



COPRA CHRONICLE

Issued by and for the City of Phoenix Retirees Association
Your advocate in pension and insurance matters

December 2009 **MEMBERSHIP IS OUR STRENGTH** Issue 5

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MEMBERSHIP

Changed your address or phone number? For address and/or telephone number changes, or for any questions about your COPRA membership, please contact Marvin Roelse, Membership Chairman. Marvin can be reached by telephone at (480) 288-1046, or by mail at: COPRA Chronicle, 10701 E. Peralta Canyon Dr., Gold Canyon, AZ 85118, or by e-mail at marvinr567@msn.com

COPRA BOARD ELECTIONS

There were five members seeking election this year for the term of office 2010 – 2011. Voting was conducted by a “voice vote” at the December 3rd COPRA Annual Meeting and Holiday Party.

Congratulations to Jim Flanagan, Barbara Kellogg and Jack Thomas the incumbents that were re-elected for the upcoming term. We also have two new board members that were elected and will start in 2010. Tami Polinsky retired from the Police Department in 2008 as the Communications Manager (9-1-1 and Police Radio) after 29 years. PJ Jasso retired after 33 years of service with the City where she held the position of International Economic Development Director and also served as Chief of Staff to the Phoenix City Council. We are excited to have Tami and PJ join us!

NEWLY ELECTED BOARD



JIM FLANAGAN



BARBARA KELLOGG



JACK THOMAS



TAMI POLINSKY



PJ JASSO

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The holiday season is all around us with continued reminders as we visit the shopping malls and stores. It is exciting to take the grandchildren to see Santa Claus and it brings back warm memories of much younger years. It was also wonderful in this special and busy season to share with other City retirees at the Annual Holiday Luncheon which was held in conjunction with our Annual Meeting on December 3. We had almost 170 folks in attendance who shared a great lunch and visiting with friends and acquaintances.

On a more personal note, this was also the day in which we were saying goodbye to Donna Lewis and Al Zielinski on the COPRA board. Donna was instrumental in facility coordination for our three meetings every year along with planning and coordinating the Holiday Luncheon as well. Al was involved with the Health Care Task Force and worked on our Benefits Committee which also required a significant amount of time. I thank both these dedicated retirees who continued to serve the rest of us over these past years.

It was also an exciting day where we welcomed to the COPRA board two new faces, PJ Jasso and Tami Polinsky. We thank them as well for their willingness to serve on the board and continue the tradition of others before them. I am continually reminded every time the board meets of the commitment of this group and their dedication to the needs of all City of Phoenix retirees. COPRA takes a lot of work and this group of 10 individuals along with supporting committees is making a difference month by month.

I am also pleased to announce that the membership at the Annual Meeting approved the by-law changes that were recommended last month in the Chronicle. The new single dues rate of \$10 goes into effect January 1, 2010. Your support of the recommendations COPRA brings to the membership at these annual meetings is greatly appreciated and will help us to continue providing important services.

In closing and on behalf of the COPRA Board, we all wish you and your family the very best for this holiday season and we look forward with great anticipation to an even better year in 2010 for everyone.

Jack

CHRONICLE ISSUES VIA E-MAIL

If you are interested in receiving your copy of the CHRONICLE electronically, send a request (including your name) to COPRAChronicle@gmail.com or call Mary Franklin at 602-705-8822. We will, of course, continue sending CHRONICLE issues to all members who prefer to receive it in the mail. Receiving your newsletter electronically will help defray some of the printing and mailing costs and be COPRA's effort to help make the world a little greener!

THE WHAT AND HOW OF THE 13TH CHECK

What is the 13th Check?

The Post-retirement Distribution Benefit (13th Check) is found in the Phoenix City Charter, Chapter XXIV, Section 41. The 13th check amount is a supplemental payment determined annually. It is only paid if sufficient monies in the Pension Equalization Program (PEP) reserve fund exist. It is a one-time payment and not a permanent increase in pensions. The amount, if any, is normally payable on December 1st and is included in the December pension check. A separate check is not issued.

How is the 13th Check Funded?

The 13th check monies are paid out of the PEP fund.

How are the 13th Check Amounts Calculated?

The Phoenix City Charter sets forth how 13th Check amounts are calculated:

The distribution income at the end of each fiscal year shall be equal to the product of the present value of pensions determined in subsection 2 at the end of the previous fiscal year times the positive excess, if any, of the rate of investment return determined in subsection 1 exceeding the assumed rate defined in subsection 2 ... not less than one percent, to the extent that funds are available in the Pension Equalization reserve.

