

# ELDORADO VISTAS

VOLUME XI, ISSUE 12

December 2009

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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

## ECIA Conservation Committee

### A Wealth of Experience Protects Eldorado's Environmental Treasure

**SET UP BY THE FIRST RESIDENTS**  
Here over a quarter century ago, the hard-working volunteers of the ECIA Conservation Committee help keep some 4,200 acres of wilderness preserve and 1,000 acres of greenbelts beautiful and useful for all of us in Eldorado. The committee's mission includes advising the Board on the environmental health of our common areas and providing resource education for the community.

In addition to the 28 acres of our Community Center, every ECIA member is also a part owner of the Preserve and the greenbelts, which total over 5,000 acres—a larger area than most state parks in New Mexico. The Preserve, located to the east over SR 285, was deeded to the ECIA as part of a legal compromise on water issues and lot size reached by Santa Fe County and the original developer of Eldorado, AMREP (American Realty and Petroleum Corporation). The gift has an important restriction: the vast area must be maintained as a wild land area for the benefit and enjoyment of ECIA members.

There are reportedly some ECIA members who have never visited the Preserve, and perhaps a smaller number who may know that we have such an amenity but are not aware of its beauty and extent. A detailed map, available for the asking, may be obtained from the ECIA office in the Community Center.

The Conservation Committee meets regularly to conduct business related to its mission, but its members also assist the ECIA staff in maintaining the many miles of trails in the Preserve. During one recent work party, Committee members and volunteers planted over 200 young trees in the area's newly restored wetlands area. They have also been involved in eradicating a non-native tree, salt cedar (tamarisk), which not only takes up excessive amounts of water but effectively poisons the soil for native species struggling to survive.

The Conservation Committee is headed by **John Parker**, who works full time as Chief of the Field Op-

erations Division of the New Mexico State Environment Department. Other members include **E.J. Evangelos, A.J. Melnick, John Kenny, Ken Koger, Gerald Gulseth, Eleanor Gossen, and Dana Richards**. Liaison from the ECIA Board is **Lisa Robles**. **Mark Young**, whose college degree would qualify him as a forest ranger, represents the ECIA staff to the committee.

What may turn out to be the most significant accomplishment in the Conservation Committee's history involves its recent partnership with a local non-profit foundation, Earth Works Institute. With grant funding from that organization, three interns will be hired to help maintain trails and trail signage, combat invasive non-native plant species that harm water resources, and continue to improve the wetlands area of the Preserve. On October 24 of this year, the Committee invited residents to an event to advertise the restoration of a large wetland area in the Preserve by the Earth Works Institute of New Mexico. Details of that very successful event may be found in the article by John Parker, chairman of the Conservation Committee, on page 7 of this issue.

The Preserve, the greenbelts, the hike-bike trails, and now the wetlands in the Preserve are remarkable improvements to the environment. They are treasures we all own jointly.

On reflection, what is surely a greater treasure is the commitment and hard work of the unpaid volunteers who make a positive difference for all of us here—such as the members of the Conservation Committee.

—Frank Schober

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

**Volunteers at the wetlands  
in the Eldorado Preserve.**

Photo: Conservation Committee



## Where the Deer and the Bobcats Roam

*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](mailto: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.

**WE MOVED FROM URBAN** Kansas City to the high desert of New Mexico. Since our home is only a short distance from a 44,000-acre ranch surrounded by mountains, we have a lot of wildlife to watch, photograph, and enjoy: deer, antelope, fox, coyote, and even a mountain lion and bear, we've been told.

Recently, at 6:30 am, Pete opened our back door to see a kitten dart up our purple robe *Robinia* tree.

Although the size of a tomcat, clearly it was not a domestic animal because of its short tail and black pointed ears. Very shortly, a mother bobcat jumped the coyote fence and tried to coax her kitten down from the tree. Without any luck, she jumped from post to post for four hours, not willing to leave her kitten. Occasionally she rested her head and snoozed a bit. Excitement increased when a formidable male bobcat indifferently sauntered across the lower wall, jumped the fence, and left the property. Of course, cameras came out and neighborhood photogra-

phers were invited over for photo ops.

