

## Russ Mosser

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I am Catherine Kauffman, from the Historical Committee along with John Wintersteen and Kathryn Gasser here to interview Russ Mosser.

**John:** Do we have your permission to quote any or this entire interview today?

**Russ:** Yes

**John:** Would you like to introduce yourself?

**Russ:** I was born in the bay area of Texas in 1942. I developed bronchitis when I was 2 years old and the Army Corps of Engineers transferred my Dad to a high and dry climate – Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was working for the Corp of Engineers building military installations at Sandia, Las Alamos, and Manzano. We lived there through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Then we moved into Phoenix for business reasons. I started Camelback High School two days after we moved to Arizona in 1956. Paradise Valley was in the County at that time. I lived at 37<sup>th</sup> Street 2 blocks north of Camelback, on Medlock Drive. My parents lived there until about 1994. The folks were members of the Camelback Tennis Club, which later became John Gardener's. I think McDonald Drive was partially dirt then. I remember leaving Camelback high school at 2:45 in the afternoon when school was out. We would go to a fellow's house near 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and the canal and grab our guns and go shooting north of the canal. It was open-range from 32<sup>nd</sup> Street north. Gene Pulliam's house and the Hermosa Inn on Palo Cristi were the only buildings north of Stanford Dr. There was no Lincoln Drive. There were no houses, north of the canal at 32<sup>nd</sup> St. – just open range.

Two days after I graduated high school in 1960, I moved to California to work labor on a housing tract. Then I tootled off to the University of Colorado and got a couple of degrees in Electrical Engineering and Marketing. I met my bride of 53 years there. I joined IBM in '65. We moved four times in the 1<sup>st</sup> 9 years. When IBM said they were going to move us to Mohansic, New York, we said, "No you're not, we're westerners". They gave us a choice of five locations one of which was Phoenix. When we came here, we looked around, Glendale, Tempe, and Mesa. We realized we might as well have moved to Dallas if we lived in one of these places. The part of town I knew about was over here, near Scottsdale. So that's where we elected to live. We bought our house in June 1974 at - 5925 East Solcito Lane – one block west of Finisterre. 59<sup>th</sup> Place between McDonald and Lincoln was a dirt road. There was pavement on both ends – about four houses worth – and the middle was a dirt road. We lived in that house for 42 years until we sold it in 2016. It was a "Heathkit" house. It had been torn up so badly we had to put it back together. We didn't have much money at the time, and prices in Phoenix were 25% higher than in Albuquerque.

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By the way, back in the late 50s – early 60s, where Finisterre is now, there used to be an airstrip from the intersection of Invergordon and Lincoln to 59<sup>th</sup> and McDonald. It was a private airstrip owned by the Flying-T Ranch. Hugh and Marsha Ruddick now live in what was the Flying-T Ranch house. -.

When I was at Camelback High School, the Phoenix Union High School District operated a flying school from about 1948 until maybe around 1964. The flying school started because so many people had been in the service flying, during WW-II. When they got their required missions under their belt, they came back to Arizona and became instructor pilots. Many became teachers in Phoenix. So the teachers, including my high school principal, all became part of this PUHSD flying school. They convinced the school district back in 1948 to buy 7 or 8 fabric-covered, Aeronca-AC airplanes (They were very basic airplanes) and start a flying school. You could take flight lessons in High School, like you could take drivers education. They used Sky Harbor Airport. I attended between 1957 and 1959. If you went to Ground School on Monday night, you could fly one 45-minute dual-instruction flight that week. If you didn't go to Ground School, you couldn't fly that week. They had a fabulous safety record. We would shoot approaches on the Flying-T airstrip. We wouldn't touch down because it was a private strip. But we used it for practice. Little did I know eventually I'd live 42-yrs at the end of that airstrip.

All over Arizona, there were these satellite airfields, which were triangular shaped airstrips. The Army Air Force would take the pilots out to these fields and they would train at hundreds of locations around the State. In the middle of each of these triangular airstrips, there was a big tetrahedron, which turned into the direction the wind was blowing, so the pilot candidates could see which runway to use.

