

ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME XI, ISSUE 9

Sept. 2009

IN THIS ISSUE

Letters / EFRS	2
ECIA President	3
2010 Budget	3
In the Community	4-5
Roads / Biking	6
ERA News	6
Birds / Security	7

Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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El Dorado Community School

NOBODY WILL FORGET the day when the ceiling in **Jennifer Medeiros's** classroom collapsed and flooded the room with water. Luckily, the pipes burst when the school was closed, and no first- or second-graders were hurt. There are other leaks in the main hallway that leave puddles where students could slip and fall.

Every morning, students get off their buses and are greeted with the smell of sewer gas in the teacher's parking lot. It is a rotten way to start the day, the result of an aging, inadequate septic system that even wafts across Avenida Vista Grande to neighboring households. Inside, fourth-

graders are proud of their newly remodeled bathrooms, but the broken septic system carries the stench down the hallway all the way to the cafeteria.

In other classrooms along the older wing of the school, many young students and teachers spend their afternoons bathed in sweat because the air-conditioning system is no longer functioning properly. Last May, a seven-year-old boy earnestly told me that he thought the unpleasant heat in his class was probably caused by global warming!

In truth, the real culprit is the aging original wing of El Dorado Community School. Fortunately, Principal **Yann Lussiez** has been hard at work with the Santa Fe Public School District to solve the problem. The school formed an Architectural Committee to work with **Thomas** and **Sara Easterson-Bond** of WoodMetalConcrete Architecture to renovate the school. While sections of the building are in excellent condition, the original middle wing is in need of an overhaul. With last year's addition of seventh and eighth grades and a pre-school program, plans were already in the works to expand the building. The school district pushed the bond issue timetable ahead a year to take advantage of lower construction costs in the weak economy, and work has already begun.

Architects suggested that the building expansion could be combined with renovating the older sections

Photo by Carol Leyba



Labyrinth at the Community Garden, adjacent to parcel being prepared for planned school expansion

of the school, since both tasks needed to be addressed. The result was a new school plan with two stories of classrooms and outdoor spaces. Best of all, the design elevates the height of the second story only a few feet above the existing gymnasium, thus minimizing the obstruction to mountain views for houses in the neighborhood.

The new plan also includes a new gymnasium for middle school sports, a full-size football field, and numerous new classrooms.

The school has also built a new community garden packed with every vegetable imaginable, which currently boasts over 60 members. The garden began construction in April. In addition to the communal garden, there is a perennial garden, a cactus garden, and an outdoor classroom which will be used by students of all ages during the 2009-10 school year.

—Brian DeLay

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

In Memoriam: Bruce Blossman

Our community has lost a civic leader in the passing away of Bruce Blossman. It is with a heavy heart that I express, on behalf of the ECIA Board of Directors and staff, our deepest condolences to his family.

—Ed Benrock, ECIA President

**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 ECIADebby@aol.com. 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.

More Pool Time?

MANY ELDORADO RESIDENTS have enthusiastically requested that the ECIA swimming pool operating schedule be extended beyond Labor Day. However, in addition to the expenses of water heating and pool chemicals, there are difficulties in obtaining qualified lifeguards. The high-school and college students who work during the summers are returning to school by the latter part of August, making a season extension difficult.

This year, however, General Manager **Bill Donohue** is investigating the use of full-time lifeguards from elsewhere in the county to provide a few extra weekends in September. Some Eldorado residents have also volunteered to serve, but they would still be required to hold current Red Cross certificates in both CPR and Lifesaving Techniques.

—Dan Drobnis

Roadrunners Raffle

RECENTLY the Eldorado Roadrunners RV Club held a raffle to benefit the El Dorado Fire and Rescue Service. A 16 GB iPod was won by **Carlos Valencia** of Glorieta. I would like to thank the members of the club for their help in selling tickets and all the people who bought tickets and made donations. I would especially like to thank the Eldorado Supermarket for allowing us to sell tickets in the store. We raised \$1341 through this effort, to be donated to El Dorado Fire and Rescue. Eldorado Roadrunners also donates several hundred dollars each year to Dogs for the Deaf through various projects. The Roadrunners Club meets at the Main Fire Station on Avenida Vista Grande on the third Tuesday of each month.

Again, thanks to everyone.

