

ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME X, ISSUE 5

May 2008

IN THIS ISSUE

Sheriff & Bobcats	2
Pres. Notes & Soil Repair ..	3
In the Community	4-5
Roads and ERA Update	6
White-breasted Nuthatch ..	7
Master Gardening	7
Water Harvesting	8

Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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Thinking Outside the Book

VISTA GRANDE PUBLIC LIBRARY

(VGPL) is certainly not your grandparent's library. Yes, there are plenty of books, more than 20,000 of them, in fact. But there are also recorded books for all ages, movies on DVD and VHS, music CDs, teaching materials, a broad selection of magazines and the always-popular public computers, including one that is ADA-compliant.

From the moment the idea for a library was born, the thinking around the institution has been "outside the book." VGPL is an independent, nonprofit library that relies heavily on individuals in the community it serves to keep the doors open. Currently, less than 30 percent of the budget comes from Santa Fe County. More than 70 percent of the operating budget comes from people like you. The library counts on you to support the Ice Cream Social in August each year, the Silent Auction and other fundraising efforts. In the most recent legislative session, the library was awarded a \$55,000 capital appropriation toward a planned expansion—not quite the \$1.3 million needed, but a start, nonetheless.

Library Director **Barbara Hagood** and Children's Librarian **Pamela Monaghan-Geernaert** depend on more than 50 volunteers to execute the day-to-day work of the library and to create a place with heart. Volunteer **Sara Jordan** is a great example. For the past four years, Sara has worked to help catalog resources that come into the library and now directs a crew of seven each Monday to see that the materials you want are on the shelf. But Sara doesn't stop there. She is a regular volunteer for After School Reading, helps out on Book Donation Day and, with a smile, generally makes the behind-the-scenes efforts run smoothly. And there are 50 more like her.

VGPL has been successful in securing grant funding for two projects that definitely look outside the book. McCune Charitable Foundation recently awarded funds to create a teen advocacy board and junior book club. The program, entitled "Act Up,"

will address the problem of a decline in library usage by teen patrons. The goal is to provide an engaging environment in which teens will use technology to create podcasts that promote their local library.

Technology is also the focus of a \$12,000-plus grant from the New Mexico State Library. The Technology Showcase Grant will enable the library to create two Apple graphic design stations that let users edit photos, video and audio and create animation. There are also plans to install five iPod listening/viewing stations in the library by June. If that's not enough, there will be 10 iPods that can be checked out.

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"When we saw the Technology Showcase Grant proposal from Vista Grande Public Library, we were really excited," said **Geri Hutchins**, Federal Programs Coordinator with the New Mexico State Library. "It seems like a very creative way to address the changing needs of the 21st century."

It is not only through technology that the library is thinking outside the book. During the summer months, the library will host a series of night sky programs for families. Bring your blankets, lawn chairs and telescopes. "Fly Me to the Moon" is a chance to learn about the most mystical of all orbs. "Stories in the Stars" will explore ancient mythology and the constellations. The series finale is sure to intrigue—"The Edge of the Universe is a Wall with One Side."

Now, more than ever, the library is the place to be, whether to read a book, learn a language or study the stars. Visit the website at www.vglibrary.org to see the many ways the library adds value to your lives and your community. Check it out.

—*Mary Arnold & Barbara Hagood*

***ECIA Board
Work Study
Meeting,
Community
Center, Mon.,
May 12, 7 pm***

PHOTO BY RICHARD GROSS



**Library Director
Barbara B. Hagood**

**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.

So Says the Sheriff

I READ YOUR NEWSLETTER religiously every month and appreciate having information available to me that is well-designed and well written. I was disappointed, however, to see on the back page of the March issue Dan Drobnis saying that I have publicly stated that "Eldorado is a low crime area and enjoys (!) a low priority for regular patrols." Dan goes on to say that I will continue to believe this if crimes are seriously underreported.

