

# PHOENIX THUNDERBIRD CLUB

Arizona Chapter #66

\* SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2020 NEWSLETTER \*



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT



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To say the least, 2020 has been a tumultuous year! I tried looking in a crystal ball to see if I could find answers for our Pioneer Luncheons schedule. Alas, the scene was not crystal clear and did not offer much reassuring information.

Having never lived thru a pandemic before, my thoughts were that the luncheons were far enough in the future and we would be fine. But as the months went on and the virus continued ravaging the state, the harsh reality of the long-lasting pandemic set in.

When Dr. Robert Redfield of CDC, one of the nation's top health officials, said in July that Americans should brace for what will likely be a difficult Fall and Winter season because of co-occurrence of COVID-19 and influenzas, the answer seemed more clear.

It is heartbreaking but seems prudent to **CANCEL** the luncheons set for **September, October, November, and December 2020.**

Any of our luncheon locations would inevitably lead to a sizeable number of people being in close proximity. Six feet social distancing would not be possible, and the health and wellbeing of all of our members is most important.

We certainly hope you are all doing well. Please continue to be safe!

*Ellen E. Miller and Caron Personke*

## VETERANS NEWS

For the past several years, Phoenix Thunderbird Club members have been wonderfully generous with donations of Christmas gift wrapping items and participation in the Veterans' Christmas Gift Shop sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. With the Phoenix VA Hospital in a lockdown situation because of Coronavirus, it is not known if the Gift Shop will take place this year.

"It's only June and we don't know what to expect," was the VA response when asked if it would be possible to schedule the Gift Shop in December. It is doubtful the Gift Shop event will be held this year. But thanks to the generosity of Pioneers, the ALA has considerable wrapping items stockpiled in storage rooms at the hospital for when the Gift Shop resumes. There is plenty of space in the storage rooms if you still want to donate gift wrap items for the Gift Shop. Carole also still collects magazines, books, DVDs, small shampoos, socks, etc. for veterans. Carole (602) 242-1026



### Bicycles and Chromebooks



AND COVID-19 STRIKES PLANS AGAIN! The usual Spring Assembly at Acacia School, when Pioneers award bicycles and Chromebooks to students who have earned points, was cancelled. Schools were closed, the students were attempting online learning, and people were practicing "social distancing". At some point this Fall, the bicycles will be taken to the school and presented privately to the winning students. Chromebooks will be awarded next year.



The 2021 Club Budget will no doubt dictate which various projects we can continue in the future. With only 2 months of luncheon fund raising this year, our bank account has not been exactly growing! Our continued support of St. Mary's Food Bank, help with the VA Hospital "9911 Fund" for veterans in crisis, and scholarship sponsorship will be discussed by the Board this Fall. Every amount helps - Thanks to everyone who has signed up for Fry's Community Rewards as every time you shop, Fry's makes a percentage donation to Pioneers. Thanks to everyone who has made individual donations to Phoenix Thunderbird Club.

## **HUG-A-BEARS GOING GANGBUSTERS !**

In spite of Coronavirus putting Pioneers, the state, and the nation on hold, the Hug-A-Bears group has not slowed down! The cutting, stuffing, and sewing has continued by each member of the group in their own home. Although Maricopa County Hospital and Honor Health (John C. Lincoln) are not accepting the bears at this time, a supply is ready for distribution when they reopen their doors for Hug-A-Bears. If you want a project you can do at home, contact Caron Personke for Hug-A-Bear information. 602-670-1743

**"CARON'S CHALLENGE"** Newsletters will feature "Caron's Challenge"

***Stay safe! Continue to avoid Coronavirus!  
Take care of yourselves and each other***

## IN MEMORIAM

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We send prayers for strength and comfort to the loved ones of those who have passed away.

**ELIZABETH “Beth” THOMAS-BLAINE** 12-11-52 / 04-12-20

“A Phoenix, AZ native, Beth graduated from Alhambra High School in 1970, and worked at the Qwest Phone Company until she retired in 2006.”

**LEONA JOAN LISAK NEULIEB** 01-12-27 / 04-21-20

“Leona worked for an later retired from Mountain Bell Telephone Company after 30 years.”

**TOMAS S. VIDAURE MSGT/USAF (ret.)** 12-29-24 / 04-24-20

“After his service in the U. S. Air Force, he worked for Mountain Bell until his retirement.”

**DONALD D. WILLIAMS** 1936 / 04-26-20

“Dwayne worked at Western Electric / AT&T for 30+ years.”

**HARRY ROGER “Rog” SKETO** 01-25-32 / 04-30-20

“Rog was honorably discharged as an Air Force Staff Sergeant E5 in 1955. He went to work the next week as a Lineman with Mountain Bell Telephone Company in Yuma. He lived and worked in Gila Bend, San Manuel, Coolidge and Casa Grande before moving to Phoenix in 1971. At retirement he had 29 years of service with Mountain Bell. Harry worked 2 more years for AT&T before taking early retirement in 1985, as a Manager in Information Systems.”

