



**Senator Jay Tibshraeny**  
**Mayor of Chandler: 1994 - 2002**

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Note: Interview is with Senator Jay Tibshraeny and his brother Michael Tibshraeny

JR: Senator Tibshraeny, what was the name of your maternal grandparents?

MT: Tewfik Francis Malouf and Anna Wingfield Malouf

JR: What about your paternal grandparents?

MT: Mike F. Tibshraeny and Betty Tibshraeny

JR: Where were your grandparents from?

MT: Our grandparents were from Lebanon. Tewfik, Betty and Mike were all from Lebanon and Anna was born in Colorado.

JR: How is it that they came from Lebanon to the United States?

JT: The paternal grandfather, Michael F., he immigrated to the United States, he started his process, it was a 10 year process, in 1910. A lot of the Lebanese families immigrated in the early 1900's, he started the process of coming over and back then it was all by ship, go through New York. They settled in Arizona, I think the climate was similar to where they came from. He had a few trips back and forth before he decided to settle on Arizona. Actually it was during WWI, at one point he came over and travel was restricted during the war so he was stuck here for a long period of time, a couple years, where he couldn't go back and see his family. After WWI he went back to Lebanon and brought the rest of his family out in the early 20's.

JR: Do you know what area of Arizona he first settled in?

MT: They first settled in Ray/Sonora, a mining town between the area of Globe and Superior, now it doesn't exist. They were merchants, dry goods, clothing, groceries, that was their business. That area was like where they were from, they were from a place called, Biskenta, Lebanon. It's up in the mountains above Beruit, so the climate was somewhat the same. It was warm, not a forested area, that area was more like it. They were used to warm climate, olive trees, date trees and all.

JR: What is the name of your father?

JT: Albert J. Tibshraeny. I'm actually named after him. I'm Albert Jay Tibshraeny, Jr.

JR: Was he born here in Arizona?

JT: He was born in Lebanon in 1921 and he came here on one of the subsequent trips of his Father. I think they came in stages. He came here in about 1925.

JR: What kind of work did your father get involved in? Did he continue with the mercantile type business?

JT: He grew up in Mesa. His family grew up in Mesa, he went to Mesa High. He played for Mutt Ford, who was a historic coaching figure from way back when in Arizona. He (Ford) is in the Arizona Hall of Fame. He played football. He was in the Marines, he was in WWII also. Initially when he got out of high school he did a little traveling then he served in the Marines, he served in the Pacific in WWII. He came back and after he got married he did get into different businesses. He was in the clothing business in downtown Chandler.

It was one of his earliest business ventures. He developed a couple subdivisions in Chandler. He developed the Tyson Manor Subdivision in Chandler, which has a Jay Street. Then he got into commercial construction, which is really where he spent the biggest part of his business career. He was an entrepreneur as were pretty much many, many of the Lebanese and Middle Eastern families that settled out here. The men were entrepreneurial by having the entrepreneurial spirit, the Bashas, they got into the grocery business, the Sabas stayed in mercantile, stayed in the clothing business. My dad got into real estate and development in the construction business.

MT: My father was also in farming. In the 50's he was a cotton farmer, in the Eloy area. Later on during the time we were in construction we got into the citrus business, which we still do today.

JR: What is the name of your mother?

MT: Francis Rose Tibshraeny. She was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her Father was in the railroad so they moved to Prescott where she grew up and graduated from Prescott High School and then moved into Phoenix. Very shortly after that she met my father, in 1946, they were married February 16, 1947.

JR: How did your parents meet?

MT: They never really told us, but I think because they were Lebanese, friends introduced them. A short courtship.

JR: Once they were married where did they live?

MT: They moved to Chandler. They stayed at the Chandler Lodge. They managed it and stayed there. There was a little market, now an auto parts store, they first stayed at that market. It was a little grocery store. They stayed there for a very short time then moved to the Chandler Lodge on Arizona Avenue just north of Galveston.

JR: Can you describe what the Chandler Lodge looked like or what it entailed?

MT: The main road, Arizona Avenue, it was one of those two lane concrete highways, very narrow concrete highway. It wasn't very well used because one time they caught me out on it in a little toy car driving down it, so obviously they didn't have much traffic on it. It was just a very small bungalow type lodge. Things were very quiet. There were only about 3,000 people living in Chandler then. Farming and Williams Air Force Base was near it. The [lodge was built in the] old style with tile roof, somewhat Spanish style building.

JR: How long were they there?

MT: I think two or three years. Soon after that he built the house on West Toledo Street. That was the first house we moved into. My Dad built three houses in Chandler. Two on West Toledo and one at 891 West Oakland.

JR: When were you born Michael?

MT: I was born January 31, 1948.

JR: Were you born at home?

MT: Chandler didn't have a hospital. I was born at Mesa General Hospital. The building is still there it is next to Brown & Brown Chevrolet on Main Street in Mesa. I'm not sure when Chandler got a hospital so I don't know where my brother and sisters were born.

JR: Senator Tibshraeny, what year were you born?

JT: I was born in 1954. In Mesa at Mesa General Hospital. That is where Mike and my two sisters were born also.

JR: There are four children in your family?

JT: Yes.

JR: What are the names of your sisters?

JT: My older sister is Joyce, she is between Mike and I. The youngest is Janice.

JR: If you think back to when you were children can you remember who some of your neighbors were on Toledo Street?

MT: On the first Toledo Street there were the McDermotts, the father was involved with the National Guard, the Finleys, the Wrights, he owned a jewelry store, the Enloes were right next to us, he was in farming. I remember his house because he had a full basketball court he had a lot of boys so we stayed over there quite a bit.

JR: Did you associate or get to know any other Lebanese families either in Chandler or in the area?