The PUH School District was paying the high-school flying instructors. We, the students, were only paying \$5.50 hour for gas and oil on the airplanes. After a year, we got our license. This program ended when the school district went for a bond election in 1962 or 1964 – and the AZ Republic came out against it. The bond election was defeated. Once the flying school was gone, it was gone forever

**Kathryn:** What can you tell us about when you were a Deputy Town Marshal?

**Russ:** When I came here with IBM in 1974, there were several people in our office who were in Police Reserves and Sheriff Reserves in the City of Phoenix, in Maricopa County and in Pima County. One day there was an accident on McDonald Drive near our house. An officer showed up at the time wearing a Marshal's uniform. It was Norm Johnson. Norm was at Camelback High School, a year ahead of me. One time in high school, this guy came out of nowhere as I was getting the tar beaten out of

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me by some bigger kids. It was Norm who stepped in and saved my bacon. I always knew Norm was a good guy. He is the one I inquired about getting into the Sheriff Reserves. Norm said, "How about TPVPD Reserves?" That was August of 1975. This led me to getting involved with the Town as a State-Certified Reserve Police Officer, and subsequently as the chairman of the TPV Police Retirement Board. Eventually, I ended up signing Norm's retirement papers when he decided to muster out. That's how I got involved in TPV community service.

**Catherine:** How long were you the Reserve Deputy Town Marshal?

**Russ:** I was a State-Certified Deputy Town Marshal for 8 years. I resigned when I ran for Council in the fall of 1983. During the time I was volunteering for the police, I was also on the Planning & Zoning Commission for 2-3 years.

**John:** Were you one of many reserve deputies?

**Russ:** I was Reserve #6. The one I remember most was Bill O'Connor who was Reserve #5. He was there before me and was there for quite some time after me. Bill was an executive at Motorola. We had a number of Reserve Officers come and go over the years. In fact one of the fellows, Kerry Swart, had been a Sheriff's Reserve Officer. He worked with me at IBM. He became tired of working at the Sheriff Office, so we recruited him. Kerry came to the Town and served as a Reserve Deputy with us for a long time. That "dirty rat" got all the good action while he was on-duty, such as: plane crashes, fatal accidents, etc., while I would get to direct traffic.

**John:** What kind of training did you have to become a Reserve Deputy?

**Russ:** In addition to many ride-along with TPV Deputy Marshals, I went to the Sheriff's Academy and attended a semester long program near Pioneer Road every Saturday or Sunday. Then I took the State test and suddenly I was certified. It was called ALEOAC - Arizona Law Enforcement Officer Advisory Council. Being a Reserve Deputy was a volunteer position. I was never paid. I would generally take the place of a regular deputy who wasn't there. They either had a class to go to, ill, or needed some time off. I was out there in a car by myself doing everything they would do. I had to collect evidence, arrest people, write tickets, etc. I never drew my gun in anger. I was very proud of that. I probably took too many chances. I would have said, "I never took my gun out of the holster", but the PD finally changed their policy and said that when we were clearing a house, which may have been burglarized, we would have our gun out for the protection of the other officers who were in the house with us. It was quite interesting work and I enjoyed it very much.

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I served in that capacity for about 8 years. I really enjoyed being in a position to help people when they had problems or difficulties in their life.

**John:** Were there times that you were the only law enforcement officer on duty here in Paradise Valley?

**Russ:** Probably, but not very often. Generally, a sergeant and two deputies were on duty. I would be one of the two officers. I'd have to admit that there were times that I would say "why am I doing this instead of being at home with my family?" But like most things in police work – hours of boredom get interrupted with moments of shear-terror. Something would come over the radio and off you would go to something interesting, where you were needed. I loved being in a position of helping other people, and that's generally what we did. We showed up at a point and time when somebody had a discontinuity in their life. It could be a family fight. It could be a kid running away, an auto accident, or a house fire. I enjoyed being there to help folks who were at a point of distress. I didn't enjoy doing traffic enforcement. In fact, I wouldn't write a ticket unless the violator was more than 20 miles per hour over the speed limit. I didn't want to take my time going to court unless it was something really serious.

