

# ELDORADO AT SANTA FE VISTAS

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Monthly Newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association

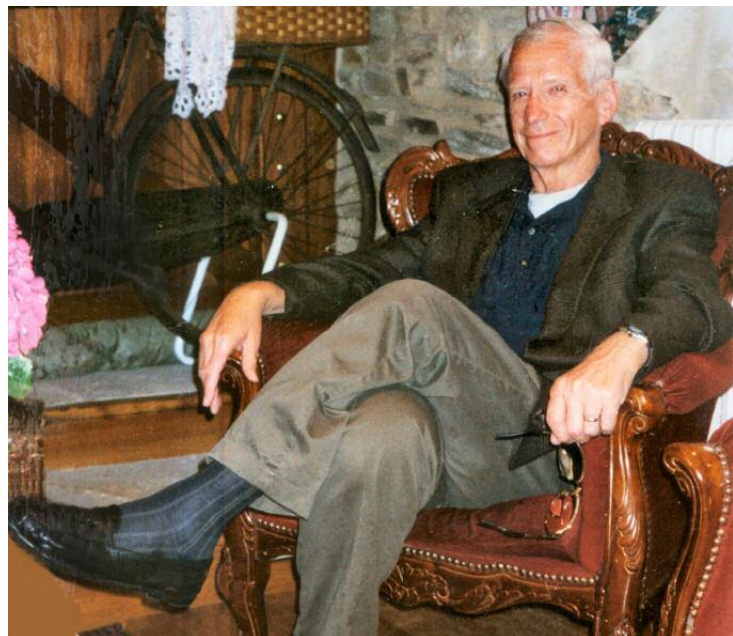
ECIA, 1 La Hacienda Loop, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508 ▼ (505) 466-4248 ▼ [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org)

## In Memoriam: Frank Schober

Eldorado is fortunate to have so many residents willing to volunteer for committees, library, firefighting, and special event planning. **Frank Schober**, who passed away on September 27, was one of Eldorado’s most active volunteers. Frank served on the ECIA Board from 2000 to 2005, chaired the Information Committee for many years, was an advocate for Neighborhood Watch, and helped organize many community events, most notably, the July 4 parades. Frank was chosen as Eldorado Resident of the Year in 2007.

Frank and his wife **Gale** moved to Eldorado from Southern California, where he served for eight years as Adjutant General, commanding the California Army and Air National Guard, with the rank of Major General. His military experience was impressive. In addition to his service in the National Guard, Gen. Schober taught American History and Middle Eastern Studies at West Point for three years, attended an immersion program in Arabic at the Army Language School, commanded a battalion in Vietnam’s Mekong Delta, and served as speechwriter to Army Chiefs of Staff **William Westmoreland** and **Creighton Abrams**.

After his retirement, Frank worked part-time for a contractor preparing emergency plans for cities and counties, including one for Mora County. He was appointed by Governor Richardson to serve on the state’s Emergency Preparedness Task Force.



For all his military bearing and dedication to his work, Frank enjoyed injecting a bit of humor and anecdotes into his presentations. Those of us who were fortunate to work with Frank on a committee will miss that sense of humor and his leadership. (Thanks to **Dan Drobnis** for information he provided for this article.)  
 —*Jack Arnold*

### El Dorado Community School

El Dorado Community School, built in 1980 as a K–6 grade school, has been open for K–8 students for several years, following major renovations made in 2012. The school now serves not only Eldorado but also Galisteo, Lamy, the 285 Corridor, Glorieta, Cañoncito, and up to the edge of Pecos.

Enrollment currently stands at 515 students, a decrease of more than 50 students from the high of previous years. The lower numbers this year and last reflect a national trend related to the economic downturn of 2008 and lower birth rates. There are 45 teachers at the school; class size averages 17 to 25.

Principal **Anne Darnton** came to El Dorado School in 2010, just in time to deal with the pressures of a major renovation that added a two-story building. Anne has been in New Mexico for many years but hails from Michigan. She has a BA from Williams College, a master’s in Elementary and Special Education from Boston University, and an EdS from the UNM Educational Leadership Program. She and her husband, a teacher at Santa Fe High, live in the area and have a sixth-grade son at the school.

Vice Principal **Kevin Garcia** came to El Dorado in 2015. He was a long-time social studies teacher and assistant football coach at St. Michael’s High. He is also the Athletic Director at El Dorado, which is a

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

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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 gloria@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.

