

ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME VII, ISSUE 12

Dec. 2005

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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

What Is the ECIA?

FROM TIME TO TIME, ECIA Board members receive questions or requests that indicate some level of misunderstanding regarding our homeowners' association and its function. As the old year closes, this is probably a good time to answer some of those Frequently Asked Questions.

What is the ECIA?

The ECIA is the Eldorado Community Improvement Association, which is the long title chosen some years ago for the association of home and lot owners in the Eldorado at Santa Fe subdivision. Like any homeowners' association, the ECIA manages our common properties and amenities, and enforces the Protective Covenants and Architectural Guidelines that control the development and appearance of individual houses and lots. All lot owners are members, and are required to pay an annual assessment to fund these activities, currently \$240 per lot per year.

What rules govern the ECIA?

There are basically three sets of governing documents: the ECIA's *Corporate Bylaws*, most recently amended and adopted in April, 2000; the *Covenants and Building Restrictions* most recently amended and adopted in April, 1996; and the *Guidelines for Protective Covenants and Building Restrictions*, most recently revised and adopted in October, 2005. The Bylaws set up the ECIA as a corporation, the Covenants set basic standards for development, and the Guidelines provide rules for consistent interpretation of the Covenants. All are available on the ECIA website at <http://www.eldoradocommunity.org>, or in printed form at the ECIA office at the Community Center.

Who governs the ECIA?

The Bylaws provide for a Board of Directors, currently seven members, each elected for a term of three years. Elections occur in March, with terms beginning at the end of the annual members' meeting in May. Vacancies between elections are filled by vote of the remaining Board members. Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at

7 pm at the Community Center, and are open to all Association members.

How big a staff does the ECIA have?

The Association has a full-time staff of five: General Manager **Bob Pritchard**, Administrative Assistant **Debby Padilla**, Covenant Compliance Representative **Charles Smith**, Facilities Manager **Bill Donohue**, and Maintenance Assistant **Jesus Garcia**. In the summer, the staff is augmented by several part-time maintenance workers, and up to a dozen swimming pool lifeguards. Office staff may be reached at 466-4248 during business hours.

How can I become active in the ECIA?

The core of the ECIA are the volunteer members of its committees, listed (with their chairs and meeting times) on pages three and five of each *Vistas* issue. These dedicated volunteers are the reason the ECIA can serve its members at a reasonable cost—the

annual assessment has not increased since 2001. All committee meetings are open to all Association members, and each chair may nominate new committee members from those who have attended at least three meetings. The Board votes to approve new nominees.

Why can't the ECIA do something about...?

Eldorado is an unincorporated subdivision—albeit the largest in New Mexico, and Santa Fe County is our local government. Traffic violations, animal control, noisy neighbors, and law enforcement in general are the responsibility of the Santa Fe County Sheriff's Department, and road maintenance is the task of the County Public Works Department. Water and sanitation are the responsibility of the Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District—a state agency. Fire and emergency services are provided by the volunteer Eldorado Fire and Rescue

SEE "WHAT IS THE ECIA?" ON PAGE 2

***ECIA Board
Work Study
Meeting,
Community
Center, Mon.,
Dec. 12, 7 pm***



PHOTO BY LYNN MCPHERSON

**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.

Dog Bites

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15th was a rare treat—a cool, cloudy morning in Eldorado. I was near the end of my daily jog/walk on the greenbelt trails when I was bitten by an unleashed dog. Let me repeat that—while simply walking along the greenbelt, I was bitten by an UNLEASHED dog. When a 75-pound dog clamps his jaw into your calf, numerous teeth break the skin and a significant wound is inflicted. My wound bled off and on for two days, a bruise 5 inches across appeared, and the doctor not only gave me a tetanus shot, but also prescribed a round of antibiotics. This was not a playful nip at the heels.

The dog owner has apologized, for which I am grateful, but it took the distinct possibility of a judge deciding the dog should be put down for the owner to agree to obey the law and keep the dog on a leash.

