

## Reveles a prodigal son of proud town of Miami

Robert “Bob” Reveles acknowledges that many of the young men from Miami High School who graduated alongside him in the early 1950s didn’t achieve the kind of business and personal success that he did.

But Reveles also is quick to point out that it is those same young men—the ones who stayed to work in the mines, who came home after the war to open a small business, who kept the town going even in its darkest times—who are the ones to be commended. They saved the town from dying away, so that people like Reveles could one day have a town to come home to.

Still, Reveles’ resume is an impressive one, and a testament to the moral and educational support he received growing up in Miami. In particular Reveles recalls the town librarian, a gentle and kind person who always told him to “dare to dream big dreams.” “How many kids get challenged like that ... and actually have an opportunity to dare to dream big and do it,” Reveles says.

Reveles points out that there is a long list of people from the Globe/Miami/Superior area who have dared to dream big dreams and gone on to see them come true. He is honored to count himself among them, and attributes his successes in life, in part, to growing up in a small town.

“These rural communities have a lot to offer,” he asserts. “The people in the urban centers of our country need to recognize that there are some unique values in these small, rural mining communities. Values that permeate into every dream that every child has.”

Reveles’ own dreams and ambitions led him across two oceans, into a long career in politics, and ultimately into the field that permeated his own childhood; mining.

After graduating from Miami High, Reveles joined the Air Force at the time of the Korean War. He was assigned to the legal office at Amarillo Air Force Base. While stationed there, the personnel office contacted him about a post at NATO Headquarters in Florence, Italy. He was not immune to the lure of the romance and beauty of the Italian countryside, and accepted the assignment.

But first, he came home to Miami on leave to prepare to go overseas. He visited with Dr. Nelson Brayton and his wife, knowing they were world travelers. The Braytons gave him books about Italy and Florence, and offered tips about places to visit.

Reveles spent three years in Italy at NATO headquarters, and saw the opportunities of working with people of different backgrounds. He developed an interest in becoming a member of the Diplomatic Corps, serving his country abroad in a diplomatic career.

After his enlistment service was up, Reveles enrolled in Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in Washington, D.C. But with the cost outstripping his meager GI benefits, he came back to Miami and worked at Inspiration Consolidated Copper Co. in order to earn enough money to pay for his tuition. Reveles, who was one of only a handful of young men from Miami

High who took the time to learn shorthand, put his skills to work in the mechanical engineer's office, doing secretarial work.

Once he had saved up enough money for tuition, he again called on his friend Dr. Brayton, who had served as a local legislator. Reveles asked if Brayton would write a letter of introduction to Brayton's former political colleague, Sen. Carl Hayden of Arizona, introducing Reveles and asking the senator to help Reveles find a job in the nation's capitol.

That letter turned into a job with Rep. Stewart Udall in Washington, D.C. Reveles was brought on board to replace Udall's personal secretary, who was about to go on maternity leave. Once again, Reveles' shorthand skills served him well. That position ultimately led to a 25-year career working as an aide in Congress for various congressmen, including Rep. Morris K. "Mo" Udall from Arizona, 2nd District, who at one point served as chairman of the U.S. Interior Committee.

"After that, I decided that the challenges weren't really that exciting anymore. So I tried my hand at running for Congress," Reveles explains. He ran in the Democratic primary in 1972, and while he didn't win, he greatly enjoyed the experience.

"I got to a point where I was interested in working in the private sector," Reveles says. "I met with Harry Conger, president/CEO of Homestake Mining Co., which had just made a world-class gold discovery in Northern California."

He joined Homestake as manager of Government Affairs and within a few months was promoted to vice president of Government Affairs. "I brought to them a perspective from the environmental side that they had not really had the benefit of previously." His knowledge of environmental concerns was based on his time working with Stuart and Mo Udall, both of whom had strong national reputations in environmentalism.

"At the same time I could see, at the local level, what an overzealous application of environmentalism could do to people's lives. I wanted to bring the different viewpoints together," Reveles explains. "I found myself becoming more interested in being a consensus builder, whereas in the past I had been more of an activist. But I felt that a person needs to go beyond activism; if you are going to talk about problems, you need to talk about how to resolve problems. I wanted to bring those skills together on behalf of an industry that had given me an opportunity when I was a young man."

His determination to work with, and not against, the community and environmental activists concerned about this potential new mine ultimately led to a change of attitude in the mining community, Reveles says. That world-class deposit of ore was located at the juncture of three Northern California counties: Yolo, primarily farming/agriculture; Lake, sporting a high tourism/recreation interest; and Napa, with its famous wine country.

"We became very proactive in identifying every possible interested constituency," Reveles says. "We felt that if we could identify people's concerns, we could deal with them beforehand. A proactive approach, in the long run, would be a better use of your economic resources."

That proactive, partnering approach is part of the standard in the mining community today. “That’s why I’m excited about Resolution Copper,” Reveles explains. “We’ve learned through history, and through mistakes, that there are better ways. Mining is no different. Things that are no longer acceptable to the community aren’t acceptable to the mining industry as well.”

Reveles acknowledges the bad side of mining, the side that once put the bottom line before safety, put whites above ethnic minorities, and put profit before all. But the industry itself, as well as the attitudes toward miners, has changed since he was a boy. And, he says, the good that mining can bring remains a perpetual truth.

“The things that mining does are the things that everybody needs,” Reveles says. “I remember listening to an old miner at his retirement party, who was asked to give some parting words. He said. ‘People need things, things are made of stuff, and stuff is what we mine.’”

“Too often people in urban communities don’t recognize that virtually everything they use or touch throughout the day, in their office or home, starts with mining,” he points out. “Socially speaking, it also is important to not lose sight of the heritage and history of mining in communities like Miami.”

That is why Reveles serves as statutory agent for the Bullion Plaza Cultural Center & Museum in Miami. He is proud to be a part of that diverse, rich history of the town, and feels it’s important to keep sight of the past in order to steer toward a better future in this community that nurtured him, supported him, and challenged him to “dream big dreams.”