Game and Fish was called but declined to displace the cats to the mountains, knowing they would move on. However, the ranger did check our property,



even the roof, and found that our property had the kind of privacy that might draw in a mother bobcat wanting to protect her kitten from other predators.

Neighbors were alerted, and one couple was greatly disturbed, since they keep their domestic cat outdoors part time. The Game and Fish ranger advised against letting small pets range freely out of doors, not so much because of bobcats but rather coyotes. The rest of the neighborhood is pleased to be a part of the wild, and all are aware that wildlife should definitely not be fed.

—Pat Cole, *Estambre Court*



## Juvenile and Young Adult Crime

**IT HAS BEEN SPECULATED THAT SOME** of the graffiti, vandalism, mailbox bashing, burglary, discharge of firearms, and animal cruelty in Eldorado is committed by local juveniles and young adults. According to New Mexico law, juveniles and young adults may face fines, jail time, detention time, prison sentences, community service, or probation for misdemeanor, felony and ordinance convictions. (In New Mexico the age between juvenile and adult is 17, though some minors may be tried as adults.)

Further, when a young person has been caught committing a crime, there are other consequences as well, such as:

- ▼ Employment suspension or termination
- ▼ Academic suspension or expulsion
- ▼ Loss of scholarships
- ▼ Denial/loss of professional and/or occupational licenses
- ▼ Loss of civil rights, including the right to vote
- ▼ Loss of driving privileges
- ▼ Custody transfer
- ▼ Deportation or denial of citizenship for immigrants
- ▼ Loss of reputation/public humiliation
- ▼ Financial burden on parents

Other consequences reach far into the future. The Internet offers a variety of ways for employers, educators, and individuals to run background checks on anyone. Many companies do background checks on prospective employees. All educational institutions check prospective teachers. The military is no longer accepting persons with criminal records. Let's keep an eye on our kids and talk to them about the consequences of committing a crime.

### OCTOBER CRIME STATISTICS

- ▼ Suspicious vehicle at mailbox: 1
- ▼ Theft and vandalized mailbox: 1
- ▼ Suspicious vehicle: 1

**NEXT NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH MEETING:** Monday, February 1, at 7 pm at the Eldorado Community Center.

**TIP OF THE MONTH:** You can buy an electronic dog-barking alarm for \$80–\$90. When movement is detected, the barking dog alarms will alert you; the closer the movement comes, the more frequent and threatening the barking gets. Find the alarm you like best by searching the Internet.

For more information, contact **Marilyn Walker** at [lightwalker2@comcast.net](mailto:lightwalker2@comcast.net) or **Lyn deMartin** at [lyndemartin@hotmail.com](mailto:lyndemartin@hotmail.com).

—Lyn de Martin

## From the President's Desk

### ECIA Amenities Make All the Difference

**R**ESIDENTS' USAGE OF OUR amenities at the Community Center, wilderness area, the hike and bike paths, and Compadres Park has been high this past year. There is not another homeowners association in New Mexico that can offer so much and yet keep its assessments so low. The cost of maintaining the Association's amenities has risen significantly over the past eight years, and yet the Association's Board has diligently kept the assessment very low through cost-effective planning and

investments. Of course, as my last article in *Vistas* made clear, the volunteer committees also have saved the Association major dollars in community services. Any realtor will tell you that what makes Eldorado so desirable is the amenities that we offer, and certainly the amenities also help keep our home prices up. Eldorado is a great place to live and enjoy our New Mexican lifestyle. Your Association's Board is working to keep it that way.

—Ed Benrock, ECIA President

## Holiday Lighting Tips

**A**S THE HOLIDAYS APPROACH, many residents will be thinking of decorating their homes as part of their family celebrations. This may well include exterior holiday lighting. While the stringing of exterior lights around the outside of your house may be a most enjoyable activity, residents should keep in mind that Eldorado does have guidelines for exterior lighting as part of the Protective Covenants and Building restrictions—specifically, Article II, Section 10, Exterior Lighting. These guidelines, which help to prevent excessive glare and light pollution and help to keep our night skies dark, should be followed during the holiday season as well as year round.

