

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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Waterwise Summer Garden Care

It's all about summer protection; mulching is the key to helping plants survive our dry summer heat. Some sound advice from Waterwise Gardening, LLC:

MULCHING ESTABLISHED PLANTS

Be sure that all your established perennials, trees and shrubs are well mulched with a thick layer of wood chips, bark chips, crushed pecan shells or pine needles placed in a wide circle around their base. Now is an excellent time to thicken up the mulch layer as mulch decomposes into the soil and becomes thinner. Even gravel mulch gets thinner after the freeze/thaw cycle of winter and spring absorbs the gravel into the soil.

Perennial beds need a one-inch layer of mulch material. Trees and shrubs need a 2-to-3-inch layer of mulch material.

IRRIGATING ESTABLISHED PLANTS AND LANDSCAPES

It's much better to water less frequently and deeply with more water than more frequently with less water. Roots follow the water down into the soil. Ample deep watering increases root depth and resistance to dry conditions above ground. You can train your garden to be more water-thrifty by doing it this way. In the heat of summer here in arid New Mexico, water once every seven days, watering long enough that the water goes 8 to 12 inches deep into the soil.

—Info from Waterwise Gardening, LLC,
<https://www.waterwisegardening.com>
Compiled by Sue Garfitt, Eldorado Resident



Marilynn Jennings uses gravel mulch for perennial gardens, (left), with sculptures and pottery for added color and interest. Sue Garfitt and Mary Ellen Madigan, (center and right) mulch their gardens with thick layers of wood chips.

Save the Date for 31st Eldorado Arts Studio Tour

The Eldorado Studio Tour has been a community wide event for 31 years. This year 72 studios will be open to the public on **Sat., Sept. 23** and **Sun. Sept. 24**.

The Opening Reception will be held on **Fri., Sept. 22** from 5-7 PM at the Community Center, giving you the opportunity to see samples of the art being shown by all 102 participating artists and to meet many of those artists. This year,

visitors will be able to purchase art at the Opening Reception.

The Preview Gallery will be open **Fri. Evening, 5-7 PM, Sat. from 9 AM-5 PM** and **Sun. from 9 AM-3 PM**.

We will need gallery hosts during the preview gallery. You can volunteer for a 2-hour shift. Please call or text **719 686-9642**, or email Gailwhiteiris@newmexico.com for more information or to sign up.

YOU CAN FIND BOARD MEETING MINUTES ON OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.ELDORADOSF.ORG.

Annual Fundraiser Provides Hunger Relief



Inside the 'Food Mobile', volunteers and staff distribute items.

I started volunteering at The Food Depot in 2020, not long after the pandemic forced so many of our neighbors to lose their jobs. I thought hunger in Northern New Mexico would lessen once people were able to return to work; that didn't happen. There are currently nearly 40,000 food insecure people in Northern New Mexico, and over 12,000 of these hungry people are children. In the last three years, I have watched The Food Depot grow and create new, innovative programs that bring tasty, nutritious meals to our neighbors in need. The Food Depot now provides 700,000 meals each month to communities across Northern New Mexico, thanks to its strong network of supporters and volunteers.



Twelve years ago, The Food Depot launched an annual fundraiser called Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) from **June 1 through Sept. 23**. This volunteer-led event is now the most significant fundraiser each

year. In 2022, N2N raised \$294,000. In 2023, the N2N goal is \$300,000! During this friendly competition, neighborhoods, businesses, and community groups compete to raise the most money for hunger relief in Northern New Mexico.

Eldorado is one of the neighborhoods participating in this drive. In 2022, Eldorado's approximately 2700 homes contributed \$3,900 to N2N. We can do better! 40,000 hungry neighbors are depending on us. I decided to join this effort by chairing our Eldorado neighborhood's campaign. If you would like to be a part of this important mission and show Northern New Mexicans how generous the Eldorado community truly is, please join us. The top fundraising neighborhoods, community groups, and businesses will receive special recognition at the end of the N2N Fund Drive.



