

ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME X, ISSUE 10

October 2008

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Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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

New School Year, New Names

AUGUST 27 MARKED THE FIRST DAY of El Dorado Community School and the 6th and 7th grade Academy of Leadership. Changes in the teaching staff as well as the grounds were completed in time for new and returning students. The 2008-09 school year promises to be one of success.

Pre-kindergarten is being offered for the first time at El Dorado Community School. A three-year grant from the Public Education Department will fund the new program. Four-year-old students will receive instruction from Lucille Fresquez who formerly taught kindergarten. Thirty students will participate in the program, which runs half-days, four days a week.

Megan Varela is El Dorado's new 5th grade teacher for the 2008-09 school year. She is a recent college graduate and says she is very excited to have her first teaching job at El Dorado, where she student-taught with Kathleen Nakamura for the past 1½ years. Megan grew up in Pecos, NM, and completed her schooling there. She student-taught at Ramirez-Thomas Elementary School in Santa Fe before coming out to El Dorado. She feels that the administration at El Dorado Community School is very supportive, and the parents and community are very involved in their children's education. Megan's first class in El Dorado has already told her that they "are motivated by having such a young and new teacher."

Returning to the school as a 1st grade teacher is Deborah Luke-Skol. Deborah—a 20-year Santa Fe resident who originally hails from Michigan—spent last year working as an educational assistant with K-1 teacher Annetta Grace-Darmitzel. A daughter of educators, Deborah is motivated by the children. She said that first graders are "little wonders"—sweet, loving, kind and motivated to learn. Deborah also appreciates the support of the parents in the community and from the school itself. She said the teachers are incredible professionals and the staff is "out of this world." Because of the partnership between the community and the school, Deborah feels that pre-K

and the middle school will be successful and that the changes reflect what the community of Eldorado needs and wants. The new name of the school also reflects this partnership.

Joining the Academy of Leadership (6th and 7th grade) is Scott Larsen, teaching 7th grade science and 6th grade math. Scott joins the school from the Anglo-American School in Moscow, Russian Federation. He has extensive experience teaching math and science, both at the middle school and high school level. Scott is highly qualified in scientific laboratory application, holds Special Education certification, and is well versed in the uses of technology.

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



**Megan Varela, 5th grade
teacher at El Dorado**



**Deborah Luke-Skol, 1st grade
teacher at El Dorado**

Photos by Kirsten Jasna

REMEMBER:

New school hours: 7:50 am–2:50 pm

Kindergarten through 5th grade Friday dismissal:
12:30 pm

6th–7th grade Friday dismissal: 2:50 pm

Lower parking lot is for buses and staff parking
ONLY

Do not leave your car unattended in the fire lane. Do
not drop your child off in the middle of the parking
lot or street.

—Kirsten Jasna and Lisa Robles

***ECIA Board
Position Open
Interested?***

Send resumé to
ecommunity@aol.com
or call Bill Donohue
at 466-4248



**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.

Please Slow Down

AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS in Eldorado are dangerous. They lack situational awareness, and one of these drivers will cause a horrific accident. During a period of four months, I have seen several dangerous situations, and none of the offending drivers were kids:

- 1 I was passed on a curve by a dark-colored BMW who nearly hit an oncoming car in the opposite lane.
- 2 A big white American-made car, female driver, came up on my tail and passed me as I slowed for the RR tracks, without seeing what might be in front of me.
- 3 My daughter was driving home in the dark, and was scared by a car behind her flashing its lights.
- 4 An SUV with two 50+-year-old men, laughing away and obviously oblivious, failed to observe the stop sign at the corner of Vista Grande and Monte Alto and was narrowly missed by a car in front of me turning left.
- 5 On more than one occasion, when going north on 285 and turning with the left-turn signal at the light at Vista Grande, oncoming right-lane driver(s) have failed to stop.

