

ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME VII, ISSUE 5

May. 2005

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Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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The Community Needs You

THE ANCIENT GREEKS, as we know, had a word for many of the issues, foibles and problems that we encounter in our modern lives. The word idiot is an example. In present day use, most often, it is a “fighting word,” denoting an abysmal lack of intelligence that we apply to people who anger us, though they may be otherwise quite intelligent.

The Greeks used the word to mean something quite different from the pejorative that we are used to, however. To them, idiots were persons so concerned with their private lives that they refused to support the activity and work of the community in which they lived.

In the latter, classical sense, there is a lot of idiot behavior in Eldorado. For example:

- ▼ A recent county election calling for voters to decide a multi-million dollar bond issue drew less than 10% of the electorate.
- ▼ A recent election to the Community College Board drew just over 1% of the total number of those eligible to vote.
- ▼ ECIA Board meetings, which decide a variety of issues of concern to residents (budgets, capital projects, architectural guidelines, road maintenance, etc.), are all too often attended only by board members.
- ▼ There are only three candidates for five ECIA Board positions this year.
- ▼ The ECIA's committees do a great deal of the work to make our community livable but they are starving for members.
- ▼ ECIA Annual Meetings are sparsely attended.

It should be strange to us who live in one of the most beautiful communities in the United States, a community worth conserving and protecting, that many of our residents show no interest in it—unless and until the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard!) factor kicks in.

Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, “Tip” O’Neil, once said, “All politics are local.” He might just as well have said, “All improvement of our surroundings, our security, and

the environment that supports our life must be, first and foremost, local, citizen-based efforts.”

We have not only a beautiful and well-run community here in Eldorado, we also live in one of the most safe, attractive, environmentally beautiful communities in the nation. We are the largest unincorporated community in New Mexico and we offer more smoothly-operating amenities to our members than any other known community association in the state. But it takes volunteers to keep it going.

I am proud to have served these last several years as a member of the ECIA Board. I urge everyone in this community, if they have not been involved heretofore, to get involved now. Plan to attend the ECIA Annual Meeting at 7 pm May 2, at the elementary school. Consider joining one of the ECIA committees. Volunteer and add some weight to your ideas, your suggestions and your complaints about life here. Refuse to be an idiot in the ancient—or any other sense.

Join! Participate! Eldorado isn't just a development. It's a way of life and its quality of life depends not on budgets, amenities or capital outlay programs—but on you.

—Frank Schober

An Eldorado resident and frequent contributor to the Vistas, Schober is completing a second term as a member of the ECIA Governing Board with this year's Annual Meeting.

**ECIA Board
Work Study
Meeting,
Community
Center, Mon.,
May 16, 7 pm**

**VOLUNTEERS SERVE
THEIR COMMUNITY IN
MANY DIFFERENT WAYS.**



**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. 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.

Sometimes It Feels Like Whitewater Rafting!

THE **ELDORADO WATER** and Sanitation District (EAWSD) was formed, in large measure, to purchase the water utility from El Dorado Utilities (EDU). Although EDU was prepared to sell the utility to a Utilities Inc. (UI) for \$6.3 million, they would not sell to EAWSD. Therefore EAWSD, following the mandate of our community, had to pursue the purchase through a process called condemnation—essentially, a hostile takeover.

The condemnation has been a contentious process, and it is not over yet. EDU asserted that the utility was worth an exorbitant price, \$35 million. EAWSD disagreed, and the question was taken to a jury. The jury determined that a fair price was \$11 million. EAWSD had raised \$7.9 million by issuing a General Obligation (GO) bond, and the court determined that EAWSD could take over operation of the utility after depositing \$7 million with the court, the balance to be paid by June 1, 2005. EAWSD is preparing to issue Revenue Bonds to cover the \$4 million, and we fully expect to have the bonds sold in time to complete the purchase.

Back in April 2002, Eldorado residents indicated they were strongly in favor of public ownership. In August 2002 the residents voted overwhelmingly in favor of the GO bond issue, which would raise funds through increased taxes. In January 2005 residents again voted overwhelmingly in favor of public ownership by their selection of the Board of Directors, all of whom support this direction.

