



COPRA CHRONICLE

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

May 2015

MEMBERSHIP IS OUR STRENGTH

Issue 5

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AMENDMENTS TO THE BI-LAWS TO THE CITY OF PHOENIX RETIREES ASSOCIATION

At the next COPRA General Membership Meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2015, the COPRA Board of Directors will be seeking your approval of changes to the Bi-Laws. Many of these changes are housekeeping in nature, but the most significant changes that we will be requesting approval from membership are to increase the number of Board of Directors from ten (10) to twelve (12). Increasing the number of board members will allow us to have more resources to support the increase in activities that COPRA is providing to our members. We also want to bring on new Board members to help us transition as some members leave the organization. Copies of the revised Bi-Laws will be provided to all members on Thursday, May 21 for review prior to approval.

SQUAW PEAK PARKWAY REUNION

Submitted by Pete Johnson

SQUAW PEAK PARKWAY REUNION - 2015 marks the 25th anniversary of the completion of the 5 mile Squaw Peak Parkway (renamed in 2003 to Piestewa Peak), the City of Phoenix's largest road project ever built. After all these years we'd like to see if there's any interest in getting all the City staff that were involved in the project together for a fun and informal reunion. There are no details yet, but the event will probably be scheduled for late Fall. Please get the word out, and indicate your interest in the event by sending an email to Pete Johnson (azbigpete@yahoo.com). Again, folks from any and all Departments involved in the project are welcome.



MEMBERSHIP

Have you changed your address, email address or phone number? For address, email address and/or telephone number changes, or for any questions about your COPRA membership, please contact Sheryl Jeremiah, Membership Chair. Sheryl can be reached by telephone at (623) 376-2980, or by mail at: COPRA Chronicle, 19031 N 76th Ave, Glendale, AZ 85303-8303, or by e-mail at sheryljeremiah6@gmail.com

Notice:

The April 1, 2015 pension payment included a Pension Equalization Program (PEP) increase of 1% for those eligible; this increase should have been 1.6%. This oversight was corrected on the May 1, 2015 pension payment which included the additional 0.6% retroactive to January 1, 2015.

Our apologies for this error and any inconvenience. If you have any questions, please contact Lollita Cordova at 602-262-6498.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As most of you know, this will be the last Chronicle before we take our summer break. The next issue will be in September. I had to think about what to share this month and decided to focus on the COPRA organization and how it has grown significantly over the past 17 years since I have been a member, but equally important how it has stalled recently in membership growth, now sitting at around 50% of all retirees being members. This level is totally foreign to my way of thinking considering the services provided. That is why this month we are now reaching out with this May issue to the folks who took advantage of the one-year free membership when they retired, but then never renewed. Was it because of the annual dues of \$10.00 (now \$12.00) which barely covers our annual postage and publishing costs, or were we missing something that retirees needed? That last thought is the most concerning, yet we never hear from folks regarding what we may be missing. Where are all of you non-COPRA members?

In summary, there are 10 members of the board who dedicate hundreds of hours every year looking out for all retirees and not just the current members. Yes, you do receive the Chronicle, but so many other activities occur and a little reminder never hurts to make the point. We represent you on the Health Care Task Force and Retiree Sub-Committee Task Force (challenging with time commitments) but nevertheless your voice is constantly heard, and we do have an impact keeping many of the costs in check. We represent you on COPERS (Retirement Board) and share our concerns every month in both general and special meetings of that board. In fact, our COPRA representative now serves as the Vice-Chair of that critical board. We represent you on Pension Reform issues as they continue to surface, both serving previously on the Pension Commission, and most recently in the successful defeat of Proposition 487. We represented you many years ago with the successful implementation of the PEP program and 13th Check. We represented you with improvements in the MERP Program and trying to assist those with low pension incomes. Finally, we spend many hours preparing and presenting the special General Meetings covering Health, Pension, and State of the City, and receiving support and assistance from City staff and the City Manager in those presentations. The bottom line is that we represent you with a united voice each and every time the need arises and keep you informed at all times. Where are all of you non-COPRA members?

I bring this up because our membership is not expanding with the retiree growth. If we cannot grow the membership to reflect a growing majority of the City retirees, then all of us who "volunteer" to be on the board begin to question "What service can we provide that we are not doing and why do so many retirees feel that it is not relevant to be a member?" Only you who are not members can answer that, but your voice has been silent. Either by not joining, or not sharing why you are not joining.

In closing, the upcoming meeting in May on the "State of the City" with our City Manager, Ed Zuercher, is an opportunity for some of you who have not attended in the past to come to the General Meeting and hear what Ed has to say. For the past several years he has enlightened those in attendance regarding where the City is currently, and where it is going, both from a budget and upcoming issues perspective. He also is always open to two way communications and answers every question that is presented from the audience. This meeting will also allow COPRA to seek approval from the membership on expanding our COPRA Board back to twelve members, which will assist in our operating functions going forward.

