

“And So To Go On With My Story...”

Rose Mofford

FIRST LADY OF ARIZONA



In Commemoration
of Honorable
Rose Mofford's
90th Birthday



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Written by Stephanie McBride-Schreiner

BIOGRAPHICAL TIMELINE: Rose Perica Mofford

- 1922** Born in Globe, Arizona
- 1939** Went on a cross-country championship tour with an amateur women's softball team, the Cantaloupe Queens
- 1940** Graduated from Globe High School as class valedictorian
- 1941** Began her career in government as secretary to State Treasurer Joe Hunt
- 1943** Moved with Hunt when he was elected to the Tax Commission
- 1954** Briefly left government to become business manager for *Arizona Highways*
- 1955** Became secretary and later, assistant secretary of state under Secretary of State Wesley Bolin
- 1957** Married T. R. "Lefty" Mofford, then captain with the Phoenix Police Department
- 1975** Appointed assistant director of the Arizona Department of Revenue, formerly the Tax Commission, by Governor Raul Castro
- 1977** Named first female secretary of state by Wesley Bolin, who left that position to take office of governor
- 1978** Elected secretary of state for a full term, and re-elected in 1982 and 1986
- 1988** February 5: Became Arizona's acting governor after House of Representatives voted to impeach Governor Evan Mecham
April 4: Became 18th governor of Arizona, and the first woman to hold that office
- 1989** January: Delivered first State of the State address and earned respect and admiration from Democrats and Republicans alike
September: Signed into law a paid holiday for the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., two years after Governor Mecham rescinded the state-observed holiday
- 1990** Decided not to run for a second term as governor of Arizona
- 1991** Left the governor's office to begin an active retirement
- 1997** Honored for her public service by renaming the Cave Creek Sports Complex as the Rose Mofford Sports Complex on her 75th birthday

INTRODUCTION: A Woman of Many Firsts

Rose Perica Mofford is one of Arizona's greatest treasures. She was the first Arizona woman appointed and elected as secretary of state and the first to hold the Office of the Governor of Arizona. Her story is an important part of the history of Arizona politics, women, and the state of Arizona as a whole. Rose's pioneering spirit, personal determination, ardent devotion to the people of Arizona, and calm and strong leadership as a public official reflect the very best the state has to offer.

In honor of her 90th birthday and many years of public service, this booklet presents a short history of Rose Mofford's accomplishments through the years, a lifetime of many firsts. It traces the key benchmarks of Rose's personal and professional successes, weaving excerpts from some of her many speeches, transcripts from oral histories, newspaper clippings, and correspondence. The unique aspects of Rose's personality and style are a significant part of her success story. What emerges from these pages is a picture of a woman and politician who strove to be the very best that she could be for her family, her friends, her colleagues, and for each and every citizen of Arizona. Rose had many champions, and she championed many others in return, designating herself as the "State's Mother" and its ambassador charged with ensuring the best interests of all Arizonans. With her memorable white beehive and salty sense of humor, Rose Mofford is fondly thought of as the friendly, feisty, and capable woman who was the right governor at the right time. Her story reminds us that politics need not be a game of partisan divisions, special interests, or personal gain, but in Rose's view, a privilege and a responsibility.



Rose Mofford, 2001. Courtesy of Rose Mofford.

Happy Birthday, Rose!

FIRST IN CLASS: Growing up in Globe, Arizona

“The most memorable experience anyone could hope for...from church, school, and neighbors, I met the finest people who were caring and sharing and never too busy to offer a helping hand. ...I feel that I shall always remember [Globe] as my hometown.”

— ROSE MOFFORD, GILA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ROSE MOFFORD COLLECTION

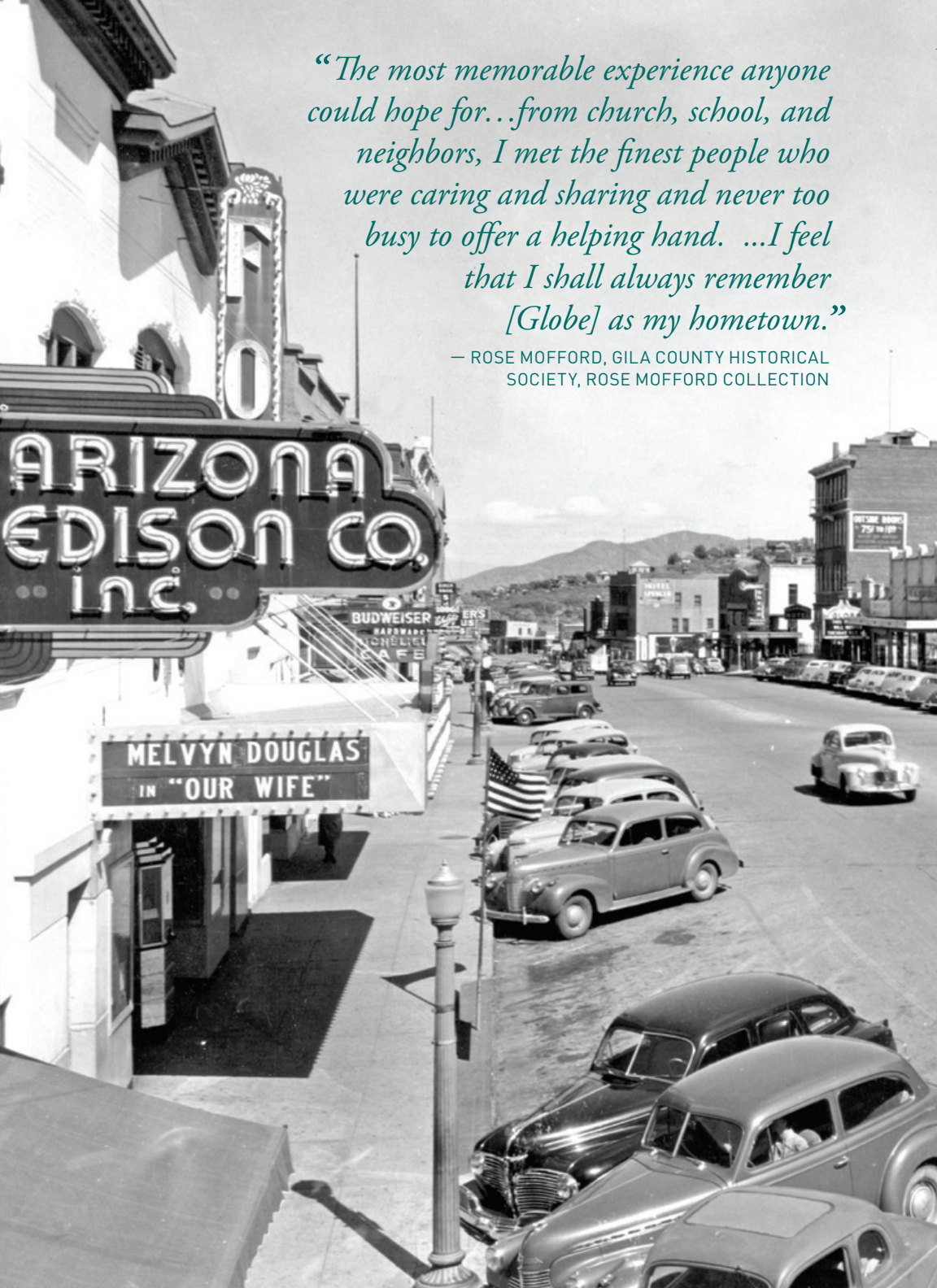
“Any success I’ve had comes from my roots...”

— ROSE MOFFORD, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, 1990

Rose Perica Mofford’s story begins in 1922. Rose Perica was born in Globe, a mining community in East-Central Arizona. Rose was the youngest of John and Frances Perica’s six children. Her birth order was probably the only time in her life that Rose would come in last. From an early age Rose excelled at everything she did, from academics to athletics to school elections. She was an outstanding student who was valedictorian of her class and earned scholastic achievements that the town of Globe had never before seen. Rose was also a gifted athlete and played on the high school tennis team. Rose developed a keen sense of leadership early on as an officer of numerous high school clubs and class president of her high school class from seventh grade to her senior year.



(above left) “Home of Governor Rose Mofford: Arizona’s First Lady,” sign entering Globe, Arizona. Photograph by author. (facing page) Globe, Arizona, c. 1941. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.





(left) Vintage Postcard of South Broad Street, Globe, Arizona, n.d. Courtesy of CowCards.
 (right) Old Dominion Copper Company, n.d. Photo courtesy of Dennis Whiteaker.



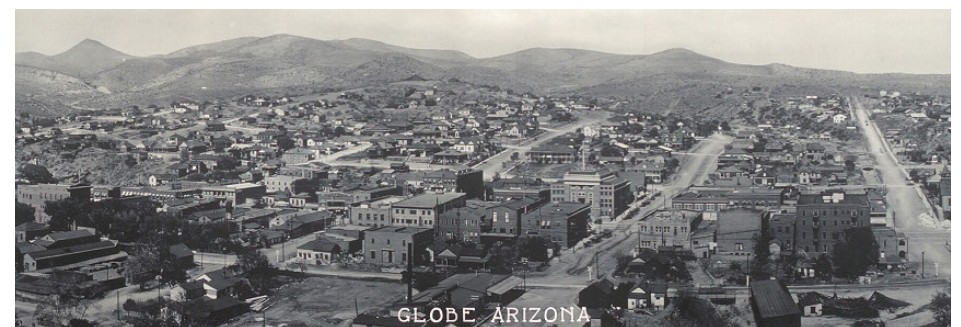
Rose attributed much of her success in life to her roots: her family and her experience growing up in the rural mining town of Globe. The county seat of Gila County, Globe was small—the entire population of Gila County in 1940 was less than 29,000 people.¹ Globe was a product of the copper mining industry. From the 1880s to the 1920s, copper was king, particularly during World War I.² By the 1930s, the Great Depression hit the mining communities hard, and a major Globe employer, Old Dominion Mine, closed its doors in 1931. The precarious ups and downs of the mining life instilled principles of hard work, discipline, loyalty, and sacrifice into members of mining town families. This background fostered in Rose a fierce determination, a strong work ethic, a familiarity with working-class politics, and empathy for the concerns of hard-working Arizonans.

