

ELDORADO VISTAS

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June 2005

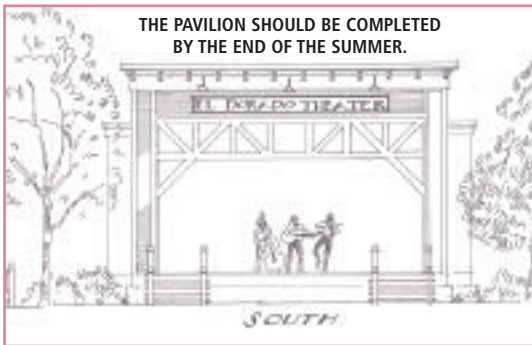
IN THIS ISSUE

Letters	2
Our Night Sky	3
Did You Miss It?	3
In the Community	4-5
Centipede Nightmare II	6
Walking in Eldorado	7
Year-round House Finch	7

Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

1 La Hacienda Loop, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508 ▼ (505) 466-4248 ▼ www.eldoradocommunity.org

ECIA Goals for 2005



THANK YOU TO ALL of the Eldorado residents who attended the May 2nd Annual Membership Meeting. It is always good to come together to meet and greet neighbors and to conduct the business of our community. It was especially satisfying to give the Board's "people who make a difference in Eldorado" award. Recognition was given to Ed Benrock, Roads Committee Chairperson, Ray Nichols for his work on our water issues, and the ERA for their many good works on behalf of the community.

One item not fully discussed at the annual meeting was the goals established by the Board for 2005. The goals were developed with input from committee chairs, residents and staff.

CIVILITY AND INVOLVEMENT

It is the goal of the ECIA to encourage community involvement in all governance, issues and events that affect residents of our community as a whole. We as Board (and all ECIA appointed committees and staff) must act with courtesy toward our constituents on all matters and must insist on civility and respect from those residents who take issue with our positions. We will encourage residents to deal with each other with respect and in a civil manner. The Board will therefore:

- ▼ Encourage and pay attention to public comment.
- ▼ Promote involvement in issues of governance from the widest possible population.
- ▼ Expect that committee chairs and members convey the same courtesy and respect.

COMPLIANCE

The ECIA Board will be diligent in the enforcement of the Protective Covenants for Eldorado. The Board will oversee the consistent application of the covenants with a strong sense of fairness in order to maintain the quality of life desired in the Eldorado community. Therefore the Board will:

- ▼ Support staff in covenant compliance.
- ▼ Keep residents informed to promote compliance of the covenants.
- ▼ Complete and disseminate updated, user-friendly covenant guidelines.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Board will strive to provide residents with a safe and secure environment by supporting the work of the Neighborhood Watch/Traffic Calming Committee, by employing a security firm that demonstrates a commitment to keeping our community safe and by maintaining a close working relationship with the County Sheriff's Department. The Board will:

- ▼ Research and develop methods to improve traffic flow and enforcement with the help of the sheriff's department and the county traffic engineer.
- ▼ Dispatch security to the school area during arrival and dismissal of students to calm traffic.

VOLUNTEERS

The Board will continue attempts to increase community involvement and will demonstrate appreciation for those who serve the community. Therefore the Board will:

- ▼ Develop opportunities and resources for the success of volunteers in their work in the community.
- ▼ Set opportunities for recognition of residents who volunteer and contribute to community activities.

RESOURCES AND AMENITIES

The Board is dedicated to preserving the abundant resources and the excellent amenities of the Eldorado community. Supporting and working with the committees, staff and other residents, the Board will:

SEE "ECIA GOALS" ON PAGE 2

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

**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.

Only a Squirrel

THERE ARE TIMES IN ONE'S LIFE when at the end of the day all one can say is: "What a lousy world this is." Well, yesterday was such a day. When I returned from my evening walk along that great trail along the railway track, coming up Monte Alto Rd., there in the middle of the road and only a few feet from our driveway lay this little squirrel—totally and horribly squashed. Not a nice sight. When I got into the house I told Joe and his first thought was: "Oh, I hope it isn't my squirrel." Sadly, after going out to see for himself, he knew it was. And this incident then set the mood for our evening: from the little squirrel to the general "don't give a damn" attitude of people when so many inconsiderate drivers race along Monte Alto now that it's paved. The ever worsening push to make more money, climb the ladder and thus always the hurry, can't waste a minute to slow down and after all, this was only a squirrel.

