



COPRA CHRONICLE

FEB 2025 | ISSUE 2

Issued by and for:
**City of Phoenix
Retirees Association,**
your advocate in pension
and insurance matters.

MEMBERSHIP IS OUR STRENGTH

IN THIS ISSUE

COPRA 2025 Executive Board.....	1
President's Message.....	2
Postcard From the Past.....	3
COPRA Treasurer Report 2024.....	3
COPERS Corner.....	4
Miscellaneous.....	5
Save the Date.....	5
New Retirees, In Remembrance..	6
New Members.....	7
SITREP.....	7
COPRA Monthly Winner.....	8

2025 COPRA EXECUTIVE BOARD

On January 9, 2025 the COPRA Board chose the following
Board Members for the Executive Committee:

President: **Rob Sweeney** Treasurer: **Louis Matamoros**
Vice President: **Donna May** Secretary: **Mary Jo Slunder**

*Other Board members have been appointed to
lead the following committees:*

Membership Committee:

Anna Marie Dragonetti

Programs Committee:

Kathy Wenger

Healthcare Committee:

Ron Ramirez

Nominating Committee:

Mary Jo Slunder

Retirement Board Committee:

Rob Sweeney

Chronicle Committee:

Regina Ficken

Website and Social Media Taskforce:

Gail Piceno

Other communications support:

Larry Schone

Please join us in welcoming all of the COPRA Officers and Board Members in their roles. They each bring special skills and talents to the COPRA organization! If you would like to assist one of the Committee Chairs, please contact Mary Jo Slunder at mj.copra@gmail.com



MONUMENT VALLEY, AZ | Photo: Manfred Guttenberger, Pixabay

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

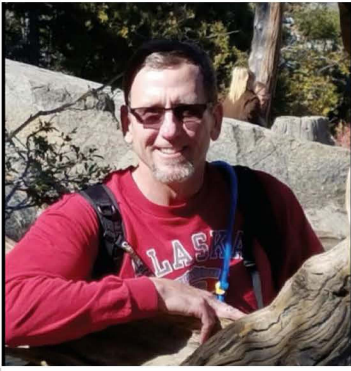
PO Box 2464

Litchfield Park, Az 85340

Or PayPal to:

phoenixcopra@gmail.com

Board meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Thursday of the month, except June, July and August.



By Rob Sweeney

As many of you know, I grew up in what is now central Phoenix, just one block north of Christown Mall. My older sisters remember when the mall was a farm owned by a man named Chris. By the time I knew the land, it was a mall on the

receiving end of Santa Claus being delivered by helicopter each Christmas!

Growing up in Phoenix was great! Summertime was hot and humid, not just because of the outside air, but due to the 'swamp' cooler running indoors! We'd play in the flood irrigation and race our bicycles down the alleys. I spend many hours at the Yucca Branch Library and played flag football league at Encanto Park.

I always loved the outdoors, so what better place to attend college than Northern Arizona University. I went there with the intention of becoming a Game and Fish Officer. Taking Organic Chemistry pointed me in another direction! I found Economics then Finance and made the official switch to the latter.

I returned to Phoenix post-graduation seeking a career. The national economy after Black Monday in 1987 created significant challenges for this graduate! I spent what felt like a fortune on copying and mailing resumes (you know, before everything turned electronic!). After a short time in consumer finance, I landed a new job.

Little did I know it would turn into a wonderful career.

I wasn't necessarily seeking a job in the public sector. In the end, it felt like the City of Phoenix found me.

Every step of the way during my career in Phoenix was rewarding, both personally and professionally. I felt a greater purpose in my 'job' by helping my fellow citizens. While some tasks may have been mundane at times, I was able to connect what I was doing with that of excellence in governance.

Many of my colleagues felt the same way. We'd debate to find common ground on the started your career with the City of Phoenix was on the opposite side of the debate. We wanted the best for our community, workplace and each other.

Two of my children have also entered the realm of public service. My oldest daughter works recruiting public health officials in New Zealand after working in private human resources. My son spent time in the private sector only to hear the calling to obtain his Master's in Public Administration. He now works for a local government. They, too, understood the value and rewards of working in the public sector.

I respect that each of you also spent (at least our next or subseone) of your careers delivering quality services to the citizens of Phoenix. Whether it was in the back-office processing payroll and payables or on the front line providing public safety and public works services, I tip my hat to you for your dedication! We need to support those seeking to join the ranks of public service. It is hard, honorable and rewarding work.