## String Lighting

Over the past few years, the use of string and rope-style lights for exterior accent lighting and for holiday displays has been on the increase. The most recent Eldorado Covenants and Guidelines do not specifically address these kinds of lights, but because they can be very bright and are usually not downward shielded, the ECIA Board felt that it was important to establish a formal policy to regulate their use. At the Board Meeting of September 15, 2016, the directors passed a Board Resolution for a new policy, as follows:

*Article II 10. Exterior Lights. Exterior lights are prohibited unless they are 75 watts or less and are properly shielded so as to direct light downward. I [Pam Henline] move that the following further clarification of this rule be adopted by the Board of Directors and becomes effective immediately on adoption:*

*A. The 75 watt incandescent standard applies to all types of exterior lighting including LED, LCD or other types of lighting. Exterior lighting shall be measured in lumens. According to the Energy.gov website the equivalent of a 75 watt incandescent bulb*

*should be approximately 1100 lumens, regardless of the type of lighting.*

*B. Any and all types of string, or rope, or other similar lighting, with the exception of Holiday Lighting, must be installed under a solid cover such as a portal or other structure with a solid roof so that all lights are shielded in a way to prevent any upward light transmission.*

*C. The ECIA Board of Directors will determine the length of time [in days] when Holiday Lighting may be displayed. Note: Christmas lighting may be displayed from Thanksgiving through January 15.*

With the passing of this new Board Motion, we ask that residents please refrain from using any type of string, or rope, or other similar lighting that would be in violation of these new restrictions. Additionally, please choose your lighting choices responsibly, respecting neighbors and enjoying and preserving our New Mexico night skies.

If you have any questions, contact me at the ECIA at 466-4248 or via e-mail at [myoung@hoamco.com](mailto:myoung@hoamco.com).

—Mark Young, Compliance Coordinator

## Director “Overboard”

For the first time in our 44-year history, a sitting ECIA Board member has been recalled. Having been elected to the Board only this past spring, **Claudia Daigle’s** three-year term was brought to a premature finish by September’s end. Ms. Daigle had come onto the Board after running unopposed.

Her abrupt removal resulted from a successful petition drive spearheaded by resident **Joni Alm** of Verano Loop. The petition cited two reasons for Daigle’s recall: her unauthorized removal of a campaign sign from private property, and her continued litigation against the Board.

While 417 signatures were needed for the Board to begin the recall process, 509 out of 602 collected were certified as valid. At its monthly meeting last August, the Board, by a vote of 6–0 (with Daigle recusing herself), directed the ECIA Election Committee to conduct and complete a membership recall election.

The Committee sent recall election ballots to the 2,644 eligible members “in good standing.” Of the 1,375 returned, 49 were declared invalid because of tampering, duplication, or other irregularities. On September 29, the five-member Election Committee tabulated the remaining 1,326 votes, certifying 1,085 for recall and 241 for retention.

—Gershon Siegel

## County General Obligation Bond Election

In a Presidential election year, it can be easy to overlook the local issues that will be on the ballot, such as general obligation bond proposals. In July 2016, the Santa Fe County Commissioners adopted a resolution to place five bond questions on the ballot for Santa Fe County voters to consider in the November general election. The bond questions ask County voters about funding up to \$35 million for roads, water and wastewater, public safety facilities, community health facilities, and open space, trails, and parks. Projects identified for funding that would directly impact Eldorado, if approved by the voters, include paving of Balsa Road, an addition to

the Eldorado Main Fire Station, completion of the rail trail from Avenida Eldorado to Spur Ranch Road, and an improved trailhead for the rail trail at Avenida Vista Grande. In addition, there are several other projects within our District 5 and the adjoining District 4 that may be of interest, including development of the Thornton Ranch open space in the Galisteo Basin and an addition to the Hondo Fire Station #2. Residents can learn more about the purpose and content of the bond election, including the potential impact to property taxes at [http://www.santafecountynm.gov/news\\_detail/2410](http://www.santafecountynm.gov/news_detail/2410).