—William Bodle
President, Eldorado Roadrunners

The Village at Eldorado under new ownership

The new name is La Tienda Eldorado.
Spaces are renting now. If you would like
to learn more or make suggestions to the
new owners, go to
www.latiendaeldorado.com
and click on the Community Input tab.



Fun times at last year's El Dorado Fire and Rescue Service Barbecue and open house.

Fire & Rescue Barbecue

THE EL DORADO FIRE and Rescue Service will host its annual barbecue and open house on Sunday, September 20, from noon until 4:30 pm. The barbecue and open house will be held at the main fire station located at 144 Avenida Vista Grande, halfway between Avenida Torreon and Monte Alto Road. Music will be available and food will be provided by RealBurger.

EFRS is planning many activities geared toward children, but there will be fun and things to do for all ages. Meet your neighbors and that group of volunteers who provide public safety services all year long. Last year almost 700 people attended the event, and we hope for an even bigger turnout this year. All of the firefighting equipment will be at the open house, so don't forget to bring your cameras.

Parking will not be available at the fire department due to limited space, so please plan to park at the El Dorado School and walk the short distance to Station 1. We hope to see everyone there.

—Stephen F. Tapke, Lieutenant
El Dorado Fire and Rescue Service

From the ECIA President's Desk

IN MY MANY CONVERSATIONS with residents, security often comes up as one of their prime concerns. I can't imagine a more traumatic event than returning from work or shopping to find that your house has been broken into and your prize possessions stolen. It has to weigh heavily on your mind from that moment on. Because of this, the Board will be looking into our different options in regard to the private security company that we now employ.

The recent Security Fair was a success, and many of our residents turned out to ask questions of the different vendors on how they might protect their property from thieves and to get tips on home safety.

I do want to thank **Marilyn Walker** and **Frank Schober**, co-chairs of the Security Fair, and all the volunteers from the Neighborhood Watch program. Thanks also to our General Manager **Bill Donohue** and his staff for all their hard work in making this event a success; without them, this Fair would not have been possible. Special thanks go out as well to the Eldorado Fire Chief **Guy Monroe** and his Vol-

unteer Fire Department, to the Santa Fe Sheriff's Department, the New Mexico State Police and, of course, the many vendors and speakers who put on the seminars and demonstrations.

The Board will be looking to see if the Security Fair should be held yearly. If you have thoughts on this, please contact me.

Volunteerism is the heartbeat of any community—from the Directors of the Board to the chairs and members of the different committees. Without volunteers, our homeowners association could not exist and function properly. Eldorado is very fortunate to have the dedicated residents serving on the Board and the many committees of the Association, but what about you? Are you willing to take an active role in your community by serving on a committee of your choice? The Association has nine committees on which your expertise would be welcomed. I encourage residents to take part; it will give you a feeling of self-satisfaction in knowing that you are contributing to the community in which you live, Eldorado.

—Ed Benrock, ECIA President

Schedule for 2010 ECIA Budget Meetings

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE will be developing a recommended ECIA Operating Budget for Board approval over the next several weeks. Surpluses from previous years have been used to hold the annual assessment at \$240 for eight years, but it is likely that an increase will be needed for 2010.

ECIA members who are interested in participating in the budget development process are welcome at the following meetings:

Wednesday, September 2, 9:30 am: The Finance Committee continues discussion of the 2010 draft Operating Budget and begins review of committee and individual proposals at its regular monthly meeting. Venue: Conference Room.
Tuesday, September 15, 7 pm: The Finance Committee continues review of proposals for evening attendees. Venue: Living Room.
Wednesday, October 7, 9:30 am: The Finance

Committee continues review of the tentative budget at its regular monthly meeting, and adopts preliminary recommended budget. Venue: Conference Room.

Monday, October 12, 7 pm (or October 19 if the Board prefers its regular workshop): Joint meeting of the ECIA Board and Finance Committee. Committee chairs and residents are invited to further explain their budget requests if desired. Venue: Conference Room.

Monday, November 2: Proposed 2010 budget available at ECIA office and on website.

Saturday, November 14, 10 am: The Board conducts a public hearing on the proposed 2010 budget. Copies will be available at the hearing. Venue: Railroad Building.

Thursday, November 19, 7 pm: The Board adopts the final 2010 budget at its regular meeting. Venue: Classroom.