Don't worry, I don't get it either. That's why the COPERS' staff calculates this amount. These calculations are then checked by the Fund's actuary and the City Auditor. After making this required calculation, the recommended 2009 13th Check rate was 1.0%. The COPERS Board approved this recommendation at its October 28, 2009 meeting and appeared on your December check.

The 2009 13th Check payment of 1% will reduce the PEP reserve by about \$1.3 million leaving a balance of about \$426,000. Funds are added to the PEP reserve when the average calendar year investment return over five years exceeds 8%. In addition to funding the 13th Check, the PEP reserve is used to pay for PEP increases. The PEP, which is a permanent benefit increase payable in April, is calculated as the lesser of the calendar year CPI or the amount supported by the PEP reserve. In 2009 the PEP increase was 1.7% and reduced the PEP reserve by about \$13.8 million. Early next year the Board will review the five year investment return and determine whether the reserve is sufficient to provide a 2010 PEP increase. Given the negative long-term investment climate, it is not likely that there will be a PEP increase in 2010.

Who is Eligible to Receive the 13th Check?

All retirees and their beneficiaries, receiving benefits as of June 30th of the year any payment is made, unless the beneficiary is deceased or a minor.

“Membership is Our Strength”

SUCCESSFUL HOLIDAY PARTY



Toys were collected for Toys-For-Tots. Shown here were just a fraction of what the generous members brought.



Donna Lewis showing her holiday Spirit



Good Food!
Good Company!



MORE HOLIDAY PARTY PICTURES



MANY THANKS TO OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS



Donna Lewis
Al Zielinski

Donna Lewis and Al Zielinski were presented with \$100.00 gift certificates in appreciation of their many years of service. They both worked tirelessly as board members and on committees that benefit the membership.

They both will be missed!



Donna Lewis and
Al Zielinski
with President
Jack Thomas

NEW RETIREES

September 2009 Retirees

Donna Davis
Donna Ferstl
Michael Fulghum
Walter Godbehere
Jimmie Gray
Pamela Heckaman
Yolanda Ramirez
Timothy Simmons

November 2009 Retirees

Alton Washington
Frank Fairbanks

NATIONWIDE RETIREMENT SOLUTIONS: SSN Not Needed to Access Account

Due to a recent Web site enhancement by Nationwide Retirement Solutions, which administers the city's 457 and 401(a) Plans, your User ID to access your online account does not need to be your social security number. You can go online to www.phoenixdcp.com and follow these easy steps below to change your User ID. If you have any questions about this or need technical assistance, please contact Nationwide at 1-800-891-4749.

1. Log onto phoenixdcp.com.
2. Click "online profile" in the upper right corner of your online account screen.
3. At the "user name/password change" screen, type a new User ID in the "new user name" box.
4. Then, press "enter" or scroll to the bottom of the screen and click on "submit" to save the change.
5. A pop-up screen will display a message of "user name change confirmed."

This function always has been available to set up or change your password. It recently became available for changing your User ID, which previously had a mandatory default of the user's social security number.



"Membership is Our Strength"

★ IMPORTANT DUES CHANGE NOTICE ★

Please check the mailing label on this Chronicle for the "Dues Paid Thru:" year. If the "Dues Paid Thru:" year is "2009", you should renew your COPRA membership now!

As a retiree, it is important that you stay abreast of events happening in the City that may have an impact on your benefits and the retirement fund. Please renew your membership today. As our motto on the front page of the Chronicle says, "Membership is Our Strength."

The 2010 dues paid IN DECEMBER 2009 ONLY are still \$7.00 for Singles and \$10.00 for Couples. The dues special is also available so if you pay dues for 4 years (\$28.00 Singles; \$40.00 Couples), you get credit for 5 years.

NOTE - Due to bylaw changes approved at the December 2009 General Meeting, effective on JANUARY 1, 2010, the cost of all dues will be \$10.00 annually. The dues special will still be available at a cost of \$40.00 for 5 years.