JT: Yes, we knew the Bashas and Sabas. There were other families too. It wasn't like we hung around Lebanese regularly. We hung around everybody in Chandler, which there were only about 5,000 people. The Lebanese families would do things yearly at the Greek Orthodox Church in Phoenix and they would have an annual dinner or things like that. There was a close relationship there.

My father, one of his first jobs growing up in Mesa, their house was in an old part of Mesa, the house they grew up in Mesa, his father and mother and brothers, is in central Mesa, the Basha's grocery stores were just getting started back then which would have been in the late 1940's. My dad went to work for Eddie Basha, Sr. who passed away in 1968. He was kind of my father's business mentor. My father went to work for him in his stores. I can still remember when we went on vacations to California in the 60's, Eddie Basha, Sr. had slowed down and retired a good deal from the business and he spent a lot of time in California, so when we would go on vacation to California, my dad would drive up to a cattle ranch and talk with him, he was still advising my father in the 60's.

JR: Were there any other Lebanese families?

MT: The Mitchell's and a large contingent of them, they were from Superior. A lot of them lived here too, we associated with them when we got together. I can't think of others.

JR: Did they have a store also?

MT: I think the Mitchells were into mercantile and grocery. The Sabas had the clothing stores.

JR: Where did both of you attend school?

MT: We all attended in Chandler. I started at Cleveland Elementary and it's no longer a school, then Hartford Elementary and then Chandler Junior High then Chandler High.

JT: I did the same. I went to Cleveland for a few years. It's now part of Chandler High School. They closed that school down in the 70's. It was named Cleveland because that street used to be Cleveland Street then subsequently years later when I got on the council that road name changed to Chandler Boulevard. I also went to Chandler Junior High which is also no longer a school but it is also a part of the Chandler High School. Chandler High School was the only high school in Chandler until Hamilton High opened about 10 years ago.

JR: What year did both of you graduate from high school?

MT: 1966.

JT: 1972.

JR: Are there any teachers that you had either in grade school, junior high, or high school that really stand out in your mind as being memorable?

MT: I cannot recall a teacher in high school that their name stands out.

JT: I had a lot of good teachers. I think my first grade teacher, Mrs. Howard, and I had other good teachers going through. Last week my daughter started Chandler High School so she is now the second generation going through Chandler High School. My nephews from my sister's side also attended Chandler High. We went to her orientation last week and there is still like one teacher left from when I was in high school. I had some good teachers; when I was running for Council I was actually knocking on a few of my ex teachers' doors. They said, "I knew there was a Tibshraeny running but I thought it was your dad who was running City Council".

JR: Michael, you started at Cleveland Elementary in first grade, a little bit after integration in Chandler, I'm just curious if you have any memories from that time early in your career in grade school, if you remember what that was like?

MT: I didn't know what integration was I just remember that at Chandler we had the Gila Indian reservation so we had a lot of Pima Indians and we had the Hispanic population, the black population and we all went to school. There was no to-do made about it that's just what we had. It's always been that way, I hear of other schools where it wasn't like that, so I guess we had a fully integrated school. There was not discrimination.

JR: When you were both in grade school was it mostly Anglo kids that went to that school?

MT: Not Cleveland. It was definitely not most Anglo. It was a pretty even mix of Anglo, Hispanic, Gila Indians and Black students. Not all the Indians went there but if you lived at a certain point I'm not sure where it was, they were bused to school. They were in the district. Queen Creek didn't have a high school, Williams Air Force Base had an elementary, so when we went to high school we went with Queen Creek kids, Williams Air Force Base, Gila Indians, a wide area came to school and a lot of kids from the west Chandler area.

JT: West Chandler when I was growing up was Dobson Road, so there really wasn't a west Chandler in high school because it didn't really develop past Dobson. Everything west of Price came into the Kyrene School District and they had

their own high school district and their own elementary. West Chandler is now the central city.

JR: Senator Tibshraeny, did you have any hopes or dreams about what you wanted to do after you finished school?

JT: I wanted to go to college. I hadn't formulated specifically what I was going to do for my business career, which I think most people are like that. My main goal was to get out of high school, I wanted to go to college and get a good college education and get into something from there.

JR: What about you?

MT: Back then our father and mother wanted us all to go to college. That was the big thing to go to a university, ASU, UofA. That was a definite goal and somehow they wanted me to go to law school. Then I thought I wanted to go which I did for a year but I just didn't cut it as a lawyer. Which was fine, I did learn a lot. So it was strictly going to college, graduating; all four of us children did [graduate]. Then going to work and I had no idea of what I was going to do.

JR: Where did you attend college?

MT: University of Arizona.

JT: Mike went to U of A and then the other three of us went to Arizona State. [joking] We tried that trial run down there and it didn't work out.

JR: Mike, what did you eventually get your degree in?

MT: It was in business administration.

JR: What year was that?

MT: 1970. I did go to one year of law school at ASU.

JR: Did you do any graduate work?

MT: I was a bailiff in Superior Court downtown Phoenix for one year after my first year of law school and then I decided I wasn't going to do it. I did learn a lot being a bailiff. I saw some of the great attorneys, F. Lee Bailey, and some of the other attorneys when they were young and flamboyant. It was pretty interesting.

JR: Senator Tibshraeny, what did you graduate with from ASU?

JT: I got a business degree and majored in accounting. A lot of business classes.

JR: What year was that?

JT: 1977.

JR: Let's go back a little bit. Describe your social life while you were growing up. Think about when you were a little bit older as kids in high school, what do you remember doing?