Rose’s parents came to Globe in 1915, and Rose’s father found work at Old Dominion.³ Like many of Globe’s residents, they immigrated to the United States in search of a better life. Immigrants flocked to the Globe-Miami area for job opportunities and greater freedoms. Globe was a cosmopolitan town with multi-ethnic families from Mexico, Eastern Europe, France, Italy, the British Isles, and various regions across the U.S. The San Carlos Apache Reservation was adjacent to Globe. Such close proximity of ethnic and territorial groups brought both rewards and conflicts.⁴ Coming of age in this diverse community exposed Rose

to an appreciation of other cultures as well as the inequities and anxieties that resulted when different cultures collided. In the 1930s, schools and communities remained segregated, and labor disputes often exacerbated class and ethnic differences.

Rose’s parents were Democrats and highly valued the freedom to vote. Their patriotism and political participation was a model for their children, particularly Rose. In high school, Rose worked at the county recorder’s office during the summer. One of her tasks involved voter registration. She was too young to sign the forms herself, but she gathered the voter information, filled out the forms, and had the recorder sign the formal documents. Little did she know that decades later as secretary of state, she would run the entire election process across the state of Arizona.

All throughout high school, Rose Perica had perfect attendance and consistently won the highest honors in her class. Named “Most Outstanding Girl for Globe High School,” Rose was valedictorian of her senior class, receiving the high school’s scholastic award for the highest grade point average in the history of Globe schools.⁵ She was an officer—and frequently president—of many high school clubs, including the Honor Society, the Girls Athletic Association, and the high school yearbook, the *Wigwam*. In addition to all her studies and extracurricular activities, she served as class president every year. Rose continues to be a treasured legend at Globe High School, and her accomplishments are prominently displayed throughout school hallways. As one of Globe’s most well-loved celebrities, Rose has her name featured on the welcome sign into the city, a



Bird’s-eye view of Globe, Arizona, c. 1917. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

community center, and the Rose Perica Mofford Trail, a footpath leading to the hilltop “G” overlooking the city. A recent project of the Globe High School Alumni Association, the trail will be completed and inaugurated in June 2012 in celebration of Rose Mofford’s birthday and Arizona’s centennial year.⁶

Rose’s valedictory speech highlights her intelligence, deep patriotism, and the youthful optimism of a young woman bracing herself to go out and enter the world as a citizen of Arizona and the United States. At a time when the nation was still recovering from the Great Depression and watching as World War II erupted on the European continent, Rose’s speech has a timeless quality; its main message still rings true. It reminds us of how precious American liberties were—and still are—and that it is the responsibility of citizens to work together to safeguard those liberties. Rose held strong to these convictions and they served her well throughout the course of her public service career.



Globe High School. Photograph by the author.

LET’S LOOK AT AMERICA

Valedictory Speech, 1940

Every age has its slogan—every step of the march of milestones has had some typical expression of the American people which expressed their feelings, thoughts, and behavior while they were stepping off at that particular mile. “No Taxation without Representation.” “America for the Americans.” “Go West, Young Man, Go West.” “Remember the Maine.” “Too Proud to Fight.” “Make the World Safe for Democracy.” “The Forgotten Man.”

This mile? Our age? Sometimes we think we might write on our milestone the words, “There Ought to be a Law Against That.” For in one way or another, we have all fallen into the habit of saying that, or thinking it, even though we don’t say it. It may be some phase of the social system that we want corrected, or some phase of church or business or political life. Roughly we’re not satisfied with America, and we are doing much wild talking about changing this and changing that. We are criticizing the little things and missing the bigger meaning of America; we are in the position of the man who couldn’t see the forest for the trees.

Maybe there are many things here that should be changed. Perhaps there is much wrong with us. Even though the system has made a few mistakes and failed to draw infallible plans for Utopia, there is no reason why it should be eternally condemned.

For imperfect as the American Way may be, it has proved better than any other that has ever been devised. There’s so much good in it that we ought to begin to talk a little less about what’s wrong with America and a little more about what’s right. That goes for the government, too.

In its development through the last 300 years, America has produced a standard of living unmatched anywhere on the face of the earth; in the last 60, as the system has improved, it has put America miles ahead in the march of progress. Someone has said that the nations of Europe look back to 300 years of uninterrupted progress. That may be an exaggeration, but there’s more than a germ of truth in it. It is particularly true of the last century.

Let us turn back the pages of history to the milestone greatly lamented as the “good old days.” We see a house poorly constructed, drafty, cold, and poorly ventilated. Grandfather, with his cold which he nursed all winter long, comes downstairs to poke the fire in the kitchen stove and in the old living room pot stove. His pre-breakfast chores were many and varied from feeding old faithful Dobbie to thawing out the old water pump. Grandmother’s days were long and



full, too. After the kitchen was warm, she prepared a big and heavy breakfast with little regard to calories, balanced diet or scientific feeding. Her weekdays were familiar to her, not as Monday, Tuesday, etc., but as washday, bake day, and ironing day. Truly her life was drudgery as well as monotonous.

Granddad wasn't poor; he was typical of the middle-class citizen who got along quite well; most Americans were just like him. They were poorly housed and poorly dressed. The boys lived to be almost 70, not because of that "hardy background of the good old days," but in spite of it.

Of course, that was in the country, and in the small towns. But take a good look at the city. No telephones, no automobiles, no central heating, no fire-proof office buildings. No fountains or typewriters. Horse cars in the streets crawled in the summer and gave up against the drifts in the winter.

But what have we today, after 60 years? We are the best-dressed, best-housed, best-fed people in the world. The typical modern American home, says the U.S. Department of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, has five rooms, either shower-bath or tub, electric lights, and gas. Fifty-one percent of these homes use hot-air furnaces for heat, and 48.8% of the 29,914,603 families living in such houses own them. Most of the people today own cars and not horses. This country, with only six percent of the world's population, owns 71 percent of the world's automobiles, 52 percent of the world's telephones, 44 percent of the world's radios, 30 percent of the railroads, and double the insurance of the rest of the world. There are nine million miles of road in this fast-traveling world, and one-third of that mileage is in the United States; we have some 371,000 miles, either paved with cement or hard surfaced, constructed during the last 25 years.

The great functions of medicine and health, recreation, character-building had their first great impetus in the Church. Think of the hospital, the YMCA, the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross—fill in the rest of the list for yourself. They are the strong active children of the Church-in-America.

As we pass in the street, we see the American working man, better off than any other working man in the world. He works usually eight hours a day, often a five-day week; he is protected by law from death-dealing machinery; the law insists that he have light and air wherever he works, and fire escapes. He has recreation fields, higher wages, Old Age Pensions, Labor Banks, Social Security. Above all, he is free to work where he pleases, to join a union or not, free to strike and picket. He is the free product of a free system that believes in the competition of ideas; a system would put up with strikes rather than surrender the basic principle of liberty on which it is founded.

We are children playing on the town playground across the street from the church or the store, or shouting in any one of the country's stadia. Millions

of youngsters are doing that all over the country. That's why the younger generation is healthily happy. Young Americans are crowding the free public playgrounds—built for them on the profits of American business and industry. Youth isn't worrying about the intricacies of the goosetep, but rather he is wondering who will win the next World Series or whether Yale will defeat Princeton in the fall. If he can't get himself elected president, he would like to be such a pitcher as Carl Hubbell; and let it be said here he is quite free to be either.

We have come a long, long way down the road with health and medical practice. Four thousand clinics offer service and advice to rich and poor alike. We have 6,200 hospitals, 1,096,721 beds, 170,000 doctors, or one doctor for every 756 of the population; we have the best drugs and medicines within reach of every citizen of the land.

Culturally, we have had a late start. The Old World guards a culture and an art that we must admire and cherish. Yet the younger generation in America is more favored to develop culturally than any other younger generation in the world. Think of the Carnegie Libraries that are scattered across America—6,235 free libraries with over 100 million volumes to be had for the asking. Thirteen thousand newspapers and magazines which are not censored to death before they reach the reader's table may be had for from two cents to a dollar. American youth can listen to the beat of the world's music and musicians.

Now what has produced all this? Why do we have it? We have it because we have been living under a constantly growing system that has encouraged individual initiative and enterprise. A free press, free radio, free speech, free assembly, and free church—these never could have been born in anything but an atmosphere of democracy. They all grew from a system of give-and-take that came into being on the American frontier.