**Kathryn:** Was there any particular situation that stands out during that time?

**Russ:** Yes, and I still get a little emotional over this one. One Sunday afternoon, in the middle of the summer, it was hot as hell, and I'm having one of those moments of "what am I doing here? Why am I not home with my family?" I was on Lincoln Drive and a call came in over the radio of a child in a swimming pool, north of Mummy Mountain. I don't think I have ever driven so fast from Camelback Inn to the north side of Mummy Mountain as on that Sunday afternoon. I was the first on the scene. Fortunately, the child was okay. A lot of things happened correctly like I had checked out my patrol car and made sure I had oxygen in the car. I insisted on having Phoenix Fire respond. They had higher-level qualified paramedics than Rural Fire. Phoenix Fire got lost coming in. But we were able to direct them in. I was just very relieved that the little girl was breathing when I got there. She had fallen into the swimming pool while a babysitter was there. The babysitter didn't know how long she had been in the pool. The call came in and I happened to be in a position to make a difference. Other than that, I don't think I had any other really scary stories. In most of my scary stories, I could talk someone down if they were getting crazy with me, like a fellow high on drugs with a butcher knife. I can't tell you how I talked him down, because it's not "PC" to use words like that anymore. ☒

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I do have a funny anecdote about Ron Dalrymple who was our chief at one time. One day he came in with bright orange hair and was very embarrassed. His story was that the chlorine in his pool had reacted with his shampoo. But we knew he had tried to dye his hair and it went bad on him.

Now the whole time I was a reserve I missed the real action that was going on, like shootings. I had a scanner in my personal car so I could get used to listening to radio chatter. It was necessary to recognize what was being said over the radio. Radio chatter is like a foreign language until you get used to it. I was on my way home one evening, someone had taken a shot at one of our police officers during a pursuit and bailed out of his car around 56<sup>th</sup> Street and Doubletree. I went straight there from work. The police were blocking the street. I just had on my business clothes and didn't have any weapons with me. So I took one of the shotguns from a patrol car and manned the intersection for a while. Lou Mazurczyk was the officer who had been chasing the perp. Until he retired, Lou had this license plate on his office wall that had a bullet lodged in it, from when the person shot at him. I don't know if we ever did catch that perp.

I had two goofy incidents of being on the wrong radio channel. One embarrassing incident was a dog had been hit on Tatum Blvd. The dog was not in good shape and we called somebody to help. I decided to stay with the dog. Then some other traffic started happening in Town, and I'm sitting there completely dumb. I was on the wrong radio channel and I didn't know about the other radio traffic. So I didn't know this other activity was going on. Here I was waiting for this dog to pass away.

Back then we were using the sheriff's office for radio communications and we had dead spots around the mountain - 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, south of Lincoln was called the "hole" because when you were in there, you could hardly get out over a radio - you were "in the hole". That was a big problem.

The topography of the mountains in the Town made it very difficult with regard to the police radio system. So one Sunday morning, I grabbed a portable radio and hiked up to the top of Mummy Mountain. We ran the police cars into every nook and canyon around our Town to see if we had radio coverage in all those locations. We did! Bill O'Connor (R-5) was with Motorola and an executive in their solar division, got us a solar powered transmitter, and we hauled up to the top of Mummy Mountain. I think we are still using that location, or a version of it today. We are about to switch to the Phoenix City-Wide radio system now.

There was another embarrassing incident about being on the wrong radio channel. I had heard during the day that TPVPD was chasing a burglary suspect dressed in an

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orange sweatshirt. I was going on duty that afternoon and as I drove north on Invergordon, I saw somebody walking through this open field (where Finisterre is now) with an orange sweatshirt over his arm. I had been told many times “you’re not on duty until you get to the station, you have to check in on the radio and get your patrol car.” We had no cellphones at the time. So I drove to the station and called this suspect in. When coming to work, my scanner was on the wrong radio channel that afternoon. I was on the main PD channel with the radio in my car. TPVPD was using another channel for this burglary traffic case. So I didn’t know this suspect was still on the loose.

We had one shooting in Town, while I was a reserve. But I was not on duty that night. Some fellow wanted to commit “death by cop”. It was at a property located at the southwest corner of Mockingbird and Invergordon. A guy had been in there all day drinking himself silly. He was waiting for the police to come into the driveway and he was going to shoot them. Somehow his girlfriend got away and called the police. Bobby Van Camp and another officer came in from the back of the house. We didn’t have portable radios back then, when we got out of our cars, we turned on our radios onto the outside speakers. The officers got to the back fence behind this house and the radio went off. Now the bad guy knew they were out back. He came out shooting. There was a big shoot out. He lost. I attended the debriefing afterwards. This fellow had something like 8 bullets in him, but he was still staggering around. Bobby said, “I fired the shotgun several times and he didn’t go down. I couldn’t believe he didn’t go down.” We found out later that one of the other officers had put bird-shot in the gun because he had been shooting quail on some of the vacant land in Town, and hadn’t put the buck-shot rounds back in the shotgun.