Some suggestions that residents should consider when putting up any exterior holiday lights include:

- ▼ Avoid using any bright-colored spot lights or unshielded bulbs over 75 watts.
- ▼ Be sure that if you are illuminating any outdoor features, your lighting is not shining up in the air, as all lighting should be directed downward.

- ▼ Consider putting a timer on exterior lights to go off at a reasonable hour.
- ▼ Talk to your neighbors when installing lighting to ensure that your lights are not bothering them.
- ▼ Remember to take down holiday lights no later than end of January.

If you do have any questions at all regarding exterior or holiday lighting, feel free to call me at 466-4282 or email me at [eciaccr@aol.com](mailto:eciaccr@aol.com).

Wishing you and your entire family a most enjoyable holiday season!

—Mark Young  
ECIA Covenant Compliance Representative



## Better Right Than Never...

**T**HANKS TO THE COUNTY for coming back to put down the new shoulder surface and repaint the shoulder stripes on Avenida Vista Grande. Due to concerns raised by your Road Committee, bicycling and bike safety enthusiasts living in Eldorado, along with support from County Commissioner Liz Stefanics, we should no longer have to worry about bicycle riders falling into the traffic lanes due to the uneven shoulder surface that has existed for the past few months. We hope the cyclists will take this effort to heart and ride safely and single file along the new shoulders.

The county has begun work on replacing long-vanished base course on several short sections of Eldorado roads where residents have had great difficulty in negotiating muddy surfaces during heavy precipitation events. Completed as of this writing are Vista Grande Circle, Buena Ventura Place, Balsa Court, Domingo Court, Ladera Road, and Ladera Lane. Four other roads are in the process of being worked on. The worst sections of seven through roads will also receive grading/base course in the next few weeks.

—Nolan Zisman  
Road Committee Chair

### ECIA OFFICE

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Stable: Bonita Mamp  
Election:  
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Neighborhood Watch:  
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Facilities & Grounds:  
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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)



### Children's Theatre/ Teen Players in January

Mark your calendars! Eldorado Children's Theatre will be presenting the classic "Wizard of Oz" with over 40 children ages 6–12 at the James A. Little Theater on January 30 and 31 at 2:00 pm. The Eldorado Teen Players advanced group will be presenting a hilarious new musical comedy direct from Broadway, "25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." The show will be performed at the James A. Little Theater on January 22, 23, 29, and 30, at 7:30 pm, and on January 24 at 2 pm. Call the box office at 466-4656 for more information.

### Eldorado Energy Coop (EEC)

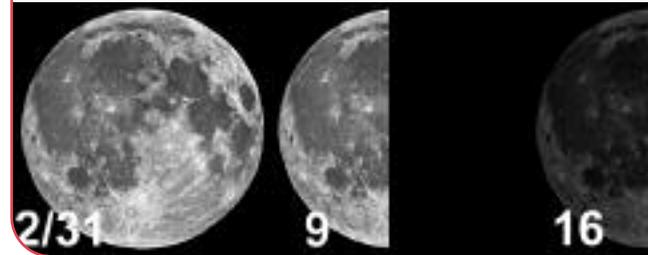
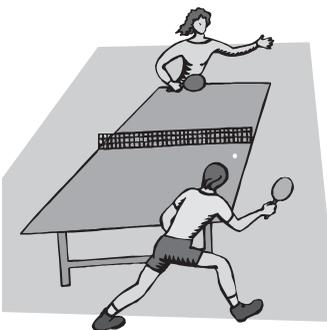
The EEC Carbon Busters had a tremendous response to our debut community outreach event at the Agora on October 3. We're now booking home energy audits into February. To get on our list, call **Deborah Boldt** at 466-2295. Better yet, join us! We're actively seeking new Carbon Busters. We'll teach you what you need to know—all that's needed is a willingness to help meet the current climate challenge by reducing Eldorado's carbon footprint. Plus, we have a lot of fun doing it.