Bottom left and above: Staff and volunteers of The Food Depot help organize food drives, fundraisers, and food preparation and distribution to food insecure people in NM.

To make a donation to The Food Depot's N2N effort, please visit <https://thefooddepot.org/n2n-donate/> or send a check to: The Food Depot, 1222A Siler Road, Santa Fe, NM 87507. If you donate online, please indicate that you are donating for the Eldorado community. If you donate by check, please put Eldorado on the memo line.

—Bonnie Gross, Eldorado Resident
Photos courtesy of The Food Depot

August Brings New Features on Eldorado Radio Voice

As summer winds down, Eldorado's local radio station, low-power ELDORADIO 1660 AM, introduces a new long-range series on Saturdays, and tickles listeners' history chops. *Saturday Matinee*, one of two weekend specials at **12 noon**, begins an annual traversal of the best-known Gilbert and Sullivan operas on **Aug. 19**, with *Trial by Jury*, performed by the D'Oyly-Carte Company that made them famous, plus a surprise bonus. This weekly showcase offers jazz, classical and folk performers, recorded in concert. *Retro Radio* at **noon Sunday** brings back *Mr. President*, with listeners challenged to identify the past White House resident profiled by Edward Arnold. *Retro Radio* highlights a varied full hour of old-time radio **each Sunday**.

At **10:30 each weekday morning**, ELDORADIO's *BreakTime* offers a mid-morning chance to sit down for

interesting talk on a variety of topics. Mondays feature *History in Sound*, Tuesdays a story, sometimes for kids, and Wednesdays a conversation about the arts. Thursday's *Voice of the Poet* is 15 minutes of verse, including a monthly series of Shakespeare sonnets, and Friday is devoted to comedians and laughter.

Weather, news headlines, and a run-down of local and city events, plus happy music, help Eldorado wake up at **7 every morning**. A quick news summary about half an hour before sunset updates listeners just before *Music Through the Dark 'til Dawn* until the "Eldoradio birds" at **7 the next morning**. Most of the day is a variety of music, with no chatter or commercials. Restricted by the FCC, ELDORADIO's signal covers the community in daytime, but after sunset reaches only the center of Eldorado.

—William Dunning, Eldoradio Host

ECIA Bylaws Review Committee Welcomes Input



It's that time again: every two years, all ECIA members have the opportunity to suggest potential changes to the community Bylaws. The Board welcomes member input in this important process and encourages members to read the Bylaws and submit suggestions for changes. The goal of the process is to ensure the governing structure of our community will be continuously improved and updated.

The current Bylaws (specifically, Article 16 of the Sixth Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Eldorado Community Association, available on the ECIA website on the Governing Documents drop down menu) state that every two years a committee shall conduct a review of the Bylaws. The Bylaws were last amended in 2022. The new members of the Bylaws Review Committee began meeting in July of this year.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BYLAWS REVIEW PROCESS:

- **Bylaws Briefing—presentation and opportunities for member input.** Two presentations about our current Bylaws, how to make comments, the process the Bylaws Review Committee will follow in evaluating the comments and suggestions, will be held at the ECIA Community Center classroom and via Zoom, on:

- **Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023, at 10 AM**
- **Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023, at 7 PM**

- **Sept. 15, 2023, at 5 PM is the deadline** for members to send comments or suggestions for amendments to the Bylaws. Comments may be entered into the comment form on the Bylaws Review webpage on the ECIA website, emailed to BylawsReview@eldoradosf.org, or mailed or hand-delivered to the ECIA office.
- **Review of suggestions.** The Bylaws Review Committee will meet regularly over the next several months to review all suggestions from members. Finally, the Committee will recommend necessary amendments to the Board.
- **Membership vote.** After the town hall and an attorney review, the final step in the process will be a membership vote on final proposed amendments, as part of the annual meeting process, in **April of 2024**.
- **If approved by a vote of the members**, the amended Bylaws will take effect after the annual meeting in **May of 2024**.

