

President's Message July, 2026

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As a state organization we strive to be the main clearinghouse of information and opportunity for our constituency. With the remnants of Covid, changes within the athletic club industry, and a fragile economic climate, our base has been affected. In order to build more energy and generate more engagement, we are embarking on a campaign to 're-invent the wheel' with some long-lost connections. Please follow:

LAS CRUCES---one of the original racquetball hotbeds in New Mexico, it staged the first State Championship at the Student Activity Center at NM State University in 1974. Dr John Reznik, who recently passed away, was an avid racquetball player, promoter, and author. He directed that first NM State Racquetball Championship. The original four racquetball courts still stand; and, our motivation is to hold an event there in 2027. The Las Cruces Convention and Visitors Bureau supports our endeavor; and, a host of players are accessible north and south along the Rio Grande corridor.

GALLUP---Most do not know that the original campus of Gallup High School had a racquetball court. It was before the Cecil Garcia Fitness Center erected three courts at the Old Zuni Road location. Names like Tim Scanlon, John & Sheila Kennedy, Fran Pawlowski, and Pat Gurley sparked promotion and growth. One time the Kachina Open was the longest standing tournament under NM Racquetball. After an absence of a decade, we intend to return to Gallup in 2027. Earl's and Jerry's Diners await!

POJOAQUE---Ex-Governor George Rivera and Tribal Judge Frank Demolli spearheaded the growth of racquetball in Pojoaque at the Wellness Center. In the late 1990's two courts were erected with the help of Kent Taylor of Sports Unlimited. A few years later, two courts were added alongside a multi-use fitness room. The IRF designated Pojoaque as one of a few *International Training Centers*. Its infrastructure, its strategic location outside Santa Fe, and the Buffalo Thunder Hilton resort made it a natural 'go to' destination. The IRF World Senior Doubles and a professional tournament were held on its courts. Similar to Las Cruces and Gallup, Pojoaque has not staged an event for a decade. With the recent hire of Director Ryan Cordova, 2027 will bode well for us to return to operate a series of events. Ryan has a racquetball background, has resided in Northern New Mexico for many years, and has ambitions to grow the indoor court sports once again at the Wellness Center. Stay tuned!

UPCOMING

IRF 41st Frank Hotels World Senior Racquetball Championship *R2sports.com*

Montoya Rec Center, Wilson Complex, UWC Rec Center Las Vegas, NM (September 1-5)

Meadow City IRT Pro-Am Racquetball *R2sports.com*

Montoya Rec Center, Wilson Complex Las Vegas, NM (November 19-22)

Quote of the month 'Grab that which is positive; keep the negative out of the loop' **NF**