



COPRA Chronicle

YOUR ADVOCATE IN PENSION AND INSURANCE MATTERS

Issued by and for:
City of Phoenix Retirees Association

SEP 2024 | ISSUE 6

MEMBERSHIP IS OUR STRENGTH

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

It's Elections time at COPRA.

Your COPRA Board of Directors works as your advocate in pension and insurance matters and as such it develops, promotes, and establishes activities for the benefit of its members and ALL City of Phoenix retirees.

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. This year, though, we need SEVEN members who are committed to our cause, enthusiastic, and willing to advocate for our retirees.

Serving on the COPRA Board is fun and rewarding. We typically meet once per month at the Washington Activity Center, except for the summer months of June, July and August, after all, we are all retired and try to find some reprieve from our Phoenix heat.

If you are willing to serve on the Board of Directors, please contact Mary Jo Slunder at mj.copra@gmail.com no later than October 12, 2024. If you have any questions regarding positions on the Board, you may contact any one of the Board members for information and feedback.

Current Board Members up for reelection this year are Anna Marie Dragonetti, Rob Sweeney, Andy Terrey, and Kathy Wenger. More importantly, we still have three additional vacancies to fill.

Please consider volunteering for this important mission serving our fellow retirees, we all have different talents and skills to offer, let's put them in good use!

MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues for COPRA:

\$12 per year or \$50 for 5 years or \$100 for lifetime

If you have changed your address or phone number, or have any questions about membership due payments, please contact Anna Dragonetti at 602-992-0362 or copra.members@gmail.com

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

Or PayPal to:
phoenixcopra@gmail.com

Save the date:

Annual COPRA Holiday Luncheon & Toy Drive, and General Membership Meeting & Board of Directors Elections.

Friday, December 6th, 11:30 to 2:00 pm,

at the Washington Activity Center, 2240 W. Citrus Ave, Phoenix.

Sharko's will be serving our luncheon (Classic Holiday Buffet).

Our Toy Drive will benefit the Phoenix Head Start Program.

Annual elections for board members will also be held. If you haven't served on the board, please consider throwing your name into the hat. We can always use new ideas and energy!



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Paris Olympics have come and gone! It was great to see all the athletes competing in events representing their respective countries. I appreciated watching the USA do well in almost every event they fielded athletes. The sacrifices all the athletes made to get to Paris were many. While the popular events get a lot of attention, I found myself seeking out the lesser-known events, well at least lesser known to many in the US.

I grew up in Phoenix, where most days outdoor activity was what kept us kids from getting into trouble. As a kid, I cannot remember a day I was not doing some sort of physical activity: swimming, biking, basketball, baseball, tag, etc. During recess in grade school, we devoured our lunches as quickly as possible in order to play basketball, flag football or 'smashed aluminum can' foot hockey. When I got to high school, the obligatory one year of physed turned into all four years for me. The coaches were great! But the sports they introduced us to were even better.

It was in high school where my love for physical activity and sports expanded beyond the typical. First was team handball. What a blast to play and watch! Many in the US confuse this sport with some form of racquetball without the racquet. Oh no! It mixes basketball (dribbling and traveling offense), football (passing), hockey (seeking to score against a goalkeeper while shooting outside the crease) and soccer (creating a wall to keep player from scoring). Team handball requires good communications, spacing, timing and strategy. This sport is huge in Europe yet has not received the attention it deserves in the US. I guess we need to create a 'Major League Handball' or 'National Handball League' or 'National Handball Association' to get kids interested!

Next was field hockey. While the sport is big in Europe and Asia, it lags in the US (at least here in the southwest). It was fun to be the goalkeeper and put on all the protective gear. It was more fun to run the length of the field with teammates passing the ball back and forth and seeking to score. Now for most of us young men in high school, we used the stick as if it were a golf club. This was a big 'no-no' when in close proximity to another player. Coach Candrea made you run laps for your first penalty. He used his 'swat board'

on your behind for any subsequent infractions. You never wanted that, as Coach had forearms like Popeye!