I have said that Eldorado is among the lower crime areas in Santa Fe County. I never have said that the Eldorado area is a low priority for regular patrols. A deputy is assigned to the greater Eldorado area 24/7, 365 days a year. There usually are two deputies assigned Friday nights and Mondays during the day.

I encourage residents to always report crime or suspicious activity, and I always have said that the Eldorado area has one of the most well run Neighborhood Watch programs and the most proac-

tive communities in Santa Fe County. I applaud those efforts and ask you all to keep up the great work. I hope you will publish this letter and take my response, not in a negative way, but only as my attempt to make sure that correct information is disseminated.

One thing about burglaries: one or two people can carry out five or six burglaries a day. A few days of this and the crime rate can rise dramatically in a brief time. When we catch these people, the crime rate drops just as dramatically. We will catch these people and things will return to normal.

The most effective way to catch burglars is with help from the public. Deputies cannot be everywhere. Most burglars are caught when someone calls in a suspicious person or vehicle or when a burglar is caught in the act. I ask everyone to be extra vigilant and be our eyes and ears. It is a cliché, but it's also very true that crime prevention begins at home.

—Sheriff Greg Solano

What Do Bobcats Eat?

ABOUT A MONTH AGO, my wife and I looked out our window and saw a large bobcat sitting just outside our small walkway wall. I ran to get the camera, but when I returned to the window my wife noted that with the arrival of two large ravens it had moved quickly across to our neighbor's backyard and around the rear of their house. I was concerned because, while our rear garden has a high wall to offer our cat a safe haven from coyotes, it would not keep out a bobcat. I guessed that maybe it was not a problem because a cat would not eat another cat, and I knew that the northern New Mexico bobcat prefers cottontails, jacks and small rodents. Then I started seeing notices for missing cats going up around the neighborhood.

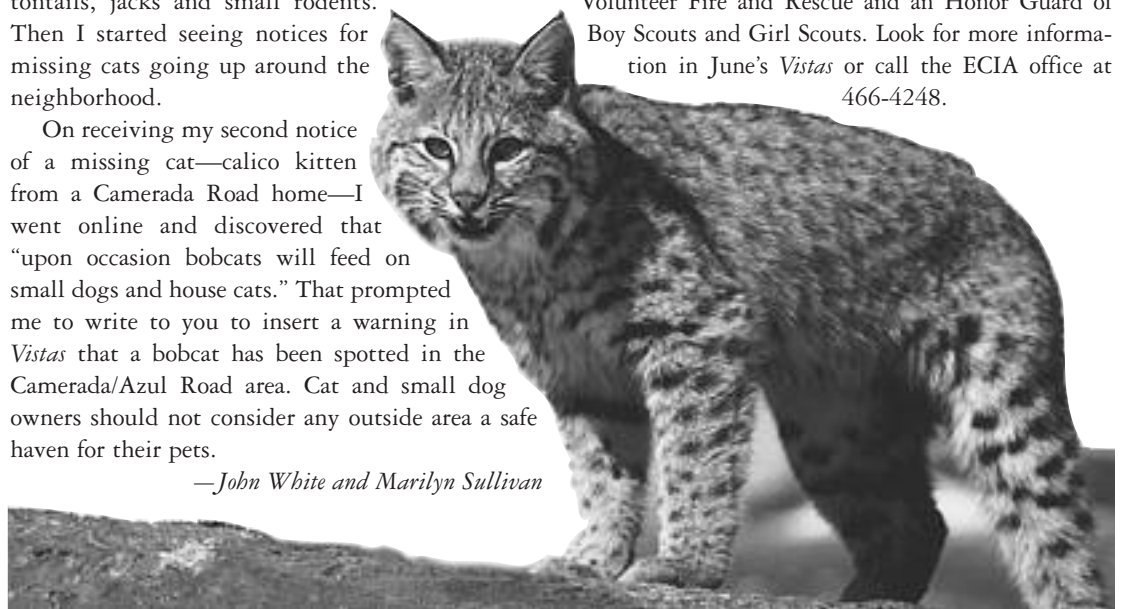
On receiving my second notice of a missing cat—calico kitten from a Camerada Road home—I went online and discovered that "upon occasion bobcats will feed on small dogs and house cats." That prompted me to write to you to insert a warning in *Vistas* that a bobcat has been spotted in the Camerada/Azul Road area. Cat and small dog owners should not consider any outside area a safe haven for their pets.

