

ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME V, ISSUE 7

July 2003

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Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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Horsing Around at the Eldorado Stables



Su Anne with Valentine

Jennifer Stinebaugh

Did you know Eldorado has stables? Located at Highway 285 and Avenida Eldorado, the stables are an amenity of the ECIA. This property was set aside specifically for a community stable from Eldorado's inception. Begun in

the early 1970s with just a few barns and horses, the stables were "built out" recently at 36 barns and there is now a waiting list for residents wanting to bring their horses to this unique amenity. Eldorado Stables is a self-care facility where each horse owner is totally responsible for the care of his or her own animals. We have two arenas and two round pens for lessons, training and exercising, not to mention great access to many local trails.

The users of the stable amenity are a diverse group of horse people, including 7-year olds and 70-somethings, people who have been around horses all their lives and those of us who are living a childhood dream of riding off into the sunset. We are retired professional rodeo riders and beginning dressage riders, one-time ranchers and farmers and new hunter jumpers, weekend trail walkers and competitive endurance riders. Several in our community have been in professional horse racing and some have shown their horses (with much success) all over the country. We are nurses, lawyers, doctors, teachers, artists, massage therapists, writers, stay-at-home moms, entrepreneurs, bureaucrats, computers experts, general managers, etc. We are a cross section of the Eldorado Community except that women outnumber men by about three to one. What is it about women and horses?

The horses (and a few mules) are a diverse bunch too. The Eldorado Stables is home to lots of muscular quarter horses in colors from buckskin (think Dale Evans' horse, Buttermilk) to classic palominos

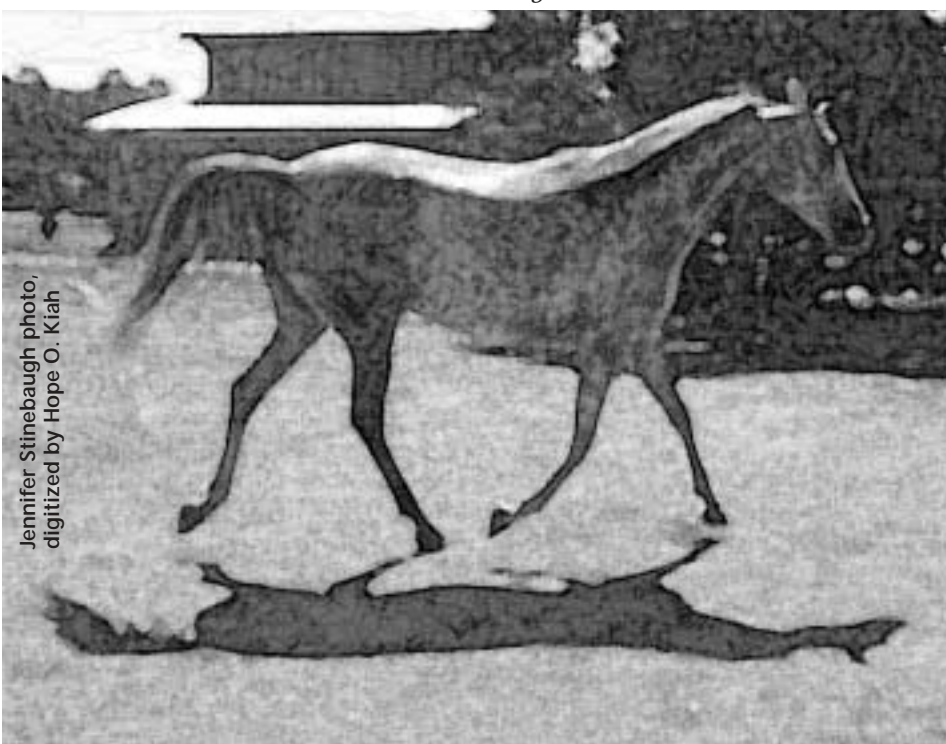
and a few handsome brown bays and gleaming red sorrels. If you like spots and splashes, we have several flashy paint horses and one leopard Appaloosa. A number of the horses at our stables are rescues with histories unknown and a few are mustangs that once roamed public lands. There are lots of Arabians, flea bitten grey (think white with freckles) to solid black with delicate, beautiful faces and the even more delicate Paso Finos. Thoroughbreds and Saddlebreds, Morgans, one Shetland pony and combinations of all of the above round out the herd. We have several honored senior citizens horses, some of which are over thirty.

