



## Covenant Change Voting Results Announced

**Members received ballots in late November to vote on a proposed Covenant change. The EHHA Covenants state that every ten years changes can be made with a majority vote. 51 votes were needed to make the change. There were 66 ballots returned with 49 votes for and 17 votes against, resulting in a FAILURE to pass the proposed changes.**

The Board would like to thank the members of the Covenant Revision Committee for their hard work. Once the time to vote approached, it became clear that the best way to proceed was to have members vote on the procedure in which changes are made to the covenants rather than attempt to change all the covenants at once. This was the only way to avoid sending members a thirty page document that would have been an all-or-nothing vote. If the measure had passed, EHHA members could have voted on items individually over time.

**Thank you to the members that participated in the voting.**



Gold miner, Jack Radford, at his mining claim on Eldorado Bar in 1820. The Sapphire and Ruby Mining Co. of MT, owned by an English group of investors started hydraulic mining again for sapphires in 1895. For more about the history of sapphire mining on Eldorado Bar, see the story on page 3.

## Fall Road Work Completed

Fall road work was done again this fall by contractor, Harold Johnson. The fall work mostly consisted of grading all EHHA roads before winter set in. Additional gravel was placed on Owen Road to build up areas that have been especially muddy and slick. Spring road work will also be completed by Harold. It continues to be the Board's mission to improve EHHA roads as much as possible over time with the allotted funds available.

## From the Board of Directors

The EHHA Board of Directors often receive requests from members that would like more information about the sapphire mine area. Members are not always sure where the boundaries of the common area are and where the private claim area is. New members often are interested in mining, but do not know how to get started. As a result, the Board will be offering their assistance on the same day as the Annual Clean-up and Meeting. Immediately following the clean-up and lunch at the docks there will be a tour of the Eldorado Mine provided for anyone interested. In addition the Board is pleased to announce.....

### **A Special Presentation**

Prior to the EHHA Annual Meeting

May 1, 2010 starting at 5:00pm

York Community Hall

**"Sapphires of Montana"**

**By**

**Richard B. Berg**

Senior Research Geologist/Museum Curator

Montana Bureau of Mines & Geology

We look forward to seeing you there!

## Winter Has Arrived

Eldorado residents enjoyed a white Christmas again in 2009. December 2009 was the coldest on record in over a decade for Eldorado. There were 15 days in December with temperatures below zero degrees, with temperatures sometimes as low as 30 below! While freezing temperatures don't sound very inviting, we all are hopeful that they will help with the pine beetle problem. Watching the trees in our area die and turn brown is nothing short of heartbreaking. If you have plans to cut dead trees on your property this winter, please remember that the beetles will survive to fly this spring if the bark is not peeled from the trees. Another method to kill the bugs is to cover lumber with clear plastic to "cook" them once the weather gets warm.

## Eldorado Web Page

Eldorado members, Jim and Connie Bretes, volunteered to create and maintain a web site for the Association from their home in Michigan. Eldorado members can visit this site to stay updated. Covenants, By-laws, and Architectural Committee worksheets may be printed off the site on your PC! Many suggestions were made at last year's annual meeting on how the site can become an even more useful tool and the Board will continue to work with the Bretes to improve it. Visit us anytime at the following address.

[EldoradoHeights-HelenaMT.com](http://EldoradoHeights-HelenaMT.com)

Welcome to all new Eldorado Members!

Want to be more involved? Join a Committee! Find out more at the Annual Meeting in May!

## Hunting Season 2009

Hunting season seemed to go better in 2009 than in the previous year with many freezers being filled in Eldorado. Stephanie Fletcher got an amazing two-for-one on the opening day of rifle season when she and another member of her hunting party each bagged a big bull elk within moments of each other at sunrise! The story has become legend in York! There was very little bear activity in Eldorado this year after two years of garbage raids and disappearing bird houses! There have been turkeys roaming around despite the many coyotes running through and there was a mountain lion spotted just last week.

Many of you may have noticed a new addition to the Boat Dock Area this summer while enjoying the lake. Director, **Rick Hewey**, built a brand new outhouse that would put any other to shame! We are fortunate to have such a talented builder on the Board! It came out so nice that Rick joked about making it his new company (Big Sky Builders) headquarters! Watch for posted office hours!