I wish you good health and happiness – Rob



Sculpture of Ferdinand the Bull resting among a garden of blossoms and tropical plants in the east wing of Phoenix's oldest shopping mall.

COPRA Members, we encourage you to tell the Chronicle how you started your career with the City of Phoenix. Email your story to rfcprachronicle@gmail.com and we will feature it in a subsequent issue of the Chronicle.

COPRA TREASURER 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

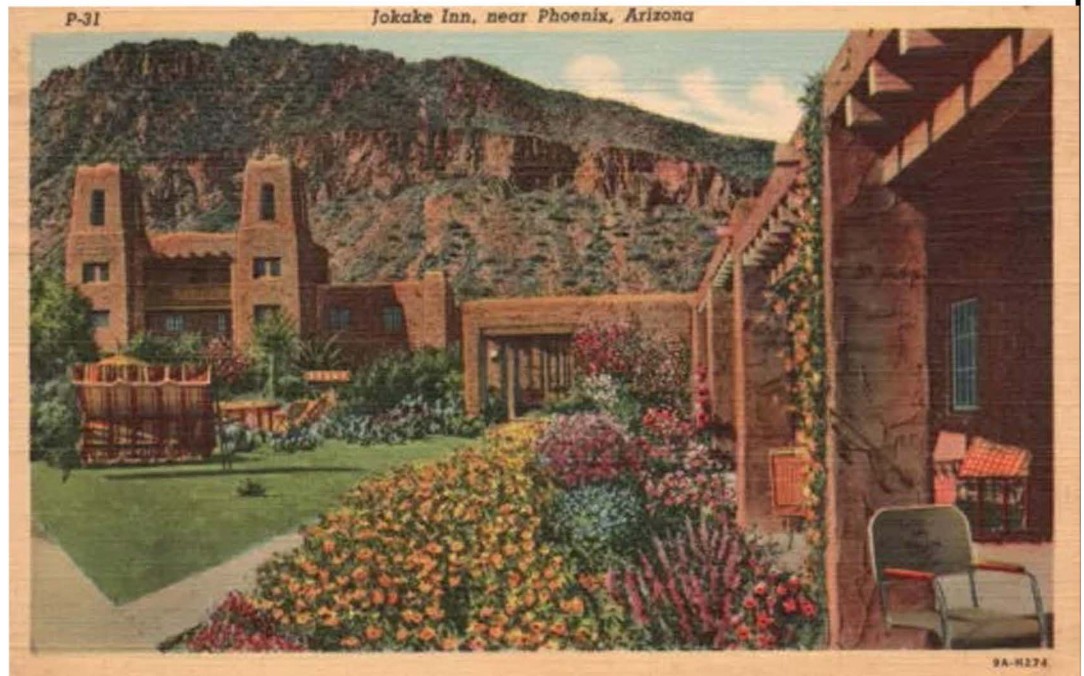
Book Balance		2024 YTD
January 01, 2024		\$90,765.97
Receipts		
Member Dues		11,677.00
PayPal		3,235.67
Interest Earned (will be donated)		4,083.72
Holiday 50/50 (Via PayPal and mail)		150.00
Holiday Tickets Sold		1,029.20
Disbursements		Total Receipts \$20,175.59
Returned Checks, service fees		\$ 7.55
Bank Fees		9,010.12
Chronicle		-
Overpayment/refunds	Ink, Office Supplies, Computer expenses, including laptops and postage	986.49
Business Expenses	Gift cards, refreshments, holiday party	7,914.46
Member Support	(paid via PayPal/checking account)	522.00
Website		
Book Balance		Total Disbursements \$18,440.62
December 31, 2024		\$92,500.94
Checking		\$ 4,102.80
PayPal	All transactions included	5,224.22
	CD (04/21/2025 @ 9-mo 4.21%- \$20,000	21,766.30
	CD (01/17/2005 @ 6-mo 4.97% - \$20,000	21,764.17
Bank Balance	Money Market 3.44%	39,643.45
December 31, 2024		Total \$92,500.94

POSTCARD FROM THE PAST | Jokake Inn

By Andy Terrey

This postcard of the Jokake Inn is postmarked April 4, 1943.