On to archery. For me, this was new. I don't come from a hunting nor a 'summer camp' family. The competition was fierce between us friends. Near the end of the archery two-week rotation, Coach Post would have us try and use math and angles to hit the target placed face-up on the ground about 80 yards away. How this was a good idea for immature high schoolers I will never know! We were shooting arrows towards the swimming pool as if we were trying to hit the target! 'Sorry Ms. Post, I narrowed my apex and sent my arrow a bit too far and I need to retrieve it!' Luckily the pool did not have any swimmers!

My favorite of all the sports was water polo. This is not your typical 'Marco Polo' sport at which I excelled among family and friends. I was always a good swimmer and a decent basketball player, two very transferable skills. I loved fast breaks in basketball: passing the ball without needing to dribble. My good friends and I worked that approach to perfection in the pool. My summers treading water in San Diego awaiting the next wave to body surf upon also helped in my 'training' for the sport. The last day of the water polo rotation was spent jumping off the high dive: this did not help me with my continued fear of heights!

It was fun to watch these 'lesser' (at least from a US perspective) sports during the Paris Olympics. Watching brought back great memories of the fun I had playing them. It also reminded me how blessed I am to have had great experiences at the hands of some wonderful teachers. My eyes and mind were open to something new and exciting.

It is never too late to find that 'new and exciting' spark. I am not necessarily talking about sports either. Our brains need to be exercised and challenged. This can occur doing puzzles, reading and engaging in conversation. As we age, we need to find ways to keep our bodies and mind sharp. While team handball may be out of the picture, going to the gym and/or community center to work out and/or volunteer is not. Or perhaps physical training for a spot in the Senior Olympics is in your plans. No matter what motivates you, find your passion and make a plan to reach your goals.

Stay safe, healthy and happy - Rob

Update your Information

As retirees, you may travel and live in multiple places during the year. Isn't life great? Life might be good, but if your information is not up-to-date, then you may be missing some vital information. It is crucial to keep your information up-to-date with our office, so you can receive important information regarding your pension.

If you move or will be in any place for an extended time, make sure to fill out a Change of Address form and submit it to the Retirement Office. Doing this ensures that you will receive all communications promptly. This will be extremely important in the next couple of months, as we prepare to send out our Annual Benefit Entitlement Affidavits.

Annual Benefit Entitlement Affidavits are received every three years. If we do not receive the affidavit back, your monthly pension payments may be suspended until you contact the Retirement Office.

Other information you may want to ensure is accurate and/or update is your Tax Withholdings (both Federal and State), and your direct deposit. You can update this information through eCHRIS or through the Retirement Office. All forms can be found on our webpage at www.phoenix.gov/copers or you can contact us via email at copers@phoenix.gov or by phone at (602)534-4400.

Once you know your information is up-to-date, then you can continue to enjoy your retirement wherever you may be.

COPERS Funded percent information

Funded ratios are a snapshot taken on one day each year, so market conditions can affect that figure resulting in some of the fluctuations seen on the chart. The COPERS funding ratio goal is 100% (fully funded) by June 30, 2039 and the plan is on track to achieve that goal. Plan underfunding is due to historical low returns on plan assets, people in general living longer and decreases in governmental workforces; however, City Council and the COPERS Board are committed to achieving full funding. Voter approved pension reform and City Council's commitment to ensuring plan success has been effective in getting the plan on track.