Bylaws Basics: Bylaws are the rules which govern how an organization operates. ECIA is a non-profit corporation and a homeowners association, so it must have Bylaws in addition to its other governing documents, which include the recorded covenants and the articles of incorporation. The Bylaws are approved and may only be amended by a vote of the membership.

News Corral

LIFEGUARDS NEEDED TO KEEP POOL OPEN IN SEPTEMBER

Many of our lifeguards go back to school in mid-August. But if we can recruit enough lifeguards to replace them, we can keep the pool open until—ideally—Oct. 1. It takes two lifeguards per shift to keep the pool open—starting at \$16.00/hr. Email Pool Manager Logan Dutton at ldutton@hoamco.com. In the last couple of years, we've successfully recruited enough lifeguards to operate past Labor Day with reduced hours.

If you love to swim and would enjoy keeping the pool open through Sept., please consider signing on as a lifeguard. Our pool manager will be holding periodic trainings so new guards can get certified or refresh their training.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES AVAILABLE ONLINE

The ECIA Board Meeting Minutes from July and all prior months (going back to 2014) are available on eldoradosf.org at the ECIA Governing Board webpage. In order to leave more room for informational articles, the Board is experimenting with not running the full text of the Minutes, but instead providing articles about the actions taken. Board meeting Minutes should be posted online before the next month's *Vistas* is published, so the members will have easy access to information about what the Board is doing.

Tell us what you think!

ZYDECO SQUEEZE LIVE SATURDAY, AUG. 5

La Tienda Plaza Stage, Eldorado, NM 5:30–8 PM, Free!

ECIA BOARD & MANAGEMENT

Board: *President Amelia Adair, Vice President Jonathan Turkle, Treasurer Joseph Gutierrez, Secretary James Herbert Williams, Director Mary Bonilla, Director Ken Howard, Director Carol Sanguinetti*

Management: ECIA is managed by HOAMCO. *General Manager Julie Navarro*, jnavarro@hoamco.com
Monthly report available at www.eldoradosf.org > Board & Committees > ECIA Governing Board.
ECIA office open Mon–Fri 8:30 AM–8 PM, Sat & Sun 9 AM–5 PM. For information call 505 466-4248.

ECIA Conservation Committee Seeks New Members



The mission of the ECIA Conservation Committee is to recommend “actions to protect the existing natural resources of the community and enhance these resources whenever possible, to provide recreational opportunities for the community...” and to provide education about our resources. Those

resources include the Community Preserve—more than 4,000 acres of undeveloped land across Highway 285 owned by ECIA—and almost 1,000 acres of Greenbelts within the plat of the Eldorado subdivision.

The Conservation Committee recommends policies for management and enhancement of these natural areas, consults with the ECIA Operations Manager on maintenance and projects, and partners with outside organizations and experts such as Santa Fe County, the Cactus Rescue Project and the Santa Fe Conservation Trust on habitat preservation and enhancement projects. The Committee regularly organizes, trains and leads teams of volunteers, including current and past Conservation Committee members and other interested Eldorado residents, who donate hundreds of hours of time annually on trail and other maintenance projects.

The Conservation Committee provides education about our natural areas via articles in *Vistas*, speaking to resident groups, tabling at community events, and posting helpful resources about weeds, xeriscaping and other information on the ECIA website. On the Committee’s webpage, residents can

find trail maps, native plant information, policies and links to other local conservation organizations.

Homeowners interested in helping with trail and other maintenance projects can sign up to be on the Committee’s Volunteer Contact List by emailing **conservationchair@gmail.com**. These projects usually take place during the spring and fall months, in favorable weather and trail conditions.



The Conservation Committee provides erosion control at the Eldorado Community Preserve.

The Committee is searching for new volunteers. No technical or physical skills are needed. The Committee is looking for people who are interested in conservation-related issues in the Eldorado natural areas and who are enthusiastic about contributing to the stewardship of the Eldorado Greenbelts and Community Preserve in a collaborative manner.