I urge you to join with me in lobbying the County for roundabouts to be placed along Vista Grande, Avenida Eldorado, Amistad and Monte Alto, and other locations to slow down traffic. Roundabouts have certainly worked along Richards

Avenue near the community college, slowing traffic to a reasonable speed. In addition, we could ask for speed bumps at other locations. We can accomplish this if we work together. I can be reached at bchimp2@msn.com.

Barbara Mandel

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Vistas* sought feedback on Barbara Mandel's letter from the ECIA Roads Committee, which we offer below as simply another opinion. Several articles in the *Vistas* have addressed driving issues, including April, May, and September 2007, and June 2008. They may be accessed at www.eldoradocommunity.org, via the *Vistas* Newsletter tab.

NOLAN ZISMAN, CHAIR OF THE ECIA ROADS COMMITTEE, REPLIES:

THE COUNTY will not install speed bumps. Their studies show only a very slight reduction in average speeds and they're expensive to install and maintain. As for roundabouts, users of the roads where they exist greatly dislike them. There's also the issue of where to install them. We have four-way stop signs at all the logical places where there might otherwise be roundabouts. The other intersections have traffic volumes too low to justify the expense of roundabouts. I have observed that speeding happens most often during the morning commute and by outside workers who are in Eldorado during the weekdays.

The best way of reducing speeding in Eldorado is to have an ongoing police presence here, and increased taxes to cover these costs.

ERA News

YOUR ERA is pleased to announce two additions to the ERA Board. Noelle Miller, with previous experience in community organizations, will join as Secretary. Mary Ann Kenny, a longtime resident and active on many of Eldorado's boards, will complete our Board. John Whitbeck and Jessica Boinoff will head our newly formed Eldorado Mobility Committee. Help us to welcome these new members at the next ERA Quarterly Meeting, Monday, October 13 at 7 pm in the Community Center Classroom.

For more information about your ERA, its Board or Committee Chairman, go to eldoradoresidents.org.

The National Election Candidates Reception and Forum will be jointly sponsored by the ERA and the Vista Grande Public Library on Tuesday, October 14. The Reception will be at the Library from 5 to 7; the Forum will be at the School Gym from 7 to 9 pm. All the candidates on the November ballot have been invited to attend.

The first TGIF of the fall series will be held in the Community Center Living Room, Friday, October 17, 5 to 7 pm. Come enjoy good fellowship, food and your favorite beverages. Marilyn Farrell is your hostess. All Eldorado residents are invited.

There are now two new horseshoe pitches next to the dog park, and plans are afoot to hold the first annual Horseshoe Tournament. Watch for the announcement. Who will be the Eldorado champion horseshoe pitcher?

The Eldorado Volunteer Observation Patrols, an extension of the Neighborhood Watch Program, will start operations this month. Contact Larry Eccard, 466-3535, to learn more about volunteering.

The ERA, with encouragement of the ECIA, plans to expand its efforts to serve our Community. Let me know how you would like to be involved, and we'll find a place for you.

—Bruce Blossman, ERA President

In Memoriam: Charles Chipman

WE ARE SAD TO REPORT that our beloved guard, Charles Chipman, was killed in a tragic motor vehicle crash in the early morning of August 17, 2008.

He was the most dedicated Security Officer we have had in recent memory, and he loved working with the residents in Eldorado. He greeted everyone he met with a smile that kept everyone who met him at ease. We really miss him.

There will be a memorial service at the

Community Center for Charles on October 12, 2008, in the afternoon. All are welcome to attend. Further details will be known by October 1, so give us a call and we will update you.

A fund has been established for a Memorial Plaque to be placed on the Community Center grounds to honor the fine work he performed.

—Debby Padilla, ECIA Office Manager



ECIA News

ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE BOARD, we hope you had a fun and safe summer. Please remember that school is in session, so drive carefully and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. In addition, there are after-school activities such as soccer at the Community Center, so watch your speed on Monte Alto.