**Catherine:** Tell us about your service including dates and with whom you served on the Planning and Zoning Commission.

**Russ:** Dick Andeen and George Adams were on there with me. A guy named Sanders was there for a long time. I can’t remember who else was on there right now. Maybe Dick Coffee was on P&Z with me. Probably Sara Moya was too. I was pretty ignorant with Town politics. It was like you tell me to do this job and I will do it as I understand it. We had a Planning Director named Muin Kalla. Some applicant came in about vacant land west of where Montelucia is now - southwest side of Tatum at Lincoln. Of course every time there was vacant land, all the developers said the only thing we could do is make this commercial. I think the Red Lion was there and they wanted their resort to expand onto the southwest corner of Lincoln and Tatum. Their scheme was to tunnel underneath Tatum. So as not to impact traffic on either

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Lincoln or Tatum, all the traffic from the west side would come through this tunnel. This went through the Zoning Commission and we said, "No, I don't think so." Not a good idea for Paradise Valley. Of course what P&Z said didn't have much weight with the Town Council. Often Council decided what they were going to do anyway. We were just a bureaucracy that people had to go through, to get their application heard by the Council. This time the Council didn't want to approve this hare-brained project either. The Town Staff figured out that underneath Tatum was a 10 or 12-foot sewer pipe that takes the sewage from the North Valley and routes it down south to some sewage treatment facility in Phoenix. When they finally got to the applicant who was going to build the tunnel under Tatum big enough to drive a fire truck through, the Council said, "What are you going to do about that sewer pipe?" He said, "What sewer pipe?" Obviously, that shut the whole project down.

Everyone wanted their "plot of dirt" turned into a "bucket of gold", by some simple Council Zoning Action.

We had another deal, which came before us, at the southwest corner of Double Tree and Scottsdale Road. Some lawyers came in and said, "You can't do anything with this property except allow commercial development there. And by the way, this land is worth \$4.5 million dollars. Nobody is going to pay that much to build houses on it." The Council asked our Town Attorney to check out the ownership history of that property. The Town found out these people had bought this property for probably \$250,000 and they "baseballed" sales on it, trading it among three partnerships they owned. They sold it between these partnerships over and over again until these folks had built the property value up on the books, from \$250k to \$4.5 million, over a very short period of time.

This nonsense was going on up and down Scottsdale Road. This type of activity was a major cause of the Savings and Loan Crises in the 1980s. Appraisers would just look at comps. They didn't look at who traded it. A lot of real-estate was highly inflated in value. So these fellows came to the Town with their deal. The Council said, "Oh by the way, you guys have been selling this land to yourselves for the last couple of years. You've jacked it up to this book value which is totally phony."

Another goof was when I was pretty new on the Planning & Zoning Commission; I had to go to a Council meeting as the representative from the Zoning Commission. A property - which is now the Double Tree Resort at Jackrabbit and Scottsdale Road - presented a plan to the P&Z Commission that identified outdoor tennis courts. At the Council meeting, I realized that the plans had changed from outside tennis courts to indoor tennis courts. Jack Brock was the mayor. I didn't think it was all

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that significant. I didn't mention anything in that Council meeting- my mistake! It became a huge problem when they built the place. That space became a ballroom and conference center, which they didn't have enough parking for. Everybody was going nuts because resort customers were parking in the neighborhoods. Developers were a lot savvier than Zoning Commission and Council Members were.