2010 Eldorado Calendar Canceled

THE ELDORADO ANNUAL calendar has been canceled for 2010. Advertiser support, which is necessary to defray the cost of full-color printing on quality paper, fell short for the 2009 calendar and appeared to be even more difficult to obtain for 2010. A decision on a 2011 calendar will

be made next year.

Instead, photographers are invited to post their pictures of Eldorado on eldoradocommunity.org. A substantial number are already available for viewing.

The regular issue of *Vistas* will be published in December.

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 Conservation: John Parker and E.J. Evangelos
 Stable: Bonita Mamp
 Election: Ken Robinson
 Roads: Nolan Zisman
 Information: Frank Schober
 Neighborhood Watch: Larry Eccard & Marilyn Walker
 Facilities & Grounds: Fred Raznick

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 466-READ
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 204-2945
 Fire and Rescue
 466-1204
 County All Purpose
 820-CNTY (2689)



Urban Wildlife Issues Talk

Elizabeth Hatton, Epidemiologist with NM Department of Health, will give a presentation on plague, disease characteristics and homeowner strategies to resist infestation/infection; **Rick Winslow**, Predator Specialist, NM Game and Fish Department, will deliver a talk on bears, mountain lions and other predators in our area, focusing on how to avoid attracting them to your residence and what to do if they are encountered. The presentations, hosted by the ECIA Conservation Committee, will be held on Thursday, September 10, at the Community Center Railroad Building, beginning at 7 pm.

"Wizard of Oz" and "Chicago!"

Classes are starting this month for Eldorado Children's Theatre and Teen Players 2009/2010 productions! This is a great opportunity for your child to gain confidence and learn all about the performing arts with highly trained professionals in a safe, nurturing environment right here in Eldorado! All students will perform in these great shows, with full-scale professional-quality productions at the James A. Little Theater in January 2010 in Santa Fe. "Chicago" (pending approval of rights) will be performed by the teen players (ages 13–18), and "Wizard of Oz"—celebrating its 70th anniversary—will be performed by the children's theater (ages 6–13). For information or an application, go to eldoradochildrenstheatre.org or call 466-3302. Don't delay, these classes fill fast!

Eldorado Energy Coop (EEC)

This fall EEC is presenting Climate Masters, a national program offering a free series of classes providing key information on climate change and what you can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in your daily life. Currently being offered at Santa Fe Community College, this course will be for residents of Eldorado and the surrounding area.

SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, October 3, EEC will host its first community outreach event—a hands-on demonstration site at the Agora where you can find out everything you ever wanted to know about making your home energy-efficient, saving money, and reducing our community's carbon footprint. Plus, you can sign up for a free energy audit by EEC's Carbon Busters! team. Local vendors will be on hand to provide the weatherizing materials you need. The event is cosponsored with the ECIA Conservation Committee. For more information, contact **Deborah Boldt**, 466-2295, dboldt23@gmail.com, or **Amy Bertelli**, 466-1624, amysue@cybermesa.com.



The Eldorado Spiritual Coop

Eldorado Spiritual Cooperative is a non-hierarchical, meditative sharing that helps fuel the rest of the coops. Come join us on the 1st and 3rd **Tuesdays** (note the change in the day), 5:45–7:15 pm, in the school library. Be part of wave of change here in Eldorado, in a spirit-filled way! Call **Don McAvinchey** at 955-1847 to RSVP.

The Eldorado Food Coop

The Eldorado Food Cooperative meets once a month and/or as needed. Our food interests include better access to locally produced food; ways to gain more knowledge, information, and skills about food production, preparation, and preserving; community interaction; foods that are any or all of the following: local, organic, minimally processed, home produced, cost effective, cruelty free.

We are currently arranging educational opportunities in the form of presentations on food processing (canning, drying, pickling, etc.), field trips to local farms and coops, and local wild foods/medicinal herb identification walks. If you have knowledge you have been waiting to share regarding the above, this is your opportunity! If you have wanted to learn these things, consider joining us! For more information about our group, contact **Fox** at foxwoman22@hotmail.com, 231-0892 or **Carole Tashel** at Ctashel@cybermesa.com, 466-6153.

Eldorado Community School Garden

We are gratified to have had such wonderful support from our community in our first year of operation. Please remember us next year if you would like to participate with other wonderful people from Eldorado in participating in our sustainable and productive garden cooperative. For more information, please contact **Marilynn Jacobs**, eldogarden@comcast.net, 466-6707; or **Eleni Cahn**, elenicahn@msn.com, 466-1558.

