

# ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME IX, ISSUE 11

Nov 2007

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Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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## Cooperation in an Emergency is Vital

**CHIEF GUY MONROE**, the leader of one of New Mexico's finest fire and rescue services, the 40-member volunteer department of Eldorado, has reason to be concerned. During a major emergency such as our New Year's Eve blizzard of 2006, he is the officially designated "Incident Commander" in charge of the emergency response.

There are eight to nine thousand people living in the area served by the El Dorado Fire and Rescue Service (EFRS) that extends on both sides of State Route 285 from its intersection with Interstate 25 south to the village of Lamy. The problem, says Chief Monroe, is that the population living in our area of responsibility is easily isolated. "Just look at a map of the area," he says. "If the intersection of Avenida Amistad and Highway 285 is not passable for whatever reason and Route 285 is blocked before it intersects with State Route 41 that leads to the village of Galisteo, only vehicles capable of cross-country travel could get here to help us, and our population could not easily evacuate."

The heightened awareness of the vulnerability of our communities to the direct or indirect effects of terrorism has prompted governments at all levels in the United States to review their all-hazard emergency plans and complement those plans with regular training. Santa Fe County Director of Emergency Services **Martin Vigil** has encouraged all larger population districts in his area of responsibility to develop emergency plans that would, on approval, become annexes to the County Emergency Response Plan. The village of Edgewood in the southeastern portion of Santa Fe County recently had its emergency plan made official when it became part of the county's plan.

On October 15, Chief Monroe convened a meeting at his department's main station. Its purpose was, in the Chief's words, "to bring the together the stakeholders—those organizations in our area with human and material resources that may be needed when a catastrophic emergency hits here again."

One problem that illustrates the need for coordination and cooperation by all agencies in this

community was the water crisis that struck Eldorado in June 2006: Water company workers digging in an attempt to locate crucial shut-off valves needed a specialized pump to clear water from their work area. The company sent to Albuquerque for the pump, but, as the Chief said, "Our Station #1, two blocks away from the scene had such a pump, but water company officials didn't ask for it...because they didn't know it was there."

Stakeholders attending the October 15 planning meeting, in addition to the EFRS, included the ECIA, the ERA, the Senior Center, the EAWSD, El Dorado Elementary School, the Library, La Canada Wireless Association, the local amateur radio coordinator, the 285 Coalition, directors of the Eldorado Neighborhood Watch and representatives of the commercial establishments on the 285 corridor.

Chief Monroe began the meeting with a mission statement. "The Fire Department will lead the emergency response as we always do," he said, "but what the county is encouraging all local agencies and groups to do is to coordinate *before* an emergency so that they can cooperate fully and effectively after it happens.

"We know we are extremely vulnerable here," said Chief Monroe to those at the meeting, "but we can and we must act quickly to do several things:"

- ▼ Develop and publish a plan that will facilitate a stakeholder "Mutual Aid" system. In such a system, the human and material resources of each stakeholder are known by all other stakeholders and it is understood that in an emergency they will aid each other with those resources if they are not in use or not likely to be in use.
- ▼ Designate a location and develop an "Area Mutual Aid Coordination Center" for Eldorado.
- ▼ The Eldorado Neighborhood Watch should work in the pre-emergency phase to improve individual and family readiness for emergencies.

"We've met and that is a major accomplishment," said Chief Monroe. "We've got a lot more to do, but I am convinced that we can do it. The safety of the Eldorado area depends on our success."

—Frank Schober

**ECIA Board  
Work Study  
Meeting,  
Community  
Center, Mon.,  
Nov 12, 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](mailto: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.

# Dog Eat Dog No Longer

**T**HE ELDORADO COMMITTEE that hashed out a dog ownership policy for the community discovered that there can be compromise in a dog-eat-dog world.

The problem was trying to get everyone to agree that dogs must be leashed or at least kept under voice control in public areas of the 4,000 acres of Eldorado plus the additional 4,000 acres of preserve across Route 285.

"We gradually built a consensus," said **Pamela Christie**, a member of the Ad Hoc Dog Committee of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association (ECIA) that worked out the "Responsible Dog Ownership Policy." Pamela, who has lived in Eldorado for 23 years, owns a Vizsla, a Hungarian breed, one of an estimated 3,000 dogs in the community.

The panel of at least 15 members struggled for three months to adopt a policy that would satisfy all dog owners following a stormy meeting in January of about 70 people who were hotly divided on whether dogs should be leashed.