—Felicia Probert

# Message from the ECIA President

September and October have been eventful months for the Eldorado Community Improvement Association. Responding to a petition signed by 15% of the membership, a vote was held to remove Ms. **Claudia Daigle** from the ECIA Board. Ms. Daigle's ouster was supported by 82% of those voting, and she will no longer serve on the Board. However, Ms. Daigle has once again filed suit against the Association, claiming that ground-based solar arrays and other structures are in violation of the ECIA covenants, an issue that has already been adjudicated through the New Mexico court system. The Association is contesting this frivolous litigation in the most vigorous terms. ECIA expenses in this suit will be covered by our insurance policy.

Ms. Daigle's departure left two vacant seats on the Board, and we are pleased to announce that two exemplary Association members, **Mr. John Henriksen** and **Mr. Michael McDowell**, have been named to complete these directors' terms. Mr. Henriksen's term will end May 2019, while Mr. McDowell's term will be up in May 2018. Both gentlemen will bring exten-

sive leadership skills and management experience to your Association Board. Look for additional information about them on our website and in next month's *Vistas*.

We are also in the middle of budget planning for the coming year. When a draft is complete next month, a public meeting will be held where all members can weigh in on the proposed budget. Association assessments (dues) for next year will remain the same as this year.

Finally, we and our management company, HOAMCO, are continuing our search for a new permanent general manager. We will post announcements on the ECIA website and send out an e-blast as soon as any final decision is made. In the meantime, ECIA business is being ably conducted by our interim general manager, **Isabel Ugarte**.

The holiday season is almost upon us, and the ECIA Board wishes everyone in our community a pleasant autumn and a very Happy Thanksgiving.

*—Dag Ryen, President, ECIA Board of Directors*

## Recent Board Actions

The ECIA Board held its regular monthly meeting on October 20, 2016. Present were President **Dag Ryen**, Vice-President **Pam Henline**, Secretary **David Yard**, and Director **Antone Forneris**. Treasurer **Todd Handy**'s absence was excused. The following actions were taken:

- ▼ A consent agenda was approved, including a variance request at 11 Tarro Road for a decades-old fence with stringers on the outside, a variance request at 6 Camerada Road for a ground-based solar array at more than 15 feet from the primary residence to take advantage of natural vegetative screening, and a variance request at 66 Encantado Loop for construction of a small accessory structure more than 15 feet from the house to take advantage of existing fence screening.
- ▼ A motion was passed unanimously to grant a variance for existing fencing at 31 Fonda Road that extends 4 feet into the 50-foot road setback.
- ▼ A motion was approved unanimously to grant a variance for a small accessory structure at 10 Mimosa Road more than 15 feet from the primary residence to take advantage of existing natural screening.
- ▼ A motion was approved unanimously to grant a variance for a ground-based solar array more than 15 feet from the primary residence at 2 Encantado Road with a revised and improved screening plan.

▼ A motion was passed unanimously to table a variance request for an existing small accessory structure at 2 Jacinto Court that extends into the 20-foot setback, pending further collaboration with the owner on appropriate screening.

▼ A motion was passed unanimously to accept the results of the recent election removing Director **Claudia Daigle** from the Board of Directors.

▼ A motion was passed unanimously to appoint **John Henriksen** and **Michael McDowell** to vacant positions on the ECIA Board of Directors.

▼ A motion was passed unanimously to accept the Election Committee's proposal for election procedures, with additional discussions to follow regarding placement of security codes on election materials.

▼ A motion to appoint new members to the Stable Committee was tabled unanimously in consideration of upcoming review and adoption of revised stable rules.

The next regular meeting of the ECIA Board will be held on November 17, 2016, at 7 PM in the Railroad Building at the ECIA Community Center. Complete minutes and agendas of ECIA Board meetings are available at the ECIA office or on the website: [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org).

**CORRECTION:** In last month's Recent Board Actions, abstentions on a motion to restrict the use of rope lights was incorrect. Directors abstaining on the vote were Directors Handy and Yard.

