

*MEETING THE NEEDS OF SENIORS IN
RURAL NEW MEXICO*

A PRESENTATION BY

BARBARA RIOS

*FINANCE MANAGER, DEMING LUNA
COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING,
INC.*

FOR

*LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES COMMITTEE*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. History of the Older Americans Act**
- II. Aging Structure in New Mexico**
- III. Overview of the Deming Luna County Commission on Aging, Inc.**
- IV. Providing for Rural Communities in New Mexico Presentation**

HISTORY OF OLDER AMERICANS ACT

HISTORY OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

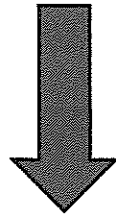
The Older Americans Act (OAA) is an Act that was signed into law in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Act was part of his **Great Society Initiative** aimed at improving the social welfare of the United States. The Act was a response to Congressional concerns of a lack of social services for older adults. The Act is the federal guide to programs and services that support activities which help older adults live independently and remain part of the community. The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging (AOA) under the Administration for Community Living (ACL) administers most OAA programs. Only those promoting part-time employment opportunities and community service activities for seniors fall separately under the Department of Labor.

The majority of OAA programs are “core services” authorized by Title III/IIIE—Grants for State and Community Programs on Aging. These core services vary depending on local needs, but often include transportation, nutrition, support for caregivers, recreation, in-home assistance, disease prevention and more. The OAA also authorizes funding for training, research and demonstration projects in the field of aging as well as grants for services for Native Americans and elder rights activities

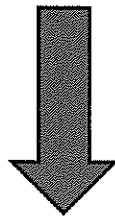
States receive Title III/IIIE Grants according to a formula based on their share of the nation's population of individuals 60 and older. States then pass these funds to Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), which coordinate programs and services for older adults at the local level. Counties are key recipients of these dollars and frequent administrators of these programs. Roughly 25 percent of the 625 AAAs across the nation operate within county governments, while another 28 percent operate within regional planning councils or councils of governments that often include counties. Meanwhile, 56 percent of AAAs rely on local funding streams through counties or other local governments to provide additional programs and services.

AGING STRUCTURE IN NEW MEXICO

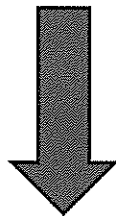
Office of the Governor



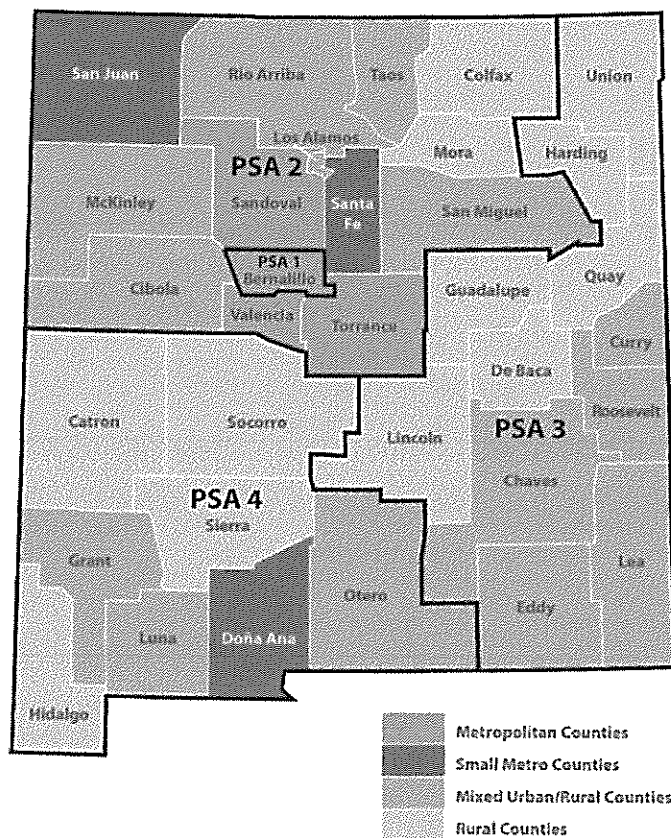
**Aging & Long-Term Services
Department**



