

## January 2022 Newsletter

# SANDOVAL DEMS

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SANDOVAL COUNTY



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## Message from the Chair



### **A new ward structure, new volunteer opportunities, but the same old dodgy Republican county commission**

By Alex Piland, DPSC Chair

What an eventful end of the year it has been! The ward reapportionment has passed the County Central Committee (CCC) with 79 votes to approve the reapportionment, and 4 votes to not approve.

Vice Chair Chavez began working on this last March, and he has done an incredible job! The Democratic Party of Sandoval County now has a total of 13 wards (up from 5). The wards are realigned as shown here.

Maps with clear distinct ward boundaries and precincts will soon be posted on our website, [sandovaldemocrats.org](http://sandovaldemocrats.org). From the home page, click on "About the Party Organization," and then click on "Wards and Precincts." Ward chairs will be appointed early in 2022.

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SANDOVAL DEMS DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SANDOVAL COUNTY	
New Sandoval County Wards	
Ward	Name
A	Bernalillo & Sandia
B	Placitas & Algodones
C	Pueblos
D	Corrales & River's Edge
E	North County
F	Cabazon
G	Intel & High Resort
H	Chamisa Hills
I	Rainbow
J	Loma Colorado & Vista Hills
K	North Hills
L	Enchanted Hills
M	Northern Meadows

As always, if you would like to become more involved, please contact me at [chair@sandovaldemocrats.org](mailto:chair@sandovaldemocrats.org).

We have plenty of volunteer opportunities available for everyone, especially in this election year!

If you are a member of the CCC or if you hope to become a delegate to this year's pre-primary convention, please attend your ward's meeting via Zoom. Dates are as follows:

- Wards A, B, C, D and E will meet on January 29.
- Wards F, G, H, and I will meet on January 30, and
- Wards J, K L, and M will meet on February 5.

Our CCC meeting will be two weeks later. An official "Call to Meeting" with links and times will be sent thirty days prior.

Speaking of meetings, the Democratic Party of New Mexico will be holding its pre-primary convention on March 5 in Roswell—Covid permitting. Click [here](#) for more information about the pre-primary convention.

Finally, to everyone's frustration, the Republican majority Sandoval County Commission neglected to include stakeholders in the county

to their county redistricting. They chose to employ a partisan consultant to redistrict without including any of the leaders of Sandoval County's sovereign nations. The consultant actually argued that he knew what was best for redistricting the Native American communities in our county!

The process used to employ this partisan hack was out-of-the ordinary, and the redistricting

packed and cracked in order to

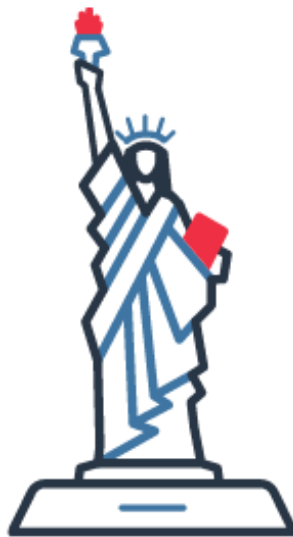
maintain Republican leadership in a county that has more registered Democrats than Republicans.

Even though the redistricting contract was awarded in July, the county manager claimed that there wasn't enough time to consult with affected parties. Our two Democratic county commissioners were not even informed of the redistricting until after

the maps were drawn.

Please continue to express your opposition to the County Manager [Wayne Johnson](#) and Commissioners [Block](#), [Heil](#), and [Meek](#).

**DPSC Wants You**



**To Run for Office**

By the way, Meek is up for reelection in 2022, and we are seeking a Democratic challenger. He passively ran unopposed in his last election and was therefore allowed to be a "walk-on" for this important seat.

Meek has been nothing more than an acolyte for the destructive, non-inclusive policies put forth by the chair of the commission. His voting record proves that he is not a critical thinker and does not consider what is best for his constituents.

