

Taos United Community Forum

Kit Carson Electric Coop Boardroom

March 6th, 2018 5:30 – 7:30

TU Community Forums are held on the first Tuesday of each month

Our next meeting will be April 3rd

The opinions and comments below are those of the speaker and not official positions of Taos United, a non-partisan, nonprofit community information and education group

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Mya Coursey, TU member, opened the meeting and introduced guest speaker **Susan Herrera, candidate for Democratic nomination for State Representative, District 41**. Herrera is a retired CEO of Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation and a former director of the congressional Hispanic Caucus in Washington, D.C.

Herrera believes we need a blue tsunami and a strong State legislature to back national movements. She is running on a platform to improve public education, create good jobs and build a better, sustainable health and behavioral health system. She supports an overhaul of the New Mexico tax system so that working families in New Mexico are the priority.

"We can create a strong revenue stream for state education, health and economic development by revamping the income tax, permanent fund and gross receipts taxes. Depending upon oil and gas fees and playing the 'revenue guessing game' annually is not a smart way to sustain services to our citizens."

During her tenure as CEO of LANL Foundation, Susan raised millions of dollars for local school districts and teacher professional development, early childhood education, First Born home visiting, college scholarships, and community development. She also worked on creating the UNM Taos Campus in its infancy, and has worked for several nonprofits serving northern NM including Child Rite and Siete del Norte. During the 80's Susan worked in Congress as a legislative assistant to Rep Jim Lloyd (D-CA) and then assumed the position of the Executive Director of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Susan is an expert in creating coalitions of city, state, and national leaders who can work together to solve community problems.

Please visit susanherrera.com.

The Democratic Primary is Tuesday, June 5th

SPEAKER RECAP

PROGRESS MADE: KCEC SOLAR INITIATIVE

Luis Reyes, CEO, KIT CARSON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, announced progress made toward their *Solar Initiative* to have 100% daytime solar energy by 2022.

8 ½ megawatts of solar capacity have been constructed, with 10 additional megawatts scheduled for completion by October 2018.

KCEC was designated a finalist for 'Best Utility of the Year' by COLORADO SOLAR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION.

RENEWABLE ENERGY – NEED TO HELP CREATE A STRONG PUBLIC REGULATORY COMMISSION

Bob Bresnahan, Trustee of KCEC and founder of RENEWABLE TAOS, announced the pace of renewable energy is picking up speed. The laws of regulation are dramatically stressed, and it is of utmost importance that the Public Regulatory Commission [PRC] of New Mexico be radically strengthened to support the transformation of our State toward renewable energy.

RENEWABLE TAOS and KIT CARSON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE have invited PRC candidates Janine Yazzi and Stephen Fischmann to speak in Taos. Although these candidates are not from our district, their work as part of PRC will affect the entire State. Be sure to mark your calendar: **PRC CANDIDATE FORUM: [Tuesday, March 13, 6:30pm at KCEC, 118 Cruz Alta Road.](#)**

THANK YOU FOR SUCCESSFUL TAOS UNITED MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS CANDIDATE FORUM

Marjorie Luckey, TU Board member, thanked the Candidate Forum volunteers for a superb event one month ago: Mark Asmus, Bea Balsamo, Mya Coursey, Danielle Freeman, Ken Manning, Suzie Schwartz plus moderators, Stan Riveles and Rose Gordon.

NEW TAOS UNITED BOARD MEMBERS ANNOUNCED: Marjorie also announced 3 new members of the TU Board: Bob Bresnahan, Megan O'Reilly and Melissa Moe. With these new members, 2 of the original and longest serving Board members, Mary Lane Leslie and Brantly Goodwin, have stepped down to continue to serve Taos United in other roles.

Thanks also went to gracious volunteers Barbara Berg and Alexandra Rose for their lovely homemade cookies.

PLUTONIUM: DOE proposal for LANL

Stan Riveles announced there is opportunity for public comment on a Department of Energy proposal to expand the use of plutonium by a factor of 10 at Los Alamos National Lab. There is widespread concern that this is a possible prelude to expansion of plutonium pits.

Please write to Radiological Laboratory Utility and Office Building (RLUOB) Document Manager, NNSA Los Alamos Field Office

Attention: CMRR Project Management Office via email: RLUOBEA@hq.doe.gov to request a 60-day extension of the public comment period **by Mar. 26 deadline** stating that this 30 day comment period is inadequate for the public to access, analyze, and comment on the 125 pg. Draft Environmental Assessment released by the DOE on Feb. 22.