In the early 1900's, Jessie Benton Evans, a prominent artist from the Chicago area, purchased 40 acres of land near the southeast base of Camelback Mountain. She gave 12 acres to her son, Robert, who built a unique adobe house on the land in 1926. The house was given its name by a young Hopi Indian boy who saw the structure and called it Jokake (pronounced "joe-KAH-kee"), which means mud house. Over the years, the house was expanded to accommodate overnight guests.



By the 1930's, the Jokake Inn had transformed into a boutique hotel, attracting celebrities and socialites during the winter. It later became part of the Camelback Inn, which was then purchased in the mid 1980's to make way for the Phoenician Resort.

The Bell Tower, a Pueblo Revival-style building, is the last surviving piece of the Jokake Inn. It can be seen on the left side of the road as you enter the Phoenician Resort property.

Sources: Arizona Highways. (n.d.). The Jokake Inn. Retrieved December 12, 2024, from <https://www.arizonahighways.com/classroom/jokake-inn>
The Phoenician, A Luxury Collection Resort. "History of The Phoenician." Accessed December 12, 2024. <https://www.thephoenician.com/history>

Get Back in Balance After the Growth Stock Rally

Mark Hackett, CFA, CMT

Chief of Investment Research,

Nationwide Investment Management Group

January 8, 2025 - Many investors' portfolios have delivered impressive returns in recent years. The traditional balanced portfolio of 60% equities (represented by the S&P 500® Index) and 40% bonds (represented by the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index) achieved an above average annualized return of 9% over the past decade. The equity side of this allocation has had the biggest impact, with the S&P 500 averaging a 13% annualized return over this time. In contrast, the benchmark bond index has managed just a 1% average annualized gain.

Over this 10-year span, the forward valuation of the S&P 500 has jumped by nearly one-third, from 16 times to 21 times, while the yield on the 10-year U.S. Treasury rose from 2.19% to 4.57%. As a result, a portfolio that was not rebalanced during that period would have gone from a 60%/40% allocation to 79%/21%. Since 1980, the bond market has outperformed the equity market just over one-fourth of the time, or 12 of the past 45 years, but since the Global Financial crisis, stocks outperformed bonds in 13 of the 16 years.

Below the surface, the shifts are even more pronounced. Large-cap growth equities have dominated stock index returns. Over the last ten years (2014-2024), the Russell 1000® Growth Index (representing the 1000 biggest growth-oriented companies) has averaged a 17% annualized return, more than double the pace of the

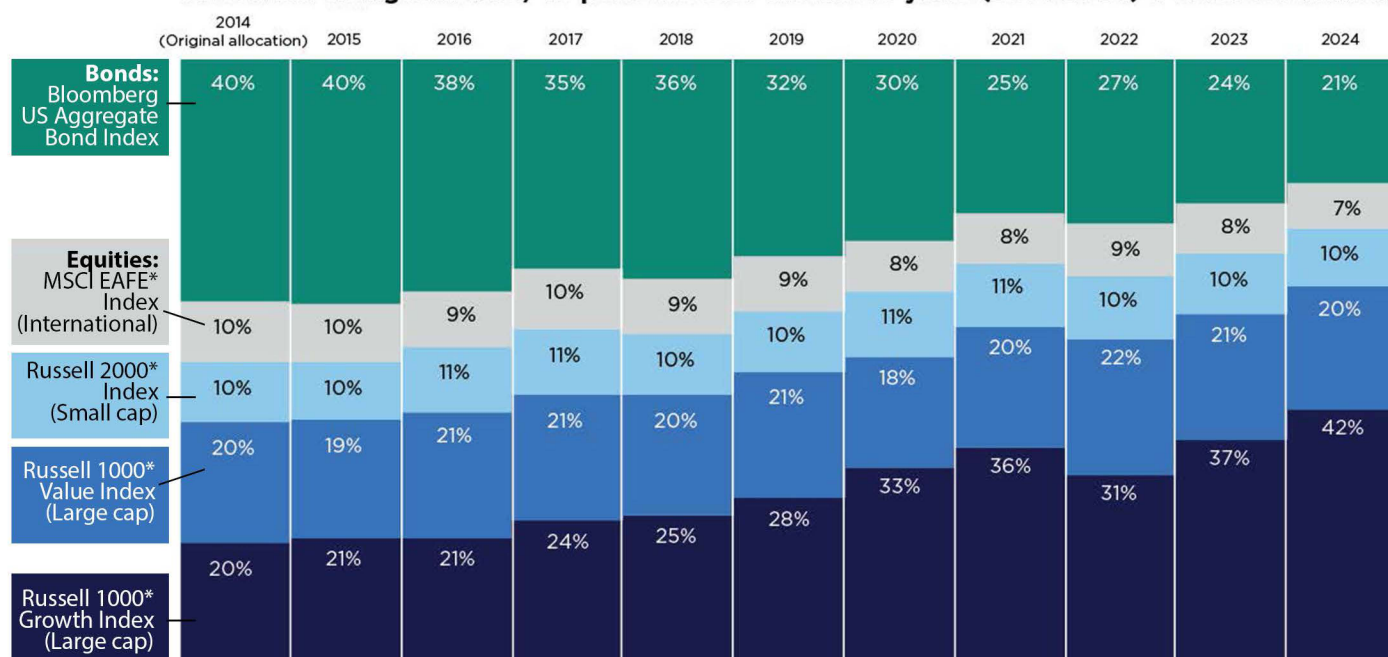
Russell 1000® Value Index (8%), the small-cap Russell 2000® Index (8%), and the international-stock benchmark MSCI EAFE® Index (5%).