Please have a wonderful, safe and healthy summer in whatever adventures you may be planning. If I do not see you at the meeting later this month, hopefully you will make the next one in the fall. Also, if you are not currently a member of COPRA, please take to heart in a positive way my thoughts about our wonderful organization, the work being accomplished and consider the benefits of being a member.

Thank you, Jack

ALL-INCLUSIVE EXCURSIONS, STAY-AT-HOME TRIPS, AND GLAMPING

ONE PRICE VACATIONS

Adults and families looking for a less-expensive vacation this year might want to consider one of many all-inclusive trips offered in tropical playgrounds such as the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Aruba.

At Coconut Bay Beach Resort and Spa in St. Lucia, guests can lounge on the sandy beach and enjoy the cool ocean while sipping drinks and sampling appetizers that don't cost you another dime (except for the tip). OR . . . you could play in the 85-acre ocean-front waterpark or video game lounge, ride on a zipline or play a round of golf, take in a movie or play volleyball or tennis, try some scuba diving, snorkeling, wind-surfing or kayaking or take on a ping pong challenger and jump on trampolines.

All without leaving the grounds or paying separate fees for each activity. Even your food at one of five top-quality restaurants and drinks at one of several bars is included for one inclusive price. Many resorts offer on-site child care, separate wings for adults and families and themed activities and attractions, plus ocean views and plenty of sun.

"Do your homework" when searching for the best all-inclusive vacation for your entourage, says Zachary Rabinor of "Journey Mexico." He suggests focusing on preferred destinations and activities, with special emphasis on "size, quality and staff-to-guest ratio."

Source: "Top All-Inclusive Resorts," travelandleisure.com

NO PASSPORT REQUIRED

Although a passport is necessary to expand our world view and our chance at world travel, no passport is needed to see America's top sites. Ranking #1 on swifty.com's list of American destinations is Arizona's own Havasu Falls which offers turquoise waterfall pools as your reward for a 2-4 day mule-pack ride to the bottom of the Grand Canyon.

Maybe you've been there, done that. OK, how about Lanikai Beach, Hawaii, the "Heavenly Sea" where you can find powdery white sand beaches, lush tropical gardens and cool trade winds. Or go in the opposite direction to visit Charleston, S.C. with its antebellum architecture, plantations and historic charm.

Did you know that Nashville, TN boasts a full-size Parthenon complete with a 42' statue of the goddess Athena? Oh, and there's also the Grand Ole Opry. In Kennebunkport, Maine, enjoy the rugged coastline, whale-watching and iconic lighthouses, and while at Jackson Hole, WY, soak in the area's breathtaking beauty while white-water rafting, fly fishing or hiking.

Rounding out some of America's top destinations are Big Sur, California; Girdwood, Alaska; St. John, Virgin Islands; Yellowstone National Park; Lake Tahoe, Nevada; Boulder, Colorado; Santa Fe, New Mexico and Napa Valley, California.

I'm sure each of you could add your own special American destination to this list – so go out and see it!

Sources: swifty.com, "No Passport Needed"

GLAMPING

What the heck is "glamping," you might ask? Gaining in strength and popularity since the term was coined in 2007; glamping is the mix of glamour and camping. Say what? Yes, the two can be combined with some outrageous, adventurous results.

(Continued on page 6)

NEW RETIREES (FEBRUARY 2015)

Carlos Avila	Water Services	Donna Johnson	Police
Cynthia Barreras	Fire	Michelle Kirby	Finance
Lawrence Bee	Water Services	Robert Montano	Civic Center
Veronica Brown-Castaneda	Finance	Nicolasa Quinteros	Police
Marylouise Chavez	Housing	Randy Richards	Planning and Dev.
Debra Cruvey	Water Services	Wallace Scholz	Management Services
Mamie Denmark	Police	Diana Smith	Comm. & Economic Dev.
Robert Donahue	Public Works	Debra Stanton	Police
Robert Eckhoff	Public Works	Lisa Takata	City Manager's Office
Maria Fruciano	Equal Opportunity	David Tiffany	Water Services
Frank Garza	Public Works	William Whitson	Human Resources
Gilbert Guerra	Aviation	Ricky Worth	Parks & Rec.

PHOENIX NEWS

COUNCIL APPROVES ACQUISITION OF STATE LAND FOR MOUNTAIN PRESERVE

The City Council unanimously approved the acquisition of vacant state land west of I-17 and north of the Cloud Road alignment for a mountain preserve. The property consists of approximately 172 acres and is to be acquired for Mountain Preserve purposes, and is to be designated as "Mountain Preserve" in accordance with the provisions of Chapter XXVI of the City Charter.