The big deal is, it's a life needlessly snuffed out because of inconsiderate carelessness.

And just the other day I was thinking as I was finishing my walk down Monte Alto from the top of the hill by Cuesta: "What a wonderful place this is. People are so lucky to be living here in Eldorado. The attractive adobe houses, situated so far apart that sometimes we see coyotes strolling through. The clean fresh air, no smog, the most gorgeous sunsets and sunrises. The beautiful snow-capped mountains visible from everywhere. Friendly people who even wave to me as they drive by although we don't even know one another. Flocks of bluebirds—how lucky!"

You see, as a Canadian coming from Toronto—a crowded, noisy and frequently polluted big city—I am permitted to spend only six months here and therefore cherish every moment here. But yesterday was a disappointment.

So please, take time to care, notice, respect and appreciate life and the beauty around you and keep Eldorado the enviably extraordinary spot in the "Land of Enchantment."

—Ann White

Good Neighbor Chemistry

SPRING HAS SPRUNG TO LIFE in Eldorado—bringing with it some forms of life that we could likely do without. From Pine Bark Beetles to tumbleweeds, and houseflies to mosquitoes, there is likely to be something to bring out the Wasteland Wes in the best of us.

However, before you reach for pesticide or herbicide with the biggest warning skull-and-crossbones, please give some thought to your neighbors, and to the environment we all share. Pets, birds, and even people can be unwittingly harmed by coming into contact with unnecessarily potent or carelessly or indiscriminately applied chemicals, and the runoff inevitably ends up in our groundwater supply.

In fact, one homeowner in neighboring Belicia has brought suit against the Belicia Homeowners' Association regarding use of the pesticide Sevin, which the association was spraying to control bark beetles. Within Eldorado, the ECIA in 1998 adopted a recommendation that:

- ▼ The ECIA will use the least toxic materials for pest control, as cost allows.
- ▼ The ECIA will use the least toxic materials for maintaining its common property and facilities, as cost allows.
- ▼ The ECIA will, whenever possible notify Eldorado residents when pesticides or other toxic chemicals will be used or have been used

by the ECIA.

The ECIA continues to adhere to these recommendations, and urges that all residents do the same on their own properties. So, if you have to spray or use toxic pesticides/herbicides, please inform your neighbors ahead of time.

—Dan Drobnis



ECIA Goals FROM PAGE 1

- ▼ Continue to improve and maintain a stable area that is safe for equestrians and their owners.
- ▼ Support and require compliance with the Rules and Regulations established by the stable community.
- ▼ Work in collaboration with the county on improving and maintaining our system of roads.
- ▼ Maintain the established hike/bike paths and establish criteria for construction of hike/bike paths on newly paved neighborhood roads.
- ▼ Complete construction of the Community Pavilion and integrate the Community Center grounds with the new construction.

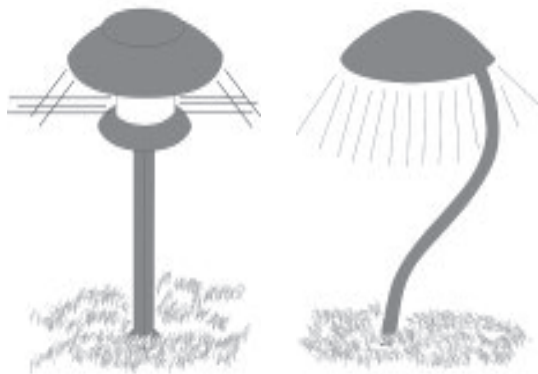
Many of these goals are ongoing. If you have something you would like the Board to work on, please call or e-mail your request to any Board member.

—Jeanne Klein, ECIA President

Our Night Sky

EXTERIOR LANDSCAPE LIGHTING

- ▼ A fully shielded light fixture must use opaque material.
- ▼ The light (luminary) shall not be visible through any openings in the fixture other than the lowest point of the fixture (the bottom).
- ▼ There shall be no upward component of any exterior lighting.
- ▼ Landscape lighting shall illuminate only the ground below (adjacent to) the fixture.
- ▼ It is recommended that landscape, walkway, monument or driveway lighting shall not be mounted higher than twenty-four (24) inches above the ground or exceed 20 watts per luminary.
- ▼ It is recommended the minimum spacing of lighting fixtures for driveways and walkways visible from neighboring property shall be 20 feet for driveways less than 120 feet long and 30 feet for driveways longer than 120 feet.