Please don't tell me that your dog won't bite. Supposedly, this dog didn't bite either. In fact, I had to pull up my pant leg to prove that I was bitten because I was not believed. Blood on the trail was convincing.

I am only asking that the leash law be observed. The greenbelts are not leash-free zones. I am asking this of all dog owners, regardless of your dog's temperament. Respect the law and respect your neighbors. Don't let anyone else be hurt.

—Peg Johnson

What is the ECIA? FROM PAGE 1

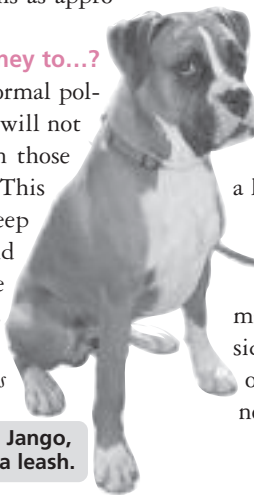
Service. The Santa Fe County School District runs the elementary school. The Vista Grande Public Library is operated by its own Board of Directors, and must raise its own operating funds—the County has no public library system. The ECIA staff and Board members try to solve residents' problems and answer questions on a neighbor-to-neighbor basis, and will refer questions and complaints outside its jurisdiction to other organizations as appropriate.

Why doesn't the ECIA give money to...?

The ECIA Board adopted a formal policy in 2001 that the Association will not support any activities other than those directly sponsored by the ECIA. This allows the Association to keep annual assessments low, and allows members to support the organizations of their choice as individuals.

—Dan Drobnis

Good dog, Jango,
always on a leash.



Another Dog

MARYBETH AND I were just out walking our leashed dogs when we were charged twice by an aggressive off-leash dog whose owner couldn't be bothered to get off of his bicycle and get the dog under proper physical control. He couldn't even be bothered to apologize for his dog trying to attack us. It was very upsetting, although fortunately no one was hurt. Other than report this to the sheriff and Animal Control, are there any other steps we can take?

An update...I received a call from Ted with Animal Control this morning. He seemed genuinely concerned, although he acknowledged that since we could not provide him with the name or address of the owner it would be difficult to follow up. He did say he would have someone check the records to see if there had been other complaints about a dog with the same name and description and if so, see if there was an owner name. He also said he would have someone patrol the area where the incident occurred at the same time of day to see if the owner and dog were there so that he could talk to him. Ted indicated that SF County currently allows dogs to be off leash if they are under voice control (not the case with this dog) and are within 5 feet of their owner (also not the case with this dog), but that this will be changing in the near future so that all dogs are required to be on a leash.

—Andrea

Stricter Leash Laws

IS A STRICTER COUNTY LEASH law coming? One of the most frequent complaints to the ECIA concerns dog attacks or perceived near-attacks. The open spaces of Eldorado seem to encourage some animal owners to believe that it is OK for their dogs to roam free, or with only the most distant supervision.

County ordinance up to now has required dogs to be on a leash, or "under voice control." The latter has usually been interpreted as calm and within five feet of the owner. In order to eliminate much confusion, the county is considering a much stricter ordinance, requiring dogs to be on a leash at all times when off their property.

Owners should be aware that even when dogs are on their own property, the dogs can swiftly run off to chase a pedestrian, biker, or another animal. Even gregarious, friendly dogs can create considerable alarm when they chase off after an animal or person who is understandably alarmed by such a noisy display.

—Dan Drobnis

Making Plans

REMINDER: THE GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTIVE COVENANTS and Building Restrictions for Eldorado at Santa Fe were revised and approved by the ECIA Board of Directors on October 20, 2005. Once you receive your copy, please review it for all project applications submitted to the Architectural Committee.