That January session was called because "we had this ever-increasing dog problem in the community—dog bites, walkers who were afraid of dogs," said **Richard Anderson**, a member of the ECIA Board, co-chair of the ad hoc committee and the owner of two Scotties and a Weimaraner.

The two extremes at the meeting were highlighted on one side by a man who proffered his wrists as if handcuffed and said he may as well be arrested

because there was no way he was going to leash his dog. On the other was a woman who related how a friend was mauled by a dog, though the incident did not occur in Eldorado.

That's when the Board decided to form a committee to draw up a dog policy. Its foundation is the Santa Fe County dog control ordinance.

But the ordinance "fell flat when it came to voice control," said **Su Ann Armstrong**, committee co-chair and owner of an Akita, a Japanese breed. "So we made it more rigorous."

The breakthrough came with a draft policy to allow dogs to roam free in greenbelts and the preserve if the dog immediately obeys voice commands.

"It just made sense to let them off the leash if they were under control," Pamela said.

"Virtually everybody [on the committee] said they could support it," Su Ann said. "The crux of the new rule is that a dog cannot approach another person without that person's permission."

—Richard C. Gross



## It's Not My Dog

**A**S YOUR COVENANT REPRESENTATIVE, my directive is to assist in the promotion and implementation of our policies. In the course of doing this work I have found that a number of dog owners do not believe their dog causes any disturbance. "My dog is so friendly and loveable." I see this in my own attitude with my dog, but at times even my dog will not take kindly to another dog or person while I am out for a walk. And when this happens I am very glad I have the dog on a leash and under my control.

Most people's perception is that their dog will treat others the same way the dog treats his/her owner. This is frequently not the case (probably for different reasons). Most dogs want to be the alpha dog, but when they become fearful, dogs will become aggressive. This aggression can cause great concern to the person on the other end of this behavior. Some

of our neighbors are deathly afraid of dogs.

So what does my office do when we receive complaints concerning aggressive dogs? Whether they are with the owner or out roaming, I ask the normal questions: Who, what, when, where and for how long. Sometimes people who call in prefer to remain anonymous, which is okay. Either way we follow up on the issue. What we do first is call the dog's owner (if possible) and review the issue with them. This is when a number of owners say; "It's not my dog." If it is a barking complaint, the owner claims that it might be the neighbor next door or across the greenbelt, which could very well be true. As we all know if one dog starts to bark and others follow. I ask the dog owners to try to be sensitive to their neighbors and not allow their dog(s) to bark continuously. This becomes a nuisance. We consider a nuisance a violation of the Covenant.

## From the President's Desk

**T**HE ELDORADO COMMUNITY has something special. It is the envy of other communities and from what I hear, our community is an important component in the calculation of desirability by homebuyers. We have many things that make us special: the night sky, the large lots, the greenbelts, the preserve, the hike/bike paths and the stables. But the one thing that sets us apart is our Community Center complex.

The complex is getting better and better. From early spring through late summer, there has been one project after another begun and completed. If you haven't been to the center in awhile, you should inspect the work before the snow falls.

The dog park has been a popular addition. Dogs and their owners can be seen romping and playing from sunrise to sunset. Dog owners have taken ownership of the park and do a good job of keeping it clean and safe for all.

Residents who are basketball enthusiasts made a

case for a regulation size basketball court at the Community Center. The board approved the construction of the court in April and the court was erected in no time. The basketball court is located beyond the playground and the tennis courts. If a basketball court can be beautiful, then Eldorado has a beautiful court. All are welcome to check it out. Maybe soon we can have basketball tournaments with all of the fun things that go with it.

Finally, the biggest, most expensive improvement was the construction of a new patio at the back of the Community Center. It is a beautiful bricked area, with short walls for sitting. The area around the trees will ensure that the trees get enough water to prosper, unlike in the old patio. There will be a cistern to capture water from the roof of the center that can be used for watering the trees and the soon-to-be planted shrubbery. (The pipes and cistern are being installed as I write this.) There are two shade ramadas that give the patio depth and focus. The patio will be a wonderful place for weddings, reunions and any festivities that residents want to hold outdoors. Phase 3 of the plan is to extend the improvements to the tennis courts and the basketball court. This phase will be completed in a year or two.

There is more to be done, especially inside the center. Stay tuned for information on more improvements that will certainly help Eldorado keep its reputation of being a desirable place to live and recreate.

—Jeanne Klein  
ECIA President

Nearly completed patio renovations  
are much prettier and safer.