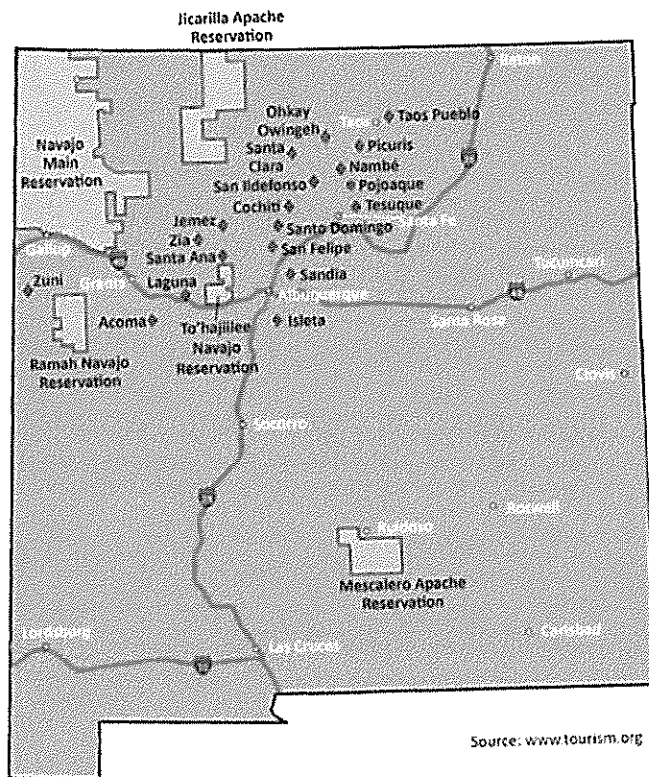
Area Agencies on Aging



Senior Program Providers



New Mexico Counties	
PSA 1	Bernalillo
PSA 2	San Juan, McKinley, Cibola, Rio Arriba, Los Alamos, Sandoval, Valencia, Santa Fe, Taos, Torrance, Colfax, Mora, San Miguel
PSA 3	Union, Harding, Quay, Guadalupe, De Baca, Curry, Lincoln, Chaves, Roosevelt, Eddy, Lea
PSA 4	Catron, Grant, Hidalgo, Socorro, Sierra, Luna, Doña Ana, Otero



PSAs	Pueblo, Nation, or Tribe
PSA 5	New Mexico portion of the Navajo Nation
PSA 6	Mescalero Apache Nation, Jicarilla Apache Nation; Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Sandia, Santa Ana, Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, Picuris, Pojoaque, Taos, Tesuque, Zia, Zuni Pueblos

DEMING LUNA
COUNTY
COMMISSION ON
AGING, INC.



Deming Luna County Senior Citizens Center

800 S. GRANITE STREET • DEMING NEW MEXICO • 575.546.8823

DEMING LUNA COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING, INC.

WHO WE ARE

The Deming Luna County Commission on Aging (COA) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization whose primary goal is to provide critical services for older adults in Luna County.