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President.....Jim Wilbur  
Vice President.....Paul Jagoda  
Director.....Troy McGee Jr.  
Director.....Nick Odell  
Director.....Rick Hewey  
Director.....Curtis Freeman  
Director.....Dick Alberts  
Secretary.....Jean Jagoda

## **ASSOCIATION ADDRESS**

Eldorado Heights Homeowners Association  
5499 Huotari Lane  
Helena, MT 59602

## 2010 ASSOCIATION DUES

Dues for 2010 will be **\$210.00** per lot. **Dues need to be paid in the month of May.**

The Board of Directors has enacted the following delinquency policy;

- 1) Association fees are due in the month of May every year.
- 2) A reminder will go out to members who have not paid along with the Annual Meeting minutes on June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 3) A final notice will be sent August 1<sup>st</sup> including a 10% late fee.
- 4) Delinquent members will be sent to collection September 1<sup>st</sup>.

\*Please remember that bills are not sent to members. Mark your calendars now to remind yourself when to pay your dues.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EHHA ANNUAL MEETING

MAY 1, 2010 6PM

**YORK COMMUNITY HALL**

EHHA ANNUAL WORK DAY/PICNIC

**MAY 1, 2010 10AM**

Bring your yard tools and gloves. This is the day that the portable boat docks are reinstalled and the common area cleaned up. Cold drinks and sandwiches are provided by the Association. Please bring a salad, side dish or dessert to share.

## **Legal Action Continues**

The Association was forced to file a case in Lewis and Clark County court as a result of covenant violations on lot 63 owned by Cheryl Jenkins last year. Ms. Jenkins did not meet the deadline set by the Board of Directors to bring a house and barn moved to her property into covenant compliance.

## **Eldorado Bar History**

As members of EHHA we all have the right to dig for sapphires on Association property. What people may not know is that Eldorado Bar has a long and fascinating history that pre-dates the large dredge operation of the 1920's and 30's which left all those hills of gravel and rock.

In 1886 two brothers from Michigan named Spratt filed a mining claim for Eldorado Bar. Gold miners had been finding sapphires for years, but they were not considered to have any value. The Spratt brothers continued to acquire all the bars up and down the Missouri River from Canyon Ferry to American Bar from 1886-1890 from gold miners relieved to unload there "useless" claims, and created the Eldorado Gold and Gem Company.

Frank Spratt converted the York Hotel into his home and his brother George lived in cabins at the mining sites to keep an eye on operations. They knew the best market for the sapphires was in Europe. They hired G.K. Streeter, the son of the most noted gem expert in England, who traveled to MT all the way from the diamond fields of Africa. Streeter found the stones to be genuine and wrote a report on his findings.

In 1891, the Spratt's company became the Sapphire and Ruby Company of Montana when a group of English investors bought it for 2 million dollars. That same year, the only systematic mining for sapphires in the United States was taking place in Montana!

By 1895 hydraulic methods of mining were being used at Spokane and Eldorado Bars. The Spratt Family re-acquired the properties in 1897, but left the area soon after. There are Missouri River (Eldorado) Sapphires in the Crown Jewels of England!

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### ***Plans to Build?***

*The Board of Directors reminds members that they are **required** to fill-out and submit an Architectural Review Worksheet prior to construction of any kind. The Architectural Committee's job is to help determine if building projects meet the protective covenants. This prevents costly mistakes for both the members and the Association. Worksheets are available on request thru the EHHA address and on the web page.*

# EHHA THANK YOU'S

EHHA attorney, **Mona Jamison**, spent many hours working on the proposed Covenant Revision. Mona has been the EHHA attorney for over 20 years and always does a wonderful job representing us.

Members **Ray Butler and Mark Gates** continue to help with snow removal using their personal tractors.

Member **Luryce Summers** mowed around the Association sign and mailboxes again this summer.

**Jim and Connie Bretes** created and maintains the EHHA web-site.

Thank you to the **York Historical Society** for providing the historic photos for the Bugle. (For more info on the York Historical Society, visit the EHHA web-site.)

Thank you to all the members that helped with our annual clean-up last May. It was a great success. Hope to see you again this year.

## Where are You?

The single most difficult task for the Secretary/Treasurer is tracking lot owners. Lots change hands or people move without giving notice. As a result, every time a mailing goes out to members, some will always come back un-deliverable. Please keep us up-dated with current addresses and let us know if you sell your lot! Thank You!



The Eldorado Bar sapphire dredge pictured in 1938. There was a town of Eldorado located at the present day EHHA boat dock area. When the mining operation shut down, homes from the town were dragged across the ice of Hauser Lake and sold at auction.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