Wrong: light escapes in a horizontal direction.

Correct: light flows only downward.

Did you ever wonder if your efforts to keep the night sky are noticed? Read about our award in the article at the bottom of this page.

The Architectural Committee meets at 7 pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month... compliance, first!

—Charles Smith,

ECIA Covenant Compliance Representative

Did You Miss It?

APPROXIMATELY 100 PEOPLE attended the Eldorado Community Improvement Association's (ECIA) Annual Meeting of the Members on Monday night, May 2. What follows are the highlights:

- ▼ ECIA Board President, **Jeanne Klein**, opened the meeting by thanking all who had helped set up the meeting. After introducing the current Board members, Ms. Klein introduced the Board candidates, **Sandy McGregor**, **Jeanne Klein** and **Philip Balcombe**.
- ▼ During the President's Report, Ms. Klein announced that Eldorado has won the Night Sky Award by the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance, a well-earned award. She also covered improvements that have taken place in our community, such as those at the stables, new playground equipment, newly paved roads, new hike/bike paths and the Community Pavilion that should be finished by late summer.
- ▼ After **Dan Drobnis** read the Treasurer's Report, County Commissioner **Jack Sullivan** spoke to the attendees about the soon-to-be-built Senior Center, the water issue, and roads. He then answered questions about law enforcement in our community.
- ▼ Committee chairs were then asked to speak briefly about their committee's work and goals.

Their presentations highlighted the importance of the volunteers who help keep our community running.

- ▼ Beaming with pride, Ms. Klein took the microphone again and announced awards for "People Who Make a Difference" in Eldorado. This year's recipients are listed in the article on page 1 of this *Vistas*.
- ▼ The floor was then opened for a community forum and Ms. Klein asked for any comments or discussions that residents might wish to initiate. Items of discussion included:
 - ▼ ERA and ECIA cooperation.
 - ▼ **Mary Raynard** talked about the Water Board working with the Conservation Committee on water issues, including some type of education of water conservation issues.
 - ▼ **Ray Nichols** talked briefly about the current water situation.
- ▼ Finally, the meeting ended with a reading of the Board election results, which showed that all three candidates were elected.

A small combo from the Eldorado Community Band played before the meeting and during the break. There was a drawing for door prizes among the attendees. Many gifts were given out, including merchandise and gift certificates donated by area businesses. All in all, this year's meeting really seemed fun, yet relevant. Did you miss it?

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COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Finance: Gisela Knight
Architecture: Bill Schwent
Conservation: Steve Wust
Stable: Dina Sassone
Election: Vacant
Road: Ed Benrock
Information: Ken McPherson
Neighborhood Watch: Sandra Vreeland

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Vista Grande Library
466-READ
Security
204-2945
Fire and Rescue
466-1204
Animal Control
986-2430

Artists' Shoptalk

The June Shoptalk will take place Wednesday, June 15, 10 am - noon, at the home of **Jane and Jim Chandler** (466-6930). Jane is a painter and Jim a photographer. The Shoptalk is where local artists are invited to gather at each other's homes for coffee and conversation. If you are new to Eldorado, come and meet members of our very active art association.

Opera Unveiled

Desiree Mays will appear for the Vista Grande Public Library's Adult Program presentation in June. This will take place Thursday, June 16, 7-9 pm. Content of the program will again be "Opera Unveiled," where Desiree will present an introduction to this season's Santa Fe Opera schedule.

Desiree is a resident of Eldorado, a world traveler, tour guide, and radio commentator, and she lectures on opera throughout the United States and Europe. Her "Opera Unveiled" books are an ongoing series and popular with both newcomers and dedicated opera fans.

Wherefore Art Thou?

The Eldorado Shakespeare Reading Group is holding its first meeting on Tuesday, June 21 at 2 pm in the Eldorado Community Center. All are welcome—no experience necessary. For more information, please contact **Mary Denison** at mmw85@aol.com.

Bring Your Wheels!

Attention owners of vintage, exotic (and not-so-exotic) cars, the Second Annual Eldorado Car Show will be held on Saturday, June 4. This "drop-in" car event, hosted once again by the First National Bank of Santa Fe, Eldorado Branch, will take place at the Community Center from 1:00-4:30 pm. The bank is providing refreshments, music and lots of fun giveaways.