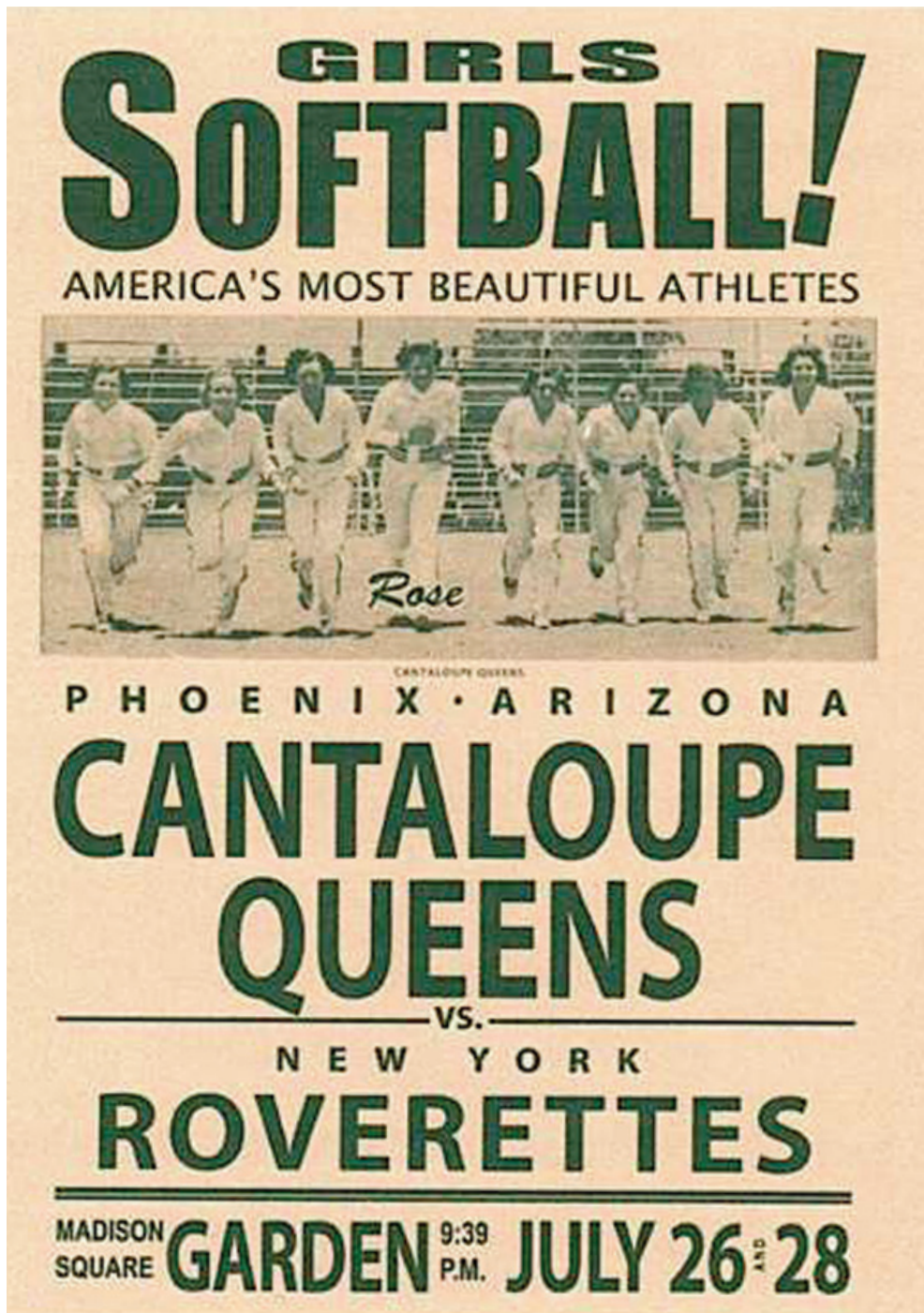
Let us not try to do away with the freedom that has lifted us to the heights that we now enjoy. The minute we surrender our rights and privileges to an all-powerful centralized governmental control, we lose all that we have inherited from our ancestry and all that we have gained throughout our history.

Let us, then, with reverence in our hearts, pray for the strength that we, the coming citizens of this great nation, may carry on the great heritage of democracy, free enterprise and good fellowship that is now entrusted to our care.

There is one thing that I can truthfully say: "I THANK GOD THAT I AM AN AMERICAN GRADUATING IN 1940."

Valedictory Speech, 1940





Cantaloupe Queens vs. New York Roverettes Poster. 1939. Courtesy of Arizona Softball Foundation.

“Sports are very important to all of us. They help you learn how to win and how to lose. They played a big part in my success.”

– ROSE MOFFORD

Fortunately for Arizona sports fans, Rose Mofford’s enthusiasm for sports is another essential part of her story. As an amateur athlete in her early days, Rose experienced firsthand the multiple benefits that sports could provide to an individual’s physical and social wellness. Her personal experience in amateur softball and basketball in the late 1930s also taught her that sports teams—men’s and women’s—could bring important economic development opportunities and positive publicity to local communities and to the entire state of Arizona. Rose gave equal attention to softball, soccer, baseball, basketball, gymnastics, golf, football, and all amateur sports, because in addition to state and local economic rewards, they all “represent the highest quality of life and best form of recreation.”⁷ Throughout her public service career and retirement, Rose has tirelessly supported statewide sports activities of every stripe ranging from professional and college teams to amateur leagues and children’s programs. She has helped sponsor sports facilities in Arizona that span from the largest of stadiums to neighborhood recreational centers and parks. Much of Arizona’s success and profitability in sports is due to Rose Mofford’s life-long advocacy and support.

CANTALOUPE QUEEN

During high school, Rose played the sports available to young women at the time: tennis, softball, and basketball. Recruiters recognized Rose’s abilities as a basketball player and offered her a contract to play for the professional All-American Redheads, which she turned down to take her first job in government. In particular, her participation in softball would shape her future views on the value of sports. Rose’s softball career

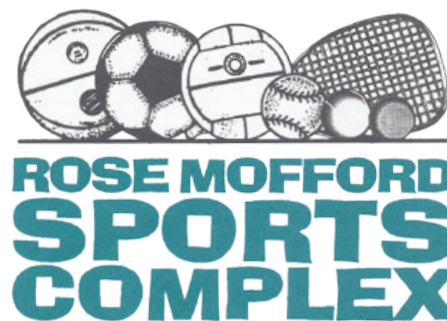
coincided with a larger shift in softball during the 1930s that opened up new opportunities for amateur women athletes. During the Depression years, softball expanded as both a recreational sport and as a spectator sport: the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) organized in 1933 and began to hold national softball tournaments across the nation, and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) built thousands of softball fields across the nation, making the already popular sport affordable and accessible to large crowds and rural communities.⁸ When 17-year-old Rose was between her junior and senior year of high school, her batting and first-base skills were noticed by the organizers of an amateur softball touring team sponsored by Arizona's Cantaloupe Growers called the Cantaloupe Queens. Rose signed on as a first-base player for the Queens' first ever cross-country championship tour with the team during the summer of 1939. That summer, the team traveled across 33 states playing 20 exhibition games in various cities, including Chicago and New York City. At Madison Square Garden, the Queens played three games, each of which drew an estimated 18,000 spectators.⁹ That championship exhibition tour convinced Rose of the tremendous personal rewards for individual athletes as well as the possibilities that sports opened up for community and economic development.

Rose Mofford on championship tour, 1939. Courtesy of Rose Mofford.



HALL OF FAME

An all-star player in her own right, Rose Mofford was one of the driving forces that encouraged men and women athletes and all types of sports organizations. An organizer of the Arizona Softball Foundation and a charter member of its Board of Governors, Rose served as the chairman of the Foundation's Annual Hall of Fame and Awards Banquet, was honored as the Foundation's Woman of the Year in 1976, and was twice inducted into the Arizona Softball Hall of Fame. The Softball Foundation owes much of its success to her organizational talents and support.¹⁰ Rose's support for sports did not end with softball, however. As early as the 1950s, Rose joined the Arizona Olympic Club to financially assist amateur athletes in all sports who aspired to compete in the Olympic Games. For several years she served as the organization's secretary, and some years she was the only woman member.¹¹ Rose also supported women's participation in sports, and for years she helped host events celebrating women's sports and athletes throughout the Phoenix area. As governor, Rose and her staff made a statement about the need to support all athletes by attending the Special Olympics Games and cheering on disabled sports competitors. For her continued dedication to sports and in honor of her 75th birthday, the City of Phoenix in 1997 fittingly renamed the Cave Creek Sports Complex, located at 9833 N. 25th Avenue, the Rose Mofford Sports Complex.



Dedication ceremony program, Rose Mofford Sports Complex, 1997.

“Rose Mofford has recognized the importance of sports as a cornerstone element of economics, recreation, and indeed, the quality of life.”

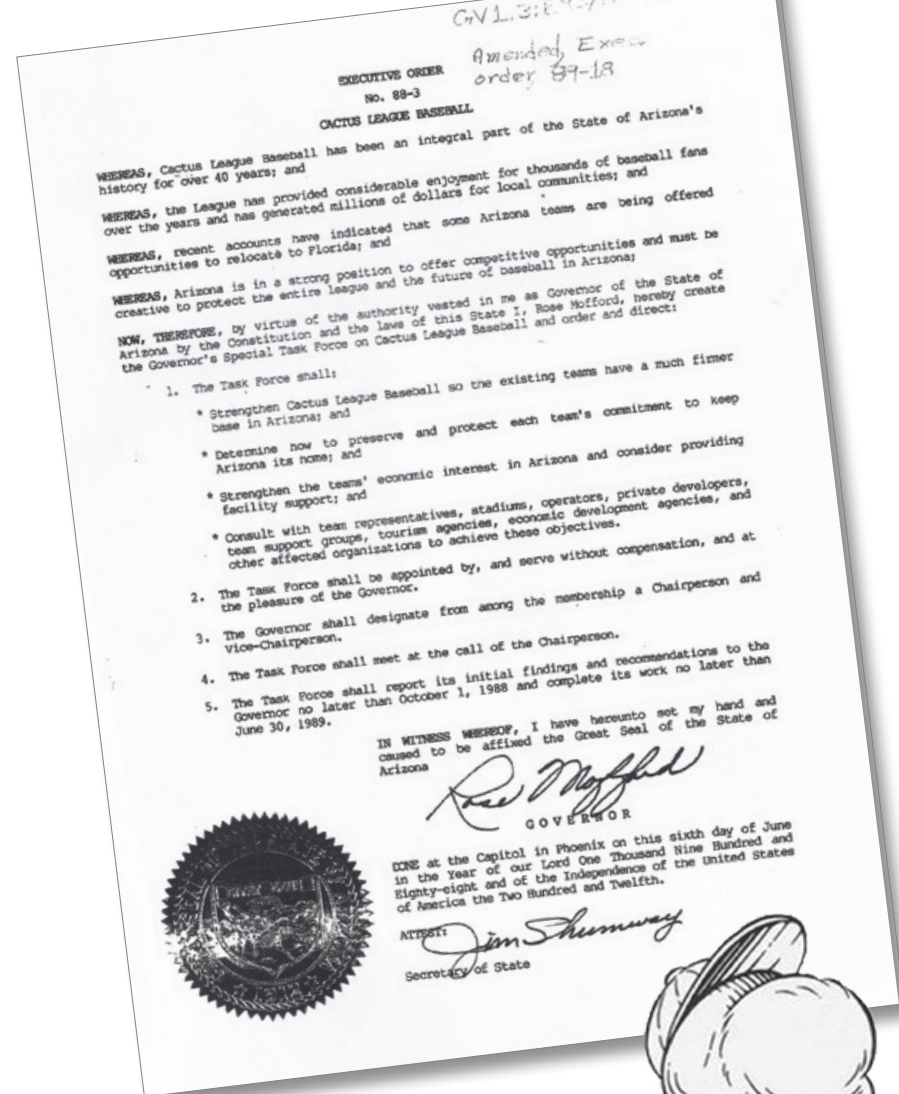
— FLO ECKSTEIN, CITY OF PHOENIX PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD, 1997

