



Chair's Letter December 2023

Fellow Santa Fe County Republicans,

The elections are over and in Santa Fe County it was a mixed bag for Republicans. Hats off to our friends in Edgewood, where conservatives had a clean sweep. Congratulations to Jerry Powers, Sterling Donner and Patrick Milligan for winning their Town Commissioner races, and Lyndsi Donner and Jeffery Lossing for winning their School Board races. David King and Wendy Lossing also won their Soil & Water Supervisor races.

In the Santa Fe City Council and School Board races, however, our valiant candidates did not prevail. Thank you to Joel Nava and Patricia Vigil-Stockton for giving the voters a choice and forcing incumbent candidates to run real races for their seats. We need more of this in the 2025 local election. Every city council and school board district deserves to have Republican candidates contesting elections. We generated plenty of press, brought our issues to the fore and sparked important discussions about our government representatives.

I was hopeful that the high turnout signaled disaffected voters coming off the sidelines, but this did not prove to be the case. In actuality, our Republican candidates forced the Dems to rally their activist base, bring in their experienced consultants, and boost their own voter turnout. We made them really work for it, and we know we're up against the 100-year entrenched Democrat political machine of New Mexico. Looking at the ballot measures, we see that Santa Fe went 3 to 1 progressive for the most part. This 75/25 split is in line with past elections, where Republicans get our 15% and pull in another 7-10% from DTS and other voters. In retrospect, I can say we neither over-performed nor under-performed based on the historical record.

However, the turnout data does have a sobering message. In Santa Fe County, Dems turned out 36% of their registered voters, while Republicans only got 23% of our registered voters. We have a huge apathy problem that will need to be addressed in 2024. Our work does not end here, it is only just beginning.

We will not be having a December meeting. Please enjoy the Christmas and Hannukah holidays; rest and recharge. The legislative session starts on January 16th, one day after the Iowa caucuses kick off the 2024 primaries. It's going to be a wild ride for the next 11 months.

Peace and Blessings,

Robert Witsenhausen

Robert Witsenhausen, Chair