While admission to the event is totally free, raffle tickets will be available for numerous prizes donated by other Eldorado businesses and organizations. Proceeds from the raffle will go to the Vista Grande Public Library, the Eldorado Performing Arts Association and the Tsunami Relief Fund.

Along with the car show, the bank and the library are hosting exhibits of automotive photographs by Eldorado residents/photographers including **Sheila Bicoll**, **Timothy Hearsum** and **Douglas Stewart**. The exhibits will be on view in both locations through the month of June.



Organizers were pleased with last year's turnout and envision an even larger event this year as Eldorado car aficionados take advantage of the opportunity to view and show off their cars. Children are also encouraged to bring their favorite vehicle. If it has wheels, bring it!

Senior Center Named

On May 11th, the Santa Fe County Commissioners held a ceremony for the naming of the new Senior Center to be constructed next to the Vista Grande Public Library. The center is to be named after **Patty and Ken Adam** who have been active leaders in senior activities in Eldorado for many years. They were instrumental in getting the Senior Lunch Program going on Wednesdays at the Community Center, the Meals on Wheels program, and the Senior Van Service.

During the 2003 legislative session, Patty Adam spoke to the appropriations committee for the need to finish allocating funds so that permits, plans and ultimately the construction of the facility could go forward. Her advocacy and concern for adequate services for seniors living in Eldorado has been unwavering. Mrs. Adam's concern is that too many seniors move away from Eldorado because senior services are not available here. With the new center, residents in the area will have facilities closer to their homes. Construction should be completed by 2006.

Arts Association Program

The Eldorado Arts Association's June meeting will have a presentation by **Cathy Dubay**, who will demonstrate and talk about her work in encaustic medium. The technique uses molten wax to create works of art. The meeting begins with a social at 7 pm, June 30, with the program following at 7:30 pm. The meeting is open to the public. For further information call **Janet Amtmann** at 466-3256.

In the Swim

The pool opened 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,



Astronomy Corner



Out of this world

A good time of year for your night sky observing adventure is between May and July. Constellations such as Sagittarius the Archer and Scorpius the Scorpion pass dramatically overhead. So does the Milky Way. This edge-on barred spiral galaxy's galactic bulge is plainly visible on clear, dark nights.

On the June solstice, the Sun reaches its maximum northern declination of 23-1/2 degrees north. This latitude is called Tropic of Cancer. The tropics of Cancer and Capricorn were named over 2,000 years ago by the ancient Greeks. Today after centuries of precession, the solstices occur in Taurus and Sagittarius. The summer solstice will occur on June 21 at 00:45 MDT.

The planets in June: Mercury, Venus and Saturn will be really close-by June 24-28; just look in the sky at dusk in the direction west-north-west. Jupiter is visible from sunset to midnight high in the sky and you can find Mars after midnight rising in the east.

—Juan Alvarez
Jalva88610@aol.com

Saturday, and Sunday 10 am to 8 pm. Lap Swim: every day from 8 to 10 am, plus Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 6 to 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. Remember your association dues must be paid to use the amenities.

June 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

JUNE SPECIAL EVENTS

Pool opens Sat., May 28 (stays open until September 6)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

285 Coalition	Wed., June 1, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock	466-1598	CFR
Road Committee	Mon., June 6, 6-7 pm	Ed Benrock	466-2088	CFR
Finance Committee	Wed., June 8, 9:30-11 am	Gisela Knight	466-2568	CFR
EAW&SD*	Wed., June 8, 7-9 pm	Ray Nichols		CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., June 13, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Architectural Committee	Tues., June 14, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., June 16, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Information Committee	Mon., June 20, 7-8 pm	Ken McPherson	466-4161	F
Stable Committee	Tues., June 21, 7-9 pm			LR
Architectural Committee	Tues., June 28, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Book Club/Pot Luck	call for date and time	Ken Fischer	466-2537	
Troop 414 Committee	1st Wed., 7:30-9 pm	Bruce Blossman	955-0880	CR
Search & Rescue	Thurs., June 9, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR
Book Club	Sat., June 11, 1:30-3 pm	Barbara Rugg	466-2559	
La Canada Wireless	Mon., June 13, 7-9			LR
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
Library Book Group	4th Thurs., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	Lib
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	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
Men's Bridge	Thursdays, 1-4 pm			LR
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

Your Nightmares Too

IT SEEMS THAT CENTIPEDES EVOKE many feelings in Eldorado. I received many emails, and would like to share them all with you, but I only have room for a few excerpts (unfortunately, some have been edited quite a bit).