One other thing we have lots of is fresh manure for composting. Making compost is easy and great for your gardens, lawns and trees. Just make a big pile, wet it down and cover it. Toss it occasionally and add a little water to keep it moist. When it no longer looks like manure, it is glorious organic compost. So bring a shovel and truck or a few tubs and buckets and help yourself. Take all you want; somehow there's always more.

—Su Anne Armstrong

Gwen loves to trot

**ECIA Board
Work Study
Meeting,
Community
Center, Mon.,
July 14, 7 pm**



Jennifer Stinebaugh photo,
digitized by Hope O. Kiah

**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.

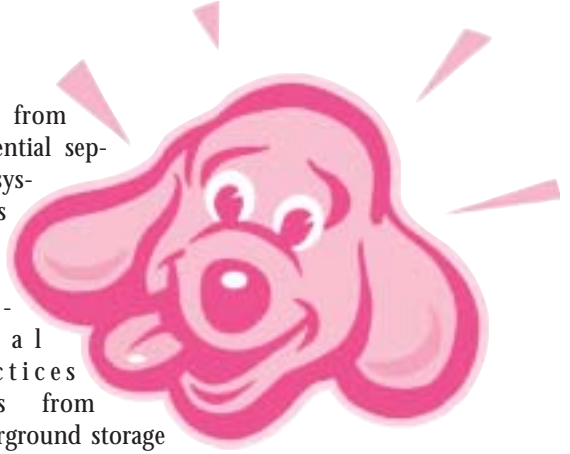
Don't Blame the Dogs

Patricia Anello (*Vistas*, volume V #6) has got to be kidding! Dog feces in the greenbelts a significant threat to Eldorado's ground water quality? As a ground water scientist and environmental manager based in Santa Fe for over 15 years, I find such unbased assertions downright offensive to my profession. I also find it ironic, given Stephen Wust's thoughtful letter the previous month suggesting the community look into alternative ways of disposing of our sewage. It's true that over 90% of New Mexicans rely on ground water for their drinking water, but one should not confuse the nuisance of stepping over dog poop on a greenbelt trail with a bona fide threat to environmental health. The State Environment Department will tell you that the single most prevalent pollutant of our subsurface waters is nitrate contamination

from residential septic systems and agricultural practices (leaks from underground storage tanks at gas stations are a distant second).

Perhaps we should look at our own community of humans to find blame for our serious environmental problems before going after "man's best friend".

—James P. Bearzi



Another Side of the Speeding Issue

After reading all the articles published in this newsletter about speeding in Eldorado, I decided to relate the other side as I have experienced it. Three times recently I have had the same experience. I have been driving on Vista Grande at very close to the speed limit when a car pulls out in front of me from a side street so close to me I have to lock up all 4 tires to keep from collecting a new unwanted hood ornament. Then I get to follow behind this Einstein for three and a half miles at a blazing speed of 25 to 30 miles per hour. I do not pass in Eldorado.

I have observed two similarities of these three incidents. First was the look of wide-eyed amazement on the face of these individuals that their unsafe behavior would raise the blood pressure of a normally serene person. Second was the fact that if these people would have waited literally 2 seconds for me to pass, they could have entered Vista Grande without putting both of us in danger and completed their leisurely trip in peace because in every case there was not another car for miles behind me.

—Jerry Massee
Fonda Way

Questionnaire for Owners of Loose Dogs

1) Were you personally granted exemption status from the ECIA ruling that states, "It is forbidden to permit dogs to run at large in Eldorado."?

2) Did your neighbors respond positively when you asked if it was okay for your dog to urinate and defecate on their property?

3) Did your neighbors respond positively when you asked if it was okay for your dog to approach and jump on them while they are out walking their own dog?