CACTUS LEAGUE

Perhaps the greatest crown in Rose Mofford’s longstanding support of Arizona sports is her executive action to save the Cactus League in the early 1990s. Since the 1950s, the Arizona Cactus League consisted of major league baseball teams that conducted their spring training in Phoenix, Yuma, and Tucson, Arizona. First coined in 1954, the Cactus League originally consisted of four teams, enough to schedule games and have an exhibition season.¹³ By the 1990s, Arizona was home to eight spring training teams, but three of those eight teams were seriously considering moving their franchises to Florida, the only other spring training competitor. In 1988 Governor Rose Mofford stepped in and issued an Executive Order to establish a task force to study the issue and make recommendations. Upon her review of the task force’s report, Governor Mofford stated that “the status of the (Cactus) League was tenuous because of the Florida competition, and that Arizona must be prepared to contribute resources to protect the League.”¹⁴ That year, Rose implemented legislation for a car-rental surcharge that would be used to build and improve sports facilities, and all of the teams stayed in Arizona. This legislation, combined with a commitment on the part of the government to dedicate time and resources toward the goal of strengthening the Cactus League, continued to pay off for Arizona. Since the early 1990s, the Cactus League has grown to include 15 teams and has continued to boost Arizona’s economy through ticket sales and tourism. Saving the Cactus League also paved the way for Arizona to secure an expansion team—the Arizona Diamondbacks. This championship team would go on to win the World Series in 2001, putting Phoenix, Arizona, on the map of major league baseball.



Rose Mofford at 88 years young, with Mesa Mayor Scott Smith. Courtesy of Boys of Spring website.



(above) Executive Order 88-3 on Cactus League Baseball signed by Governor Mofford on June 6, 1988. (right) Rose Mofford Baseball Card.



“[Rose’s] spirit flows as bright as the Arizona sunshine; her determination, equal to the pioneers who settled this great land; her expertise has no equal and the Democratic Party no greater friend.”

— FORMER GOVERNOR SAM GODDARD, AT ROSE MOFFORD’S INDUCTION INTO THE ARIZONA DEMOCRATIC HALL OF FAME



(above) Phoenix skyline, looking southwest, ca. 1940. Courtesy of Brad Hall. (right) Sign on the outskirts of Phoenix, ca. 1940. Photo by Russell Lee, Farm Security Administration, Office of War Information Collection, Library of Congress. (facing page) Rose Mofford in her early career. Courtesy of *Phoenix Gazette*.



FIRST FEMALE SECRETARY OF STATE: The Road to Success, 1940-1988

“I work every day like I was running for re-election and the race was tight. That’s the only way I know how. That’s what my mother taught me.”

— ROSE MOFFORD, IN 1986 INTERVIEW FOR *THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC*

When Rose traded the ball field for a position in the state treasurer’s office, she embarked on a long and fulfilling career in public service. Her career would achieve many firsts along the way: the first woman in Arizona to become secretary of state, the first secretary of state to officially serve as acting governor, the first elected official to become governor as the result of an impeachment, and the first woman in Arizona to become governor. Rose attained political positions that no other woman had previously reached. In those days, women had to rely on their wits and play the game with the “good old boys.” For Rose, her career successes were not solely benchmarks for women, but were part of a larger picture of pioneering politics in Arizona history. The year she was elected for her third term as secretary of state, Rose remarked:



I have heard it said that the politics in Arizona rivals the most intricate of historical chess games.

The last hundred years of history reflects a rugged and hostile terrain that has been transformed into a totally productive environment.

It took a special brand of courage to settle the West; that sense of pioneer spirit has been translated directly into our political history.

In my 46 years of service to the state of Arizona, I have always been close to the political arena, if not right in the middle.

We are rich in tradition and accomplishments. While the labels of politics change from time to time, the spirit of Arizona rings through with a note of strength unknown in other states.¹⁵

This pioneering spirit guided Rose well. From secretary to secretary of state, she was someone that people could count on to do her job, do it well, and relish doing it. Rose cultivated positive relationships with her male and female peers. It was those relationships, assisted by her strong capabilities, her solid political background, her can-do attitude, and her amiable personality and sense of humor, that led Rose down the road to success. Along the way, she strove to open up greater opportunities to all—women, ethnic minorities, children, the physically or mentally ill, the homeless, and the disabled. The track record of her rise to the office of the secretary of state testifies to Rose’s philosophy of “putting people first” as a public official who served the best interests of Arizona’s citizens.

THE EARLY YEARS

The first chapter of Rose’s career in government began in 1940. After taking a secretarial position with State Treasurer Joe Hunt, Rose packed her bags and moved from small-town Globe to Phoenix, the state capital. The war brought a population and industry boom that would continue to expand the Phoenix metropolitan area for the next four decades. In this atmosphere of expansion and change, Rose learned about politics and the law, built long-lasting professional relationships, and worked her way up the political ladder.

When Hunt transferred to the Tax Commission, now the Department of Revenue, Rose was asked if she would move with him, and she did. After 11 years of loyal service to Hunt, she decided to leave government for an opportunity with *Arizona Highways*



Rose Mofford in 1952.
Courtesy of Rose Mofford.

magazine. At this point in her career, Rose witnessed the effects of gender discrimination for the first time. After leaving the Commission, Rose discovered that her job was given to a man, but with double the salary and five additional people to help him. Rose recalled, “We didn’t have such a thing as ‘Women’s Lib,’ but...I felt that it was definitely showing partiality to the man.”¹⁶ Rose did not let the incident get her down. Before the 1970s women’s liberation movement, she and other Arizona women filled prominent places in government—including U.S. Congresswoman Isabella Greenway, State Auditors Ana Frohmler and Jewel Jordan, Arizona House of Representatives Legislator Polly Rosenbaum, Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Lorna Lockwood, and Arizona Senate Majority Leader Sandra Day O’Connor—and demonstrated that women could fill those roles as well as men. For the rest of her career and into retirement, Rose would support women through official appointments, formal and informal mentoring, and committee work for organizations dedicated to advancing and honoring women.

From 1955 to 1975, Rose Mofford worked as assistant secretary of state under Wesley Bolin. In 1975, Governor Raul Castro appointed her to a director position in the Department of Revenue. She took it, and as fate would have it, political successions, professional connections, and her



(above) East Elevation, Arizona State Capitol Building. Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. (left) Rose Mofford with Polly Rosenbaum, 2004. Courtesy of the Department of Arizona Mines and Mineral Resources, Arizona Geological Survey.



(above) Arizona Governor Wesley Bolin with Rose Mofford, 1948. Courtesy of Rose Mofford. (right) Rose Mofford with Governor Ernest McFarland, 1954. Courtesy of *Arizona Capitol Times*.



(facing page left) Rose Mofford Collection at the Mining and Mineral Museum. Photo by Brian Scott Gordon. (right) Secretary of State Rose Mofford in 1980 with 40 Year Service Award. Courtesy of Rose Mofford.

long record of capable public service would lead her back to the secretary of state office, and eventually the Office of the Governor of Arizona. In an oral history interview conducted in 1998, Rose recounted the details of these career-changing moves:

In October of 1977, Castro chose to go to Argentina as the ambassador. I was in the Department of Revenue. Mr. Bolin became governor because he was secretary of state, and he came down and asked me, would I like to become secretary of state. And I said no...[B]ut finally I took it because I was convinced by many of his friends and by him that I knew so much about the office. And it was a good move. I had been there for four months when Governor Bolin died. I couldn't become governor...you had to be elected and I was appointed. So Bruce Babbitt became the youngest governor of Arizona. Then isn't it strange that many years later, 1988, once again this [situation] came up, but I was elected so I was given the appointment.¹⁷



THE MOFFORD TOUCH

Once appointed in 1975, Rose remained secretary of state for 13 consecutive years. She was immensely popular with the public, and in the election of 1986, she ran unchallenged. As secretary of state, Rose increased productivity and efficiency, introduced new computer technology, including a system that connected the secretary of state's office with the Federal Election Commission data, and professionalized the election process throughout all of Arizona's counties. Perhaps most important, she infused warmth and humanity into this somewhat technical and mechanized office. Rose welcomed people from every corner of the state to contact or visit her, and in her correspondence with the public, she often gave both office and home phone numbers. Rose's office on the seventh floor became a must-see tourist attraction around the State Capitol. Her collection of kachina dolls, considered one of the finest in the nation, antique guns, Southwestern artifacts, and sports memorabilia showcased Rose's appreciation of Arizona's diverse heritage as well as her own unique flair.