OUR OPERATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

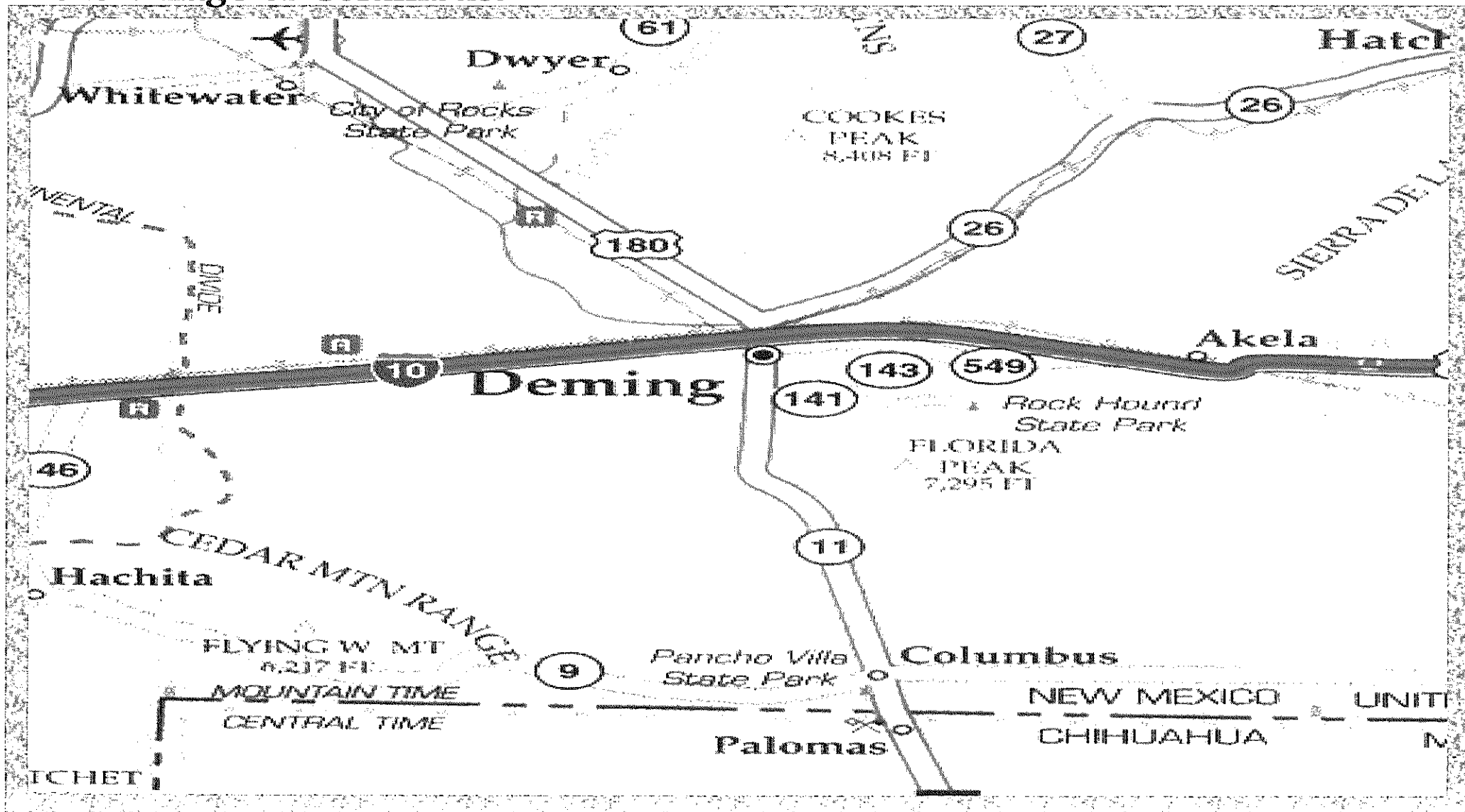
Our operational philosophy is our mission statement;

“Promotion of Independence, preservation of dignity, and enhancement of life quality for a diverse population of older adults and people with disabilities.”

Our mission allows us to provide social, nutritional and preventative programs and services to older adults and at risk citizens of the City of Deming, Village of Columbus and all of Luna County, to enhance and maintain their health, safety and dignity, and protect them from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Assisted by the provisions of the Federal Older Americans Act, as administered by the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging and the Aging and Long Term Services Department, the COA strives to meet the needs of its participants with dedicated response from its paid employees and volunteers.

SERVICE AREA

Luna County covers 2,965 square miles encompassing the City of Deming (16 Sq. Miles), Village of Columbus (4 Sq. Miles) and all of the surrounding areas of Luna County. Luna County borders the Country of Mexico with the Mexican town of Puerto Palomas just 3 miles from the Village of Columbus.



WHO WE CONTRACT WITH:

The Deming Luna County COA currently contracts with the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to provide Congregate and Home Delivered Meals, Transportation, In-home Services, IIE Respite services and Adult Day Care services.

