

John Dorman Will Lead and Restore Respect

By William C. Thomas

"Elbert County is one of the top 3 laughingstocks of Counties in the State," John Dorman says. "We don't deserve to be the butt of jokes from State Agencies and we don't deserve to be on the edge of bankruptcy and it's time to correct that."

The audits are late, "there's no understanding that DOLA (Department of Local Affairs) can help us," and "we can't even figure out how much money we have because we don't know how to budget."

He's disgusted with what he sees as dysfunctional government and a tremendous lack of leadership. "If you're a leader, you get the most out of people; you inspire others to do more." Right now, he sees people with "legitimate concerns" being "branded as anarchists" by County Commissioners; he sees Department Heads being hired without "due diligence;" he sees a County without direction. "True leadership changes that."

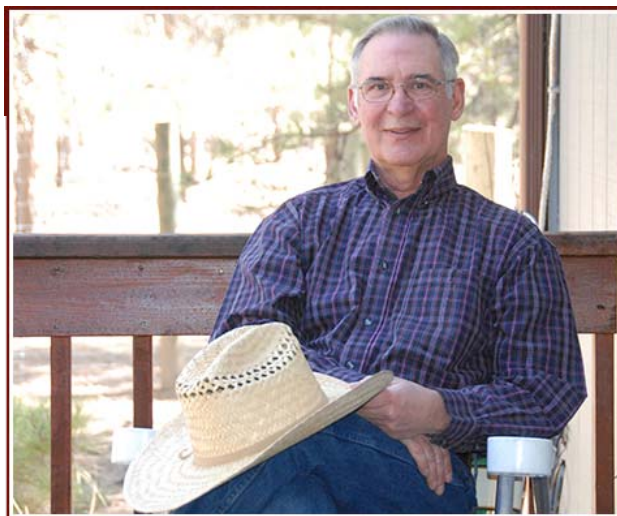
A 1966 graduate of Junipero Serra Catholic High School in Gardena, California, John Dorman joined the Navy in 1967. Scoring high enough on the tests all enlisted personnel take, Dorman studied as an Ocean Systems Technician. That means he analyzed intelligence and data. Because he was bright and dependable and could communicate well, he trained personnel in the use of the latest technologies developed by Bell Laboratories for the military. It's odd to think that any information gleaned over 40 years ago would still be secret, but Dorman cannot disclose exactly what it was he decoded or worked on.

He trained and worked in Iceland, Hawaii, Florida, and California: ultimately coordinating all information for the Navy 3rd Fleet in the Pacific and leaving the Navy in February, 1978, with the rank of Chief.

Only a month later, Dorman joined the Naval Reserves in California. By 1984, he was serving as Senior Chief and personnel director; by 1985, he was the Training Chief for the entire West Coast: a post he held until his retirement in 1992.

Because the Reserves had little or no equipment, "we had to be creative." Unlike others who talk about it, Dorman says, "I did it:" taking surplus military equipment and adapting it to new uses as different needs arose. He described a perimeter warning system he'd created using old flashcubes from a Kodak camera as an example. "We used what we could in creative ways," which, he admits, is "adaptive thinking." He considers this an asset in his run for County Commissioner.

In the private sector, meanwhile, Dorman was not only learning about computers; he was creating infrastructure in Information Technologies on the West Coast, "that would run, no matter what the disaster." This meant that he needed to design technologies and train personnel in various businesses to anticipate and deal with disasters to maintain a state of "Business Continuity." It's taken for granted today; but its beginning meant tons of work for Dorman, who had to train personnel to look at work differently and look at what was done in every aspect of business for fire, flood, earthquake, riot: you name it. "I look at details," he says.



"I'm not running against anybody," he said. "I'm running for Elbert County."

Every one of his projects has come in on time and on budget. "I know how to read a budget, create a budget, and understand how a budget works. I saved \$26 million for Home Savings of America in Los Angeles just by establishing a baseline for them." He believes he can do a similar job for Elbert County.

In 1999, he and Shellane, his spouse, moved from California to Elbert County. They have 35 acres next to Meadow Station. "It was our dream to move here. If I don't do something to help Elbert County, I could lose that dream," Dorman says. County Commissioner seems to be the answer.

Although he's been a Republican, Dorman is an Independent at this time. He agrees with the Republican principles that Government can be smaller with just as much efficiency, "but that doesn't mean that we limit services." He has a plan to meet people where they live in order to administer county services, rather than in Kiowa; to restore the 5-day work week; and to "make sure that everyone in important positions in the County is qualified." The reason he's not a Republican or Democrat, he says, is because each party asks for adherence to a narrow party ideology. "I've gotten some great ideas from people who I disagree with," he says. "I don't want to have that block. I'm completely non-partisan."

He has worked against Ray Wells Superslab Project, when the prospect of a superhighway covering parts of Elbert County was a real possibility; he has worked on the Spring Valley Vistas development project; he has worked on the Oil and Gas Regulations that went down in defeat: he has a "street cred" for being aware of and involved with real issues facing the County.

One of the things that Dorman wants to promote is Elbert County's salability: "There are historical trails; there are a ton of things that we can do to sell the County." He mentions Campdrafting; Horse Shows; Camping. "We can create a destination for Colorado. We've got to start small; but it creates jobs and it creates an environment for growth. We can't create an environment for factories, but we can have an environment for growth." He suggests trails along the rivers and creeks; facilities for horse events. Limited; but understandable, given the infrastructure.