The Committee meets on the **second Tuesday of every other month at 7 PM**. Meetings are open to all ECIA members.

—Photo courtesy of the Conservation Committee



2023 Fourth of July Celebration—



Vista Grande Public Library August Events

Thanks to everyone who supported us in July, starting with the Art Reception, the parade and throughout the month. The fun continues in August!

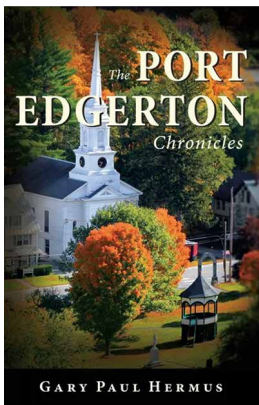
The final **Rock Time** of the summer will take place **Saturday, Aug. 5 from 11 AM to 2 PM**, in front of the building. Bring your rocks, fossils, and questions. If it's stormy, they'll be inside, so come on in!

Aug. 5 from 1 PM to 3 PM, we will have a reception for our **August Artist, Jasmine Quinsier**. Please stop by to meet the artist and see some great work!

Toddler Storytime every Thursday at 10:30 AM.

Chess every Friday from 3 PM to 5 PM; we're always happy to set up other days.

Family Movie Night, Friday, Aug. 18 at 7 PM.



Local author **Gary Paul Hermus** will be at VGPL on **Friday, Aug. 25 at 7 PM**, to share his new book: *The Port Edgerton Chronicles*.

The last **Trivia Night** of the summer is at the Santa Fe Brewing Company at La Tienda, **Monday, Aug. 28 at 7 PM**. This is a great library fundraiser, plus, it's a lot of fun. \$10 per person. Fiendishly difficult questions, beer, and camaraderie. Bring a team or join one on site.

After School Library Club starts in **September, Tuesdays and Wednesdays after school**. Pick up a sign-up sheet at the library or print and bring in the online form. Space is limited, so register early.



We may have two days available for our wonderful dogs to be read to during the school year. For those who don't know, **Wags and Words** is a program we've been running since 2014, where struggling or reluctant readers can read to a certified therapy dog. Sessions last between 5 and 15 minutes, depending on how many people

are scheduled and how long the reader wants to read. This program helps to build confidence and comfort with reading. Most importantly, reading to furry listeners who don't care about skill level can make reading a fun experience, which is the library's goal. We're still sorting out details, but if this is something your child (no age limit) would benefit from, please reach out to us so that we can include you in the planning.

LIBRARY INFO:

Phone: 505 466-7323

Email: librarydirector@vglibrary.org

Address:

14 Avenida Torreon, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508

-Record Number of Eldorado Resident Attendees



—Photos provided by Amy Gross, Jim Brown, Mike Ault and Darrel Owen

Night Skies over Eldorado during August

August is dominated by two night sky events: a strong meteor shower and the opposition of the planet Saturn.

The Perseid meteor shower peaks on **Aug. 12** and **13** (please see details under Key August Night Sky Events). Many consider this shower to be the best of the year because it's prolific and can be observed in warm weather. This meteor shower begins in **mid-July** and runs through the **end of Aug.** This year, the peak is expected to occur around **2 AM** on **Aug. 13**, so Eldorado is well-placed to view it.

The shower gets its name from the constellation Perseus, where the meteors appear to originate from. But, you don't need to find Perseus to watch the show—the meteors might be seen in any part of the sky. The meteors themselves are debris from the 109P/Swift-Tuttle Comet, which returns to the inner solar system every 133 years. The comet last visited in 1992.



Meteors are bits of rock, iron, and other debris that collide with the Earth's atmosphere at high speed. This Perseid started out red, then turned blue-white as it plunged through our atmosphere, about 60 miles above the Earth. The color offers an indication of the chemical composition of the meteor, red being associated with atmospheric nitrogen and oxygen; blue-white suggesting calcium or magnesium.