JT: Chandler was rural. The population when I got into high school was probably 10,000 or so. It was a small community, very farming oriented. Today now we are pretty much a metropolitan area. There was a distance between Tempe and Chandler then and Tempe and Mesa. It was a long trip for people to come to Chandler. There was not a lot of social things to do in Chandler, it's not like it is today. A lot of the social activities when I was growing up were typical things for a small town. It revolved around your family and whatever you did with your

family. TV was a big deal then. Church activities and school activities. It was a big thing when I was young to go to a high school football game on Friday nights with my family. There wasn't a lot to do. It was a farming community so it was a small town. Simple things that were important. There was one movie theater in Chandler in the downtown square, it was called the Parkway Theater, we'd go there for movies. That was kind of an interesting place.

JR: Why was it an interesting place?

JT: The always nice farming kids were hell raisers and the lady that ran it, she was an interesting lady, Mrs. Woods, she used to rant and rave at the kids, she would say, "You are all going to end up in prison if you don't behave yourself." That was really the only entertainment venue in the whole city when it was here in the town square, was the Parkway Theater. Part of that building still stands it's incorporated in the west side of the square. I think Zocalo's is actually housed in part of the old Parkway Theater.

JR: What about you, Michael, do you have any particular memories?

MT: It was very small so we didn't go to, even when we had our licenses, we didn't go too far out the Chandler area. School activities were big. They had dances and football games. I played sports, so you did whatever sports that you could do. Community activities are what you did. We just did what we could in the city. When we could drive we might go to Mesa and that was a big deal. That was a big deal because it was all country between Chandler and Mesa. Chandler ended at Ray Road and all were dirt roads except the main road. It was great growing up in Chandler. I loved it. The rural part you could step out the door and you were in the country or the desert in less than a mile. It was fun. I really enjoyed growing up in a rural town.

JR: How was the downtown Chandler area different than downtown Mesa?

MT: Chandler was small so it was easy to get around. Everything was down there, the pharmacy, grocery store, bakery, movie theater, the bank, it was all right there. In fact it was really all on the west side except for the grocery store. I was a paperboy and they would deliver our papers down there and that is where we would load up. So you go downtown every day and gather up your papers and make your deliveries. It was nice for me as a kid, it was small and it was manageable. I enjoyed it. It's nice to see that they have redone the downtown and made it where people can go back down there, I go down there still. Mesa was a lot larger. Since we didn't go to Mesa, it was more strung out, downtown Mesa is still nice. My uncle had a clothing store there so we would go to Mesa with the family. It was a big city.

JR: Who is your uncle?

MT: My Uncle Roger had the clothing store. My grandfather started it then my Uncle Roger took it over. We still own the building.

JR: What was it called?

JT: It was a western store. Tibshraeny's Western Store. My grandfather operated it for many years then my Uncle Roger ran it until late 70's. We still retained ownership of the building but another western store came in. Now that store has been divided into three different suites; we have a couple different tenants in there now.

JR: Did your family attend a church in Chandler?

JT: My father co-founded St. Matthews Episcopal Church in Chandler. So we were all Episcopalians, we grew up in the Episcopal Church. There wasn't an Episcopal Church in Chandler and in the 50's him and a couple other people started the church. They initially started by using other churches or other buildings as a lot of starting churches do. Then they bought some ground in the late '50's where the church is now, which is near the intersection of Alma School and Erie Street, just a little bit to the east of that intersection. They bought some ground and they started building that church. It still sits there today. They have expanded it a little. We've all attended church there. I still go to church there as does one of my sisters.

Through the years it's grown into a big congregation now. There are not a lot of the elder families that went to that church. So whenever they talk about doing different things in the church or making different changes to the church I have a little bit more of the historical perspective that gets lost as time goes on.

JR: When your family would go to Phoenix do you remember what the drive was like?

JT: We weren't a metropolitan area, now you zip on the freeway. The roads were really small, concrete roads. It was a concrete road, it was bumpy and it was built in sections and some of the sections rise, some of it sinks. The trips were long trips because there was no easy way. There weren't a lot of traffic lights, there were stop signs. It took time. We would probably drive up Alma School Road and take Baseline as far as we could then drive up north into Phoenix. Even though we were not a big metropolitan area we still had [a lot of] people and it still took time to get there. The other thing, if you were going to get on Alma School, even into the 70's and maybe early 80's, sometimes during certain times of the year, the ranchers were having their sheep drives. They were taking their sheep north or bringing their sheep back. So we would have to give the right of way to the sheep. The roads were very poor quality, very narrow, fairly dangerous, and the trips into Phoenix were a big deal and took a long time.

JR: Are there any local Chandler or Mesa farming families that you remember?

MT: I remember the Riggs, Schneffs, Hastings, Barneys, Powers (they have Power Ranch now), Anderson, Henrys, there are a lot more but those I definitely remember and a lot of them I worked for in the summers.

JR: What did you do in the summers when you were working?

MT: My dad was in cotton, I chopped cotton. That's a wonderful job. Then I worked in the potato sheds and that started in May, they bring the potatoes into the shed and you bag them or put them into railroad car. I worked in some melon sheds,

watermelon, cantaloupe, and a lot of things like that. I worked at Spreckles Sugar, which now they have blown up those towers, those two concrete towers. I remember working inside those towers where they would store the sugar. I didn't like sugar too much after that because one of our jobs was to vacuum up all the bugs that were in there. When I say vacuum we had a large vacuum and we would vacuum so many crickets you would not believe it. That sugar would be taken and put back into the centrifuge and reheated and refined again. Definitely it made me not be a big sugar eater.

JR: Can you tell me a little bit about what your day would entail?