### ECIA OFFICE

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS President

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Vice-President

**Pam Henline**  
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Secretary

**David Yard**  
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Treasurer

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Director

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### COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Architecture:  
**Katherine Mortimer**  
Conservation: **Jim Daniel**  
Election: **Kathie Graham**  
Facilities & Grounds:  
**Lee Onstott (acting chair)**  
Finance: **Dan Drobnis**  
Information: **Open**  
Roads: **Felicia Probert**  
Stable: **Pat Donahue**

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General Manager (Interim)  
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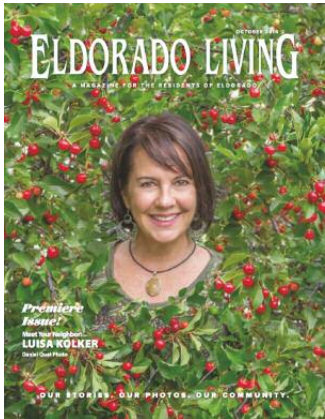
Webmaster:  
**Jack Arnold**  
[webmaster@eldoradosf.org](mailto:webmaster@eldoradosf.org)

COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
Vista Grande Library  
466-READ

Fire and Rescue  
466-1204  
[eldoradofirerescue.org](http://eldoradofirerescue.org)  
County All Purpose  
820-CNTY (2689)



Give a book about Eldorado for Christmas! *Windmills and Dreams* Available at the Community Center \$15 check or credit card



Katie Holmes stars in "Pieces of April," Nov. 9 at La Tienda



Check out the Yoga classes at the Community Center Classroom

**2017 Budget Development**

The ECIA Finance Committee continues discussions to develop the 2017 Operating Budget, with November meetings scheduled:

**Monday, Nov. 14, 9:30 AM:** The Finance Committee adopts a final recommended budget and Budget Message at its regular monthly meeting.

**Monday, Nov. 14, 6 PM** followed by Board working meeting. Joint meeting of the ECIA Board and Finance Committee. Committee chairs and residents are invited for information or to further explain their budget requests if desired. Venue: Conference Room.

A complete list of scheduled meetings leading to the adoption of a 2017 Operating Budget in December is available on the website, [eldoradosf.org](http://eldoradosf.org).

**New Publication for Eldorado**

By now, most every household in Eldorado should have received a copy of the premier issue of *Eldorado Living*. The monthly publication is a gift from Baya Road residents **Bryan Tagas** and **Margo Spellman**, who just moved here from Seattle a year ago. They, along with the magazine's "sponsors," made it happen.

To quote the website ([eldoradoliving.org](http://eldoradoliving.org)), "*Eldorado Living* is a full-color, monthly magazine designed to connect Eldorado's more than 6,000 residents with each other and with the businesses who sponsor the publication. *Eldorado Living* will focus exclusively on the community, delivering high-quality news, features and photos about the people, places and events that make Eldorado a vibrant neighborhood. The magazine will be mailed free of charge each month to Eldorado's 3,000 homes." — *Gershon Siegel*

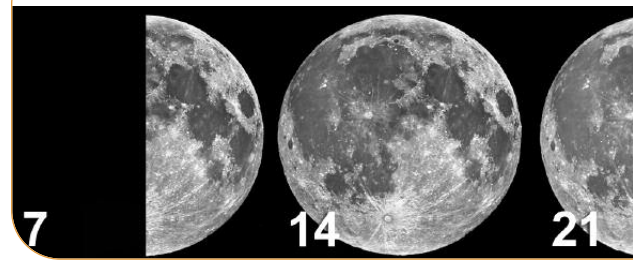
**Reel New Mexico, November 9**

Screening at La Tienda in Eldorado on Wednesday (note the special day), November 9 at 7 PM is "Pieces of April" (80 minutes, 2003). Peter Hedges's directorial debut is a movie about family that's both heartfelt and tough-minded. The tale of a black-sheep daughter April (Katie Holmes) making Thanksgiving dinner for her suburban clan avoids sentimentality at every turn and truly earns both its laughs and its tears.

The movie works as an ensemble piece, but one that might have collapsed without its center, the magnificent Patricia Clarkson. As April's mother, a holy terror in the last stages of cancer, Clarkson delivers her finest performance among about 100 fine Clarkson performances in the past few years.

Her character is both hilarious and maddening, an alto-voiced fount of one-liners and backhanded compliments. During a drive to New York City, the mother tells her younger daughter (played with heartbreaking neediness by Alison Pill): "You're just like me, except for

**MOON PHASES FOR NOV**



your slight weight problem." She saves her most poisonous barbs for April, however, urging her family to fill up on doughnuts so they don't have to eat her cooking.

Clad in her character's punk-rock armor of magenta hair and smudged eyeliner, Holmes does a subtle job of portraying the high stakes of this family feast. April knows this might be her last chance for a reconciliation, and a broken oven heightens her stress.