2005 ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATIONS THROUGH OCTOBER 31

Total number of projects submitted through October 31, 2005

- ▼ Projects submitted241
- ▼ Projects approved208
- ▼ Projects disapproved33
- ▼ Variance requests16

Types of projects submitted for 2005

- ▼ Fences and walls119
- ▼ Additions 58
- ▼ Accessory buildings42
- ▼ New homes23

2005 COVENANT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITY THROUGH OCTOBER 31

Here is a summary of covenant compliance violations through October 31, 2005

- ▼ New violations Jan. through Oct. 31, 200591
- ▼ Violations corrected Jan. through Oct. 31, 200593
- ▼ Active violations outstanding as of Oct. 31, 200531

Here are the most common covenant violations:

- ▼ RV screening30
- ▼ Exterior lighting (not shielded)13
- ▼ Trash – nuisance13
- ▼ No permit for construction12

I want to thank everyone for your support and efforts in making Eldorado a place to enjoy all of the great New Mexico “enchanted views”. Suggestion...please try compliance, first!

—Charles Smith, the ECIA CCR

Guidelines for the Protective Covenants

MOST OF US LEAD VERY BUSY and demanding lives. I find myself, even in retirement, rushing around staying busy and involved. But once in awhile, most of us stop to smell the roses, so to speak. We watch a beautiful sunset or take a walk in the greenbelt or on the hike/bike path. When we stop, we can see that we live in a pretty nice place where people care about their homes and lots and where we as residents are in general agreement about how we want our environment preserved. The preservation of Eldorado is the responsibility of the homeowners and the ECIA Board of Directors as their representatives.

That responsibility led the Board, two years ago, to ask the Architectural Committee to begin work to revise the guidelines for the protective covenants. Their charge was specifically to make the guidelines more user-friendly with detailed explanations. The revisions would assist residents in better understanding the requirements of the covenants and would, therefore, facilitate their decisions about remodeling, additions and other home construction projects.

After many meetings, some on Saturday and many late into the night, the Architectural Committee submitted the *Revised Guidelines for Protective Covenants and Building Restrictions for Eldorado at Santa Fe*. In a joint meeting with the committee, the Board reviewed the revised guidelines and set a public hearing date for September 20, 2005. About twenty residents attended the public hearing and gave their advice to the Board. At the October 20 regularly scheduled Board meeting, the revised guidelines were passed by a unanimous vote.

The guidelines will be mailed to each homeowner within a month or two. Please review the guidelines and if you have questions, feel free to come to a Board meeting with your question or call the Association office. Remember, the guidelines are about preserving what is precious to us and to the future residents of Eldorado! A big “thank you” to the members and former members of the Architectural Committee for a job well done.

—Jeanne Klein

compliant
lamp style



non-compliant
lamp style



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Vista Grande Library
466-READ
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204-2945
Fire and Rescue
466-1204
Animal Control
986-2430



pillows, mats or blankets you prefer. Chairs will be provided and will suffice for all meditations presented.

Senior Center to Become a Reality

Santa Fe County issued a call for bids in November to construct the **Ken and Patty Adam** Senior Center next to the Vista Grande Public Library. The county should award the winning bid no later than early December. So the board of the Eldorado senior group and county officials are planning a groundbreaking party in mid-December. The senior group is determined to break ground before the New Year and be in the center in June 2006. Watch for details in the local papers.

This is a dream come true for many of the local seniors who have lobbied the State Legislature for more than four years, spoken at County Commission sessions, and served on the building committee. The center, though located in Eldorado, will serve seniors beyond the confines of this community.

Santa's On His Way to Eldorado

Santa will be making his regular stop in Eldorado on December 10, from 2 to 4 pm at the Community Center. He's called ahead to arrange for refreshments to be served, and a wonderful display of model trains to be viewed in the classroom. Parents and children are welcome to come and enjoy this event away from the crowds at the malls. Sponsored by the Eldorado Residents Association, this event is always a wonderful way to welcome in the holiday season. For information, call 466-1484.

