



COPRA CHRONICLE

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

September 2023

MEMBERSHIP IS OUR STRENGTH

Issue 6

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	2
In Remembrance	3
New Members	3
COPRA Needs You to Serve on the Board of Directors	3
New Retirees (April, May and June)4	
Community Service Fund Drive.....	6
Your E-mail is Your Entry	7
Holiday Party	7
2023 COPRA BOARD	7
Meeting Notices.....	8

IMPORTANT UPDATES ON CITY OF PHOENIX RETIREE HEALTH PLANS

CITY OF PHOENIX BENEFITS OFFICE

Two important changes are coming to the City of Phoenix retiree health plans:

Retiree Health Plan Enrollment Period Changes

As recommended by the Health Care Benefits Trust Board and adopted by the City, effective January 1, 2024, if you are not enrolled in a City retiree health plan, you will not be able to enroll or re-enroll in the City's retiree health plans. This change applies to dental, vision, and non-Medicare medical plans individually.

Also, as of January 1, 2024, retirees will have 31 days from the end of either their active City-sponsored health coverage, or their City COBRA coverage, to elect and submit payment for medical, dental, and vision coverage. If elections are not made within 31 days, the retiree will be unable to enroll in the City's retiree's health plans in the future.

If you are not currently enrolled in the City's health benefits, and are interested in more information, you can visit the [City's retiree benefits website](#). If you are interested in enrolling in City health benefits, the City's benefits office needs to receive your retiree enrollment form by Thursday, December 28, 2023, to process your request for the 2024 plan year.

Non-Medicare Medical Retiree Plan Sunset

The non-Medicare medical retiree plans will end and no longer be available on December 31, 2025 unless the plan is unable to procure re-insurance (stop loss) and/or enrollment falls below a threshold where costs are no longer sustainable, in which case the plans would end sooner than December 31, 2025. This does not affect the available Medicare plans offered.

Closer to December of 2025, the City will partner with benefits consultants and insurance carriers to offer education and training regarding navigating enrollment in a non-Medicare plan offered through the federal marketplace.

(Continued on page 4)



"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 Mary Jo Slunder.

Mary Jo can be reached by: telephone at 602-206-5515, or by email at copra.members@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 from your account.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Rob Sweeney

Preparedness... Emergency Management personnel tell you to be prepared. Ready – Set – Go! Have a plan! Arrange the plan! Execute the plan! Most oftentimes we think about being prepared related to an emergent issue. Fire; flood; loss of power; etc. While this is extremely important, I believe being prepared for the normalcy of life to be equally important.

I have had the pleasure of sharing many personal stories, experiences and joys of my life each month via the President's Message. I love to draw upon my family, especially my parents, on their ability to convey the important parts of life and how to make it meaningful to today.

My parents were Depression-era babies. Mom talked about having mustard sandwiches for dinner while her parents fed the 'hobos' soup on the back porch near the railroad tracks of their northwestern Indiana home. She never threw away something that had residual value; prepare to use it another day! Dad talked about how he and his three siblings spent three years in a Chicago-area orphanage after their father died. My grandmother could not afford to care for four mouths without help in 1932. She remarried and recalled the children home to care for and embrace a blended family. Dad learned to be financially prepared and not rely upon anyone but himself for his family.

My parents prepared themselves for a long, loving life together. They were spiritually, emotionally, financially and physically ready for the long haul. Nothing was going to get in the way of their future success together and for their seven children. Going to the grocery store? Prepare by making a list of only the essential items and circle the ad for the best price; coupons were a must! Going on a multi-week vacation to San Diego? Pack the car full to the brim of the food staples which can be used on the beach. Needing a new car? Dutifully put money away until you have cash to pay for it.

My father was the king of the Envelope System before a certain celebrity of today made it popular. He kept all the worthless envelopes from junk mail to keep track how he was going to spend that week's budget. Cash was king! My father could have made millions by selling the system, but his mind was on other matters.

Mom used to cut the three boys' hair when the nuns thought we looked too ragged. Dad would calculate the cost of each haircut and put that sum, along with rebates and coupon savings, away for vacation. My father was extremely calculated. He knew if you had more than two slices of deli meat on your sandwich. He could tell when you took the car on an, 'extended' drive after school. He tracked EVERYTHING.

My father's dedication to detail enabled us seven children to not want for anything. Yes, there were sacrifices, but none that stand out. We created our own music. We created our own toys. We created life-altering experiences which we all carry with us today.