### The Eldorado Food Coop

The Eldorado Food Cooperative meets once a month and/or as needed. Our food interests include better access to locally produced food; ways to gain more knowledge, information, and skills about food production, preparation, and preserving; community interaction; foods that are any or all of the following: local, organic, minimally processed, home produced, cost effective, cruelty free. For more information about the group, contact **Fox** at foxwoman22@hotmail.com, 231-0892 or **Carole Tashel** at Ctashel@cybermesa.com, 466-6153.

### Teen Center at La Tienda

Some of the teens in our community wish they had a place to call their own. A place where they can hang out, play ping pong, watch a movie, cook something, perhaps even share some entrepreneurial spirit and get a little business started. As it turns out, their wish just may come true! The new owners of La Tienda (formerly The Village shopping center), **Steve** and **Destiny**, are very enthusiastic and willing to provide space for a Teen Center. There are approximately ten teens and their parents currently drumming up plans. And much to our delight, some local businesses are jumping on board to sponsor this youth-full endeavor! If you or your kids are interested in being involved, call **Sandy Szabat**, 466-6702.

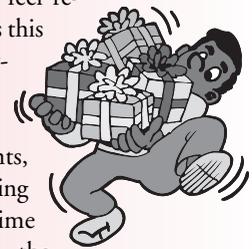


### Community Services Position at ECIA

The ECIA is looking to hire a full-time Community Services Manager. This position will support the present Security Company, helping to secure the safety of the community through education and training. This person will act as a deterrent to any criminally minded people by performing routine patrols of the community. Interested in this position? Send a resume to the ECIA office or contact **Bill Donohue**, General Manager, 466-4248.

### Relieve Your Holiday Stress With EFT!

Wouldn't it be nice to feel relaxed about the holidays this year rather than worrying about not having enough time or money, buying the right presents, eating too much, drinking too much, spending time with difficult relatives, the hardships of traveling, etc? Join us in a FREE class on Saturday, December 5 at 10 pm in the Railroad Building and learn how to practice EFT® (Emotional Freedom Techniques), also known as tapping, a very simple method of releasing stress and negative emotions. Children 10 and older are welcome. For more information, see [www.andisutherland.com](http://www.andisutherland.com) or call **Andi Sutherland**, EFT-ADV, at 466-3207. (Please call to confirm if it's a snowy day.)

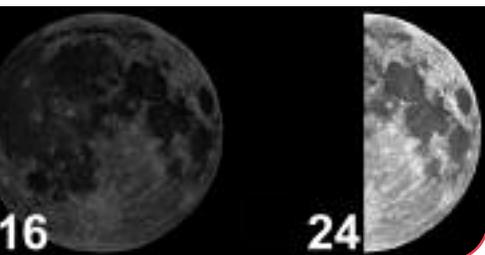


### MOMS Helping Moms

The MOMS Club of Southeast Santa Fe stands for Mothers Offering Mothers Support. 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 call or email to find out our next meeting time. Contact **Jackie Camborde**, Membership VP, [jackiecamborde@yahoo.com](mailto:jackiecamborde@yahoo.com), 466-0094.

### Holiday Shopping at the Library

Come shop for gifts December 5 at Vista Grande Public Library's annual Holiday Book Bash, and support your local library at the same time. From 10 am to 4 pm, you'll find tables loaded with books, CDs, and DVDs, fiction for children, teens



## ASTRONOMY CORNER



December 2009

**DECEMBER 13, 14: Geminids Meteor Shower.** Considered by many to be the best meteor shower in the heavens, the Geminids are known for producing up to 60 multicolored meteors per hour at their peak. The peak of the shower is on December 13 and 14, although some meteors may be visible December 6–19. This year, a nearly new moon will provide an excellent viewing experience in the early morning hours. The radiant point for this shower will be in the constellation Gemini. Best viewing is usually to the east after midnight.

**DECEMBER 21: The Winter Solstice** occurs in the northern hemisphere at 17:47 UT. The Sun is at its lowest point in the sky, and it will be the shortest day of the year. This is also the first day of winter.

