

VISTAS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ELDORADO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

1 La Hacienda Loop, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508 • 505 466-4248 • www.eldoradosf.org

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Get to Know Candidates for April's Board Election



MELICENT D'AMORE SEEKS TO SERVE

I'm Melicent D'Amore and have been a member of the ECIA Board of Directors since October 2019. It has been my pleasure to serve as Vice President for the past sixteen months. Before moving to Eldorado six

Melicent D'Amore

years ago, I served a four year term as an elected Township Supervisor in Centre County, PA. I worked closely with the county on a number of projects, including zoning and roads. That experience prepared me to serve as Board Liaison for the Information, Road and Architectural Committees.

I love New Mexico and especially Eldorado. I moved here knowing that the community was an HOA with covenants and

bylaws and as a resident and Board Member, I understand that it's my responsibility to abide by those rules. To ensure that as a community, our policies reflect best practices, I accepted the daunting task to oversee a policy review for the ECIA. In doing so, I've listened to resident suggestions, concerns and compliments. For each decision made, I take into account the short and long term effects it will have on Eldorado as a whole. I consider my role as a Board Member especially important relative to my fiduciary responsibility for the community.

If re-elected, I will continue to respectfully serve and represent the very diverse community that is Eldorado. The current Board of Directors is composed of competent and dedicated volunteers and I'm committed to work with them to ensure that the vision for Eldorado will continue to be *"a premier homeowners community in New Mexico, known as a diverse, family focused and welcoming environment offering outstanding amenities, fiscal strength and quality services for residents."*

Thank you for your continued support.

SAL MONACO OFFERS FISCAL SKILLS

My wife Tana and I have been residents of Eldorado since 2015 when we both retired from our professions. I am an Air Force veteran and have held positions in the private sector as a principal with Standard and Poor's and as an educator—as a university business professor, Dean, and Provost.

While in Eldorado I have worked as a volunteer for fundraising events at our local library (VGPL) and served on the ECIA Finance Committee as both a member and chair. In December of 2019, I was appointed to a short-term Board position ending this May and have been serving as ECIA Treasurer. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work closely with both Board and Committee members and fully understand and appreciate the time, effort, and service commitment required.

I have chosen to run for election to an open Board position because I believe it's important for ECIA to maintain a strong financial position that is also responsive to our community's needs. I am fully committed to the current Board's efforts to continue to improve member relations and provide outstanding service to our community. I believe my background in business and finance provides a skill set that blends well with the talents of the current Board. If elected, I would hope to continue in my role as Treasurer.



Sal Monaco

I believe the most important characteristic for our Board is transparency in action, deliberations, and execution of our responsibilities. Everything, except the most private and sensitive matters, should be available and open to members. My goal as a Board member would be to ensure

there are clear policies and procedures (from debt collection to procurement and budgeting) that are followed and published. And that all policies, rules, and guidelines are applied equally and fairly. I also believe the Board has a responsibility to manage the operations of our Association as effectively and efficiently as possible and strive for nothing less than excellence. As Treasurer, I have focused on carefully managing the cost of operations and, if elected, will work to ensure we can maintain control of budget growth and, through efficiencies, even reduce the size of future operations budgets. Now that we have achieved a reasonable reserve fund, annual growth in operating budgets is the principal cause driving increases in assessments. Consequently, keeping our operating budget under control is the best way to reduce the growth of future assessments.

Board Actions and Summary March 22

The March ECIA Board of Directors meeting was held via Zoom. President Nancy Sulzberg, Vice President Melicent D'Amore, Secretary Carol Sanguinetti, Treasurer Sal Monaco, and Directors David Sorkin and Erika Penczer were present and a quorum was met. HOAMCO staff including General Manager Julie Navarro, Assistant General Manager Jessica Collins, Operations Manager Mike Rogers, Compliance Officer Mark Young and Pool Supervisor Kevin Raphael attended. The Board approved the Consent Agenda.