—John White and Marilyn Sullivan

The 4th

THIS YEAR'S FESTIVITIES will be bigger and better than ever with lots of free food—hot dogs, sodas, popcorn and snow cones. There will be pool games for the kids, music by the Eldorado Community Band and plenty of shade in the new patio area at the Community Center to keep things comfortable. Eldorado 4th of July celebrations begin at 10 am with our annual parade along Monte Alto to the Community Center.

We invite all Eldorado residents and organizations to join the parade. Build a float or just dress up and march along with the kids, dogs, horses and the Order of the Thistle (bagpipes) led by the Eldorado Volunteer Fire and Rescue and an Honor Guard of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Look for more information in June's *Vistas* or call the ECIA office at 466-4248.



From the President's Desk

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY in the neighborhood! Spring is in the air. It is apparent from the number of residents who are out and about on the hike/bike paths and the green shoots peeking out of the soil.

Spring also is the time for Association Board elections in Eldorado. It is wonderful that five residents have stepped forward to be elected to the four Board seats being vacated.

It is important that residents send in their ballots by May 2 so that the community has a voice in who represents them on the Board. Regardless of whether or not you pay much attention to the work of the Board, these seven people have a major influence on what happens in and for our community. So vote. It only takes a moment.

This is my final missive to you. I want to express my appreciation to all who have worked with the Board and me throughout the years to make improvements and sometimes just to hold the line on issues in our community. It has been my pleasure to serve a community that is very unique in our visions and aspirations for the place we call home. I have every belief that the new Board will continue to work in the spirit of consensus-building and civility.

I turn to Garrison Keillor for my last message to you, "Be well, do good work and keep in touch."

—Jeanne Klein



The Secret Life of Soil

HOORAY, HOORAY FOR MAY 1! It's that gardening time of year, and the end of snow and frigid nights. By the end of the month, even tender annuals will be safe in our southern Rockies, and we will once again surround ourselves with the wonderful world of color.

While above ground we drool with the visual feast of not only color but the texture of grasses, fragrance of herbs and the shade of trees, let's consider the secret life of soil. Below the surface is a whole other world, which if nurtured will enhance the environment of us surface dwellers. Feed the soil and the plants know what to do. Feeding the plants is old school—part of the green revolution, which was a temporary shot in the arm. Let's think future!

Our New Mexico earth is characteristically low in phosphorous and organic matter and high (alkaline) in the pH department. This is not good news. Years of pinon/juniper invasion, fire suppression and overgrazing have created a landscape that doesn't hold water very well; therefore, it does not support microbial life—the secret life beneath us.

Our job is to amend our landscapes and gardens to bring back that life force, giving the plants what they need not just to survive, but to look lush and vibrant. We all know about mulching the roots of our green friends, but I suggest we mulch also to protect the microbes, earthworms and other beasties. Wind and

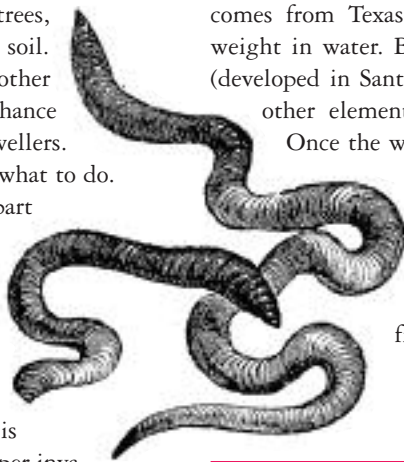
sun dry our skin, *que no?* Think of the top layer of our good earth as skin protecting everything beneath. Live, healthy soil—slightly acidic, rich in organic matter, minerals, and elements such as phosphorous—supports living things, which support plant growth, etc.