For more info and a sample public comment letter, click this link https://www.nukewatch.org/pressreleases/PR-2-22-18-CMRR_Rad_Lab_draft_EA.pdf or contact Suzie Schwartz at [575 770 2629](tel:5757702629)

TAOS ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL

Jean Stevens announced the TAOS ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, April 18 – 22. The first evening on April 18th will take place at SOMOS, featuring poetry on the environment. April 19-22 will take place at the TCA with a variety of wonderful films. Suggested \$5 entry fee will be donated to nonprofits Amigos Bravos, Renewable Taos, Rivers & Birds, Somos and TCA.

NEED PROGRESSIVES IN OUR LEGISLATURE

Jay Levine of RENEWABLE TAOS announced he is organizing gatherings in private homes to raise support for Susan Herrera, candidate for Democratic nomination for State Representative, district 41. She will oppose incumbent Rodella who *must* be defeated – good bills die in her care! There are fewer than 10 progressives in the NM Legislature. We need more!!

WINTER MARKET

Peter Rose urged support of local vendors at the TAOS SATURDAY WINTER MARKET, 10-2 at the Guadalupe Church Gym, 205 Don Fernando Street. For more information call 737-5111 or online www.taoswintermarket.com

POOR PEOPLES CAMPAIGN

Megan White announced a kick-off of the POOR PEOPLES CAMPAIGN at 2pm on Sunday March 18, First Presbyterian Church in downtown Taos. This is a national grassroots campaign led by Reverend Barber in the manner of Martin Luther King, focused on the issues of racism, poverty, militarism, and environmental degradation. Todd Wynward toddwynward@gmail.com is leading the local effort. A diverse group of intercultural, interfaith leaders from our region will inspire and provide opportunities to act every week during the national **Forty Days of Action, May 15-June 25.**

For more information: poorpeoplescampaign.org
Tell us you're coming at <https://www.facebook.com/events/134646480690945/>
For volunteer opportunities contact Megan White megan@lamafoundation.org

TEENS #WALKON THE PLAZA WITH THEIR SUPPORTERS TO END GUN VIOLENCE

Marjorie Luckey urged everyone to join the MARCH ON THE PLAZA on Wednesday March 14th, at 10am, Taos Plaza. Organized by students of Taos' high schools and middle schools, youth speakers will speak about the impact of gun violence in their lives, read poetry and perform music. There will be a march to the TCA at 11am to view "Art of Nonviolence" a heartbreaking middle schoolers art exhibit.

At 12 noon the group will march to First Presbyterian Church for an adult and youth Forum discussion of actions to be taken. **Attendees are asked to stand in quiet solidarity with students. Wear orange to #endgunviolence**

This is part of [#NationalSchoolWalkout](#) : for 17 minutes at 10am across every time zone on March 14th to protest Congress' inaction to do more than tweet thoughts and prayers in response to the gun violence plaguing our schools and neighborhoods. We need action. Students and allies are organizing the national school walkout to demand Congress pass legislation to keep us safe from gun violence at our schools, on our streets and in our homes and places of worship.

MEET & GREET - STATE AUDITOR CANDIDATE

State Representative BILL McCAMLEY, a progressive Democrat from Las Cruces, is running for State Auditor in a hotly contested Democratic primary. He is an exciting and highly qualified candidate with good ideas for this very important office. There will be a **Meet & Greet on Tuesday March 13 at Lambert's Tree House, 5:30 -7:00 pm**. Everyone is invited to come hear more about what he has to offer.

TENT - TAOS ELDERS & NEIGHBORS TOGETHER

Marianne Furedi of TENT announced an October 1st launch date for 'virtual village.' The goal is to have a community of elders and neighbors supporting one another, enabling members to stay in place in their homes and communities as they age. There are 250 TENT villages springing up nationwide. This nonprofit is recruiting members and volunteers. They seek funding through grants, donations and membership. For more information please see www.taoselders.org

FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN

Caryle Zorumski, COORDINATOR of the TAOS COUNTY IMAGINATION LIBRARY, talked about this affiliate of the Dolly Parton organization. 560 children in Taos County are receiving one free book EVERY month through this extraordinary effort. Free books are available to children up to 5 years of age. Parent registration is available at www.imaginationlibrary.com Fiscal support is coming from FRIENDS OF TAOS PUBLIC LIBRARY.