With a set jaw and forced smile, Holmes shows the effort it takes for her character to make nice. April can't resist popping off to a neighbor even though he's let her borrow his oven. Holmes's face registers instant regret, and the moment gives us insight into what her family has endured all these years.

Her mother would shudder to see April, in cracked black fingernail polish, rinsing the turkey in the grimy sink of her Lower East Side apartment. But knowing her mother will eat the meal without seeing behind the curtain is an illicit kick for the audience. April has her dad (Oliver Platt) in her corner, at least, a man staving off his own sadness to buoy his family.

April's Mom tries to recall good memories from April's childhood, but neither she nor her family members can muster any. Clarkson brings a breathtaking mix of rage and frustration to the dying mother in this scene. With time running out and her reflexive use of humor wearing thin, knowing she's right about her daughter is no longer satisfying.

For more information, please call 466-1634.

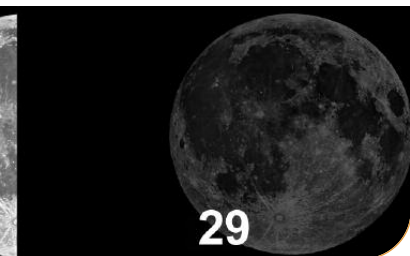
**Healthy Benefits of Yoga**

How many times do you find yourself limiting your activities because of self-thoughts about aging? These beliefs may be spoken out loud in conversations with others, or they might come in the form of self-imposed thoughts circling around in your mind. We all age, and that cannot be denied; however, how we do so can differ significantly. So many variables come into play. Yet, lifestyle choices, self-thoughts, level of physical activity, social connectedness, and lifelong curiosity and love of learning do have an effect on how each one of us ages. If you would like to achieve greater flexibility, strength, and balance, try yoga!

Although this is not a comprehensive list of the health benefits of yoga, here are ten ways that yoga can

# November Events

MBER 2016



enhance well-being: (1) improves flexibility, (2) builds strength, (3) increases muscle tone and definition, (4) improves balance, (5) supports joint health and strengthens bones, (6) improves immune function, (7) teaches better breathing, (8) fosters mental calmness, (9) reduces stress, and (10) increases self-confidence. You might notice that this short list of ten health benefits includes enhancers that assist in the ongoing development of the body, mind, and intellect. Consider adding yoga into your regular self-care routine. However, if you have hesitation about whether this is a "right fit" for you, seek the advice of your health care professional before doing so.

Three classes of different ability levels are offered weekly in the ECIA Classroom, and the days and times are listed in the monthly calendar (at right). For beginners or those new to yoga, there is a once-weekly Gentle Stretch/Slow Flow class offered on Wednesday mornings as an introduction to the yoga postures. For those more physically active or with some experience in yoga, two Vinyasa Flow classes are offered weekly on Tuesday and Friday mornings which blend breathwork and postures into a dynamic, active flow. These classes are offered at reasonable rates, and a variety of class passes are offered, as well.

Yoga is an ancient practice that has become highly popularized in the West because of its many positive benefits across the human life-cycle, no matter what age.

—Mary Garvey Horst

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

Email [gloria@eldoradosf.org](mailto:gloria@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

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Architecture Committee	Tues., Nov. 8, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Architecture Committee	Tues., Nov. 22, 7-9 pm	Mark Young	466-4248	Foyer
Board Work Study	Mon., Nov. 14, 6-8 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CR
Conservation Committee	Tues., Nov. 1, 7-9 pm	Jim Daniel	609-941-4527	F
ECIA Board Meeting	Thurs., Nov. 17, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	RR
Election Committee	Wed., Nov. 9, 2-4 pm	Kathie Graham	466-2133	CFR
Facilities & Grounds	Wed., Nov. 2, 4-6 pm	David Lovro	466-0540	CFR
Finance Committee	Mon., Nov. 14, 9:30-11:30 am	Dan Drobnis	466-4781	CFR
Information Committee	Mon., Nov. 21, 7-9 pm	ECIA	466-4248	CFR
Road Committee	Wed., Nov. 16, 6-8 pm	Felicia Probert	466-1563	CR
Stable Committee	TBA	Alice Griffin	795-6424	F