DEALING WITH THEM

"Centipedes come into the house from the drains in your bathtub and showers, but they don't seem to be coming into the house from the drains in the sink. Close these drains when you are not showering or in the bathtub. You will find no more centipedes in the house! Hope this works for you—it's worked for me!"

—Anonymous

"The small, wormlike ones don't bother me too much. I just pick them up with some tissue and flush 'em. However those giant outdoor centipedes that seem to find their way into the house are the ones that rob me of sleep after seeing them. Last year I discovered that I had good luck using salad tongs that I bought from Target to pick them up and take them outside and heave them out into space back over the wall. The tongs that I use for this are about a foot long, long enough to keep my hands away from the squirmy thing." —John Eason

"Loved your story. When we moved to Eldorado 7 years ago, a veteran Eldoradoan taught us a trick we use to this day. We have two cats who usually find the centipedes and stare at them too. We pick it up with kitchen tongs and throw it outside—no mess, no fuss (although they do squirm a bit), and it works every time." —Colleen Kelly

[Note to self: buy tongs.]

"My humanitarian principles are suspended for centipedes. Once you've had one crawl on you in the night, it's hard to be anything but terminally revolted. The killing method that works for me is to drop a paper towel on the centipede, then jump in the air and come down on it hard. This works best if you have shoes on. If not, find a shoe and use it like a club on the paper towel. Hit it till you see squishy stuff. Thanks for the article!"

—Penny Dever-Reynolds

HUMOROUS ENCOUNTERS

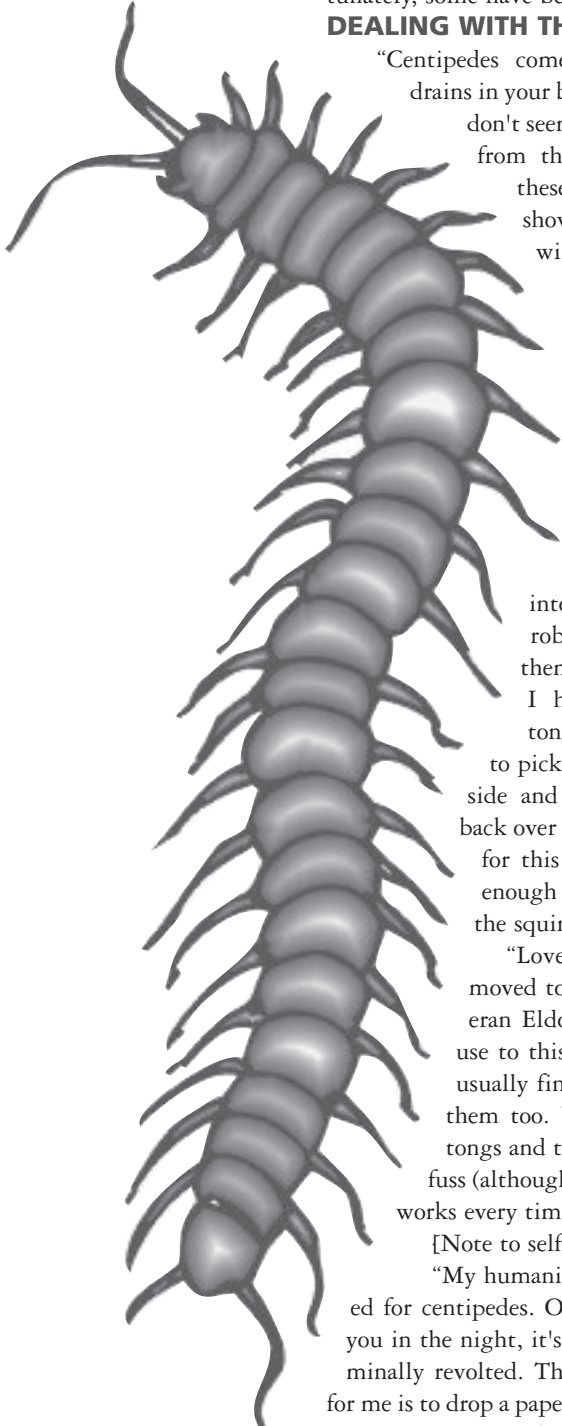
"Our first encounter with these fascinating creatures was 15 years ago, soon after moving here. Hearing a loud screech coming from the bathroom, I went in to discover my husband looking at the white wall in horror. A 7-inch centipede there rested. "Get rid of it!" he exclaimed. He hands me a box to catch it. With adrenaline pumping, I slam the box over the creature! He hands me a record jacket to scoot under the box. It works, but then I have to endure the sensation of this big, wiggling thing scurrying around, trying to get out. He opens the back door and I throw the whole set-up outside. A second encounter was to see one crawling into the pocket of his jacket that was lying on the cedar chest. The solution this time was to quickly bag the jacket in a Hefty bag, seal it up and take it to the cleaners, where he casually announced as he dropped the bag off and hurried out the door, 'Oh, by the way, there may be a centipede in the pocket.' After many more frightening visitations, a psychic friend said to build a pile of rocks outside and tell the centipede god that they needed to house-down in that pile, not our house, or face dire consequences! It worked—no alarming sightings for a long time." —Michele Flynn

