

# Arizona Democratic Party Chair



*Left to right: PC Democratic Club Chair Vicki Barber, Charlene Fernandez, Club Vice Chair Jim Sheard (photo by Gillian Driscoll)*

## **Gillian Driscoll**

The PebbleCreek Democratic Club welcomed Charlene Fernandez, Chair of the Arizona Democratic Party, to their November meeting. Ms. Fernandez has an extensive political background and brings much experience to the Party. She served in the Arizona House from 2014 to 2021 and was the Democratic Leader from 2019 until 2021 when she left to work at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Prior to serving in the Arizona House, Ms. Fernandez worked as Constituent Services Coordinator in west CD2 where she spearheaded the drive to bring a Veteran's Administration clinic to Yuma County, saving veterans a long drive to Phoenix. Charlene also served Governor Janet Napolitano as a liaison for the Arizona Department of Environment Quality in Yuma County and was elected First Vice Chair of the Arizona Democratic Party from 2008 to 2009.

Ms. Fernandez realized while in the Arizona House that there was a disconnect between the Legislature and Arizonans. She pioneered travel around the state to meet people, assess their needs and learn the specific requirements of their location. This project raised the number of House Democrats from 23 to 29. After joining the USDA she asked the Biden administration to get clean water to those parts of the state, in particular the reservations that had none. She also spearheaded getting more housing built to accommodate those in need.

She emphasized that the Democrats need only two more Representatives in the AZ House to gain a working majority. She also reported that her visits to

universities have found them full of enthusiastic young Democrats who care about current issues. She requested that we support the state candidates and use the RTS (Request to Speak) system, to let our opinions be known. She encouraged members to keep talking the truth to combat misinformation.

Prior to Ms. Fernandez' talk, two Arizona Democratic Candidates spoke briefly. Eric Stafford is running for a second time for the Arizona Senate, having lost the first time around. He is determined to run a comprehensive campaign this time and reach as many voters as possible. Christine Scianna is running for the Arizona House. She is an Arizona native who taught science to junior high students while raising four children as a single parent. She has a non-verbal, autistic daughter and left teaching to be her full time caretaker.

Dani Sterbinsky also addressed the club. She is running for Congress in CD9 hoping to unseat Paul Gosar. Dani is a navy vet with a master's in Industrial Psychology who helps organizations to function more effectively. She is committed to finding long term solutions to current issues and in bringing people together. She believes our governing bodies have forgotten how to function.

The PebbleCreek Democratic Club meets on the first Wednesday of the month at the Tuscany Falls Ballroom. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. and the meeting commences at 6:45 p.m. The meetings are open and all are welcome. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Jan. 7.

# Dem Club veterans Service Committee Creates Community of Kindness Project



*PebbleCreek Democratic Club Veterans Service Committee member Bob Wiedower and the 225 gifts donated by Democratic Club members to a local elementary school (photo by Chuck Veltri)*

## **Gillian Driscoll**

This year veteran members of the PebbleCreek Democratic Club formed a Veterans Service Committee. Their mission is to provide service and support to both the club and our community.

Since its inception, the Service Committee has been engaged in several

service projects. One of their main aims is to support children in need in the local area. In respect to this, the group adopted two local schools. In the summer they organized a highly successful school supply drive. This project resulted in over eight thousand individual items being

— **DEM cont. on page 63**

## **DEM**

- continued from page 57

donated to the schools by the Democratic Club, its veterans, and members.

In a follow up project, the Service Committee members helped an elementary school in Avondale supply 30+ pairs of new shoes for students in need.

The most recent project of the group is a program called "Community of Kindness" and was a promise made by the Veterans Committee to provide Christmas gifts to a school of 225+ young kindergartners, first graders, and second graders in the West Valley. The project was supported by the PC Democratic Club and friends who were given the holiday wish list of an individual student. They then shopped

and wrapped specific gifts for that child. The goal of having Christmas presents for every child was met and the gifts were delivered to the school by the Veterans Service Committee members who helped to distribute them to the students.

Earlier in November on Veterans Day, over a dozen veteran members of the PC Dem Club and their spouses had the honor of attending a luncheon together to celebrate their service to our country.

Any interested Democratic veteran is encouraged to join the committee and be part of this service group. Contact Bob Wiedower or Chuck Veltri in the Source Book.