PHOTO BY HOPE KIAH

### IT'S NOT MY DOG CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

If the person does not respond, or we keep getting complaints, I then send them a letter informing them that they are in violation of the Covenant and they need to develop a plan to come into compliance concerning this nuisance. The goal is to come up with a strategy to ensure and maintain the quality of life we all want in Eldorado.

If we do not get a response, we write a second letter, again informing the resident of the issue and that we will take legal action (which we prefer not to do). Most of our residents want to be good neighbors. Some solutions include basic dog training, use of a bark collar (citronella) and even insulating one's garage to

ensure the dogs do not disturb the neighbors.

After the third letter, we have the attorney for Eldorado write a letter requesting that the dog owner either respond to the ECIA or we will move the issue to arbitration. As most of you know, we have an arbitration process in our Covenant which we all have agreed to at the time we purchased our homes.

Our goal is to preserve and maintain the quality of life here in Eldorado for our residents to enjoy. We want to maintain the natural beauty of our community and preserve our property values.

—Bert Lysen  
CCR

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Stable: Tommie Brasel and  
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Election: Pat Lavengood  
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Information: Ken McPherson  
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### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Vista Grande Library  
466-READ  
Security  
204-2945  
Fire and Rescue  
466-1204  
Animal Control  
992-1621





Joretha Hall



Drumright



Thomas Maes



Beyeler



Commerford



Nina Morrow

## IN THE COMMUNITY

### Wanted: a Few Good Drivers

Meals on Wheels is looking for a few good drivers who could share approximately four hours twice a month. We need drivers who could deliver meals to those less fortunate than we in the Eldorado area, those who are homebound or shut in. This is a rewarding venture, and those who are visited greatly appreciate seeing and talking to an outsider.

If you are interested and can share about four hours twice a month, call **Pat Lavengood** at 466-9765.

### For Art's Sake

The Eldorado Arts & Crafts Association will sponsor a Fall Show on November 10 and 11, Saturday and Sunday, from 10 am to 5 pm each day. It will be held at The El Dorado Elementary School, located at the corner of Avenida Vista Grande and Avenida Torreon in Eldorado.

The show features 50 Eldorado artists—all under one roof. The fine art and craft show includes jewelry, pottery, fiber arts, tin work, photography, painting, sculpture, wearable art and much more. Enjoy live classical guitar and refreshments as you get a jump on your holiday shopping or add to your own collection. Admission is free and there is ample parking, including handicap access. For a preview of artists participating in this year's Fall Show go to <http://www.eldoradoarts.org/>.

Every artist will donate a portion of their proceeds to El Dorado Elementary School and El Dorado Fire and Rescue.

### County to Open Satellite Office Here

Santa Fe County is in the process of opening a new satellite office in Eldorado. "This is the second of at least three satellite offices we are planning" said **Roman Abeyta**, Santa Fe County Manager. "Having a presence in Eldorado as well as the new office in Pojoaque and the planned office in the Stanley/Edgewood area is part of an overall commitment to better customer service."

The Eldorado office will be open three days a week with the times and hours to be announced in the near future. County staff will provide general constituent liaison services—answering general questions, helping solve resident problems, issuing land fill permits, and voter registration.

### Cancellation

The Vista Grande Public Library Program originally scheduled for November 15 has been canceled.

### Bend Me, Shape Me

Since June, Chair Yoga has been offered at the Adam Senior Center twice per week. We've had

## Moon Phases for Nov



a great turn out and those joining the class have seen some big improvements in mobility, flexibility, balance, strength, breathing and overall improved knowledge about how the body and mind work.

As we move into fall and winter, we'll continue to offer these Chair Yoga classes twice a week: Mondays from 10:30 to 11:30 am at a fee of \$3.00 and Fridays from 1:30 to 2:30 pm at no cost.

Tai Chi for seniors will be held on Wednesdays from 10:30 to 11:30 am at no cost. You are welcome to come and watch to see if Yoga and/or Tai Chi would be good for you. Classes are open to seniors 60 and older. For more information, call 466-3256. The Senior Center is located at 16 Ave. Torreon, next to the Vista Grande Public Library.

### Figure Drawing Open Studio

Every Monday morning at 10 am a group of artists and would-be artists meet for figure drawing open studio at the Eldorado Community Center's Railroad Station, the building next to the offices. A professional model does both short and long poses for two hours. The cost, usually between six and nine dollars, depends on the number of attendees. Everyone, regardless of experience, is invited to draw with this very non-judgmental group. Bring your own materials and drawing board and join in this great way of starting the week.