Saturn will be opposite the Sun in our sky, with Earth between them, on **Aug. 27**. At its closest approach to Earth, the ringed planet will still be more than 800 million miles away. Sunlight reflecting off Saturn's clouds and rings will take about 73 minutes to reach our eyes.

In 1610, Galileo Galilei first viewed Saturn through a telescope, thinking the planet was attended by a moon on either side of it. He once referred to these 'moons' as 'Saturn's ears.' Almost fifty years went by before Dutch astronomer Christiaan Huygens noted that Saturn was surrounded by a disk.

Today, we know that Saturn is a gaseous planet, surrounded by rings composed of myriad ice particles, and that there are gaps between the rings caused by gravitational effects with the planet and several of its 146 moons. Details in the rings are reminiscent of the grooves in a record album.



The Hubble Space Telescope took this amazing photo of Saturn in June 2019. The bands in Saturn's atmosphere are due to the planet's rapid rotation period of 10 hours, 45 minutes. The colors of the atmospheric bands provide an indication of the chemical composition of the planet's cloudtops. The rings are made of countless small ice particles that orbit the planet.

Because the Sun, Earth, and Saturn are in line at opposition, Saturn's rings brighten at this time, due to the relative lack of shadows, as seen from Earth (this is known as the Seeliger Effect).

August and September offer the best views of Saturn. Powerful binoculars or telescopes are needed to view the rings and glimpse Titan, the second largest moon in our solar system.

KEY AUGUST NIGHT SKY EVENTS:

Aug. 1: A full supermoon occurs at **12:33 PM**, however, the Moon won't rise until **8:41 PM**.

Aug. 3: **Before dawn**, the waning gibbous moon passes about two degrees below Saturn.

Aug. 10: Mercury is farthest east of the Sun, visible in the evening sky, in Leo. Mars is above and to the left of Mercury.

Aug. 12–13: The Perseid meteor shower peaks on the night of **Aug. 12** and morning of **Aug. 13**. During the peak, about 60 meteors per hour can be seen. Fortunately, the Moon is almost new and will not interfere with viewing.

Aug. 16: The Moon is new and below the horizon all night.

Aug. 24: The waxing gibbous moon, 57% illuminated, occults (passes in front of) the bright star Antares. The star will disappear behind the night side of the Moon, during twilight, at approximately **8:05 PM** and reappear from behind the daylight portion of the Moon at **9:11 PM**.

Aug. 27: The planet Saturn is at opposition (opposite the Sun in the sky), visible from sunset to sunrise.

Aug. 30: A full supermoon occurs at **7:37 PM** and rises ten minutes later in Aquarius. Saturn is to the Moon's upper right. This full moon is also known as a 'Blue Moon' because it's the third of four full moons in a season.

—Article by Eric Saltmarsh,

Photo left, Eric Saltmarsh; Photo above, NASA, ESA, A. Simon (Goddard Space Flight Center), and M.H. Wong (University of California, Berkeley)