### MONTHLY / SEMI-MONTHLY MEETINGS / BIMONTHLY

EAWS&SD	1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 pm	Anna Mondragon	466-1085	EAWS&SD
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		LR
Eldorado/285 Recycles	2nd Tues. of month, 4-6 pm	Sue Daniel	856-220-7087	CFR
Roadrunner RV	3rd Tues. of month	Brad Cottingham	466-4655	
Search & Rescue	2nd Thurs., 7-9 pm	santafesar.org		VGPL
Healing Arts Practitioners	2nd Tues., 4:30-5:30 pm	Terry Terry	303-475-0922	LR

### 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., 11-12 pm			CFR
AA	Sun., 5:15-6:15 pm			La Tienda
Boy Scout Troop 414	Wed., 7-9 pm	Karl Cordova		RR, CR, LR
Bridge	1st & 3rd Fri., 1-5 pm	Shirley Davis	982-6179	LR
Community Church**	Sun., 9:00 & 10:30 am	David McPherson	466-2495	La Tienda
Creative Movement for Kids	Tues., 3:30-4:30	Teresa Schwarz	428.0832	CR
Eldorado Hikers	Tues., 8:30 am	Terry Gibbs	466-6914	CC
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 am	Ellen Higgins	970-201-4776	LR
Square Dancing	Fri., 6-9 pm	Connie Walters	466-4226	RR
Yoga/Gentle Stretch	Wed., 9-10:15 am	Mary Horst	490-2790	CR
Yoga/Vinyasa	Tues. & Fri., 9-10:15 am	Julia Cairns	466-1935	CR
Zumba	Tues. & Thurs., 9-10 am	Tana Monaco	690-4332	Max Coll CC

\* Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District

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

\*\*\* Reservations required

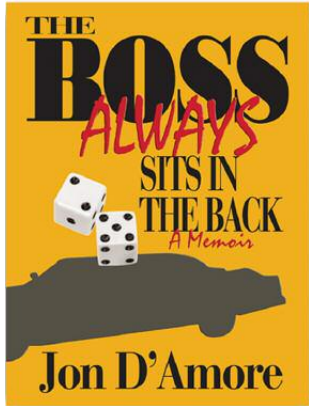
VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.eldoradosf.org](http://www.eldoradosf.org)



## Library News

**Book Sale:** The Fall Book Sale is here! The Book Sale will be held at the library on Nov. 10, 11, and 12 during regular library hours: 12 to 6 on Thursday and Friday, and 10 to 4 on Saturday. Shoppers can find thousands of adult titles, both fiction and nonfiction, as well as children's and youth books, DVDs, and music CDS. The book sale is a fundraiser for VGPL and will help buy new materials, fund programs, and cover other expenses to help VGPL continue to provide free services to the community.

**Treasurer Needed:** The library's current treasurer will be leaving the Board next spring when her term is up, and VGPL needs someone with financial skills to replace her, beginning early next year in order to learn the job. The treasurer, who is also a board member, is responsible for oversight of the bookkeeping function, preparation of monthly reports for the board, leading the annual budget preparation process, supervising financial activities at our fundraisers, and the like. (Day-to-day bookkeeping is handled by a volunteer.) Hours required for the treasurer's activities vary but likely average 2 to 3 hours per week. If you are interested, you may contact **Donna Mazzola** at [treasurer@vglibrary.org](mailto:treasurer@vglibrary.org) or **Judy Spain** at [jespain@aol.com](mailto:jespain@aol.com) or 505-954-1241.