The "Mofford Touch" extended well beyond the walls of the State Capitol. Prior to 1981, the secretary of state's office did not have a budget for commemorative items to give to dignitaries or citizens who visited the State Capitol. Rose believed that all visitors should return home from their trip with some tangible portion of Arizona's rich history and that "a 75-cent pen to a busload of visiting schoolchildren or a state flag to a veteran's group is a small price to pay for pride in our beautiful state."¹⁸ Except for election times, Rose spoke frequently at organizational gatherings of

all types. She received hundreds of thank-you letters from organizers, but Rose would send her own thank-you letters for the opportunity to speak. For instance, in April 1986, after she spoke at a mother-daughter tea at Greenfield Elementary in Gilbert, Rose sent notes of thanks to the principal, the assistant teacher who organized the event, the parents of the young girl who escorted her through the school, and the little girl who held her purse during the speech!¹⁹ Countless people sent Rose letters with their deepest personal concerns, to which she graciously replied with great sincerity.

The Office of the Secretary of State also expanded during Rose's time. In addition to the state's chief elections officer, the registrar of all lobbyists and notary publics, the recorder of campaign contributions for all Arizona politicians, the head of the state's publications office, Rose was formally recognized as acting governor in 1986. During Governor Bruce Babbitt's term, Senate Bill 1139 formalized the secretary of state's duty to serve as "acting governor" when the governor is out of the state, out of the country, or under physical or mental disability. The new legislation was one of the most significant moments in Rose's life thus far, and the new title was well-deserved. While Babbitt was running for president, Rose assumed his duties for no fewer than 889 days of his term.²⁰ With over 40 years of experience in government, Rose was well-equipped to take charge. She



Bird's-eye view of Phoenix, Arizona, 1976. Courtesy of Arizona Collection, Arizona State University Libraries.

also was able to maintain her sense of humor in the midst of the pressure. She enjoyed telling a story about one of the governor's absences, when after working late on a Friday night, she and an aide got stuck in Governor Babbitt's elevator at the empty State Capitol. Pushing the emergency button, they heard a prerecorded message: "This is Bruce Babbitt. At the sound of the tone, leave your name and number, and Rose Mofford will handle your call..."²¹

Reflecting on her time as secretary of state, Rose had fond memories. She "loved every minute" of her role and was proud of her accomplishments, which were based on the quality of her interactions with people as much as on the quantity of her office's output:

I saw so many changes during that time. I tried to streamline the office of secretary of state, and I worked very closely with the public. I must tell you, and I would let the world know, and I've told everybody, that [secretary of state] is the best job in Arizona because you can help so many people. You have knowledge of everything that is going on. Because of my prior experience, by working in the magazine, I learned all about the state, the little cities, and so forth. The people felt that they had an opportunity to call me and I would respond. I never took my phone out. All the time I was secretary of state or governor, it was there, and it's still in the phone book and it's the same number. Because I feel that when people call, they don't want to talk to a machine, they want to talk to you if they can. I do have a machine, because you can't stay home and answer all the calls...I'd say from 1977 to 1988, when I became governor, I probably had one of the best staff in the secretary of state's office. We had no [voicemail]—you got a voice, you got a person...I enjoyed being secretary of state, learning all the laws, working with the legislature...all of the people that I worked with, we remain friends.²²





LESSONS LEARNED: “The 12 Men in My Life”

Rose Mofford gave many speeches during her public service career. While each speech catered to a particular event, issue, and audience, some common themes infuse nearly every speech she delivered: her Arizona roots, her dedication to the people of Arizona, and her extensive public service career. Always an entertaining speaker, Rose never failed to incorporate plenty of humor into her speeches. Her funny stories and down-to-earth wit were an important part of her signature speaking style that allowed her to connect to her audience members like each one was a longtime friend.

The following excerpt exemplifies these key aspects of Rose’s unique and memorable public speaking style. The topic of her speech—education—was one of Governor Mofford’s highest priorities throughout her term. In an inspirational and engaging way, Rose encouraged college students to learn from others, which she cleverly demonstrated in examples from her own political career, then spanning 47 years. Another feature of the speech is her focus on former governors—a group that Rose fondly called “the 12 men in my life.” The speech shows how Rose drew upon the experiences and strengths of her predecessors over the course of her career, and how much she learned from and enjoyed her relationships with each and every one of them. It also provides important insights into what Rose believed were the keys to success—not just in politics but in life in general—that she learned along the way.

...I’ve been fortunate to have worked with 12 [governors], and with hundreds of state legislators and thousands of city, county, and state officials—and I have enjoyed every day of it. I’ve learned from each of them, and I want to share some of what I’ve learned with you.

Governor R. T. Jones was an investigator. He wasn’t content to take rumor as fact. I hope your time as students has taught you to be investigators as well. Don’t take rumors as facts. Examine issues, research them, and investigate opportunities—by doing so, you’ll find that there are many more opportunities open to you than you might think.

During the days of Governor Sidney P. Osborn, my brother John was on the highway patrol. He wore badge number one, and had the world’s best sense of humor. I was working at Arizona Highways magazine, and John thought it was funny to call and imitate the governor: “This is Sidney P. Osborn—send over 200 copies of the magazine.”

One day, the magazine had announced that it would go from black-and-white to color. The switchboard was alive with calls. My secretary was out, the phone rang, and I grabbed it. The voice said, “This is Sidney P. Osborn.” My immediate response was, “The hell, you say!” He said, “Lady, this is Sidney P. Osborn!” I said, “Governor, I apologize. I’ll bring them over on my back if necessary.”

When I resigned my position to become assistant secretary of state, I submitted my resignation to him. His note came back, thanking me for my service to the magazine and wishing me well in the new job. On the bottom was a handwritten note, “The hell, you say! Sidney P. Osborn.”

Governor Osborn had a sense of humor and taught me how important that is in any walk of life. He was also compassionate and always had an open door. That’s the second lesson of this brief history course: compassion. Life is not just facts and figures—it’s people. Your studies here have given you tools for future success. You are well-positioned to receive many blessings. Never forget there are many without such advantages. Never forget you have an obligation to give back as well as to receive.

Governor Dan Garvey...was always interested in the out-of-doors. Certainly there can be no greater place on this earth to enjoy the out-of-doors than the state of Arizona. I hope that, during your time here, you have developed—as I have—a love for the mountains, the canyons, the deserts, and the open spaces of this great state. I hope you will carry with you an



(left) Former Arizona Governors (from left) Jack Williams, Rose Mofford, Sam Goddard, Raul Castro, and Evan Mecham, at the State Capitol complex, 1996. Photo by Rob Schumacher/*The Arizona Republic*. (right) Governor Bruce Babbitt with Rose Mofford, 1987. Courtesy of Rose Mofford.

appreciation of the natural beauty that is our heritage—and remember that clean air, clean water, and the unsoiled beauty of protected wilderness areas are our responsibility as well as our heritage.

Governor [Howard Pyle](#) was a communicator. Even our current “great communicator,” Ronald Reagan, could have taken a few hints from Governor Pyle. Communication is more than just radio or T.V. It’s more than just a few catchphrases. Communication through the spoken or written word means success if you’re clear, concise and interested in your reader or listener—but it means failure if you’re vague and imprecise. Education is what can be the difference between the two. Your education has given you the skills to communicate effectively. Use them.

[Ernest McFarland](#) was the only governor to have held leadership positions in all three branches of Arizona state government. He cared about Arizona and about the people he served. All the textbooks in the world, all the research and term papers don’t mean anything if you don’t care about your subject, if you don’t care about your work—most important, if you don’t care about people. Governor McFarland succeeded because it was obvious that he cared about the issues and about the people of this state. He and his successors, my good friends [Paul Fannin](#) and [Wes Bolin](#), put people first.

Governor [Sam Goddard](#) looked to the future... The future: That’s really what this ceremony is all about. I’m proud of an awful lot about this state, but I’m not very proud about some of the low rankings we get on our educational system, because education goes to the very core of the future of this state and of its citizens. We can be proud of institutions like [this] because their business is preparing people—young and old—for a future they can look forward to...

Governor [Jack Williams](#) was a student of history. He revered history and taught me that we can learn from our mistakes as well as our successes—and not to repeat the mistakes. His successor, [Raul Castro](#), was a man of determination—and the only person in our history to serve three different ambassadorships. During Governor Castro’s tenure, many foreign dignitaries were received at the Capitol. Raul Castro showed me that we live in a global society—that we can’t pretend to live in isolation or build barriers between ourselves and other nations. Our global society is an interdependent society. We can’t retreat in the face of enormous economic challenges of an interdependent world. Instead, we have to rise to the challenges: in the workplace and in the classroom, too.

[Bruce Babbitt](#) understood those challenges. He was a scholar—not in the stuffy, ivory-tower sense of the term, but a man who understood the meaning of

“applied education.” He was an advocate—for child care, for education, for the environment, for the Central Arizona Project. And he knew how to get things done by doing his homework and by involving others.

Over the past year or so, I’ve thought a lot about a particular phrase used often by my immediate predecessor, [Evan Mecham](#): “The good people of Arizona.” I think that Governor Mecham and I probably would use that term differently, and I think it’s a shame that the term has come to be a political catchphrase to include those with certain political beliefs and to exclude all others.