Those are the basic facts, but woven into this story are multiple legal proceedings, litigation that has added to the cost of the system and slowed down the process, delaying the purchase and costing the district more money. The litigation has been introduced both by developers and by EDU and UI. EDU and UI have been joined by a handful of residents who want to see public ownership fail, in spite of the community's strong commitment to public ownership.

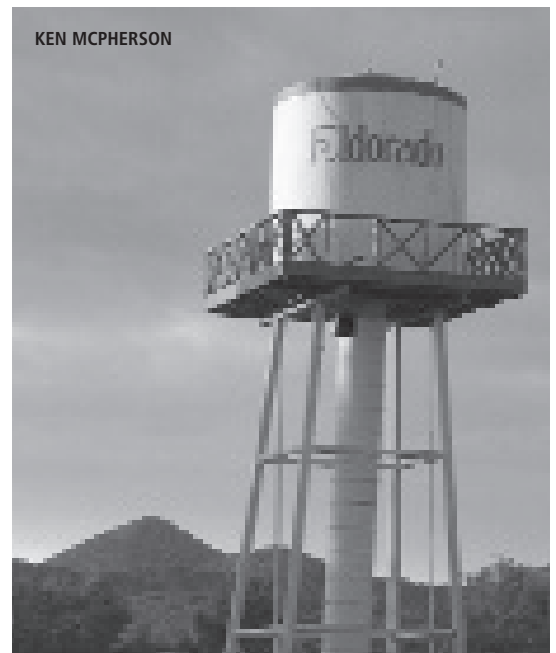
Because of the litigation, our GO bonds were sold without rating and without insurance. To overcome those deficiencies, we pledged both the taxes and the system revenues ("double pledging") to back up the bonds and make them attractive to buyers. Now, before we issue Revenue Bonds, we must re-fund the GO bonds to eliminate the double pledge, so that revenues from the system can be pledged.

Litigation, or the fear of it, also played a part in our recent failure with the Board of County Commissioners. Different Commissioners voted against the Joint Powers Agreement for different reasons, but the fear of being drawn into the many lawsuits was a consistent theme.

Despite these disappointments, EAWSD's resolve and its commitment to public ownership of our water resources has been unwavering. The vast majority of us want to see public ownership of the water utility so that we can protect the water supply, promote conservation, build excellence into the system and manage and operate the system effectively and efficiently. In March we had our first quarterly performance review with OMI, our utility operator, and we are extremely pleased with the way they are approaching the challenges that face them. We are continuing to talk with the county, who also supports our commitment to public ownership, to see how we can be helpful to each other in the future. We have every intention, and every confidence, that we will complete the purchase of our water system.

—Mary Raynard
Secretary, EAWSD

KEN MCPHERSON



Healthcare Planning

RECENT NEWS EVENTS have underlined the importance for each person to have a current Advance Directive for Healthcare. A form, specialized for New Mexico residents, together with simple instructions, is available for printout from Presbyterian Hospital's website, but may be used with any healthcare provider.

The Web address is:
www.phs.org/facilities/patguide/advdirform.shtml.

Views from the Eldorado CCR...

TRASH – It is spring and time to think about cleaning up the yard. Please be aware of your neighbors' views. Here is a litmus test: if your storage looks like a permanent rummage sale and is placed where you do not have to look at it but your neighbors do, you are not abiding by the spirit of the covenants.

DOGS – Recently a dog off of the leash bit an 8-year-old girl (with the owner present). If you think your dog is under control, think again! Voice control means your dog is by your side and is controlled by your voice commands. If your dog is two blocks away, that's not voice control. If the dog steps off of your property, the dog is considered to be breaking the law. Please control your pet with fencing, and always use a leash.