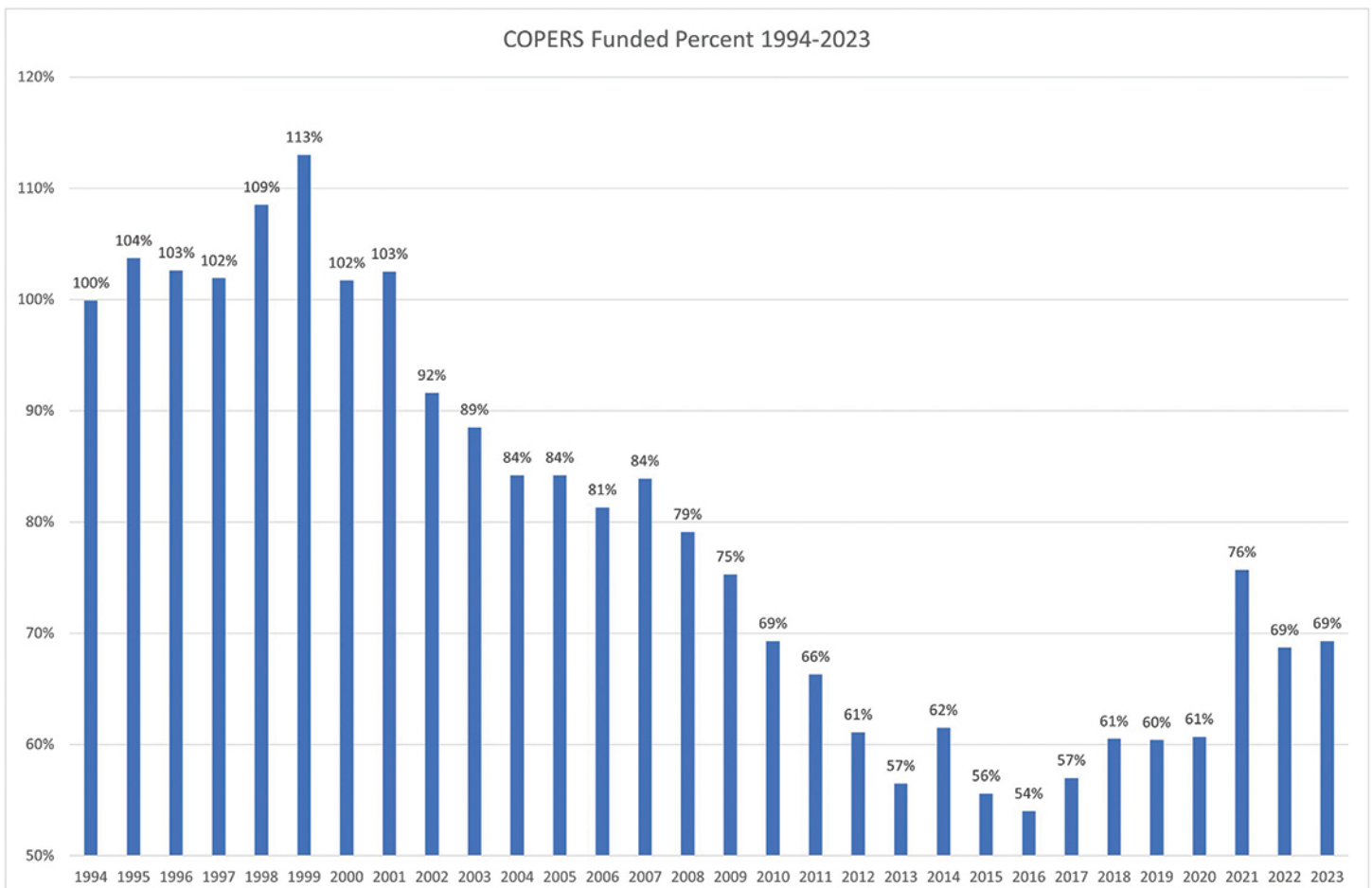
Know that the team at COPERS is dedicated to serving you and is here to assist you with your questions, concerns and needs. Contact us at:

COPERS

200 W. Washington Street 10th Floor,
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Phone: (602) 534-4400

Email: copers@phoenix.gov



Library Shelf: Phoenix Public Library's Amazing Library Card

The Amazing Library Card

Phoenix Public Library



We know many of you know all of the magic that can be found through a Phoenix Public Library card.

Although we are always going to be all about the benefits and pleasure of reading, Phoenix Public Library is more than books. A Phoenix Public Library card brings access to checking out materials, streaming music and movies, getting hands on/

personalized help with completing FAFSA, working with local expertise to land that job or find what's needed to start a business, staying connected, and more! As part of our annual "Amazing Library Card" campaign through September and October we're asking everyone to help us spread the word! Phoenix Public Library cards are free for Maricopa County residents.

Visit phoenixpubliclibrary.org to find one of Phoenix Public Library's 17 locations, sign up for an eCard, or plan a visit.

SITREP

This is a new column for the COPRA Chronicle, which we hope will keep the interest of all who had served in the US Armed Forces and also that it will pique the interest of those in civilian attire who also serve the nation, cities and communities in different capacities.

Welcome to the inaugural SITREP.

For those unfamiliar, SITREP stands for situation report. Each month, we will delve into various military topics. If you have any specific questions or topics, you'd like to have covered in here, please let us know by email at copratreasurer@yahoo.com.



