

The Depression and Arizona

- Arizona was affected like all other parts of the country when the depression hit.
- Most of the people took a 40% cut in pay. By doing so, it allowed some people to keep their jobs that would have otherwise lost them.
- The main three industries in Arizona – Cattle, Cotton, and Copper were three of the industries that were hit the hardest.
- Two out of the six main banks in Phoenix went out of business and another was on the brink.
- Victims of the Dust Bowl began arriving in the valley by the droves looking for jobs.
- Most of those arriving from other states found jobs picking cotton, beets, strawberries, citrus, and doing some farm jobs.
- Peoria was a farm community and managed to survive because some of their farms were well established. They too, lost income because the prices of their crops kept going down.
- Most families lived in homes with fans going during the times of heat or had sleeping porches.
- Minorities suffered from the Jim Crow Laws of the South as some could not eat at restaurants they wanted or go into certain stores.
- One million Mexicans were deported to Mexico, but 60% were U.S. citizens. This happened because people wanted more jobs for whites.
- Schools and neighborhoods were rigidly segregated. One example of this was the establishment of Phoenix Union Colored High School.
- Restrictions were also put on Japanese farmers who were very prosperous at the time.
- The people got their news and entertainment through the two radio stations that they had in Phoenix. Some of the programs they listened to were Abbot and Costello, Burns and Allen, Edger Bergen, Death Valley Days, Dick Tracy, Fred Allen Show, The Shadow, The Green Hornet, The Guiding Light, Fibber McGee and Molly, Lone Ranger, Jack Benny Program and Information Please.

- **In 1933 Franklin Roosevelt was elected the president and with his election came the beginnings of the Great New Deal.**
- **Roosevelt felt that it was the government's responsibility to help get us out of the depression. As a result, he created programs such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Bureau of Public Roads, and the Civilian Conservation Corps.**
- **These programs created jobs and gave money to construction projects such as the Old Gym, which was built in 1936 by Peoria High School. Other local projects of the WPA were Phoenix College and North Phoenix High School.**
- **The government became the biggest employer in the United States.**
- **These jobs reversed the trend and started helping the economy until WW II began and the economy of war created many jobs.**