EXTERIOR LIGHTS – Because a light fixture has glass surrounding the bulb does not mean it is shielded. The shield must be opaque and light shall

not be visible through any openings in the fixture other than the bottom. Landscape driveway low voltage and solar powered lighting is no exception. Some of the older homes have lantern- and globe-style fixtures with clear and white glass; these fixtures are not shielded. They can be brought into compliance by masking the lowest area and painting with an opaque earth-tone color.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW – Planning for a new fence, wall, portal, addition or accessory structure? No additions or exterior alterations above the natural grade shall be made to an existing building (structure) until the design, location, exterior colors and building materials for such additions and alterations have been approved in writing. The Architectural Committee meets at 7 pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month... compliance, first!

—Charles Smith, the ECIA CCR

From the President's Desk

THE PRESERVATION OF THE NIGHT sky is important to the residents of Eldorado. We work together to ensure that our skies are not illuminated so that on a clear evening we can see the skies in their full beauty. Now our work and conscientious efforts have been recognized. Eldorado was given the Night Sky Award by the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance. The award was granted at a luncheon in Taos on April 9. This recognition goes to all residents in our community. Setting modesty aside, I must say we work diligently, and regard the night sky as one of our natural resources that we protect and cherish. So each of us can pat ourselves on the back and say, "a job well done." Keep up the good work!

The Architectural Committee, staff member, Charles Smith and board liaison, Dan Drobnis have been working for over a year to revise the Guidelines for the Protective Covenants and Building Restrictions for Eldorado. The revised guidelines were written to clarify and update the guidelines that were issued in February 2004. These guidelines should be useful to long-time residents as well as to people who are just moving into the community. Copies of the revisions should be available in early to mid-May and public comment will be solicited after thirty days of their release. The time and place for public comment will be published. Once the revised copies are released, please take time



to read them and be prepared to comment on them. It is important that the board and the committee hear from you so that we have guidelines the community wants and can support.

Please put May 2 on your calendar and plan to attend the Annual Meeting of the ECIA residents. This is the members' meeting – it is a time to catch up on what is happening in the community and, if you desire, to make a public comment for the record. We will meet at the El Dorado Elementary School at 7 pm. Hope to see you there.

—Jeanne Klein

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Vista Grande Library
466-READ
Security
204-2945
Fire and Rescue
466-1204
Animal Control
424-2050

Flea For Fun!

Saturday, May 14, is the Eldorado Residents Association's Spring Flea Market in the Community Center's parking lot. Setup begins at 7 am, buyers are welcome at 8 am and closing time is noon. No space reservations are necessary. Space is on a first come, first served basis. Cost per space is \$10.00 for Eldorado residents, \$15.00 for sellers from outside the community and \$20.00 for commercial sellers. Bring what you'll need for your setup, and please, **no food or weapons may be sold**. Sellers need to clean up their area, take unsold items with them and be out by 1 pm. Donuts, coffee and various refreshments will be sold. For information call **Pat Kuhlhoff** at 466-4877.

Art Tour 2005

The Eldorado Studio Tour, an art extravaganza of huge proportions, will be held the weekend of May 14 and 15 from 10 am to 5 pm in 56 studios throughout the community, and will feature 99 Eldorado artists. Our artist-rich community is home to residents who create work in many media, from traditional oil, watercolor and acrylic to abstract sculpture; from wearable art to masks made from gourds. This year's tour will feature the widest variety of art in the history of the tour. It is best to visit the Preview Gallery at the Fire Station on Vista Grande to see examples of each artist's work and pick up a brochure with a detailed map to plot your course to the studios. Preview Gallery hours are also 10 am to 5 pm Saturday and Sunday. Colorful flags and signs designate the studios and decorate the entrances into Eldorado. We are expecting large numbers of visitors from around New Mexico. An added feature will be **Peas N' Pod catering**, who will provide lunch at the Fire Station.

The artists will again donate part of their proceeds to Eldorado Fire and Rescue, The Vista Grande Public Library and the Community Band. Over the last five years nearly \$14,000 has been donated in total to these community organizations. For information, contact **Joretha Hall** at 466-6245 or **Janet Amtmann** at 466-3256. View artists' work at: www.eldoradoarts.org.

Association Fees

If you haven't yet paid your association fees, you are delinquent. You will need to call the ECIA office at 466-4248 to see what late fees you owe.