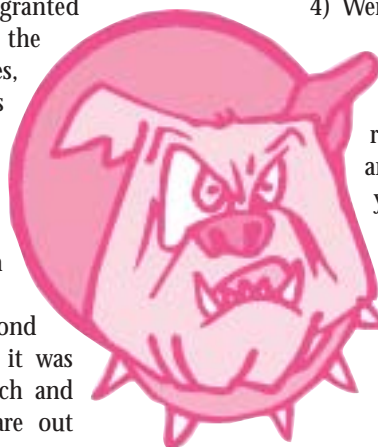
4) Were you able to teach your dog to look both ways before crossing the road?

5) Were you able to secure guarantees from every driver who uses our roads that they would exercise caution and be ever-vigilant to the possibility of your dog running out in front of them?

Let's all take responsibility for our dog's safety, while at the same time demonstrating courtesy toward our neighbors and their property.

DO UNTO OTHERS...

—Ellen Hutchins - Altura Road



Wet and Wild – Who's on First?

Eldorado residents following the Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District (EAWSD) acquisition of the local water system may need help. EAWSD currently is working on four legal issues:

- ▼ Condemnation of the assets of El Dorado Utilities (EDU) and required state bond funding.
- ▼ EAWSD opposition to acquisition of EDU by another company.
- ▼ Defense against a lawsuit alleging EAWSD lacks authority for condemnation.
- ▼ Defense against a utility-led suit to void the district's 2002 election authorizing bonds.

"Ya can't tell the players without a scorecard," as they say at the ballpark, so here is the lineup:

EAWSD: A quasi-municipal state agency formed in 1997 to represent EDU customers and investigate acquisition of EDU, led by a three-member volunteer elected board. EAWSD includes all of the area served by EDU, which includes most of Eldorado and several neighboring subdivisions, but leaves out the welled area in northwest Eldorado. Residents of EAWSD decided in August 2002, by more than a 2:1 majority of those voting, to authorize bonds to acquire the assets of EDU by purchase or condemnation, thus making EAWSD the local water utility. This acquisition is currently the subject of multiple lawsuits and regulatory actions.

EDU: The current water company, serving about 2,600 customer sites. It was formed by AMREP, the original developer of Eldorado at the time that lots were platted in the 1970s. Piped water helped make AMREP's lots more valuable and saleable. AMREP has been seeking to sell EDU in recent years as part of closing out its Eldorado area operations. An EAWSD attempt to negotiate a purchase of EDU's assets failed, and the EAWSD board subsequently voted to purchase them through condemnation.

UI: Utilities, Inc., an Illinois company that operates small water utilities throughout the U.S. UI currently has a contract to purchase the assets of EDU, which would make UI the local water utility. This contract, which has been extended at least twice, predates the EAWSD bond election. EDU, UI and five area residents have filed suit challenging the 2002 bond election. Their suit was dismissed in May in state district court but an appeal has been promised.

NUON: An international utility holding company based in the Netherlands that recently acquired UI. UI management has stated that they expect to

continue operating UI with a minimum of oversight from the parent company.

PRC: The State of New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, which would need to approve UI's acquisition of EDU. EAWSD has intervened to argue against the acquisition. After formal hearings, the Hearing Officer recommended that the acquisition be approved, but the full Commission is delaying a decision until at least July 21, 2003, pending outcome of some of the legal challenges to EAWSD's condemnation.

NMFA: The New Mexico Finance Authority, which funds state entities by sale of state bonds. The NMFA currently is awaiting resolution of some of the legal challenges to EAWSD's condemnation of EDU assets before delivering the bond funds voted to pay for EDU assets.

Alto Eldorado et al.: A group of nine developers who are challenging the statutory authority of EAWSD to acquire EDU's assets through condemnation. The group, which includes outspoken property owner **Joe Miller**, has stated that if EAWSD acquires the water utility, the group's ability to obtain future water service could be jeopardized. The suit was dismissed at the state district court level in February, but that decision is being appealed.

OMI: (Operations Management, Inc.) After receiving competitive bids from professional utility management firms, EAWSD negotiated a contract with OMI to operate the water system when and if it is acquired.

These are the facts for now. Of course, "It ain't over 'til it's over."

