

ELDORADO at SANTA FE VISTAS

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Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

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

To Build or Not to Build: That is the Conundrum

WATER MATTERS PART 4

In three previous articles in *Vistas* (August, October, and November 2015) covering Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District (EAWSD), we reviewed some of its history and some of its problems. Perhaps the most daunting of these challenges is its location—in the desert Southwest where water is not abundant. Yet there are other hurdles of note. In the mid-1990s, citizens in this community acted to form the District to gain local control over its water supply. As it's turning out, the road to "local control" can be a long and bumpy ride.

To obtain public ownership, the District found itself taking the drastic action of condemning the system—a move that stopped the developer from selling it to a Dutch conglomerate. One of the reasons cited for condemnation was Eldorado Utilities, Inc.'s lack of a permanent facility. The resulting adjudicated settlement of over \$11 million was awarded to the developer for its aging utility. The District scrambled to cover that inflated price through bond issuance totaling over \$13 million. Ever since acquiring the system, the District has worked under a significant debt.

The rate on those original bonds issued in 2004 was 6%. In June 2013, the District was successful in obtaining two loans (for \$4.7 and \$3.775 million) from the New Mexico Finance Authority with significantly lower interest rates. These loans were used to retire the original bonds. These loans are scheduled for retirement by 2023 and 2025.

The District's debt service is paid through revenues from water sales. Additional revenues come through property taxes on those living in the District. The District raised its rates in 2009 in order to maintain and add to the system. By early 2016, EAWSD water users can expect higher water bills resulting from the most recent of these raises. Users tied to the utility will also see a hike in their property taxes.

A HOME OF ITS OWN

Since its formation in 1997, EAWSD has managed its affairs from several venues. At first, the Board conducted its administrative business from a tiny office in the ECIA Community Center. Acquiring the utility in 2004 required larger quarters and the District

rented commercial space. When these offices became cramped, the District moved into the complex that was then called "The Village at Eldorado," where it is today.

In 2012, The Village went into foreclosure, resulting in the termination of the District's lease. The new and current owners, Steve Ewers and Destiny Allison, offered the District three options in writing: (1) sign a new lease, (2) buy the building (renamed La Tienda) at market value, or (3) rent the space month-to-month.

The District opted to rent month-to-month as a temporary solution toward finding a permanent space of its own, for both operations and administration. Back in 2010 the District had already received county approval for a development plan to build a combined office/maintenance facility on a 5.4 acre site at 190 Avenida Vista Grande, near Monte Alto Road. Preliminary drawings were rendered showing a 3,175 square foot maintenance facility (estimated at \$1.138 million) and a 5,000 square foot operations and administration building (estimated at \$1.14 million). Currently there is no funding for this facility, although the District has made efforts to obtain it.

In 2013, on its facility funding application to the NM Finance Authority, the District claimed that the landlords had been "unwilling to enter into a lease agreement." Then again, at a March 31, 2014, EAWSD public hearing, the District made the same claim. Ewers, feeling misrepresented, explained to EAWSD general manager David Chakroff that submitting an application to the Finance Authority with factually incorrect documents could result in losing the grant. Subsequently, the District submitted an amended "Technical Memorandum" with the application.

In an October 2014 letter to EAWSD president James Jenkins, Finance Authority CEO Robert P. Coalter responded to the District's amended technical memorandum: "Your letter focuses primarily on the circumstances surrounding EAWSD's submission of factually incorrect documents. . . . While this situation was a factor in the Finance's Authority's decision to terminate the binding commitment letter, staff, in its communication with your staff and counsel, have tried to emphasize that the decision was primarily financial."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>

**ECIA Board
Meeting,
Community
Center
Railroad Bldg.
Thurs.,
December 17,
7 PM**



Share your comments with us!

For policy and
deadline, see
below

Editorial Policy

Vistas welcomes your ideas, stories, photos, and art. Please include full name and contact information. The newsletter will not publish material deemed inflammatory, biased, or inappropriate. Submissions will be selected and edited at the discretion of the editor. Community announcements are welcome as well, along with accompanying photos.

