



# COPRA CHRONICLE

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

November 2020

**MEMBERSHIP IS OUR STRENGTH**

Issue 8

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### **"Membership is our Strength"** **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership for COPRA is \$12 per year or \$50.00 for 5 years. If you have changed your address, email address or phone number, or have any questions about dues payments, please contact Linda Henderson.

Linda can be reached by: telephone at 623-693-9955, or by email at [lindajoyhenderson@gmail.com](mailto:lindajoyhenderson@gmail.com)

**Mail payments to:**  
COPRA  
PO Box 2464  
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340

**PayPal Payments:**  
You can send in dues via PayPal. Use our email address [phoenixcopra@gmail.com](mailto:phoenixcopra@gmail.com) from your account.

## ANNUAL OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR 2021 ENDS NOVEMBER 13!

The City of Phoenix remains committed to providing its retirees with sustainable and worthwhile health care coverage. In 2021, City retirees and their eligible dependents will have access to a variety of Medicare and non-Medicare health plans – plus new dental plans, a vision plan, legal plans, and pet insurance (with a new provider). The City remains committed to take steps to positively impact the health of its retirees and their families by offering competitive and sustainable health plans.

As in the past, open enrollment is a passive process. If you don't want to make any changes, you don't need to do anything. If you want to make any changes, you must do so no later than 5:00 p.m. on November 13<sup>th</sup>. Please refer to your Benefits Guide for details.

If you have any questions, the City Benefits staff is there to help. You can call them at 602-262-4777 or email them at [benefits.questions@phoenix.gov](mailto:benefits.questions@phoenix.gov).

Many thanks to Laura Ross, our representative on the City's Health Care Task Force, and others, who worked to get the 2021 Benefits Guide for Retirees mailed to us all. As you may have previously read, initially the City was not going to mail these guides out, but only make them available on-line. When (or if) you see Laura, please thank her for all of her hard work on behalf of COPRA members and City retirees!

## COPRA BOARD ELECTIONS

It is election time once again for the COPRA Board of Directors. In the October issue of the Chronicle, we asked if any members were interested in becoming a candidate for a Board position. There are twelve elected positions on the Board, each serving a two-year term. There are four incumbent members seeking re-election, and two new candidates seeking election to the Board this year for a term covering 2021-2022. Elections are staggered with six Board positions coming up for election each year.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Rob Sweeney

Almost a year has passed since our last General Membership Meeting and holiday luncheon. I always looked forward to, 'catching up' with friends and colleagues during our early-December celebration.

But unfortunately, the Corona Virus is having its way and quashing our plans. But we will not be deterred! We are committed to holding our General Membership Meeting virtually this year to ensure we continue moving forward as an organization. Please find the preregistration process elsewhere in *The Chronicle*.

Just as COPRA is finding ways to keep you connected, it is a reminder that we all need to find new ways of engaging with our friends, family and society. You may enjoy walking the aisles of the grocery store, but find the, 'order ahead and pick-up' option convenient and time saving. Visits to the Doctor can be like spending time with a good friend. But maybe you now find, 'telehealth/telemedicine' just as effective for general discussions.

So many of us are now forced to try new things. Some we may like, and others we deplore! But at least we are trying it! We are challenging our minds to be creative and resourceful. At least we can have one positive outcome of spending the past 8-9 months separated from our normal routines.

So, with the General Membership Meeting coming up next month, perhaps this is the time you push yourself to understand what this, 'Zoom' thing is all about. I want to personally thank the COPRA Members who expressed interest in serving on the Board. They are trying something new by serving as a Board Member. But that cannot happen without our collective involvement in the December 4 General Membership Meeting. Just like you were asked to cast a ballot on November 3, the COPRA Board is asking for your involvement to vote for Board candidates on December 4.

As Thanksgiving is fast approaching, we may find ourselves longing for the large gatherings with family and friends. Most public health agencies are asking that we tone down our urge this fall and seek a smaller, more intimate gathering. This would be a great opportunity to try something new! A new recipe perhaps! Or roast a game hen instead of a turkey. Whatever your plans are, I wish you peace and happiness at Thanksgiving.

I wish you all safety and comfort – Rob

## COPRA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Our annual General Membership Meeting will be held virtually this year due to the pandemic. The meeting will be held on Friday, December 4 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. We will probably not need the full time. We will be voting for candidates for open Board seats and we have invited special guests to provide informative presentations. We normally would have the meeting in conjunction with our holiday luncheon, and we are disappointed to not be able to accommodate the luncheon due to the pandemic.

