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GREENLIGHT



Dennis Myers, RIP

BY JEFF VONKAENEL / jeffv@newsreview.com

After filing a Reno News & Review cover story about how Nevada's state legislature is the first with more women than men as well as three news stories, one of which included former Sen. Harry Reid saying that Al Franken deserves another shot, longtime RN&R reporter Dennis Myers passed away last weekend.

Over the last 17 years, I have been his colleague, his employer and his biggest fan. He was a reporter's reporter. He was super smart, hard working, fair and productive. And he had an incredible ability to absorb and retain a massive amount of information, which he then transformed into interesting stories. He brought life to a vast array of topics, including music and the defense budget.

But his primary area of expertise was Nevada politics. He covered the state for 50 years. He knew all the major players, and they knew him. Several times, when I was visiting RN&R's offices, Reid was there talking with him.

I will not even attempt to list all the phenomenal stories that Dennis wrote for RN&R, or during his previous journalistic career. RN&R will be dedicating a special issue to some of these.

But I would like to tell you about one story. In the Aug. 15 issue, he wrote a story, "Lost dollars: Nevada lets gold royalties slip away." What is most remarkable about this story is that it was not remarkable for him. It is typical of what he wrote every week for the last 20 years.

In this story, he reveals that large amounts of taxes "are going uncollected from the mining industry for lack of legal authority." Which is significant, given

that "Goldman Sachs is predicting the price of gold will hit \$1,575 an ounce within three months." In 2014, if Nevada voters had closed this loophole and taxed the mining industry similarly to other industries, it would have brought in significant tax revenue at a time when so many government services are underfunded in Nevada. The article pointed out that neither Republicans nor Democrats, who are now in charge of both legislative chambers, nor the governor's office, have found the political courage to take on the powerful mining industry.

This is classic Dennis. He finds a story not covered by anyone else and connects the dots—in this case, the recent rise in gold prices to the ongoing lack of Nevada government funding. He explains the political process that got us into this mess and the possible path that could get us out. And he does it without any over-the-top rhetoric.

There will only ever be one Dennis Myers. He used his 50 years of experience to bring light to Nevada politics. There are now three million people living in the Silver State, who may never have had the pleasure of knowing him. But all of those people are living in a better state because of him.

I don't know if there is an afterlife. But I would suggest that if there is any hanky-panky going on behind the Pearly Gates, it's time to knock it off.

Dennis is coming. □

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Jeff vonKaenel is the president, CEO and majority owner of the News & Review.