I am Louis and I spent three years in the U.S. Army, starting with basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I spent time on Tank Hill which left me with lasting memories - Fort Jackson dirt is still in my shoes.

As a food inspector, I was stationed at Ft. Eustis, VA. My training at Fort Knox allowed me to join the exclusive Fort Knox Three Hills Club, whose members have conquered the infamous Misery, Agony, and Heartbreak hills known for their steep grades and challenging climbs.

My father's guidance and inspiration led me to serve in the military. His memory is a blessing.

Postcard from the Past: The Desert Botanical Garden

This postcard dates back to 1963, and judging by how the people are dressed, the picture was probably taken during the winter.

In 1934, Swedish botanist and engineer, Gustaf Starck, founded the Arizona Cactus and Native Flora Society (ACNFS) as a way to educate Phoenicians on the importance of respecting and preserving the Sonoran Desert. The ultimate goal of the ACNFS was to establish a botanical garden that would "display and interpret the desert to those who fail to appreciate its beauty."

In 1936, Starck met Gertrude Webster, the heiress of a large lumber fortune and a prominent figure in the political and social life of Phoenix, and persuaded her to join the ACNFS. She supported Starck's work and was instrumental in obtaining a land grant to build the garden in a section of the former Papago-Saguaro National Monument. With support from her and others, the Desert Botanical Garden opened in 1939 as a non-profit museum dedicated to the research, education, conservation, and display of desert plants. Today, the Desert Botanical Garden is home to more than 50,000 plants, one-third of which are native to the area, including 379 species that are rare, threatened, or endangered.



Sources: Matthew Hooper. "The Desert Botanical Garden," Salt River Stories. accessed 25 July 2024. <https://saltriverstories.org/items/show/404>.

Wikipedia contributors. Desert Botanical Garden. In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Accessed 25 July 2024. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desert_Botanical_Garden

Nationwide News

The Risks of Investing and How to Manage the Risks

Christina Lessard, CFP®Lessac1@nationwide.com

What is investment risk?

Investment risk is the possibility of a negative financial outcome when investing. There are 2 main categories of investing risk: *systematic and unsystematic*.

Systematic risk is risk that affects the entire market. It's a natural part of investing caused by factors beyond our control. It affects the entire market, and it applies when investing in the market in general. It is caused by factors outside of an organization or industry such as: economic conditions, interest rates,

political events, and natural disasters. It cannot be avoided or eliminated; however, it can be managed.

Unsystematic risk is specific to a company or industry. It affects a specific company or industry and applies when investing in a specific company or industry. It is caused by factors within an organization or industry, such as: management issues, financial issues, regulatory changes, and competition. Unsystematic risk cannot be eliminated, however, it can be avoided and managed.

It is important to note that both Systematic and Unsystematic Risks can be managed.

Understanding investment risks can help you reach your financial goals

Knowing about risks such as these can help you avoid some risks and account for others. Market, inflation and interest rate risk are systematic risks. Longevity and investor error risk are more specific to you.

Market risk: The risk of investments losing value due to factors that affect the whole market

Inflation risk: The risk that your investment returns won't keep up with inflation

Interest rate risk: The chance that a change in interest rates could reduce the value of an investment

Longevity risk: The risk of outliving your money While you can't know for certain the number of years, you'll need your money to last, a few things can guide you:

- Your age
- Your health and family history
- General life expectancy, which is age 79 for women and age 73 for men — but is rising¹

Investor error risk: The risk of making crucial mistakes when investing. These risks are within your control:

- Investing based on emotions
- Timing the market (or trying to)
- Procrastinating (putting off investing)
- Neglecting your allocations



Asset allocation: A key way to manage risk

Asset allocation is how you divide your investments among different categories of assets such as stocks, bonds and cash. It's also one of the most important investment decisions you make.

3 main categories of assets with different levels of risk

In order to spread out your investments — or allocate your assets — you need to know about the 3 main asset categories: Stocks, bonds and cash or cash equivalents.