GM Julie Navarro reported that the Annual Report packet was mailed **Mar. 22** and the Ballot Box will be placed outside the front door of the Community Center **Mar. 23**. The Ballot Box will be well marked so that there is no confusion between it and the Assessment Box. HOAMCO has hired an Administrative Assistant, Jocelyn Rizzo who will work with Mike Rogers and Mark Young to ensure that records, reports and scheduling are current. Operations Manager, Mike Rogers reported that fence lines throughout the Preserve trails have been repaired. Fencing is nearly complete around the basketball court and patio lighting is working well. The Maintenance Team installed a wind shield at the Dog Park and high efficiency toilets in the Community Center.

ECIA's County Liaison, Joseph Gutierrez spoke with P. J. Montoya, the County Manager for ground infrastructure. The County will use \$10K for each project to begin planning the Torreon and Azul upgrades. Though the \$300K Eldorado requested from capital outlay may not be approved, the \$130K requested for the Azul project is awaiting the Governor's signature. Joseph also mentioned that there is monies for fire station and water company improvements that could benefit Eldorado.

John Gervers gave a presentation about the *Eldorado Tree Samaritans* who have worked on Eldorado trees for seven years. There are twelve volunteers who have trimmed over 750 trees along the 33 miles of roads in Eldorado. In addition to pruning trees, the group often trims bushes where road safety might be impaired and unclogs culverts. ECIA thanks these volunteers (some of whom are not Eldorado residents) for their dedication and commitment.

THE BOARD APPROVED THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS:

- To accept the letter from the Conservation Committee addressed to residents affected by the Library Trail;
- To appoint Sal Monaco, Jody Price and Amelia Adair to serve on the 2022 Bylaws Review Ad Hoc Committee.

VARIANCES APPROVED:

- To allow for up to an 8 feet encroachment of a new wall into the 20-foot side setback at 12 Monte Alto Place;
- To approve an under-construction home to exceed the allowed height by 6 inches at 15 Fonda Court.

NEW BUSINESS TOPICS WERE DISCUSSED:

- The pool season will be determined by the county's COVID-19 status. All efforts will be made to allow for

recreational/family swim, lap swim, swim lessons and access to the baby pool. Decreased occupancy may apply. There will be a Community Pool Survey sent out via eblast and posted on the ECIA home page to gather resident preferences and suggestions;

- The 2022 Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee will begin to review the existing bylaws in May. Residents interested in participating on the Committee should contact the office for further details.

ON-GOING BUSINESS TOPICS WERE DISCUSSED:

- The effort to celebrate Eldorado's 50th Anniversary are underway. An idea was posed to be create a "timeline" of events and important issues that chronicle back to the start of the community. Photos and articles are welcome and can be sent to phenline@comcast.net;
- Insurance for the community is still in review and further details will be forthcoming;
- The Annual Meeting will be held Monday, **May 3 at 6:30 PM**. Justin Scott, CEO of HOAMCO and Commissioner Hank Hughes have been invited to speak. If COVID-19 guidelines allow, the meeting will be held outdoors (weather permitting) at the Community Center. There will be door prizes and a small dessert table;
- The Annual Report packet was mailed. For residents eligible to vote in this year's election, materials are included. If you do not receive a packet by **Apr. 1**, please contact the office;
- The archived files review was presented. Board members, Committee Chairs and members along with staff will work to sort the 60-65 boxes of files. The current Document Retention Policy will be followed.

OPEN FORUM

- A resident reminded the Board and Architectural Committee that variances granted should be clearly reviewed to avoid future confusion;
- A resident asked about the construction on Route 285 and was told that it is the "Dollar Store".

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM. The President's Report and Treasurer's Report, along with Task Group and Committee reports are on the website. Approximately 27 members of the community signed into the meeting. Recordings of the meeting can be requested by calling the ECIA office at **505 466-4248**. Complete minutes and agendas are available at the ECIA office or on the website: eldoradosf.org.

Thank you to all who participated.
We hope to see you at the next meeting on:
Monday, April 26 at 5 PM.

—Nancy Sulzberg,
ECIA Board President

Vote for ECIA Board Members Who Work for You

E CIA Board of Directors election Ballots and Quorum Proxy Statements are due by **5 PM, Thursday, Apr. 29**, either by mail or hand delivery to the ECIA office.



