (digital or snapshots) are encouraged!

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

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

SPECIAL EVENTS

ECIA Candidate Forum	Sat., March 21, 10 am-12 noon	RR
TGIF	Fri., March 20, 5-7 pm	LR

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Architecture Committee	Tues., March 10, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Architecture Committee	Tues., March 24, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Board Work Study	Thurs., March 5, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., March 16, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Conservation Committee	Tues., March 3, 7-9 pm	Jim Daniel	609-941-4527	F
ECIA Board Meeting	Thurs., March 19, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	RR
Election Committee	Wed., March 11, 2-4 pm	Kathie Graham	466-2133	CFR
Facilities & Grounds	Wed., March 4, 4-6 pm	John Calzada	466-1947	CFR
Finance Committee	Wed., March 11, 9:30 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Information Committee	Mon., March 23, 7-9 pm	Frank Schober	310-8593	CFR
Road Committee	Not scheduled	Felicia Probert	466-1563	CFR
Stable Committee	Tues., March 3, 7-9 pm	Alice Griffin	795-6424	CFR

MONTHLY / SEMI-MONTHLY MEETINGS / BIMONTHLY

EAW&SD*	1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 pm	Anna Mondragon	466-1085	RR/CR
Eldorado Arts & Crafts	Last Thurs. every other month	Mary Fredenburgh	466-1035	CR
Eldorado Book Club	3rd Wed., 3:00 pm	Susan Aylward	shaylward@gmail.com	
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	Gordon Groff	699-7680	
Search & Rescue	2nd Thurs., 7-9 pm	santafesar.org		CR

WEEKLY MEETINGS

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

* Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

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

*** Reservations required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradosf.org



At the Library

Vista Grande Public Library elected new board members and a new executive committee at its Annual Membership meeting in January. The 2015 Board of Directors is made up of **Roberta Armstrong**, president; **April Lauseng**, vice-president; **Donna Mazzola**, treasurer; and **Kathleen Camborde**, secretary. **Ann Jenkins**, **Gail Lindsay Marriner**, and **Leo Toralballa** fill out the rest of the board.

The new board will focus on revising the library's long-range plan. The community is invited to assist in this process; look for information on the website, www.vglibrary.org, and library bulletin boards. Also, an exciting new spring event will be announced soon.

PROGRAMS: In addition to "Wags and Words," After School Reading Club on Wednesday afternoons, Story Time on Friday mornings, and Friday afternoon Chess, VGPL hosts varied programs for the general community. Thus far, these have included **Jeff Berg's** *Made in Santa Fe* and *Physics for Everyone (No Scientific Knowledge Necessary!)*, a series of educational presentations. Check the website for upcoming events; VGPL gets new proposals weekly and adds items often.

Do you have an idea for a program you would like to see, or even better, help put together? VGPL is eager to hear from you. Local artists and writers interested in taking part in a series of Teas with an Artist

are asked to contact Librarian **Julia Kelso**. We also keep hearing about people wanting to start book clubs. Is that you?

MOVIE PRESENTATIONS: The library has a projector and movie screen in the meeting room, which makes for a nice big-screen experience. The monthly Family Movie Night continues to be popular with all ages. The next one is scheduled for Friday, March 13, at 7 PM. Call for the title and rating. Popcorn and juice are provided and everything is free, although donations are gratefully accepted.

Some patrons have asked for a Grown-up Movie Night, with films that appeal to an older audience. This would require a dedicated group who would commit to running and attending within our license agreement. Please contact library staff if you are interested in making this happen.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: VGPL is a community hub and proud of the work enabled by its volunteers. Quite literally, the library couldn't exist without them. Currently there is a real need for volunteers to serve on committees such as Finance, Development, Advocacy, Communications, Facilities, IT, and Programs. If you have skills that would benefit one of these and a few hours each month, then the library would love to have you. And if you are ready for a bigger commitment, there are vacant seats on the board of directors as well.

—Tracey Mitchell



American Kestrel.
Photo: Steve Jurvetson. Creative Commons Generic license.

American Kestrel (AK)

Thanks to **Dale Stahlecker** for identifying this bird in Eldorado. I have not seen the AK here, but have observed this beautiful small falcon (the smallest falcon in North America) on many occasions. You are likely to see the AK in the summer hunting for small prey. The male has beautiful plumage: a dark eye with a white patch underneath, two vertical lines from the base of the bill and behind the eye, a small gray head, a lovely reddish brown back and lighter breast fading to white, black spotting on the back and breast, long blue-gray wings, and a long reddish tail tipped by black and then white. The female's face has a similar pattern, but she is a less bright reddish brown on most of her body. From below, both show striping under the wings. Females are generally slightly larger than males. AKs are about 10 inches long with a wingspan of about 22 inches. Most birds are year-round residents but may change territories somewhat during winter and for breeding season when northern U.S. and Canada are already too crowded. They are found throughout the U.S., Central America, and in much of South America.