**JOHN J. DINBOKOWITZ, SR.** 10-18-48 / 05-11-20

“John moved to Arizona in 1967 to marry Bonnie Bouton, and began a 35 year career in management with Western Electric (AT&T, Lucent Tech, Agere Sys).”

**WALTER HENRY KUBIS** 08-16-28 / 05-2020

“He retired after 38 years of service from AT&T”

**BARTHOLOMEW “Bart” JAMES AHERN** 07-21-34 / 06-07-20

“After high school graduation, he enrolled at St. John's School of Theology in MN. He left the seminary after the death of his parents and began a 26 year career at the Mountain Bell Telephone Company (later AT&T), from which he retired in 1986. During his early years at Mountain Bell, Bart earned his BS degree from Arizona State University in 1963.”

**ELIZABETH MARY “Betty” WELBORN** 10-30-30 / 11-16-17 (Just learned of passing)

“Betty retired from Mountain Bell Telephone Company, after a 36-year career, in May, 1986”

**VINCENT JOSEPH RILEY** 11-21-1934 / 06-17-2020

“He was transferred from New York to Phoenix with AT&T in 1968. He became a Security Supervisor at AT&T until his retirement.”

**NANCY ANN COPPLOE** Passed 07-20-2020 at age 95.

“She was born in Youngstown, Ohio, where she was employed by Ohio Bell and transferred to Arizona to complete 45 years of service with the phone company.”



***No luncheon reservation forms attached  
... No luncheons in September or October ...***

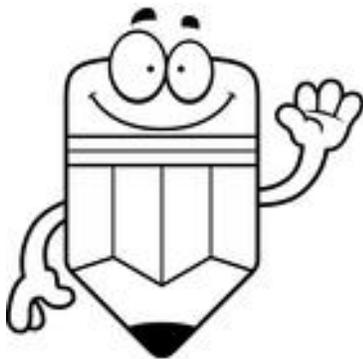


## BACK - TO - SCHOOL

Although we have not been able to collect donations of Back-to-School supplies at luncheons, the monetary donations made in memory of Pioneer Marcie Richison gave us the opportunity to purchase an outstanding amount of supplies to be donated to Acacia School:

- 030 bottles of 8 oz. hand sanitizer
- 005 bottles of 32 oz. hand sanitizer
- 250 disposable face masks
- 750 spiral notebooks
- 100 12-count packages of colored pencils
- 480 #2 pencils
- 010 packages of 4-count highlighters for teachers
- 208 boxes of 24-count crayons
- 100 glue sticks
- 060 bottles of glue

FORTY HUG-A-BEARS were also donated to Acacia School. Principal Christine Hollingsworth noted the bears are very helpful and comforting to some of the little children who may be overwhelmed by the whole school experience.



Please contact Ellen E. Miller or Caron Personke if you or you know of a Phoenix Thunderbird Club Pioneer who would like to receive a cheerful note during this time of pandemic. Just a note to say "Hello". Sometimes getting something in the mail can be a lift to someone's day – especially during these times of isolation!

## ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP NIGHT

Apache Junction High School

*With COVID-19 restrictions in place, the annual Scholarship Night was not held at Apache Junction High School. However, Madalyn Rollins Scholarships were awarded by mailing the certificates of scholarship to the recipients.*



### **PIONEER WEBSITE – easy access to Pioneer**

**information** <https://aztelecompioneers.org> Chapter 66 website

### **PHOENIX THUNDERBIRD CLUB - OFFICERS / COMMITTEE CHAIRS Sept. 2020**

President:	Ellen E. Miller	(623) 546-9223	eem4tbird@outlook.com
Sr.Vice-President:	Caron Personke	cp4tbird@gmail.com	
Secretary/Treasurer:	Caron Personke	cp4tbird@gmail.com	
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Education:	Caron Personke	cp4tbird@gmail.com	
Fellowship	Audrey Gregory	(602) 548-1521	[Get well, sympathy cards]
Fundraising:	Cindy Krey	(480) 753-0805	gjcjin1956@gmail.com
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Luncheons:	Barbara Hernandez	(623) 326-0281	bar-jas@msn.com
<b>[Reservations]</b>			
Luncheons:	Laura Warren	(602) 574-0437	lmwaz@msn.com
<b>[Reservations]</b>			
Luncheons:	Patricia DeBusk	(602) 943-7773	padebusk@Q.com
<b>[Location Arrangements]</b>			
Hug-A-Bears:	Caron Personke	cp4tbird@gmail.com	
Volunteer Hours:	Tom Nelson	(602) 418-1620	aznative1893@outlook.com
Pioneer Museum:	Frank Elsberry	(602) 734-3359	
Veterans Hospital:	Carole Spiess	(602) 242-1026	onmywayout.76@Q.com
Food Bank:	Pearl Biedrzycki	(480) 705-0490	
Treasures4Teachers and Ronald McDonald House:			
	Dorothy McShee	(602) 276-7076	mapatt02@ymail.com