There will be a secure black Ballot Box outside the door for your envelope during regular business hours Monday—Friday, 8 AM–5 PM. If you need to deliver your ballot outside the ECIA office hours, please contact GM Julie Navarro to set up an appointment. If you have questions about the Ballot or to request a Replacement Ballot, notify the GM at **505 466-4248**. Election materials (Ballot, Quorum Proxy Statement) have been included in the Annual Report Packet for those Members Eligible to Vote along with candidate statements.

Ballot counting starts at **9 AM, Apr. 30** at a place to be determined. Members may view the process via Zoom. Results are announced at the Annual Meeting for Members on the evening of Monday, **May 3**. More information on this meeting will be announced later.

—Bette Knight,
Chair Election Committee

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE ECIA ANNUAL MEETING: MONDAY, MAY 3, 6:30 PM.



Community Center Opens

The Community Center will open **Monday, Apr. 5** with the following guidelines, please check eldoradosf.org or call **505 466-4248** for further information:

- Open to residents 8:30 AM–4:30 PM Monday through Friday;
- Doors will be unlocked and Rest Rooms available for use;
- Only ECIA Committees will be allowed to use either the Conference Room or Classroom;
- Committees can choose to meet in-person, continue to use Zoom or do both (notice to staff at least 1 week prior to meeting is essential);
- Anyone coming into the building must wear a mask.

PLEASE NOTE: IF OUR COVID STATUS CHANGES, WE WILL MAKE ANY NEEDED ADJUSTMENTS.

ECIA BOARD & MANAGEMENT

Board: *President Nancy Sulzberg, Vice President Melicent D'Amore, Treasurer Sal Monaco, Secretary Carol Sanguinetti, Director David Sorkin, Director Erika Penczer.* One Board vacancy at this time.

Management: The ECIA is managed by HOAMCO. *General Manager Julie Navarro, jnavarro@hoamco.com*
Monthly report available at www.eldoradosf.org under Resident Resources.

Starting Monday, Apr. 5, ECIA office and rest rooms open to public. For info call 505 466-4248.

Weed of the Month: Cheatgrass

This first of a series of articles from the ECIA Conservation Committee targets a common Eldorado weed—Cheatgrass (also Downy Brome). Cheatgrass comes up early in the growing season, but can pop up later depending on weather conditions so it's important to monitor your land regularly during the growing season. Our goal is to help property owners identify the key culprits early when they're small, easy to remove, and haven't caused so much harm to our native habitat.

The word "cheat" conjures up negatives, and seeing "cheatgrass" should do the same. When it first comes up in the spring, I think of it as a flame that can easily get away and should be immediately extinguished. This species got its name from "cheating" livestock of nutritious forage, just as it cheats wildlife of the native vegetation they need to survive.

Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) is on the New Mexico Noxious Weed List. It originated in Southern Europe, northern Africa and southwestern Asia and germinates early in the spring (get it out then!)



CHARACTERISTICS:

- Annual, reproduces by seed;
- Favors dry, disturbed ground;
- Drooping inflorescence with nodding spikelets and sharp awns;
- Is inconspicuous when young and green, thus most people don't notice it until it turns purplish—and by then it is difficult to pull out and the seeds have matured.

WHY IS IT A THREAT:

- It aggressively invades our local habitats, outcompeting the native grasses and flowering plants that make Eldorado beautiful and support its wildlife;
- It's very flammable when mature. One spark from a cigarette or a power tool could start a wildfire which can threaten property and wildlife habitat;
- Its ripe awns lodge in clothing and pet hair. They can pierce a dog's skin, become embedded and cause infection;
- A property with cheatgrass is less attractive. Although this is a widespread species in New Mexico, that does not mean it is impossible to eliminate or that you shouldn't try. On the contrary, because we have less of it here, mostly along roadsides and in disturbed areas where it will rapidly spread across properties, it is easy to pull out in its early stage so your yard can be spared a major invasion of it.

HOW TO MANAGE IT:

- Proactively avoid and minimize any soil disturbance on your property—this is a delicate habitat, easily damaged and hard to restore;
- Pull by hand when the plant first germinates and is small and green, before seeds are produced;
- Tamp down the soil around where you pulled to minimize invasion by other weeds that favor disturbed soil;
- Continue to check the site through the growing season and every year to make sure more seeds don't germinate. Native grasses and forbs, both perennial or annual, will come in over time;
- Don't use chemicals; they are unnecessary and ineffective, and will harm native plants and animals.

