

PHOENIX THUNDERBIRD CLUB

Arizona Chapter #66

* MAY 2020 NEWSLETTER *



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT



By now we are all aware of the severity of COVID-19 and probably exhausted from the anxiety of it all. It has certainly upended our lives. This is affecting all our lives in ways we never thought possible and the changes are profound! In these uncertain times, we must all do our best to help ease the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Americans are not at all used to having our lives restricted but here we are!

In light of the recommendations from local authorities on social distancing and limiting public gatherings, **the APRIL and MAY luncheons are canceled.** Not only do we feel this is the best course of action for the safety and wellbeing of our Pioneer family, the restaurants are closed at this time! Following President Trump's extension through APRIL of the federal guidelines and the Governor's Stay-at-Home order issued for APRIL, we hope this decision assists with efforts to contain COVID-19. The MAY luncheon is canceled as precautionary measures.

The health and wellbeing of all our Pioneer family, as well as their families and friends, is our utmost priority in these challenging times. We urge everyone to be safe and engage in the health protections urged by health authorities. Please look out for one another, work to protect and care for yourselves and one another, and be well! Wishing you serenity in the storm!

See you in September!

Ellen E. Miller and Caron Personke

“Stay home. Stay Healthy. Stay connected.”

Gov. Ducey Executive Order.

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

Avoid Coronavirus ! Stay safe ! Stay well !

PIONEER WEBSITE – easy access to Pioneer information

<https://aztelecompioneers.org>

2020 SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications for the four 2020 Chapter 66 Scholarships were submitted and were reviewed by the Scholarship Committee. Recipients of the scholarships are Phoenix area resident and ASU student **OLIVIA GRACE DOW**, and Tucson residents **AMBER PATTON** and **AYLA PATTON**, students at University of Arizona, and Tucson resident **DEBORAH LESNESKI**, student at American InterContinental University.

OLIVA DOW began her freshman year in Fall 2019 to study at the very selective Walter Cronkite School of Journalism, considered to be the best journalism program in America. Oliva was admitted to Barrett, the Honors College. Barrett, the Honors College recruits academically outstanding undergraduates across the nation and has been named "Best Honors College" in the nation. What an honor for Pioneers to award Olivia with a scholarship! She is an Alumni Association Medallion Scholar and is the volunteer photographer for the *State Press*. Being awarded this scholarship will help Olivia as she enters her sophomore year.

Olivia's supportive grandmother, **PAT RENTMEESTER**, is a Life Member of Pioneers. Her career path took her from being a telephone operator on a cord board to repair service to the Coin Center. Pat retired from the Coin Center with 25 years of service and an attendance record of only one missed day of work - because of a car accident – in those 25 years!

**HUG-A-BEARS: *No workshop in April.
No workshop in May.
No workshop in June, July, August.***

Although the Hug-A-Bears team is not meeting for their monthly workshops, the HAB activity does not stop. Team members in their homes are cutting, sewing, stuffing, attaching eyes and noses, and completing each bear with the final “finishing butt stitches”. Delivery of the bears is on hold during COVID-19 lockdown.

Did you know? 1½ yards of fabric can produce 10 Hug-A-Bears



Has Coronavirus isolation changed the way you grocery shop? Do you have your groceries delivered or arranged for pickup?

Fry's is one grocery store which provides both delivery and pickup services for shoppers. AND Using Fry's Community Rewards program helps Pioneers. All you have to do is shop and we benefit. It's easy to enroll in the Fry's Community Reward Program. Our code is SH877. Go to the website:

<https://www.frysfood.com/topic/community/#/new-community-rewards-program>

If you have any questions or problems, contact Caron Personke or Ellen E. Miller

Each time you use your Fry's card for groceries or gas a percentage is given back to Pioneers



Acacia School Awards Assembly



Postponed to Fall 2020

It's an annual event that students, teachers, and Pioneers look forward to at Acacia School in May. However, this year, in accordance with Governor Ducey's directive, schools are closed for the remainder of the school semester. Fortunately, Acacia School completed testing and reviewed students who made exceptional strides this year in reading and math skills prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, which forced school closures.

Acacia School students in 6th grade will not be back next year as they will move on to junior high. A bicycle to the 6th grade reading go-getter and a laptop to the 6th grade math achiever will be presented by Acacia personnel before these students leave the school for good. With no assembly presentation, Pioneers will miss the opportunity to cheer for these 2 students' successes but they will know we are all proud of them.

Kindergarten through 5th grade (who will be 1st grade and 6th grade in Fall semester) winners will be honored at a presentation/celebration being planned for the Fall when the students return to school. Date and time, to be determined, will be posted on the website <https://aztelecompioneers.org> and, if possible, in the September/October Newsletter.

The students' excitement at the assembly is contagious! It is very enjoyable and rewarding to attend the assembly. There is limited seating for the Pioneers (the kids sit on the gym floor, the Pioneers are seated in chairs on the stage) so please contact Tom Nelson if you are interested in attending.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE

At Acacia Elementary School, textbooks and basic supplies are provided. Some additional materials are useful for each student. Student's Optional List from Washington Elementary School District is perhaps helpful for our Back-To-School Supplies Drive in the Fall.

Metric Ruler * Back pack or Book Bag * Washable Markers * 3-Ring Binder
Subject dividers (1 pkg of 5) * Set of colored pencils * Pocket folders
Plastic Pencil Pouch for 3-ring Binder * Box of tissue

IN MEMORIAM



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

MARCELENE "MARCIE" RICHISON 04-10-28 / 02-16-20

"Marcie graduated from North Phoenix High School in 1946. She started working for Mountain Bell Telephone Co where she retired after 30 years."