"I'm just delighted we finally got this on the agenda and it is going forward. ...this protects Ben Avery shooting range and the pioneer museum. So they will always be safe." – Councilwoman Williams

UNIFIED CITY SERVICES/MUNICIPAL ID CARDS

At the request of Chairwoman Laura Pastor, City staff has begun to research the possibility of creating a Unified City Services Card. Additionally, City staff has met with the OnePHX Coalition, which also is working to create a Municipal ID card for residents to use for identification purposes and which could be part of a unified services card system for access to City services such as libraries, parks, senior centers, and transit, as well as discounts at arts and cultural facilities.

Many cities in the United States have Unified City Services and/or Municipal ID cards. Some of the cities manage the implementation of the card program, while other cities have outsourced the program. Examples of a few of the cities are below:

New Haven, Connecticut San Francisco, California Oakland, California
Los Angeles, California New York, New York

In order to move forward on a Unified City Services/Municipal ID card concept, staff seeks direction from the Parks, Arts, Transparency and Education Subcommittee and recommendation for City Council approval for staff to identify technology requirements, such as the various software platforms used throughout the City, and security and compatibility requirements, and develop proposed implementation policies and standards, such as who will be eligible for the card, what the card can be used for, how the information will be stored, shared and protected, and other factors.

Source: Thelma Williams' weekly email newsletter dated 4/3/2015.

GUEST COLUMN BY RICK NAIMARK, DEPUTY City Manager



Rick Naimark

We are just a few months away from the August election for the Mayor and City Council members from Districts 1, 3, 5 and 7. On the ballot will also be several items referred to the voters by the Mayor and City Council.

Proposition 100, if approved, would update the City's General Plan, which establishes a vision for the entire city along with policies and goals to guide future physical development. The Phoenix General Plan was last adopted by the Phoenix City Council and approved by voters in 2002. State law requires that this item be referred to the voters. The Council referred this measure to voters at the March 18, 2015, Formal Council Meeting.

Proposition 101, if approved, would continue a locally controlled alternative expenditure limitation. This alternative expenditure limitation would set the limit equal to the budget adopted by the City Council each year through the annual Community Budget process. State law requires that this item be referred to the voters every four years in conjunction with an election for mayor. State law also dictates the specific ballot format for this proposition, which differs somewhat from the usual format for propositions on a City ballot. The Council referred this measure to voters at the March 25, 2015, Formal Council Meeting.

Proposition 102, if approved, would amend Chapter 18, Sections 14 and 15 of the City of Phoenix Charter enabling the disbursement of funds without the issuance of a paper check or warrant. The language in the City Charter was established in the early 1970s and with changes in technology issuing physical warrants is no longer an efficient payment method. The Council referred this measure to voters at the March 25, 2015, Formal Council Meeting.

Proposition 103, if approved, would amend multiple sections of the Phoenix City Charter Chapter XXIV, Part II related to the City of Phoenix Employees' Retirement System. The most significant changes under this proposal are for employees hired after January 1, 2016. These new employees would go into a new Tier 3, which is a Stacked Hybrid Plan with a changed structure and different benefits from the current plan. The Council referred this measure to voters at the March 25, 2015, Formal Council Meeting.

Proposition 104, if approved, would amend Chapter 14 (Privilege and Excise Taxes) of the Phoenix City Code to set the portion of the transaction privilege and use tax for transportation at seven tenths of one penny per dollar for a total period of 35 years, beginning January 1, 2016. This funding would establish a Comprehensive Transportation Plan for Phoenix to maintain and expand the light rail and bus systems, improve City streets and roadways, and provide Phoenix residents with more transportation choices, including improvements for bikes and pedestrians.

We encourage all Phoenix residents to register to vote before the deadline for this election, which is July 27, 2015. If you would like more information about the election, or to learn how to register to vote or get on the Permanent Early Voting List, please go to phoenix.gov/elections or call 602-262-6837.

Tears of joy are like the summer rain drops pierced by sunbeams.

- Hosea Ballou -

RENEW YOUR COPRA MEMBERSHIP!!

Please check the mailing label on this Chronicle for the “Dues Paid Thru:” year. If the “Dues Paid Thru:” year is “2014”, you should renew your COPRA membership NOW!

If you receive the COPRA Chronicle by email which doesn't have a mailing label, you should have received an email in December advising you of the status of your COPRA membership.

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.”