—Carol Beidleman,

ECIA Conservation Committee

Photos: Left, Dr. Richard Old, www.xidservices.com;
Middle and right, "Cheatgrass. The Bad Guy of Grasses"
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Vista Grande Public Library Still Serving Up Books



With the caveat that everything can change with very little notice, VGPL is now offering both browsing and computer use appointments. Appointments may be made for 1/2 an hour per day and are first come, first served. A parent or caregiver may include ONE child

under 12 in their appointment. Youth over 12 (or in grade 6) must make appointments separately. Patrons will be required to mask at all times and will lose appointment privileges for failure to do so. If you leave a message regarding an appointment, please wait for confirmation before arriving in order to avoid overbooking.

We are still providing reserve service and door or outside pickup. We continue to offer craft bags every two weeks for the kids, binge and grab bags for all ages.

Call **505 466-7323** for reservations or questions.

Visit our website, www.vglibrary.org, for information on e-books, databases and our new online book sales.

—Julia Kelso,

Director, Vista Grande Public Library

This Kingbird is a Screaming Tyrant

Among the multitude of colorful migrant songbirds (passerines) returning in spring to northern New Mexico from more temperate climes is Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*) or "screaming tyrant", if you will. Just a bit smaller than the familiar robin, Cassin's is one of three kingbird species that regularly breed in our state. Fearless and pugnacious when it comes to attacking potential predators—be it crow, raven, or hawk, kingbirds are aptly named. I've seen them mercilessly harass raptors many times their size, even diving upon and striking the perplexed intruder into their airspace.



Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus Vociferans*)

Who was this Cassin for whom fully five North American birds are named, you might ask? John Cassin (1813–1869) was a Philadelphia businessman who also happened to be curator of the bird specimen collection at the august Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences. A local finch and a sparrow also carry his honorific (it should be noted that there is an activist movement to replace all honorific common bird names with more descriptive ones).

In our area, look for this handsome flycatcher from mid-to late-April, when they arrive via a relatively short migration from their wintering grounds in Mexico, to September when they again depart. Cassin's has a lovely lemon yellow belly, a pewter gray head and back, dark brown tail, and a bright white chin and cheeks that contrast nicely with its leaden head. But perhaps their most diagnostic or defining feature relative to other kingbirds—especially the also locally common Western Kingbird, is a thin buffy band at the end of its tail. Western Kingbird, which prefers more open country and flatter terrain by contrast, has a black tail sporting conspicuous white tail edgings (outer tail feathers). This look-alike cousin is also a paler shade of gray, and their calls are different as well. The Western's call note is a sharp "whit".

For me, the loud, raspy "*chi-bew*" calls of Cassin's Kingbird are a welcome sound of the juniper savannah here in Eldorado, and a sign that spring is truly here. Their energetic songs, sung mostly at dawn, are a jumble of rapid, squeaky notes. New Mexico and Arizona constitute the epicenter of this bird's summer range in the US. Breeding pairs nest only once per season, often in piñon or ponderosa pines and generally produce four young which leave the nest after little more than two weeks. Kingbirds, like all flycatchers, eat massive quantities of insects, although Cassin's seems to prefer more fruit in its diet than its relatives. They deftly snap up insects while on the wing, but will also pluck prey from the ground. Like their brethren, Cassin's Kingbirds have broad-based bills and wiry bristles at the base of their beaks, making them effective bug zappers.

Noisy as they are, Cassin's Kingbirds certainly back up their rhetoric with fearless action, so look forward to their imminent return.

—Article and photo by René Laubach



Do You Remember When?

Send us your memories, anecdotes and photos of Eldorado, from 1972 to 2021. As a part of celebrating 50 years of *Eldorado at Santa Fe* in 2022, *Vistas* will assemble historical facts to help us see how much our neighborhoods have changed and grown. Personal events of general interest also will be included. For instance, do you remember the local newspaper *The Sun*? When was it published? Or when were the railroad crossing gates installed and do you have a photo of a train with the crossing gate down? Anyone who would like to do a little research by culling facts (*Vistas*, *Windmills and Dreams*) is invited to help with this project, but your own photo and story is important. Please send me your input and also let me know if you would like to be part of making the project come together: phenline@comcast.net.