August Meetings

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

ECIA Committee	Architecture Committee	Tuesdays	8, 22	3–5 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Katherine Mortimer	architecturechair@gmail.com
	Board of Directors	Tuesday	15	5:30 PM <i>Zoom / CR</i>	ECIA Board	505 466-4248
	Bylaws Review Committee	Monday	14	5:30 PM <i>Zoom / CR</i>	ECIA Board	505 466-4248
	Conservation Committee	Tuesday Bi-Monthly	No Meeting this Month		Thomas Brendenbug	conservationchair@gmail.com
	Election Committee	Wednesday	9	2–4 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Bette Knight	electionchair1@gmail.com
	Facilities & Grounds	Wednesday	2	10 AM–12:30 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Kathy Ritschel	fandgchair@gmail.com
	Finance Committee	Tuesday	8	9:30 AM–Noon <i>Zoom</i>	Joseph Gutierrez	j.gutierrez@eldoradosf.org
	Road Committee	Wednesday	2	5:30–7 PM <i>Zoom</i>	James Mason	roadchair1@gmail.com
	Stable Committee	Monday Bi-Monthly	No Meeting this Month		Lisa Bessone	stablechair1@gmail.com
Monthly/Semi-Monthly	Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Committee	Thursday	TBD	9:30–11:30 AM <i>Zoom</i>	Amelia Adair	a.adair@eldoradosf.org
	Acoustic Jam	2nd & 4th Sun.	13, 27	4–6 PM <i>CC Patio (LR if weather)</i>	Chris Harrell	clharrell505@gmail.com
	Bridge Club	1st & 3rd Wed.	2, 16	1–4 PM <i>CR</i>	Susan Lovro	sulovro@aol.com
	Eldorado/285 Recycles	2nd Tuesday	8	4–6 PM <i>Zoom</i>	Karen Sweeney	505 466-9797
	Eldorado Book Club	3rd Wednesday	16	3–5 PM <i>LR</i>	Pam Henline	phenline@comcast.net
	Model Railroad Club	2nd Tuesday	8	6–8 PM <i>RR</i>	Anthony Balano	apbbalano@gmail.com
Weekly	Mah Jongg (Social Games)	2nd & 4th Wed.	9, 23	11:30 AM–3 PM <i>Foyer</i>	Carol Hardin	caje8@comcast.net
	Adult Basketball	Thursdays		6 PM–Dusk <i>CC Basketball Court</i>		
	Al-Anon	Saturdays		3:30–5 PM <i>CFR</i>	Phebe Macrae	phebemacrae2@gmail.com
	Bible Study & Worship Service	Saturdays		10:30 AM–12:30 PM <i>CR</i>	Kevin Rehorn	kevinrehorn@msn.com
	Chair Aerobics	Tuesdays / Thursdays		10:30–11:30 AM <i>RR</i>	Naomi Burtnick	505 577-7305 naomiburtnick@gmail.com
	Eldorado Hikers	Tuesdays		8:30 AM <i>NE corner CC Pkg.</i>	Terry Gibbs	505 466-6914 trgibbs@comcast.net
*	Recovery AA Meetings *Thursdays Women Only	Tues / Thurs* / Fri		Tues: 5:45 PM <i>CR</i> Thurs: 6 PM* <i>CR</i> Fri: 6 PM <i>RR</i>	Olivia Ogorek	oliviaogorek@gmail.com
	Bylaws Townhall	Wednesday	30	7 PM <i>Zoom / CR</i>		

Zoom meeting information is online at www.eldoradosf.org > News & Events > Zoom Schedule. Calendar info collected and verified by ECIA office, GM@eldoradosf.org. Sign up for ECIA Newsbriefs by going to eldoradosf.org, scroll down to “Sign up for eBlasts”.

CR: Classroom; CFR: Conference Room; LR: Living Room; RR: Railroad Bldg.; CC: Comm. Ctr.; CC Pkg.: Comm. Ctr. Parking Lot

* Other August Community Events

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Use & Disposal



Perplexed about what to do with leftover pesticides, household cleaners, oil-based paint, rechargeable batteries, and fluorescent bulbs?

They fit the category of household hazardous waste (HHW) and should be dealt with cautiously. HHW is a household product, leftover or maybe old and never used, that has a label or ingredients that contain any of the following warnings—Flammable, Ignitable, Corrosive, Reactive, Toxic. Follow instructions on the original container for use, storage and disposal. Never mix these products.

In Santa Fe, we are fortunate to have a dedicated facility to take care of these wastes. The HHW facility at the Buckman Road Recycling and Transfer Station, commonly referred to as BuRRT, is open **Friday and Saturday, 8 AM to 4:45 PM**, and located at 2900 Buckman Road, **505 820-0208**.