–[www.seasky.org](http://www.seasky.org)

and adults, nonfiction on everything from Abiquiu to zoology, and much more. You can choose a gift basket ready for special book-lover friends, or even get your chosen book, CD, or DVD gift-wrapped in a beautiful, warm shawl.



A growing list of local authors will be autographing books. You can view their signing schedule online at [www.vglibrary.org](http://www.vglibrary.org), or on the Agora bulletin board. If you have published a book and live in southeastern Santa Fe County, contact the library for information on how you can participate. Also, new this year is a table for books that are out of print, first editions or otherwise hard to find.

# December 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*

### DECEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS

Santa Comes to Eldorado	Sat., December 12, 2 pm	Bill Dunning	466-1153	LR
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### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Facilities & Grounds	Tues., December 1, 4 pm	Fred Raznick	466-2305	CFR
Conservation Committee	Tues., December 1, 7-9 pm	John Parker	466-7513	LR
ERA	Mon., December 7, 7 pm	Bill Dunning	466-1153	LR
Road Committee	Mon., December 7, 6 pm	Nolan Zisman	466-2968	CFR
Architectural Committee	Wed., December 9, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	Foyer
Board Work Study	Mon., December 14, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
ECIA Board	Thurs., December 17, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Information Committee	Tues., December 22, 7-9 pm	Frank Schober	310-8593	LR
Stable Committee	Tues., December 22, 7-9 pm	Bonnie Mamp	466-4271	LR
Architectural Committee	Wed., December 23, 7-9 pm	Bill Schwent	466-7708	CFR

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

EAW&SD*	1st & 3rd Thurs, 7-9 pm		466-2411	RR
La Canada Wireless	2nd & 4th Mon., 7-9 pm	lcwireless.org		Library
BOOK Group	2nd Saturday 9-10:30	Joan LaMarque	466-6000	CFR
Eld Dog Club	Tues., December 8, 7 pm	Freddi Hetler	466-2005	LR
Library Book Group	3rd Mon., 7-9 pm	Shelley Moore	466-9636	VGPL
Conserv. Comm. Hike	3rd Sat. of month	Eleanor Gossen	466-1949	
Roadrunner RV	3rd Tues. of month	Bill Bodle	466-3011	Fire
Cub Scout Pack 414	4th Tues., 7-9 pm	John Kieling	466-4232	Sm Gym
EACA Meeting	Last Thurs. of month		466-6245	Fire

### WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tues., 5:30-6:50 pm			CFR
AA	Wed., 10:30-11:30 am			CFR/CR
AA	Thurs. 5:30-6:30 pm (Women Only)			CFR
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., 6:45-7:45			CFR/LR
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wed., 7-9 pm	Fritz Denny	466-4070	RR/CR/LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Mon, 1-4:30 pm	Kate Kaulbach	466-1465	LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-4:30 pm			LR
Bridge	2nd & 4th Fri., 1-4:30 pm	Pat Lavengood	466-9765	LR
Bridge	Wed., 9-noon	Nancy Rost	466-2832	LR
Community Church	Sun., 9:30 & 11 am	David McPherson	466-2495	CC
Community Band	Thurs., 6:30-8:30 pm	Joel Hopko	466-8412	New gym
Eldorado Hikers	Tues., 8:30 am	Terry Gibbs		
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 TH & F, 12-1 pm	Senior Center	466-1039	
Knitting Club	Tues., 10 am-noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	LR

\*Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

\*\*Reservations Required

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

## Adam Senior Center News

**JOIN US FOR LUNCH!** The Adam Senior Center is open to all seniors aged 60 and over. We serve lunch on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 11:45 am to 12:30 pm. The cost for the meal is a donation of \$1.50 (guests under 60 pay the meal cost of \$8.15), and we ask that you call the Center at 466-1039 before 9 am on the morning of the day you wish to come, so we will know how much food to prepare. Menus for the month's lunches are posted on the Adam Senior Center window, but all of the food is great! In December we will be having our holiday meal of baked ham, sweet potatoes, and all the trimmings on Monday, December 21. Join us for the festivities—just give us a call to reserve your spot!