It’s time for us to redefine the term “the good people of Arizona,” because that should mean all the hard-working people of this state. It should mean people who care about their future, their children’s future, their state’s future, and their nation’s future. It should mean people who are willing and able to rise to the challenges we face. It should mean people with compassion for the less fortunate. It should mean people who insist on a clean and healthy environment, on the best educational system possible.

A few weeks ago, a young reporter asked me what sources I drew my advice from. It comes from every corner of the state. I have walked the cotton fields in Parker and helped sandbag their homes when floods ravaged the area. I served on the emergency council when the homes and businesses in Clifton were flooded, and I have walked the streets of that city as we worked to find temporary shelter for the victims. In each place, I listened to the advice given by all the people I met. Clarence Dupnik, Sheriff of Pima County, gives me his opinions, as does Helen Reece, Justice of the Peace in Winkelman. My old friend, Ed Sawyer in Safford, the ranchers at the Arizona National Livestock Show, the cotton growers, young men and women of Future Farmers, people in mining, medicine, education, and health care—I exchange ideas with all of them.

These are the good people of Arizona. They want the same things you and I want. They want to make our state a trendsetter in business innovation, community cooperation, and management of government. They recognize that our state has everything it takes to fulfill the potential of greatness.

Commencement Speech, 1988



“Considering the state she found the state government in, she did the best she could. It wasn’t a place she wanted to be, and we’ve all referred to [Rose Mofford] as ‘the healing governor.’”

— JANE HULL, THEN HOUSE SPEAKER, *PHOENIX GAZETTE*, MARCH 6, 1991

FIRST ARIZONA GOVERNOR TO FOLLOW AN IMPEACHMENT

In February 1988, while Rose was serving her fourth term as secretary of state, the legislature voted to approve House Resolution 2002, impeaching Governor Evan Mecham. Once again, Rose became acting governor, but this time the story had a much different ending. When the Senate voted to impeach Mecham on April 4, 1988, Rose ascended to the governorship. Rose never aspired to be governor; she never asked for the job, never campaigned for it, and was able to move beyond bipartisan maneuvering and do what she felt was the best thing for Arizona and its citizens at the time. And when the political circumstances demanded that she take the reins, Rose “played the hand that she was dealt” for the people of Arizona.²³

Upon taking office, Governor Mofford understood that her first task at hand was to calm the waters, take control, and restore confidence in the State Capitol. To do this, Rose took the higher ground and chose civility over condemnation, soothing rather than further fueling an already painful situation in Arizona politics. On April 4, 1988, Rose released the following statement:

Members of the press and my fellow Arizonans: This is a difficult hour in our state’s history. My heart goes out to the entire Mecham family. Today, we have reached

(facing page) Governor Mofford pictured in State of the State address program, January 14, 1991. Courtesy of Karen Scates. (below) Governor Mofford reads a brief statement to reporters after the Senate voted to convict Evan Mecham, April 4, 1988. Photo by *The Arizona Republic*.



“The impeachment was making national headlines. She helped restore the state’s credibility.”

— GEORGE CUNNINGHAM, GOVERNOR MOFFORD’S CHIEF OF STAFF, *ARIZONA REPUBLIC*, NOVEMBER 16, 2004

the end of difficult times in Arizona. I know the decision made by the Senate today was not reached lightly. It is time to put all that behind us and move forward. Today our constitution has worked. Our elected representatives have spoken. As we work together to bind the wounds of the last few months, let us purge our hearts of suspicion and hate. Today, none of us are Republicans, none of us are Democrats. We are all Arizonans. Let us go forward together as Arizonans. I ask all of you for your prayers and your support, both for me and the Mecham family. I did not ask for this burden. But I do not shrink from the job before me. With God’s help, I will not let you down.

I am an Arizona pioneer woman. I am willing to make the tough choices.... Join with me in making these difficult decisions, and together we will journey on toward the next frontier.



(above) Rose Mofford is sworn in as governor, 1988. Courtesy of Rose Mofford.
(facing page) Mofford waves to the crowd after becoming governor, April 1988.
Photo by Rob Schumacher/*The Arizona Republic*.

FIRST WOMAN GOVERNOR OF ARIZONA

Governor Rose Mofford rose to the occasion indeed. While some legislators predicted that Rose would be more of a caretaker than a governor, she would prove them wrong in her first State of the State address to the 39th Legislature. In her opening, Rose set the gallery at ease with her trademark humor, commenting how as governor she would be expected to have “the courage of a pioneer woman, the compassion of Gandhi, the wisdom of Solomon, and the energy of Magic Johnson.”²⁴ She also projected a hopeful outlook: “I believe that today, the state of the state is hopeful. Things are not perfect but since I assumed office, what was chaos has been calmed. What was divisive has been brought together.”²⁵ Her speech took a serious and practical turn as Rose delved into her major proposals to tackle the budget deficit, spur the economy, protect the environment, and channel more state funds toward education, prison reforms, teen pregnancy and child abuse prevention, health care, and programs for seniors, the mentally ill, and the homeless. This maiden address presented a strong, balanced agenda that impressed both Democrats and Republicans alike, and set the tone for a strong, consistent governorship over the next three years.

The future of Arizona and the prosperity, safety, and health of Arizona’s people were Rose’s first priorities, and as governor she took a practical yet caring approach to Arizona’s future. In her first year as governor, she concentrated on the four Es: Economic Development; Education; Environment; and Exact Count. Rose’s goals were clear: She wanted Arizona to become competitive in regional, national, and international markets and for the words “made in Arizona” to become synonymous with quality and consumer satisfaction. In terms of education, she wanted to restructure and revitalize Arizona’s educational system and help it to become one of the most successful in the country. Environmentally, she wanted to maintain a delicate balance between natural resources and urbanization so that Arizona’s natural wonders could be both protected and enjoyed and that Arizona’s most critical resource—water—would be carefully and wisely managed for future generations of Arizonans. Finally, she pushed for a comprehensive and efficient 1990 census process to ensure that Arizona received its fair share of federal appropriations in the future. Assisted by an intelligent and capable support staff, Governor Rose Mofford’s office did much toward the achievement of these lofty goals.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM GOVERNOR MOFFORD'S TERM

- Re-established paid state holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr., reversing economic boycotts, restoring tourism industry, and mitigating national criticism and controversy
- Provided tax relief for the Cactus League and created a sports promotion office to recruit and retain Cactus League franchises and other sports programs
- Made over 900 appointments to state commissions, boards and courts, including 25 judges, and more appointments to women and ethnic minorities than any previous governor
- Managed statewide emergency mobilization for natural disasters—fires, floods, freezes, and droughts—and acquired federal and state funds to provide relief to disaster victims
- Established the Governor's Office of Drug and Substance Abuse to support prevention and educational programs targeting youth and elderly in rural and urban areas
- Created a Governor's Task Force on AIDS to develop an effective and coordinated statewide response to the HIV epidemic
- Restructured State Corrections facilities and established a separate juvenile corrections facility
- Launched environmental studies and programs, such as the Brown Cloud Study, legislation for clean-burning fuels, and the Riparian Habitat Task Force
- Strengthened economic development efforts through the establishment of a Commerce and Economic Development Commission
- Revised credit card legislation that made possible credit card companies' relocation to Arizona and related job growth
- Provided educational funds to programs serving at-risk preschool, junior and high school students, limited English proficient students, non-literate adults, and gifted students
- Maintained "Good Neighbor" policy with Mexico and formalized cooperative efforts to promote research, education, technology development and tourism across borders
- Created the Governor's Productivity Council to encourage both state agency productivity and accountability to the citizens of Arizona
- Balanced the state budget three times in 18 months, including two mid-year budget crises
- Increased the Department of Transportation's ability to construct highways in rural Arizona

"She's been strong and relentless on the big issues."

— FORMER GOVERNOR BRUCE BABBITT²⁶

Rose took on some of the most divisive and controversial issues of her day, and in ours: She was a key figure in the re-establishment of the paid holiday for Martin Luther King Jr., which was first established by Governor Babbitt and later rescinded by Governor Mecham. As governor, Rose fought hard to get Arizona legislators to "do the right thing" and recognize Dr. King's tremendous achievements, and finally after four long, painful years of debate, Arizona citizens voted to institute Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 1992.²⁷ A strong advocate for the homeless of Arizona, Rose authorized measures to provide emergency shelter for the homeless population of Phoenix during one of the harshest winters on record. She also created a task force to study and make recommendations for a comprehensive statewide response to the HIV epidemic at a time when AIDS awareness was just beginning to hit the national stage. A consistent defender of American liberties, Rose was champion for high-quality education programs—not only K-12 schools, colleges, and universities, but programs for all ages and covering every level of ability. She voiced a strong opinion on a highly contentious topic that still divides some Arizonans: her opposition to mandated English-only language instruction in Arizona schools. In an editorial piece submitted to *USA Today*, Rose defended her position on the principle of America's constitutional liberties:

English proficiency is important for anyone who wants to play a meaningful role in society. However, the effort to declare an official English-only policy in Arizona and other states is both shortsighted and, in my view, unconstitutional.

Arizona has devoted considerable resources to encourage exports to other countries such as our neighbors in Mexico and in Taiwan, where we have a trade office.

Strictly interpreted, an English-only constitutional amendment could hamper that effort by inviting a lawsuit from any citizen objecting to state agencies publishing brochures or executing agreements in any foreign language. This would put our state at a serious disadvantage with other states and countries which recognize the importance of helping businessmen and tourists with pamphlets and documents available in other languages.



Governor Mofford holds up the MLK holiday bill, March 17, 1990. Photo by Michael Ging/*The Arizona Republic*.

GOVERNOR ROSE MOFFORD'S STATE OF THE STATE SPEECH
Delivered to the 39th Legislature, Second Regular Session
January 8, 1990

This proposition could also bar state employees from answering the most routine questions and providing help in many circumstances. This is just one reason I believe such English-only amendments are unconstitutional.

