

ELDORADO VISTAS

Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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Dec. 2003

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No Increase in Annual Assessment for 2 Years

It is once again time for the ECIA Board of Directors to consider and approve our community's operating budget for the fiscal year 2004. I would like to take this time to publicly express my sincere appreciation to the finance committee, the ECIA Board and certainly **Bob Pritchard** and his staff who have all worked tirelessly on this somewhat arduous task. Many hours of work as well as numerous meetings, both public and working, have gone into the final draft you will see. It has been decided that once again there will be no increase in your annual \$240.00 assessment for the next **two years**. I feel that it is nothing short of a small miracle that we are able to run this association, as well as offer so many amenities, for such a reasonable assessment. There are many homeowners' associations throughout Santa Fe that charge much higher fees with only a fraction of the amenities we have. Please take the time to enjoy all that we have to offer and to notice the changes and new additions to our amenities, such as the newest hike/bike trail and last year's renovations to the pool area. The board will still be considering several applications for more capital projects like these, and has already approved an allotment to complete the hike/bike trail at Ave. Casa Del Oro. Projects like these help raise the quality of life we enjoy here in Eldorado as well as raise YOUR property values as we continue to become a more desirable place to live. It is your community, and your continued interest in how we handle the budget and the projects planned for the future is very important. We have a solid plan that should keep us strong for years to come, as well as let us continue to improve what is arguably the best place to live in New Mexico.

—Terence Schwind



***ECIA Board
Work Study
Meeting,
Community
Center, Mon.,
Dec. 15, 7 pm***



Share your comments with us!

For policy and
deadline, see
below

Editorial Policy

Vistas invites opinions, ideas, stories, photos, and art from the community at large. Please include contact numbers for fact checking purposes. The newsletter will not publish unsigned letters or material deemed inflammatory. Material will be printed at the discretion of the editors. Letters over 150 words will be edited for fit. Community announcements are welcome; accompanying photos are welcome, too.

Deadline: Newsletter deadline is the 3rd day of each month. Submissions can be dropped off or mailed to the ECIA office or emailed to info@eldoradocommunity.org. Please include "Attn: *Vistas*" in your message.

Mission Statement

The mission of *Vistas*, the monthly newsletter of the ECIA, is to inform the Eldorado community about issues before the ECIA Board and the membership at large. By so doing, the publication seeks to foster increased neighborhood pride and community participation in the decision making process.

No Motorized Vehicles

I think it is time to remind people again that motorized vehicles are not allowed on our greenbelts, walking trails and rail trail. Yesterday I encountered 3 ATVs, 2 motorcycles and 1 pickup truck on the rail trail – most of these driven by minors. More signs and enforcement would be welcome, but obviously parents should be taking more responsibility for their kids' behavior.

—Kevin Doyle

Thanks to Life Savers

How do you say "Thank you!"—not once but twice in a month—for the Eldorado Fire Department saving my life? I had pneumonia but did not know it, and simply couldn't breathe. Two Sundays running they came, put on the mask, and got me to the hospital on time. Their caring, understanding, talking to me to calm me, make me proud to belong to the Eldorado community and have this marvelous fire department team available. They also cared for my husband Joseph before he died. I am donating his painting, called "Circle of Life," to the fire department with my heartfelt thanks. The painting depicts what they do—keep life going—and serving our community so well.

—Ann L. Yates

Screening Needs Definition

I have lived in this community since 1996 and I am completely opposed to having the beauty of the terrain we all enjoy disfigured by unscreened Recreational Vehicles. The covenants state that they shall be "screened". The dictionary definition of "screen" is to "obscure from view." Well this is certainly not the case with many thoughtless RV owners on or near my street.

Views are important here. People buy their homes and more importantly enjoy them because of the views we all enjoy. We have covenants that decree that our homes have to match the "Santa Fe Style," to be low to the ground, blend with the terrain in both form and color. What good does it do to have big white RVs that do all possible to wreck this effort?

I was at the last board meeting and heard a lot of both nonsense and threats to the board concerning RVs. The fact is that the board has been assured by its legal counsel that they have not

We Don't Need RV Guidelines

I am adamantly opposed to your proposed RV "guidelines" and urge you to cease your attempt to implement them. The existing covenants already contain guidelines, which were written to prevent just such changes by individual board members in the future and duly approved by the community. Writing these is a thinly disguised attempt to change them without a vote of all property owners, clearly a violation of the covenants, which will result in a loss when the ECIA is sued by the RV owners, supported by the 1,000,000 member Good Sam's Club. Certainly, ECIA funds can be better spent than in pointless legal battles. This does not even speak to the fact that we are already grandfathered in with the existing covenants, preventing any changes.