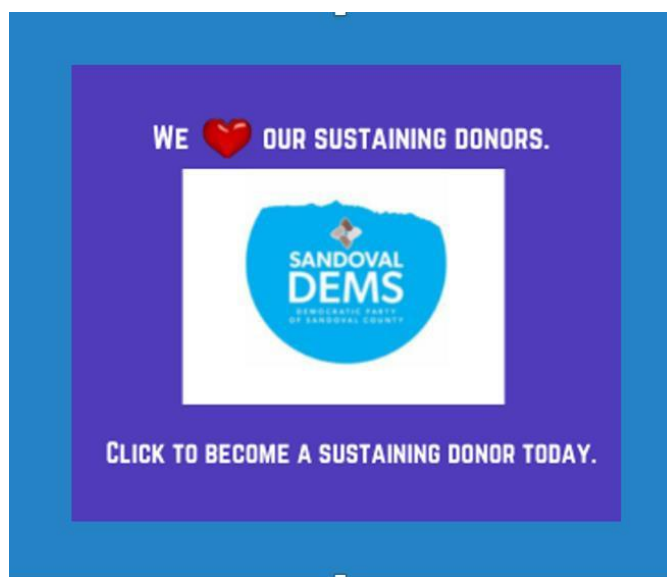
Meek must be challenged. The Sandoval County Commission is too important to concede to unscrupulous Republicans!

Are you the right candidate to beat Michael Meek? If so, please contact me at [chair@sandovaldemocrats.org](mailto:chair@sandovaldemocrats.org).

We have devised numerous ways of supporting candidates and can provide you with information, advice, and modest financial support.

On behalf of the DPSC Executive Committee, I wish you all a happy and healthy 2022.

Alex



## Making A Difference in Sandoval County

### Courts not only stayed open during Covid, they evolved to better serve New Mexico's residents

By Julie Vargas and Briana Zamora, Justices of the New Mexico Supreme Court



Justice Briana Zamora

We're proud—and honored—to be the newest members of your New Mexico Supreme Court.

"Justice Zamora is spearheading an effort to make sure that criminal defendants who are in custody are taken to trial first, and those in need of competency examinations receive them in a timely manner so that cases can move forward."

Appointed by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham in the past year—in the middle of a pandemic and unprecedented times—we are excited about the work of our judicial system in New Mexico.

It's important for you to know that New Mexico courts have remained open and functioning during the entire pandemic. In fact, it has evolved to better serve our

residents. While many businesses had to close or shorten hours, our courts never missed a beat. Of course, we had to make changes and do things differently, but the functions of the critical third branch of government continued.



Justice Julie Vargas

"Justice Vargas has been active with the Court's efforts to make sure that our system continues to function by ensuring that civil cases move forward efficiently so that they can be tried, and the parties can get a resolution."

The Supreme Court has supervisory authority over all of our state courts.

Justice Vargas has been active with the Court's efforts to make sure that our system continues to function by

ensuring that civil cases move forward efficiently so that they can be tried, and the parties can get a resolution.

These efforts have included finding alternate locations or innovative ways to conduct jury trials in larger (safer) settings, as many of our

courtrooms are not large enough to allow for social distancing.

Most recently, the Court has worked to expand its foreclosure

mediation program to districts outside of Bernalillo County and implemented a program to assist landlords and tenants to obtain federal funds to pay past-due rent and avoid eviction.

On the criminal side of the system, we are also working to ensure that both victims and defendants get their day in court as soon as possible.

Justice Zamora is spearheading an effort to

make sure that criminal defendants who are in custody are taken to trial first, and those in need of competency examinations receive them in a timely manner so that cases can move forward.

We have also taken steps to make sure that

criminal proceedings involving a defendant's liberty interest or civil proceedings involving a parent's right to raise his or her children

are conducted with parties physically present at all times possible.

We also are encouraging the continued use and expansion of virtual hearings in matters where the parties' presence is not necessary. Use of virtual hearings allows those facing transportation challenges and those who might be reluctant to come to the courthouse because of immigration concerns to attend hearings

“... to keep doing this work—and working for you—we must run in the 2022 election to keep our seats. We need your help. You can download our petitions at our websites: [www.KeepJusticeVargas.com](http://www.KeepJusticeVargas.com) [www.KeepJusticeZamora.com](http://www.KeepJusticeZamora.com).”



and participate in our system of justice.