My father prepared for everything. There was always an article clipped from the newspaper he wanted to share with me the next time I stopped over. He completed his double-entry accounting each week to ensure he was staying on track with the week's budget he prepared. He made sure we were ready in time, even while on a camping vacation, to be five minutes early to church each Sunday.

My dear father passed away in my arms at the end of July, three days shy of his 97th birthday. We had planned the night before to have Mass on TV the next day. I was up with him early to assist him with his needs. He died preparing his body for Mass. He had prepared his soul and life to ensure he was surrounded by family and ready for his spiritual flight.

My dad and I worked on his financial preparedness for years. He planned a seamless approach to the closure of his estate. He prepared us all for what he wanted to happen when he passed. He prepared us to ensure there would be no question or infighting among family members. He entrusted upon me to close out his financial affairs, and that is a gift for which I did prepare. The one thing my father could not prepare me for is the emptiness in my heart now that he is gone.

It is never too late to prepare for the next thing. Dinner tomorrow? Grocery list? Your death? Having a documented and well communicated Last Will as well as beneficiaries identified on accounts is one of the best gifts our father has given us seven children. He was a true planner and prepared all of us, and his soul, up to the end.

Wishing you all the gift of preparedness, peace and love – Rob

IN REMEMBRANCE

Name	Date of Death	Department
Billie Jean Silvio (Joseph)	6/14/2022	
Frances P. Johnson	1/1/2023	Aviation
Darrell Tripp	9/8/2022	Water Services
John L. Jackson	12/23/2022	
Marie K. Fulton	12/28/2022	
Robert B. Holtzman	1/7/2023	Law
Patricia Leach	1/10/2023	Library
Bobbi A. Mahkewa	3/1/2023	Human Services
Linda Lee Masters	3/1/2023	
Beatrice Dunlap (Orval E.)	3/4/2023	
John Wolfe (Erin R. Angelini)	3/15/2023	
Carol Hinkle	3/17/2023	Neighborhood Services
Federico A. Espinoza	3/25/2023	Public Works Department
Ernest E. Gomez	3/31/2023	Street Transportation
Martha Skagen	4/1/2023	Housing Department
Gerald Oakry	4/3/2023	Street Transportation
David Pietsch	4/3/2023	Public Works
Henriette (Etta) C. Williams	4/4/2023	Municipal Court
Gladys Mahoney	4/6/2023	Library
Peter A. Van Haren	4/6/2023	City Manager's Office
William V. Clinton (Dolores)	4/9/2023	
Lois L. Landis	4/12/2023	Phoenix Police
Marty Crespín	4/13/2023	Human Services
Alice Yanez (Max Y.)	4/13/2023	
Victoria Silvas (Frank)	4/15/2023	
Diana Decker	4/19/2023	
Betty C. Slonaker (Robert A.)	4/25/2023	
Evelyn Cartwright	4/26/2023	Municipal Court

(Continued on page 5)

NEW MEMBERS

Jeffrey D. Cowee	Water Services	Lisa Pera	Phoenix Police
Karen S. Cowee	Library	Janice Pitts	Human Resources
Joyce Dreyer	Street Transportation		

COPRA NEEDS YOU TO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

We are approaching that time of year when we need candidates to fill positions on the COPRA Board. There are twelve elected positions, each typically serving a two-year term. Elections are staggered with five to six Board positions up for election each year.

Current Board Members up for reelection this year are: Victoria Correll, Louis Matamoros, Gail Piceno, Tammy Ryan and Mary Jo Slunder. More importantly, we still have two vacancies to fill – one for a 1-year term, and another for a 2-year term.

Serving on the COPRA Board is fun and rewarding. We typically meet one per month at the [Washington Activity Center](#). You can also participate via Zoom Meeting if it is more convenient.

If you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors, please contact Andy Terrey at at.copra@gmail.com no later than October 11, 2022.



