



Dennis Myers, 1948-2019

It's the end of an era. New legislators will never be interviewed by Dennis Myers or grow to understand the depth of his knowledge or passion for Nevada history. They won't be surprised by the flash from the old-fashioned camera he wore around his neck to be ready for candid photo opportunities. They won't be rendered inarticulate by a tough question from the unassuming reporter far more knowledgeable than they on just about any political topic. Dennis Myers, reporter extraordinaire, died after a stroke last week.

I met Dennis 40 years ago when he covered the creation of the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, wanting to know how the food would be donated and distributed and what exactly was in those lunches in the Summer Food Program. Later, when I was the Executive Director of the Children's Cabinet, he'd call me at all hours, especially on the weekends when he was working on a news story and thought I had a piece of information he might need.

Our paths crossed socially here and there as we were friends with some of the same people, mostly feminist women who naturally gravitated toward him as someone who understood their struggles and valued their voice. His last feature for the Reno News & Review focused on the difference a female majority made during the 2019 legislative session. Dennis, with all his interesting quirks, was one of the good guys.

As a journalist, he was in a class of his own. His knowledge of Nevada history was deep and detailed. He understood the nuances of Nevada politics and asked people the right questions to elucidate the truth. He worked for many years as a television reporter before he was fired for broadcasting a story an advertiser didn't like. He had too much integrity to ignore the facts.

Dennis was indefatigable as a reporter, logging long hours of research to follow his nose for news. Remember when Ira Hansen was set to be Speaker

after the Republicans unexpectedly took control of the Assembly in 2015? It was Dennis who recalled the derogatory columns about women, minorities and gays that Hansen had written decades earlier in the Sparks Tribune and spent days combing through 800 of them, many on microfiche. He then wrote a compelling cover story putting the pieces of the puzzle together. In the pre-Trump days when Republicans still cared about the bad optics of supporting racist and bigoted leaders of their party, the story forced Hansen to step down from the top leadership post.

Dennis had strong personal ethics. When people tried to usher him to the registration table at a Human Services Network awards breakfast where he was to be honored as the Media Champion, he firmly refused and went to the back of a long line to wait his turn. When I ran a bill to increase penalties for stalking at the request of Jerry Lewis, he objected to the Legislature offering a

rare Committee of the Whole so Lewis could address the full Assembly instead of a mere Judiciary Committee. He told me a woman terrorized by a stalker would never get that opportunity, so why bend the rules for a celebrity?

And the man could write. As my editor, he fact-checked me without mercy. Once in awhile he would question how I used a word or two, and we'd go back and forth on email before I inevitably changed it to something we both could agree on. Recently, I quoted a famous author in my column, and he dryly wrote to me that he would expect such an accomplished writer to be able to use the word Democratic correctly.

Rest in peace, my friend. Nevada will never be the same. □

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Career Discovery Day
September 12, 2019

Thursday, September 12, 2019
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Washoe County Administration Complex
1001 E. Ninth Street

Washoe County is a leading employer in the Northern Nevada area with over 2,600 employees and County officials who take great pride in serving our local community. Come join us to learn more about the services we provide to the citizens of Washoe County and the many exciting career options you can explore!

Human Resources will be there to explain the recruiting and selection process to help you put your best foot forward when applying for job openings. We look forward to seeing you at this exciting event and invite you to become one of Washoe County's everyday heroes.

Alternate Public Defender, Alternative Sentencing, Assessor's Office, Clerk's Office, Community Services Department, Comptroller, District Attorney's Office, Health District, Human Resources, Human Services Agency, Juvenile Services, Justice Court, Library System, Office of the County Manager, Public Administrator, Public Defender, Public Guardian, Recorder's Office, Regional Animal Services, Regional Medical Examiners Office, Registrar of Voters, Second Judicial District Court, Sheriff's Office, Technology Services, Treasurer's Office, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District