



# COPRA CHRONICLE

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

May 2024

**MEMBERSHIP IS OUR STRENGTH**

Issue 5

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message .....	2
In Remembrance .....	3
Psst - The Burton Barr Central Library has Rare Book Room! .....	3
New Retirees (March).....	3
Postcard from the Past.....	4
Real ID Deadline Extended .....	4
Volunteering at a Dog Rescue.....	5
New Members .....	5
My Paris Trip.....	6
Your E-mail is Your Entry.....	7
2024 COPRA BOARD .....	7
Meeting Notices.....	8

## BE READY FOR VOTING

These are recommendations from the Citizens of Maricopa County:

Before you show up to the polls to vote, confirm that you are registered to vote and that Maricopa County Voter Database has your correct address ([beballotready.vote](http://beballotready.vote))

You could show up with your ballot already filled out and use the on-site drop box or you could request a ballot to be printed at the Voting Center, fill it out and feed it through the onsite tabulator.

If you are requesting a ballot to be printed at the Voting Center, you will be required to provide certain forms of identification to prove who you are and where you live before your ballot can be printed. These documents could be your Arizona Driver's License (AZDL) or your Arizona Voter ID card and can be scanned into the touch screen Site Book. The Site Books have access to your registration information in the Maricopa County Voter Database.

The best choice is always your unexpired AZDL, with your current address. If your address is not current on your AZDL, your second-best option of an ID would be your current Voter ID card which should show your current address. If you don't have a Voter ID Card or if it doesn't have your current address, use [Maricopa.gov](http://Maricopa.gov) and show your digital Voter ID at the poll. A US Military ID or US Passport could also be used along with a current Voter ID card.

Be prepared and have an efficient and pleasant voting experience!



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

Membership for COPRA is \$12 per year or \$50.00 for 5 years, or \$100 for lifetime. If you have changed your address, email address or phone number, or have any questions about dues payments, please contact Anna Marie Dragonetti.

Mary Jo can be reached by: telephone at 602-992-0362, or by email at [copra.members@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:phoenixcopra@gmail.com) from your account.

*"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."*

*— CS Lewis*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Rob Sweeney

As I was growing up, the month of May sparked feelings much like December. There was great anticipation as to what vacation awaited the family over the summer. Most times it was spending time on the beach in San Diego to get out of the sweltering Phoenix heat. This was a necessity, as our humble home just north of Christown Mall lacked one modern amenity we all enjoy today: air conditioning!

Our family's late spring days in May were spent getting the evaporative cooler in tip-top shape! My brothers and I left an abundance of 'knuckle skin' on the metal grates of the cooler as we scraped away the prior year's rust with a wire brush. This allowed for us to add a new layer of 'Rust-Oleum Gray' spray paint to make them look brand new!

Our mom and dad had all kids ready the house during springtime, especially due to living with evaporative cooling. While evaporative cooling was economical, the old systems allowed a bit too much moisture in the home. There was a need to wash the walls and place the mattresses outside in the sun to ensure mildew would not take hold (or at least to halt its continued existence). Finally, we were all dispatched with a wet towel in hand to stand in front of a vent when dad turned on the cooler so we could catch any debris being sent through the ductwork. To us, that was the official start of summer!

We also never really started summer on Memorial Day, as our father would use the opportunity of a holiday to complete a major project in the house. Most often it was to paint a room or the outside house trim. There were the occasional recarpeting events and the installation of a new 'Doughboy' pool. I recall the year the final replacement pool was installed: we left a 3-foot circular path around the outside perimeter of the pool and then sloped it down to create a 'deep end' in the middle!

Memorial Day weekends were quite memorable for all of us. School was out, but you needed to attend to the project at hand before settling into summer. Whatever the project, we could not escape the roaring sound of the Indianapolis 500 racing event as it played on the radio (remember when the race was never on live TV!). Dad would cut out the race's pole positions from the newspaper and track when each driver's day was done and who won. He kept meticulous notes: B. Unser accident – 32nd lap; G. Johncock: engine failure - 54th lap; A.J. Foyt transmission issue – 199th lap; A. Unser winner. We were then subject to the whole thing all over again when the race made its way to national TV via tape delay. I always wondered if dad was reconciling what he heard on the radio to what he saw on TV, just to make sure announcers Chris Schenkel and Jim McKay had their stories straight!

Those last days of May also required us to use the verb form of the word 'may'! 'May I help paint the hallway?' 'All the chores are done; may we go swimming?' 'May we go to Christown for a soft-serve ice cream?' Lord help us if we were to substitute the word 'can' for the word 'may'. The nuns at our parochial school drilled the use of 'may' into us like a Marine Sergeant, thus my parents would respond in-kind if we were to inappropriately ask a question with the word, 'can.'