NEW RETIREES (APRIL)

Laura Brown	Law Department	David Leinenveber	Homeland Defense Department
Jeffrey Cowee	Water Services Department	Thomas Mawhinney	Police Department
Karen Cowee	Library Department	Christopher McClarin	Public Works Department
Susan Dill	Public Works Department	Rebecca McConnell	Fire Department
Patricia Duffek	Human Services Department	Tommy Medina	Parks & Recreation Department
Kim Duprest	Law Department	David Mohler	Neighborhood Services Department
Gary Gidak	Fire Department	Tomas Montano	Parks & Recreation Department
Vincent Gigliotti	Street Transportation Department	Marsha Munday	Water Services Department
Kyle Griffey	Parks & Recreation Department	Donald Ramirez	Planning & Development Department
Teddi Hall	Finance Department	Miguel Rodriguez	Neighborhood Services Department
Stephen Harkin	Finance Department	Donald Sowden	Planning & Development Department
Sonya Hernandez	Municipal Court	Christabal Uribe	Street Transportation Department
Lori Hudson	Aviation Department	Richard Webb	Public Transit Department
Todd Jones	Aviation Department	Lee Woods-White	City Manager's Office
Frank Lambert	Water Services Department		

NEW RETIREES (MAY)

Joseph Giudice	Public Works Department	Frank Peralez	Parks & Recreation Department
Candy Howell	Fire Department	Michael Reynolds	Public Works Department
Karen Idehara	Library Department	Julie Rodriguez	Aviation Department
Jose Islas	Public Works Department	Jennifer Sanchez	Phoenix Police Department
Kathleen Kramer	Phoenix Convention Center	Oscar Sandoval	Street Transportation Department
Carmen LaPierre	Aviation Department	Jeffry Schade	Public Works Department
Michael Longe	Parks & Recreation Department	Jason Stokes	Phoenix Police Department
Brian Mrotek	Water Services Department	Kerry Vonada	Phoenix Police Department
Martin Otero	Parks & Recreation Department	Enrique Yanez	Phoenix Convention Center
Diana Peneva	Water Services Department		

NEW RETIREES (JUNE)

Kenneth Brown	Phenix Convention Center	Garth Newby	Phoenix Police Department
David Epperson	Water Services Department	Kevin Thoe	Public Works Department
Daniel Esparza	Water Services Department	Tracie Tyler	Phoenix Fire Department
Paula Fortier	Library Department	MaryLou Valdez	Parks & Recreation Department
Lawrence Gerske	Aviation Department	Robert Walsh	Street Transportation Department
Sandeep Mendon	Phoenix Police Department	Eric Watson	Parks & Recreation Department
Paula Milligan	Finance Department	Willie Williams	Street Transportation Department

IMPORTANT UPDATES ON CITY OF PHOENIX RETIREE HEALTH PLANS (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

The City will be offering virtual information sessions to answer non-Medicare medical retiree plan questions on the dates and at the times listed below. Information about how to access these sessions will be posted to the benefits website in September.

Date	Time
October 5	9:00 – 10:30am
October 12	2:00 – 3:30pm
October 19	9:00 – 10:30am
October 25	2:00 – 3:30pm
November 6	9:00 – 10:30am

The City is reviewing how this will affect Category MERP and will provide more information on a future date.

If you have additional questions, you can contact the City's Benefit Office via email at benefits.questions@phoenix.gov or by phone at 602-262-4777. Or visit our website at <https://www.phoenix.gov/hr/benefits>.

IN REMEMBRANCE (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 3)