Beneficial mulch, such as compost, turns to soil relatively quickly. The Back-to-Earth brand of compost is readily available commercially. This product comes from Texas (local) and holds 10 times its weight in water. Be liberal with it. YumYum mix (developed in Santa Fe) is rich in phosphorous and other elements and is also readily available.

Once the worms and other beasties begin to thrive, the by-product is the drop in pH to slightly acidic. Now the secret life of the soil has a chance to do its thing—create a beautiful ecosystem from the ground up.

Let's get dirty.

—Michael Clark, Owner
Tropic of Capricorn



Once a Year

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the Membership is being held on May 5 this year. All residents of Eldorado are invited to attend this meeting to hear about what your community has done, is doing and expects to do in the future. There will be refreshments, speakers and mingling. It begins at 7 pm in the school's gym. Bring a neighbor. Get involved!

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Conservation: John Parker
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Roads: Nolan Zisman
Information: Ken McPherson
Neighborhood Watch:
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Fire and Rescue
466-1204
County All Purpose
820-CNTY (2689)



PHOTO BY THEA WITT

Thea Witt's photograph "If Clouds Could Dance" won the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission's 2008 City Different Poster Competition. Thea is one of the 105 artists displaying at the Eldorado Studio Tour May 17 and 18 from 10 am to 5 pm in artists' studios throughout Eldorado.

Bite into Good Art

The May meeting of the Eldorado Arts and Crafts Association (EACA) will be a potluck. This is an annual event and will be held May 30 at 6 pm at the Community Center. Please bring a dish—salad, main dish or dessert—that will serve eight and plan to enjoy yourself, meet other artists and craftspeople and welcome the summer season. Non-members are welcome. For information, call Virginia Westray at 466-9133.

Let's Do the Time Warp Again

Next up for the Eldorado Teen Players is the rock 'n roll cult classic *Rocky Horror Show*. This is a show recommended for more mature audiences. The show runs May 16 and 17 at 8 pm and May 18 at 2 pm at the James A. Little Theater at the New Mexico School for the Deaf in Santa Fe. There will be a sneak preview on May 15 at 7:30 pm.

Seventeen teens from Eldorado and beyond and a professional band will perform the show "like you've never seen it before." Directors Lisa Lincoln and Robyn Avalon have turned the show into an ensemble production in which most of the cast are onstage the entire show. Tickets are \$10 for students and seniors and \$12 for adults. The sneak preview is "pay what you can." Come experience the "Time Warp" again! Call 466-4656 to reserve tickets or visit their website at www.eldoradochildrenstheatre.org.

What's Your Favorite Car?

The Santa Fe Vintage Car Club will host the 5th annual Eldorado Car Show May 17 from noon to 4 pm at the parking lot in front of the Community Center and will donate the proceeds. Registration begins at 9 am and costs \$10. Expect door prizes and exhibits.

The Eldorado Community Improvement Association will use the occasion to distribute pool passes for the coming pool season.

All We Were Saying Was...

Thank you to those who replied regarding "Planting" a Peace Pole at the Community Center. I received fewer than 10 responses. The ECIA Board decided that was an insufficient response to warrant further discussion at this time. Again, thank you to those who responded. Your comments were greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, Tom Miller, ECIA Board

Get Her a Book

On Saturday, May 10, The New Mexico Book Coop and the New Mexico Book Association will sponsor a Mother's Day Weekend Book Fair from 10 am to 3 pm at the Village at Eldorado Shopping Center. The fair will feature authors



and publishers from all across New Mexico (at least 37 authors, nine of whom will be giving readings). Rental of tables by the authors will benefit the Vista Grande Public Library. Artists and craftspeople are invited to participate in this event.

People interested in more information can email susan_tarver2@comcast.net.