Calling All Block Captains

The Eldorado Neighborhood Watch Committee once again invites all Neighborhood Watch Block Captains, and any residents interested in becoming Block Captains, to our December 19 meeting at 7 pm in the Eldorado Community Center conference room. Refreshments will be served. If you are a Block Captain or are interested in becoming one, and cannot attend this meeting, please call **Sandra Vreeland**, Chair of the committee, at 466-6079.

Farewell

The Conservation Committee and the ECIA Board want to jointly express appreciation to **Ed and Cary Carlson** for their many contributions to Eldorado and to the Conservation Committee since the 1980s.

As they depart New Mexico for a new home in Colorado, we want the community to know that without their efforts the recreational benefits of the Eldorado Preserve would not be what they are today. Everyone should know that Ed and Cary Carlson were a moving force in trail planning, construction, and sign placement on the Preserve. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

We wish Ed and Cary happy hunting, fishing, and watercolor painting in their new home in Salida, Colorado.

—*The ECIA Board &
The Conservation Committee*

The JFK Myths

Thursday, December 15, from 7-9 pm, **Larry Sturdivan** will discuss his recently published book, *The JFK Myths: A Scientific Investigation of the Kennedy Assassination*, at the Vista Grande Public Library. On November 22, 1963, (the day of the Kennedy assassination) Sturdivan accepted a position as a physicist involved with wound ballistics at the Aberdeen Proving Ground. Consequently, he observed ballistic tests conducted at the Biophysics Lab of Edgewood Arsenal during the Warren Commission's investigation. In 1978, as a senior researcher, Sturdivan became the Army's contact with the House Select Committee on Assassinations as they investigated the case, whereupon he served testimony in hearings about the assassination. Larry now lives in Eldorado.

Meditation Workshop

Elizabeth Ebner, a licensed professional clinical counselor and certified Yoga teacher, presents a free workshop on January 14, from 9 am to 1 pm in the Railroad building at the Community Center. This workshop is largely for people who want to learn how to meditate. There will be some techniques done on the floor with music that are very calming and relaxing. The longest we will actually be sitting without movement, at any one point, will be 15 to 20 minutes. You will leave with materials on the methods presented.

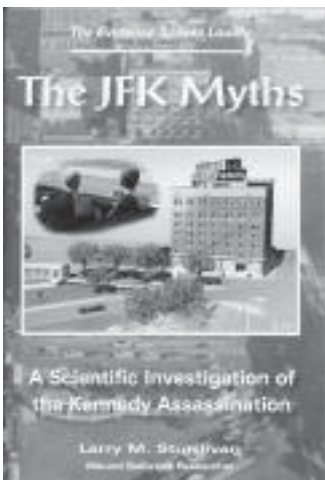
All levels of experience are invited to attend to learn new methods, to add your expertise to the process and/or to re-charge your practice.

Dress comfortably and bring whatever props,



PHOTO BY DAN DROBNIS

The Carlson's handiwork.



Larry Sturdivan's new book.





Astronomy Corner

Accessorizing your telescope

It is hard to choose accessories for your new telescope. The list of possibilities is almost endless—eyepieces, filters, cameras (film and digital), computers, software, etc.

Where to start?

There are two steps I personally recommend: Be an informed buyer and ask questions BEFORE you buy, and, if possible, test the equipment as soon as you get it.

Where to get more information:

Your local planetarium is the most affordable source of information.

The December Sky:

Mercury will be very low in ESE in the morning sky; **Venus** will be low in SW after dark; **Mars** will be in ESE after dark; **Jupiter** will be low in SE at dawn; and **Saturn** will rise near 8 pm in ENE. **Winter Solstice** is December 21, 1:35 pm.

Next time: *Connecting the dots (constellations)*

—Juan Alvarez

Jalva88610@aol.com

School's Chorus

On December 9 at 10:30 am, the advanced chorus from El Dorado Elementary School will be singing to the residents of El Castillo. How can we hear them? Twice on December 13, 8:30 am and 6:30 pm, the Winter Chorus and Band Concert will be held in the north gym.