The accompanying chart shows how a hypothetical allocation to these different slices of the equity market would have changed a 60/40 balanced portfolio over the last 10 years. If an investor left this portfolio untouched and never rebalanced during this time, the allocation to growth equities would have more than doubled from 20% to 42%. Value and small caps would be unchanged at 20% and 10%, respectively, and international and bonds would have shrunk substantially.

Interestingly, the last time an imbalance of this magnitude occurred was during the dot-com stock bubble of the late 1990s. Following that period (beginning in 2000), the bond market outperformed stocks for three consecutive years, value outperformed growth in seven straight years, small caps outperformed large caps in six of seven, and international stocks bested U.S. domestic equities each year from 2003 to 2008.

With many growth stocks at sky-high valuations, there's a significant risk of a downturn in this part of the market. Investors who have slept on rebalancing their portfolios during the bull market for growth stocks may be exposed to more risk than they're comfortable with. That's why diversification and rebalancing are so important to a long-term investment plan.

Allocation changes in a 60/40 portfolio over the last 10 years (2014-2024) if never rebalanced



Source for chart data: Morningstar, National Investment Research.
Past performance is not a guarantee of future results.

COPERS CORNER, continued

Tax Year 2024:

1099R Statements

Retirees who opted in to electronic receipt of the 1099's, the documents are available via eCHRIS. Those who did not opt in should receive via US mail before the end of January.

Verifying Your Contact Information in eCHRIS

As 2024 comes to an end, now is a great time to make sure you verify your contact information in eCHRIS. 2024 tax forms will be mailed to all benefit recipients at the end of January 2025. If you consented to receive your 1099R electronically, you will be able to view it earlier in the month. If you would like to receive your 1099R Statement electronically next year, please review the eCHRIS Guide to set-up the opt-in option.

If you prefer to have it mailed, please ensure your address is up to date. You can help ensure your contact information is printed correctly on your 1099R for tax year 2024, by logging into your [eCHRIS Self Service Portal](#).

Please confirm your address by clicking on the **Personal Details** icon, then select **Addresses** to verify your address. If your address needs updating, please call our office at (602) 534-4400 to request a Change of Address Form. This document will need to be completed, signed, and returned to our office either by mail, fax at (602) 495-2008, or via email submission to COPERS@phoenix.gov. You may also access the Change of Address form under the [Retired Member Forms Section](#).



MISCELLANEOUS

Volunteer Nonprofit Service Association's (VNSA)

Used Booksale

By Andy Terrey

When:

February 15-16, 8:00am to 6:00pm

Where: Arizona State Fairgrounds

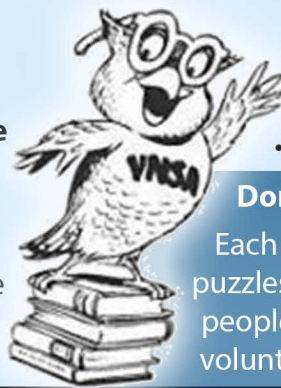
1826 W. McDowell Rd.