To renew your COPRA membership, send a check payable to "COPRA" to the following address:

COPRA
% Marvin Roelse
10701 East Peralta Canyon Drive
Gold Canyon, AZ 85118-5130

In Remembrance

Frankie Spellman	08/13/09
Una M. Roark	10/17/09
Norman Cogwell	10/24/09
Bill M. Moore	10/25/09
Lloyd Hiles	10/21/09
Olive Stotts	10/27/09 Survivor
Georgianna Rodecap	11/02/09
Mildred Hanscom	11/02/09 Survivor
John J. Kish	11/08/09
Leslie Senior	11/22/09 Survivor
Charles Thiergart	11/18/09
Augusta Crosser	11/24/09 Survivor
Hal Furman	11/21/09

HEALTH AND COMPASSION

We care about our members and their families. If someone in your family is ill, whether at home or in a care facility, or if a loved one has passed away, please call Mary Dysinger-Franklin at (602) 705-8822

TIDBITS OF INFORMATION

Effective January 1, anyone that owns a traditional IRA may convert the IRA to a Roth IRA, regardless of their Adjusted Gross Income. Under current rules, one may not have Adjusted Gross Income over \$100,000 to convert a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA. A Roth IRA grows and is distributed income tax free, assuming the Roth IRA owner complies with specific rules. In January 2010 anyone, regardless of Adjusted Gross Income, may convert a Roth IRA.

Due to the rule change, you may consider converting all or part of your IRA money into a Roth IRA. While this conversion may make sense for some individuals, there are many things to consider. We strongly urge you to discuss this with your tax professional before doing a Roth IRA conversion.

PLEASE NOTE: ROTH IRA conversions are a taxable event.

2010 COPRA BOARD

President:	Jack Thomas(623) 825-6999 E-Mailjntnt@cox.net
Vice President:	Laura Ross(623) 878-3334 E-mailljross50@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Gary Gross(602) 992-7495 E-mailgwgross1@cox.net
Secretary:	Barbara Kellogg(623) 322-5227 E-mailavidgolfer@aol.com
Board Members:	PJ Jasso (602) 448-4102 E-mail.....rl-squared@hotmail.com
	Tami Polinsky(602) 327-9217 E-mail ...tamiyourjewelerylady@gmail.com
	Jim Flanagan(480) 497-8317 E-mailjamesaflanagan@gmail.com
	Sue Stites(602) 819-7106 E-mail.....sstites@cox.net
	Karen Clifford-Anderson(623) 772-7472 E-mail.....kcliffander@yahoo.com
	Kerry Wangberg E-mail.....wangwell@qwest.net
Benefits Committee Chair & Health Task Force:	Laura Ross(623) 878-3334
Retirement Board Rep:	Kerry Wangberg
Member Support and Social Chair:	
Membership Chair:	Marvin Roelse(480) 288-1046 E-mail.....marvinr567@msn.com
Chronicle Editor:	Mary Dysinger-Franklin(602) 705-8822 E-mail.....copranewsletter@gmail.com
Past President:	John Burke (ex officio).....(928) 427-9461

COPRA website.....	www.phoenixcopra.com
COPERS website.....	www.phoenix.gov/phxcopers
COPMEA website.....	www.copmea.com
City Retirement Systems (COPERS).....	(602) 534-4400
Personnel - Benefits Section	(602) 262-4777
COPMEA.....	(602) 262-6857

Chronicle Article Deadline

Please be advised that the deadline for submitting articles for the Chronicle is the **20th day of the month** before you want the article to appear. Any member may submit material for publication, but the Editor determines what will appear in the final copy based on suitability and available space.

This is your Chronicle. Help us by submitting articles of general interest. Tell us about yourself, your family, a trip you've taken or an interesting hobby you have. Suggestions are always welcomed.

E-mail to: COPRAnewsletter@gmail.com
Or mail to: Mary Dysinger-Franklin
6208 E. Desert Cove Ave
Scottsdale, AZ 85254

Disclaimer

Acceptance of advertisements or articles in the COPRA Chronicle does not constitute an endorsement by COPRA of goods or services.



DECEMBER COPRA CHRONICLE

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COPRA Chronicle, %Marvin Roelse
10701 East Peralta Canyon Dr.
Gold Canyon, AZ 85118



COPRA wishes everyone
A Happy & Safe
Holiday Season!

MEMBERSHIP MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Washington Adult Center, 2240 W. Citrus Way, Phoenix, AZ

Tentative Dates

March 25, 2010

May 20, 2010

October 7, 2010

**Board meetings are at 10 am on the 2nd Thursday of the Month
Except for June, July and August**