MT: I mostly worked in the potato sheds. One of the reasons I [worked there] when I was in high school is that I started just before school was out [for summer]. For two years I was able to actually get out of school early before school ended, about a week. My day would start at 4:00am and it took an hour to drive out to Queen Creek. We would work until dark. There was no overtime back then and no work rules. I did a number of jobs but one of the jobs I did was a jigger where the potatoes come down [a conveyor belt] and you have three sacks. The potatoes fill up one, you take it off, give it to the sewer, make sure you get a bag on there and go to that one before that one fills up. You are doing this all day long. After a while kids go whacky. Sometimes they would just lose it and the belt would keep going and you'd miss a sack and the potatoes would spill over and then the owners would come out and go crazy on us. It was an all day deal, you'd have a couple breaks, but at night you would dream about potatoes coming down the pike. In a lot of those sheds they have the culls which were the little potatoes which are now expensive but in those days they let them run off and threw them away. They brought the prisoners from Florence, they had a work detail and they would collect all the culls and take them back to Florence to eat. So we had a little bit of interface with the prisoners. They would always be asking us to get them certain things, which we couldn't really get, like cigarettes and things like that. It was interesting. So we did a lot of agriculture work. It was hard and we worked for six weeks. Six days a week and sometimes seven days a week. When that was over we had a pretty good amount of money for those days and a lot of times we didn't have to work the rest of the summer.

JR: How much were you paid?

MT: I'm thinking it was in the \$1.00-1.50 an hour range.

JR: It wasn't per sack?

MT: There was piecework but not in the sheds I worked in. In the melons it was per box.

JR: When you were working in the packing sheds who was working with you?

MT: Mostly young people. There were the migratory workers. In those days it wasn't the Mexican migratory workers it was more of an Anglo group. They would work Arizona, then California, then Washington for apples. It was the peaches, apples, potatoes, all of it.

JR: Were these folks from Oklahoma?

MT: Definitely. It slowly started to change and a lot of people started living in Queen Creek and then it was just a different group. When I was finally done with it in four or five years, those people were gone. Then it was more of the Mexican farm workers in there. Still it was high school and I think they were glad to get rid of

the high school kids because later on it was all adults. It was a good job for back then. It was in the 60's.

JR: Tell me a little bit about the Spreckles Sugar Plant, what did they do there?

MT: They made sugar. They made it from sugar beets. Sugar beets were grown all around there and some from California. They did the entire process and it was an industrial process and it was fairly dangerous because they heat everything and it

is a liquid and they put it in a centrifuge and all the liquid goes out and then you have the white sugar. I don't know how they made the brown sugar. There was a lot of hot water you could get burned. I drove a truck. I did a lot of different jobs in there. It was pretty good work. I worked there two summers. I don't know how long they stayed in business. I don't know if they were in business more than five or six years.

JT: It was one of the first big industries to locate in Chandler. They came in the early 60's. It was a big deal when it came because it was a big change. That facility was off Arizona Avenue in the southeast area of Chandler. The only thing I remember is at night you could tell there was a sugar plant in your city because even though where we lived it was probably eight miles from it, there was that odor from whatever that process was and you could smell it and you knew the plant was up and running. It was a big business. They lasted about 10 or 15 years. The silos stayed for a long time.

MT: They didn't have OSHA. I remember with no training whatsoever, the way you got up to the top of the silo (each silo had different floors) there was a belt about a foot wide and it had little black knobs on it and it went straight up. You turned it on, you stepped on it, and you just went up. You couldn't really turn it off you had to jump off at the floor. It was mostly kids working there and nobody ever got hurt that I know of. We would go up there and on our breaks we would go to the top of the silos and have our lunch. I remember that belt well. They could never have anything like that today.

JR: The plant was located on South Arizona Avenue?

JT: Between Chandler Heights and Riggs Road, right in that area.

JR: Did you make more money at the Spreckles Sugar than the potato shed?

MT: They definitely worked on an eight-hour shift. 40 hours a week. They had to pay overtime. In farming you could work seven days a week, 50, 60, 70 hours, that's how you made your money, you worked long hours. Little better money because it was a factory, they had no benefits, it was minimum wage probably.

JR: Senator Tibshraeny did you have any jobs while you were in high school?

JT: I didn't have interesting jobs like Mike. The only farming job I did, I did some stomping cotton, when they would dump the cotton into the trailers they moved it in you would get on top of it and actually stomp it to push it down so they could get more cotton in there. That was about my most interesting job.

JR: Did you work in a gas station or anything like that?

JT: He did, he worked at a gas station.

MT: I also worked for a crop dusting company. I was a flagger. We loaded the chemicals in the plane and then we would leave and we would start at 2:00am because they didn't want to have any wind. The flagger what he does, in the night you have a flashlight and you mark off the rows and start flashing the light and the crop dusters dead head on to you. At a certain point before the plane gets there you start walking. Now that I think back on it, of course we want to avoid getting sprayed, I'm sure the fallout of it we got some spray. That was an exciting job because we went to very remote areas, we would go to Maricopa, which back then from Chandler to Maricopa we were in the middle of nowhere. There would be two people because one would be at each end of the row. We would just have flashlights and waving it at the plane and we would start to walk another 20 steps and he would come back and go to the next guy. In the day it was a little less dangerous. I remember parathion and malathion and all the chemicals they used. But I feel good, I'm still healthy. I think when I was growing up you did the rural type jobs which is mostly farm related. You could work in a store, I think later on I worked in a Saba's store sweeping the floors. I remember sweeping the floors at our store. You might go in for two hours, clean up, empty the garbage can, sweep the floor then you are out of there. That was something you could do after school. Everybody did work to get money. The parents did not just give you money you had to go work for it.

JR: What did kids in your age group that you associated with, what typically would be the age when they would start working?

MT: I'd say 13 or 14. For sure at 14. So you might be just getting out of junior high but definitely when you were a freshman you were working. All of my friends worked and we all worked in the same jobs. That was a social thing too. We were together all day long so it was fun.

JR: You said you worked as a bailiff for a while, what other types of jobs did you have as an adult and what do you do now?