1. Stocks

- Reflect a share of ownership in a company, with earnings coming from profits and/or higher stock prices
- Historically have higher risk
- Offer the most growth potential

2. Bonds

- A loan to a government or company, typically paid back with interest
- Historically less risky than stocks, but usually have lower returns
- Sensitive to interest rates

3. Cash or cash equivalents

- Cash or short-term investments that can quickly be converted into cash
- Has the lowest risk, so generally considered safest
- Lowest return potential of all 3

New COPRA Members

Michael Davis Street Transportation Department
Ruben Diaz Public Works Department
Ronald Ramirez Neighborhood Services Department

Julie Rodriguez Aviation Department
Jan Sherwood Parks and Recreation Department
Laurie Smith Street Transportation Department

NEW RETIREES

APRIL 2024

Alex L Martinez
 Alvaro E Meythaler
 Araceli Rios
 Bechara W Manzur Jr.
 Craig P Doyle
 Diane T Hamilton
 Donald R Pursell
 Douglas Ray Salentine
 Fernando Pallares
 Francis J Carena
 Jackie M Stoddard
 Jaques A Klotz
 Jesse W Cooper
 Jocelyn R Forsyth
 Karen H Tash
 Ken Perez
 Margarita Lugo
 Nannette Marie Romero
 Olie R Carvajal
 Rafael Jimenez
 Thomas R Wandrie

Aviation Department
 Information Technology Services Dept.
 Human Services Department
 Street Transportation Department
 Aviation Department
 Library Department
 Street Transportation Department
 Public Works Department
 Planning & Development Department
 Information Technology Services Dept.
 Water Services Department
 Aviation Department
 Phoenix Police Department
 Public Works Department
 City Auditor Department
 Public Works Department
 Parks & Recreation Department
 Finance Department
 Water Services Department
 Public Works Department
 Planning & Development Department

MAY 2024

John M. Bauer
 Marjorie M. Bresnahan
 Mario Castillo Lovato
 Monica Guerin Yahner
 Samuel K. Hartman
 Daniel D. Johnson
 Gina M. Maraccini
 Gary D. Martelli
 Cole C. Mohr
 Bertha C. Moreno
 Martha A. Moreno
 John Musselman
 Laura J. Neal
 Stanley J. Norice
 Kim Steadman
 Lisa M. Valdivia
 Lisa Young
 Sharon L. Zlotnick

Planning & Development Department
 Planning & Development Department
 Public Transit Department
 Public Works Department
 Fire Department
 Planning & Development Department
 Street Transportation Department
 Phoenix Police Department
 Aviation Department
 Street Transportation Department
 Municipal Court Department
 Municipal Court Department
 Phoenix Police Department
 Human Resources Department
 Parks & Recreation Department
 Planning & Development Department
 Finance Department
 Aviation Department
 Public Transit Department

JUNE 2024

Wilma Cavalier
 Rosie Daley
 Annie G. Erbacher
 Robert Fellers
 Robert E. Flanigan
 Thomas F. Kilfoyle
 Danielle D. Kriplean
 Stephanie P. Lopez
 Catherine M. McIntyre
 Michael R. Moreno
 Michael J. Phillips
 Kevin M. Quinn
 Chris F. Rounseville
 Maura Williams

Human Resources Department
 Neighborhood Services Department
 Fire Department
 Public Works Department
 Law Department
 Housing Department
 Phoenix Police Department
 Law Department
 Human Resources Department
 Fire Department
 Public Works Department
 Public Works Department
 Water Services Department
 Library Department

2024 COPRA Board of Directors

President:

Rob Sweeney
 480-215-2215
 coprapresident@gmail.com

Vice President:

Andy Terrey
 602-653-5460
 at.copra@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Louis Matamoros sn.com
 623-734-6624
 biglou6415@yahoo.com

Secretary:

Mary Jo Slunder
 602-206-5515

Board Members

Chronicle Chair:

Regina Ficken
 623-521-0052
 rfcoprachronicle@gmail.com

COPERS Representative:

Tammy Ryan
 602-430-5965
 tlgryan1822@gmail.com

Membership Chair:

Anna Marie Dragonetti
 602-992-0362
 copra.members@gmail.com

Activities Coordinator:

Kathy Wenger
 602-550-4390
 kjw7833@msn.com

Website Support:

Gail Piceno 602-509-1908

Health Care Task Force Rep:

Donna May
 602-513-1069
 dmay.copra@gmail.com

COPRA website:

www.phoenixcopra.com

COPERS website:

www.phoenix.gov/copers

COPMEA website:

www.copmea.com

City Retirement Systems (COPERS)