Surely your school-age children have already marked your calendar, but just in case...El Dorado Elementary School will be closed for the holidays from December 19-30, returning to classes on January 2.

December 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

DECEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS

Santa at Community Center Sat., Dec. 10, 1-4 pm

LR

ECIA offices close on December 26

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Road Committee	Mon., Dec. 5, 6-7 pm	Ed Benrock	466-2088	CFR
Perform. Arts Assoc.	Tues., Dec. 6, 7 pm			RR
Conservation Committee	Tues., Dec. 6, 7-9 pm	Stephen Wust	466-0436	LR
285 Coalition	Wed., Dec. 7, 7-9 pm	Kathy Pilnock	466-1598	CFR
EAW&SD*	Thurs., Dec. 8, 7-9 pm		466-2411	CFR
Board Work Study	Mon., Dec. 12, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Architectural Committee	Tues., Dec. 13, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., Dec. 15, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Neighborhood Watch	Mon., Dec. 19, 7-9 pm	Sandra Vreeland	466-6079	LR
Information Committee	Mon., Dec. 19, 7-8 pm	Ken McPherson	466-4161	F
EAW&SD*	Thurs., Dec. 22, 7-9 pm		466-2411	CFR
Architectural Committee	Tues., Dec. 27, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR
Stable Committee	Tues., Dec. 27, 7-9 pm	Dina Sassone	466-2516	LR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Book Club	Sat., Dec. 10, 1:30-3 pm	Barbara Rugg	466-2559	
Book Club/Pot Luck	call for date and time	Ken Fischer	466-2537	
Library Book Group	2nd Thurs., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	Lib
ERA Coffee Social	Tues., Dec. 6, 10-11 am	Joe Auburg	466-1484	F, K
Search & Rescue	Thurs., Dec. 8, 7-9 pm	Dave Burdett	466-9765	CR
Troop 414 Committee	1st Wed., 7:30-9 pm	Bruce Blossman	955-0880	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., Dec. 12, 7-9	lcwireless.org		LR
MOMS Club	Call for date and time	Shannon Ratcliff	986-9050	
ERA Coffee Social	Tues., Dec. 20, 10-11 am	Joe Auburg	466-1484	F, K

WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tuesdays, 5:30-6:50 pm			LR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am			RR
AA	Fridays, 6-7 pm			CFR
AA	Sat., 10:45-11:45 am			LR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm			CFR
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wednesdays, 7-9 pm	Paul Tuck	466-4815	RR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Mon., 1-4 pm			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	Wednesdays, 9-noon	Nancy Rost	466-2832	LR
Community Band	Thursdays, 6-8 pm	Joel Hopko	466-8412	
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	Therese Janowski	466-1397	CR
Knitting Club	2nd & 4th Tues., 10 am-noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	F
Adult Volleyball	Wed., 7-9 pm	Arlene Mayer	466-6641	School

*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

**Reservations Required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradocommunity.org

The Eldorado Eagles Have Landed!



PHOTO BY HOPE O. KIAH

The Eldorado Eagles Staff

IF AN EL DORADO ELEMENTARY student approaches you wearing a press badge, with pen and paper in hand, don't be surprised. Budding journalists with a yearning to cover the news have declared Eldorado their beat, with a special emphasis on their own world: school. Headed by parent volunteer **Jeryl Spear** (pen name: J. Elaine Spear), a professional journalist, the Eagles are busy preparing their first newsletter. The issue covers the Halloween Carnival, Thanksgiving traditions and a creative writing piece. The writing piece is a monthly showcase that will accentuate the talents of budding young poets or story writers.