**John:** How did you come to serve on Town Council?

**Russ:** After getting involved in the police department and realizing that TPV was a place you could make a difference by being involved elsewhere, I stuck my toe in the water with the Planning & Zoning Commission. I learned the TPV zoning laws and a little bit about what was going on with development, and how the Town worked. Then in the fall of 1983, I decided to run for Council. We, at P&Z, weren't making real decisions on zoning. We made advisory decisions that often the Council would ignore. I wanted to spend my time making real decisions. 1983 happened to be a contentious time, much more so than I realized. Bunches of people were really torqued off at Jack Brock and the existing Council. There was a political sub-force called the Paradise Valley Home Owners Association (PVHOA). They were doing a lot of things that were self-serving, but also some things that were very valuable. People would come before the Council or the P&Z Commission who weren't trying to sell a position that was best for all concerned. They were in there to make a spectacle out of themselves, and a circus out of our meetings. These folks were trying to get rid of Brock. When the primary election was held, I think I got the "last seat on the bus" going into the general election. Brock, John Long and one other person were so low in primary votes that they dropped out of the race. They were cut out of the general election by the primary voting. Going into the general election, one night two people contacted me from the Paradise Valley Homeowners Association (PVHOA), telling me that they were going to back me for Town Council. I, of course, said thank you. But then they said, "Not so fast. You have to agree to support Dick Andeen for mayor and renounce your friendship with these other candidates, which included Bob Plenge, Joan Lincoln and some others I can't remember." I said, "You have got to be kidding"! That phone call is the single reason Dick Andeen didn't get to serve as Mayor of TPV. Our Council ended up voting Joan Lincoln as mayor.

**John:** Was there anything specific that you remember during your tenure on the Town Council?

**Russ:** Where Cheney Estates is located now, we had some developer come in and say he was going to build lakeside property. He wanted to fill the lake up with

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recycled water and he kept using this term “full body contact” water. We weren’t sure what he meant by this, but basically thought it meant that you could drink the water. It was to be potable water. His plans were to use treated sewage, and we were going nuts. At that time, I was on Council and Joan Lincoln was mayor. We were going up and down Scottsdale Road, looking at the Gainey Ranch sewage treatment plant, and other private sewage treatment plants trying to figure what retreating sewage was all about. Oscar Butt was the Town Manager and a member of the Paradise Valley Country Club. He was excited about the idea because he wanted effluent water for the PVCC golf course irrigation. The whole idea went bust. It never got past the Town Council in terms of getting approved.

Another development with amazing history was what is now the Ritz. We were really getting “foxed” on this one too. The rumor went out that Scottsdale was thinking about putting a sewage treatment plant in Paradise Valley, on the southwest corner of Scottsdale and Indian Bend, possibly related to the “full body contact water” application. That property – the north 40 acres, along Indian Bend Road – belonged to City of Scottsdale. I think it was the north one-fourth of the quarter section which belonged to the City of Scottsdale. The McCormick family had deeded this land to them when they developed McCormick Ranch. Guy Stillman and his family originally owned the strip across the north end, which was 40 acres. When they developed McCormick Ranch with Kaiser Aetna, who was financing it, they gave up parcels for schools, churches, the Indian Bend Wash and the Railroad Park. All of that was part of the concessions of that whole development gave to the City of Scottsdale as part of the McCormick Ranch approval. This 40-acre property was deeded over to the City of Scottsdale but located in the Town of Paradise Valley. The property east of 7100 has always been in Scottsdale, because Paradise Valley had no interest in commercial property.

Because Scottsdale owned it, the law said that they could use it for “any municipal purpose” without getting approval from our Town’. A sewage plant would have been a municipal purpose. This was why we were looking at all these sewage treatment plants. We were thinking the developer who was proposing to do something with the lakeside property where Cheney Estates is now was trying to get the sewage treatment plant, so he could fill his lake. Well, then in comes the Holding family, about 1984. They wanted to build a Little America there, where the “Ritz” development is now. Earl Holding enters into a sweetheart deal with Scottsdale, negotiated by then Mayor, Herb Drinkwater. As it was explained to me (though this could be totally wrong) – Mr. Holding supposedly bought that north 40-acres from the City of Scottsdale for maybe \$2 or \$4-million dollars. He received very favorable

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terms from Scottsdale - zero down, 20-year note, with interest only payments to Scottsdale. The caveat was: when Mr. Holding sold it, he and Scottsdale were going to split the profits. The TPV Zoning Commission and Council approved the "Little America project". It was all a sham. I think all they were doing was getting zoning on the property to improve its value. I don't think they had any intention of building a Little America there. Mr. Holding had to start construction in order keep his deal with Scottsdale. So he improved Indian Bend Road with a paved round about, in the middle. That allowed him to defend against Scottsdale when Scottsdale said, "You haven't started building a resort. So your agreement is null and void." He said, "No, we have started." So that is what happened. Many years later, the idea of the Ritz came about. I'm not so sure we didn't approve something there before the Ritz. I can't remember - maybe something beyond the Little America. Long after I was off Council, the Council did approve something on this land, it was the Ritz. Then a number of citizens of the Town came up with a referendum petition to overrule the Council's approval of the Ritz. The TPV citizens voted down the referendum 2:1. The fellow who was behind this petition actually helped Bill Marriott because real estate values went into the toilet in 2007-08, and they ended up not building this huge resort in the middle of a down economy.