—Dan Drobnis



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Election: Frank Schober

Information: Frank Schober

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466-READ

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204-2945

Fire and Rescue

466-1204

Animal Control

424-2050



Free Concerts

The Eldorado Community Band will be performing several free concerts this summer. The concert dates are June 8, August 3, August 31, and September 21. In addition, the Band will be performing at the 4th of July event at the clubhouse. For more information, call **Peg Johnson** at 466-1459.

All Aboard! Senior Van Service

Beginning in September, the Eldorado Senior Center will offer rides to Santa Fe medical offices and facilities for those seniors who have difficulty getting into town for their appointments. Proposed days and times of service are: first and third Tuesdays leaving at 12:30 pm returning at 4:30 pm; second and fourth Tuesdays leaving at 8:30 am and returning at 12:30 pm. The Santa Fe Senior Center and Agency on Aging have allocated a van that will be kept in Eldorado to serve registered seniors within a 5-mile radius of Fire Station No. 1 on Ave. Vista Grande. Senior volunteers from the community have received training as drivers for this pilot project. Prospective riders will be picked up at their homes.

Because city transportation services do not extend to the 285 area, this will be an attempt to help seniors maintain their self-sufficiency and stay within our community. A nominal fee will be charged.

With more volunteer drivers, the service could be expanded to cover more days each week and a larger service area. Anyone interested in qualifying as a driver for the senior van, please contact **Patty Adam** at 466-1949. More information will be announced next month regarding contact numbers for scheduling service to Santa Fe in September.

Artists' Shoptalk: Wednesday, July 16, 10 am-noon, at the home of **Lucia Sybert** (466-3721). Please call for directions. Join fellow artists at each other's homes for coffee and networking.

Art Program: Wednesday, July 30, 7:00 pm, at the Community Center. **Lea Williams** from Artisan Editions of Santa Fe, Inc. will present a talk on print technologies in Giclee print-making, and marketing strategies for artists employing limited edition prints. Coffee and refreshments will be served. All are welcome to attend.

Busy Hands

Would you be interested in joining a group of like-minded people once or twice a month to exchange ideas, solve problems, or just enjoy the good company? Knitting is so old it's new again! If you have an interest, please contact me and we will set a time and day. No dues; no rules. Call **Joyce Hanmer** at 466-3018 or email at joycehan@msn.com.

Permission to Dump, Sir

Annual county residential solid waste permits for 2002-2003 will expire on June 30, 2003. The fee for the 2003-2004 permit is \$25.00. At about 50 cents a week, this fee is still one of the least expensive solid waste fees in New Mexico!

To renew your permit, wait for a renewal postcard to arrive, or pick up an application at all of the seven county transfer station locations, the Santa Fe County Finance Department at 102 Grant Avenue in town, Eldorado Supermarket, San Marcos Feed, or on the Internet at www.santafecounty.org. Permits may be purchased through the mail using an application or in person at the Santa Fe County Finance Department. For permit information, call 986-6375.

Strike up the Band for the 4th of July

The Eldorado Community will celebrate the 4th of July with its traditional parade along Avenida



del Monte Alto on the morning of Friday, July 4th starting at 9:00 am. The Eldorado Fire and Rescue and the Community Band will be there, for what is a parade without a fire truck and music! Anyone interested in participating in the parade is encouraged to do so: floats, decorated bikes, horses, strollers, scooters, motorcycles, vintage cars, pets, interesting people in patriotic costumes, and community groups are all welcome. Spectators are just as welcome to sit by the road and take in the festivities. For all the participants, the parade will stage itself along Moya Road beginning about 8:30 am, and at approximately 9:00 am the parade will follow Avenida del Monte Alto to the Community Center. There will be refreshments at the Community Center and music by the Community Band. Games for the little ones will be at the pool from 11:00 am to noon. Find some red, white and blue, pack a lunch and make a day of it with your friends and neighbors!

—ECIA Board



Eldorado Children at the 4th of July Parade, 2002

July Events

Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

Email info@eldoradocommunity.org with your meeting or 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.