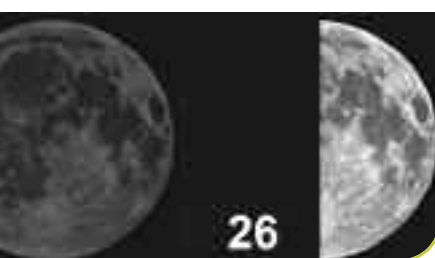
Book Donation Day

Saturday, September 5, 2009, 9 am–noon: Donate your used books and other materials to the Vista Grande Public Library. They would love to have DVDs, CDs, books that are copyrighted from 2004 or later, and any children's materials. Materials they cannot use in the collection are added to their for-sale shelves to help raise money



Photo by Carol Leyba





ASTRONOMY Corner

SEPTEMBER 2009

Want to enjoy our dark night skies? A decent telescope is a good place to start.

Contrary to popular belief, it's not the power of the telescope that makes the most difference, but the aperture (the diameter of the barrel or tube): the larger you can carry or afford, the better. Even a less expensive larger-diameter telescope will yield better views than an expensive one with a smaller diameter—it's just the laws of physics. Avoid department-store telescopes, especially those advertising high powers such as 200–500x, because magnifying a poor image only results in a worse and darker image. Lower powers yield brighter, sharper views. You can either make your child's (or your) first telescope experience a good or a bad one, so avoid the cheap telescopes and opt to pay just few dollars more for an affordable starter scope such as an 8-inch reflector or dobsonian telescope.

—David Goodrich

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

for the library. Please **do not** bring magazines, textbooks, encyclopedias, law books, technical manuals, licensed software, or homemade videos and tapes, as the library cannot use these and are unable to sell them.

ECIA Needs Web Volunteer

ECIA is looking for a web-inspired volunteer to manage the logins for eldoradocommunity.org. This involves checking the login requests daily and handling the approvals. You will work closely with the webmaster and ECIA office staff. Please send an email to ecommunity@aol.com, describing your web experience.



September 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

SEPTEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS

LABOR DAY! Pool Closes	Mon. Sept. 7	ECIA Offices closed	466-4248	
Urban Wildlife Issues Talk	Thurs., Sept. 10	John Parker	827-1080	RR
ERA Flea Market	Sat., Sept. 12, 9-noon	Marilyn Farrell	466-4469	CC

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Facilities & Grounds	Tues., Sept. 1, 4 pm	Fred Raznick	466-2305	CFR
Conservation Committee	Tues., Sept. 1, 7-9 pm	John Parker	466-7513	LR
Finance Committee	Wed., Sept. 2, 9:30 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Architectural Committee	Wed., Sept. 9, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., Sept. 14, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., Sept. 17, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Road Committee	Mon., Sept. 21, 6 pm	Nolan Zisman	466-2968	CFR
Information Committee	Tues., Sept. 22, 7-9 pm	Frank Schober	310-8593	LR
Stable Committee	Tues., Sept. 22 7-9 pm	Bonnie Mamp	466-4271	LR
Architectural Committee	Wed., Sept. 23, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Eld Dog Club	Tues., Sept. 8, 7 pm	Freddi Hetler	466-2005	LR
Search & Rescue	Thurs., Sept. 10, 6:30-9:30 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR
La Canada Wireless	Mon., Sept. 14 & 28, 7-9	lcwireless.org		Library
Library Book Group	3rd Mon., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	VGPL
Cub Scout Pack 414	4th Tues., 7-9 pm	John Kielling	466-4232	Sm Gym
Conserv. Comm. Hike	3rd Sat. of month	Eleanor Gossen	466-1949	
Roadrunner RV	3rd Tues of month	Bill Bodle	466-3011	
EACA Meeting	Last Thurs. of month		466-6245	Fire
EAW&SD*	Thurs, September 3 & 17, 7-9 pm		466-2411	CR
Book Group	2nd Saturday 9-10:30	Joan LaMarque	466-6000	CFR

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
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wed., 7-9 pm	Ramon Quintana	757-6424	RR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Mon, 1-4:30 pm	Kate Kaulbach	466-1465	LR
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 Church	Sun., 9:30 & 11 am	David McPherson	466-2495	CC
Community Band	Thurs., 6:30-8:30 pm	Joel Hopko	466-8412	New gym
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
Adult Basketball	Thursdays, 7 pm-dusk			CC

*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

**Reservations Required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradocommunity.org

At the Crossroads

A SMOOTH RIDE has been restored on Avenida Vista Grande. The county recently completed repaving of the roadway and new striping. There were some issues with the new paving interface with the pre-existing shoulders, of concern to bicyclists who ride on the road instead of the adjacent bike path. Hopefully, these will be addressed in future paving projects.