The Eldorado Bus Service has been getting some much needed attention lately. Issues have come up about the per-person charge from the NCRDT and the possible 1/8-cent tax increase for transportation this November. The bus route from Eldorado to town is desperately needed, and we want it to be run in a professional, business-like manner so everyone can benefit. Please go to the Eldorado web page at

www.eldoradocommunity.org and fill out the bus survey.

If the bus is not for you, sign up for the ride share program, also at www.eldoradocommunity.org.

Board Director **Malcolm McFarlane** has stepped down from the ECIA Board. During his brief time on the Board, Malcolm was instrumental in addressing and researching various issues that came up before the Board. We thank Malcolm for his service!

The obvious follow-up to Malcolm's departure is the opening on the ECIA Board. If you or someone you know wants to get involved in your community at a Board level, please contact the ECIA office for more information.

—Tom Miller, ECIA President

Covenant Compliance Highlights

ELDORADO IS A COVENANT-controlled community. The Covenants are a legally binding relationship. They exist "for the express purposes of protecting the natural beauty and environment of the community of Eldorado at Santa Fe, providing an attractive rural setting for residential neighborhoods and home sites and preserving property values."

Space constraints prevent including relevant text from the Covenants and Guidelines here. For detailed information, refer to those documents at www.eldoradocommunity.org/architecture.

RV Storage: Residents are entitled to keep as many as three such vehicles stored outside at any time but with covenant conditions regarding the screening (concealment or obscuring) thereof. See Article II, Section 13 "Storage and Screening of Vehicles and Their Accessories."

Solar Panels: People ask what the Covenants allow regarding active solar panels and wind generators. Both passive and active solar systems are "encouraged," but plans must still be submitted

for approval, and screening of such devices is an important element.

Sheds: Sheds require application and approval, including screening elements. See Article II, Section 2.

Barking and Loose Dogs: Loose or continuously barking dogs are subject to Covenants as well as a Santa Fe County Animal Control ordinance (which may impose fines). Refer to the Covenants, Article II, Sections 11 & 14.

Anonymous Reports, Confidentiality & Verifiability: ECIA keeps all reports of covenant violations confidential. Anonymous reports are not ignored, but they often create their own difficulties. A resident who is the subject of an anonymous report may dispute the allegation ("I don't have a dog," "That didn't happen"), in which case the ECIA cannot verify the accuracy of the report. The person making the allegation gets no satisfaction, the ECIA spends time ineffectively, and resolution is deferred.

—Marchall C. Allen

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Finance: Dan Drobnis
Architecture: Bill Schwent
Conservation: John Parker and E.J. Evangelos
Stable: Mary Ann Caldwell
Election: Ken Robinson
Roads: Nolan Zisman
Information: Carol Leyba
Neighborhood Watch: Larry Eccard & Marilyn Walker
Facilities & Grounds: Fred Raznick

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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

**Annual
Budget Meeting**
Saturday,
November 8, 10 am
Focus: For the general
public to view the
upcoming pending
budget. This is the last
opportunity to have a
say before the budget
is officially approved at
the November 20
Board Meeting



Join MOMS this Halloween.
See info to the right.

**Give us your
PHOTOGRAPHS,
EVENTS,
POEMS
and
ADVERTISEMENTS
for the 2009
Calendar! See
info...**



IN THE COMMUNITY

New Lions Club in Eldorado

The Eldorado Basin Lions Club will be newly chartered in a ceremony held at 6:30 pm on October 17 at Brumby's Bar and Grill in Eldorado. It's not too late to become a charter member! All are welcome to attend this celebration. For more information and to RSVP, call Marcel Legendre at 505-992-2205.

Lions are an international network of men and women who work together to answer the needs that challenge communities around the world. Lions participate in a vast variety of projects, ranging from cleaning up local parks to providing supplies to victims of natural disasters. The Eldorado Basin Lions Club has several projects planned in the coming months that target eye care and youth services.