AKs like open areas with low brush and scattered trees, and dead trees are important as nest sites. Males

court by rising and diving and may present food to the female. The male locates several already existent nesting cavities and shows them to the female for selection. They do not excavate nests nor do much to improve a nest site. They will use nest boxes. Pairs are monogamous. The female lays four or five eggs which hatch in 26 to 32 days. The young are helpless and fledge in about 30 days. Sometimes a second brood is produced. These birds are hunters and eat insects (grasshoppers, dragonflies, beetles), voles, mice, small snakes, lizards, and small songbirds.

AKs have been seen at sports fields in the evening, picking off insects flying around lights, catching them on the wing. As a small falcon, they may become prey to crows, barn owls, red-tailed hawks, and sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks as well as some snakes. They can see ultraviolet light, which allows them to spot the urine trails of voles and other small mammals, helping them to locate a meal.

Unfortunately, the AK is losing nesting sites as woods and dead trees are removed, and the use of pesticides kills insects that otherwise would be a tasty meal. They hide kills in their environment (grasses, trees, fence posts) for later consumption or to prevent thefts by other animals and birds. A name sometimes used is Sparrow Hawk, although the AK is classified as a falcon (*Falco sparverius*).

—Pam Henline



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH FLORA & FAUNA GROUP

Ferrets and Weasels

Several Eldorado residents have mentioned they thought they saw a Black-Footed Ferret in the community. Although our area is part of the Black-Footed Ferret's original range, the animal is highly endangered. While not impossible, an encounter would be extremely unusual. Our curiosity aroused, we decided to research the question. We ended up gaining real respect for these rare, long-bodied animals.

It's easy to confuse ferrets with weasels. It's even easier to confuse Black-Footed (BF) Ferrets (the only native ferret to North America) with Long-Tailed (LT) Weasels (the only weasel species found in our area). Ferrets and weasels are both from the family of Mustelidae, close relatives of mink, badgers, and otters. Fearless hunters, sometimes taking prey larger than themselves, both ferrets and weasels have long, thick bodies that allow them to enter burrows after their prey and to make a den there.

BF Ferrets and LT Weasels resemble each other. Both have a black-tipped tail, and they are similar in size, although ferrets (average 18–24 inches) are slightly larger than weasels (11–13 inches). The BF Ferret has a mostly tan body with black feet and a black facial mask. The LT Weasel is brown in the summer with pale underparts; in some regions, its fur turns whitish in the winter.

Ferrets and weasels are carnivores, hunting live prey. Both animals are primarily nocturnal, ferrets sometimes staying below ground for several days. They are both territorial, and they are both hunted by predators such as coyotes, bobcats, snakes, and owls. Weasels can climb trees.

The BF Ferret is a specialist. Prairie dogs make up most of its diet, and it makes its home in abandoned

prairie dog towns and burrows. Because prairie dog populations have been drastically reduced—from habitat destruction, hunting and animal killing contests, poisoning, and disease—the BF Ferret has become one of the most endangered species in the world.

The LT Weasel is a generalist. It eats a wide selection of food, including many types of rodents, rabbits, small birds, bird eggs, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and some insects. This has enabled the LT Weasel to adapt better than the ferret to changing environments and food supplies.

Efforts to reintroduce the BF Ferret have had some success; the population has grown from only 18 in 1987 to approximately 600 in the wild today. Breeding and reintroduction programs include recent efforts at Ted Turner's ranch.

If by any chance you might think you have seen a BF Ferret:

- ▼ Look for black feet and black facial mask.
- ▼ Note where it was sighted—was it near a prairie dog town?
- ▼ Note the exact location and time of day.
- ▼ Take a photo if possible.
- ▼ Alert Game and Fish of New Mexico (505-476-8000) and Flora & Fauna here in Eldorado.

References for this article are available upon request. Contact us at EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com. We love hearing from you!



Top: Black Footed Ferret
Bottom: Long Tailed Weasel
 Photos: New Mexico Game & Fish.

Of Water and Other Things, CONTINUED FROM P. 2

Additional wells have been drilled and emergency generators have been installed to ensure that, in the event of an extended power outage, water will continue to flow to our homes and to local businesses. The latest, important planned addition to our water system will be Well 19, now in the planning and design process. At a total price tag of \$1.3 million, it will be made reality on legislative approval of a bill sponsored by our local senator, Peter Wirth, and funds provided by the New Mexico Water Trust Board.