The technological changes mandated by the pandemic have resulted in many of our courts, including the Supreme Court, broadcasting trials and hearings on platforms that permit remote and public viewing, allowing for expanded transparency.

Justice Zamora serves on the Supreme Court's Steering Committee for the Commission on Equity and Justice. This Commission focuses on gathering data about and offering solutions to instances of racism and bias in the courts, educating judges and court staff about racism and bias, and creating a pipeline for a more diverse judiciary. The work of this commission is critical to make sure we serve all persons equitably, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, income, language, ability, or education.

The Supreme Court has charged the Commission on Equity and Justice with collecting demographic data points across all case types

and provide us with recommendations regarding areas where additional attention or training is needed, particularly in the areas of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation prevention, as well as sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination.

The Supreme Court is working on updating court websites to include multiple languages and address disability access. We also plan to update the judiciary's employment process and job descriptions to modify language that may exclude employees or applicants.

We've been busy! It's because so many New Mexicans depend on efficient and thorough decisions. We love our job, and we appreciate the confidence placed in us.

We remain committed to making our courts more efficient and better prepared to serve you.

However, to keep doing this work—and working for you—we must run in the 2022 election to keep our seats. We

need your help. You can download our petitions at our websites:

[www.KeepJusticeVargas.com](http://www.KeepJusticeVargas.com)  
[www.KeepJusticeZamora.com](http://www.KeepJusticeZamora.com)

As you can imagine, collecting petition signatures during a pandemic has been extremely difficult. So, even if you just return one signature, it helps immensely.





# The Health Security Plan for New Mexicans

## All New Mexicans deserve quality healthcare

By Ann E. Kepley, Precinct 132 Chair, DPSC



All New Mexicans deserve a home-grown health care system that reflects our unique healthcare needs.

role, just as traditional Medicare does. As a result, Plan members will have guaranteed, comprehensive, quality health care coverage, including mental health care, regardless of income level or health and employment status. In addition, New Mexicans will have freedom of choice of healthcare provider and facility (no more networks), even

across state lines.

New Mexicans deserve an affordable plan that provides coordinated preventive care and aftercare for patients while giving them the ability to choose caregivers and receive care close to home. These are the objectives of the Health Security Plan for New Mexicans.

**"...Plan members will have guaranteed, comprehensive, quality health care coverage, including mental health care, regardless of income level or health and employment status."**

The Health Security Plan will automatically cover most New Mexico residents. Exceptions are:

- Federal retirees.
- Active duty and retired military.
- TRICARE recipients who will continue with their federal plans.

### The Big Picture

If implemented, the Health Security Plan shifts private insurance to a supplemental

In addition, the pueblos and tribes, as sovereign nations,

may choose to join the Plan. Health plans covered under ERISA also have the option of joining the Plan.

### **Developing the Details**

In 2021, the state legislature set aside \$575,000 to pay for the first year of the Health Security planning and design process. Under the auspices of the Office of the Superintendent of Insurance, this process focused on the operational details.



State Senators Jerry Ortiz y Pino and Liz Stefanics will shepherd The Plan in the 2022 short session. The proposed bill requests \$1.5 million to continue research in the design process. The design process allows for the hiring of consultants to provide critical information needed for automatic comprehensive coverage for most New Mexicans.

### **Current Action**

On October 19, 2021, Superintendent of Insurance

Russell Toal outlined the 2021 research areas. The four areas of research are:

### **Research Issue #1— Federal Laws and Waivers**

Experts at George Washington University are completing research on federal laws and waivers applicable to the Health Security. Their analysis will explore what the federal regulations say and what waivers are available to help shape the Health Security Plan's design.

### **Research Issue #2— Provider Payments**

Experts from Columbia University and Rutgers University are researching provider payment options. They will analyze payment models and methodologies used in other countries and states and gather healthcare providers' input. Their report will encompass such areas as policies and models for pricing health care services, utilizing U.S. and international models, integrating lessons from the U.S. and international

experiences, and proposed benchmarks.

### **Research Issue #3—Global Budget**

New Mexico and national experts are researching global hospital budgets. They will provide an overview of global budgeting, examples from other countries/states, opportunities and challenges, and information on other key topics. Their report will address feasibility and implementation barriers and provide recommendations. (Global budgets are a system under which hospitals receive predictable and sustainable revenue to cover their costs.)