Phoenix, AZ 85007

Admission & Parking:

Admission to the VNSA Book Sale is free. Please be aware that the Arizona State Fairgrounds charges a **parking fee** that supports the Fairgrounds. VNSA does not receive any money from parking fees.

ATTENTION, ALL
BOOK LOVERS!



Pricing: VNSA sells thousands of books, media, and other related items at prices significantly reduced from retail prices.

All unmarked standard-size paperbacks are \$3.00.

All items are half-price all day Sunday (except for the books in Rare & Unusual).

Payment Options:

- Cash
- AZ Check (local checks only. Sorry, no OUT OF STATE checks accepted)
- Debit cards
- Credit cards: VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express

Donate Books, Media, Puzzles & Games!

Each year, you'll find almost half a million books, media, games, puzzles and other treasures at the VNSA Book Sale, all thanks to people just like you! To find out more about donating or volunteering, visit the [VNSA website](#).

SAVE THE DATE

The next General Membership Meeting will be held on March 13th, at 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, in the Auditorium of the Washington Activities Center, 2240 W. Citrus Way (23rd Ave. and Glendale Ave.) Phoenix, AZ 85015.

COPRA has invited Jeff Barton, City Manager as our key note speaker and he will address the State of the City.

We are looking forward to this meeting and to hearing about what the City is planning for the remainder of this fiscal year and for 2025-26.



BUILDING THE
PHOENIX
OF TOMORROW

NEW RETIREES

NOVEMBER

Saad Alkola	
Dee A. Anderson	Water Services Dept.
Peter W. Arballo	Public Works Dept.
Pamela L. Ball	Human Services Dept.
Christopher D Beaulieu	Parks and Recreation Dept.
Elizabeth Blakely	Street Transportation Dept.
Machelle M. Byers	Phoenix Police Dept.
Lawrence B. Campos, Jr.	Public Works Dept.
Jay C. DeWitt	Aviation Dept.
Donald J. Dunkley	
Sunsarae D. Elder	Housing Dept.
Jesus R. Esquivel	Water Services Dept.
Ralph Figueroa, Jr.	Library Dept.
Connie C. Garcia	Human Services Dept.
Randy L. Gill	Street Transportation Dept.
Larry V. Gregory	Public Works Dept.
Gloria J. Jauregui	Aviation Dept.
Angel D. Martinez	Aviation Dept.
Ismael Perez	Public Works Dept.
Wayne K. Reed	
Sheree L. Riggs	Public Works Dept.
David Rojas	Public Works Dept.
Brenda J. Schrader	Human Resources Dept.
Francisco L. Trujillo	Aviation Dept.
Michael A. Venerable, Sr.	Public Works Dept.

DECEMBER

Anna M. Bahadar	Fire Dept.
Anthony Olivarez	
Antonio Barraza	Public Transit Dept.
Byron E. Farnsworth	Street Transportation Dept.
Christina Lou Duke	Municipal Court
Dariel L. Taylor	Parks and Recreation Dept.
Denise Lynn Lemons	Information Technology Dept.
Edward C. Haag	Aviation Dept.
Edwin Hard	Human Resources Dept.
Emilio Martinez	Phoenix Police Dept.
Evan M. Anderson	
Gino Di Carlo	Parks and Recreation Dept.
Jennifer Robin Rockwell	Public Transit Dept.
Jerry W. Haws	Aviation Dept.
JoAnn Jackson	Human Services Dept.
John F. Mello, Jr.	Street Transportation Dept.
Karen A. Dousten	Finance Dept.
Lisa D. David	Public Works Dept.
Mark Osuna	Fire Dept.
Margaret Eurith Spicer	Parks and Recreation Dept.
Melissa A. Stewart	Water Services Dept.
Raymond Karl Yingling	Public Works Dept.
Richard Peyton-Disney	
Teresa Holguin	Water Services Dept.
Victoria Trevino	Human Services Dept.
Warren B. Larsen	Aviation Dept.
Wayne L. Parry	Phoenix Police Dept.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Samuel Ramirez	8/13/2024	Information Technology Dept.
Gerald E. Beeler	11/5/2024	Water Services Dept.
Richard A. Letz	11/14/2024	Information Technology Dept.
Edward L. Neary	11/28/2024	Water Services Dept.
David Marquez	12/3/2024	Public Works Dept.
James Hedberg	12/10/2024	
David Thibado	12/12/2024	Street Transportation Dept.
Steven P. Lee	12/13/2024	Parks and Recreation Dept.
William Hinkley	12/13/2024	Planning & Development Dept.
Paul Katsenes	12/20/2024	Community & Economic Development Dept.
Mildred Verville	12/21/2024	Phoenix Police Dept.
Gerald H. Gass	12/22/2024	Parks and Recreation Dept.
Darius Doolittle	12/23/2024	Water Services Dept.
Elizabeth Finn	12/27/2024	City Court
Dale L. Brightman	1 / 1 / 2 0 2 5	Parks and Recreation Dept.
Delores Leal	1 / 4 / 2 0 2 5	Phoenix Police Dept.
Dorothy Lansing (Michael)	1 / 6 / 2 0 2 5	