Save the Date!

The Vista Grande Public Library's popular annual Ice Cream Social & Silent Auction will take place



on Sunday, August 28 this year—a little earlier than usual. Once again there will be a raffle with several terrific items. Details will follow.

To Read or Not To Read

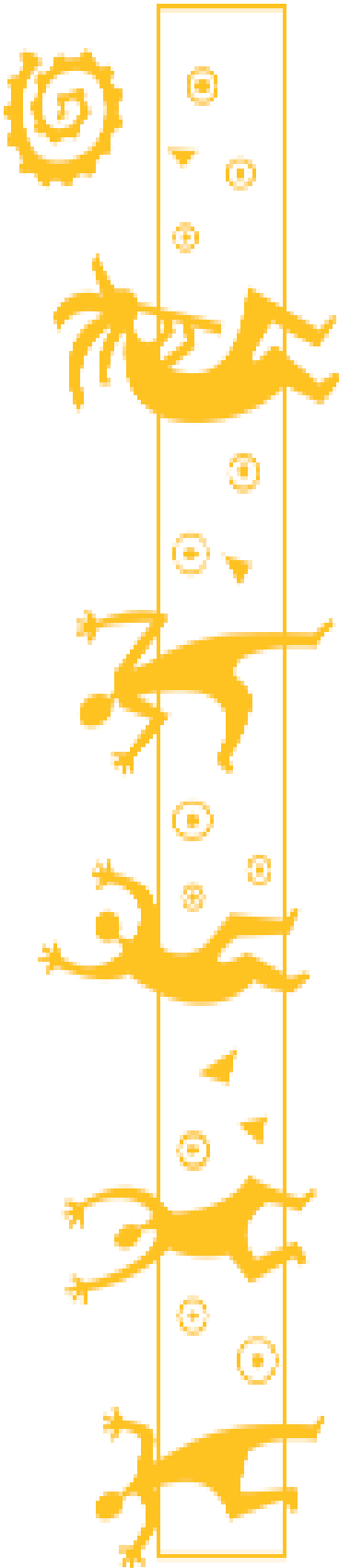
A local Shakespeare reading group is being formed. Contact **Mary Denison** at mmw85@aol.com or call 466-6657—no experience necessary.

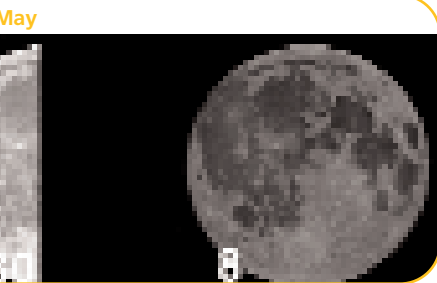
In the Swim

The pool opens Memorial weekend, May 28, and closes Labor Day weekend, September 6. We are still using the white pool passes. The pool hours are General Swim: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10 am to 6 pm; Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday 10 am to 8 pm. Lap Swim: everyday from 8 am to 10 am, plus Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 6-8 pm. Association fees must be current to have access to all amenities. We are still looking for a few lifeguards. You must have a current CPR certificate and lifeguarding certificate. If interested, please contact **Bill Donohue** at 466-4248.

Memorial Weekend Hike

The Conservation Committee will lead a moderate hike on Saturday, May 28 in our Community Preserve. Meet at the Community Center at 9 am and return by noon. The leader will be **Joe Armbruster**. Bring the whole family and enjoy some fresh air and exercise before your holiday cookout. Bring hat and water. Call 466-1118 for details.





Astronomy Corner

Extrasolar Planets

Extrasolar planets we have discovered so far are giants like Jupiter and Saturn, many orbiting close to their stars. We don't expect them to support life as we know it, but these planetary systems may contain smaller, terrestrial planets. Some scientists believe that there are thousands of other systems waiting to be discovered.

The planets in May: Jupiter is visible all night; Saturn visible in the evening sky. Mars, the red planet, will be visible in the morning sky.