### **Research Issue #4—The Future**

An expert from New Mexico State University is preparing analysis on future needs for this health care program.

*For more information on The Plan, go to <https://www.nmhealthsecurity.org>.*

*You may email  
Senator Jerry Ortiz y Pino  
at [jortizyp@msn.com](mailto:jortizyp@msn.com) or  
Senator Liz Stefanics  
at [lstefanics@msn.com](mailto:lstefanics@msn.com)*

*To contact your legislator, go to <https://nmlegis.gov> click on Legislators to get their contact information*

#### **Land Acknowledgement**

**We as the Democratic Party of Sandoval County recognize that Sandoval County is located on the ancestral land of Indigenous People. We acknowledge and honor our land caretakers and commit to retain and advocate for the traditions and cultural knowledge Indigenous People have practiced since time immemorial.**

**Click image for full text of Land Acknowledgement by Leah Ahkee-Baczekiewicz.**



## Sandoval County Democrats Give Back

**Sandoval County Sheriff's Office  
delivers Christmas presents to the  
Torreon Chapter House of the Navajo Nation**





# Sandoval County Democrats Give Back

## Democratic women prepare to Feed Rio Rancho Kids in the new year



Ready to Go



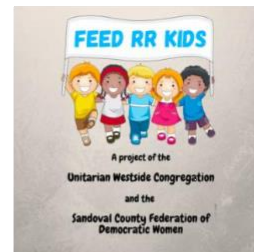
One Packet



We Recycle!

### FEED RIO RANCHO KIDS – SIGN UP TO HELP IN JANUARY

- It is a New Year and the need for weekend snack packs for our kids continues. This message is very simple. We need donations of money and of food.
- To be ready for our January 18 assembly, we need (see numbers in red):



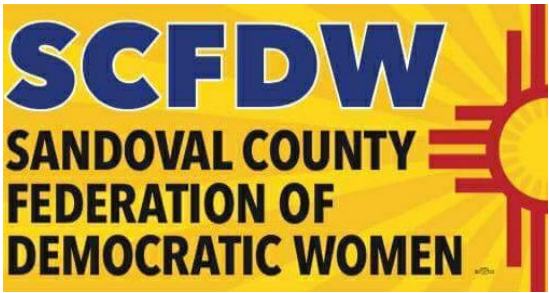
Feed RR Kids - January 18, 2022			
Goal - 200 packets			
Goal	Item	We Have	We Need
200	Napkins	200	0
200	gallon zip lock bags	200	0
400	spoons (two in each packet)	oodles	0
Food Items			
400	granola bars- various kinds (two in each packet)	166	234
200	beef ravioli flip top cans	76	124
400	fruit flavored snacks (two in each packet)	42	358
200	trail mix	23	177
200	applesauce packets	102	98
200	mac and cheese	0	200
200	puddings - vanilla & chocolate	22	178
200	crackers and cheese	108	92
200	tuna salad kits	47	153
200	ramen noodles	11	189

- The first three items have priority.
- If you would prefer to donate,
  - A check made payable to "UU Westside" should be mailed to Karen Schafer, 4800 Palmas Altas Drive SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124.
  - To contribute online, go to <https://uuwestside.org/> and click on "donate" in the upper left-hand corner, then add the amount, select the down arrow, and scroll down to "Feed RR Kids."
- Volunteers wishing to join in the assembly fun, should be at the UU Westside, 1650 Abrazos Ave. NE, Rio Rancho, at 9:30 am on January 18. Masks are mandatory.

We appreciate each one of you. Our program is making a difference and we can only continue with your support.

—Karen Schafer, Kitty Perez, and Chris Spigarelli, Coordinators





Join us today to unite women of the Democratic Party and help elect Democrats

Click on image or go to <https://sandovalcountyfdw.org>

- Become more informed about candidates
- Learn about political processes in our county
- Vote for SCFDW leadership in the Executive Committee election
- Membership in the New Mexico Federation of Democratic Women and the National Federation of Democratic Women is included
- Be informed about county, regional, state and national meetings of interest to Democratic women.