MT: After the bailiff I went to work in construction. I've always worked in construction a little bit, I was actually in the Labors Union and I worked on commercial construction jobs. I did that for about one year. Then I went into the office in the commercial construction. That was my first regular job was in the commercial construction company of my dad's. Then I was not in the field as much, I'd go out, but I was not working physically then, doing estimating and whatever you do in commercial construction.

JR: What kind of job do you have now?

MT: Now I am in business with my brother. It was my father and I and my brother. We were in the citrus business. We had citrus in Chandler Heights and Mesa and then we moved most of our stuff to Yuma because of the cost of land in this area. In fact we only have one farm left here of citrus near Falcon Field, 20 acres. We are [still raising] citrus [in Yuma]; we have some property that we manage; and we buy and sell property. Then we do some other investing, like in residential lots, and build some custom homes, and we're in partnership with our brother-in-law.

JR: So your family still has a very diverse....

MT: We still are entrepreneurs. Some years citrus is terrible. Agriculture in general can have its very down years. Luckily we have other things to fall back on. It is fun, always something different.

JR: How have you seen the agricultural industry in Chandler change?

MT: It changed from the fact that there are just so many people now, the only reason there is still any land available, it's only because they haven't sold it from agricultural standpoint, if you go to Yuma, Maricopa, even Queen Creek, within Chandler, I would not call Chandler a farming community at all. I would say the land you see in some kind of agriculture they are strictly land banking it. They are just holding it for development. They are probably not making much money on the farming end of it. I think farming and citrus is over in Maricopa county. There is not more new citrus being planted. The groves are older and older and pretty soon they'll all be gone. There will just be the citrus you plant in your yard. It's a sad thing but it's just that there are so many people moving here. Even Yuma is growing. So there is a real stress on agriculture in the whole state just because of the land prices and water.

JR: Senator Tibshraeny maybe you can tell me a little bit about your career once you got into college...

JT: It's not as glamorous as Mike's. I didn't get kicked out of as many jobs as Mike either. Basically I had a few different jobs but when I would go to college in the summer my Dad had me work out in the field for a couple summers. I helped the different trades, the carpenters, the laborers. It's hard work, it's hot in the summer and working outside is a physical job, and is hard work. It was good work, it paid good. I don't know what the dollar was. I got my union card because for a while the companies he was affiliated with were union affiliated, in terms of the craftsmen and the trades; so even though I was the boss's son, I still had to get my union card and pay my dues. The pay was good. That was my interim jobs basically getting out of high school on up to finishing my college work.

Then I went to work for my dad in the commercial construction business. Mike had already been for a while and kind of learned that business from my father and that was good training. We did a lot of commercial projects, my dad did a lot of projects that are well recognized, not only in Chandler but the valley, he did a lot of school stuff, a lot of community college stuff, projects on ASU and U of A campuses. Mesa Community College, for example, the first big chunk when it first came out of the ground, he was the general contractor. His company was a large general contractor and they did large type work. I did that for about 10 or 11 years and then my dad pretty much retired from commercial. We kind of got into what Mike already went over in about 1990. We've been doing that ever since.

JR: Are both of you married?

MT: Yes.

JR: Tell me a little bit about your wives and families.

- MT: I met my wife, she's from Mesa, here at a Dairy Queen. That's when I was going to college. My senior year. We got married in 1976. I'm still married today. We have no children. We raised a nephew on her side of the family. We have lots of nieces and nephews and we can spend a lot of time with. I enjoy that. Family is very important to us. Our immediate family and our mom and dad's sisters and brothers and their husbands and wives, are very important to us. My wife's name is Tina. Her maiden name was Paterick.
- JT: Married to Karen and we have a daughter named Lauren. My wife, her father was in the military so as a lot of people know they travel a lot. One of her dad's assignments was to be stationed at Williams Air Force Base which is now Williams Gateway Center. I think she moved to the valley in her junior year of high school then they moved to Chandler when she was a senior. I met her there but I didn't start dating her until about three years later. She was going to U of A and I was going to ASU, I tried to talk some sense into her like I tried to talk some sense to my brother that she was going to the wrong school, but anyway we got married in 1981. We have one daughter, Lauren, who is going to Chandler High now. She's a good student, a good athlete, a good kid. It was that military thing where a lot of the kids that their parents were in the military actually lived on the base because there was military housing on the base, as there is on practically every base. They were all bused to Chandler, I went to high school with a lot of military kids bused from Williams Air Force Base.
- JR: Senator Tibshraeny, tell me about how you got involved in local politics.
- JT: It was interesting. I was always involved with coaching, youth, and that kind of thing. I kind of got interested in politics in 1979. Chandler was having a lot of controversy in their city government. I read the paper and I read the paper then, they had a recall election, the only recall election they've ever had in Chandler. I got really fascinated with the politics, I went to a couple council meetings, saw what was going on and as it turned out, they ended up recalling in May, 1979, the Mayor and three or four city council members. It was a major upheaval, but that's the kind of thing people take interest in, and take note of.
- I got interested in that and soon after that I was appointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission in 1980. Chandler was still small in 1980 - 29,000 people. I was on the planning and zoning when a lot of the significant things that laid a lot of the groundwork for what's going on in Chandler today started to take place. I was involved with the zoning of the first Intel plant in west Chandler, which was the first major giant industry to come in and do something like that. The Motorola plant hadn't yet located in Chandler. We had a couple high techs. So I got on the Planning and Zoning Commission and spent six years there. I got my real nuts and bolts in municipal government and the planning and zoning process, which in a growing city like Chandler was and still is very important. The planning and zoning process is about 80% of what you do on the government side. I did that for six years. My real interest occurred during the recall that I found real interesting.