—Juan Alvarez
Jalva88610@aol.com



DAN DROBNIS

May Events

Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

Email info@eldoradocommunity.org with your meeting/event information, or bring it to the ECIA office by the 8th of the month for publication in the following month's *Vistas*. Please include "Attn: Vistas" and be sure to indicate:



1. **Type of Event**
2. **Location**
3. **Date & Time**
4. **A Resource Person** (one who can answer questions both about the event and the sponsoring organization) and his/her telephone number.

Photographs (digital or snapshots) are encouraged!

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

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

MAY SPECIAL EVENTS

ECIA Annual Meeting	Mon., May 2, 7-9 pm	El Dorado Elementary—all members
Pool opens	Sat., May 28	
ECIA offices closed	Mon., May 30	Memorial Day

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Conservation Committee	Tues., May 3, 7-9 pm	Stephen Wust	CFR
285 Coalition	Wed., May 4, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock	466-1598 CFR
Architectural Committee	Tues., May 10, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708 CFR
Finance Committee	Wed., May 11, 9:30-11 am	Gisela Knight	466-2568 CFR
EAWS&SD*	Wed., May 11, 7-9 pm	Ray Nichols	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., May 16, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248 CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., May 19, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248 CR
Information Committee	Mon., May 23, 7 pm	Ken McPherson	466-4161 F
Architectural Committee	Tues., May 24, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708 CFR
Stable Committee	Tues., May 24, 7-9 pm		CR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

ERA Coffee Social	Tues., May 3, 10-11 am	Jerry Bradley	466-4253 F
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
Search & Rescue	Thurs., May 12, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765 CR
Book Club	Sat., May 14, 1:30-3 pm	Barbara Rugg	466-2559
Book Club/Pot Luck	call for date and time	Ken Fischer	466-2537
Library Book Group	4th Thurs., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636 Lib
La Canada Wireless	Mon., May 9, 7-9		LR
Cub Scout Pack 414	4th Tues., 7-9 pm	Ty Ransdell	466-2579 Sm Gym
MOMS Club	Call for date and time	Shannon Ratcliff	986-9050

WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tuesdays, 5:45-6:45 pm		LR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am		LR
AA	Thursdays, 5:45-6:45 pm	CANCELED	
AA	Fridays, 6-7 pm		CFR
AA	Sat., 10:45-11:45 am		LR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm		LR
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Paul Tuck	466-4815 RR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Mon., 1-4 pm		LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Marjorie Segell	466-3958 CR, LR
Bridge	2nd & 4th Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Pat Lavengood	466-9765 CR, LR
Bridge	Wednesdays, 9-noon	Nancy Rost	466-2832 LR
Community Band	Thursdays, 6-8 pm	Joel Hopko	466-8412
Fire & Rescue Training	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204 Station
Fire & Rescue Work Duty	Saturdays, Call for time	Fire Station Office	466-1204 Station
Senior Lunch**	Wednesdays, 12-1 pm	Therese Janowski	466-1397 CR
Knitting Club	2nd & 4th Tues., 10 am-12 pm	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

My Nightmare

SUMMER IS FILLED WITH INSECTS that drive me crazy. Of course, Eldorado's insects aren't as bad as a thousand other cities', but they still give me the creeps. My least favorite crawly thing has to be the centipede.

You have probably seen them, the hideous creatures. I'm not sure if they scare me because of their prehistoric look or because they are almost indestructible, but they do scare me. When I'm sitting in my living room in the middle of summer and a centipede goes scurrying across the floor with the speed of a Japanese Bullet train, my fear makes me hesitate. Before I can get to it with my shoe, it hides beneath the baseboard or under a piece of furniture, leaving our cat staring at the dark space for the next three to four hours.

"Why kill it?" my wife asks. "Catch it and throw it outside."

Now I have thought about that proposition. They move so fast, twist and turn with such flexibility, I cannot even imagine trying to catch one. Who knows what evil impulse they are acting out? So I opt for the manly way out: I make up an excuse about how dangerous they are, with their poison bite and all. Well, that excuse led me to research these monstrous creatures to prove my point once and for all.