Name	Date of Death	Department
Louis F. Spadafore	4/26/2023	Parks & Recreation
Deborah Cusimano (Michael)	4/28/2023	
Charles F. Italiano	4/30/2023	Public Transit
Otis Wilson, Sr. (Patricia)	5/3/2023	
Helen M. Baumert	5/4/2023	Budget & Research
Jean M. Jarczyk	5/6/2023	
Reynaldo V. Gallego	5/6/2023	Parks, Recreation & Library
Terry L. Spross	5/14/2023	Water Services
Gary S. Levan	5/15/2023	Human Services
Mary E. Henneman	5/16/2023	Aviation
Charles Bugh	5/16/2023	Aviation
John H. Watson	5/19/2023	Phoenix Fire
Stanley A. Gorinac	5/22/2023	Water Services
Ramon L. Romero	5/24/2023	Municipal Court
June Wright (William H.)	5/25/2023	
Barbara R. Douma	5/25/2023	Planning & Development
Valorie Reveles (Rudolph P.)	5/26/2023	
Bryan Raines (Jane L. Morris)	5/27/2023	
Gary L. Slatcher	5/27/2023	Phoenix Police
Gloria D. Shelton (Jerry)	6/1/2023	
Jose Y. Campoy	6/6/2023	Street Transportation
Annabelle McMillan (James)	6/7/2023	
Angelita Fierros (Ruben T.)	6/8/2023	
Robert E. Martin	6/10/2023	Public Works
Terry A. Smith	6/10/2023	Water Services
Wilma G. Rogge	6/11/2023	Street Transportation
Jimmy Marsden	6/13/2023	Planning & Development
Angel P. Romo	6/14/2023	
Barbara J. Roberts	6/15/2023	Law
Charles Garcia	6/20/2023	Neighborhood Services
Mark Garry (Barbara A.)	6/22/2023	
Ramon F. Rivera	6/22/2023	Water Services
Raymond M. Espinoza	6/23/2023	Phoenix Police
Martha Austin (Henry J.)	6/25/2023	
Dean A. Matthews	6/26/2023	
Judith Newsome	7/3/2023	Municipal Court
Jane Neal (Cecil)	7/4/2023	
Joseph A. O'Brien	7/4/2023	Street Transportation
Aaron Borrego	7/5/2023	Phoenix Police
Nicole M. Conover	7/5/2023	Municipal Court
Hazel I. Baker	7/8/2023	Parks & Recreation
James A. Cobb	7/10/2023	Human Services
Richard Morice, Sr.	7/11/2023	Water Services
Nancy Matus	7/11/2023	Water Services
Clara Brewer (Joseph R.)	7/13/2023	
Vicki L. Leswick	7/13/2023	Phoenix Police
Pok S. Kula (Robert G.)	7/14/2023	
Ida N. Cota (Enrique)	7/15/2023	
Tom Antila	7/17/2023	Water Services
Teresa Figueroa (Robert S.)	7/19/2023	
Rosemarie Gilsdorf (Thomas J.)	7/30/2023	
Brenda Manion (Patrick)	7/30/2023	

(Those on the list who are surviving spouses will have the retiree's name in parentheses after the deceased's name.)

2023 COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND DRIVE ENDS OCTOBER 13

The City is once again partnering with Valley of the Sun United Way in its annual campaign where City employees and retirees give back to the community—supporting organizations that give back to families and individuals.

With the help of City retirees, the Community Service Fund Drive (CSFD) raised almost \$25 million since inception in 1998 for health and human services programs. The CSFD Executive Committee is counting on your generous support again, and thanks you for your continued generosity.

No matter where you give, your gift goes far—but not far away. All contributions stay in Arizona to address our most critical health and human service needs. You may consider choosing Agency #9000 to help the Valley of the Sun United Way stomp out hunger; end homelessness; ensure children and youth succeed; and improve financial stability for families. Or consider helping fellow City employees through a donation to Agency #9201, Helping Other Phoenix Employees (HOPE) Fund. This fund is designed to lessen an employee's financial burden caused by an unexpected event. Or consider donating to an agency that is also eligible for a tax credit.

Additionally, you are all welcome to participate in volunteer opportunities and can find more information at <https://vsuw.org/get-involved/volunteer>. When registering, list the City of Phoenix as your employer and "Retiree" as your Job title. Volunteer hours logged contribute \$28.00/hr toward the CSFD goal!

For a full list of eligible agencies or for any other questions please contact us at csfd@phoenix.gov or at (602) 399-4500.

Contributing to the fund drive is easy and convenient—submit a paper pledge form or even donate using a credit card. For your convenience, a special retiree pledge form is attached below for your cash or check contribution. We look forward to your continued support as a valued member of our City family.

Sincerely,
The CSFD Retiree Committee

**RETIRED CITY OF PHOENIX EMPLOYEES
COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND DRIVE
PLEDGE FORM**
csfd@phoenix.gov

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:
City of Phoenix Human Resources Department
Attn: Marissa Hernandez/CSFD Program Coordinator
250W. Washington Street, 10th FL, Phoenix, AZ 85003

Last Name (please print) _____ First Name _____ MI _____

Address: _____
Street, City, and Zip Code

Phone: () _____

Email: _____

DONATION: _____

I would like to make a one-time cash or check contribution of \$ _____.

Please make checks payable to CSFD.

All cash & check donations will be deposited and will count towards the tax year in which it was submitted.

CONTRIBUTION DESIGNATION

There are many worthwhile organizations on our agency list that would benefit from your donation. You may, however, consider selecting from these popular agencies. Or request a full agency list to make your selection.