**To Become a Member**

1. Complete the membership form (below), and
2. Include cash or check made payable to SCFDW (\$20 for 2022)
3. Mail to

Jae Riebe, Treasurer  
6800 Nagoya Rd NE  
Rio Rancho, NM 87144  
Questions: [JaeRiebe@gmail.com](mailto:JaeRiebe@gmail.com)

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

NEW\_\_\_\_\_or RENEWAL\_\_\_\_\_ DATE\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_Ward\_\_\_\_Precinct\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone\_\_\_\_\_ Cell\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_







## Miss Information

### Republican Sandoval County Commissioners trample Native American rights

By Judy Gordon, DPSC Secretary

Miss Information moved to New Mexico 4 years ago and remains enchanted by its beauty and culture. But the bigotry on display by the Republican Sandoval County Commissioners—David Heil, Jay Block, and Michael Meek—has left me outraged and saddened.

In steamrolling inequitable and unfair redistricting maps over the objections of Native American pueblos and tribes, these commissioners underscore that prejudice and chauvinism are alive and well in Sandoval County.

At its December 9 meeting, the commission voted along

party lines to accept a redistricting map to which all county Native American pueblos and tribes, as well as many others, strenuously objected.

The chosen map was developed for the Republican

commissioners without any consultation with Native Americans or any other communities under a contract with former Republican state senator Rod Adair. The vote

went as expected, and I will not go into the many deficiencies of Adair's radically gerrymandered maps.

Instead, I want to call out the Republican commissioners' rude and disrespectful

"One Native American leader reported that upon confronting Adair about his online screeds, especially regarding Columbus Day, Adair told him, "No one can out-Indian me."

treatment of Native Americans in the redistricting process. Native leaders spoke at both the November 18 commission meeting when the maps were first presented and the December 9 meeting when the vote took place. All forcefully objected to the lack of consultation and challenged the end result.

Because many readers will not have attended the meeting, I feel you should have the opportunity to know the actual words of Native leaders in responding to the Republican redistricting proposals. Here are some excerpts from their comments:

"...irresponsible to sequester the entire Native population into one district."

"...wrong, insulting, . . . a slap in the face to most Indigenous populations of this county."

"...violate principles of self-determination."

"...lacks fairness, equity, justice."

"... worst kind of arrogance and paternalism."

"...direct violation of the Voting Rights Act."

"...aim to do a disservice to my people..."

"This is about the marginalization of Indigenous groups in Sandoval County."

"...silencing the voice of Indigenous communities..."



One Native American leader reported that upon confronting Adair about his online

screeds, especially regarding Columbus Day, Adair told him, "No one can out-Indian me."

Another leader stated that redistricting is a complete failure on Sandoval County's part.

Miss Information couldn't agree more. Our Republican county commissioners seem unconcerned that, by law, they are responsible for the

health, safety, welfare, and prosperity of our county as a whole. Instead, these commissioners have positioned themselves to serve only those who already agree with them.

The three Republican commissioners can't even be bothered to wear masks at large, crowded public commission meetings. They clearly don't care that they're imperiling their constituents and violating the rules they

have a sworn duty to uphold. Why, then, would we expect them to care about the voting rights of Native Americans?

To use a word recently deployed by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the redistricting process will leave a lasting "stench." When it comes to future commission elections, Sandoval County voters must remember the egregious actions of the commission's Republicans and say, "Never again."



**Isaac Dakota Casados, Chair, Native American Democratic Caucus, speaks at protest prior to vote on redistricting**



## Executive Committee Update

### We have an effective new ward structure and tarnished county commission districts

By Judy Gordon, DPSC Secretary



On Saturday, December 11, we held a County Central Committee (CCC)

meeting to brief members on the ward reapportionment plan proposed by the Executive Committee. First Vice Chair Isaac Chavez briefed the CCC on proposed ward configurations.

CCC members then received a ballot by email and had a week to vote on the changes. The proposal passed decisively, with 94 percent of voting members giving a thumbs up to the proposed ward structure.

The new ward structure increases their number from five to thirteen. Ward reapportionment was needed because our population has grown too large to effectively organize with only five wards.