DEADLINE: Newsletter deadline is the 5th day of each month. Submissions can be dropped off or mailed to the ECIA office or e-mailed to diana@eldoradosf.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.

Deck the Halls . . .

With the holiday season upon us, many Eldorado residents will soon be decorating their homes for their family celebrations. While exterior holiday lighting is allowed in Eldorado, please remember that we do have guidelines for exterior lighting as part of the Guidelines for Protective Covenants and Building restrictions. These are detailed on page 8 of the Guidelines, and they are intended to prevent excessive glare and light pollution and to keep our night skies dark. These guidelines should be followed as closely as possible when putting up your exterior holiday lights. The link to the Lighting Guidelines in the Eldorado Website is as follows:

▼ <http://tinyurl.com/ECIA-guidelines/>

Some key points to remember when planning exterior decorating are:

- ▼ Avoid using any bright-colored spotlights or unshielded bulbs over 75 watts.
- ▼ Make sure that any larger lights (such as colored spotlights) are shielded and aimed downward, not shining out toward your neighbors or up in the air.
- ▼ Consider putting a timer on exterior lights that will turn off your lights at a reasonable hour; this will save energy and keep you from bothering your neighbors in the late evening hours.
- ▼ Consider creative and reflective decorating! Not everything is about strands of lights. Reflective ornaments, ribbons, wreaths, garlands, and tinsel can be very attractive and use no electricity.
- ▼ Consider using energy-efficient LED holiday lights, wherever possible. They are now available at most stores that sell holiday lighting. LED holiday lights are:

—*Efficient*, saving up to 98% of the electricity needed to power conventional painted or ceramic coated bulbs;

—*Environmentally friendly*, their low temperatures emitting less CO₂, and their manufacture requiring no glass or tungsten (because electron movement in semiconductor chips is what causes illumination), also more environmentally friendly;

—*Durable*, as LEDs are encased in hard-to-break plastic versus the more fragile glass of incandescent lights; also, being electronic, their lifetime is up to 10 years;

—*Practical*, being available in standard packaging of 25- to 100-bulb strands that can be connected together to provide a seamless string;

—*Safe*, being cool to the touch and much less likely to overload a circuit; and

—*Attractive*, as they are available in traditional shapes, sizes, and colors.

Further information on energy-saving lighting can be found on these websites:

▼ <http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/energy-efficient-holiday-decorating-tips/>

▼ http://mydocs.epri.com/docs/CorporateDocuments/EnergyEfficiency/Holiday_Lights_112007.pdf/.

Finally, please remember to take down holiday lights no later than January 31, 2016. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact me, Mark Young, at the ECIA at 466-4248 or e-mail me at mark@eldoradosf.org.

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

—Mark Young, Covenant Compliance Representative

Property Tax Clarified

According to David Chakroff, general manager of the EAWSD, the letter from Santa Fe County Treasurer Patrick Varela printed on the back page of the November *Vistas* did not make it clear which Eldorado residents would be affected by the announced tax increase. To clarify: Only properties within the Eldorado Area Water & Sanitation District will be affected.

Chakroff also writes, "The article implies that the tax mil levy was increased to 4.36 mils. That was the levy requested by the Board, but the State approved a tax levy of 4.246 mils. The new District tax levy is 4.246 mils. The article also states that the tax increase is expected to provide a revenue yield of \$1,199,000. That is not correct. The tax increase is expected to provide revenue yield of about \$260,000."

Final 2016 Budget Dates

The following are dates for development of the final ECIA budget for 2016. All ECIA committee members and residents are welcome to participate:

▼ **Tuesday, December 1, at 9 AM:** Proposed 2016 Operating Budget and Message available at the ECIA office and on the website, eldoradosf.org.

▼ **Monday, December 7 at 7 PM:** Board Public Hearing on the proposed 2016 Operating Budget. Copies will be available at the hearing. Venue: Railroad Building.

▼ **Thursday, December 17 at 7 PM:** Board adoption of the 2016 budget at its regular meeting. Venue: Railroad Building.

Message from the ECIA Board

The holidays are upon us, but your Association still has some tasks to wrap up before concluding a successful year. Our management company, HOAMCO, has identified finalists for the position of general manager, and we are currently holding interviews with them. We hope to have this process completed and a permanent GM in place at the beginning of the New Year.