As of January 1, 2015, COPRA membership dues are \$12.00 annually. There is a dues special that if you pay \$50.00, you receive membership for 5 years. To renew your COPRA membership, send a check payable to “COPRA” to the following address:

COPRA
% Barbara Kellogg
1465 E Rosemonte Dr
Phoenix, AZ 85024-2962

DANGEROUS NAME SEARCHING ON THE INTERNET

Searching for popular names plus terms such as “download” or “MP4” often leads to sites filled with spyware, adware and viruses. *Top 10 most dangerous names to search:* Comedian Jimmy Kimmel was most dangerous, followed by DJ Armin van Buuren, singer and actress Ciara, rapper Flo Rida, musicians/singers Bruce Springsteen, Blake Shelton, Britney Spears, and Jon Bon Jovi, comedian Chelsea Handler and singer Christina Aguilera. *Self-defense:* Get celebrity information from trusted websites, use antivirus software, and keep it updated, do not give out your personal information, do not download software, music or videos from unknown sites, and do not open e-mail attachment from unknown sources.

Source: Consumer Reports

ALL-INCLUSIVE EXCURSION, STAY-AT-HOME TRIPS, AND GLAMPING (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 3)

Glamping is simply camping without sleeping on the ground, wearing the same clothes for days or lugging a bunch of gear to a remote spot in the woods. Oh, and did I mention that indoor plumbing could be available? That's a major part of glamping, let me just say.

You do have some choices here, believe it or not. Just \$35 per night will get you a four-person teepee in Gunnison, Colorado, complete with a propane log fire, a double bed and futon, an electric light and bed linens. You might have to bring extra blankets or pillows, but the great outdoors is just a step away. On the extreme end of the glamping spectrum, \$1,000 per night rents a two-person tepee at Mustang Monument Wild Horse Eco-Resort in Wells, Nevada, which includes hardwood floors, chef-prepared meals and activities such as horseback riding and archery.

According to glampinghub.com, glampsites can range from a treehouse to a yurt to hobbit houses inspired by J.R.R. Tolkien. A unique structure is required for glamping, but exotic food is not. So pack an extra dress or pair of shorts ditch the sleeping bag and get your glamp on!

Excerpted from “Wanderlust – an insider’s guide to the cushy side of camping” by Lindsay Funston, O, The Oprah Magazine

IN REMEMBRANCE

Alfred Anderson	11/04/14
Shirley Zengler	02/06/15
Rose M. Ruiz	02/26/15
Emma Whiting	03/04/15
Isabella Johnson	03/16/15
Joseph Cajero	03/22/15
Wilma Swanson	03/23/15
Jerry W. Orosco	03/23/15
Franz Nordstrom	03/26/15
Theodore Gatten	03/28/15
Pedro Madril	03/29/15
Terri Baack	03/30/15
Helen A. Birthright	03/31/15
John Deagle	03/31/15
Delores Archilla	04/01/15
James Quinn	04/03/15
George Horvath	04/05/15
Everett S. Finn	04/05/15
Robert D. Porter	04/08/15
Otis Keys	04/09/15
Rose D. Scholz	04/10/15
John P. Canisales	04/14/15
Ronald W. Johnson Sr.	04/14/15
Morris B. Nydes	04/19/15

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 Franklin at (602) 705-8822.

DID YOU KNOW...

...that memories change over time? Memories are comprised of pieces of information stored in several parts of the brain. Over time and as we acquire new information, memories fade and can distort, creating what is believed to be a truthful recollection of an event when, in fact, it is a new version.

...that drugs cost more at doctors' offices? Physician-dispensed drugs cost 30% to 74% more in 2013 (latest data available) than similar drugs from pharmacies. Advocates of physician dispensing say that it improves quality of care by raising supervision and lowering noncompliance.

Source: *Bottom Line Personal* May 1, 2015

2015 COPRA BOARD

President:	Jack Thomas	(623) 825-6999 E-mail jnt@cox.net
Vice President:	Laura Ross	(623) 878-3334 E-mail ljross50@gmail.com
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Retirement Board Representative:	Susan Perkins	(602) 861-5914 E-mail sjperkins@msn.com
By-laws Review Chair:	Karen Clifford-Anderson	(623) 772-7472 E-mail kcliffander@yahoo.com
Member Support and Social Committee Chair:	Dawnell Navarro	(623) 412-0854 E-mail navarro2@cox.net
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Chronicle Editor:	Mary Dysinger-Franklin	(602) 705-8822 E-mail copranewsletter@gmail.com

COPRA website.....	www.phoenixcopra.com
COPERS website.....	www.phoenix.gov/phxcopers
COPMEA website.....	www.copmea.com
City Retirement Systems (COPERS).....	(602) 534-4400
Human Resources - Benefits Section.....	(602) 262-4777
COPMEA.....	(602) 262-6858

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.



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COPRA Chronicle, %Sheryl Jeremiah
19031 N 76th Ave
Glendale, AZ 85308-8303



2015 MEMBERSHIP MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

**Important Meetings:
Mark Your
Calendars**

May 21, 2015 at 1:30 pm - State of the City

October 15, 2015 at 1:30 pm - Healthcare

December 4, 2015 at 5 pm - Annual Holiday Party/Meeting (venue TBD)

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