Now that we have a new structure in place, wards and precincts will be well positioned for upcoming elections.

Many thanks to Isaac for applying his prodigious skills with geographical information system mapping and his deep knowledge of the county to this project. He made the process go smoothly, and we couldn't have done it without him.

Thanks, also, to the CCC for accepting the Executive Committee's proposed ward organization. Information on the new ward structure will be posted on our [website](#) soon.

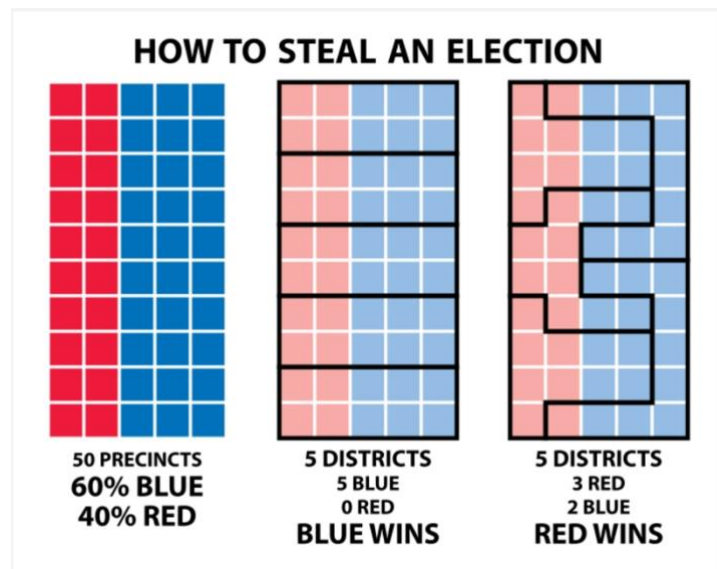
At its last meeting, the Executive Committee discussed the situation with Sandoval County

Commission redistricting, which is an effort by the Republican majority on the commission to pass a radically gerrymandered map designed to ensure at least 10 years of minority Republican rule. The following week, the commission voted to accept one of the gerrymandered maps on a party line vote.

We have reported elsewhere that the new map received no input from Native Americans, small towns, or other affected parties and was passed over their vociferous objections.

Although the vote didn't go our way, the Democratic Party of Sandoval County (DPSC) and Native American pueblos and tribes mounted an

impressive turnout at the last two commission meetings and made passionate and compelling arguments against the plan.



How to Steal an election. Image by Steven Nass ([CC BY-SA 4.0](#)) via Wikimedia Commons.

The Executive

Committee encourages Sandoval County Democrats to run for office and has been devising ways to support candidates. We now have a list of resources that DPSC can provide. If you are interested in potentially running for office and would like to know more, contact [Chair Alex Piland](#) or Vice Chair [Isaac Chavez](#)





# Democracy: Not A Spectator Sport

## Volunteer Opportunities and Contacts

### VOLUNTEER FOR FUNDRAISING OR EVENT PLANNING



CLICK HERE

### Videographers Wanted

Record DPSC  
Live  
Events



Create  
Videos for  
Social Media

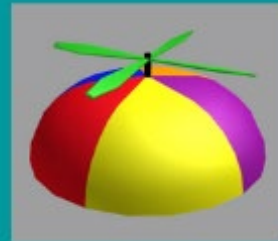
Click to Volunteer

### Join the Research Task Force



CLICK HERE

### We Need Data Analysts



CLICK HERE

### Volunteer Opportunities and Contacts

- **Run for Office, Ward Chair, or Precinct Chair**—contact **Isaac Chavez** at [icvez9@gmail.com](mailto:icvez9@gmail.com).
- **Communications Team and Data Analysis Team**—contact **Delbert Schafer** at [schafer42@gmail.com](mailto:schafer42@gmail.com).
- **Fundraising and Event Planning**—contact **Karen Schafer** at [karenjean44@gmail.com](mailto:karenjean44@gmail.com).
- **Research Team**—contact Ann Kepley at [ann.kepley@gmail.com](mailto:ann.kepley@gmail.com).
- **Videography/Event Streaming**—contact June Anglin at [juneanglin@gmail.com](mailto:juneanglin@gmail.com).