We will be hosting the General Membership Meeting on Zoom, a video and audio platform for our members to connect to the meeting. To ensure the meeting is as secure as possible, we are asking members to please pre-register for the meeting by November 7. If you have a computer and email, please send your request to: [coprapresident@gmail.com](mailto:coprapresident@gmail.com) with, 'General Membership Meeting Registration' in the subject line. We will follow-up with a link to the meeting. Computer users will be able to choose a video or audio-only connection. If you do not use a computer, please contact me at 480.215.2215 and we will get you an audio-only connection.

Thank you and we will, 'see' you on December 4 – Rob Sweeney

# STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

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AVONDALE AZ 85392

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AVONDALE AZ 85392

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Full Name: Complete Mailing Address:

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The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:  
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 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

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	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		1940	1530
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		0	0
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		1940	1530
g. Copies Not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		95	
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		2035	1530
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		100%	100%

\*If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

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d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)		

I certify that 60% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

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 The publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the NOV issue of this publication.  Publication not required.

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TREASURER

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

# SUDOKU

Sudoku is a puzzle game designed for a single player, much like a crossword puzzle. The puzzle itself is nothing more than a grid of little boxes called "cells". They are stacked nine high and nine wide, making 81 cells total. The puzzle comes with some of the cells (usually less than half of them) already filled in. The object of the game is simple: Fill in the empty cells with numbers from 1 to 9! No number can be repeated in a single column, row, or 3x3 square grid.

There are numerous Sudoku sites on the Internet, many of which provide hints for solving the puzzles and many of which provide free puzzle downloads or free play.

The solved puzzle is available on page 7.

Puzzle Source: <https://sudoku.com/easy/>

	3				9	6		
6		2	9	4	3	8	5	1
							7	3
3	9	1	7				6	8
					1		4	2
4				8	6			
9	4	7		3				
	1	6		9	5		3	
8				6	7			9

## NEW RETIREES (SEPTEMBER)

Angie Alvarez	Fire Dept.	Patricia Maus	Police Dept.
Victoria Bracken	Police Dept.	Dawn Porfirio-Milton	Library
Alex Chavez	Street Transportation	Kara Rivera	Public Works
Thomas Gemberling	Library	Richard Rivera	Street Transportation
Luis Manriquez	Water Services	Rosemarie Tirelli	Phx Conv. Center

## COPRA BOARD ELECTIONS (CONTINUED)

*(Continued from page 1)*

In accordance with the COPRA By-Laws, if there are no more than 6 candidates seeking office, a formalized ballot process is not required. Voting will be conducted by a "virtual vote" at the December 4, 2020, COPRA Annual Meeting.

A special thanks to all who participated in the process: **Louis Matamoros, Dawnell Navarro, Mary Jo Slunder, Tammy Ryan, Linda Henderson and Susan Perkins.**

### Candidates Seeking Re-election:

#### **LAURA ROSS (incumbent)**

Retired from the Street Transportation Department in 2005 as a Management Services Administrator after 30 years with the City. Laura has been an active COPRA Board Member since then and is currently serving as COPRA Vice President. Laura has served as either Vice President or President on the Board for the past fourteen years of her 15 year tenure. She has served as the Retiree Health Care Task Force Representative for that same time as a Board Member.

"I want to use my knowledge to ensure that retirees continue to receive the best benefits available at a reasonable price."

#### **SUE STITES (incumbent)**

Retired from the Law Department in 2005 as a Management Services Administrator after 33 years with the City of Phoenix that included work in Police, Municipal Court and Public Works. Sue has been a COPRA member since 2006.

"I want to utilize my experience to assist in the ongoing exchange of information with the retiree population through the identification of helpful resources, programs and an enhanced interactive web site."

*(Continued on page 5)*

## YOUR E-MAIL IS YOUR ENTRY

As you all know, receiving the COPRA Chronicle by email significantly defrays the printing and postage costs for COPRA. An added benefit is that if there is any important information that COPRA wants to send you, we have your email address on file and can transmit to you in a timely fashion.

In order to encourage our COPRA members to receive the Chronicle by email, your COPRA Board started a new program! Each month, we will randomly select one member who receives their Chronicle by email and that member will receive a \$25 gift certificate to a grocery store (Fry's or Safeway).

The November winner is **Susan Martinez. CONGRATULATIONS SUSAN!**

If we already have your email address, you are automatically entered! If you do not receive the Chronicle by email do so NOW! You can provide your email to Linda Henderson at [lindajoyhenderson@gmail.com](mailto:lindajoyhenderson@gmail.com). She can also be reached by phone at (623) 693-9955.