MOMS Halloween Party

The MOMS Club of Southeast Santa Fe is hosting a Halloween Costume Party and Open House on Monday, October 27, 3:30 to 5:30 pm in the Eldorado Community Center classroom. MOMS Club stands for Mothers Offering Mothers Support, and its purpose is to offer social and community activities for mothers and their children. Our group organizes play dates, field trips, park dates, Mom's Night Out, service projects and much more. If you or your child would enjoy this group, please join us or just drop by to find out more. For more information, email santafemoms@gmail.com.

Waste Recycling Workshop

The Conservation Committee and the New Mexico Environment Department are co-sponsoring a workshop on waste recycling at the Eldorado Community Center on Saturday, October 18 at 9 am. The workshop will include a talk on recycling rules for Santa Fe County residents as well as a hands-on workshop on "Backyard Composting in the Arid Southwest" given by composting guru and Eldorado resident Greg Baker. Recycling and composting are ways to divert household wastes from landfills for beneficial uses. Composting in our area offers special challenges for which Greg has developed simple solutions.

Last Call for Calendar 2009 Materials

Artists and photographers submitting artwork for the 2009 calendar, committee chairpersons with dates to be included on the calendar, and businesses that want to advertise on the calendar pages—the deadline for your submission is October 1, 2008. Email your artwork, information, or ad reservation to Debby Padilla at ECIAdebby@aol.com, or stop by the ECIA Office. Order forms for advertising can be found on our website, www.eldoradocommunity.org.

Moon Phases for October



Save the Date: November Arts Show!

Mark your calendars for the 7th annual Eldorado Arts and Crafts Association Fall show at the El Dorado School. This year it will be held on November 8 & 9, Saturday and Sunday from 10 to 5 each day. Featuring 50 artists and craftspeople, this will be a wonderful opportunity for some early holiday shopping.

Interested in Square Dancing?

Eldorado Depot Dancers square dance every Friday night, 7-9 pm in the Railroad Room. Come enjoy the fun. For more information, contact Leny or Dori, 466-1809.

Eldorado Gas & Oil Team (EGOT!)

The Eldorado Gas & Oil Team is dedicated to the wise and frugal management of our energy resources to meet the needs of Eldorado and the larger community and to preserve our environment now and for future generations. Our intent is to represent the interests and wishes of our community regarding energy issues, and to ensure that our elected representatives understand and act on our behalf, creating and voting on legislation that aligns with our values.

Among other actions, our members have been surveying residents regarding the potential impacts of proposed gas and oil drilling and extraction in our area. EGOT! is also dedicated to promoting the development and use of wind, solar, and other technologies in our community that will reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Please contact dboldt23@gmail.com. We welcome your comments, questions, and involvement.

Poets Sought

We've decided to include short bits of poetry (no longer than 4 lines) on the 2009 Eldorado calendar. Email your poetic words to Carol Leyba at cbsleyba@comcast.net.

Conservationists Needed

The Conservation Committee is seeking additional members. The committee meets monthly. Contact John Parker, 466-7513.

Election Signs

Public election signs are allowed on a lot 14 days prior to a public election and shall be removed within 72 hours after said election.

—Bill Donohue, ECIA General Manager



ASTRONOMY Corner

BECOMING A BETTER OBSERVER.

Your unaided eyes are incredible light sensors: you can see the Milky Way, the dark and light areas on the Moon, comets and many more celestial objects. Next time you look up into the night sky, try to recognize patterns and then draw what you see. Does your drawing look different than the real sky? If so, you need some help—you need an egg. Yes, just take an egg from the refrigerator and draw it against a white background. Do not draw the shape of an egg, but draw the egg in all its detail. Keep track of all your drawings and keep looking up and drawing. Sooner or later you will see much more of the night sky.