First of all, I found the literature quite varied. In one book, I read that centipedes, ferocious hunters despite their poor sight, hunt at night using their antennae and sensitive hairs on their feet to smell and find prey, while a website tells me they are a harmless nuisance and will not attack unless provoked. (Isn't that what they say about all dangerous

animals and insects?) The following is what I could find out with some assurance of validity.

Guess what? A centipede isn't even an insect; they are arthropods, which are critters with external, jointed skeletons. (So already I'm thinking they are deceptive.) There are 3,000 documented species of centipedes all over the world. They reach maturity after about two years, and can live to the ripe old age of seven. They may have as few as 30 feet or more than 100. A centipede's main enemies include lizards, salamanders, shrews, owls, wild cats and even other centipedes, since they can be cannibalistic.

As mentioned above (I can't get it out of my head), they are ferocious hunters. They eat insects, and kill their prey by squeezing it with poison-containing pincers on their first pair of legs. These pincers have evolved over the eons from the original front legs. Some centipedes have even been known to rear up to catch bees and wasps in flight!

When disturbed, centipedes move swiftly toward darkened hiding places. Some say that they can move as fast as over a foot per second, but of course, they move faster than that when I'm chasing them.

Is a centipede bite deadly? Here is what the poison center at the University of Arizona has to say:

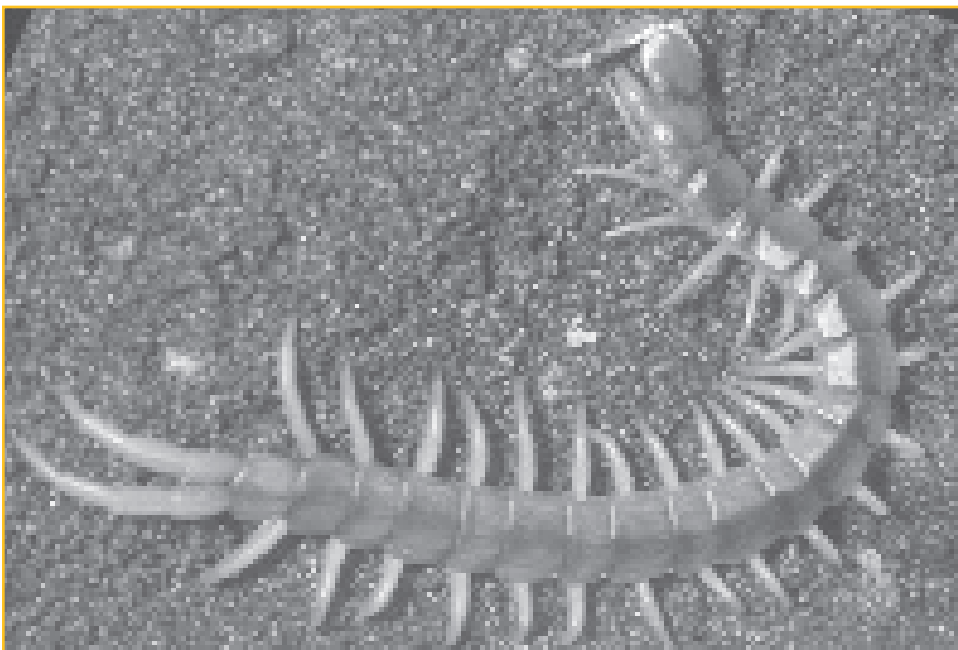
SIGNS & SYMPTOMS: A centipede bite will cause local inflammation and a painful response. Symptoms are frequently short-lived, lasting only a few hours. Although cases of persistent tenderness lasting for several weeks can be found, they are extremely rare.

FIRST AID: Many centipede bites can be treated at home. The patient is advised to encourage bleeding

from the puncture site, clean the site well with soap and water and apply a cool compress. To relieve local pain, a solution of ammonia diluted in water, if applied early, has been reported to help. If the pain is severe, or lasts longer than 12 hours, relief may be found in an emergency room or urgent care facility. For additional information, call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Have you ever tried to kill a centipede? If they are on a carpet or rug, forget it! They have been made to survive! Should I take my wife's advice and just try to scoot them outside some way? Write me and tell me what works for you, and if you have any great centipede stories, we'll try to publish the best ones.