The COA also contracts with the NM Aging & Long-Term Services Department for NM Grown foods, Senior Companion and RSVP Volunteer programs.

The COA contracts with the City of Deming and with Luna County for funding to supplement current federal and state funds.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Title III - contracts provide service to individuals 60 years of age or older or to a spouse or widow or widower of and individual who is 60 years of age or older.

Title III E - Respite contract provides service to caregivers who are 55 years of age or older.

Senior Companion - program is open to individuals who are 55 years of age or older. Individuals are placed with seniors either through Adult Day Care services or in a private home setting to provide companionship. This relationship helps to foster independence by encouraging seniors to do things for themselves.

RSVP - program is open to individuals who are 55 years of age or older. Individuals volunteer throughout the County with local businesses and Organizations to meet the needs of each respective mission.

SERVICE MODEL/STAFFING

Our organization models its services after the Older Americans Act. The staffing that we provide is essential to the numerous services and programs currently offered. We have developed departments to sustain effective and efficient services so that the citizens in our community benefit from requirements needed to remain independent for as long as possible. From the Executive Director through to the direct care staff, all have the passion to ensure that our clients are satisfied with the service which is provided. Our In-Home Service Department ensures that the organization meets and exceeds its goals of providing excellent care. Our Adult Day Care program provides a safe and comfortable environment conducive to an enjoyable experience for its participants. Overall, we demonstrate the total component package from the administrative support and the development of social relationships down to the compliance of case management with staff who are dedicated to meeting the mission and goals of this organization.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF AN EVER GROWING POPULATION



Determining how to meet the needs of an aging population is becoming more and more challenging. Ever increasing costs for service, concerns of quality of care, and the rising population in need of care to include mental health issues are widespread. Our services have become a form of long-term care to assist a population of older adults and adults with disabilities. More individuals are requiring services and without this funding the needs of these individuals cannot be met. What is also at risk is funding to provide for a qualified staff to provide the services. Increased funding is needed to provide an essential living wage for staff!

We continue to look for ways to become more efficient and effective in order to serve those at risk in our community. Continuation of this funding allows our organization to address our goals and objectives and provide for successful outcomes. The ultimate goal is to provide services for individuals who are in great need socially, economically and of protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation while assisting them to live independently for as long as possible free from fear of premature institutionalization. Our organization will continue its strong commitment to serve the needs of the citizens in our community. We intend to continue to make a positive difference for those in greatest need in Luna County.

PRESENTATION

The importance of providing for an aging population in rural communities.

As the nation's population rapidly ages, counties face increasing demands and challenges in providing comprehensive systems of care to their older residents. Federal funding for OAA programs has not kept pace with these demographic changes. Without additional resources, counties will face new challenges in providing the rapidly aging population with access to critical services. The infrastructure of state funding for these critical programs has also not kept pace. The possibility of new State funding gained through each Legislative Session *needs to be recurring funding* or the likelihood of our programs and services suffering and the older adult population not receiving what they need to survive will become reality. Our facility is also challenged with recruitment and retention of qualified staff due to the limitation of funds needed to provide for a crucial living wage. The building that we currently reside in is no longer adequate in size as well. Luna County does not have adequate infrastructure for aging in place as it does not have a graduated care facility such as what is in Dona Ana County with such places as the Good Samaritan Village. Graduated Care Facilities are senior living options that allow residents to start at lower levels of care and, as their needs change, move to higher levels of care without needing to relocate. These types of facilities would be very valuable in rural communities due to the scarcity of long-term care facilities as well as allowing families to be close by and not have to travel great distances to visit their loved one.

Promoting aging in place is at risk in rural communities in New Mexico. The infrastructure for an aging population in New Mexico is at risk of not providing the critical support needed for an aging population and risking the creation of unacceptable barriers. Helping older adults age well in rural New Mexico requires assurances of funding structures, expanding health-care access, strengthening caregiver support, and implementing age-friendly communities. Having these critical needs in place will ensure older adults will continue to age with dignity and grace and not be *prematurely institutionalized*.