We are also in the final stages of the budget process for 2016. A proposed budget has been reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Board, vetted at a public forum, and will be approved at the Board meeting on December 17. We are fully aware that Eldorado residents are being hit with increases in several major categories for the coming year, with higher property taxes, higher water rates, and expected increases in rates for electricity. Nonetheless, the expenses of the Association are also rising, and we continue to work toward building a solid reserve that will allow us to keep facilities in tip-top conditions in the future. We have sought to keep the annual assessment as low as possible and have instructed the general manager to work closely with members who face special financial needs.

With the year drawing to a close, we look back with satisfaction at the projects that have been completed during the past twelve months. The pool season this year was refreshing and fun as always! We have a new certified facilities manager and two after-hour building attendants who are available to assist Community Center users as well as keep the facilities safe and sound. In partnership with Santa Fe County, we completed repaving of the hike/bike trail from the school area to the Community Center. The Association completed maintenance on hike/bike segments on Avenida de Compadres and Avenida Casa de Oro. Major plantings were completed in the "triangle" area at the center's entrance. And we thank to the volunteers who worked diligently throughout the year on trails, landscaping, and other improvements. The goal of each of these projects has been to make our amenities more accessible and enjoyable for ECIA members. We hope everyone has a chance to enjoy the many recreational opportunities the ECIA has to offer.

And last but not least, we hope that everyone in Eldorado enjoys a safe and rewarding holiday season!

—ECIA Board of Directors

Recent Board Actions

The ECIA Board held its regular monthly meeting on November 19, 2015. Six Board members were present: **Dag Ryen** (President, presiding), **Pam Henline** (Vice-President), **Todd Handy** (Treasurer), **Jeanne Calzada** (Interim Secretary), **David Yard**, and **Antone Forneris**. Director **Greg Colello**'s absence was excused. President Ryen announced that a meeting open to all ECIA members would be held on December 7, at 7 PM in the Railroad Building to review the proposed ECIA budget for 2016. He also announced that State Senator **Peter Wirth** and State Representative **Matthew McQueen** will hold an open meeting in the Railroad Building on December 10, from 5:30 to 7 PM, to discuss state capital investments in the Eldorado area. The following formal actions were taken by unanimous vote.

- ▼ A variance request was approved for a ground-based solar and thermal array located more than 15 feet from the dwelling with appropriate screening at 33 Altura Road.
- ▼ Variance requests were approved for a ground-based solar array located more than 15 feet from the dwelling with appropriate screening at 4 Carlito Road and at 8 Gavilan Road.

- ▼ A variance request was approved to allow for a 14-foot-wide new portal with metal roof at 2 Monte Alto Place.

- ▼ An amendment to the ECIA contract with HOAMCO was approved to include purchase of the Caliber software package for homeowner and Board communication at \$25/month.

- ▼ Motions were approved to appoint **Ken Kleiber** to the Road Committee and **Ray Nichols** to the Information Committee.

The following actions were also taken:

- ▼ A variance request for a small auxiliary structure (fish pond) at 114 Verano Loop was approved (Ryen, Calzada, Yard voting for; Henline, Forneris voting against; Handy abstaining).

- ▼ A variance request for approval of an existing fence line protruding into the 50-foot road frontage setback at 9 Bonito Court was rejected unanimously, with the Board requesting resubmission of the application to include additional information on enclosure square footage.

Regular Board meetings are scheduled on the third Thursday of each month at 7 PM at the Community Center and are open to the public. An open forum and community announcements are normally included. Complete minutes and meeting agendas are available at the ECIA office or website: www.eldoradosf.org.

