

TUCSON'S MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Politics

Tucson's movers and shakers in politics include two former mayors and two members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Norwegian immigrant **Henry Jaastad** was a seven-term mayor who led Tucson through difficult times in the 1930s and 1940s. As Tucson's longest term mayor, in the 1970s and 1980s **Lewis C. Murphy** oversaw a time of economic and population growth. Rancher and social activist **Isabella Greenway** was the first U.S. Congresswoman in Arizona history and in 1930 founded the Arizona Inn. Respected trial lawyer **Morris Udall** served 30 years in the U.S. Congress, earning a reputation as the "most creative and productive legislator of the 20th century."

Henry Jaastad (1872-1965) was born in Norway, immigrated to the United States in 1886, and arrived in Tucson in 1902 as a journeyman carpenter. He formed his own contractor business, became a naturalized citizen in 1904, completed correspondence courses in architecture and studied electrical engineering at UA, and in 1922 earned his architecture license. Starting as a designer of small residential buildings for private individuals, Jaastad branched out into commercial ventures including stores and office buildings in downtown Tucson, plus schools, churches, and hospitals, earning him accolades as the designer of "some of Tucson' most significant public architecture," until his retirement in 1957, having been responsible over his 50-year career for over 500 projects. Jaastad buildings still existing include Tucson High School and several buildings at Tucson Medical Center.

Jaastad was also actively involved in local politics, serving two terms as a city councilman in 1925/26 and 1931/32, then seven terms as democratic mayor of Tucson from 1933 to 1947. His political service spanned Tucson's recovery from the Great Depression through the end of World War II, maintaining the financial integrity of the city with a "pay as you go" approach. Jaastad helped to secure natural gas from New Mexico, the Stone Avenue underpass, 90 miles of paved streets, public pools at city parks, and expansion of military airfields at Davis-Monthan and Marana.

As writer Mona L. McCroskey put it, "Henry Jaastad's work as an architect and his tenure as mayor have left an indelible imprint upon the City of Tucson."

Lewis C. Murphy (1933-2005) was born in New York City, grew up in Iowa and Minnesota, moved to Tucson in 1950, earned a business degree from UA in 1955, served as a U.S. Air Force pilot in Japan from 1955 to 1958, and then returned to Tucson to earn a law degree in 1961. He spent the 1960s in private practice and banking and was appointed Tucson's City Attorney in 1970.

"Lew" Murphy, a Republican, was elected Tucson's mayor in 1971 and served 16 years through four terms until 1987, assisted during most of that time by City Manager Joel D. Valdez, and guided Tucson through many changes. The City's population nearly doubled and high-tech companies such as IBM and Learjet (now a subsidiary of Bombardier) opened plants in Tucson. Murphy brought CAP water to Tucson, started the Community Food Bank, built a route to the airport, and annexed 63 square miles of additional land for the city.

Murphy “truly loved the community” and regarded the best part of being mayor as getting to meet people.

Isabella Greenway (1886-1953) was born Isabella Selmes on a farm in Kentucky, attended schools in New York City where she met and became lifelong friends with Theodore Roosevelt’s niece, Eleanor, and was one of Eleanor’s bridesmaids when she married Franklin Roosevelt.

In 1923 Isabella married Col. John Campbell Greenway, who brought Isabella to Arizona, to a ranch near Bisbee, where he was manager of the Calumet and Arizona Mining Company. In 1927, a year after her husband died suddenly, Isabella moved her family to Tucson. That same year, using money from selling her copper stock, Isabella bought a ranch in Williams, Arizona and a year or so later, became owner and operator of Los Angeles-based Gilpin Airlines.

Isabella’s political activities intermixed with her successful entrepreneurial operations, blazing a trail for remarkable women in Arizona politics today. During the late 1920s, in Tucson, she opened a furniture factory employing disabled veterans and their immediate families. In 1928 she became Arizona’s Democratic national committeewoman, and in 1932 she campaigned heavily for Franklin Roosevelt. Greenway, a Democrat, was elected as Arizona’s sole Representative to the 73rd Congress in 1932 and won reelection in 1934, working to improve Arizona’s economy, provide employment, expand irrigation and flood control, improve roads, and protect veterans’ benefits.

Meanwhile, in 1929/1930, Greenway built Tucson’s Arizona Inn - greatly enhancing Tucson’s reputation as a tourism destination. The Arizona Inn is considered among the top hotels in the world - still active today and in the National Register of Historic Places.

Morris Udall (1922-1998) was born in St. Johns, Arizona, lost his right eye in a childhood accident, served in the Army during World War II, graduated from UA where he was a star basketball player, played basketball professionally for the Denver Nuggets for a year, and then returned to UA to earn a law degree in 1949, after which he quickly established a record as a great trial lawyer, particularly in personal injury law.

In 1961 “Mo” won a special election for his brother’s vacant seat in the U.S. Congress, when Stuart Udall was appointed Secretary of the Interior in the Kennedy administration. Mo Udall was reelected 13 more times as a democrat, championing environmental causes, campaign finance reform, and the welfare of Native Americans, until he resigned in 1991 due to the effects of Parkinson’s disease. In 1976 he ran unsuccessfully for the Democratic nomination for President as a liberal alternative to Jimmy Carter.

As a Congressman, Morris Udall authored the Alaska Lands Act of 1980, which doubled the size of the National Park System, as well as legislation to protect archaeological finds, enact civil service reform, legalize Indian casinos, and provide for the safe disposal of radioactive waste. He was respected for his vision and integrity – even by Republicans.

Selected Sources and Information: Greenway, John Campbell and Isabella, Arizona Historical Society, MS0311; *Isabella Greenway – An Enterprising Woman*, Kristie Miller, 2005; “Henry O. Jaastad: Architect

of Tucson's Future," Mona L. McCroskey, *Smoke Signal*, Spring 1990; "Overpass memorializes Tucson's Mayor Murphy," David Leighton, *Arizona Daily Star*, September 3, 2013; *Mo: The Life and Times of Morris K. Udall*, Donald W. Carson and James W. Johnson, 2004.