Happy Trails

The ECIA Conservation Committee will perform trail maintenance in the Wilderness Preserve on Saturday, May 17. Community members who would like to participate should meet at 9:30 am in the Community Center parking lot. Bring hiking boots, gloves and water.

Are You Digitally Savvy?

Master Gardeners need a volunteer this month, someone who can convert a bubble diagram and landscape design support documents into a digital format. Interested? Call Jill Charboneau at 466-2702 or email charboneau@lavenderltd.us.

ERA – Never Bored

Nominating Committee Chair Pat Lavengood announced the results of the April 7 ERA Board Election. Elected to the seven-member board were: Bill Dunning, Bruce Blossman, Craig Hansen, Frank Schober, John Matis, Marilyn Farrell and Eddie Marshall.

The Board officers were appointed as follows:

- ▼ Bruce Blossman, president
- ▼ Craig Hansen, vice president
- ▼ John Matis, secretary
- ▼ Marilyn Farrell, treasurer

Thanks to the candidates who stood for election, reelection and those who attended the annual meeting and voted.

Pool Opening

Swimming pool opens May 24

We are using a photo ID pool pass this year. You can obtain yours at the ECIA offices Monday-Friday, 8-5 and on Saturdays in May from 9 am to 1 pm. There is a nominal fee of \$2 per photo ID; this covers the cost of the plastic.

Attention Renters

Before you are allowed pool access, the owner of the home you are renting must





ASTRONOMY Corner

NATURAL NIGHT LIGHTS

Auroras are produced when streams of particles from the sun interact with Earth's magnetosphere, stimulating oxygen and other atoms to shine.

These night lights can shimmer, pulsate or even flash around the sky, and they create one of the most beautiful sights of the night sky.

If you live in the northern hemisphere, you will see the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) and people living in the southern hemisphere can see the Aurora Australis (Southern Lights).

—Juan Alvarez
Jalva88610@aol.com

Protect our night skies; keep outside lights low or off when not needed.

submit a letter to the ECIA authorizing you to use the pool.

Pool Season and Hours

Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend:

Lap Swim, 8 to 9:30 am daily, and from 6 to 8 pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

General Swim, is from 9:30 am to 8 pm Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday and 9:30 am to 6 pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Please keep food and beverages in the snack area or patio area only.



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 5, 7-9 pm	466-4248	School
ERA Flea Market	Sat., May 10, 8-noon	In CC parking lot	
Car Show	Sat., May 17, noon	In CC parking lot	
Pool Opens	Sat., May 24, 8 am		
ECIA offices closed	Mon., May 26	Memorial Day	

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Neighborhood Watch	Mon., May 5, 7 pm		
Conservation Committee	Tues., May 6, 7-9 pm		LR
EAW&SD*	Tues., May 6, 7-9 pm	466-2411	CR
285 Coalition	Wed., May 7, 7-9 pm	Rosemarie Bajioni	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., May 12, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248 CFR
Finance Committee	Wed., May 14, 9:30 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781 CFR
Architectural Committee	Wed., May 14, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708 CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., May 15, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248 CR
Information Committee	Mon., May 19, 7-8 pm		F
EAW&SD*	Tues., May 20, 7-9 pm		466-2411 RR
Stable Committee	Tues., May 27, 7-9 pm	Mary Ann Caldwell	466-4271 LR
Architectural Committee	Wed., May 28, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708 CFR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Shakespeare Group	Tues., May 13, 2-4:30 pm	Mary Denison	466-6657	CFR
Search & Rescue	Thurs., May 8, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	LR
Book Club	Sat., May 10, 9-10:30 am	Joan Lamarque	466-6000	
La Canada Wireless	Mon., May 12, 7-9	lcwireless.org		Library
League of Women Voters	Sat., May 17, 10-11 am			LR
Roadrunners RV Club	Tues., May 20, 6 pm	Beverly Cottingham	466-4655	Fire
Library Book Group	3rd Mon., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	VGPL
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
MOMS Club	Last Fri. of month	Mandie Rippey	795-4086	
Bird Walk	1st Sat., 8:30 am	Ron Duffy	466-6398	
Conserv. Comm. Hike	3rd Sat. of month	Eleanor Gossen	466-1949	
EACA Meeting	Last Thurs. of month		466-6245	Fire

WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tues., 5:30-6:50 pm			LR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am			CFR/RR
AA	Thurs., 6-7 pm			CFR
AA	Fri., 6-7 pm			CFR
AA	Sat., 10:45-11:45 am			LR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm			CFR
Al-Anon	Thurs., 7:00-8:00 pm			LR
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wed., 7-9 pm	Paul Tuck	466-4815	RR
Men's Bridge	Tues., 6:30-9 pm			F
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	Wed., 9-noon	Nancy Rost	466-2832	LR
Community Band	Thurs., 6:30-8:30 pm	Joel Hopko	466-8412	
Fire & Rescue Training	Wed., 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Fire & Rescue Work Duty	Sat., Call for time	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Senior Lunch**	M, W & F, 12-1 pm	Senior Center	466-1039	
Knitting Club	Tues., 10 am-noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	LR
Figure Drawing	Mon., 10 am-noon	Neil O'Brien		RR
Adult Volleyball	Wed., 7-9 pm	Arlene Mayer	466-6641	School
Adult Basketball	Thurs., 5:30-dusk			BB Crt

*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

**Reservations Required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradocommunity.org

The County “Rocks!”

A**FTER THIS WINTER’S SNOW**, rain and mud, we had over 16 miles of dirt roads that were deemed in bad shape. Kudos to the county in promptly responding to our request to grade these and other roads and fill holes in several roads where the dirt meets pavement. The grader operators also did a terrific job in lowering the sides to prevent water runoff onto driving lanes, and in getting whatever remaining base course there was along the sides of the roads back onto the driving lanes. New rock also was put onto several of the worst cul-de-sac roads and onto short sections of through-roads where there was only dirt (and large ruts).

As of the writing of this column, the county has

also received a list of intersections with downed street signs and hopefully will get to these once our spring winds have died down. Thanks also to the many Eldoradoans who have sent in Road Problem Reports via the ECIA website to help us identify problem areas. In the past year, we’ve heard from 72 residents and have hopefully rectified many of their reported problems.

The county is ready to put out a bid request to contractors for repairing some roads regarding new base course. Funding for this work will be from the 2007 legislature’s award of \$679,000 for Eldorado road repairs. Work may get started later this year.

—Nolan Zisman, Chair
ECIA Road Committee

Spring is in the Air—tra la, tra la

W**E MANAGED TO GET THROUGH** the winter without a major storm. But the committee of Eldorado area organizations, businesses and homeowner associations continues to meet monthly at the main fire station to plan for our next possible emergency. Start your planning at home by checking off the list of “Items to Know and Do” in an emergency. Contact **Frank Schober**, committee chair, at 310-8593 for more information.

There is a June 3 primary and county election, and the state and national election on November 4. There are five candidates vying for our District 5 county commissioner’s seat. Two candidates, **Steve Wust** and **Joe Auburg**, live in Eldorado and should know our issues. Plan to vote.

Plans are for a bigger and better July 4th celebration. We encourage all Eldorado organizations to participate in the parade to the Community Center, where there will be food, music, prizes and fun for all. Contact **Su Anne Armstrong**, event chair, at 466-4067.

Preparations have been made for the expansion of the Vista Grande Public Library and a new library parking lot. The Senior Center will also have an improved parking lot soon. The El Dorado Elementary School, library and Senior Center have become our de facto civic center, complementing the facilities at the Community Center.

Comprehensive plans for improvements at the Community Center will be undertaken by the recently chartered ECIA Facilities

and Grounds Committee. Contact **Fred Raznick**, committee chair, at 466-2305 to express your interests.

Plans are continuing for the highly successful Series of Soirees, the third of which will be held Sunday, May 25 at the Community Center Depot. Contact **Ron Dans** at 216-0882 to learn more about the Eldorado Performing Arts Association and how you can become a star.