— Juan Alvarez
jalva88610@aol.com

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



Mount Rushmore Tour for Seniors

The Adam Senior Center presents a tour of Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills of South Dakota, May 17-23, 2009: 7 days and 6 nights is \$570 per person, double occupancy. This includes 10 meals (6 breakfasts and 4 dinners, gratuities included). For information, call Dolores Brock, 466-3848 or Pat Kuhlhoff, 466-4877.

October 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

OCTOBER SPECIAL EVENTS

Candidate Reception	Tues., October 14, 5-7 pm	Bruce Blossman	VGPL
Candidate Forum	Tues., October 14, 7-9 pm	Bruce Blossman	Gym
ERA TGIF Friday	Fri., October 17, 5-7 pm	Bruce Blossman	LR
Eldorado Lions Club	Fri., October 17, 6:30 pm	Marcel Legendre	992-2205 Brumby's
ERA Quarterly Meeting	Mon., October 6, 7 pm	Bruce Blossman	CR

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Facilities & Grounds	Tues., October 7, 4 pm	Fred Raznick	466-2305	CFR
Conservation Committee	Tues., October 7, 7-9 pm	John Parker	466-7513	LR
Finance Committee	Wed., October 8, 9:30-noon	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Architectural Committee	Wed., October 8, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., October 13, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., October 16, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Information Committee	Tues., October 21, 7-9 pm	Carol Leyba	466-1158	F
Architectural Committee	Wed., October 22, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
Stable Committee	Tues., October 28, 7-9 pm	Bonita Mamp	466-4271	CR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Shakespeare Group	Tues., October 14, 6-8:30 pm	Andy Dobek	466-0223	CFR
Search & Rescue	Thurs., October 9, 6:30-9:30 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR
La Canada Wireless	Mon., October 13 & 27, 7-9	lcwireless.org	Library	
Roadrunners RV Club	Tues., October 21, 6 pm	Beverly Cottingham	466-4655	Fire
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
MOMS Club	Last Mon. 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
EAWS&SD*	Thurs, October 2 & 16, 7-9 pm		466-2411	CR
Lions Club	2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 6:30	Marcel Legendre	992-2205	Brumby's

WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tues., 5:30-6:50 pm			LR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am			CFR/RR
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., 7:15-8:30 pm			LR
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 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
Figure Drawing	Mon., 10 am-noon	Sande Anderson	466-4688	RR
Adult Volleyball	Wed., 6 pm	Scott Gerber	466-9333	CC field
Adult Basketball	Thurs., 5:30-dusk			BB Crt

*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

**Reservations Required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradocommunity.org

In the Music

YOU'RE LATE. You gulp your dinner, snatch up your stand and instrument, and screech down the driveway. As you scoot



PHOTO BY MAGGIE GERBER.

Eldorado Band playing at Flag Day ceremony in June 2008. Sitting, left to right: Barbara Gerber, Dori Smith, Melody Brooks. Standing, left to right: Joel Hopko and Leonard Stovall.

inside the El Dorado School gym, the sound of scales and warm-up exercises greets you. You blow a few practice notes and set up your music.

And then, you exhale. Soon you will be in the music, and the rest of the world can wait outside until you're done.

As the Eldorado Community Band enters its tenth year, this thrill of being in the music continues to thrive. Although we are all busy people, and being in the band is one more commitment, we are well aware of its rewards: Together, we grow. And together, we create beauty.

This year's spring and summer seasons were particularly fruitful for the band. We began by collaborating with the Rio Rancho Symphonic Band, playing well-attended concerts both in Rio Rancho and at St. Francis Auditorium. Then we put on a soiree concert in late May at St. John's United Methodist Church, playing not as one large group but as individuals in smaller ensembles. Summertime was

about community service, playing downtown for Flag Day and then in Eldorado for Independence Day and the Ice Cream Social.