The county has also reconfirmed its intent to spread some leftover base course (from our recent major project which restored over seven miles of some of the worst dirt roads in Eldorado) on some of the more “slippery when wet” segments of our roads. About two miles of roadway will benefit from this work, expected to be completed prior to the first fall

snows.

Your Road Committee recently met with a County Public Works Department representative to discuss the future of Eldorado roads. The county receives approximately \$300 of every \$1,000 collected in property taxes and, surprisingly, only \$20 of that goes toward road maintenance services. Unless this changes drastically, or unless funding from legislative appropriations increases dramatically (not expected during the next few years), we are unlikely to see any significant changes in maintenance activities in the foreseeable future.

—Nolan Zisman
Chair, Road Committee

Road Biking in Eldorado

LAST MONTH, I wrote a short piece about riding mountain bikes. But of course, many residents prefer road bikes, those bicycles with thin tires and often curled handlebars, which are often seen sharing our roads with automobiles.

By state law, autos are required to give bicycles on the road at least five feet of distance—though many motorists fail to provide this margin of safety. If you come up upon a bicyclist on the road, please give the rider some space. You may find yourself thinking, why don’t road bikes stick to the trails instead of the road? The fact is, road bikes are fast-moving vehicles that would pose a threat to others on the trail. In addition, road bikes need a smoother surface than the uneven asphalt and gravel of the trails.

Road bikers try to stay in the shoulder or to the right of the white line, but their ability to do so depends on how large the shoulder is (if there is any) and what material is in the roadway. Road bikers may have to curve slightly into the traffic at intersections or driveways to avoid the gravel accumulated there. Hazards to road bikes include trash, glass, plastic, and

other debris thrown to the side of the road by cars or passers-by. Once you travel by bike, you see how much stuff has been tossed into the roadways, posing a risk of accident. Because road bike tires are very thin, they are not difficult to puncture, especially by discarded glass containers such as beer bottles. Road bikers in this area should consider more protective tires and tubes to reduce the number of flats.

Road bikes typically have two gears at the pedals and nine or ten gears at the rear wheel. They are usually geared higher than mountain bikes, permitting higher speeds. Autos and pedestrians should look carefully at intersections to avoid road bikes zipping by. Road bikers use hand signals to tell others if they are turning right or left. When a road bike comes from behind another, it’s common to hear “On your left!” as the speedier biker warns of his/her passing.

For everyone’s sake, please observe simple safety rules to ensure that riders, pedestrians, and motorists can safely share the roads.

—David Goodrich

ERA News

THE ELDORADO RESIDENTS Association and its board of directors send their heartfelt condolences to **Eleanor Hillman**, whose husband, **Bruce Blossman**, passed away August 1 after a lingering illness. Bruce, a visionary president of the ERA Board for many years, was still an active board member—designated President Emeritus—at the time of his passing. A memorial service remembered “the Captain” on August 22 at the Community Center, but his inspiration and example will be with us all for a long time.

This month, the ERA Fall Flea Market starts at 8 am on Saturday, September 12, and continues until noon in the parking lot of the Community Center. Admission and parking are free for buyers, with a graduated scale of booth rental fees that gives Eldorado residents the lowest rate. Contact coordinator **Marilyn Farrell**, 466-4469, to register, or see her before 8 under the porch at the Center.

—Bill Dunning
President, ERA Board



Safety & Security Fair

OVER 400 PEOPLE attended the Eldorado Safety and Security Fair on Saturday, August 8, at the Community Center. Representatives from Rancho Viejo visited to learn how they can build as successful a Neighbor Watch as we enjoy. Workshops, child fingerprinting, informational tables on identity theft, children and the Internet, home emergency prevention, courses such as Santa Fe Community College's Firearms Skills: First Steps for Women, law enforcement officers, firefighters, and vendors of lights, alarms, gates, and doors were among the many offerings available. Eldorado's Quik Send provided document shredding and information about secure versus insecure types of commercial shredding. (Did you know that some commercial shredders do not shred on-site, meaning documents pass through the hands of other people before being destroyed?) Upcoming *Vistas* articles will cover some of these topics in greater depth.