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Cherry Payne

Election: **Kathie Graham**

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Roads: **Felicia Probert**

Stable: **Open**

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Vista Grande Library

466-READ

Fire and Rescue

466-1204

eldoradofirerescue.org

County All Purpose

820-CNTY (2689)



New Year Music & Fun

Ring in the New Year with American JeM at La Tienda's Performance Space (Thursday, Dec. 31, @ 7–10:30 pm). Enjoy a three-course meal with a complimentary glass of champagne and dance the evening away to an eclectic Americana style music. At 10 PM, the group will sing Auld Lang Syne together with East Coast fans and then continue the music and fun until 10:30 PM. \$70/person (includes three-course dinner with champagne, festive favors, dancing). Reservations required. Call 670-8604 or email triojem@outlook.com



Reel NM Screening
December 10

Adam & Kim's Christmas Trees

Opening Saturday, November 28, at the north parking lot of La Tienda, the Eldorado-owned and -operated business, Adam and Kim's Christmas Trees, will offer quality, fresh-cut Christmas trees from Oregon. Douglas fir, Grand Fir, and Noble Fir will be available in sizes from tabletop to tall trees. Wreaths, garland, and chili ristras will also be available. A portion of proceeds is donated to El Dorado Fire & Rescue Service. Facebook: AdamKimsChristmasTrees for more info.

New-Old Radio Programs on Eldorado

Tradition rules the airwaves on at least one small radio voice. Eldorado's low-power AM broadcaster, ELDORADIO 1660, adds a little touch of Christmas and Hanukkah music this Black Friday, increasing it slowly until December 24, when the 24-hour eclectic easy-listening station will broadcast carols, concerti di natali, and holiday features all day for two days.

This year, ELDORADIO has added some new-old radio features, with more to come in 2016. Since November 1, Edward R. Murrow's five-minute "This I Believe" has aired at 7:30 AM seven days a week. Originally heard on CBS radio from 1950 to 1954, it follows "Good Morning, Eldorado" on at 7 AM every day.

Sundays at noon, manager **Bill Dunning** has presented occasional sneak previews of Retro Radio, a series starting regularly at noon Jan. 3. It will offer a full hour of old radio shows—comedy, mystery, dramatic and musical programs from 1930 to 1960, the Golden Age of Radio.

ELDORADIO also introduces this month a revolving 10:30 AM feature weekdays at "break time." These short programs highlight nuggets of history, storytelling, conversations, poetry, and comedy throughout the week.

The rest of the round-the-clock broadcast day is a blend of many different kinds of music, designed for tranquil relaxation, with only a few announcements now and then. Because of legal limitations, ELDORADIO, on the air since 2010, can only be heard within Eldorado.

Cowgirl Christmas Set for Dec. 5

Eldorado welcomes the holiday season on Saturday, Dec. 5, with a Cowgirl Christmas from 10 AM to 2 PM at La Tienda. Fifteen local and area craftspeople will join merchants in the community for a celebration that includes food, fun, decorations, and even pony rides, as well as a chance for youngsters to visit with Santa Claus.

Proceeds from the Cowgirl Christmas event will benefit the U.S. Pony Club, a nonprofit that teaches safe riding and horse care to young people, said **Holly Ourisman**, Eldorado area resident and owner of Barn Dogs in La Tienda, who is coordinating the event.

The jolly old fellow from the North Pole is stopping over in Eldorado on his way from Canada to Amsterdam, according to polar spokes-elf **Jolly Reithe**. Reports from elves on shelves indicate that there are several ex-

MOON PHASES FOR DECEMBER



ceptionally excellent children in Eldorado, and Santa wants to be sure that they have an opportunity to chat with him. Using his original name, Sinterklaas, Santa will preside the next day, Sunday, Dec. 6, over holiday events in The Netherlands, as the season gets under way in earnest. The spokes-elf added that Santa hopes to return for another Eldorado visit before Christmas Eve.

Locals Keep Up-to-Date

Be in the know! Subscribe to the La Tienda weekly update @ www.LaTiendaEldorado.com and click on the big mailbox on the far right side of the page.

Reel New Mexico in December

Screening on December 10 at 7 PM at La Tienda's Performance Space is *Christmas in the Clouds* (95 minutes, PG, 2001), part romantic comedy, part screwball comedy, and part historic breakthrough—the latter because the movie is about affluent Native American yuppies. Contrary to the typical Hollywood stereotypes of American Indians, this takes place at an upscale Indian-owned ski resort. The only alcoholic in the cast is a white undercover investigator for a guidebook.