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

2025 COPRA Board

Board of Directors:

President:

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

Vice President:

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

Treasurer:

Louis Matamoros | 623-734-6624
copratreasurer@yahoo.com

Secretary:

Mary Jo Slunder | 602-206-5515
mj.copra@gmail.com

Board Members

Chronicle Committee:

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

Retirement Board Committee:

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

Membership Committee:

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

Programs Committee:

Kathy Wenger | 602-550-4390
kjlw7833@msn.com

Website and Social Media Taskforce:

Gail Piceno | 602-509-1908
Gpiceno0808@gmail.com

Health Care Committee:

Ron Ramirez | 623-640-3934
Jman2345@cox.net

Other Communications Support:

Larry Schone | 480-469-1385
larryo.schone@gmail.com

COPRA website: www.phoenixcopra.com

City Retirement Systems (COPERS):

602-534-4400 | www.phoenix.gov/copers

COPMEA: 602-262-6858 | copmea.com

COP Human Resources – Benefits

602-262-4777

NEW COPRA MEMBERS

Douglas Frost Planning and Development Department
Joann Jackson Human Services Department
Brenda Schrader Human Resources Department

SITREP



Welcome to SITREP, which stands for situation report. It will cover various military topics every month. If you have any specific questions or issues you'd like us to explore, please email at copratreasurer@yahoo.com.

The 2025 Federal Benefits Guide for Veterans, Dependents, Survivors, and Caregivers is a reliable source of information on benefits and services currently available by law and regulation. The Veterans Affairs, (VA), a trusted authority, validates the information provided in the guide as of Oct 10, 2024. For the latest Veteran care and benefits updates, please visit va.gov. The benefits guide is available at:

<https://department.va.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/2025-Federal-Benefits-for-Veterans-Dependents-and-Survivors.pdf>

Whether you're just getting out of the service or have been a civilian for years, the VA Welcome Kit, personalized to your needs, can help guide you to the benefits and services you've earned. Your VA benefits and services can support you differently based on your circumstances. Keep your welcome kit handy so you can turn to it throughout your life—like when it's time to go back to school, get a post service job, buy a house, get health care, retire, or make plans for your care as you age. It's a lifelong support system that you can rely on. For additional information, please visit www.va.gov. To find the nearest VA facility, go to www.va.gov/find-locations. As a companion to the booklet, the VA Welcome Kit is available at <https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/>.

**You are
not alone.**

Confidential crisis support
is available 24/7.

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1

Chat: VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat
Text: 838255

FEBRUARY COPRA CHRONICLE

Annual dues include \$5.00 for the COPRA Chronicle. Dues are \$12.00 per year, \$50 for 5 years, or \$100 for lifetime membership
COPRA Chronicle (**ISSN 15215431**), is published monthly except June, July, August by:
City of Phoenix Retirees Association,
11523 W. Cyprus Dr, Avondale, Az 85392.
Periodicals postage is paid at Avondale AZ offices and additional mailing offices.
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 February winner is Suki Peterson.

CONGRATULATIONS, Suki! 🎉🎉🎉

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 15th 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

Annual dues include \$5.00 for the COPRA Chronicle. Dues are \$12 per year, \$50 for 5 years, or \$100 for lifetime membership.
COPRA Chronicle (USPS No. 0016-924) is published monthly except for June, July and August by City of Phoenix Retirees Association.
PO Box 2466, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340 | Periodicals paid at Avondale, AZ and additional mailing offices.

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