"When I was in school, my parents told me that I couldn't make a living as a writer, and I took their advice to heart," says Jeryl. "It wasn't until I had my son, Cody, and realized that I couldn't leave him with a babysitter, that I seriously pursued writing as a way to be a full-time mom and, eventually, a full-time writer, too. It's my fondest hope that many of the young journalists in our community will pursue a writing career right from the get-go. I fully expect their skills will be in high demand. After all, just think how many words are printed in newspapers, magazines and books everyday. The availability of creative work in this field is staggering!"

Following her desire to challenge her journalism students by allowing them to experience a real-life working situation, Ms. Spear assigns beats for the reporters, and will soon announce the new deputy editor, managing editor, assistant editor, head photographer, art director and chief illustrator. In the meantime, the Eagles are immersed in learning the art of a great interview, meeting deadlines and scouting for news. New journalism students are always welcome.

Do you have something you would like to share with the Eagles? Contact: eldoradoeagles1@aol.com.

Not Just Another Subdivision

AFTER ALL, ANYBODY IS AS *their land and air is. Anybody is as the sky is low or high, the air heavy or clear and anybody is as there is wind or no wind there. It is that which makes them and the arts they make and the work they do and the way they eat and the way they drink and the way they learn—and everything.*

Gertrude Stein

Eldorado has, as we daily experience, beautiful skies, clear air and views that astound visitors as well as those of us fortunate enough to live here. Its singular beauty is something that one can experience most evenings when the sun begins to set over the distant mountains. At a recent meeting, an ECIA Board member remarked that he was born and lived for many years in the City of Santa Fe, but it was not until he moved to Eldorado that he saw what are surely some of the world's most beautiful sunsets. Where else, except in this "Big Sky Country" can one see the march of the sun from solstice to solstice?

Our homes are rather special here. They are

set apart. They blend in. They are the color of the land. They are truly "of the land" and don't seek to make some sort of statement apart from it. In the gated subdivisions of most American cities the house is everything. It may have views but they are not the encompassing, enfolding views that we have in Eldorado. With a few weather-caused exceptions, when we look west and over the Cerrillos we can see Mount Taylor, the second highest peak in New Mexico, and further to the west even the mountains of Arizona. "Living lightly on the land" has different meanings, but for many of us in Eldorado it means living where the beautiful terrain is left to make the architectural statement, and not the house that is built upon it.

To some, the covenants that govern how our homes are built and how they must be maintained are a dreaded enforcement issue. But if we wish to preserve this jewel of a community for as long as we can, the covenants are a key means of ensuring that the land and not the works of man is what we focus on.

—Frank Schober

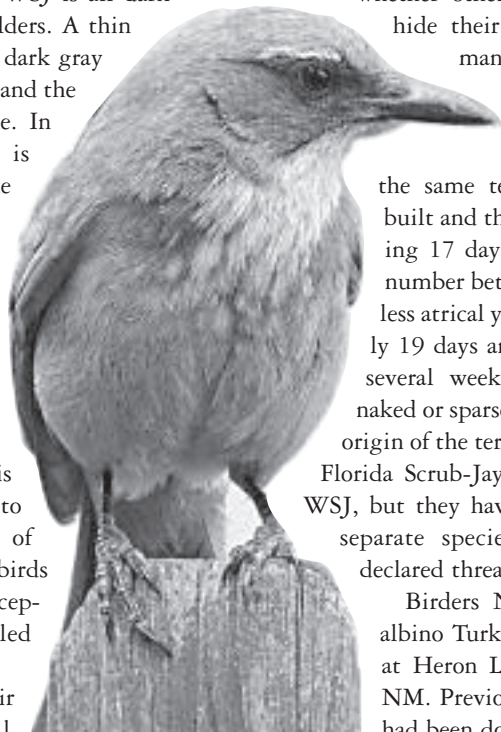


Western Scrub-Jay

I LOVE ALL OF ELDORADO'S BLUE birds, but I'll bet sometimes we forget this saucy fellow, the Western Scrub-Jay (WSJ). This medium-size crestless bird, 11.5" long with a wingspan of 15.5 inches, is a year-round resident. Their habitat consists of areas with stunted trees: mesquite, scrub oak, piñon pine, juniper, and thick, low brush. They can also be found near suburban yards or wooded city parks.