Kate Montgomery, the writer-director, has such affection for the characters (played by Sam Vlahos, Mari-Ana Tosca, Tim Vahle, and Graham Greene) that we can feel it through the screen; we sense they represent something she wants to say about the Native Americans she knows. Although the plot is perversely frustrating, the end of *Christmas in the Clouds*, after everything finally comes out more or less as we hoped it would, leaves us with surprising affection and warmth. There are holiday pictures that are more high-tech, more sensational, with bigger stars and higher budgets and even greater artistry, but there may not be many with such good cheer.

Architecture Committee

The second December meeting of the Architecture Committee is canceled for the holidays. Their next meetings will be on January 5 and 19. This change in the January schedule is to accommodate the ruling that no more than 30 days can elapse between meetings.

Recycle Old Holiday Lights

Many of us will be thinking of putting up holiday lights and new lights will be purchased to replace those no longer working. Before you throw them away think about recycling them at La Tienda in Building B.



ASTRONOMY CORNER

December 2015

December 22 - Winter Solstice. The South Pole of the earth will be tilted toward the Sun, which will have reached its southernmost position in the sky and will be directly over the Tropic of Capricorn. This is the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere.

—From seaandsky.org

Changes Near You?

Have any of your neighbors submitted architectural modification plans to the ECIA for approval? What changes to the built landscape are being considered near you? Check out the Architecture Committee agenda at <http://tinyurl.com/ldjmreo> or the ECIA Board agenda at <http://tinyurl.com/lkxxdmw>.

New Zoning Map

In October, Eldorado residents received a letter from the Santa Fe County Growth Management Department Director Penny Ellis-Green, explaining a proposed County Zoning Map. Asked how this new map, if approved, will affect Eldoradoans, ECIA President Dag Ryen wrote: "The development map has essentially no impact on ECIA members, and marginal impact on properties in the 285 corridor. The hearing on Nov. 24 will be of interest to owners of undeveloped properties in the area."

December Events

Left out? Help us compile a comprehensive events listing.

Email diana@eldoradosf.org with your meeting/event information, or bring it to the ECIA office by the 3rd 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.

CC=Community Center, LR=Living Room, F=Foyer, CFR=Conference Rm, CR=Classroom, RR=Railroad, K=Kitchen

SPECIAL EVENTS

2016 ECIA Budget	Tues., Dec. 1, 2015	Budget Available in Office & Website	
Finance Committee	Mon., Dec. 7, 7-9	Public Hearing on 2016 Budget	RR
ECIA Board Meeting	Thurs., Dec. 17, 7-9	2016 Budget Adopted	RR
ECIA Offices Closed	Thurs. & Fri. Dec. 24 & 25		

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Architecture Committee	Tues., Dec. 8, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Architecture Committee	No 2nd meeting in Dec.	Mark Young	466-4248	
Board Work Study	Mon., Dec. 14, 6-8 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Conservation Committee	No meeting in Dec.	Jim Daniel	609-941-4527	F
ECIA Board Meeting	Thurs., Dec. 17, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	RR
Election Committee	Wed., Dec. 9, 2-4 pm	Kathie Graham	466-2133	CFR
Facilities & Grounds	Wed., Dec. 2, 4-6 pm	John Calzada	466-1947	CFR
Finance Committee	Mon., Dec. 14, 9:30-11:30 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Information Committee	Mon., Dec. 21, 7-9 pm	Frank Schober	310-8593	F
Road Committee	TBA	Felicia Probert	466-1563	CFR
Stable Committee	TBA	Alice Griffin	795-6424	CFR

MONTHLY / SEMI-MONTHLY MEETINGS / BIMONTHLY

EAW&SD*	1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 pm	Anna Mondragon	466-1085	RR/CR
Eldorado Arts & Crafts	Last Thurs., 7 pm	Mary Fredenburgh	466-1035	CR
Eldorado Book Club	3rd Wed., 3:00 pm	Pam Henline	phenline@comcast.net	
Eldorado/285 Recycles	2nd Tues. of month, 4-6 pm	Karen Sweeney	466-9797	CFR
Library Book Group	2nd Sat., 9-10:30	Joan LaMarque	466-6000	CFR
Roadrunner RV	3rd Tues. of month	Gordon Groff	699-7680	
Search & Rescue	2nd Thurs., 7-9 pm	santa fe sar.org		Moved to VGPL