"One morning, my husband Johnny Boggs got out of bed and put on a pair of Levi's which were on the floor from the day before. After pulling them half way up, he felt something slightly wiggling inside, but pulled them up the rest of the way thinking it was a string or something. Just before buttoning them, he realized it must be an intruder of some kind and quickly peeled them off to reveal...a large centipede. He killed it with a cowboy boot. This has become part of our family lore and we laugh frequently about it. He does a centipede dance and our three-year-old son yells, "Run like the wind Daddy," whenever the word centipede is mentioned. That will teach him to put his clothes in the hamper!!" —Lisa Smith

Thank you all for being part of the centipede connection. Maybe we should consider an annual Centipede Festival?

—Ken McPherson

For additional letters and the full version of all letters, you can go to your community website at www.eldoradocommunity.org and click on Vistas Newsletter. If any more letters are received, Hope Kiah (Vistas designer and web master) will post them on the website.



Walking in Eldorado

ACCORDING TO A RECENT STUDY, people who live in “walkable” neighborhoods are 2.4 times more likely to get outside for their daily requirement of exercise. This statistic stuck in my mind as I rounded the last corner near the clubhouse on my way home from an evening run.

I love our Eldorado paradise! Nothing compares to how walkable our neighborhood is. With miles of hike/bike paths winding through our high desert community and a convenient trail along the railroad tracks, there is no excuse not to get outside for a little exercise. Of course there is also our wilderness area, complete with marked trails for horseback riding and hiking year round. I have even seen some hearty souls trail-running the rocky pathways. All of our Eldorado venues present sweeping vistas, views of mountain ranges and voluminous blue skies.

Many times I run in the cool of the morning, take an evening walk to watch the sunset, and on weekends enjoy an uphill hike. It's always a joy to say

hello to people on the trails or stop to chat with a neighbor out walking the dog.

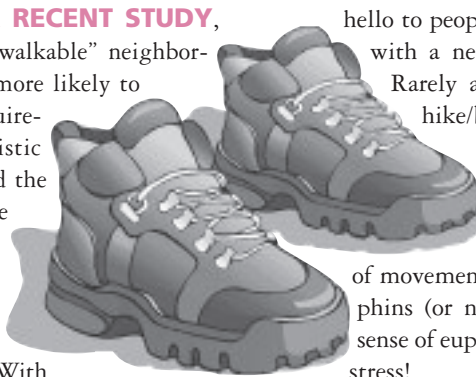
Rarely am I the only person on the hike/bike trail.

Besides getting exercise, another attribute of my daily run or walk is a feeling of calmness. Apparently the act of movement increases your body's endorphins (or natural painkillers), creating a sense of euphoria. What a great way to de-stress!

Do you spend time outside with your family taking a stroll, enjoying the sun and blue sky? I encourage you to look at the possibilities available in Eldorado. Grab a friend and schedule a daily walk together. Have a family bike ride. Take some time each day, step out of your house and see what Eldorado has to offer. You might be surprised how a simple walk in your neighborhood can offer a healthy dose of wellness.