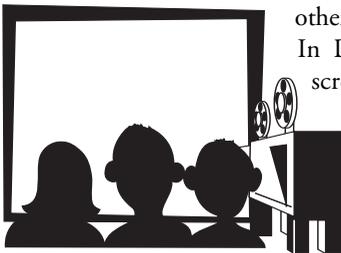
**JOIN US FOR MOVIES!** We show movies every other Thursday at the Adam Center, right after lunch. In December we will add an extra movie, with screenings on December 3, 10, and 17 (we are closed December 24 all day, and will not have a movie on December 31). We plan to follow the holiday theme, but with so many holiday movies out there, we are looking for seniors to phone in their favorites. Right now we have a

list that includes a whole range from *It's a Wonderful Life* to *White Christmas* (Bing Crosby) and *A Christmas Story* ("you'll put your eye out!") to *The Santa Clause* (Tim Allen) and *Elf* (Will Farrell). Please let us know your choices by phoning the Center at 466-1039, and then come and enjoy the show!

**JOIN US FOR RIDES!** As mentioned in previous *Vistas* articles, we are privileged to have a wonderful driver working at the Center—**Paul Vigil**. We are now building our transportation program. We can offer rides to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and special events, between 9 am and 4 pm on most weekdays. You need to reserve your spot at least 24–48 hours ahead of time by calling 466-1039, so we can get you on the schedule. Fares are \$1 each way to help cover our fuel costs.

Since we only have one driver who may be providing rides to several seniors at any given time, we may not be able to pick you up at exactly the time you request, but we will try to accommodate you within a half-hour either way of that time. And remember, you can also get a ride to the Center to join us for lunch!

—Cathy Berkley



## Eldorado Hikers Group

**ALTHOUGH ELDORADO RESIDENTS** may not know of us, the Eldorado Hikers Group has been hiking weekly for the past nine years and is open to all who live in our community. The group's hikes usually have 4 to 12 participants. We meet each Tuesday at 8:30 am at the northeast corner of the Eldorado Community Center parking lot. We leave our cars and carpool from there to the trailhead, but hikers can also drive themselves. Well-controlled and appropriately leashed dogs are welcome, though not in other hikers' cars. Carpool drivers are reimbursed for gas expenses.

Our hikes are generally local, sometimes in the Eldorado Preserve, and usually last from 4 to 6 hours. We communicate with our hikers via email (we have 45 members on our email list) and with our schedule (see below). If prospective hikers have general questions about our schedule and hikes, want a copy of our schedule, and/or want to be included on our schedule email list, they can contact me, **Terry Gibbs**, at [trgibbs@comcast.net](mailto:trgibbs@comcast.net), or 466-6914. Questions about specific hikes, or about what gear to bring, should be directed to listed hike contacts on our schedule.

—Terry Gibbs

### HIKE SCHEDULE FALL-WINTER 2009/10

The schedule is subject to change based on weather and access limitations, as decided by the listed contact. Questions should be directed to the listed contact. Meeting time continues at 8:30 am regardless of daylight savings time changes. The per-person travel cost is payable to drivers.

Date	Hike	Distance/Elevation/Total Time/Travel Cost	Contact
12/1/09	Dorothy Stewart +	2 mi./<300 ft./2.5 hr./\$2	Dave Perkins
12/8/09	Ball N-S X-Country ++	2.7–3 mi./500 ft./4 hr./\$2	Rosa Carlson
12/15/09	Buckman Mesa/Otowi Peak+++	5.5 mi./1100 ft./6 hr./\$4	Terry Gibbs
1/5/10	Eldorado to Lamy ++	4.8 mi./~200 ft. dwn/3.5 hr./\$0	Larry Eccard
1/12/10	Ball Loop 19 ++	4.1 mi /< 500 ft./3.0 hr./\$2	Dave Perkins
1/19/10	Up Hidden Cnyn/ T-401 & Return ++	4 mi./500 ft./3.5 hr./\$0	Tom McGuffy
1/26/10	Bishop via 101/102 +	2 mi. /<500 ft./2 hr./\$0	Dick Huelster
2/2/10	T-201 Loop +	2 mi. /<200 ft./2 hr./\$0	John Shaffer