There is a charge based on weight, but few residential customers get beyond the minimum fee of \$6 (a \$20 deposit is required on the way in; it is refunded on the way out). BuRRT also offers a free disposal day on **Saturday, Nov. 4 from 9 AM to 1 PM**. Credit/debit cards, local checks, and cash are accepted.

BuRRT, along with the Caja del Rio landfill, is operated by the Santa Fe Solid Waste Management Agency under a joint powers agreement with both the City and County of Santa Fe. Their website, www.sfswwa.org, has extensive information about types of waste and directions to the facility.

Remember, it is illegal to dispose of HHW in the trash, on the ground, down the drain, or by abandonment. HHW can cause physical injury to sanitation workers, contaminate septic and wastewater treatment systems, and pose hazards to people in the home. Take advantage of this outstanding County service. Note: Except for automotive fluids, other Santa Fe County Convenience Centers do not accept HHW.

Do you really need these products? Consider Source Reduction, as there are many safe, inexpensive substitutes for these purposes.

The BuRRT HHW Facility has a reuse program available to the public. If you have an HHW item that is in good reusable condition, you can put it in the reuse area. Or, if you are looking for a little bit of some type of chemical or cleaner, there is a good chance you might find it at the HHW Reuse Center for FREE (This comes at your own risk)!

—Gary Stoller, Eldorado/285 Recycles

*School will be starting
Bright sunflowers wave and bow
Will monsoons bring rain?*

Mission Statement The mission of the monthly newsletter, *Vistas*, is to inform members of 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 Board of Directors. Community announcements, photos, and articles of interest to homeowners are welcome. Submissions are due on the 5th of the month preceding publication. Submissions may be submitted to articles@eldoradosf.org. For help with any article, see the *Vistas* Style Guide: www.eldoradosf.org > News & Events > *Vistas* Newsletters.

The Eyes Have It—Presenting an Appetizing Meal



You've probably heard the phrase, or even said it to yourself, "my eyes got bigger than my stomach." This means the food looked so delicious that you put more on your plate than you could eat, making the point that we eat first

with our eyes. So keep this concept in mind as you plan, shop, cook and plate your meals. In my opinion, there are three components to how food looks: color, texture, and presentation.

In terms of color, some meals can appear heavy and overly filling, while others can appear lighter and fresher which is typically more appealing. If you make a pasta dish in a light cream sauce with shrimp you wouldn't want to serve it in a white dish because there would be no color contrast. Make your flavorful dish more colorful by adding some fresh spinach, green peas, or a handful of fresh basil or Italian parsley. Conversely, if you've made a tomato-based gazpacho soup, it will look best in a white or beige bowl versus a bright colored bowl which can look unappetizing paired with the red of the soup.

The texture of food on a plate also influences a meal's appeal. Consider the common meal of grilled steak, potatoes

and broccoli. Instead of baked or mashed potatoes and steamed broccoli, consider roasted red, purple and white potatoes paired with pureed broccoli. This option combines crispy and creamy on the plate. Or perhaps you're making a vegetarian risotto with wild mushrooms and parmesan; consider serving it with a green salad with colorful raw vegetables, black olives and chopped nuts to maximize color and texture variation.

Food presentation is equally important. For a buffet, consider placing a few of the food servings on raised platters, or interspersing colorful food with dishes that are more neutral looking. These techniques create more visual interest in the food. For individual plating, rather than the more traditional three items on a plate (protein, starch, vegetables), consider stacking the food. This not only combines the flavors in a wonderful way, but also presents the dish in a way that will seem haute cuisine to your guests.

Although the above suggestions may seem like a lot to think about when all you want to do is cook, I promise you that over time, these considerations will become effortless with enormous payoff.

—Karen Fisch, Eldorado Resident
Photo © Can Stock Photo / Deagreetz



NEWSBRIEFS: For the latest information from ECIA, please sign up for newsbriefs, (ECIA's electronic mailing system) by going to eldoradosf.org, scroll down to "Sign up for eBlasts".



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