This is quite an achievement, considering our humble beginnings. Nine years ago, many of us were picking up our instruments for the first time in decades. We were, frankly, terrible, but the patient tutelage of our early conductors—**Lee Boyd Montgomery, Gene Shroyer, and John Emory**—pulled us out of our musical dark ages and into the modern era. Our current conductor and music director, **Kurt Carr**, continues to challenge us, often amazing us with how good we can sound.

The Eldorado Community Band can be a perfect fit for many types of players. For some it is a great place to get back into music after years of inactivity. For others who might play music alone or improvisationally, the band provides a balance for becoming a better reader and ensemble player. Still other accomplished musicians are glad to find a venue in which to learn a second instrument. Regardless of one's motivation or level of ability, each of us gets to experience the joy of being in the music.

New members are welcome to join us at rehearsals on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8:30 pm in the auxiliary gym at El Dorado Community School. Our holiday concert will be December 13 at 2 pm at St. John's United Methodist Church (1200 Old Pecos Trail, at Cordova Road). To learn more, go to www.eldoradoband.org, or call 466-8412.

—Barbara Gerber

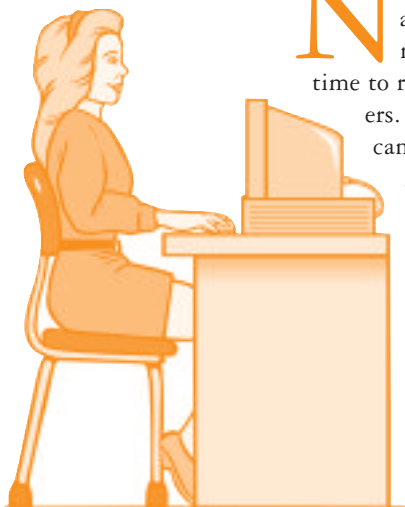
Computers and Your Health

NOW THAT FALL IS IN FULL SWING and students are back in school (and the rest of us are still at work), it is a good time to revisit how we interact with our computers. As much as we love them, computers can create or worsen physical problems. Common computer-related injuries include carpal tunnel syndrome, elbow tendonitis, neck and shoulder pain, headaches, and postural syndrome, a disorder with back and neck pain. All these maladies can be avoided with just a few precautions. First, take a look at your workstation setup. Your monitor should be at eye level so that your neck is in a neutral position and your muscles can function optimally without strain.

Your keyboard should be at elbow height, and you should have a place to rest your wrists while typing. This keeps your wrist and elbow in a comfortable, neutral position and minimizes stress. Your chair should be set up so that your back is well supported and your feet can rest flat on the floor, with your hips at knee level or just slightly above. This keeps your back in an optimal position so your back muscles are supported.

Pay attention to how much time you spend on the computer. Do not work longer than 45 minutes without a 5-minute break to get up, reverse your position and do some stretches. If you notice your back or neck getting tired, this is a cue that it is time for a break. Remember, preventing a problem is a whole lot easier than fixing one.

—The staff at Eldorado Physical Therapy



Western Kingbird (WK)

THIS COMMONLY SEEN fly catcher is a summer bird in Eldorado. In May and June of 2008, several residents watched a pair building a nest about 30 feet high in the center crook of the large cottonwood tree near the ECIA building.

The WK is 8.75 inches long with a wingspan of 15.5 inches. Its head is gray, its back is gray with tinges of yellow, and its tail is a slightly darker gray. A black line runs from eye to bill. Cheeks are white fading into gray. The belly is a bright sulfur yellow. In flight, the yellow belly is seen to extend on underwing axillaries (wing feathers close to the body and at the front of the wing). Females are slightly duller than males. These (and most) kingbirds have rictal bristles—stiff bristles pointing forward where the bill meets the head. Studies so far have not been able to discover the purpose of these bristles!

The WF prefers open areas with large trees. They often sit high on electrical lines or denuded branches, waiting for insects, which they “hawk” on the wing, using their broad, flat hooked bills. Some fruit

is also part of the diet. The song is a simple series of notes or alarm whistles. From lab studies, the song seems to be innate and is not learned. The Cassin’s kingbird is less common, but can be seen here. It is similar but has very little white on its breast and wings, and its back is browner.