COPRA Board Members need some additional assistance as we settle into summer. Perhaps you hear an inner voice asking you, 'I wonder if I may be of assistance?' or 'Can I make a positive impact to COPRA?' We will gladly accept the form of each question with an emphatic: YES! Please consider reaching out to any of us on the COPRA Board to understand how you can help. I promise, I won't require you to lose any skin from your knuckles!

I wish you a happy and healthy summer – Rob

*"A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken."*

*—James Dent*

## IN REMEMBRANCE

Name	Date of Death	Department
Carrie L. Holified (Cebron)	05/26/2022	
Anthony Gardy	07/15/2023	Public Works Department
Joseph Ballantyne	11/14/2023	Street Transportation Department
Richard J. Rivera	02/07/2024	Information Technology Department
Tony N. Aguilar, Jr.	02/16/2024	Aviation Department
Mark A. Gilmore	02/26/2024	Public Works Department
Donna L. Sydow	03/03/2024	Municipal Court Department
Arturo G. Rios (Hazel)	03/04/2024	
John T. Brown	03/13/2024	Street Transportation Department
Carmen Gonzales (Johnny)	03/17/2024	
David W. Barr	03/23/2024	Public Works Department
Leo O'Donnell	03/23/2024	Library Department
Norma C. Heil	03/24/2024	Finance Department
Jay M. Leu	03/24/2024	Parks and Recreation Department
Ruben G. Salazar	03/30/2024	Public Works Department
Billy Rivera	04/03/2024	Public Works Department
Doris Patton	04/06/2024	
James E. Ringle	04/12/2024	Public Works Department
Rosendo A. Mendoza	04/16/2024	Street Transportation Department

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

## PSST - THE BURTON BARR CENTRAL LIBRARY HAS A RARE BOOK ROOM! LEE FRANKLIN - PHOENIX PUBLIC LIBRARY



Do you love old books and art? Visit Phoenix Public Library's Rare Book Room! The Rare Book Room is located on the 4th Floor of [Burton Barr Central Library](#). Designed by renowned architect Will Bruder, the Rare Book Room houses three special collections. The furnishings and artwork are an expert blend of old with new which create an elegant, yet inviting space. Where else can you find lithographs by Joan Miró and Marc Chagall together with an 1895 Washington Printing Press and a Noguchi coffee table? Join



us in the Rare Book Room for open walk-in hours 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on select Saturdays and [special presentations](#) at Burton Barr Central Library. Enjoy a chance to explore the Room, browse the reference collection, and view select rare items on display including miniature books, artists' books, manuscript leaves, and more.

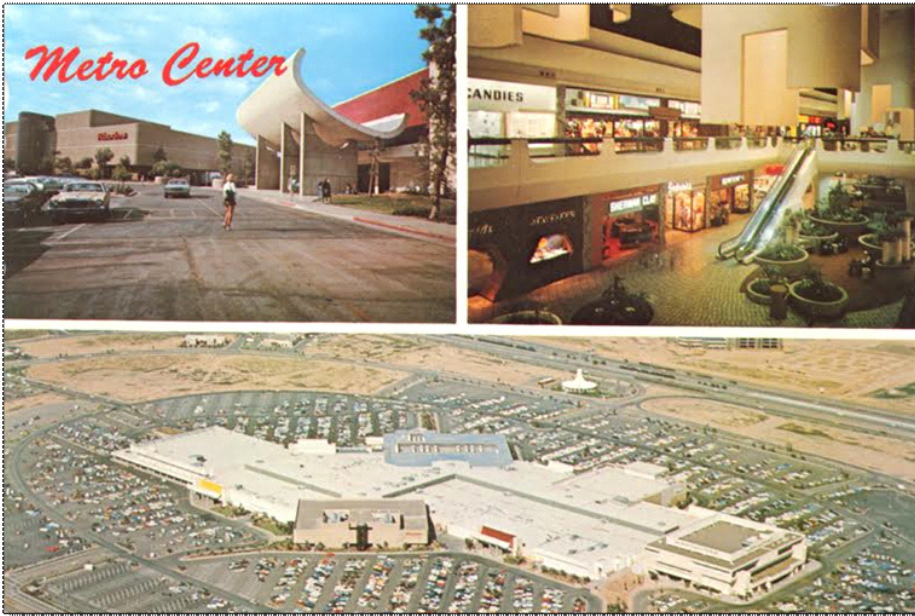
## NEW RETIREES (MARCH)