JULY SPECIAL EVENTS

4th of July Parade at 9:00 am on Avenida del Monte Alto ECIA offices closed

ERA Quarterly Meeting Mon. July 7, 7-9:30 pm

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Information Committee	ECIA	466-4248
Neighborhood Watch	Frank Schober	310-8593 call
Recreation Committee	Elaine Napp	466-2023
Road Committee	Mon., July 7, 6-7 pm	Allen Larson 466-4792 CFR
Finance Committee	Tues., July 8, 10-11 am	Dan Drobnis 466-4781 CFR
Architectural Committee	Tues., July 8, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent 466-7708 CFR
EAWS&SD*	Wed., July 9, 7-9 pm	Don Dayton 466-2411 CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., July 14, 7-9 pm	ECIA 466-4248 CFR
285 Coalition	Wed., July 16, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock 466-1598 CR
ECIA Board	Thurs., July 17, 7-9 pm	ECIA 466-4248 CR
Architectural Committee	Tues., July 22, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent 466-7708 CFR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Master Gardeners	Mon., July 7, 7-9 pm	Beverly Hafner 466-0261 RR
Vista Grande Book Club	Thurs., July 10, 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore 466-9636
Search & Rescue	Thurs., July 10, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett 466-9765
Book Club	Sat., July 12, 1:30-3 pm	Barbara Rugg 466-2559
Book Club	Sun., July 13, 7-9 pm	Ken Fischer 466-2537
Cub Scouts Pack 414	Tues., July 15, 7 pm	Clay Williard
Arts Assoc. Shoptalk	Wed., July 16, 10 am-noon	Cary Carlson 466-6073
Arts Assoc. Program	Wed., July 30, 7-9 pm	Arlene Siegel 466-3274 LR

WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tuesdays, 5:45-6:45 pm	CR
Al-Anon (open to all)	Fridays, 9-10 am	
Bridge	1st & 3rd Mon., 1-4:30 pm	LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fridays, 1-4:30 pm	Marjorie Segell 466-3958 CR, LR
Bridge	2nd & 4th Fridays, 1-4:20 pm	Pat Lavengood 466-9765 CR, LR
Bridge (Beginning)	Wednesdays, 9-noon	Gen Norris 466-4120 LR
Bridge (Mens')	Thursdays, 1-4 pm	Bill Kapoun 466-8497 LR
Boy Scouts Troop 414	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Paul Tuck 466-4815
Community Band	Thursdays, 7-8:30 pm	Peg Johnson 466-1459 School
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	Marjorie Segell 466-3958 CR

*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District **Reservations Required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradocommunity.org

Animal Control Officers—Dealing with the Good, the Bad, and the Coyote

NEEDED:

A volunteer is needed to act as a grant writer for our Eldorado arts community. We need to help the Eldorado Band acquire a gazebo type stage that would provide a place for practices and performances, to be located, probably, in our Community Center. Call 310-8593 for further information on volunteering for this worthy cause.

The following interview was held June 2, 2003, with **Andrew Jaramillo**, Supervisor, Santa Fe County Animal Control to discuss Eldorado animal control, and was conducted for *Vistas* by **Gretel Underwood**.

Gretel: What is the role of Santa Fe County Animal Control?

Andrew: Our purpose is to protect animals from neglect and abuse, to protect residents from annoyance and injury and to promote the health, welfare, and safety of residents and animals.

G: How large an area do you cover and how many officers do you have?

A: Santa Fe County is approximately 2,000 square miles. I have four officers under me.

G: What is the most mistaken perception held by the public about Animal Control?

A: That we are killers, that we're animal killers. Also, with 2,000 square miles, we can't be there in five or ten minutes. The perception is that we're not quick enough.

G: Can you clear up for our readers what is meant by voice control?

A: Voice control means when your dog is by your side and is controlled by your voice commands. When you violate the law is when your dog is two blocks down and you call him back, that's not voice control. When your animal is on your property, there needs to be restraint somehow—with a wall, a fence, electric fencing—not roaming at large. If the dog steps outside the boundary, the dog is considered to be breaking the law.

G: When is a barking dog violating the law?