—Louise Roach,

Editor of on-line health and fitness newsletter
<http://bome.netcom.com/~newsflash/>



Our Year-Round House Finch (HF)

THIS SMALL SPARROW-SIZED BIRD can be seen in Eldorado all year long. During the dark days of winter their short song is enjoyable to hear. Each bird is about 6 inches long, with a wingspan of 9-1/2 inches. Coloring is sexually dimorphic—males are wine-red on the forehead, throat and breast, quickly fading to a whitish stomach with grayish streaks and brown wings showing 2 faint bars. Females are less distinctive—brownish-gray heads and backs, undersides light with blurry grayish streaks. Juveniles are similar to females, but they all have short, relatively heavy, curved bills, which mark the finch family. These birds form loose flocks in winter, and are a common bird at our feeders. They eat mostly seeds along with small amounts of fruit, buds and tree sap. They need places to perch and places where they can build a cup nest of twigs and grass. (I have had young raised the last two years in one of my bluebird boxes. They also seem to like the deep rectangular yellow newspaper holders on mailboxes). Males court by spreading and fluttering their wings, then drooping their wings and raising their head and possibly some crest feathers. The female incubates four or five eggs for 12-14 days and the atrical young fledge in about 15 days. Both birds feed the young and pairs are usually monogamous.

HF are found in suburbs and open areas where they have access to water. They are resident throughout the 48 states. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, eastern populations descend from the 1940 release of illegally caged birds by pet shop owners on Long Island, New York. The eastern population experienced exponential growth, finally reaching the Great Plains, where they are now meeting the western population. Interestingly, the introduced eastern populations have developed migratory behavior that is absent in western HF. Birds from the Northeast and Great Lakes area now migrate south in winter.

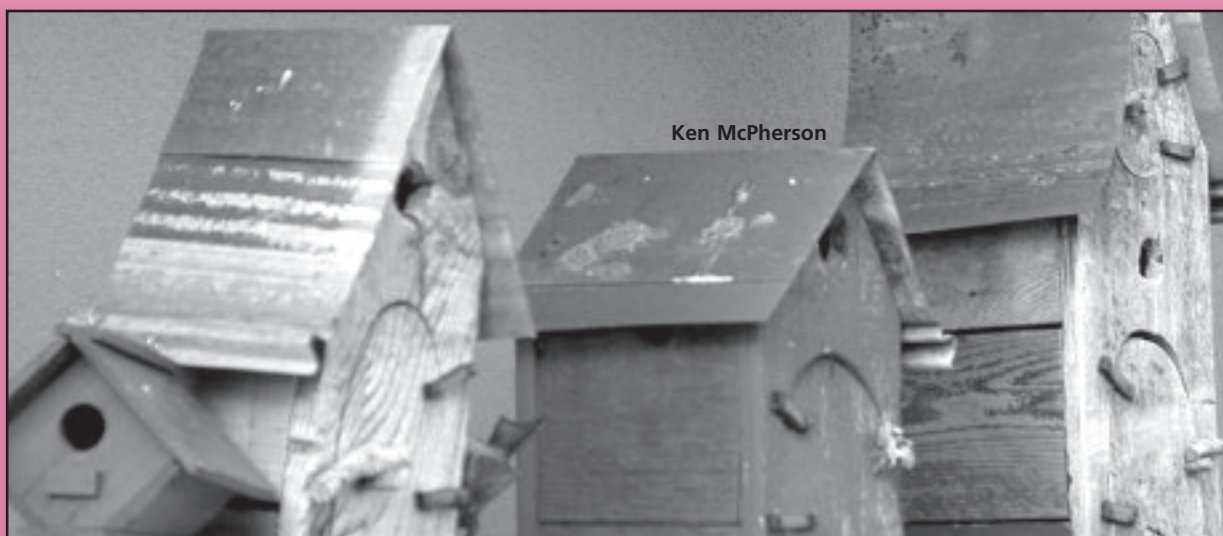
In case you missed the big birding news, there are confirmed sightings of the ivory-billed woodpecker in Arkansas. The previous sighting was in 1944 and the bird was thought to be extinct in the U.S. A good web site for information on this woodpecker is www.nature.org/ivorybill.

—Pam Henline



Security
204-2945

Fun Houses



Eldorado residents have expressed their creativity not only with attractive, arty mailboxes, they have also created or bought wonderful, rustic birdhouses for our feathered friends. Some are double-decked, some bright colors, some made out of aged barn wood, and others can house three or four nests. If you would like a photo of your birdhouse to be considered for the back page, contact the editor for photo requirements (size of file, resolution, etc.). Write to kenzwork@hubwest.com.