602-534-4400

COP Human Resources – Benefits

602-262-4777

COPMEA 602-262-6858

IN REMEMBRANCE

James S. Allison	4/8/2023	Street Transportation Department
C R (Carol Ray Adamson)	9/5/2023	Aviation Department
Duke G. French	2/27/2024	Public Works Department
Arthur L. Esquivel	3/25/2024	Street Transportation Department
Salvador S. Leon	3/27/2024	Planning and Development Department
William Valenzuela	4/2/2024	Housing Department
Shirley J. Hollen (Marshal)	4/7/2024	
Jean A. Millward	4/10/2024	Public Works Department
Regina G. Stafford	4/12/2024	Planning and Development Department
Rosie L. Martin	4/14/2024	Library Department
Josephine Torres (Eddie)	4/15/2024	
Charles W. Haynes Sr.	4/16/2024	Street Transportation Department
Kathleen H. Myers	4/16/2024	Library Department
Janet L. Coffman (Larry)	4/21/2024	
James G. Subers	4/21/2024	Planning and Development Department
Dorothy Cherry (Cornelius)	4/23/2024	
Hortensia Lopez (Pedro)	4/24/2024	
Eileen P. Weiner	4/24/2024	Municipal Court
MaryAnne Fusselman (Clarence)	5/2/2024	
Bobby Dodson	5/4/2024	Aviation Department
Ralph Rodriguez	5/6/2024	Aviation Department
Richard H. Curtis	5/7/2024	Finance Department
Fred V Simon III	5/10/2024	Aviation Department
Jacquelyn A. Frost	5/10/2024	Parks and Recreation Department
Julia Schreiber (George)	5/12/2024	
Gary Neden	5/12/2024	Water Services Department
Thomas Godbee	5/16/2024	Street Transportation Department
Ramona Uranga (Jesus)	5/18/2024	
Anthony Pardo, Jr.	5/20/2024	
Ronald Nelson Short	5/20/2024	
Robert H. Smith	5/21/2024	Law Department
James P. Veres	5/26/2024	
Linda Carol Ellis	6/1/2024	Phoenix Police Department
Theodore M. Nowicki	6/5/2024	Public Works Department
Joseph Edgar Harriot	6/6/2024	Aviation Department
Don M. Bertoni	6/10/2024	Street Transportation Department
Donald L. Peyton	6/19/2024	Homeland Defense Department
Starrett (Peter)	6/19/2024	
Mary E. Balcomb (Robert)	6/23/2024	
Rachel H. Hernandez (Carlos)	6/24/2024	
Mark D. Landrith	6/24/2024	Street Transportation Department
Donald Coomber	6/25/2024	Street Transportation Department
Nancy S. Wolfe	7/2/2024	Management Services
James E. Lackey	7/3/2024	Street Transportation Department
Raymond G. Chavez	7/3/2024	Public Works Department
Marshall W. Kotterman	7/5/2024	Parks and Recreation Department
Linnie Haywood (Lindbergh)	7/6/2024	
Shirley A. Brown	7/7/2024	Community and Economic Development
John O. Maye	7/10/2024	Development Services Department
Nathaniel Rhodes	7/3/2024	
Thomas Pina	7/21/2024	Aviation Department

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



SEPTEMBER COPRA CHRONICLE

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POSTMASTER:

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

COPRA Monthly winner

By receiving the COPRA Chronicle via email significantly defrays the printing and postage costs for your 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 the news to you in a timely fashion.

In order to encourage our COPRA members to receive the Chronicle via 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 Charles Bolus

CONGRATULATIONS, Charles! 🎉🎉🎉

If we already have your email address, you are automatically entered!

If you do not receive the Chronicle by email, start NOW!

Request the change from paper copy to email version by providing your email address to Anna Dragonetti at copra.members@gmail.com

She can also be reached by phone at 602-992-0362.

Chronicle Articles Deadline

This is YOUR newsletter, 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. Suggest or request a subject that might be of your interest or your fellow retirees.

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, the Chronicle Chair and the Editor will determine what will appear in the issue of the month based on suitability and available space.

Submissions:
rfcprachronicle@gmail.com

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