



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

2015 was a busy year for our organization! Key newcomers joined and made great contributions. New officers were selected to carry our work forward in 2016.

ADMINISTRATION

In 2015 Karen Sweeney served as our Chair, Sue Daniel as Treasurer, and Joe Eigner as Secretary. For 2016 Sue Daniel and Sue Garfitt were chosen as Co-Chairs, Sheila Sullivan as Treasurer, and Libby Maclaren as Secretary. Our monthly meetings will continue in the conference room of the ECIA building. All interested persons are welcome to attend on the (second Tuesday of the month, 4-6 PM). In 2015 our website eldorado285recycles.org continued to attract visits, growing from 14,494 in 2014, its first year, to 31,005 in 2015. One of our members received a scholarship to attend the 2015 meeting of the New Mexico Recycling Coalition in held in Albuquerque June.

MISSION

Our group's mission is to encourage all residents of Eldorado and the Hwy.285 Corridor to reduce the amount of material they send to the landfill by practicing the "5 R's" (1) Refusing to buy unneeded items, (2) Reducing unneeded packaging of what they buy, (3) Repairing whatever they can to extend its life, (4) Reusing other people's unwanted "stuff" in place of buying them new, and (5) Recycling (including composting) of whatever can't be repaired or reused. We recognize the importance of reaching out beyond the Eldorado/285 area to the Santa Fe City and County agencies that influence recycling policies and behaviors, while at the same time emphasizing activities within our own community.

PROGRAMS

- 1. ADVOCACY:** Throughout 2015 we were active as advocates for recycling in the Santa Fe area. Our members participated in the meetings of the Board of County Commissioners, the Santa Fe Solid Waste Management Agency SWMA, which oversees the local landfill, and BuRRT - the Buckman Road Recycling and Transfer Station, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee, the City Environmental Services Division, and the City Council and its Public Utilities Committee.
- 2. COMPOSTING:** Our "compost pile in every backyard" program continued under the leadership of Marcia Spears-Cihon. We installed 50 "straw bale worm-composting systems" in Eldorado and along the Hwy.285 corridor. This bested our 2014 effort of 40 for a cumulative total of 90. We purchased straw bales in bulk, delivered them to the recipient's backyard, set up the "system", seeded it with worms from our own systems, and trained the new composters on feeding the worms with kitchen scraps. We estimate that the 90 systems will divert 20 tons of food waste (and some other organics) from being landfilled in 2016 and every year thereafter as long as the homeowners maintain their systems. In April our group received a 2015 Sustainable Santa Fe Award for this project.
- 3. RECYCLING:** In 2015 we continued to collect selected conventional recyclables and "hard-to-recycle" items at the Eldorado Supermart and at La Tienda. The items included: old athletic shoes, household batteries, #5 plastics, mixed #1 and #2 plastic bottles and metal cans, old plastic writing instruments such as magic markers and ballpoint pens, bottle corks, rubber bands, dental care items, personal care and beauty items, string lights, and cold weather clothing items (hats, scarves, gloves, etc.). We also collected recyclables at our local senior center and from several Santa Fe dental offices. During 2015 we collected 2,888 pounds (1.4 tons) of recyclable/reusable materials, plus 119 pairs of athletic shoes and 164 warm wear items. We ended the collection of batteries and mixed recyclables on August 1st, since these can better be taken directly to the Eldorado Convenience Center. As a result our 2015 total was lower than the 2014 total of 1.7 tons. Next year's

total weight will be much lower still since batteries and mixed recyclables have been two of our heaviest categories.

We were successful in convincing La Tienda to remove one of its two trash dumpsters and replace it with a cardboard only dumpster. This change reduced the mall's solid waste cost and saves many, many trees!

4. EDUCATION: Within our area, we placed recycling information at the Vista Grande Library, the Senior Center, the Eldorado Convenience Center, La Tienda, the Art Barns in Lamy, and in the ECIA packages welcoming new residents, as well as on our website. We have published information on recycling and on our work in the Vistas, La Tienda Weekly, and the Santa Fe New Mexican. We did education and outreach tabling at the Community Gardening signup event (February), the El Dorado Community School's STEAM night (March), and the ECIA's Fourth of July event. We celebrated the "New and Improved ECC" in terrible weather in April and held two well-attended "Recycling Fun" events at the Vista Grande Public Library. The March program presented Adam Schlachter's sorting game and Sheila Sullivan's vermicomposting video. The November event featured games, worms, as well as magic tricks and music. Special thanks to our own worm troubadours/magicians Chris and Lisa Harrell!

5. AWARDS: We recognized the following area persons with our 2015 awards:

Dawn Carter - green practices in skin care studio, including recycling

Gilbert Candelaria - recycled metal art

Chris Nein - recycled metal art

Trish Fabrello - recycled fabric & found object wearable art

Destiny Allison and Steve Ewers - green business practices

6. DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING: Because we are a not-for-profit volunteer organization, we rely on the unpaid work of our volunteers, on donations from residents and businesses, money earned at a June flea market with sale items donated by our members, and from our sponsorship and operation of Eldorado's Fourth of July Pancake Breakfast, in collaboration with La Tienda's La Plancha Cafe.

7. COMMUNITY: We participated in the ECIA's 4th of July Parade and provided recycling afterward. We collected recyclable bottles and cans at the Fire & Rescue BBQ. Spring and fall we removed trash and recyclables from the heavily used section of our "main street" Avenida Vista Grande from Hwy.285 to Avenida Torreon.

PLANS FOR 2016

1. Continued emphasis on backyard composting - the most effective, best energy-saving, way of diverting fully 30% of our household trash from the landfill.

2. Make our 2016 pancake breakfast into a true zero waste event (we came close in 2015!).

3. Advocacy for the implementation of the key recommendations of the County solid waste study report, published at the end of 2014. Public opposition in 2015 to franchising has caused the County to delay and weaken the new solid waste and recycling ordinance. We will fight for passage of its remaining good features.

4.. Support for, and education of the public about the coming changes in the City recycling program, and hopefully an improved County program.