I decided to run for City Council and was elected to the City Council in 1986. Took office in March of '86. We were still small. In 1986 we were 65,000. We doubled our population so we were seeing that growth. Basically when I ran I was well known in the community because of my involvement with youth and things I had been involved with through the years. Also my planning and zoning work gave me a good background. I got involved in that race. There were eight candidates in that city council race in 1986 running for three seats. Two of the candidates were incumbents that subsequently became Mayor. Richard Dugan became Mayor a couple years later and Coy Payne became Arizona's first Black Mayor in 1990. I outpolled both of those in the primary election and took my seat, served on the Council for eight years. I actually served with Coy, I was his Vice Mayor for four years and I enjoyed that.

JR: When did you serve as Mayor?

JT: I ran those two terms as council thru '94 then I ran for Mayor in 1994 and was elected Mayor and took office in March of 1994. I wanted to continue my community service helping plan what had been a good community and what became a better community and laying the groundwork for the good business structure we had and bringing in the industry and also paying attention to the neighborhood issues and planning for really a well rounded community. Chandler for a long time, one of my big things was to make it a well-rounded community. It had been known as a bedroom community, and even into the '80's Chandler was still a bedroom community, so there was a transformation that took place. Chandler now is seen as one of the focal business communities in the state because of all the high tech business we brought in and a lot of the other things we did. We kind of moved from agrarian to bedroom community to a full service community. We did a lot of that from 1990 until the time I left in 2002.

JR: Tell me a little bit about how you made the transition from Mayor to Senator.

JT: I like serving the public. As a native of Chandler I did the council thing and I did the Mayor thing and I thought we accomplished a lot and I like solving problems. When I came on to the council there were a lot of issues that needed to be resolved and even during my time as Mayor you deal with problems on a day to day basis as a council and how you solve them is how you end of having a good community. I like public service; I like elected office. There was an opportunity after I was done as Mayor. They had done some redistricting in the state, which they do every ten years, and they carved out a district that didn't have any city incumbents in either the senate or the house. I was probably going to run anyway, I would have run even if there was an incumbent; I was prepared to run against a an incumbent, but as it turned out I didn't have to because of the way the districts were. So I ran and got elected and served my first two years and am now actually going through my first re-election.

The state has a lot of issues. They had a lot of issues two years ago. They still have a lot issues, maybe we took a few off the plate but there's a good opportunity there to accomplish a lot. When I left Chandler it was on the extreme high side and still doing great.

We built up a community that people recognized was a great community and it wasn't always that way. We built it into a full service community, we brought in industry, we made it a family oriented community. As I looked at the state they had a lot of issues. They aren't the same issues but they had financial problems. One of my strengths with Chandler was how I dealt with the finances and how we built up the finances. And they also need some help on how they are going to attract industries statewide and look into the next generation of economic development projects. The biotech field or what have you.

There's a lot of room at the state level and a lot of need for common sense. I worked with a lot of good people down there but I've seen through the years that sometimes common sense at the state level didn't prevail as much as it did at the city level and I thought my background at the city would be a very good enhancement at the state. I got on there and got assigned [to a committee chairmanship]. I was the only freshman in the whole legislature, 90 members to get a chairmanship of a committee. I'm actually running for a leadership position if the Republican keeps the majority after the elections this November of 2004. I'm going to run for one of the top three spots for the leadership of the Republicans in the Senate.

I like a good challenge and there are plenty of them at the state level right now.

JR: When you were City Councilman or Mayor what are some of the most significant memories you have from that time. Maybe things you were involved in that you were proud of or issues that came up that were really significant.

JT: In a dynamic growing community like Chandler was in the late 80's and continued to be until the time I left the Council there is always an issue whether it's a zoning issue in a neighborhood, a business wanting to locate somewhere, whether it's charting out the course for the future. We dealt with a lot of them. I liked a lot of the business things we did. I was involved on the planning commission with the west Chandler Intel project. One of my first big things when I became Mayor was the new Intel plant down in south Chandler. We broke ground on that during one of my first years as Mayor. I think in 1994. We basically went into the farming part of our community - south Chandler was still fairly undeveloped even as recently as ten years ago. Intel bought a square mile. They bought it for a real cheap price too compared to what it is today. They bought that so they wouldn't have neighborhood problems. We worked with them. So the development of the Intel facility [was important] because I saw that as setting the stage for all the development that would occur on Price Road, which it has. For all the supplier and related type industries that would come into Chandler which they have. That was a very significant part of my Mayor days just bringing in that facility into south Chandler.

The Chandler mall project opened up about one month after the 9-11-2001 terrorist attacks. That project I had worked on personally since I was a planning commissioner. In 1985 they went through planning commission and got their zoning as I became a council member in 1986. That project had a 15-year incubation period. I was there from day one and I was actually Mayor when we opened the mall.

That was neat just to see that project go from planning to going through two recessions to making sure the freeway got built and the freeway open before they would open the mall and then getting it open. It was nice to have a project that you are involved with for 15 years get opened. We accelerated our parks program. We put a lot of effort into the community services department and building all the different parks. I think my favorite part of the Council and Mayor job, I liked working with citizens and hearing them and trying to resolve their issues or take their ideas and forward them on. That was probably the thing I enjoyed the most. You don't have that as you move up the chain in political office even at the state senate. You don't deal day to day as much with the citizens as you do when you are a City Council member or Mayor because that's really the first line of fire. They are going to come talk to you about zoning or whatever. I thought I did a relatively good job of dealing with that and heading off problems before they got to be problems. We didn't have any referendums or things like that. There's an opportunity to get involved early and maybe work things out. A couple things that are timely now but may not be timely when someone views this tape that are significant though is right now there is a big controversy with Chandler and Gilbert fighting over an auto mall and hopefully they will work that out. There have only been two revenue sharing agreements done in the state between cities where they say we're not going to fight with each other on this development we're going to work something out between the cities and let the developers go do their thing versus letting the developers bid city against city. There have only been two revenue sharing agreements and I was the Mayor when we did both of them. We did them both with Tempe and it took a good staff and good council to support that. Those are some things that are still talked about; they are still a model especially when taxpayers and citizens see the taxpayer money being bid against competing cities. Those are things I'm proud of.