—Pam Henline,
Chair Information Committee

Save The Night Sky 285 and Local Light Pollution

Eldorado's dark night skies are the envy of visitors from across the country. While many Americans can't see the Milky Way from their homes, Eldoradans can enjoy viewing it on any clear, dark night. However, as the area in and around Eldorado continues to develop, light pollution has become a significant concern.

Lights are used at night for safety and security, as well as for beautification. And like every community, Eldorado contributes light pollution to the night sky. Light pollution brightens the night sky, making it difficult to see faint stars and other objects.

Viewed from a distance, a community's light pollution takes the form of a light dome. Our view to the north at night includes a light dome that deteriorates the lower third of the sky in that direction.



Light dome from the Santa Fe area, as seen from southwestern Eldorado, February 2021. The light dome extends past the pole star, Polaris (center), which stands 35 degrees above the north horizon.

Recently, a new group of concerned citizens has organized to combat light pollution in Eldorado and surrounding communities. The group, *Save The Night Sky 285*, was formed by Sam Finn, an Eldorado resident and astronomy enthusiast. *Save The Night Sky 285* is committed to the goal of enabling every person living along the 285 corridor to see the Milky Way, clear and beautiful, from his or her own backyard. It works to achieve that goal by:

- Building public awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of our dark night skies;
- Advocating with local governments, businesses, homeowners associations, and residents for responsible lighting;
- Providing resources to help guide lighting choices that meet homeowner and public health and safety needs, while protecting the night sky as a community asset.

By advocating for responsible lighting, *Save The Night Sky 285* hopes to foster a culture in which light is only used where and when it's needed, in conformance with local light ordinances. The organization focuses minimizing light pollution by businesses and residences along the Route 285 corridor, as well as surrounding areas to our north (Santa Fe and adjacent communities) and southwest (the greater Albuquerque area).

Members of *Save The Night Sky 285* also play an important role by participating in letter campaigns to influence specific community lighting decisions; encouraging others to speak out against unnecessary light pollution; and being good stewards of their own lights. We hope that the Milky Way will continue to be enjoyed from every backyard.

Detailed information about *Save The Night Sky 285* can be found on their website: www.nightsky285.org.

—Article and photo by Eric Saltmarsh

How to Avoid Fraud—Proactively

Recently Santa Fe County Sheriff Adan Mendoza cited reassuring statistics about our community's generally low crime rate. The highest incidence of crime was fraud.

People of all ages and backgrounds can fall prey to fraud, especially in a moment of distraction. If you are upset about something, you are more likely to panic and click on a link in an email or a text that says something about your computer being compromised, or a problem with an online order. Always take a moment and breathe deeply, and question what you are reading before you take action.

Here are his tips to proactively avoid being defrauded.

Phone: If possible, don't answer the phone for numbers you don't recognize. If you have a landline without caller ID, let your phone go to a message machine or to voice mail. For those who have landlines with Century Link, you can get "No solicitation" service that tells callers to hang up if they are a solicitor or to press 1 if they are not. This greatly cuts down on

robocalls and scam calls. You can add 25 numbers to a list of callers who can bypass the system.

Your cell phone should have a setting that allows only numbers in your contacts list to ring through, sending the rest to voice mail. If you run a business or are expecting an important call from someone not on your list, you would need to turn this feature off, but otherwise it cuts down on annoying distractions. If it's a legitimate call, they will leave you a message.

Some people subscribe to Robokiller or other paid services to further cut down on scam robocalls. Cell phone providers automatically screen out robocalls, but these systems are imperfect at best.

You can block numbers, but scammers just keep changing them and you could spend time every day blocking numbers.

If you do answer the phone to a scammer, hang up right away unless you want to do a comedy routine with them.

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April Meetings—Community Center Opens April 5*

*Meetings may be suspended, held via Zoom, or in-person: please check eldoradosf.org.