The ECIA Covenants Compliance table fielded some questions from residents concerned about covenants that might prevent them from sufficiently securing their homes. Covenant Compliance Representative Mark Young explained that the Architec-

tural Committee and others will be conducting a review of the Eldorado Covenants and Guidelines in the near future to provide for additional safety features. To the best of his knowledge, the lighting covenants will remain in place (75 watts maximum, shielded and downward-facing, and motion detectors set to 2 minutes).

If in doubt about what is currently permitted, contact Mark at 466-4248 or consult the covenants, which can be found online at www.eldoradocommunity.org > Governing Documents.

—Lyn deMartin, *Neighborhood Watch*

ELDORADO CRIME STATS FOR JULY 2009:

- ▼ Suspicious behavior: 1
- ▼ Car burglary: 1
- ▼ Breaking and entering: 1
- ▼ Suspicious activity/mail box: 1
- ▼ Prowler: 2
- ▼ Larceny: 1

Photo by Dan Drobnis



General Manager Bill Donohue chats with the Santa County emergency response representative at last month's Safety & Security Fair.

Barn Swallows (BSw)

THESE LOVELY, SKILLED FLIERS are found throughout the United States in the summer. BSwS are 6.75 inches long, with long pointy wings spanning 11 inches. Their head and back are a dark blue, almost iridescent at times. The male has a bright orange throat patch and a lighter orangey-buff color on the underside. The tail is long and forked (not always obvious in flight) for maneuverability but requires more energy for flight. The female is similar but with a lighter-colored underside. They are found in open country, especially near water or agriculture. Sometimes they congregate in small colonies when nesting in such places as highway underpasses or barns. For winter, they migrate from Panama to the southern tip of South America. The BSw is the most abundant and widely distributed swallow species in the world. DNA studies link BSwS to other passerines (such as warblers and titmice babblers), which are also insectivores.

Courting is done with head and neck rubbing and long, graceful glides by the male. The monogamous pair builds a plastered mud nest in 7 to 14 days, or may reuse an existing nest. Four or five eggs hatch in 13 to 17 days, brooded by both male and female (although the male lacks a brood patch, the area on the breast where feathers lay back and/or are plucked to

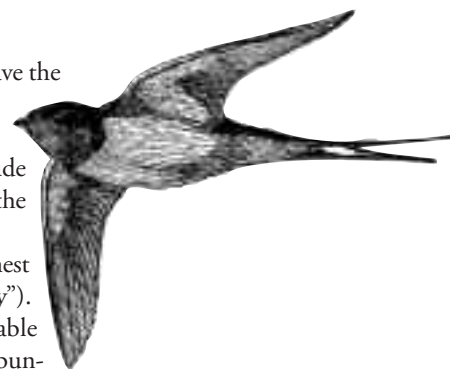
expose the skin). Helpless babies grow to leave the nest in 18 to 23 days. Their diet is almost exclusively insects, which are caught in the air. Nest helpers may be around and include babies from a first clutch or yearlings from the previous year.

Adults often return as pairs to the same nest used the previous year (termed "site tenacity"). The reasons for this include a safe and stable nesting environment and good access to abundant food. They are usually openly welcomed, as they consume huge numbers of insects.

Most people have heard about the swallows that return each year to the Mission of San Juan Capistrano, reputedly on St. Joseph's Day, March 19. The arches of the two-story, high-vaulted chapel have been left bare and exposed since the roof collapsed during an earthquake in 1812. This chapel, said to be the largest and most ornate in any of the missions, now has a more humble destiny—that of housing the birds that St. Francis loved so well.

In similar vein, barn swallows appeared this year at a nearby barn on March 27, in honor of our own Archbishop Jean-Baptiste Lamy who arrived in New Mexico in the summer of 1851.

—Pam Henline



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

Eldorado Safety & Security Fair, 2009



Photos by Jackie Koger

**Ryland Wenk, left, being fingerprinted by Judy Gurule at the Security Fair.
Parents were given the fingerprints to put in their safe deposit box for security purposes.
On the right see visitors at last month's security fair.**