There is no groundswell of resentment for RVs in this community. This is only due to the dislike of RVs by one or more board members. It does not represent the wishes of the community that you are elected to serve. On my street 5 out of 13 residences have RVs, with 1 additional former owner. There is no resentment here; why should you act as if there is any?

Often statements are included in the *Vistas* about the beauty and value of our community. The sad truth is that many people outside the community would never consider living here because of its reputation.

—Bob Wood

only the right but also the obligation to make the covenants clear by their development and publication of guidelines. One of the complainants suggested that the board-hired covenants Compliance Officer ought to simply enforce the covenant on screening as it is—that that is enough. Sadly that isn't true. The experience of two successive compliance officers has been that without a guideline on what it means to screen, people make up their own and we have eyesores that none of us should be required to put up with.

Several months ago, *Vistas* published the results of an Eldorado community survey on RVs. The results? One third wanted them banished from the community. One third wants something done about those RV owners who in no way try to screen them and a third want what we have now—no enforcement of the covenant. Sounds like a majority to me.

—Paul Williams

From the ECIA Code Enforcement Officer

ARCHITECTURAL APPROVAL AND SETBACKS

Because this is a *covenant-controlled community association*, there are protective covenants and building restrictions. The developers of our association had a vision for this community. Their goal was to assure the protection of the natural beauty and environment of the community of Eldorado at Santa Fe, provide an attractive rural setting for residential neighborhoods and home sites and preserve our property values.

Most people who purchase property in the Eldorado community are attracted and motivated by the unique qualities of our natural environment and agree that these qualities must be preserved for all present and future residents.

Two of our most important covenants are: 1) the review and approval of all structures (new home, addition, fence, wall, shed, etc.) prior to construction and 2) no structure is allowed in the property line setback area. The road frontage property line setback is fifty feet, the side and rear property line setbacks are twenty feet. If your property has more than one road frontage, each

road frontage setback is fifty feet.

If the structure you are submitting for review is in a setback area, you must also submit a variance request to the ECIA Board of Directors for their review. It should be pointed out that the granting of a variance to build in the setback is extremely rare.

There is a good reason for not allowing structures in the setback. The property line setback areas are necessary for maintaining all the open views that we enjoy. Try to picture fences, walls, sheds and studios built three feet apart on adjoining lots. The open space, the sunset and the mountain view would be gone.

When you are planning on building a structure, you need to consider all the options you have. So, even though you believe your proposal has sound aesthetic and functional virtues, the plan must be measured by our *covenant yardstick*: the preservation of the natural beauty and quality of life for all *present and future* property owners.

—Charles Smith,
the ECIA CCR

From the Desk of the ECIA President

In my last *Vistas* article I talked at length about the need for the members of our community to volunteer to serve on our various committees as well as the board. While I hate to sound like a broken record, the board is currently in need of a new director. Some of you may have already seen or read that **Raymond Singer** resigned from the board prior to the October meeting and his seat needs to be filled. I would like to take this chance to thank Ray for his time and effort over the past two years. Being a board member does require a commitment of time and energy, and as many are aware, it is mostly a thankless job. However, there is no better way to find out exactly how your association runs and to have input into that process. It is only through the participation and input of the community members that we are able to do what we do. If you feel, as I know some of you do, that your interests are not always seen or felt, now is your chance to get involved and have that happen. If you would like to apply for a position, please send a note

or resumé to the ECIA office. The board will be conducting interviews in the very near future. I look forward to having many of you apply for the open position.

On another note: as I run along the hike/bike paths and roadways in our community, I am noticing the proliferation of different types of trash, most notably beer and soda cans. While I realize it is a small portion of our community and mainly outsiders that would throw these items from their car, we need everyone's help to correct it. The ECIA does not have the manpower available to clean up all our roadways. I did notice the soccer club recently working their way along the road collecting trash and I would like to thank them and commend the effort. If everyone who currently hasn't adopted a road in our community would just adopt a small portion of the road they live on, we could all feel a little prouder of our association.

—Terence Schwind
ECIA President

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466-1204
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424-2050



Holiday Gift & Trunk Show

Former Tesuque Flea Marketers are bringing a Jewelry Trunk and Holiday Gift Sale to the Eldorado Community Center on Saturday, December 13, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Featured work: Silver Seasons jewelry, porcelain teapots and stamp dispensers, ornaments, wild and fun fashion jewelry, purses and bronze animals. Questions? Email them to info@everydayartifact.com

Tennis, Anyone?