### A Good Cause

The Eldorado Roadrunners Chapter of the Good Sam's RV Club would like to thank everyone who supported our effort to raise money for Dogs for the Deaf at the ERA Flea Market in September by purchasing raffle tickets for a bicycle, and for your generosity through donations. For more information on Dogs for the Deaf, please go to [www.dogsforthedeaf.org](http://www.dogsforthedeaf.org). Congratulations to the lucky winner **Ja Arezzi** who will enjoy riding the bicycle to The Agora where he purchased the winning ticket.

We invite all RV owners to visit our website ([www.eldadorovclub.com](http://www.eldadorovclub.com)) to learn about the fun of membership in our chapter. For more information about our chapter, contact **Brad and Beverly Cottingham** at 466-4655.



## ASTRONOMY Corner

### HOW RED IS MARS?

Two-thirds of Mars are covered with a reddish, rust-brown dust, sand and rocks. This material seems to contain a mineral called limonite which is found in Earth's deserts. Winds blowing at 125 mph (200 kph) cover Mars with dust, giving it the name "the red planet." Mars isn't exactly blood-red, but rusty red, as the color comes from the high proportion of iron in the planet's rocks—twice as much as on Earth.

### November Sky:

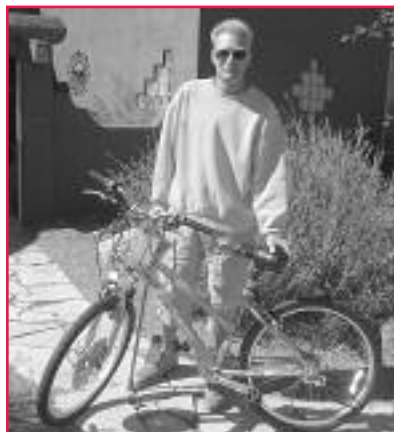
**Mercury**, visible low in the east-southeast 90 minutes ahead of the Sun; **Venus**, the Morning Star; **Jupiter**, the evening star low in the southwest at dusk; **Mars**, in Gemini, reaches magnitude -1 (brighter) and **Saturn**, in Leo. The **Leonid meteor shower** peaks on November 18 before sunrise.

The Autumn equinox begins on September 23 at 3:50 am MDT.

*Next Time: Lighthouse in the sky.*

—Juan Alvarez  
Jalva88610@aol.com

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



# November Events

## Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

Email [info@eldoradocommunity.org](mailto: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**

## NOVEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS

2007 Budget available beginning Nov. 1 at ECIA offices for review

Finance Committee Hearing Sat., Nov. 3, 10 am

RR

ECIA offices closed Nov. 22 and Nov. 23

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Finance Committee	Sat., Nov. 3, 11 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	RR
Neighborhood Watch	Mon., Nov. 5, 7-9 pm	Marilyn Walker	466-2553	CFR
EAWS&SD*	Tues., Nov. 6, 6-10 pm		466-2411	CR
285 Coalition	Wed., Nov. 7, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock	466-1598	CFR
Architectural Committee	Wed., Nov. 7, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., Nov. 12, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., Nov. 15, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Information Committee	Mon., Nov. 19, 7-8 pm	Ken McPherson	310-1120	F
EAWS&SD*	Tues., Nov. 20, 7-9 pm		466-2411	CR
Stable Committee	Tues., Nov. 20, 7-9 pm	Tommie Brasel		LR
Stable Committee	Tues., Nov. 27, 7-9 pm	Tommie Brasel		LR
Architectural Committee	Wed., Nov. 28, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Book Club	Sat., Nov. 10, 9-10:30 am	Joan Lamarque	466-6000	
ERA Coffee Social	Tues., Nov. 6, 10-11 am	Bruce Blossman		F
Library Book Group	3rd Mon., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	VGPL
Search & Rescue	Thurs., Nov. 8, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR
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
La Canada Wireless	Mon., Nov. 12, 7-9	lcwireless.org		Library
MOMS Club	Last Fri. of month	Mandie Rippy	795-4086	
Shakespeare Group	Tues., Nov. 20, 2-4 pm	Mary Denison	466-6657	CFR
Bird Walk	1st Sat., 8:30 am	Ron Duffy	466-6398	
Conserv. Comm. Hike	3rd Sat. of month	Eleanor Gossen	466-1949	
League of Woman Voters	Sat., Nov. 17, 9:30-noon			

## WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tues., 5:30-6:50 pm			LR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am			RR
AA	Thurs., 6-7 pm			LR
AA	Fri., 6-7 pm			CFR
AA	Sat., 10:45-11:45 am			CFR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm			CFR
Al-Anon	Thurs., 7:15-8:15 pm			LR
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wed., 7-9 pm	Paul Tuck	466-4815	RR
Men's Bridge	Tues., 6-9 pm			F
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-4:30 pm			CR, LR
Bridge	2nd & 4th Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Pat Lavengood	466-9765	CR, LR
Bridge	Wed., 9-noon	Nancy Rost	466-2832	LR
Eldo Business Dev Group	Thurs., 8-9:15 am	Arielle Verwey	570-0677	CFR
Community Band	Thurs., 6-8 pm	Joel Hopko	466-8412	
Fire & Rescue Training	Wed., 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Fire & Rescue Work Duty	Sat., Call for time	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Senior Lunch**	Wed., 12-1 pm	Senior Center	466-1039	
Knitting Club	Tues., 10 am-noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	LR
Figure Drawing	Mon., 10 am-noon	Neil O'Brien	577-2043	RR
Adult Basketball	Sun., 10-noon	Eddie Marshall	660-2172	Court
Adult Volleyball	Wed., 7-9 pm	Arlene Mayer		

\*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

\*\*Reservations Required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.eldoradocommunity.org](http://www.eldoradocommunity.org)

## Happy When Busy

DiAna enjoys being a part of the community and the ECIA team.



PHOTO BY RICHARD ANDERSON

**H**AVE YOU NOTICED that warm and friendly face framed so nicely in the window of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association (ECIA) offices as you walk through the Community Center? Slow down next time you are visiting and introduce yourself to **DiAna Gutierrez**, our newest team member on the ECIA staff.

DiAna Gutierrez is an organizer and loves bringing order to people, places and things. She brings her helpful nature, great sense of humor and years of experience working for the New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department to the ECIA by assisting the staff with the daily operations. She works closely with **Bert Lysen** on keeping compliance issues moving forward throughout Eldorado and on the ECIA's efforts to streamline and expedite this process.

DiAna and her husband **Joseph** are both from the area and have lived in Eldorado since 1983. They have two daughters, **Emila**, who just graduated from the University of New Mexico with a double degree

in Political Science and Spanish, and **Julia**, who just graduated from high school. They also enjoy their dogs, TooShort and Bela.

Joseph is the Community Services Department Director with the Board of County Commissioners and has been instrumental in planning, building and maintaining our library and new Senior Center. DiAna retired from the State last June and thought it would be great to be able to work in the Eldorado community.

"This is such a plum of a job, getting to work so close to home with great folks, and I so enjoy having the time to be more involved in many groups out here."

DiAna does enjoy her involvement with groups here in Eldorado and has become a block captain with Neighborhood Watch. She also has been very active as a literacy volunteer with the Community College and loves to read—everything.

"Eldorado is really a great place to live. I have experienced this even more since the girls have moved away and I now work five minutes from home. I have become involved with some many groups and rewarding activities, on top of Eldorado just being such a wonderful place to start with."

—Richard Anderson

## Water for 100 Years

**T**HE ELDORADO AREA WATER and Sanitation District (EAWSD) has posted to its web page a recent study regarding water availability for the next 100 years. Is It Possible: a qualified "Yes."

The study was performed under contract to the EAWSD Board by Glorietta Geoscience, Inc. The Executive Summary is itself summarized by the EAWSD on their web site: <http://www.eldoradowaterdistrict.com/>.

An even briefer summary follows:

Can the EAWSD meet the current water demand of about 600 afy (acre-feet per year) using only existing wells for the next 100 years?

Short answer: "No." An acre-foot of water covers one acre to a depth of one foot, and equals about 326,000 gallons. As wells age and draw down water in their immediate area, production will decline below demand within 10-20 years or less.

Is there enough untapped water underground to supply current demand of 600 afy for the next 100 years? Short answer: "Yes." Six new properly located wells will provide for current demand, with a 200 gallon per minute (gpm) reserve for contingencies,

and allow better management of existing wells.