When Ron Clark was the mayor, he had gone up to Salt Lake City and called on Earl Holding. Ron gave Mr. Holding this IBM style presentation with flip charts telling him why this was a great thing and that he really ought to build this resort in Paradise Valley. Ron and I knew each other from IBM days, mid '60's, in Colorado. Mr. Holding said. "You know Mr. Clark, that is the finest presentation I have ever seen but my name is *Holding* and that's exactly what I am going to do."

Close to the end of that 20-year note (might have been 25 years, can't remember) - Mr. Holding had an opportunity to sell the property and asked Scottsdale to let him off the hook with this 50-50% profit split. Scottsdale said, "No way that was in the deal. That's the only reason we sold it to you under those terms and conditions." Mr. Holding said fine and he held it for another 3-5 years. Then he paid off the loan to Scottsdale and owned the property free and clear. He then turned around and sold it to the Ritz people (aka: Five Star Development) for \$60 - \$65 million dollars. Again, these are the numbers I've heard. They may not be accurate. But it shows how ignorant we politicos were, no matter what we thought our capability was in dealing with somebody who was in this market professionally.

We saw this again with the Mountain Shadows development deal and the particular developer who owned it. TPV saw it when the developer of Montelucia built all of those town houses down there. No matter how thorough we thought we were,

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protecting the Town, we kind of didn't know what the left hand is doing while the right hand was showing you what they wanted us to see. That always surprised us.

During 2007-2008 the Town was going through some financial difficulties. This was when TPV reduced the number of Town employees from 140 to something in the 80's. (Don't we all wish the Federal Government was this effective?) We got through this crisis, but it also alerted us that we needed a revenue streams we could count on. In the middle of all this, the state was changing the way they were distributing revenues to the cities, further reducing AZ Town's revenues.

**John:** Was there anything you hoped to accomplish as a member of Town Council that you didn't get done during your term?

**Russ:** I thought that I was going to be able to open up things like bridle & running or bicycle paths. The Town zoning was just too far along for making changes like that. We tried to get into mountain preserves - buying some of lots on Mummy Mountain, but there was too much private land and previous subdivisions made that land was not available.

**John:** Would you like to talk about being a longtime volunteer with the police department? Two things: the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Local Board and volunteering with the police volunteers.

**Russ:** The Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Board performs basically a jury function. We had nothing to do with managing the Pension Fund investment. I didn't know what happens with the investment. For a long time, the State's Retirement Fund investments were doing a super-well. I don't know if they went into riskier investments, but they got hurt in the down turns.

With the Public Safety Retirement System, the Town collects the money from our officers. Someone at the state tells the Town how much it's going to be needed actuarially, to fully fund the TPV Public Safety Retirement System, based upon the number of retired officers, the ages of our officers, and who is retired on disability. All of those financial issues are set by the state. The local Public Safety Retirement Board does not touch any of that those funds. Each locale has their own "bank account" at the state, which is combined among the state funds. The local PSPRS Boards get a report that shows how much we have, how much it grew (or not), and how much is needed based upon the age of our officers who are eligible and the people we already out on disability. They would tell us how much our city has to pay towards the PSR Funds. It's a combination of the individual and city payments. State Law (via lobbying efforts) kept encroaching more and more on what the local