WEEKLY MEETINGS

AA	Tues., 5:45-6:45 pm			CFR/LR
AA	Wed., 7-8 pm			CFR
AA	Thurs., 6-7 pm (Women Only)			CFR
AA	Fri., 6-7 pm			CFR/LR
AA	Sat., 10:45-11:45 am			CFR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm			Moved to La Tienda
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wed., 7-9 pm	Fritz Denny	466-4070	RR, CR, LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 12-4:30 pm	Jackie Vaughn	466-2558	LR
Community Church**	Sun., 9:00 & 10:30 am	David McPherson	466-2495	La Tienda
Eldorado Hikers	Tues., 8:30 am	Terry Gibbs	466-6914	CC
Eldorado Writers Club	2nd & 4th Tues., 7-9 pm	Randy Schultz	505-220-4327	CFR
Fire & Rescue Training	Tues., 7-9 pm	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Fire & Rescue Duty Sections	Sat., 8-12 noon	Fire Station Office	466-1204	Station
Knitting Club	Tues., 10-12 noon	Joyce Hanmer	466-3018	LR
Life Drawing	Mon., 10-12 noon	Jack McCarthy	466-9601	RR
Mah Jongg	Fri., 1-5 pm	Nancy Robbins	466-1780	CR
Overeaters Anon	Mon., 7-8 pm	Barb	954-1533	LR
Senior Lunch***	Mon.-Fri., 11:30-12:30 pm	Senior Center	466-1039	
Spinning Group (Fiber)	1st & 3rd Thurs., 9:30-11:30	Ellen Higgins	970-201-4776	LR
Square Dancing	Fri., 6-9 pm	Connie Walters	466-4226	RR

* Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

**For other religious/spiritual services, go to <http://santafe.areacconnect.com/churches.htm>

*** Reservations required

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.eldoradosf.org



At the Library

Whether you need a book to help you while away an evening, a cookbook with recipes for holiday gatherings, or a DVD or craft idea to keep the kids busy, Vista Grande Public Library has all of these, free to all card holders. The staff has been working to add to the collection, particularly with recent releases for all ages. And you may not be aware that the library also has public computers with Internet and printing capabilities, a copy machine, public wi-fi, and a meeting room that can be reserved for groups. In addition, the library has many free programs for the community—check our website (www.vglibrary.org) or posted flyers for information. Computer use, printing, wi-fi, meeting room, and children's programs do not require a card, although VGPL is happy to issue cards to anyone in our service area.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

The After School Reading Club meets for the last time this year on December 9. The Winter Session will begin on January 27 and will meet Wednesday afternoons through April. Parents of children in grades K–4 can get registration forms for the Winter Session at the circulation desk, or print one from the website to return to the library.

Story Time for preschoolers and toddlers will meet on December 4 and 11 at 11:30 AM. This is a fun time for the kids and their caregivers. Drop-ins are welcome!

The *Wags and Words Dogs* have a few open appointments. The dogs come in on Wednesday and

Thursday afternoons to listen to young readers. Parents who have a beginning or reluctant reader who would benefit from this program should come by to see about signing up for a 15-minute session.

ALL AGES PROGRAMS

Family Movie Night will be on Friday, December 11, at 7 PM. The next lecture in the *Physics for Everyone* series is scheduled for Thursday, December 3, from 12:30 to 2 PM. *Lego Club* meets on Tuesday, December 15, from 3 to 5 PM. All of these take place in the meeting room of the library. Contact VGPL for information on any of these events, at 466-7323, or see the website at www.vglibrary.org/.