A: Under the ordinance, if it's persistent and constant. We consider 30 minutes to be a nuisance.

G: Do you consider Eldorado to be a problem area?

A: Well, looking at the stats, the year 2001 we had a total of 132 calls in the Eldorado area and in 2002 it was 137. So it's about average.

G: Do you get many calls from Eldorado concerning wildlife?

A: It's mostly snakes and coyotes.

G: What do they want you to do about coyotes?

A: Remove them. Coyotes are pretty slick, they won't go in a dog trap. I haven't seen one yet.

G: Do you play a role in controlling the plague?

A: The plague is strictly with the Health Department. That number is 827-0006.

G: If the county doubled your budget tomorrow, what would you do to improve your operations?

A: More manpower and better pay for those we have.

G: At the end of a bad day, what are the kind of things that made it bad?

A: When we have a situation that wasn't solved. That we have to continue with it, especially with animal cruelty, or if there is a loophole in the law and we can't charge anybody with the offense.

G: What makes a good day?

A: The opposite—when we are able to charge someone, help that animal, help the public.

G: If you didn't have this profession, what would you like to do?

A: Cook. I like to cook. Barbeque is my favorite.

G: Is there anything you would like to add?

A: I think people should be responsible, but I'd like to thank the people who aren't, because they keep me in a job.

Animal Control summer hours are Mon.-Fri., 7 am–8 pm, Sat & Sun, 7 am–5 pm, 424-2050.

—Gretel Underwood



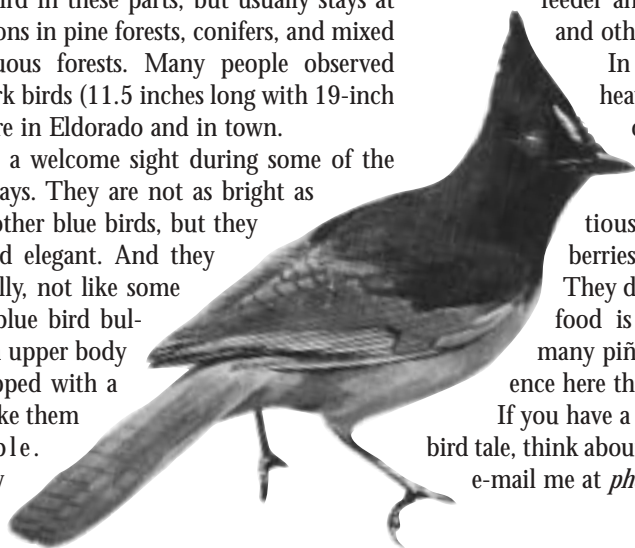
These Eldorado Jays are Stellar

I enjoy watching the birds around my house. My friends are envious because I live in Eldorado, and we get all the blue birds. This past winter, a different blue bird graced my sunflower feeder and water bowl.

The Steller's Jay (*cyanocitta stelleri*) is not an uncommon bird in these parts, but usually stays at higher elevations in pine forests, conifers, and mixed conifer-deciduous forests. Many people observed these large dark birds (11.5 inches long with 19-inch wingspan) here in Eldorado and in town.

They were a welcome sight during some of the cold winter days. They are not as bright as some of our other blue birds, but they are stately and elegant. And they act quite regally, not like some of the other blue bird bullies. A darkish upper body and head, topped with a large crest make them unmistakable.

The only other jay



with a crest is the eastern Blue Jay, which is not found this far west.

I heard their distinct raspy loud call as they came and went in front of my window. Sometimes they may imitate the calls of the red-tailed hawk, but I didn't observe this. But they were gentlemen at the feeder and didn't chase away the juncos and other smaller birds.

In the fall and winter they feed heavily on acorns, pine seeds and other seeds and nuts. They pound on hard seeds with their bill to get at the nutritious meat inside. They will eat berries and wild fruits when available. They descend to lower elevations when food is not available. The loss of so many piñon trees may explain their presence here this past winter.