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boards could do. For example, if we put an officer out on disability years ago, that person had to give the board a copy of their tax return every year. If they were making more money than they would have made with the Town's PD, they'd have to return 50% on the dollar of the overage. Then that condition was taken out of the law. Then the lobbyist's put in laws for the purpose of disability. Public safety personnel are now considered to be on-duty from the time they leave their homes until the time they return back home, thereby changing the scope of disability coverage. So if an employee is in an accident driving to or from work, they are now covered. Back to the local TPV PSRS Board itself; essentially our function was that of a jury. When someone comes up for retirement, we are to attest he had been officer here long enough to qualify for his pension. If his previous officer service or military service was transferred into his TPV pension account, it allowed him to have a pension. The place where our board decisions got messy was if we had a disability, or someone became disabled on the job. The question here was a) if this person was really disabled, and b) was it the result of an on the job injury? It was up to a doctor to determine, medically, if they were disabled or not. We would convene a medical board, which really meant hiring a doctor to check this applicant out. If the doctor said that this person couldn't do the job of a police officer, then they were entitled to disability. Or the TPV could give them a job that didn't cut their pay, but it would be a light duty job. The Town really didn't have any of those kinds of jobs. We would decide the facts of the case as the applicant presented to us. The person, who was making the application, had the responsibility to present their case to this Public Safety Personnel Retirement Board. The local Board consisted of two elected police officers, two appointed citizens and a chairman. I got the short straw for being the chairman. I was chair for something like three decades. I think I was on Zoning Commission at the time I started. Probably I was appointed because I was a reserve deputy, when the Council asked me to do this. I continued to do this until I finally got to the point to say: "you need someone else – someone more professional in H/R in this position". And the Town appointed Dick Fincher, as Chair of TPV's local PSRS Board, he's a real H/R pro!

**John:** More recently you have been one of the main stays of the Paradise Valley Police Volunteers program. Is there anything you want to say about that?

**Russ:** When we interview new volunteers, we tell them that we are like the military reserves. They'll come to these meetings and patrol. During this process they learn the people, they learn the procedures, and they learn the equipment that's available and where it's located. When a crisis occurs, the volunteers are prepared to act. On a day-to-day basis, we may go out and patrol the Town, do public service type of

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work, or chase down a lost dog or child. We report things we see that are suspicious. We are told over and over again – do not put yourself in danger. Do not try to play policeman. Do not pull over for a stalled car, call in a regular officer who's prepared to deal with that in case you are dealing with bad guys. But when something happens in Town where the Police Department needs extra staffing but sworn officers are not required, the volunteers get called out at all hours. These would include - fatal accidents, fires, lost children, plus some civic activities such as – the TPV car show – Special Olympics – Wounded Warrior's run - that type of thing. We will work with the regular officers – but we do stuff that they don't need a regular, sworn officer for. The volunteers are usually able to free-up a regular officer to deal with simultaneous traffic which might come in, like a burglary or other incident during one of our call-outs.

I've been standing in the middle of 3800 E. Lincoln Drive at 2:30 in the morning, in a driving rainstorm because the swale in the middle of Lincoln at 38<sup>th</sup> Street is full of water. When its black as midnight out, and that thunderstorm is splashing rain, you can't tell if the water is deep, or is just splashing on the roadway. We've had Tatum closed in the middle of the night, because of a water-main break that tore a big hole in the street and also because of a gas leak.

We volunteers have no arrest authority - no more authority than a regular citizen. Likewise, we are not privy to any information about citizens in the Law Enforcement databases. On a normal day, we always ride two volunteers in a car. And we are always in a marked car. We wear a uniform – khaki pants, a blue shirt and a yellow vest – no badge. Our cars have radios and computers. We don't use the TPVPD's license plate readers. They are in our cars, but we don't use them. We have portable radios too. We are on call 24x7. So when the call-out comes in we go to the police station, get a car and go out to our assignment.

**Catherine:** What else would you like to say on the record for this oral history of the Town of Paradise Valley?

**Russ:** I enjoy giving back to the community. I wouldn't have had this experience if I lived in Phoenix, Scottsdale or any other town.

**John:** What one thing of your vast knowledge of the history of the Town do you think future generations might like to have on the record?

**Russ:** I think what comes to mind is that we were a Town built out of independence. In the early 1960's there was this huge land-grab going on between Phoenix and Scottsdale. If those cities could find any way of annexing property, they would.

## **Russ Mosser**

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Some very key community leaders got together and said let's make our own Town, which they did. Originally, we only allowed the Town Council to serve for two years, because nobody "trusted the government". Talk about conservative... We wanted minimal government. We are a Town where individuals can come and speak their mind to the Council. And they can make something happen with respect to the community. It isn't like Phoenix where "you talked to the tree (Town Hall)" and the "tree" doesn't answer and the "tree (City government) just does whatever it wants to do". Individual contribution is something very rewarding and probably is the reason I got involved in our TPV community, and subsequently stayed involved. I had no intention in staying involved as long as I have - forty-three years now in some kind of volunteer role with the Town. I think it's kind of cool that we have more volunteers than paid staff in the Town of Paradise Valley.