In the U.S. Supreme Court case of Meyer vs. State of Nebraska (1923), the court reviewed a controversial statute forbidding any teacher to “teach any subject to any person in any language other than the English language.” The court said in language which I believe is applicable here:

“The individual has certain fundamental rights which must be respected. The protection of the Constitution extends to all, to those who speak other languages as well as those born with English on the tongue. Perhaps it would be highly advantageous if all had [a] ready understanding of our ordinary speech, but this cannot be coerced by methods which conflict with the Constitution—a desirable end cannot be promoted by prohibited means.”

That led the Supreme Court to conclude that the statute was “arbitrary and without reasonable relation to any end within the competency of the state.”

The constitutional rights to free speech and to vote are such cherished rights in the USA that bilingual ballots are mandated by federal law, thereby unaffected by English-only amendments to state constitutions.

Passage of an English-only amendment would cause more problems for Arizona than it would solve. Now that the federal courts have once again found constitutional flaws with the concept, I, for one, am very happy to say: Adios, English only!²⁸



...It's 1990. A new decade. The census. A year to count and be counted. We can secure our fair share of federal dollars and congressional districts by counting every Arizonan. This year every Arizonan should be able to count on us as well.

Last January, I stood before you and challenged you to join me in meeting the needs of our state and our people.

The issues are much the same; the solutions are as painful as ever. The sense of urgency is even greater. And, we all know, in an election year, there is a great temptation to avoid hard choices.

We will resist that temptation. Arizonan is counting on it.

In 1990, both the times—and your governor—are tougher.

The state of Arizona is burdened by the unresolved problems of the past, namely a budget deficit, a still weakened economy and a growing public outrage over the suffering caused by crime and drugs.

Those of you who know me, know that I am strong and those burdens will never wear down this governor's sense of optimism and good faith. Ladies and gentlemen, our time has come! It is time to work cooperatively, to solve problems, to stand and be counted...

First, let's address the deficit and the budget. In this area, I would like to be counted as the Governor of Prudence...

...The fight against crime and drugs must be another priority. I intend to be counted as a Governor of Protection...

... [T]he third major element of my plan: economic growth and security. Here, I would like to be remembered as the Governor of Prosperity...

In my closing, let me speak the words spoken to me by a great politician, a great fighter, a great healer, and a great woman—Mother Teresa.

She told me: "We do not do great deeds. We do only small deeds with great love."

We have met the challenges of the past together. We have sired in the determination of our state's future.

Let us share in the trials that confront us.

Let us share in the joy of victory and success.

Let us share in a bipartisan effort to bring the people of our state prudence, protection, and prosperity.

Let us share in making Arizona the greatest state in the greatest nation in the world.



Governor Mofford with Mother Teresa, 1988. Courtesy of Rose Mofford.



(above) Rose Mofford greets U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton of New York, 2003. Courtesy of *Arizona Capitol Times*. (right) Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, right, greets former Governor Rose Mofford, 2003. Photo by Jack Kurtz/*The Arizona Republic*.



“Rose can walk into Globe, Flagstaff, or Yuma and say hello to the first 100 people and know the names of 90 of them.”

— RICK DEGRAW, PRESIDENT OF ROOTS DEVELOPMENT, QUOTED IN *AZ TRENDS*, MARCH 1989

Rose Mofford was more than Arizona’s first female governor or the governor that smoothed over the heated political debates of the late 1980s. She became an Arizona icon. From her trademark white beehive hairstyle to her false eyelashes to her Rolodex, Rose is one of the most memorable and beloved governors in Arizona history.

Throughout her life, Rose has exhibited a strong, vibrant, and captivating persona and is the type of woman who stands out in the crowd. As a young woman, Rose was a tall, vivacious redhead; as a public official, she continued to turn heads and be recognized—not only due to her striking appearance, but for her impeccable professional skills and performance and for her congenial and helpful manner. By the time she was secretary of state, Rose was already considered the state matriarch, a tall, friendly, yet “undisputed queen bee of the State Capitol, who...[wore] a hive of spun white hair atop her head like a crown.”²⁹ As governor, Rose referred to herself as “Mother Mofford” and “the State’s Mother,” and her personal style evoked the appearance of everyone’s mother or grandmother, a strong, respected, and powerful woman to whom people could look for leadership and support.³⁰ Rose Mofford’s iconic persona in her later years captures the best of Rose’s personal traits—her warm and approachable demeanor, her fierce individualism, her maternal-like concern for the well-being of the state and its people, and her lively sense of humor—and elicited both admiration and endearment from the majority of Arizonans.

Far from being just a show or performance, Rose’s image as a strong matriarch stemmed from her connections to people. From her beginnings in state government, Rose began to maintain large metal Rolodexes—at one time she had four boxes containing 4,000 cards—full of not only people’s names and contact information, but personal notes about



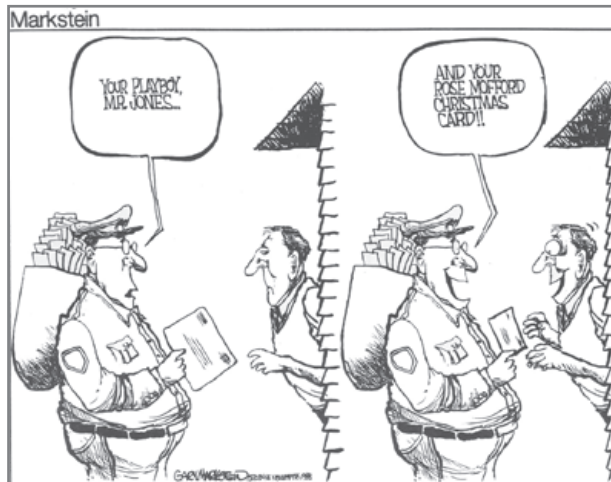
*“If you can get them laughing at you,
you can get them laughing with you.”*

— ROSE MOFFORD

birthdays, important events in their lives, children’s names, and even the names of the family pet.³¹ She has an excellent memory and the uncanny ability to recall these personal tidbits of information on the spot, adding a personal touch to otherwise superficial professional interactions. For Rose, no interaction was ever purely professional: People mattered, and she made sure that they knew it.

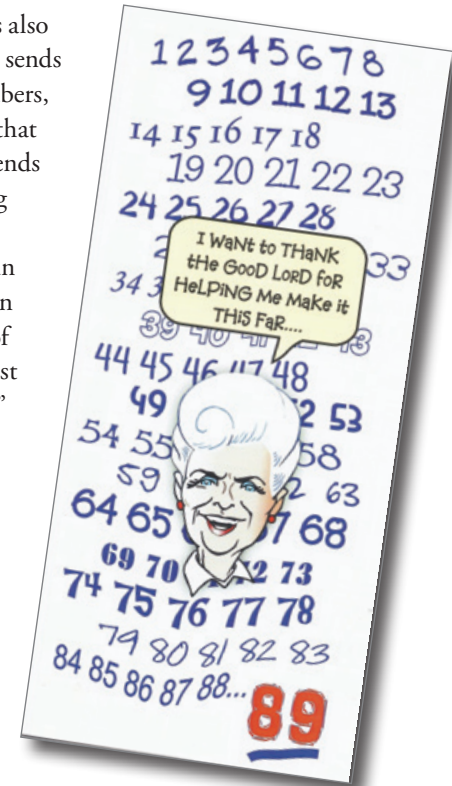
Perhaps the most indelible imprint of Rose Mofford’s iconic image is the collection of her numerous caricatures. Rose is an active participant in her caricatures, reflecting her humorous side and her charming ability to laugh at herself and with others. As secretary of state, Rose’s official stationery featured a caricature of Rose, in her signature white beehive coif, pointing her index finger with the military-inspired caption “I Need Your Support” below,

(above) Logo from Secretary of State Stationery. (right) Political cartoon featuring stir over Rose Mofford’s “Winged Victory” Christmas card, 1988.



a creative logo to encourage people to vote. Rose is also known for the holiday and birthday cards that she sends out each year to thousands of friends, family members, and colleagues. As a testament to the importance that she places on her relationships with others, Rose sends out cards to friends on her own birthday, thanking them for their friendship and support.

Commissioned by Rose herself, each card is an extension of her personality, complete with its own unique caricature design and witty humor. One of her favorite designs was the holiday card in her first year as governor. Fondly called “Winged Victory,” the card cover showed the classic Rose caricature donning a toga and holding a lit torch atop the State Capitol, a lighthearted spin on the actual weather vane of the building. The card was a hit, although it provoked some strong criticism from some of the conservative politicians for showing a bit too much gubernatorial leg, in their opinion. Despite its critics, the overwhelming demand for the holiday card led Rose to print another 7,000!



(above) Rose’s 89th Birthday Card. (far right) Winged Victory Christmas Card, 1988. Courtesy of Karen Scates. (right) Winged Victory atop the Arizona State Capitol. Courtesy of Flickr Creative Commons.

MY HANDS



My Hands Christmas Card.
Courtesy of Karen Scates.

My greatest asset during my entire lifetime, other than my wonderful and caring parents, is my hands.

They are not attractive. They are large, wrinkled enveloping hands. My own description is that they are strong, yet so gentle, so capable, and always there to help others.

These are the hands that worked to help my brothers and sisters, and scratch out a living to care for my mother and father.

These are the hands that did family chores, office work, helped in retirement homes, painted, gardened, played sports, and had time to read to thousands of youngsters, homeless, elderly, and the disabled.

They worked in school activities, scouts, civic and fraternal affairs, with law enforcement, veterans, church organizations and the blind.

These are the hands of compassion that picked up children, lifted and bandaged those that were hurt, applauding when anyone triumphed.