Author talk with Jon D'Amore on Wed., Nov. 16, 7 pm

### IMPORTANT DATES:

- ▼ **Art Exhibition:** Tama Dumlao's acrylic paintings "Seasons" from Oct. 31 to Nov. 29. Meet the Artist reception: Nov. 18, from 5 to 7 PM
- ▼ **Estate Planning presented by Carol Neelly:** Tuesday, Nov. 1, from 5 to 6 PM
- ▼ **Bird-Watching Presentation by Dawn Graber:** Thursday, Nov. 3, from 5 to 6 PM
- ▼ **Author Talk: Jon D'Amore,** writer of *The Boss Always Sits in the Back*. Wednesday, Nov. 16, at 7 PM
- ▼ **Family Movie Nights:** Friday, Nov. 4, and Dec. 9, at 7 PM. Call the library (505) 466-7323 for the titles. Everyone is welcome and admission is free.
- ▼ **Book Donation Day:** First Saturday of the month (Nov. 5 and Dec. 3) from 9 to 11:30 AM
- ▼ **Story Time** for preschoolers and toddlers on Fridays at 11:30 AM. NO Story Time on Nov. 25, when the library is closed.
- ▼ **Physics for Everyone with Robert Henderson:** Thursday, Nov. 17, at 1 PM
- ▼ **Holiday Closings:** Closed on Nov. 24 and 25 to celebrate Thanksgiving. Open normal hours (10 AM to 4 PM) on Saturday, Nov. 26.
- ▼ **International Day of Giving is Nov. 29:** Have you supported your library this year?

—Tracey Mitchell

## School, continued from page 1

huge job, hiring and evaluating coaches, scheduling all sports events, and overseeing the entire program. At El Dorado, team sports include volleyball, girls and boys basketball, football, and the only girls and boys public middle school cross-country team. The team mascot is the Dust Devils.

Students take music, art, and physical education throughout their time at El Dorado. El Dorado has a very progressive music program. General Music for grades K–4 is directed by **Jannine Sammeth**, Choir for grades 4–8 by **Galen Prenevost**, Orchestra for grades 4–8 by **Don Higgins**, and Band by **April Pickrell**. Each presents several concerts throughout the year, and the entire community is invited to attend and support this amazing music program.

The school's visual arts program is taught by **Stephanie Morris** and long-time Eldorado art teacher, **Ronnie Rohr**. They focus on a choice-based curriculum that builds on the eight studio habits of artists. They emphasize arts integration and do a great deal of collaboration with classroom teachers. The physical education program is taught by **Jenn Arlin** and **Jason Paul**. They have a full-size gym and access to the school's athletic field



The El Dorado PTA, led this year by President **Kristin Goodman**, is overseen by a Leadership Board, which makes recommendations and decisions on how the money raised is put to use. The PTA has a very active fund-raising program to support the teachers with classroom supplies not covered by the school district budget. It also helps fund sports, arts programs, and the library. This year, the PTA's Fun Run-a-Thon, a pledge-based fund-raiser, raised over \$20,000. This supports an After School Enrichment Program with a diversity of classes from Drama to Papermaking to Quadcopter Robotics. The PTA also financially supports a Food for Kids Program operated by the Food Depot that supplies healthy snacks for kids in need. Other fund-raisers include Rock the Arts, Read-a-thon, and a Halloween Carnival. This year, a Fall Festival will be held at La Tienda, with a band, food, pumpkins, and a bouncy house, all for a good cause.

Principal Darnton expressed her pride for the El Dorado students and what they accomplish after they move on from the school. In the top 10% of the 2016 Santa Fe High School graduating class, 12 of the 35 students were from El Dorado, and the top three students in the 2016 Santa Fe High graduating class were all El Dorado alumni. The Eldorado Community is also very proud of our students, teachers and school.

—Marilyn Farrell

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH FLORA & FAUNA GROUP

# Dig We Must

Ever wonder what animal dug the holes you sometimes see? Two of the most common burrowing rodents in New Mexico are prairie dogs and pocket gophers.

## THE SOCIAL ONES: PRAIRIE DOGS

Prairie dogs are a keystone species in grassland ecosystems. This means that over 200 other species—eagles, hawks, coyotes, badgers, ferrets (especially the highly endangered black-footed ferret; please notify the Flora & Fauna group if you see one!), the federally protected burrowing owl, snakes, and many others—depend on prairie dogs for habitat and food.

Prairie dogs are highly intelligent, with an elaborate and sophisticated vocabulary. They are quite social, living in small family units called *coterie*s, generally consisting of one adult breeding male (sometimes more), two to three breeding females, and young pups under two years old. Several family groups join together to form a town or colony, sometimes amounting to hundreds of individuals.

Extensive burrows, as deep as 10–12 feet, provide shelter as well as chambers for raising young, sleeping, storage, and escape from predators, floods, and fires. The burrows—frequently capped with dirt mounds that provide excellent lookout posts—channel rainwater into the water table, helping to prevent runoff and erosion and thus benefiting humans.