Older adults living in rural communities also face food insecurities at higher rates than those living in metro areas. Smaller dispersed populations limit grocery store viability. Rural older adults exhibit higher rates of malnutrition due to poverty, multiple chronic conditions and

disabilities. New Mexico ranks 13th in the Nation having a 65+ population as stated by UNM Newsroom. New Mexico's growth rate in this age group is faster than the overall rate of the Nation as stated by ibis.doh.nm.gov. The 2026 projected population per Census.gov of older adults over the age of 60 living in Luna County is estimated at 5,330. This number is steadily growing. In 2010 the percentage was at 13% and in 2020, the percentage had grown to 20.6%. Our facility is currently providing services for 1,041 older adults, which is 20% of the estimated number of older adults living in Luna County. According to the Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Luna County's median income is 37% lower than the State's average and 49% lower than the National average. Luna County ranks last for being the lowest "median household income" out of the thirty-three (33) counties in New Mexico. Many of the older citizens that use the programs and services at our facility are living on low fixed incomes and run a high risk of being in the poverty category. Food insecurities equate to higher rates of diabetes, obesity and hypertension. This equates to higher care needs for chronic health conditions and functional limitations. Health care access is very limited in rural communities due to the shortage of care providers, fewer long term care facilities forcing long distance travel when a loved one is institutionalized away from the community where they live, as well as greater travel distance for health care. Caregiver shortages ensue as paid and unpaid caregivers face heavier workloads, limited training and financial strain. Rural communities often are faced with isolation and transportation barriers as sparse populations and long distances reduce access to social support, food and medical care. One notable example of ensuring that older adults are not prematurely institutionalized is the home care services offered by our organization. The advantage of having home care services rather than being in a nursing home cannot be overstated. State-wide rates in New Mexico for a semi-private nursing home is estimated at \$9,125 per month. A private room averages about \$10,633 per month. Our organization currently provides the Title III Homemaker service at \$850 per person on a two month average and the Title III E Respite Care service at \$1,292 per person on a two month average.

It will become more challenging in providing the programs and services needed by an aging population if the infrastructures are not in place to include funding.

Key Points

- The number of New Mexicans age 65+ will increase in the next 20 years by 28% and 85+ will more than double as recorded by UNM Newsroom statistics.
- ***New Mexico is currently 12th largest in the nation with a population of adults aged 60 and older.***
- Approximately 25% of the 625 area agencies on aging across the nation operate within county governments while another 28% operate within regional planning councils or councils of governments that often include counties. 56% of area agencies on aging rely on local funding streams - including from counties - to provide additional programs and services.
- ***New Mexico currently has 4 area agencies on aging with 6 provider service areas. These are the Albuquerque Area Agency on Aging, Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging, Navajo Area Agency on Aging and the Indian Area Agency on Aging. The Indian Area Agency on Aging covers 1 provider service area which includes 19 Pueblos and 2 Apache Tribes. The Navajo Area Agency on Aging covers the New Mexico portion of the Navajo Reservation. Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging covers 32 of the 33 Counties and Albuquerque covers Bernalillo County.***
- State Legislature funding is critical so that it can keep pace with our State's growing population of older adults. Funding is crucial in putting in place the critical infrastructure to provide for the demands of this ever-growing population.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS & CURRENT COST PER EACH FOR OUR ORGANIZATION

TRANSPORTATION – Unit description is one ride (example-picking up a person at their home and taking them to Walmart = 1 ride) - Unit Cost (through August) \$13.61

HOMEMAKER – Unit description is one hour of service - Unit Cost (through August) \$26.00

CONGREGATE MEALS – Unit description is one meal - Unit Cost (through August) \$6.05

HOME DELIVERED MEALS - Unit description is one meal - Unit Cost (through August) \$12.86

ADULT DAY CARE – Unit description is one hour of service - Unit Cost (through August) \$11.85

IIIIE RESPITE CARE SERVICE - Unit description is one hour of service - Unit Cost (through August) \$33.59