ECIA Committee	Architecture Committee	Tuesday	13, 27	3–5 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Katherine Mortimer	architecturechair@gmail.com
	Board Meeting	Monday	26	5 PM <i>Zoom</i>	ECIA Board	505 466-4248
	Conservation Committee	Tuesday	6	7–9 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Paul Butt	conservationchair@gmail.com
	Election Committee	Wednesday	14	3–5 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Bette Knight	electionchair1@gmail.com
	Facilities & Grounds	Wednesday	7	10 AM–12:30 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Kathy Ritschel	fandgchair@gmail.com
	Finance Committee	Tuesday	13	9:30 AM–Noon <i>Zoom</i>	Dan Drobnis	financechair1@gmail.com
	Information Committee	Monday	12	7–9 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Pam Henline	informationchair@gmail.com
	Road Committee	Wednesday	7	5:30–7 PM <i>Zoom</i>	James Mason	roadchair1@gmail.com
Monthly/Semi-Monthly	Stable Committee	Monday	19	5:30–7:30 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Amelia Adair	stablechair1@gmail.com
	Bridge	Suspended during COVID-19			DiAna Gutierrez	505 699-3555
	EACA	Suspended during COVID-19			Kim Crickard	VP@eldoradoarts.org
	Eldorado Book Club	3rd Wednesday	21	3–5 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Pam Henline	phenline@comcast.net
	Eldorado/285 Recycles	2nd Tuesday	13	4–6 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Karen Sweeney	505 466-9797
	El Dorado School Community Garden	Suspended during COVID-19			Carol Robles	info@eldoradoschoolcommunitygarden.com
	Healing Arts Practitioners	Suspended during COVID-19			Laurie Sandman	lsandman9@comcast.net
	Life Drawing	Suspended during COVID-19			Mavis Murphy	505 466-8189
	MELT	Suspended during COVID-19			Maurena Bivins	info@maureenabivinsacupuncture.com
	Neighbors Helping Neighbors	1st Tuesday	6	6–7 PM <i>Conference Call</i>	Nancy Merz	nmmerz@msn.com
	Santa Fe Model Railroad Club	Suspended during COVID-19			Bob 505 466-4970	santafemodelrailroadclub.org
	Spinning Group (Fiber)	Suspended during COVID-19			Ellen Higgins	casaladerabe@gmail.com
Weekly	AA	Tuesdays		5:45–6:45 PM <i>Zoom</i>	505 982-8932	santafeaa.org
	AA (Women Only)	Thursdays		6–7 PM <i>Zoom</i>	505 982-8932	santafeaa.org
	AA	Fridays		6–7 PM <i>Zoom</i>	505 982-8932	santafeaa.org
	Al Anon	Saturdays		11 AM–12 Noon <i>Zoom</i>	505 473-0101	al-anon.org
	Breathing Meditation	Mondays		10:30–11 AM <i>Zoom</i>	Penny Russell	505 466-3137 sprussel@sjc.edu
	Eldorado Hikers	Suspended during COVID-19			Terry Gibbs	505 466-6914 triggibbs@comcast.net
	Knitting Club	Suspended during COVID-19			Joyce Hanmer	505 466-3018 joycehan@msn.com
	Overeaters Anonymous	Tuesdays		10 AM <i>CC Patio</i>	Barb	505 954-1533
	Ukulele Class	Suspended during COVID-19			Hazel Jordon	ukehazel@gmail.com
	Yin Yoga	Mondays		5:30–6:45 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Julia Cairns	505 466-1935
	Yoga/Vinyasa Flow	Wednesdays & Fridays		9–10:15 AM <i>Zoom</i>	Julia Cairns	505 466-1935
	Yoga/Gentle Stretch	Tues., Thurs., & Sat.		9–10:15 AM <i>Zoom</i>	Mary Horst	505 490-2790

Zoom meeting information is online at www.eldoradosf.org > News & Events > Zoom Schedule

Events are verified as of March 18, please sign up for ECIA Newsbriefs by emailing jcollins@hoamco.com to be notified of changes.

Send calendar event information to GM@eldoradosf.org.