USTA recreational tennis league season begins in the spring and teams start developing in early January. Now is the time to think about your tennis-playing future. Eldorado residents comprise an active base of competitive, successful tennis players, and yet, you travel outside your home turf to participate in practices and matches.

Are you interested in combining your forces with those who live near you? Would it be nice to practice at the Eldorado courts? Does a potential Eldorado tennis complex exist? Your answer matters. I am happy to be a new homeowner in Eldorado, recently

retired from Sangre de Cristo Racquet Club and experienced in forming and training winning USTA tennis teams. My name is **Claudia Phillips** and you can reach me by e-mail: philosophia@earthlink.net.

Quilt Exhibit Continues

The library's popular exhibit of quilts just got better. The show will now continue through December, with additional quilts added to the display. The pieces are by 13 artists living in the library's district. Most are wall art with contemporary colors and designs. ECIA members included are **Mimi McGarrity, Lola Mehlin, Alexandra Stango, Jean Stokes** and **Claudette Wilmarth**. Many of the quilts are for sale, and a substantial donation will go to the library fund for each quilt sold.

What's Happening at our Public Library
Write December 6 on your calendar for your children. The Children's Holiday Workshop at the library will show kids how to make traditional clay and tin ornaments. Don't miss it! 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Haven't bought that gift yet? The library's book sale is December 13 & 14, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The library is closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, as well as New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

El Dorado Elementary School News

Don't miss this year's annual Band and Choral Christmas Concert at the school, on December 18, at 6:30 pm.

The school's holiday break this year is from December 22 to January 2.

Local Club Helps Keep Eldorado Clean and Beautiful

Fighting blustery fall winds, 12 members of the Eldorado Roadrunners Good Sam Club, armed with gloves and plastic bags, collected 27 bags of litter from the first Eldorado entrance to Enebro Way on the weekend of November 1, 2003.

The clean-up effort was organized by **Debbie Howland**, club president, assisted by Eldorado residents **Bill and Lillian Bodle, Mark and Debbie Damitio, Joan Krall, Ed Carlson, Joe Oliver, Sandy McGregor, Marlene Abraham, Craig Hansen, Kieth Gray and Dia Wingard.**

No valuables were found, but club members collected numerous liquor bottles, beer cans and bottles, garbage can lids, lumber, plastic bags and paper.

Normally Good Sam RV clubs perform this service for their communities every May all over the United States. Lillian Bodle, the Good Sam Club's local secretary, reports that the organization

is planning a bigger and more inclusive effort for May of 2004.



December Events

Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

Email info@eldoradocommunity.org with your meeting or event information, or bring it to the ECIA office by the 8th of the month for publication in the following month's *Vistas*. Please include "Attn: Vistas" and be sure to indicate:



1. **Type of Event**
 2. **Location**
 3. **Date & Time**
 4. **A Resource Person** (one who can answer questions both about the event and the sponsoring organization) and his/her telephone number.
- Photographs (digital or snapshots) are encouraged!

Note: All meetings are at the Community Center, unless otherwise noted.

DECEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS

Santa Claus Sat., Dec. 6, 2-4 pm in the Community Center - LR

ECIA offices closed Dec. 25 – Happy Holidays!

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Information Committee		ECIA	466-4248	
Neighborhood Watch		Frank Schober	310-8593	call
Road Committee	Mon., Dec. 1, 6-7 pm	Allen Larson	466-4792	CFR
Finance Committee	Tues., Dec. 9, 10-noon	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	RR
Architectural Committee	Tues., Dec. 9, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
EAW&SD*	Wed., Dec. 10, 7-9 pm	Ray Nichols		CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., Dec. 15, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
285 Coalition	Wed., Dec. 17, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock	466-1598	CR
ECIA Board	Thurs., Dec. 18, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Architectural Committee	Tues., Dec. 23, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
Stable Committee	Tues., Dec. 16, 7-9 pm			LR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

ERA Coffee Social	Tues. Dec. 2, 10-11 am	Jerry Bradley	466-4253	F
Coffee Social	Tues. Dec. 16, 10-11 am	Jerry Bradley	466-4253	F
Book Club	Sat., Dec. 13, 1:30-3 pm	Barbara Rugg	466-2559	
Book Club/Pot Luck	Sun., Dec. 14, 6-9 pm	Ken Fischer	466-2537	
Library Book Club	2nd Thurs., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	Lib
Search & Rescue	Thurs., Dec. 11, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR
Cub Scouts Pack 414	Tues., Dec. 16, 7 pm	Clay Williard	466-3909	
Arts Assoc. Program	Wed., Dec. 31, 7-9 pm	Arlene Siegel	466-3274	LR

WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tuesdays, 5:45-6:45 pm			CR
AA	Thursdays, 5:45-6:45 pm			CR
AA	Saturdays, 10:45-11:45 am			CR
AA	Sundays, 5:15- 6:15 pm			CR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Mon., 1-4:30 pm			LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Marjorie Segell	466-3958	CR, LR
Bridge	2nd & 4th Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Pat Lavengood	466-9765	CR, LR
Bridge	Wednesdays, 9-noon	Nancy Rost		LR
Bridge (Men's)	Thursdays, 1-4 pm	Bill Kapoun	466-8497	LR
Boy Scouts Troop 414	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Paul Tuck	466-4815	
Community Band	Thursdays, 7-8:30 pm	Peg Johnson	466-1459	School
Fire & Rescue Training	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Fire & Rescue Work Duty	Saturdays, Call for time	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Senior Lunch**	Wednesdays, 12-1 pm	Marjorie Segell	466-3958	CR
Wireless Assoc.	2nd & 4th Mon., 7-9 pm	Scott Gerber	466-9333	CR
Knitting Club	2nd & 4th Wed., 1-3 pm	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	

*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

**Reservations Required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradocommunity.org

Giving Eldorado's Creatures Comfort



Murt and his
buddy/patient

This month's interview is with **Murt Byrne**, Eldorado resident, and veterinarian at the Eldorado Animal Clinic. The interview with **Gretel Underwood** took place on November 7, 2003.

Gretel: Many of us know you as Dr. Murt, but that's not your given name.

Murt: My father's, and my father's father's name was Murt, actually Murdith. I have a large Irish Catholic family in Columbus, Ohio, and when I was born my mother decided there'd been enough Murts so she named me Timothy Sean. But everybody knew my father, he was quite a character, and inevitably I started being called Little Murt.

G: Was becoming a vet a childhood dream?

M: I remember always wanting to be a vet. When I was twelve we had a springer spaniel who got distemper. That bothered me extremely, and I decided I was going to fix all the other dogs I could.

G: Where did you go to school?

M: I did my undergraduate work at UNM. I did my doctorate at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins.

G: I remember you as the vet at the shelter and that you had a practice on Rodeo Road.

M: I was basically starting from zero at that practice, but I got to run it and it was good expe-

rience for me, except that I was starving to death. I was taking calls from everybody in town to earn money. I'd been to the shelter a lot because it's something that's very important to me. After about three months of hanging around, I think they finally decided they should hire me. I did surgeries, check-ups, and of course I did their euthanasia, which was a difficult thing. That was my morning; then I'd head to Rodeo Plaza and open that practice and work there all day and then usually go back to the shelter in the evening.

G: Why did you decide to open a practice in Eldorado?

M: At Rodeo Plaza I saw that my best clients were from Eldorado. It was obvious that it was a community that cared about their pets. They are well educated and want to do the right thing. Several times I've come into an exam room and I'm faced with a series of questions and handouts. I have to be on my toes. That makes for a very healthy and good environment for a veterinarian.

G: You are expanding your practice and your facility.

M: We outgrew this facility a couple years ago. We want to be able to do things better and a little bit differently. We will also have a kennel. We will be taking everybody, but we will have the advantage of being able to take care of diabetics and geriatric pets. We will have a fourth year vet student living here as well, which is a win-win situation. The student gets to live at a very good clinic for a six-week period and we get those fresh new minds.

G: Do you have a favorite dog breed?

M: I like the herding breeds because they're intelligent. From a professional standpoint I like pit bulls. They are very stoic and tend to be good with people. I can do almost anything I want to them and they won't budge.

G: And what do you like to do in your spare time?

M: I like the outdoors. I like to hike and I'm the world's worst fisherman. I like spending time with my kids in the outdoors.

G: I'm really glad you could fit us in before the football game tonight in Albuquerque.