BRENDA CAROL (SALLAWAY) HUMISTON 04-10-59/02-24-20

"Brenda worked for QWest Phone Company for several years."

LaVERNE BROOKS 89 years of age/02-24-20

"LaVerne was an executive secretary for the Bell System in Phoenix."

ROSEMARY GHIRARDI 04-27-48/03-23-20

"Rosemary spent many years working for the telephone company in Phoenix RMC, CMC, and COCAT"

MONA FAYE (HOOD) DETER 09-22-35/03-07-20

"Mona graduated from Buckeye Union High School in Buckeye, AZ in 1954. She was an operator for the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Co. in Phoenix."

ELLOISE WILKINSON 10-22-24/03-25-20

"Elloise retired from Phoenix Newspaper, Inc. Prior to the newspaper, she was employed by Mountain Bell Telephone Co."



We thank the Richison family for designating Phoenix Thunderbird Club as beneficiary of donations in memory of their loved one, our Pioneer family member, **MARCIE RICHISON**. Marcie showed interest in our Education activities. Per the vote of the Board, the \$500. donated in her memory will be used to purchase much needed spiral notebooks for the Acacia School children. Generally, each student is required to have 4 spiral notebooks for a school year. Of the nearly 900 students enrolled at Acacia Elementary, a large percentage are in underprivileged families and all the school supplies Pioneers bring to the students are very much appreciated.

VETERANS NEWS Carole Spiess (602) 242-1026

Because of the Coronavirus, as of February 16 the VA hospital has been in complete lock down. The nursing home Community Living Center, known as the CLC, has been closed completely to everyone except nurses and Doctors. They have guards at the doors to make sure that no one wanders in. Families are not allowed in at all. You must have a badge to enter even the cafeteria. They are completely guarding these great veterans.

It's only Spring, but we are already on the move with gift wrap for next Christmas! The lady I work with at the American Legion Auxiliary has purchased new sheds to take in all of the new wrapping paper and is so excited about our ongoing donations. Ian and Garnett brought paper last luncheon and Jerry and I bought a large box of paper and gift boxes at an estate sale recently. When they found out it was for Veterans, the lady in charge lowered the price. What a deal! By the end of January I had already turned in 44 rolls of gift wrap and 10 gift bags. Thank you again Pioneers. You are off to a good start. The American Legion Auxiliary loves you all!

The building that is going to be rehabbed on East Van Buren is really moving along and will be about 202,000 square feet and is expected to be open in April 2021. They had expected to be able to close the Midtown Clinic on 15th Ave and the Thunderbird Clinic, but now with the large number of veterans moving here, they will remain open.

**THANK YOU
VETERANS**

RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) was founded in 1946. Since then over 760 million hours of volunteer service to American Veterans have been logged. VAVS volunteers are a priceless asset to American Veterans and the VA. One of those priceless assets with thousands of hours of service, our Pioneer **CAROLE SPIESS**, has retired as a volunteer at the Carl T. Hayden Veterans' Medical Center, Phoenix. Carole dedicated 27 years of volunteer service to the VA Hospital, serving 10 years in the Library and 17 years in the Volunteer Services Office. Her commitment to serving was so appreciated. The VA volunteer office will never be the same without her assistance! For the time being, Carole will continue to collect magazines, Christmas wrapping paper and donations for the hospital. **THANK YOU CAROLE!**

TWO TIME SCHOLARSHIP WINNER GRADUATES AS REGISTERED NURSE

AMANDA MARIE WIECE was awarded Pioneer Scholarships in 2018 and 2019 to help with her Nursing studies at Grand Canyon University. On February 19, 2020, she completed her testing and passed all of her RN exams and is now a full-fledged RN, working in the Emergency Department at Banner Del Webb Hospital. Way to go, Amanda! Thanks Phoenix Thunderbird Club Pioneers, through fund raising and generous donations, for helping fund the scholarship program.

GRANT MONEY RECEIVED !!!!

For the first time in many years, an application was submitted by Phoenix Thunderbird Club for grant money from Legacy West group, and we were awarded a grant! The grant request was for \$1500. to go towards the purchase of bicycles and/or Chromebook laptops for the annual Acacia School reading and math awards. Our club was awarded a **\$1000.** grant which helped with the expense of \$2521.37, bringing our costs down to only \$1521.37. Eight bicycles, 8 bicycles locks, 8 bicycle helmets, and 8 Chromebook laptops for a little over \$1500!

Club donation to St. Mary's Food Bank

Each year Phoenix Thunderbird Club members at our luncheons generously donate for St. Mary's Food Bank and \$1000. is given to the food bank yearly. In light of the current economic struggles faced by many individuals and families, caused by the impact of COVID-19, **\$1000.** is immediately being donated to St. Mary's Food Bank as an urgent need for help is apparent. Thanks to Pioneers for supporting the food bank which helps so many of our fellow Arizonans.



HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

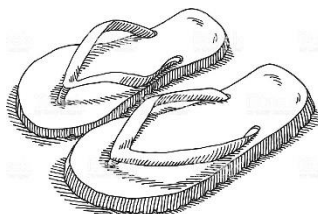
**PLEASE MARK YOUR
DECEMBER CALENDAR**

The Beatitudes.

Different Week. Different Day.

Luncheon is moved to THURSDAY DECEMBER 10, 2020

The ubiquitous summertime “flip-flop” “zori” “thong” sandals are known as “Pluggers” in Australia / “Slops” in South Africa / “Jandals” in New Zealand



**Have a
Great
Summer!**

*Phoenix Thunderbird Club
is dark JUNE, JULY and AUGUST*

**NEXT PIONEER LUNCHEON
SEPTEMBER 16, 2020**

- *Next Newsletter issue out in August 2020 for September and October*