Betty R. Baca	Info Tech Service	Michael L. Prather	Water Services Dept
Jennifer R. Calles	Water Services Dept	Anthony W. Rice	Housing Dept
Daryl L. Gardner	Aviation Dept	John S. Quintero	Water Services Dept
Shawna M. Gardner	Water Services Dept	Jan C. Sherwood	Parks & Recreation Dept
Carla D. Kuhnert	Fire Dept	Michael J. Vega	Water Services Dept
Chad M. Ourso	Parks & Recreation Dept	James G. Zwerg	Fire Dept
Simone M. Pfander	Phoenix Police Dept		

## POSTCARD FROM THE PAST

Most City of Phoenix retirees should have memories of the iconic Metrocenter Mall. The pictures in this postcard were probably taken shortly after the mall opened in the early 1970s.

Metrocenter was a joint venture of Westcor, the Homart Development Company, and the real estate division of Sears, Roebuck and Company. Construction began in June 1972 and the mall was open for business in early 1973. Construction cost was estimated at \$100 million.



Though not the first indoor mall in Phoenix, it was by far the largest. The 1.4 million square-foot behemoth was built on 312 acres in what was then a sparsely populated, unincorporated part of Maricopa County on the west side of I-17 between Dunlap and Peoria. When it opened, it was the first two-level, five-anchor mall in the U.S and the largest shopping center in Arizona. The initial five anchor stores were Sears, Rhodes Brothers, Diamond's, Goldwater's, and The Broadway.

The mall started to decline economically after the 1980s as the Phoenix area expanded and other, more modern, shopping

venues became available. Metrocenter finally closed on June 30, 2020, due to low store occupancy levels following the COVID-19 pandemic and failed rejuvenation projects to boost foot traffic. Remains of the mall were auctioned off on December 3, 2020. Following demolition this year, the property will be redeveloped as the Metro District featuring 2,600 housing units, a large park, and sizable commercial space.

Sources:

Wikipedia. "Metrocenter." Accessed 14 April 2024.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metrocenter\\_\(Phoenix,\\_Arizona\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metrocenter_(Phoenix,_Arizona))

Hoodline. Wilson, Steve. "Phoenix's Former Metrocenter Mall Set for Spring Demolition, \$850 Million Redevelopment to Follow." 21 February 2024. Accessed 15 April 2024.  
<https://hoodline.com/2024/02/phoenix-s-former-metrocenter-mall-set-for-spring-demolition-850-million-redevelopment-to-follow/>

## REAL ID DEADLINE EXTENDED

The Department of Homeland Security extended the REAL ID deadline to May 7, 2025.

The REAL ID Act established minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards and prohibits Federal agencies from accepting, for official purposes, licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards.

Beginning May 7, 2025, every state and territory resident will need to present a REAL ID compliant license/ID, or another acceptable form of ID for boarding commercial aircraft, accessing Federal facilities and entering nuclear plants. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) considers a current passport or military ID acceptable identification for boarding an aircraft.

# VOLUNTEERING AT A DOG RESCUE

By SANDRA HOFFMAN, NEW COPRA LIFETIME MEMBER

Volunteering at a dog rescue can change your life, and the lives of many dogs. I started volunteering in 2019 after my mom passed away and continued after I retired from the City of Phoenix in December 2022. Sunday afternoons I walk dogs, play with puppies, rub the belly of a scared dog, throw a ball for a game of fetch, feed and give medications to those that need them. I volunteer at Saving Paws Rescue Arizona (SPR), which is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) charitable organization in Phoenix. They provide veterinary care, evaluation, and adoptive homes for German Shepherd and Belgian Malinois (and many mixed breed) dogs who are left in pounds waiting uncertain fate or are no longer wanted or cared for. SPR doesn't believe that being sick, injured, old or pregnant is a reason to die.