M: Yeah, both my Alma Maters are going head to head. UNM is playing Colorado State University. I am a Lobo. *(Editor's note: Lobos won 37-34)*

Cheyenne Country

If you were to walk down the road at the Eldorado stables these days and call out, "Hey, Cheyenne!", it is likely you will get a "Hi" from one four year old and a high-pitched whinny from another four year old. One is **Cheyenne Garcia**; the other is a jet-black Shetland pony. Cheyenne Garcia's parents, **Jim** and **Jacqueline**, have a barn at our stable amenity. In addition to Cheyenne the pony, Jacqueline has a mare named Gemmy, and Cheyenne, the girl, has a little sister named **Sierra**.

The Garcias' moved to New Mexico five years ago from Long Beach, CA. After a fishing trip to the family vacation home in Red River, they decided they wanted to raise a family in the southwest and came to Albuquerque where they had Cheyenne. One year later, they arrived in Santa Fe and had Sierra. Jacqueline grew up riding horses at her uncle's stable. Jim is really a motorcycle man but is learning how to ride. He calls it going from the iron horse to the real horse. "The throttle doesn't work on this one," he joked, gently turning the pony's ear.

The pony came into the Garcias' life via a friend of **Terence Schwind** (our own ECIA president). Terence was keeping the pony for the friend and his seven-year-old little girl. Horse owners **Jennifer Stinebaugh** and **Susan Sylvester** saw the owner one day and asked if he would consider selling the pony to the Garcias and he



Dina Sassone

said yes. Jacqueline thanks Jennifer and Susan for being in the right place at the right time. When the seven-year-old girl met Cheyenne, the little girl, she said, "She is smaller than me. I think she should have my pony." (Just think if all adults you know were this wise!).

"Riding is something the whole family can enjoy," said Jacqueline. They intend to get a gentle horse for Jim soon. Cheyenne the girl has this to say about Cheyenne the pony: "She's very nice. I feed her hay, I brush her, and I like her fur." When asked if she wanted to call the pony by a nickname (to keep the two Cheyennes straight), Cheyenne said, "No. Her name is Cheyenne!" That special bond of a little girl and her pony: all is right with the world.

—Dina Sassone

Caring for her horse comes natural to Cheyenne

Juncos—Eldorado's Winter Friends

I saw the first Junco of our 2003-2004 winter season on October 10, beneath my bird feeder. I don't know if this was early or late, but the weather was still unseasonably warm. I think of Juncos as winter birds in Eldorado, and they are the most commonly seen birds during the Audubon Christmas Bird Count.

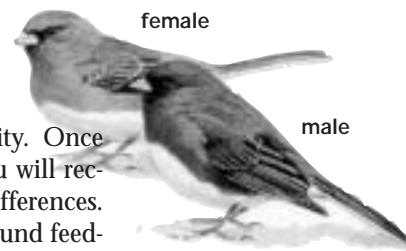
My first field guide to birds showed six distinct Junco species. In 1973, the American Ornithologists' Union combined these into two species—Dark-eyed Juncos and Yellow-eyed Juncos. The Dark-eyed Juncos have several races or populations that differ depending on the book consulted. Most of these can be found in New Mexico in winter. Oregon, Pink-sided, Slate-colored and Grey-headed are fairly common. The Red-backed and White-winged are less common. According to field guides, the Yellow-eyed Junco may be seen in SW New Mexico and SE Arizona.

But don't despair at this complexity. Once you recognize one of these Juncos, you will recognize the others, despite the color differences. They are small (5.75 in. to 6.25 in.), ground feeding birds with striking white outer tail feathers. They hop on the ground eating seeds, berries and insects, or glean seeds from low vegetation and grasses. They always seem to be perky and happy.

Winter flocks may contain 10 to 20 birds. Males seem to dominate over females in these flocks, making food less available to females. So females may winter farther south to assure their survival.

In breeding season, the birds are usually seen in pairs and are thought to be monogamous. They sometimes produce up to three broods of three to five eggs. I have never seen them in Eldorado in the summer, but I enjoy their company all winter long.

—Pam Henline



female

male

Security
204-2945

Finishing Touches

Workers smooth out the crossing for residents.

Dan Drobnis



Final paving for the new hike/bike trail over the rail crossing at Avenida Eldorado was completed in early November. Work on the crossing had been delayed while the ECIA negotiated with the Santa Fe Southern Railroad for an easement to cross the track, for timbers to be installed bridging the track, and then for good paving weather for the approaches. Crossing and intersection markers have been installed along all the trail.

The ECIA Board has approved capital funds to further extend the hike/bike trail all the way west along Avenida Eldorado to Avenida Casa del Oro, and then north to Avenida Vista Grande. The ECIA expects to see this work completed in spring of 2004 with the return of good weather.

—Dan Drobnis