Viewed from the top, the WSJ is all dark sky blue except for gray shoulders. A thin straight dark bill meshes into dark gray cheeks. The belly is light gray and the underside of their tail is blue. In general, our inland WSJ is lighter than the birds on the west coast. Males and females are marked the same. The WSJ (*a Corvid*) is related to crows, ravens, magpies and the other jays. Recent DNA/RNA studies suggest an Australian origin. All of these birds are smart, bold and vocal. The loud piercing *kkew* is often heard as the WSJ arrives to collect food. In contests of strength, around here most birds defer to the WSJ, with the exception of the curved-billed Thrasher.

WSJs love peanuts but their main diet is insects, small



reptiles, and small invertebrates, and may include bird eggs and small nestlings. They also cache food, particularly piñon and oak seeds. Cornell reports that in laboratory studies of the WSJ's ability to hide and remember seeds, jays that had stolen the caches of other jays noticed if other jays were watching them hide food. If they had been observed, they would dig up and hide their food again. Jays that had never stolen food did not pay any attention to

whether other jays were watching them hide their food. In the early 1900s, many WSJs were shot in the name of crop protection.

Pairs usually bond for several years and stay on the same territory. Cup-like nests are built and the male feeds the female during 17 days of brooding. Eggs usually number between two and six. The helpless altricial young fledge in approximately 19 days and stay with the parents for several weeks, learning to feed. These naked or sparsely downy young may be the origin of the term "naked as a jaybird." The Florida Scrub-Jay is almost identical to our WSJ, but they have recently been classified as a separate species and the FSJ has been declared threatened due to habitat loss.

Birders Note: In September, a rare albino Turkey Vulture spent some time at Heron Lake State Park in northern NM. Previously, only two other albinos had been documented.

—Pam Henline

Information Talk

State Health Department epidemiologist Pam Reynolds, will host a public meeting at the Eldorado Community Center on Sunday, December 6 at 7 pm to discuss findings from her ongoing study of plague in the Eldorado area.

Bubonic Plague is endemic in certain parts of the western states, including Northern New Mexico and particularly Eldorado. Murt Byrne, of the Eldorado Animal Clinic, reports treating several cases a year in cats and dogs, and in 2002, two residents of the Eldorado area came down with it while visiting New York, although exposed to it at home.

Fleas on local rodents transmit the disease between animals, and sometimes to humans. Plague is easily treated with modern antibiotics when detected early, but can be life-threatening when not recognized early and properly treated.

For the latest information, please attend the meeting.

Good Neighbor Policy

RECENT EVENTS IN FLORIDA and the Gulf Coast have demonstrated the potential shortcomings of government at all levels in responding to emergencies. Eldorado is fortunately out of the path of hurricanes, and earthquakes and tornadoes are rare. However, Eldorado's transportation, water, communications, and electricity all lack redundancy and could be easily interrupted.

Last month's (November 2005) Vistas listed a recommended family first aid kit. Your neighbors are another important resource. Make a point of meeting them—invite them to your house for an annual block party if you have no other way. While you are together, exchange phone numbers so that you can help each other out in the event of something unexpected.



WSJ PHOTO BY JIM BAILEY
HTTP://BAILEY.AROS.NET/NATURE



Security
204-2945

corner kid's

Aren't You Going To Open Your Presents?

What's in the box? What could it be?
Just give me a minute, now let me see...
It could be a book or some socks or a sweater,
It could be a hamster, or even better...

It could be a genie (in a bottle, of course),
Or maybe a tiny miniature horse,
It could be a bicycle built for two,
It could be my favorite color, blue.

No wait, don't rush me, just let me think,
I know, maybe a skating rink,
Wait one more minute, I'm having fun,
What? The party's over? I'm on the first one!

—Lynn McPherson