**What are the benefits from volunteering even a couple of times per month:**

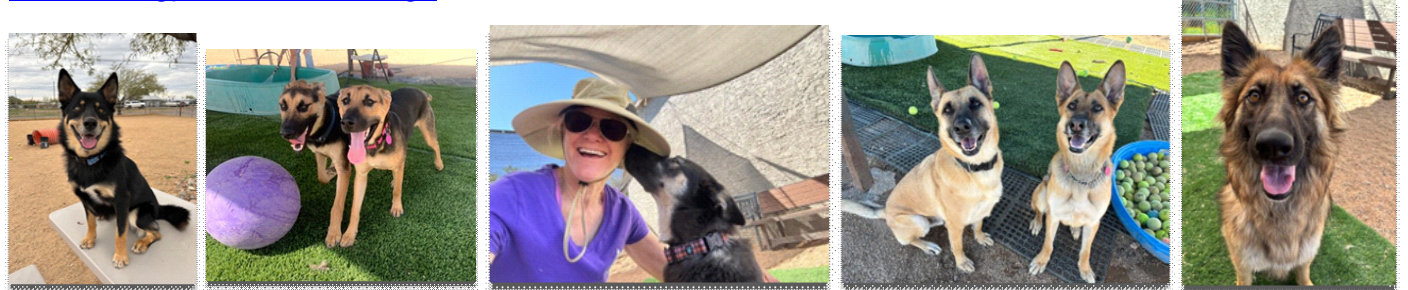
**Helping Animals in Need** – Hurt, vulnerable and malnourished dogs won't survive without help. We have dogs that were hit by cars and are treated by a veterinarian. Once stable, volunteers give them love and attention as they heal. Slowly getting them to walk, stand up to eat and drink and eventually to play. We have pregnant dogs that are malnourished, and their puppies need to be hand fed until mom can feed them.

**Making a Difference** - Time spent showing affection to dogs that have been neglected and abused will transform them. We recently had a female dog that rescue groups tried for months to catch. We finally brought her to SPR, and she kept her tail between her legs and would flinch if you tried to pet her. Volunteers slowly built her trust and showed that humans can be kind and she now run over to us and wags her tail, rolls over for belly rubs and sometimes gets the zoomies.

**Building Relationships** – Volunteering at a dog rescue allows you to build relationships not only with animals but also fellow volunteers, staff members and potential foster/adopters. These connections enrich your life and provide a support network.

**Stress Relief** – Spending time with animals has been shown to reduce stress and improve well-being. The simple act of petting a dog or taking them for a walk will improve your mood and the dog's as well. I love walking into the rescue and seeing the dogs and puppies look at me with loving anticipation of spending time outdoors with me. I get them to smile, and I take photos of them to post on the website so someone may decide to foster them or adopt them.

There are many animal rescue organizations in the valley that could use help. Even if you spend an hour or two per month volunteering, it can make a difference. Rescues need people to foster dogs to provide a home environment and to help more dogs be saved since we are often full and have no room to take more. I hope you consider volunteering or fostering; it truly has made a difference in my life and all the dogs and puppies I have helped. The website for Saving Paws Rescue is <https://www.savingpawsrescueaz.org/>.



## NEW MEMBERS

Daniel Battaglia Paulina Lopez Cisneros Helen Foster	Planning and Dev.Dept. Neighborhood Services Parks and Recreation	Sandra Hoffman Martin Nordby Li Yanhong	Planning and Development Law Department Water Services Department
------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------

# MY PARIS TRIP

ANNA MARIE DRAGONETTI



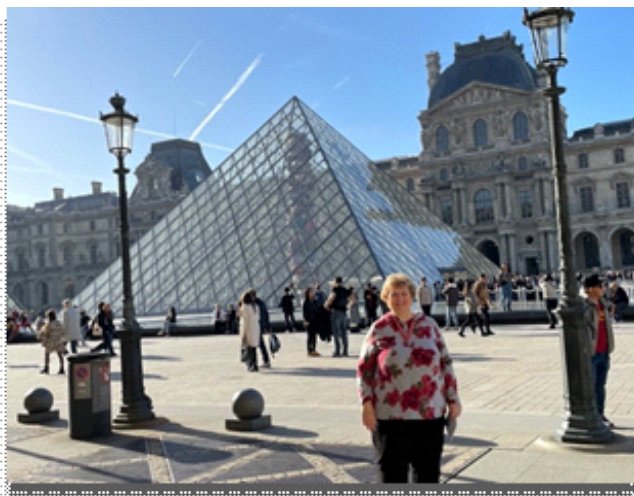
Paris was on my bucket list. My husband and I decided to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary in Paris. We used Costco and purchased the plane ticket and hotel room package. The total cost of the package was \$3,500. It was for 4 nights/five days, and it included the hotel, daily breakfast buffet, car service from the airport to the hotel, and the round-trip flight from Phoenix to Paris.

We went in October, and the weather was beautiful. We did have a little problem, though, when we got to the airport. Our pickup person wasn't there, so we found a worker with an orange vest to help us call the agency. We didn't understand the phone system and were very grateful for his help. Once we were able to reach someone, they sent a chauffeur right away to get us. We tipped our hero in the orange vest \$10 because he really was the only one at the airport who would help. Our Sky Harbor airport is definitely friendlier than Paris' Charles de Gaulle!