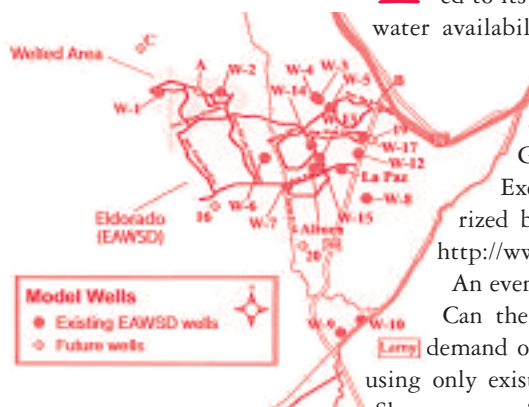
Could a hypothetical increased demand to 1,160 afy over the next 100 years be met? Short answer: "Probably Not." At least 19 new wells would be required, most over the next 15 years—likely an impractical goal because of cost and close spacing of so many wells.

One newly drilled well, known as Well 17, is located just west of Highway 285 and just north of Avenida Vista Grande. Tests indicate a routine delivery of about 115 gpm—perhaps 25% of present total demand. A contract for connection to the delivery infrastructure was recently authorized by the EAWSD Board.

Another recent EAWSD activity is the completion of a leak detection survey of about 120 miles of service lines, which has reduced unbilled water usage to under 10% of what is pumped—about as good as a water utility can expect.

Another recent report provides a model of the storage and distribution system and identifies about one-half million dollars of needed line upgrades. About \$300,000 in state grants are available to help defray these costs.

—Dan Drobnis





## Welcomed Color in Winter

### THINK OF FALL AS THE TIME OF LBBs

(little brown birds). Many of the small migrating birds are in their fall/winter dull plumage, making them hard to identify quickly. The Lesser Goldfinch (LG) is somewhat easier to pick out than a LBB. The LG is a tiny, stocky member of the finch family, four and a half inches long, with a wingspan of eight inches. They are found in the southwestern U.S. with varying hues. The New Mexico (NM) birds are pale compared to the adult male in Texas, but you might spot a very bright yellow male here. Males have a greenish gray back, pale wingbars, a pale yellow breast and stomach, some pale gray on the head and a short, dark gray bill. Females are duller. In flight, males may show a white patch on the wing when seen from above or below.

I often see them in small groups in the fall, making short bounding flights from one side of the road to the other. They are fun to watch along the roadside, where they acrobatically hang upside down and sideways on our Common Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* L.), pecking seeds from the flower. They are in NM during the summer, migrating to Central America and the northern edge of South America. Some birds may stay in southern NM during winter months. During the winter they may join flocks of up to 400 birds, which include Pine Siskins and American Goldfinches.

LG build a small cuplike nest in a tree and the female lays four to six eggs. The female incubates them for 10 to 12 days, and the atrical young (who



appear almost naked with a little down and their eyes closed) fledge in approximately 11 to 17 days. Females feed the young the first four or five days. Then both male and female feed the young a regurgitant of milky seed pulp. Adult diet consists of seeds, forbs, grasses, floral buds and berries. The male courts with spread wings and tail, flapping to the female, and may offer seed to the female.

A more spectacular version of the same bird we see resides south of Mexico City, where the males have black heads and backs and bright yellow throats and stomachs.

—Pam Henline

## At the Crossroads

**KUDOS TO THE COUNTY:** The Road Committee completed its periodic inspection of our roads during the first part of September. In general, roads were found to be in better condition than at any other time this year. Thanks to the county for getting most of last winter's "mess" put back in order.

**Road Damage Caused by Property Owners:** During various road inspections, situations were found where water running off private property is damaging the roadways. In some cases, the water is running into the center of the roadway and then down the roadway to the bottom of its hill. In other cases, water is running into the ball of a cul-de-sac causing deep ruts and making it difficult for our many service vehicles to turn around, especially after heavy rains or snow melts. This issue was recently discussed with the County Public Works. They

advise that any property owner altering the terrain within their property, i.e., grading, graveling or paving their driveways are required to obtain a permit from the County Land Use Department. This may require the installation of culverts under the driveway or cutting runoff channels so water running off the property is directed to a bar ditch, not onto the roadway. Not only are property owners required to obtain these permits, construction and utility companies have similar requirements. The Road Committee, during its inspections, will begin to document instances where it appears that water is running off private property onto the roadway and causing damage due to lack of a culvert or other drainage measures, and will report these to the county for follow-up action.

—Nolan Zisman,  
Chair, Road Committee



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

## *Fire Station Feast*



Photo by Hope Kiah



Photo by Hope Kiah

**Bill Hearne and Smokey the Bear were two popular acts at the recent Eldorado Fire & Rescue BBQ.**