

A Better Elbert

for the 21st Century

Nature vs. Greed

What Legacy Are You Teaching Your Children?



As happens from time to time, people who know how dedicated I am to stopping corruption in Elbert County will call and tell me about things that they see happening that they know are wrong. They know also that I will not just take their word for it, but will have to see it for myself. Such was the case On Wednesday morning when I received a call from a county employee who reported seeing a county road and bridge crew working on private roads within a development owned by a notable Elbert County official. I could not go out right then, but told the person who asked that I protect their anonymity that I would look into the matter as soon as possible.

Thursday morning, I drove out to see if there was any inappropriate work being done. I took my camera so that I might document any questionable activity. When I arrived, there was not a vehicle to be seen anywhere and despite what some might believe, it was the result I had hoped for. I do not want the county to be broken, but there is a lot of evidence to suggest that it is headed in that direction.

As I turned my car back toward Kiowa on Highway 86 I looked up and was amazed to see a small, low flying flock of what I instantly recognized as Whooping Cranes. I had traffic behind me and almost no shoulder on which to pull off the road. My camera was in the seat next to me and I knew I almost immediately I was going to miss what could only be described as a huge and very rare Kodak moment. I drove ahead until I could safely turn around and head back

toward the birds to see if they had landed on a large pond I had just passed. Alas, they were nowhere to be seen.

I still felt very fortunate to have seen them at such close range. I decided to return to Elbert through the Bijou Basin just in case I had another photo op. Driving home I reflected that this was the second time in five days I had missed a chance to capture rare wildlife pictures. Gaye and I saw a deer earlier in the week who had recently given birth to two fawns by the side of the road near the town of Elizabeth.

Unfortunately I did not have the camera with us. It was just about this time I spotted a small flock of American White Pelicans swimming on a farm pond. No, I am not making this stuff up. This time, I was able to get some shots. There was no way I could get closer as the pond was on private property and there was a black Angus bull that seemed intent on making sure I did not

disturb his feathered pals.

The pictures are not spectacular, but the point is that Elbert County is an unspoiled gem where wildlife is still in abundance. It needs to be protected. Wasting money, inappropriate use of county resources and greed are plaguing our county. The argument is going to be made that the only way that we can solve our financial problems is to turn Elbert County into Aurora. Bring on the roofs!

The trouble with this solution is that Whooping Cranes, Pelicans, Elk and Badgers (all wildlife I had seen in the past two weeks near my home) do not thrive in Aurorafied environments. Once the wildlife is gone, it is never going to return. Never. I think we need to appreciate what we have and protect it. Believe me when I say, in twenty years, people will drive half way across this nation to see any wildlife whatsoever, but they won't be coming to take a snapshot of a McDonalds or a strip mall.