Typically reviled by ranchers, prairie dogs are often considered pests to be hunted and poisoned. In some areas, however, protective measures are in place; Santa Fe, for example, employs a relocation program for the Gunnison’s Prairie Dog.

## THE ANTISOCIAL ONES: POCKET GOPHERS

Often considered messengers from the underworld by Native Americans, pocket gophers are named for the external, fur-lined cheek pouches used for carrying food. They are well adapted for living underground, with a powerful upper body, a short neck and a small head, small eyes and ears, and front claws and lips that close behind the incisors, both of which are used for digging.

The main burrow is usually 4–18 inches deep, with branching lateral tunnels. There are different chambers for resting and food storage. When digging, gophers leave a fan-shaped mound of dirt on the ground surface with no visible openings. Visible holes on the ground surface are most likely from ground squirrels, not gophers.

Unlike the sociable prairie dogs, gophers meet up with other gophers only when needed to mate or raise young. They eat plants by pulling them underground into burrows, or roots they come across while digging. Gophers can damage plants, underground wires, and water irrigation systems. But they also provide benefits, such as increased soil fertility and aeration, and water infiltration.

Both gophers and prairie dogs hibernate in colder climates. Predators of gophers include weasels, spotted skunks, and snakes. Predators of prairie dogs include coyotes, bobcats, badgers, black-footed ferrets, golden eagles, and prairie falcons. And, of course, humans.

Contact us at [EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com](mailto:EldoradoFloraFauna@yahoo.com). For archived Flora & Fauna articles, go to <https://eldoradoneighbors.wordpress.com/flora-fauna-group/>.



Top: Prairie dog; bottom: pocket gopher peeking out of ground. Photos: Ann V. Wood.

# Black-Throated Sparrow

This sparrow is a gem to see, very distinctive and boldly marked. I have enjoyed several sightings, although not here in Eldorado. But thanks go to Dale Stahlecker for reporting this LBB (little brown bird) here in Eldorado. The Black-throated Sparrow (BtS) is a typical sparrow size, 4.5 to 5.5 inches long, with a wingspan of 8.5 inches. Male and female are similar and have a large black throat area, extending onto a gray breast, gray-brown body, and two wide white stripes (on each side of the face) extending from just under the bill and just above the dark eye to the back of the head. They are found throughout New Mexico and live in arid desert scrub areas, earning them the name “desert sparrow” (although this moniker is used for several birds, worldwide). They may be permanent residents in New Mexico or migrate to Mexico. The song is distinctive and pleasant.

BtSs eat insects (more in summer) and seeds (more in winter), scurrying around on the ground, running between bushes. Flights are short. Some food may be found in shrubs and trees, and a few insects may be caught in the air, but this bird prefers staying on the ground. The BtS is adapted to exist on small amounts of water, which come primarily from its food. Pairs are monogamous. The male sings in breeding season to mark out his territory. The time of nesting is variable, depending on local weather and food availability. Details of parenthood are not well known but include making a sturdy cup-like nest, either on the ground or low to the ground in a shrub or cactus. Two to four eggs are laid, with the female doing the incubating and probably both parents feeding the young. Exact hatch and fledge dates are unsure but are probably similar to those of other sparrows (incubation 12–15 days and fledging at 10–11 days).



Black Throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*) Photo: Ron Knight. Creative Commons license.

The species has declined, probably due to habitat loss from urban development, but is not endangered. The oldest recorded Black-throated Sparrow was a female, and at least six years old when she was recaptured and released during banding operations in Arizona.

Thanks to the Audubon website, [birdweb.org](http://birdweb.org), and The Cornell Lab of Ornithology! —Pam Henline



# VISTAS

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Neighborhood Watch: <https://eldoradoneighbors.wordpress.com>

## 2 La Hacienda Loop — A Last Look

Last August, the ECIA Board passed a motion authorizing the demolition of the unoccupied building at 2 La Hacienda Loop. Originally, the building was a residence for the foreman when Eldorado was still a cattle ranch. Most recently, it served as a rental property but had recently fallen into disrepair. This past summer the Board determined that the cost of bringing the building back into rentable condition was not a prudent use of ECIA funds.

By the time you read this, 2 La Hacienda Loop will be but a memory. For a total of \$15,984, the Board contracted with Southwest Abatement of Albuquerque to carry out the building's demolition. The operation began on September 19 and took about three days to finish.

— Gershon Siegel