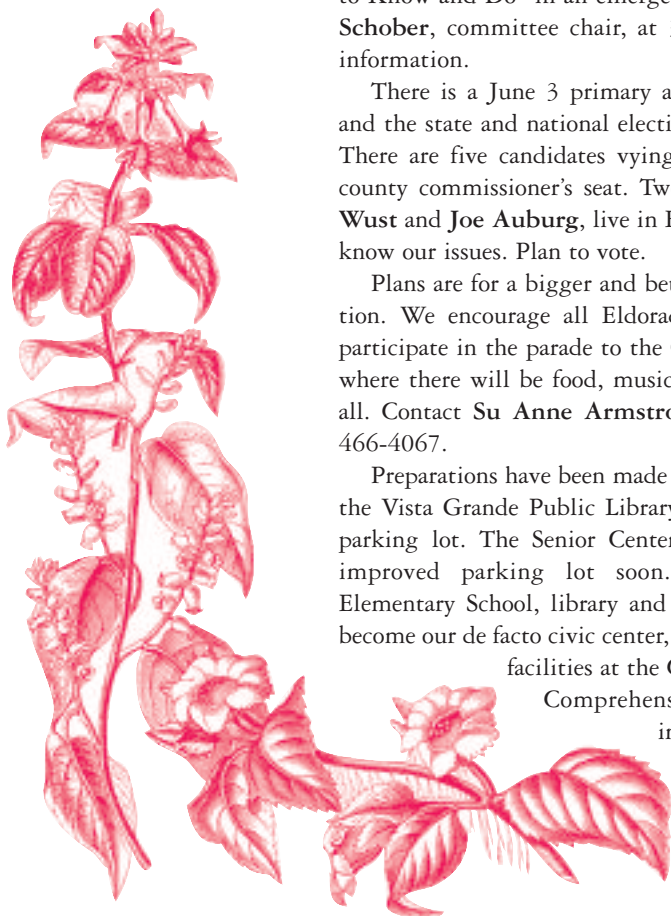
Plans are being made for a “Midsummer Night’s Dance” on the Community Center patio August 8 to benefit the school’s PE program. **Jackie Camborde** of Santé (466-0094) will chair this event.

ECIA plans to have a DVD produced of life in Eldorado. Production will start at its Annual Meeting Monday May 5 at the school and continue at Eldorado events throughout the year. The premier showing will be at next year’s Annual Meeting. Want to be in the movies? Then plan on attending this year’s Eldorado events.

This publication, *Vistas*, will soon have a new editor. **Ken McPherson** is stepping down. We all wish him equal success in his future endeavors.

Saturday, May 10, is the ERA’s Spring Flea Market in the Community Center’s parking lot. Setup begins at 7 am. Buyers are welcome at 8 am; closing time is at noon. Space is on a first-come, first-served basis. Cost per space is \$10 for Eldorado residents, \$15 for non-residents and \$20 for commercial sellers. Bring what you’ll need for your setup. No food or weapons may be sold. Sellers need to clean their area, take out their own trash and unsold items and leave by 1 pm. Donuts, coffee and refreshments will be sold.

—Bruce Blossman
ERA Board President



White-breasted Nuthatch

I HAVE SEEN THE WHITE-BREASTED Nuthatch (WbN) on a dead juniper near my house, and also on my log suet feeder. But I have more reliably seen this bird on the tall deciduous trees near the ECIA buildings. This medium-size resident is 5.57 inches long with a wingspan of 11 inches. It's shape is rather long and squat with a long head and slightly upturned beak. It has a white face, dark eyes, black crown stripe, gray wings and back, white belly, dark tail showing some striping and a reddish-brown color on the underside of a relatively short tail.

Its feet are strong with long claws, one toe to back, three to front, to enable tree climbing/feeding. Males and females are similar. Often, the bird is seen facing downward on a tree trunk. The bird is found throughout the United States and is divided into three populations—Pacific, interior west and eastern. The coloration of the three populations are quite similar but their songs are different.