FALL DONOR APPEAL

Your donations to VGPL have been and continue to be essential to our quality of life here in Eldorado and the 285 corridor. Unlike at most libraries, over half of VGPL's expenses must be covered through fundraising. Please show your support with a donation. Donors can use the new online payment system (vglibrary.org), mail a check with a hard-copy downloaded form, or stop by the library to donate via cash, check, or credit card. Your Fall Appeal gift received by December 31 automatically places you in a drawing for a donated KindleFire HD8, a great e-reader and tablet. Each new Fall Appeal donor is additionally enrolled in a drawing for a KindleFire 7. Thank you, Eldorado, for your continued generosity to VGPL.

Holiday Closures: VGPL will be closed on December 25, 26, and 31 and on January 1. Happy Holidays from your local library! —Tracey Mitchell

Eldorado/285Recycles

Thanks to everyone who donated new socks to our SOCK-TOBER project! We collected and donated 171 pairs of socks for the homeless to get them through the winter.

Between Monday, November 23, and Monday, February 1, Eldorado/285Recycles is again sponsoring a short-term Holiday Lights project, collecting your unwanted or non-working holiday string lights to keep them out of the landfill and contribute to a

healthier environment. What happens to them? They will be recycled to make wires, power cords, and smart phones. Just put them in the dedicated container in La Tienda Building B across from the Eldorado Gym, and while you are there, check out our other hard-to-recycle item collections. Help yourself to the two free recycling guides on the wall, and visit www.eldorado285recycles.org for more information. And for Facebook users, visit Eldorado/285 Recycles at <https://www.facebook.com/Eldorado285/>.

Water Matters, *continued from p. 1*

Coalter's letter goes on to explain that since the District's application for the funding was more than a year old when its amended technical memorandum was re-submitted, the Authority's policy required a reevaluation of the applicant's financial picture: "The results of the financial review demonstrated a decline in pledged revenues from FY 2012, which were used to underwrite the loans and which provided coverage."

This fall, Ewers and Allison were dismayed when confronted by a resident asking, yet again, why they

were refusing a lease to the District. In October 2015, the landlords notified the District that the month-to-month rental agreement was no longer an option. Going forward, in order to stay in the building, the District would be required to sign a lease.

On November 2, 2015, the District was provided the terms of the lease that was to be signed by December 1. By the time of publication, the District will have either signed a multi-year lease with Ewers and Allison or it will be looking for other space from which to conduct its business. Local control over our water continues to bump along. —Gershon Siegel





Helping Out Our Roads

The Road Committee recently completed the fall inspections of all roads in Eldorado. And while the majority of them were found to be in good shape, washboarding on some of our dirt roads continues to be a problem. In some areas, the washboard will pop back up in just a week after the county road grader comes through. For those of you too young to know the origin of the word “washboard,” a washboard surface on the road can best be described as the horizontal bumps and ruts that feel like a series of small speed bumps. At a minimum, driving on a washboard road surface is uncomfortable. In more extreme cases, it can increase the risk of skidding, damage the suspension system of your vehicle, and increase your maintenance costs.

What causes the washboard surface on a dirt road? A lack of moisture makes a road prone to a washboard surface, but the primary cause is our vehicles. As you drive your car, pickup truck, or SUV over the road, your tires lose a firm grip on the road and begin to

spin or skid just a little, displacing a slight amount of gravel. After this is repeated a number of times, a series of ripples will begin to form and the washboard surface results. This is especially true at higher speeds and in areas of hard acceleration and braking, such as intersections or hilly areas.

You can help prevent washboard or at least delay its formation on your gravel or dirt road by following one simple rule: Slow down! Studies have shown that any traffic going over about 3 MPH is going to cause washboard eventually. Now, traveling at 3 MPH in a motorized vehicle isn't remotely practical or expected, but if you stay at or under the 25 MPH speed limit and go easy when you accelerate and brake, the washboard will form more slowly. And that's not the only benefit of slowing down; there will also be less dust, you will have more time to brake for wildlife crossing the road, and our roadways will be safer for our walkers and bicyclists. Let's all slow down for longer road life and a smoother, safer ride.

—*Felicia Probert, Road Committee Chair*

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH FLORA & FAUNA GROUP

Eldorado's Microclimates

For years, we've heard people say that one or another area of Eldorado has slightly different weather than a separate part of the community. Curious, we decided to investigate and found out that it's true! Eldorado is home to quite a few microclimates, defined as climates in a very small or restricted area, different from the climate of the surrounding area. How can this be?