Pairs are (mostly) seasonally monogamous. Males perform frenetic courtship flights. The female lays and broods three or four eggs which hatch asynchronously in 18 or 19 days. The helpless young grow to fledge in 16 or 17 days. Parents stay with their young for another week or two (presumably the babies must develop the skill to catch insects on the fly).

WKs migrate during the night and spend winters in southern Mexico and western Central America.



—Pam Henline

Dirt Roads 101

(This is the first of a series of “At the Crossroads” articles dealing with the nature of our roads in Eldorado and what we as residents and users of our roads can do to and for them.)

I GET THE MOST COMPLAINTS/REPORTS, by far, about the washboard surface on our roads. Recently I was somewhat flabbergasted when I received a call requesting grading on Gavilan Road—which only last year received new base course. How did the road degrade so quickly? I did a little research and found the following information from *Science News*, Aug. 18, 2007, by J. Rehmeier:

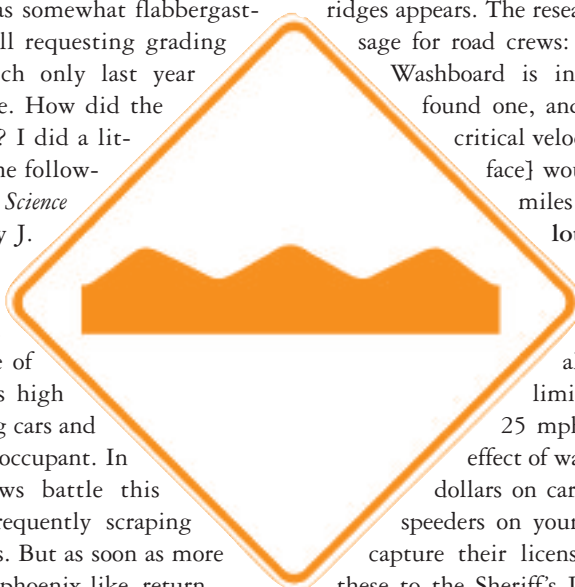
“Driving on a dirt road can rattle the bones. Every foot or so, a ridge of dirt up to several inches high lies in wait to jolt passing cars and trucks and their hapless occupant. In many places, road crews battle this ‘washboard’ effect by frequently scraping the roads with bulldozers. But as soon as more vehicles pass, the ridges, phoenix-like, return. . . . Now, a team of physicists has explained why a washboard forms. . . . Any bed of dirt or sand, even a very smooth one, has minuscule irregularities that slight-

ly jog a rolling wheel. Each time the wheel hits a bump, . . . it pushes the dirt forward a bit, enlarging the irregularity. Then, as the wheel passes over the top of the bump, the force of its descent pushes dirt forward into the next bump. Repeat these actions a hundred or more times and the familiar pattern of ridges appears. The research has a dispiriting message for road crews: Scrape often, or give up.

Washboard is inevitable. The researchers found one, and only one, solution: The critical velocity below which [the surface] would remain flat is about 5 miles per hour. **Slow down—a lot.**”

While I’m not advocating going 5 miles per hour, I believe that if we all stay within the speed limit on dirt roads (generally 25 mph), we can slow down the effect of washboarding and save a few dollars on car repair as well. If you see speeders on your dirt roads, please try to capture their license numbers. If we report these to the Sheriff’s Department, perhaps they can issue warnings and get the worst offenders to slow down.

—Nolan Zisman



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Ice Cream Social



The Trillium Marimba Ensemble entertains the crowd at the recent Vista Grande Library Ice Cream Social and Silent Auction. The annual event is a major fundraiser for the Library, which depends on the community to provide almost all of its operating revenue. *See all the pictures taken of this event by Dan Drobnis at the Eldorado website: www.eldoradocommunity.com.*