How to Avoid Fraud— Proactively *(continued from page 6)*

Social Security or Medicare is never going to close your account, and will contact you by old-fashioned letter if there are important issues you need to know about. And you don't need to speak to anyone about problems with your computer—especially a brand that you don't even own.

Some phone scams play on the heart, saying that one's grandchild is in some kind of trouble. In these trying times when people might not be in constant touch with distant family members, one could momentarily fall for such a scam, though you probably know your grandchild did not lose his or her passport in Siberia recently.

NEVER give out personal info—especially your Social Security number, Medicare number, or any credit card or bank account numbers—to an unknown caller. If a bank or credit card company calls or texts regarding a fraud,

be suspicious and make sure you call the number on their website just in case it is a fraudulent call.

The bottom line is to always err on the side of caution.

You can put all your numbers on the national Do Not Call registry, which is a great idea that doesn't seem to do much. Perhaps we would get even more robocalls and scam calls if it didn't exist, so it's worth a try. <https://www.donotcall.gov/>.

Part Two of this article will appear in an upcoming issue of *Vistas*. For the complete article go to www.eldoradosf.org > "Board & Committees" > "Safety Ed Task Group" which contains link to the full Fraud article.

—Debra Denker,
Eldorado Safety Education Task Group

*This month: fools, flowers:
why do we have both of them?
Two kinds of beauty.*

Mission Statement The mission of the monthly newsletter, *Vistas*, is to inform members of the ECIA about issues before the Board of Directors, various committees, and the office staff. Any interesting events happening in Eldorado or the surrounding areas may be included. The publication seeks to foster increased neighborhood pride and community participation in the decision-making process.

Editorial Policy *Vistas* welcomes factual and objective submissions, which will be selected and edited at the discretion of the Information Committee and Board of Directors. Community announcements and articles of interest to homeowners are welcome, along with photos. Submissions are due on the fifth of the month preceding publication. For help with any article, see the *Vistas* Style Guide posted on ECIA website, www.eldoradosf.org.

Reduce Using Plastics and Help the Planet

In November 2019, the volunteer group *Eldorado/285 Recycles*, went on a field trip to the Buckman Road Recycling and Transfer Station (BURRT). Although an unusual site for an outing, we wanted to see what became of the materials that were sent there. The mountains of plastic were a huge reminder of the “plastics crisis” that environmentalists have been writing about for the past few years. Since 2018, when China stopped accepting many contaminated recyclables from the U.S., our outdated recycling system has been overwhelmed and inadequate.

The major problem is the proliferation of single-use plastic products: bags, bottles, straws, and packaging. Plastic takes a long time to decompose. For example, one plastic bottle can take over 450 years to decompose, and in 2021, 1.2 million plastic bottles are projected to be purchased every minute worldwide. Furthermore, plastics break down into minute particles called microplastics.

Since 10–20 tons of plastic enter our waterways each year, these harmful particles present a major health threat to fish and other marine wildlife that ingest them. As might be expected, microplastics are found all over the world, and a 2019 study reported humans consume about

50,000 particles per year! Microplastics have been discovered in human organs and even the placentas of unborn fetuses. The total deleterious medical consequences are still being studied.

We cannot recycle our way out of this crisis, we can help alleviate it. The strategy is to reduce, reuse, and refill. We can reduce plastic use and demand by choosing alternative packaging for our groceries: buy foods in glass containers instead of plastic or buy in bulk and bring containers from home. Plastic bags from supermarkets can be reused and then recycled in the receptacle for plastic film at most supermarkets. Look for local stores (there is at least one in Santa Fe) which specialize in refilling consumers’ containers with soaps, shampoos, etc., reducing single-use plastics. Of course, bottle bills and plastic bag bans need our political support. To end on a hopeful note, new ways are being explored to upcycle plastic waste into a new molecule that is used to construct many industrial and consumer products.

For a free, in-depth dive to learn more about plastic pollution, please visit our website, eldorado285recycles.org and see our invitation to stream two documentaries: *The Story of Plastic* and *New Mexicans Taking Action on Plastic Waste*, as well as to attend a Zoom panel discussion of both films.

—Eldorado/285 Recycles



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