+ = easy; ++ = moderate; +++ = difficult; ++++ = very difficult

## Eldorado Wetland Restoration

**THE ECIA CONSERVATION** Committee co-hosted a special event to celebrate the ongoing wetland restoration work at the Eldorado Community Preserve. Along with their partners Earth Works Institute (EWI) and the New Mexico Environment Department, Conservation Committee members unveiled a new interpretive sign and informational kiosk on wetland restoration, conducted a brief tour of the wetland restoration area, and guided participants in planting trees and other wetland plants. The event offered food and fun for kids and families and an opportunity to acknowledge project partners and sponsors.

**Jan-Willem Jansens**, Executive Director of Earth Works Institute, spoke to the group on the importance of areas like the wetlands in the 4,200-acre Eldorado Community Preserve in providing habitat for wildlife and wetland plant species. Such areas provide important ecological corridors linking populations of species from Canada to Mexico.

Participants saw firsthand how simple rock structures placed in the wetland had reversed years of degradation caused by adjacent development. One long-term Eldorado resident remarked that since the effort began in 2007, there has been a perennial reach of water in the

wetland where before there were only rocks and sand.

Attendees were put to work planting over 200 willow saplings and other trees and plants. Previously, under the direction of restoration specialists, Committee members and community volunteers had placed the rocks that formed the dams and other structures. “Active engagement of residents, neighbors, students, and other stakeholders is essential to community building and to the potential for long-term stewardship of this landscape,” said Jan-Willem in his remarks to the group.

If you would like to get involved in wetland restoration and other Conservation Committee activities, please come to our meetings at the Community Center at 7 pm on the first Tuesday of every month, or call me at 466-7513.

—John Parker, Conservation Committee Chair



Photo: Conservation Committee

**Unveiling the new interpretive sign on wetland restoration.**

## Common Grackle (CG)

**I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE SOME** unfamiliar large birds lurking around my seed feeder in the middle of October. There were six to eight birds, and they stayed for just one afternoon. But they were very easy to identify—the Common Grackle. The CG is a large bird in the blackbird family. Our interior CG (as opposed to coastal) is 12.5 inches long with a wingspan of 17 inches. The head and neck have a distinct purple-blue fluorescent color, and the rest of the bird is a uniform bronze. The bill is slightly curved, heavy and long, and the eye is light. The bird is relatively long, with a keel-shaped tail. Males and females are similar. A relative, the Great-tailed Grackle, is often in residence in early summer at the Marty Sanchez Municipal Golf Course. If a line is drawn from northwest to southeast New Mexico, the CG can be found northeast of that line. Their summer range is in the northern United States and Canada, east of the Rockies. The birds I saw were migrating to southern areas of the United States.

During migration, CGs may join with other blackbirds and form flocks of thousands of birds.

Don't park your car under the tree they roost in at night! Farmers consider these birds a pest, as they can eat large amounts of grain and corn, especially in large flocks.

The CG is found in open woodlands, areas with some trees and around human habitation. Males fluff body feathers, spread wings and tail and pose with bill skyward for female attention during courtship. A harsh noise accompanies courting. (CGs don't have a real song!) A cup nest is built in a tree. Two to six eggs are laid, brooded by the female and hatch in 13 to 14 days. Fed mostly spiders and insects, the helpless young can fledge in 16 to 20 days. The diet of adult birds consists of insects, invertebrates, crustaceans, bird eggs, nestlings, fruit, grain, and grass seeds.

Along with some other species of grackles, the common grackle is known to practice “anting,” rubbing insects on its feathers to apply liquids such as formic acid secreted by the insects.



**Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History website**  
[museum.gov.ns.ca](http://museum.gov.ns.ca).

—Pam Henline

ELDORADO  
**VISTAS**

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#1 La Hacienda Loop  
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[www.eldoradocommunity.org](http://www.eldoradocommunity.org)

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## *Winter in Eldorado*



PHOTO: HOPE KIAH

As winter approaches, we can look forward to beautiful views of our community. This moonrise was captured last year over the Eldorado Stable after a snow-storm.