These are the hands that shook the hands of Presidents, the Pope, Mother Teresa, heads of state, governors, senators and representatives, and most important, the thousands of men, women, and children in every walk of life.

Always warm, firm and friendly, these are the hands that seemed to live their life helping others. Strong, gentle, and consistent...these are those hands.

My one wish is that I can continue to use them for years to come, and to be there to help in any beneficial way.

“[Rose Mofford] always had at the heart of her work the things that affected people’s lives. And she always took a humble stance. She is not a big self-promoter. There is something refreshing about that.”

— KAREN SCATES, FORMER MOFFORD AIDE, *THE PHOENIX GAZETTE*, MARCH 6, 1991

In her post-gubernatorial years, Rose Mofford never stopped working for the people of Arizona. She stays active in Arizona politics, supporting and endorsing public officials that she believes in. Rose also continues to advocate for sports programs. For example she took part in decision-making efforts leading to the signing of the Arizona Diamondbacks. As an avid sports patron, she attends numerous sports events for the Cactus League teams, the Arizona Cardinals, the Phoenix Suns, the Phoenix Mercury, and university sports events. She extended her service on the boards of countless organizations that promote community welfare, such as the Mercy Care Foundation and the Crime Prevention League; the advancement of women, like the Soroptimist Club and Business and Professional Women; and services for individuals with special needs, like the Lion’s Sight and Hearing Foundation.³² She also gives her time and money to non-profits that work with the homeless, the elderly, women and children—anyone that needs some extra help—and lends her name to worthy charity fundraisers. At one time the sole caretaker of her own mother, Rose especially has a heart for the elderly, a group that is too often overlooked or ignored. She spends hours just sitting and listening to their stories, helping them write letters, reading to them, or bringing small items that they need. One of her poignant Christmas cards sums up Rose’s approach to her post-gubernatorial years, highlighting how retirement is one more rewarding chapter of her long public service career.



Former Governor Rose Mofford.
Photo by Josh Coddington/*The Arizona Capitol Times*.

“OUR MOM”

Rose Mofford’s tribute to her mother, written several years after her mother’s passing, provides a glimpse into the warm, nurturing family life and strong female role model that influenced Rose’s life. Rose never had children of her own, but drawing on her mother’s example, she became a matriarch in her own right: “the State’s Mother.”

“Mom” was a big smile with love in the middle...her two eyes filled with hope and pride... and just a little bit of fear.

She was a member of the world’s greatest sorority...she was America’s hardest working career girl...she was our “Mom.” She was a tired sigh standing over a sink filled with dirty dishes...she was the future of the world in a pretty dress...she was our “Mom.”

Our “Mom” was the most talented and useful of all living people. She could dance, sing, change, cuddle, coax, kiss and burp babies...She could take leftovers from the refrigerator and blend them into a banquet fit for kings...she could attend PTA meetings...volunteer for church work... and push tons of spinach through the lips of each of us.

“Mom” stood over hot stoves...pushed irons back and forth over small and large shirts and frilly and sports dresses...she picked up the toys and darned socks and gave sympathy and tried to see both sides of every argument.

“Mom” lent her sons to America to fight its wars...furnished quarterbacks for football teams. She soothed hurt feelings and sang lullabies and bandaged up playground wounds and worried about the family budget.

Our “Mom” liked to look pretty for other people...and cried at weddings and watched us graduate from high school and college.

“Mom” was the original Jill of all trades...she was a housekeeper, plumber, gardener, carpenter and chef...she was a baby-sitter, nurse, psychiatrist and judge...she was a pediatrician, hostess, seamstress, janitress and Sunday School teacher.

“Mom” was a diplomat holding a safety pin...a philosopher with a cake in the oven...a goodwill ambassador making oatmeal in the morning.

She held back a tear when she fitted our oldest sister into her first formal party gown. She held back a tear when she saw her young daughter start off to school for the first time.

And she held back a tear when the clouds of war gathered over the world...because she knew the war lords would use her two sons for pawns.

Part of each day was spent holding back tears...because “Mom” only cried at night.

Our “Mom” had the courage that brought gentleness to nations...she gave warmth to the world. She’s God’s greatest invention...She’s our “Mom.”



PROLOGUE: First Lady of Arizona

“[Rose Mofford] is a unique commodity in American politics, and maybe, we’ll never see somebody like her again.”

— MIKE HAWKINS, MOFFORD ADVISOR, ARIZONA REPUBLIC,
JANUARY 19, 1990

To conclude this narrative of Rose Perica Mofford and her achievements, we must turn to Rose herself, the ultimate expert and definitive narrator of her own story. Her own personal recollections provide the best expression of who Rose Mofford is, what she has accomplished, and what she has stood for throughout her entire life. In her own words, the following statement captures the essence of our First Lady of Arizona.

From the Desk of Rose Mofford: Reflections on her 75th Birthday

Fifty-one years in state government: I began as a “wet-behind-the-ears” secretary at the age of 18, and ended my career as governor. And throughout more than half a century, I was motivated and inspired by my greatest love—the state of Arizona and its people.

I was born and raised in Globe, a small town that exemplified the best in Arizona: hard-working people who cared for each other and did whatever they could to improve life for all the citizens. That meant looking out for each other, contributing to those in need. I learned those lessons very early from my own parents and neighbors who were kind and generous, and who demanded only the best from each person they met.

After graduating from high school, I moved to Phoenix (still very much a small town at that time) and here I discovered the same small-town values at work. Politicians were more concerned about the welfare of Arizona’s citizens than enriching their own nest; integrity, courtesy, and consideration were the ideals they held high.

Throughout those 51 years, I had the privilege of serving in so many aspects of state government: the Tax Commission, the Treasurer’s

ENDNOTES

Office, *Arizona Highways* magazine, the Office of the Secretary of State, and finally, the Office of the Governor. During this time, I have continued to find the same dedicated, honest, and thoughtful people. Today, 17 years after I left office, those same people continue to show their commitment to public service through elected offices, their countless hours of volunteer service, and their generous contributions to the efforts which benefit the citizens of Arizona.

Many other Arizona figures may offer different impressions of their Arizona memories. It may involve Arizona's natural beauty: hiking the West Fork of Oak Creek Canyon, watching the ever-changing landscape as a summer storm moves in over the Grand Canyon, being enthralled by the towering saguaros of the southern desert, drinking in the incredible beauty of autumn's gold on the San Francisco Peaks. It might be the incredible physical changes brought about in the past 50 years: Phoenix growing to the fifth largest city in the nation, desert and agriculture giving way to miles of new homes, freeways twisting their way through the state with accompanying rush-hour bottlenecks. Others may focus on historic events: Glendale hosting its first Super Bowl, World War II making Luke Air Force Base a premier training facility, the Central Arizona Project bringing water to a thirsty desert.

But my focus will always be the same, my love for Arizona and its small-town citizens who still feel the same concerns about their fellow citizens, who still stand up to be counted. The shoemaker from Globe has been replaced by the candy makers from Glendale, the egg producers from Buckeye, the grocers from Chandler, the pie bakers from Rock Springs, the store owners from Flagstaff and Tucson, and the ranchers from Safford.

Arizona may have its unparalleled sunsets, magnificent canyons, and heart-stopping mountains, but it is the people who bring the state alive.

Rose Mofford in one of the private dining rooms at the Sierra Bonita Grill in Phoenix, 2010. Photo by Jack Kurtz/*The Arizona Republic*.



¹ 1940 United States Census, Gila County, see <http://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/az190090.txt>.

² Arizona Mining History Association, <http://www.azmining.com>.

³ Gila County Historical Society, Rose Mofford Collection, copy of birth certificate.

⁴ Arizona Memory Project, Oral Histories of Gila County, see <http://azmemory.lib.az.us/>.

⁵ Arizona Record, "Awards Are Made at Globe High School Assembly," June 3, 1938:

⁶ Conversation with Dee Hunt, Globe High School archivist and historian, May 10, 2012.

⁷ Dedication ceremony program, Rose Mofford Sports Complex, June 10, 1997.

⁸ Laura Purcell, "The Queens and the Ramblers: Women's Championship Softball in Phoenix, 1932-1965." Master's thesis, Arizona State University, 2004, 16.

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¹⁰ Arizona Softball Foundation, <http://www.arizonasoftballfoundation.org/women/mofford-rose.html>.

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¹² *Arizona Daily Star*, "Happy Birthday Rose," June 10, 1997.

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¹⁵ Draft speech, Rose Mofford's Induction into Arizona Democratic Hall of Fame, n.d., RG 2, Arizona State Archives.

¹⁶ Rose Mofford, interview, 1976, Arizona Historical Society Central Arizona Division.

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¹⁸ Office of the Governor, Press Release, May 20, 1988.

¹⁹ Various letters from Rose Mofford, RG 2, Arizona State Archives.

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²² Rose Mofford, interview, 1988. Arizona Historical Society Central Arizona Division.

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²⁶ *USA Today*, "King Day may be her crown," May 16, 1990.

²⁷ *The Arizona Republic*, "King Day made law by Mofford," September 23, 1989.

²⁸ *USA Today*, "Say 'adios' to official-language laws," February 12, 1990.

²⁹ *The Arizona Republic*, "1 woman, 1 vote; you'd better vote, too," August 3, 1986.

³⁰ *Phoenix Gazette*, "Mother Mofford soothed the pain," March 6, 1991.

³¹ *Arizona Capitol Times*, "Rose Mofford," November 12, 2004.

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SRP is proud to provide printing for this commemorative book.



“My only hope is that history will show that I did the job I was asked to do, and that I did it with honesty, integrity, a sense of humor, and with a real commitment to this State I love so much.”

— GOVERNOR ROSE MOFFORD,
STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS,
JANUARY 14, 1991