**Sign up now!**



# COPRA BOARD ELECTIONS (CONTINUED)

*(Continued from page 4)*

## **ROB SWEENEY (incumbent)**

Rob is a native Phoenician who lives in the Ahwatukee-Foothills neighborhood of Phoenix. Rob worked for the City of Phoenix for almost 29 years, retiring in December 2017 as Assistant Chief Information Officer/Assistant Finance Director and is currently serving as COPRA President. Rob held numerous positions while at the City, working in Finance, City Auditor and Information Technology Services. Rob worked on many City task forces, including the Innovation and Efficiency Task Force, Task Force on Technology Advancement and the Association/Management Committee using an interest-based negotiation approach for ASPTEA and management to resolve issues. Rob earned a Bachelor's of Science in Finance from Northern Arizona University and a Master's in Business Administration from Arizona State University. Rob is married to his wife Kecia (KEY-sha). Together they have three grown children. Rob is interested in continuing his support of City initiatives and its retirement community by serving on the COPRA Board.

## **KATHY WENGER (incumbent)**

Kathy started her career with the City in 1994 as a Budget Analyst II in Water Services and was promoted to Department Budget Supervisor. In 2000, she joined Engineering and Architectural Services as the Administrative Assistant III, responsible for budget and fiscal, personnel and payroll, IT and Central records. She subsequently joined the Phoenix Convention Center as Deputy Director, retiring in 2016.

Kathy is interested in serving on the COPRA Board to help ensure Phoenix Retirees continue to receive excellent pensions and benefits. It is her belief that COPRA is critical to ensure that pension payments, MERP payments and healthcare benefits are protected, and continue to meet the needs of retirees.

## **BRIAN SUGGS (New Candidate)**

Brian retired from the City in 2011 after 28 years of service. During that time he worked in a number of areas, including the Development Services Department, Public Information Office, Budget and Research Department, City Manager's Office and the Housing Department. He was involved in administrative duties in each of these assignments. As a result, he worked with people throughout the City organization and came to understand that the City's greatest resource was its employees. "It would be an honor to help represent the City retiree community as part of the COPRA board".

Brian has appreciated the work of the board for a number of years, but was unable to participate because of full-time employment after retiring from the City. Having finished with that employment, he now has time available to spend working on the board. Brian works well with others and looks forward to being part of a team. If elected to the board, he would be glad to hear the concerns of the City retiree community and help represent them to City management.

## **BARBARA WIESS (New Candidate)**

During her tenure with the City of Phoenix (2013-2018), she worked in Human Resources, Benefits & Wellness Division. Her primary role was 'super user / business analyst' for eChris (PeopleSoft) – everything needed to enroll in (and pay for) benefits during employment & retirement.

She will use what she added to her tool chest during the 20 + years with Maricopa & Pima Counties:

- Over 20 years in benefits management, partnering with all stakeholders (employees, retirees, organizational leadership, legal & financial partners, vendors, etc.) to develop & implement exceptional & financially sustainable benefit programs.
- Over 10 years in public retirement system legal compliance: Arizona State Retirement System, Public Safety, Elected Official Retirement System, Correctional Officers Retirement Plan.
- Over 5 years legislative coordinator (including registered public lobbyist) for all Human Resources (employment, benefits, retirement) issues

While her history with the AZ counties helped her join the City of Phoenix family, she learned very quickly

*(Continued on page 6)*

## PREVENTIVE CARE YOU SHOULDN'T SKIP

Life these days is anything but “normal.” And you’re probably doing your best to avoid the need for a visit to the doctor’s. But it’s still important to keep up with recommended preventive care. And, in some cases, doing so matters more this year than ever.

Here’s a list of preventive care you shouldn’t skip:

**Your annual physical** – Even if you’re feeling 100% with no known issues, you should still meet with your doctor once a year to review your overall health status and screen for potential risk factors. Detecting conditions early is the key to stopping them from advancing into something more serious and costly. Medical providers are taking extra precautions to keep patients safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, so call your doctor’s office before your appointment to find out about any new procedures you’ll need to follow when you arrive.

**Blood pressure measurement** – A blood pressure check is a quick and easy test that can warn you of a potentially fatal condition. Often called “the silent killer,” high blood pressure (also known as hypertension) may cause no obvious symptoms but can lead to serious health issues, since it puts extra strain on your arteries and your heart. Over time, this strain can lead to thickened, less flexible arteries, which makes them more likely to clog up and cause a heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, or dementia.

**Blood work** – One little prick of a needle can tell you an awful lot about your health, so if your doctor recommends getting blood work, do it! For example, knowing your blood sugar can detect prediabetes and give you time to make dietary and lifestyle changes that could ward off diabetes, a serious condition that can lead to heart disease, nerve damage, kidney damage, and more. And, checking your cholesterol is vital for your heart health, since too much of this waxy substance in your blood increases your risk for heart disease.