—Ken McPherson
kenzwork@bubwest.com



Ash-throated Flycatchers (ATFC)

THIS SHY BIRD OF OPEN SPACES serves us all summer long, snatching insects in the air and gulping them down. They also eat berries. They are found throughout the Southwest in open, arid habitats. I noticed one on April 2, so summer must finally be coming! The ATFC is medium-sized at 8.5 inches long, with a 12-inch wingspan. The head, neck and back are grayish-brown, with chestnut on the upper and lower tail, pale yellow on the belly and a small portion of the underwing, with a dark eye and bill, and sometimes showing a small crest on the head (males and females are similar). Sibley lists five flycatchers of genus *Myiarchus* that are difficult to identify, but the ATFC is plentiful here and the one you will most likely see.

While the female is building her nest, the male closely follows her, singing and guarding the female from the advances of other males. The monogamous parents produce four or five creamy eggs with brown, purple and olive blotches that are brooded for 15 days by the female. The helpless young are fed by both parents and fledge in 14-16 days. ATFC migrate at the end of the breeding season to Mexico

and as far south as north-eastern Costa Rica. Some winters, birds are spotted as far north as southwestern Arizona and southern Nevada.

They have a pleasant few-note call (described as kibrr, kibrr or kaBRINK) that is easy to recognize after a couple of observations. To hear the ATFC's call, go to www.naturesongs.com/birds.html and click on PASSERIFORMES, then TYRANNIDAE. It is thought that this call is entirely formed before the young leave the nest.

Studies of song learning have led to the “auditory template hypothesis”—the idea that each species is born with a neurological model of what its song should sound like and it develops that song by matching sounds that it hears with the template in its brain. This model is especially appropriate to songbirds and may or may not relate to the ATFC.

—Pam Henline



Greetings, Anxious Gardeners—

IT'S MAY! This month can start out with the scent of lilacs one day and the sound of snow shovels the next. The winter has seemed endless, but by mid-month our final frost date will arrive and for the next five months, it's gardening time.

The winter snows have given us some drought relief, but also extra work. Insect and weed populations will be higher than normal, not to mention the rapidly multiplying rodents such as rabbits, squirrels and pack rats. Extra diligence must be taken now to manage these little blessings before they get out of hand. Weeding early might require a wheelbarrow in May versus a pick-up truck in July. Mending gates and fences now will prevent your garden from becoming a salad bar for the critters. Use extreme caution when considering poisons—remember the food chain! A dead rodent full of pesticides still looks juicy to our birds of prey and coyotes.

By the third week of May, annuals such as African daisy and marigolds can be introduced to the garden for intense displays of color through October. Decorate shaded portals with houseplants, protecting them from our high altitude sun. Cluster thirsty plants near the house for efficient water use; wind and sun protection decrease moisture needs.

Tender perennials should be planted now to develop strong root systems while the earth is warm.

Long blooming *Salvia greggii*, or red sage, is rabbit-proof and also attracts hummingbirds. English lavender cultivars such as 'Hidcote' or 'Munstead' add shades of silver foliage, purple to blue flowers, and fragrance—plus they're xeric.

Water features can provide relief

to our dry climate and, per square foot, use 75 percent less water than an annual garden. This is the time to add and enjoy water lilies, cattails, parrot feather and water hyacinth. These plants can thrive in a pot as well as a pond. They require lots of sun, and a drop of garlic oil wreaks havoc on mosquito larvae. Get creative; the high desert doesn't have to be dry and barren. 'Tis the gardeners' season—enjoy!

—Michael Clark
Tropic of Capricorn



WHITEWOLFVISION.COM

Security
204-2945



Once again, the Eldorado Studio Tour will be drawing visitors from all over. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 14 and Sunday, May 15 from 10 am to 5 pm and visit some of the 56 studios throughout the community, featuring 99 Eldorado Artists. For more information, see page 4.

Sculpture by Tim Roundy