There were two competing malls. Chandler Mall was at Ray and I-10. We were competing with Tempe in 1995 and 1996 for who would do the mall. Only one was going in. The Tempe Mayor and myself kept a good relationship. Their developer went as high up as Washington, D.C. trying to get federal transportation officials to rule that our site was not a good site. The nice thing about history is that it usually repeats itself. It's the same as what was going on with us in 1995 and 1996 in Tempe, they had all the high priced lobbyists and we had high priced lawyers trying to stop each other's project. As it turned out the project was going to Tempe but we worked out a little revenue sharing, and Chandler got some revenue sharing out of that. We also ended up with a high end, nice retail development at the site we were going to do the outlet mall. It turned out really for the best for us.

The second one was a deal with the automotive industry and there was an automotive dealer that was going to go into either Chandler or Tempe and the bidding was going to be initiated between the two but Chandler and Tempe got together and said there's a 95% chance they are going to locate anyway whether they get an incentive or not.

Why don't we work out something between the cities so we're not giving it to the private sector but that we're going to share that among our taxpayers. It was a little different than the Mills deal where the cities talked real early and we said that's what we'll do. So we told the automotive dealer that we were not going to give any incentives. They built the project in Chandler. We increased our bond ratings in the different areas while I was Mayor. Chandler had serious financial problems when I got on the council and through my first term on the council. They had layoffs and pay freezes and hiring freezes because of the recession. So we spent a long time building the infrastructure within the city. One of my things when I became Mayor was to work on the bond rating upgrades because they had all been downgraded. We had a lot of things some of the council would question at times but always got enough votes to do the good strong policies and things that would be good for the future. So our bond ratings got upgraded and we had 15 bond rating upgrades from the different agencies in the different categories when I was Mayor and then within nine months after leaving Mayor in early 2003 we got a AAA bond rating which was unheard of. I think there's only one other city in the state that had an AAA bond rating. Even though I wasn't Mayor when that happened, 99% of that work I was involved with on the Council, as was the councils before me. The financial thing was good.

The building blocks for Chandler are in place now. We know how big the city is going to be. We know where the growth is going. We know where the commercial developments are going to be. We put all that in place. What is going to happen in the future is those are going to get built and the future councils will have to decide what kind of quality are they going to get out of those developments, what exactly is the commercial make up going to be? It's all pretty much those foundations of where, how, and when, were pretty much laid in the last 15 years. I think the people will be fairly happy with the build out of Chandler.

JR: You were involved when Intel first came in. Can you tell me a little bit about how that happened, how is it that Chandler was able to get Intel?

JT: The first one was probably not major brain surgery. When Intel in the early '80's was a relatively new corporation they had been in California. They were looking to expand in Arizona. They were going to build two plants. They had two criteria at the time. One was to be close to the freeway. The only freeway was I-10 that goes from Phoenix down to Tuscan and the I-17 up north. They located two facilities. The one in Chandler right off the I-10 and one up north on the I-17 right off the freeway. I think the ingredients were freeway access and cheap ground. Chandler was all farming then. They bought a big chunk of ground. They got it cheap because there wasn't the demand. They had good foresight. They probably looked at the long-term freeway and how things would go. Subsequently we built 101. They visited with the city fathers who ran the council at the time also the staff and city manager. They wanted to feel comfortable with the staff and council. They probably knew more about Chandler and where Chandler was going then than the city fathers did then.

JR: Do you feel that initiated the establishment of more industries?

JT: That basically set off the growth in the west side. It was far enough away from where the core of our growth was. The west side pretty much took off after the Intel plant located there. It basically built out in 10 years from that time. All the housing went in. Most of commercial was built within 10-12 years. The south Intel plant anchored our growth the past 10 years.

JR: Having been Mayor, how would you describe Chandler in comparison to other local cities?

JT: Chandler has gone from where the perception of Chandler even 20 or 25 years was a small, rural, agricultural community then to Chandler now is viewed by most everybody I deal with at the capitol is seen as progressive, well rounded, they've done it right. This is a city we should try and copy. It's not all about money but our per capita household income now, Chandler never had a per capita household income, I think we had the highest in the valley. We passed Scottsdale. The whole thing has changed, the way we planned our city, people in other areas view Chandler as very progressive. Chandler has had to make decisions and wasn't afraid to make decisions. Mesa is still struggling with should we charge developers impact fee. One of my first things as Mayor we took on the housing industry and how they would build houses in Chandler. Everything was cookie cutter. We said we're going to change that. We did what we called our Housing Standards and Guidelines. Took on the housing industry and now Chandler has a variation and different looking subdivisions. A lot of cities never tackled that and never tackled impact fees. We want the developers to pay for the growth they are causing. We didn't want to burden the taxpayers with that. We did that. A lot of cities like Mesa haven't done that yet. I think a lot of people see Chandler as having good ideas, have done some good things, we should copy that. It's pretty much seen as a real progressive city and that's a good thing.

JR: Michael, how have you see the city change?

MT: When I was growing up it was agricultural and a lot of my friends were from Williams Air Force Base. Today the agricultural is going away. Williams Air Force Base is decommissioned. Then Chandler became a destination. There is industry here. During the time we were in commercial construction, the west Chandler Intel plant brought on the Gould Plant, which we built; and Rogers Corporation, and a number of plants that we were involved in from a construction standpoint. Motorola was already here but they became a bigger presence so just from my personal standpoint I knew a lot of construction started. Things just grew. The city went into being more of a manufacturing, more in the high tech end. The housing development really started, I give Jay a lot of credit. Most cities were not prepared for the onslaught of the population increase and they had no foresight into financially what was going to happen to their city if they didn't charge a reasonable amount of money for these new developments. Also from the quality of the standard of living. You wanted a nice subdivision, a little landscape, variations in the rooftops and you can see it now.