Because the terrain in large parts of New Mexico's grasslands is not especially diverse, the climate in many areas is predictable. In contrast, Eldorado's terrain is significantly varied. The Rocky Mountains begin their uplift right at the north side of Eldorado and extend northward into Canada. We are sitting on the weathered run-off dirt that slopes from those mountains. This results in a difference in elevation of around 400 feet from the east side of Eldorado to the west end. That difference produces enough of a temperature variation to cause snow near Highway 285 while the west end of Vista Grande experiences cold rain.

The Rockies started developing 30 million years ago (and are still growing). Many peaks reach over 14,000 feet. Santa Fe's ski “hill” just to the east of the city sits at 12,000 feet. When rain falls on these mountains or snows melt, the downward-moving water picks up mineral particles and carries them along until they are dropped to settle on the soils beneath. Many of these run-offs of soil, called an alluvial fan, can be observed “fanning out” at the bottom on the narrow handle end in the mountains. You can see the

alluvial fan that we sit on if you look toward Eldorado when driving north over La Bajada on I-25.

In addition to elevation changes, microclimates can also be affected by location on or around hills. Since we are in the foothills of the Rockies, our land is hilly. The sun is more intense on the south side of a hill and shadier and cooler on the north side. So, our microclimates are due to both elevation differences and varying exposure to solar radiation.

A reminder: With hunting season upon us, it's important to be very cautious around the open land (State Trust Land) at the far west end of Avenidas Eldorado and Vista Grande. Some of Eldorado's greenbelt trails go right up to the edge of the open land. Posted signs are outdated or in some cases nonexistent, but please be advised that the land is leased to a rancher and not open to the public except with permission. Due to hunting and trapping dangers, public access and use of the land is not encouraged.

References for this article are available upon request. Contact us at EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com.



The Sangre de Cristo range of the Rocky Mountains.
Photo: Tom Conlon, Creative Commons license

VISTAS

Eldorado Community
Improvement Association
#1 La Hacienda Loop
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508
www.eldoradosf.org

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about Eldorado by
Jack Arnold

Road Repair (SF County) 992-3010
www.santafecountynm.gov/publicworks/road_concern.

Sheriff 428-3720
Crime Stoppers 955-5050
Neighborhood Watch: <http://eldoradoneighbors.wordpress.com>

New Faces at ECIA

ECIA welcomes **Mike Armijo** as our new maintenance supervisor and **Stephen Wojcik** as a member of our full-time maintenance staff. Mike comes to us from Pecos and Stephen is from Rio Rancho. You can spot both of them somewhere between the Community Center and the Stables taking care of our amenities. (Just a reminder for you gardeners: on Thursdays you can pick up manure at the stables or our guys will be happy to load your truck, for winter mulching.)

If you've had the need to be in the Community Center after normal office hours, you've met one or both of our new building attendants. **Gloria Silva** and **Trey McLarney** make up our evening shift, and they are here in the evenings to welcome you, give you directions, or show you where your meeting is being held. If you need a dog park tag or pool pass and can't come in during the day, Gloria and Trey are here to help you.

—DiAna Gutierrez



Mike Armijo,
new maintenance supervisor

Holiday Showcase at the Agora

The Agora shopping center will be humming on December 5, when 25 artists of the Eldorado Arts & Crafts Association set up shop for the day in the spaces formerly occupied by the coffee shop, the pharmacy, and the solar energy businesses. The "Holiday Showcase" Art Sale will feature gift-gearred items such as jewelry, wearable accessories, recycled and folk art objects, and much more in a variety of mediums including painting, ceramics, photography, and textiles. "Holiday Showcase" spaces will be open from 10 AM to 4 PM.

In addition to the event at the Agora, a number of other EACA artists will be holding open studios at their homes on that same day. Signs and directions will be posted for those participants.

For more information or questions, please contact eldoradoarts@gmail.com.



Birdhouse (left) by Al Hockwalt and Karen Nein; ceramic vessel (above) by Arlene Siegel.