

McKinley Dems get new officers; state central committee chooses new faces

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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Some new faces are now at the helm of the McKinley County Democratic Party. And, relative to the same party line, the State Central Committee, representing McKinley County, recently elected new officers as the political ups and downs of 2017 roll along.

Albert Shirley, a former member of the New Mexico House of Representatives, confirmed that Cas Hoefman (Gallup) and Sonlatsa Jim-Martin (Tohatchi) were elected chairman and vice chairman of the McKinley County Democratic Party on March 28, respectively. Hoefman announced candidacy during a February meeting of the party.

“We’re getting everything set at the local level and at the state level,” Shirley said. “Everyone agrees that we have a good group of new people.”

Hoefman takes the place of Mary Ann Armijo. Jim-Martin, an outspoken education advocate who frequently speaks out at Gallup-McKinley County Board of Education meetings, said the selection as vice president was something she welcomed.

“Yes, I am the new vice chair,” Jim-Martin said during a break at a recent school board meeting. “It’s my first time holding office within the McKinley County Democratic Party.”

Shirley, who hails from Iyanbito and extremely active in area politics since leave the state legislature decades ago, noted that area membership serving the State Central Committee now

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claims Shirley, Alray Nelson, Anna Rondon, Joanne Beneati, Deanna Crask-Stone, Liz Hannum, Amit Pande, Arden Kucate, Jim-Martin and Hoefman.

Interestingly, Nelson is the former area representative for the Hillary Clinton campaign. Hannum is the executive director of Gallup's MainStreet.

An April 29 committee meeting in Albuquerque determines who gets picked to serve on an executive committee which will represent the state in national democratic functions. Shirley said another person will be selected to serve the state central committee and that selection must come from the Pueblo of Zuni.

By Bernie Dotson

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