1. Helping Other Phoenix Employees (HOPE) Fund (Agency #9201); or
2. Valley of the Sun United Way for health and human services programs (Agency #9000)

Agency: _____ Agency # _____ Amount \$ _____

Agency: _____ Agency # _____ Amount \$ _____

YOUR E-MAIL IS YOUR ENTRY

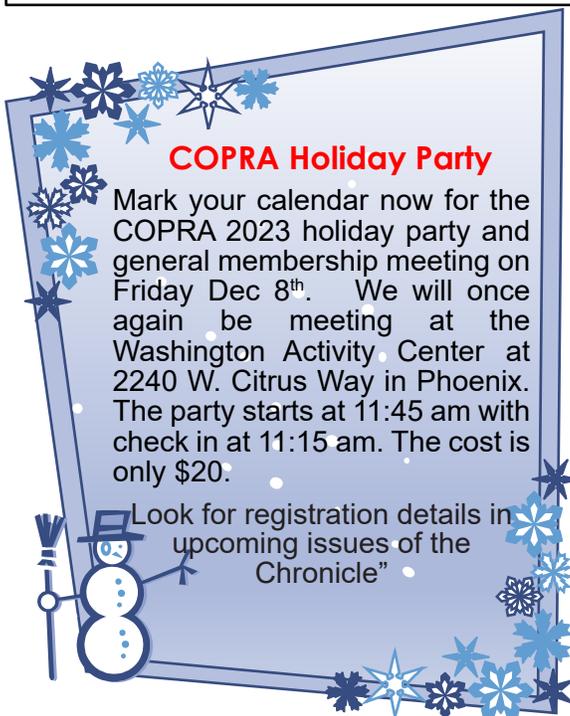
As you all know, receiving the COPRA Chronicle by email significantly defrays the printing and postage costs for COPRA. An added benefit is that if there is any important information that COPRA wants to send you, we have your email address on file and can transmit to you in a timely fashion.

In order to encourage our COPRA members to receive the Chronicle by email, 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 September winner is **Joyce McWhorter**. **CONGRATULATIONS Joyce!**

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 Mary Jo Slunder at copra.members@gmail.com. She can also be reached by phone at 602-206-5515.

Sign up now!



COPRA Holiday Party

Mark your calendar now for the COPRA 2023 holiday party and general membership meeting on Friday Dec 8th. We will once again be meeting at the Washington Activity Center at 2240 W. Citrus Way in Phoenix. The party starts at 11:45 am with check in at 11:15 am. The cost is only \$20.

Look for registration details in upcoming issues of the Chronicle"

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

2023 COPRA BOARD

President:	
Rob Sweeney	480-215-2215
E-mail	coprapresident@gmail.com
Vice President:	
Brian Suggs	602-369-0840
E-mail	bjssuggs@msn.com
Treasurer:	
Louis Matamoros	623-734-6624
E-mail	biglou6415@yahoo.com
Secretary: TBD	
Board Members:	
Chronicle Chair:	
Andy Terrey	602-653-5460
E-mail	at.copra@gmail.com
COPERS Rep/Benefits & Health Care Committee Chair:	
Tammy Ryan	602-430-5965
E-mail	tlgryan1822@gmail.com
Membership Chair:	
Mary Jo Slunder	602-206-5515
E-mail	copra.members@gmail.com
Activity Coordinator:	
Kathy Wenger	602-550-4390
E-mail	kjw7833@msn.com
Website Support:	
Gail Piceno	602-509-1908
E-mail	gpiceno0808@gmail.com
Anna Marie Dragonetti	602-992-0362
E-mail	amdragonetti@cox.net
Donna May	602-513-1069
E-mail	dmay.copra@gmail.com
<hr/>	
Chronicle Editor:	
Mary Dysinger Franklin	602-705-8822
E-mail	copranewsletter@gmail.com

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

SEPTEMBER COPRA CHRONICLE

Annual dues includes \$5.00 for the COPRA Chronicle
Dues are \$12.00 per year or \$50 for 5 years
COPRA Chronicle (USPS No. 0016-924) is published
Monthly except June, July and August
By City of Phoenix Retirees Association
PO Box 2464, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340
Periodicals paid at Avondale AZ and
additional mailing offices

POSTMASTER
Please send address corrections to:
COPRA
PO Box 2464
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340



MEMBERSHIP MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

COPRA Holiday Party and Annual Meeting
December 8th at 11:45
Washington Activity Center
2240 W Citrus Way, Phoenix, AZ

Board meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Thursday of the Month
Except for June, July and August.