If you have a favorite blue bird story or other bird tale, think about sharing it in the *Vistas*. You can e-mail me at phenline@mindspring.com

—Pam Henline

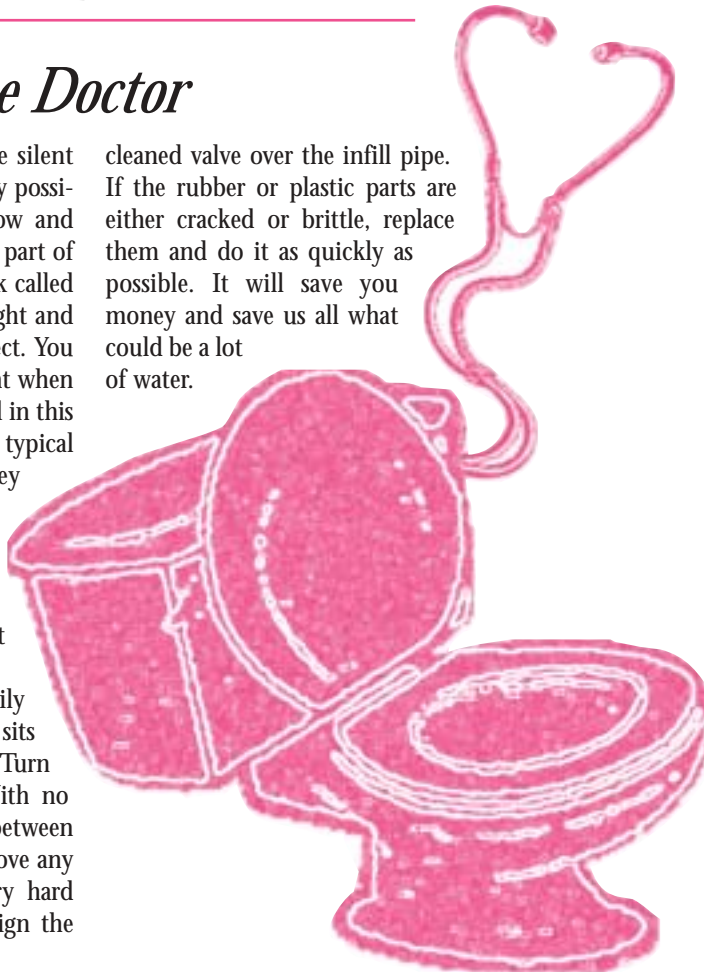
The Eldorado House Doctor

Water leaks mount up. Beware the silent leak in your toilet tank. It is very possible for a toilet to develop a slow and often silent leak in its flush mechanism. It is part of the Rube Goldberg device in your toilet tank called the flapper or ball valve. You may have a slight and ultimately expensive leak that is hard to detect. You may hear your toilet tank fill during the night when the house is quiet. Attend to it. All is not well in this most expensive of plumbing devices. (In a typical household without low-flow toilets, they account for 30% of water used.)

Try this technique: put some food coloring in your suspect toilet tank and watch what (if anything) happens. If you see colored water begin to trickle into the toilet bowl, you have a leak.

Normally all that is needed is some easily performed maintenance. The flapper valve sits atop the pipe that leads into the toilet bowl. Turn off the refill valve and flush the toilet. With no water in the tank you can wipe the surfaces between the flapper valve and the infill pipe and remove any rust or hard water deposits. (We have very hard water in Eldorado.) Make sure that you align the

cleaned valve over the infill pipe. If the rubber or plastic parts are either cracked or brittle, replace them and do it as quickly as possible. It will save you money and save us all what could be a lot of water.





Security
204-2945

Library Addition Finishes Ahead of Schedule



Janet Amtmann

The new addition to the Vista Grande Public Library was finished ahead of schedule. Now the County Commission needs to accept the building's completion and sign off on it before the new addition of about 1,600 sq. feet can be insured and occupied. New shelving has been selected and the order will be placed as soon as the county gives the library the green light. Then the real work will begin as books are processed, cataloged and transferred into the new space.

President **Ann Hume** estimates a grand opening for early November to showcase the new stacks and the separate Children's Room. Volunteers are always needed, especially in the months to come. Call **Susan Sheldon** at 466-READ to find out how you can help.

—Janet Amtmann