**Mammogram** – The American Cancer Society recommends that women age 45 to 54 get a mammogram every year, with women of other ages offered the option to have one based on their situation. Breast cancer is expected to claim the lives of more than 42,000 women in 2020, and early detection offers the best chance for successful treatment. Mammography can often detect breast changes that could indicate cancer years before physical symptoms develop.

Source: <https://www.phxbenefits.com/news/health>, accessed Sept. 22, 2020

## COPRA WEBSITE

Did you know that COPRA has a website? We post breaking information on the website as well as updated information as we get it.

The website also includes links to many City of Phoenix resources, among them the COPERS (City of Phoenix Retirement System) website, the City Connections newsletter website, the Public Information Office’s PHXNewsroom webpage, and the City Benefits webpage.

You can also find past and current issues of the COPRA Chronicle! If you remember an article you found interesting, you can search through the archives to find it again.

Your Board members are also listed, along with their positions on the Board, and their contact information.

There is lots to see on our website. Take a look!

## COPRA BOARD ELECTIONS (CONTINUED)

*(Continued from page 5)*

how much more complicated the system was, with all the different units and benefits granted to those units. She has lived in Phoenix since 1991 and relies on the services of her fellow employees - and has a deep appreciation for all that they do for her family.

Lastly, and most important, she is very cognizant of the challenges our retirees face, especially this year. She would like to help the membership evolve into our new ‘normal’ (whatever that might be); to help all of us to emerge stronger.

# IN REMEMBRANCE

James Wagner	01/13/2020
Acie Johnson	03/10/2020
Geniece Carroll	03/13/2020
John Heredia	04/16/2020
Robert Kopf	04/23/2020
Alex Kislik	04/28/2020
Carole Thomas	04/28/2020
Uno Kula	04/30/2020
Ramon Favela	04/30/2020
Manuel U. Baldanado	05/01/2020
Richard Garcia	05/01/2020
Simon Armenta	05/03/2020
Carmina Anderson	09/05/2020
Frank L. Quezada	09/05/2020
William T. Strickland	09/07/2020
Paul M. Santa Cruz	09/08/2020
David Delatorres	09/09/2020
Daryl Adams	09/09/2020
Robert E. Ruddy	09/16/2020
Ronald Martin	09/18/2020
Bennie Baker	09/20/2020
Sharon Guevin	09/20/2020
Kathleen Wilson	09/22/2020
Betty Dorothy Rivera	09/25/2020
Shirley Krebs	09/25/2020
Robert Schofield	09/30/2020
H. Paul Graves	10/01/2020
Dail Gustafson	10/02/2020
Diane E. Johnson	10/02/2020
Lorenzo B. Moreno	10/05/2020
Keith E Draper	10/08/2020
Don P. Williams	10/13/2020
Nellie Lugo	10/15/2020

Solution to puzzle on page 3

5	3	4	1	7	3	9	2	6
6	7	2	9	4	3	8	5	1
1	8	9	6	5	2	4	7	3
3	9	1	7	2	4	5	6	8
7	6	8	5	1	9	3	4	2
4	2	5	3	8	6	1	9	7
9	4	7	2	3	1	6	8	5
2	1	6	8	9	5	7	3	4
8	5	3	4	6	7	2	1	9

**Disclaimer**

All articles are for informational purposes and not intended to be a substitute for professional, legal, financial or medical advice. Consult an attorney or other professional what is best for your situation. COPRA expressly disclaims and denies liability for any decisions based on the information presented.

COPRA website.....	<a href="http://www.phoenixcopra.com">www.phoenixcopra.com</a>
COPERS website.....	<a href="http://www.phoenix.gov/copers">www.phoenix.gov/copers</a>
COPMEA website.....	<a href="http://www.copmea.com">www.copmea.com</a>
City Retirement Systems (COPERS).....	(602) 534-4400
Human Resources - Benefits Section .....	(602) 262-4777
COPMEA.....	(602) 262-6858

## 2020 COPRA BOARD

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### Chronicle Article Deadline

Please be advised that the deadline for submitting articles for the Chronicle is the **20<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:COPRANewsletter@gmail.com)

Or mail to: Mary Dysinger Franklin, 6208 E Desert Cove Ave, Scottsdale, AZ 85254

## NOVEMBER COPRA CHRONICLE

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PO Box 2464  
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340



### **2020 MEMBERSHIP MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Membership meetings held at the

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

**General Meeting (Virtual) - Friday, December 4th - 10 am to 12 pm  
(Register by email by November 7<sup>th</sup> - See article on page 2 for details)**

Board meetings are held quarterly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the Month  
Except for June, July and August. These meeting dates will be announced