Other cities now are doing it. Now the city is a place that you want to move to. Of course it's a lot bigger now. I'm pretty sure I'll be moving back to Chandler but it will be out where I used to consider almost Chandler Heights. There are no farms out there any more it's all houses. It's very different when I drive through here I only see a couple things from when I was a kid that are still there. On Alma School and Queen Creek Road there was a farm out there, and the people who owned it were named Bell. They had large trees and the trees are still there. Eucalyptus trees and those great blue herons have nests up in them. So that's still there, and I just look at that and say, well, maybe they'll keep those trees. Mostly it's all new. It's good to some extent. I'm glad that they're trying to keep some of it, like the Historical Society. We need some of the past to be maintained. You can only do that to a certain extent. With all the new people, it is a different city. I'll drive into an area of Chandler and I won't even recognize it, it's totally different. Houses, development. Where's the fields? It's all gone. It's going to happen and if you do it right you can enjoy it. There's a right way to do it and a wrong way. I think the city of Chandler has done the right thing. No doubt about it.

JR: Senator, is there anything as a native of Chandler that you kind of miss now that the city has changed so much as your brother described?

JT: It's hard to say. It's like one poet used to say, you can't go home. You can't have it like it was when you were a kid. You have good memories. That's not just in growing cities. It's with anybody when they were growing up. It changed, those were good memories. Chandler was good then but nothing stays the same. It's a good city now. It's totally different, you can't compare it anymore than you want to compare today to 30 or 40 years down the road. That's the way life is, it's about change. I kind of like to look at it on more of a positive note. If I was 10 years old again I would like it like it was when I was 10 years old. This has been good and it's been good to have a finger in what Chandler is today. I'm happy.

JR: You mentioned the Jay Street in the subdivision. Is that named after yourself?

JT: It is. I have a street named after me. The city did not name it after me. My uncle named it after me. My uncle and my father developed a subdivision in Chandler probably in the late 50's or early 60's, it's Tyson Manor. One of the streets in there was named after my cousin who is my same age, Tyson, but it's a shorter, smaller street. See they didn't dream that Chandler would grow north and south like it did, so Jay Street was a north and south street and it just kept going north and north and south and south. It's a pretty large street. [joking] My cousin is not happy about it. That's the luck of the draw.

JR: Why do you feel Chandler's history is important? I'd like you to think about if the audience was present day residents who were looking at this interview and listening to what you were going to say. As you know a lot of those people are from other places and they really don't really know who Chandler is or what Chandler has been. How would you answer that question?

JT: History in general is important, whether it's American history or world history. So the history of the community you live in is important also.

One of the constituents that used to call me would talk about the 90's newcomers. She had come here from California, she'd say, "Jay, there is this whole group it's called the 90's newcomers. They are going to outnumber you who have been here awhile". She's right—they do outnumber us. The new people in the town from 1990 is a bigger population than what Chandler's population was prior to 1990; so people moving to Chandler don't know that Chandler was a farming community. If they get to see some of the history or watch some of these programs, they get to learn a little bit about that, I think they'll find it interesting. They'll find out about how Intel moved here and why Chandler is like it is. To most people it's kind of interesting, especially in dynamic areas like Arizona. I like the Midwest, a lot of that is a great place if you grew up there, but the history is pretty stagnant. Towns of 20,000 are still 20,000. There are not a lot of areas in the world where the population goes from 3,000 to 300,000 in 50 years, which is what is going to happen in Chandler. It's interesting how the city ends up getting built. So I think that should be important to citizens that live here and want to have some roots in the community. It's important to preserve that history. Even if people who are busy may not be into it at the time, somewhere down the road somebody is going to be interested in why did this happen, or that happen, or how did this end up being like it is. Maybe if they look at the history they'll get the answer to some of those questions.

JR: Michael, why do you think Chandler's history is important?

MT: The main thing I am interested in is recording all the people that worked so hard to get Chandler where it is today. In my case a lot of the farming families, my dad and all of his brothers that worked hard in this area to make Chandler what it is today. I think it's good that you are interviewing and talking to all the different people not just one group but all the groups that were here. In the 40's and 50's to live in Chandler, there was a reason. It could have been from a business standpoint, a rural standpoint, whatever, you wanted to be out. It was difficult in those days and there weren't a lot of jobs and to go to Phoenix and Mesa was a big traveling thing. It's good you are talking to the different people. I think that is a real important part. Not just that we have certain manufacturing now, it's all the families and individuals that worked hard to get to this point and you are going to keep track of it and that's good. You come here and you really don't know, you have no idea of what went on. It was the foresight of a lot of hard working people.

JR: I have one last question I wanted to ask. Can you give me a little bit about your memories of your father's store, what you sold and what you remember about the store?

MT: It was mostly western shirts, Levi's, boots, hats, dresses. I remember the busy times were usually on Fridays and Saturdays after people got their paychecks. They usually came in, and whether they knew their waist sizes, sometimes they (measured) it on their arm. It was standard stuff, nothing fancy in those stores.

JR: Where was the store located?

MT: Jay will know the address. It's located quite near city hall.

JT: On Boston on the east side of Arizona Avenue in one of those store fronts.

JR: How long was the store in existence?

MT: I would say 10 years. My father was in it and then he went into the construction business and one of our uncles stayed in it. At some point they got out of the business and sold the building.

JT: Sometime in the late 50's he moved out of the clothing store in downtown Chandler and went into the construction business full time. I was real young when that store was operating.

JR: Ok, well that ends our interview, I appreciate you gentleman coming out to do the interview.