The Water Board is but one of the many volunteer-dependent organizations in our community. Our Fire Department, our Community School, our Library, our Senior Center, and the ECIA are all in need of vol-

unteer support, which only a relatively few residents now provide.

We may be one of the most volunteer-dependent communities in America. If you would like to see your fellow citizens at work, giving their time to keep our community looking good, maintaining our property values, and (among other things) protecting us and providing us with fresh, clean water, then resolve to visit a committee or board meeting some evening in the near future. Check out meeting times for ECIA committees at www.eldoradosf.org or the Water Board at <http://www.eldoradowaterdistrict.com/>. It won't be a crowd scene.

—Frank Schober

ELDORADO AT SANTA FE

VISTAS

Eldorado Community
Improvement Association
#1 La Hacienda Loop
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508
www.eldoradosf.org

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



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

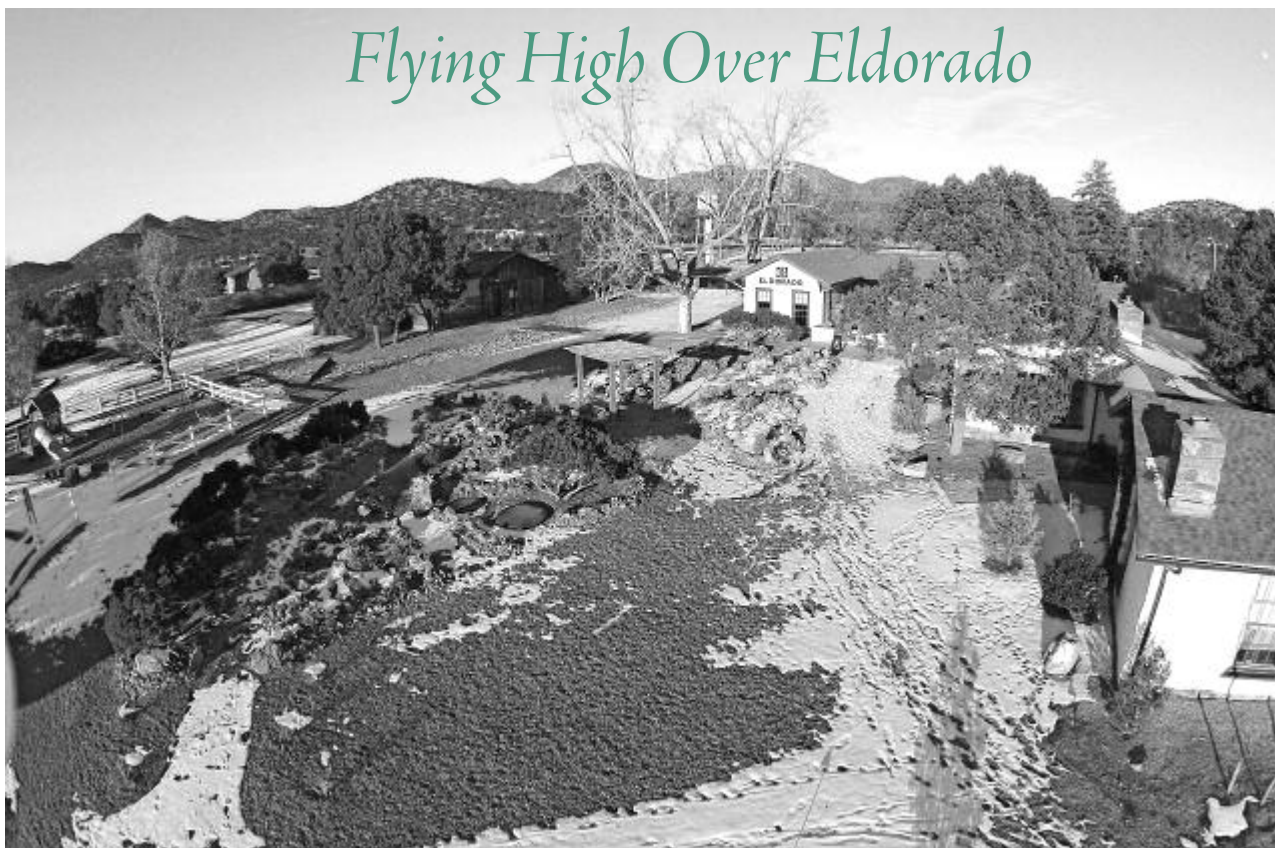


Scan this code to get
to our online video
about Eldorado by
Jack Arnold

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

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

Flying High Over Eldorado



An aerial view of the Eldorado Community Center, taken by our webmaster and photographer Jack Arnold.