Both male and female pick and furbish their nest in a deserted woodpecker hole or other cavity in a

tree, usually well off the ground. They are reported to sweep the edge of the nest hole with noxious-smelling insects. The female is courted with food, bowing and wing fluttering. Five to eight eggs are laid by the monogamous pair. Helpless young hatch at 12 days and fledge in 14 days (but I also found fledging time at 26 days).

The diet consists of insects, seeds and nuts, although chicks received mostly (or all) insects. In the fall, WbN cache nuts and insects for later meals. The pairs stay in their territory year round but do not roost together during winter. WbN might be seen during winter with flocks of chickadees. (During last winter, Santa Fe seemed to have an unusually large population of mountain chickadees.)

WbN is a small song bird and not closely related to woodpeckers. Ten million WbN are estimated to populate the United States. The nuthatch name originated in Europe from the bird's habit of wedging a nut into a bark crevice and hammering it with its bill to open it.

—Pam Henline



Show and Tell

ANYONE WHO GARDENS HERE knows that our lack of water, poor soil and harsh environment—including extremes of heat and cold and desiccating winds—make gardening in Eldorado a horticultural challenge. A new Santa Fe Master Gardeners' project located at the Eldorado Community Center intends to help local residents meet that challenge.

The idea for a water-wise demonstration and teaching garden grew from a group of Eldorado-area Master Gardeners who wanted to pass on what they were learning in the 150 hours of class needed to be a certified Master Gardener coupled with the practical experience gained in their own gardens. The installation of a rainwater catchment system as part of the ECIA's patio renovation project made development of a water-wise garden a real possibility. Also, a local project would allow and encourage a large group of Eldorado area Master Gardeners to donate their required volunteer hours closer to home.

Over the next few months, Master Gardener volunteers will begin work by reshaping the open space behind the Railroad Depot building to lay out and create the backbone for the new garden. Over the next two years, volunteers will continue to develop exhibits and handouts to explain water-wise gardening principles with step-by-step instruction for design and care of a residential garden.

Each garden feature will use a smart gardening,

low-maintenance, no fuss approach that is appropriate for beginning gardeners. Information will focus on when and how to plant, fertilize, water, mulch and prune as well as selection of appropriate and less frequently used xeric plants, shrubs and trees that thrive in our climate.

Once the garden is developed, Master Gardeners will be onsite at scheduled times to interact with visitors, provide educational tours to community and school groups and teach workshops and hands-on classes on water-wise gardening to the public.

If you would like more information about the new demonstration garden project, email or call Master Gardener Project Leaders, **Jill Charboneau** (charboneau@lavenderltd.us) at 466-2702 or **Dana Simmons** (danagsimmons@gmail.com) at 466-2294.

—Jill Charboneau



The area behind the Railroad Depot to be landscaped in the Master Gardeners' project.



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

Eldorado Water Harvesting Workshop

Join with other community members and learn how to lower your water bill, make healthier aquifers, beautify the landscape and improve soils and native habitats.

Come to a two-part workshop for Eldorado residents and neighbors to:

- ▼ Get information about various water harvesting and recycling techniques and resources
- ▼ Learn about and suggest incentives and financing options for water harvesting installations
- ▼ Tour nearby sites that demonstrate roof harvesting, septic water recycling and xeriscaping
- ▼ Speak with and network with neighbors to collaborate on installations and further training

These workshops are free to Eldorado residents. Meet at the large gym at El Dorado Elementary School Saturday, May 31 from 2 to 5 pm. These workshops are sponsored by the ECIA's Conservation Committee and the Earth Works Institute with support from the Quivira Coalition and the PNM New Ranch Network. Please call 982-9806 to RSVP or to get more information.



PHOTO BY HOPE KIAH

For every inch of rain that falls on a catchment area of 1,000 square feet, you can expect to collect approximately 600 gallons of rainwater. These barrels feed Aspen and Ponderosa.