We stayed at Melia Vendome in Paris. It was a wonderful old-style hotel. Everyone was very friendly, and the daily breakfast was delicious. I can still taste my morning cappuccinos. I have learned when traveling that it is best to stay at a centrally located hotel. It makes it so much easier to see all the sites in a short time.

All the food in Paris was excellent at local restaurants. I found it cheaper to eat at the Paris restaurants than the restaurants in the United States. In France, the price of your meal includes tax and service, which is around 15% of the total price. Tipping is optional, but if you want to show your appreciation, you can leave a couple of Euros. In Phoenix, the combined tax rate is 8.6%, plus the 15%-22% tip rate expected here. The restaurants all used very fresh ingredients. We didn't have a bad meal.

A lot of the places we wanted to see were walkable from the hotel. When we needed an Uber, it was very easy to catch one and very reasonable in cost.



Some of the sites we saw during our stay in Paris were the Eiffel Tower Summit, Napoleon's Tomb, Army Museum, Louvre Museum, Arc de Triomphe, Musée d'Orsay, Orangerie Museum, and the Rodin Museum.

We went to Angelina's, a restaurant famous for its hot chocolate, and enjoyed dinner and dessert with our hot chocolate that we shared. Also, we went to the Moulin Rouge, but we didn't have dinner. We took the option of sharing a bottle of champagne and enjoyed their wonderful show. The

tables are very, very close together, but the people at our table were so friendly that we quickly made friends.

It was a wonderful trip. We already talked about one day going back to Paris. We had such a nice time. There is so much to do and see. I am looking forward to revisiting by watching the Olympics on TV this year.

If you have any questions or would like to comment about the article, please contact Anna at [amdragonetti@cox.net](mailto:amdragonetti@cox.net)."



## 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 May winner is **Josephine Rodriguez**.

**CONGRATULATIONS Josephine!**

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 Anna Marie Dragonetti at [copra.members@gmail.com](mailto:copra.members@gmail.com). She can also be reached by phone at 602-992-0362.

**Sign up now!**



### 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

## 2024 COPRA BOARD

President:

**Rob Sweeney**

480-215-2215

E-mail

[coprapresident@gmail.com](mailto:coprapresident@gmail.com)

Vice President:

**Andy Terrey**

602-653-5460

E-mail

[at.copra@gmail.com](mailto:at.copra@gmail.com)

Treasurer:

**Louis Matamoros**

623-734-6624

E-mail

[biglou6415@yahoo.com](mailto:biglou6415@yahoo.com)

Secretary:

**Mary Jo Slunder**

602-206-5515

E-mail

[mj.copra@gmail.com](mailto:mj.copra@gmail.com)

**Board Members:**

Chronicle Chair:

**Regina Ficken**

623-521-0052

E-mail

[rfcoprachronicle@gmail.com](mailto:rfcoprachronicle@gmail.com)

COPERS Representative:

**Tammy Ryan**

602-430-5965

E-mail

[tlgryan1822@gmail.com](mailto:tlgryan1822@gmail.com)

Membership Chair:

**Anna Marie Dragonetti**

602-992-0362

E-mail

[copra.members@gmail.com](mailto:copra.members@gmail.com)

Activity Coordinator:

**Kathy Wenger**

602-550-4390

E-mail

[kjw7833@msn.com](mailto:kjw7833@msn.com)

Website Support:

**Gail Piceno**

602-509-1908

E-mail

[gpiceno0808@gmail.com](mailto:gpiceno0808@gmail.com)

Health Care Task Force Representative:

**Donna May**

602-513-1069

E-mail

[dmay.copra@gmail.com](mailto:dmay.copra@gmail.com)

Chronicle Editor:

**Mary Dysinger Franklin**

602-705-8822

E-mail

[copranewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:copranewsletter@gmail.com)

### 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

# MAY COPRA CHRONICLE

Annual dues includes \$5.00 for the COPRA Chronicle  
Dues are \$12.00 per year, \$50 for 5 years, or  
\$100 for lifetime membership  
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

# may



## MEMBERSHIP MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS



COPRA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
10:00 AM -12:00 PM OCTOBER 10, 2024  
Washington Activity Center  
[2240 W. Citrus Way](#)  
(23rd Ave. and Glendale Ave.)

Representatives from the City Manager's Office, Human Resources Division, and Retirement Office have been invited to answer your questions about your healthcare and pension benefits.

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