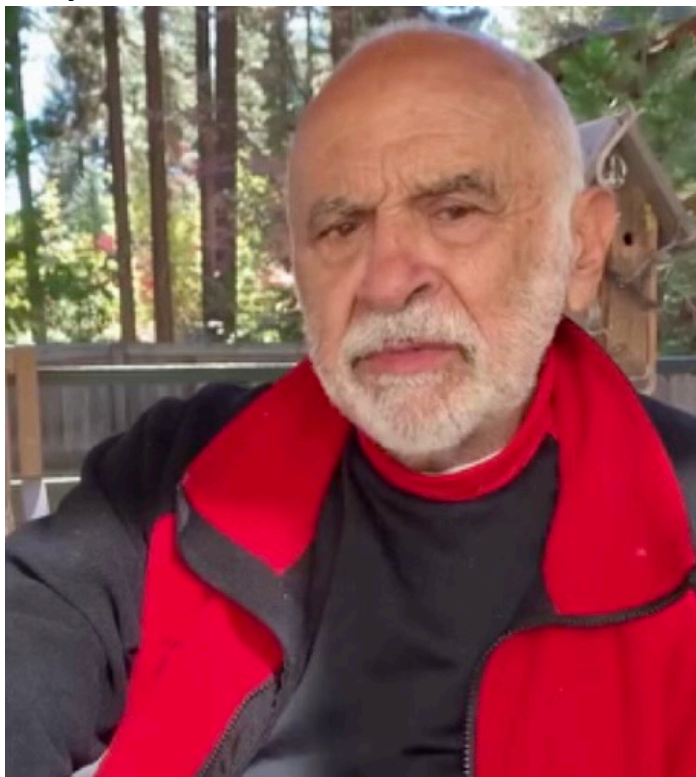


Reynaldo Martinez: Noted Nevada Educator and Political Figure



Reynaldo L. Martinez, who passed away at home in Incline village, NV on March 28, 2022, was born on June 22, 1937, as the first child of Reynaldo Sr. and Elena Martinez.

Though Reynaldo possessed a quiet modesty, he also possessed a fierce determination that he used to blaze a trail from his shepherding family in New Mexico to the halls of political power in Washington DC.

Reynaldo Sr. was a shepherd in New Mexico, who moved his family to Reno, NV, and worked there for the railroad. The Martinez family

lived in a boxcar provided by the railroad company. It was a meager, humble beginning to Reynaldo's life.

Reynaldo's impressive leadership skills began to show early as his election as the first Hispanic student body president of Basic High School in Henderson, NV testifies. He then managed the victorious campaign of his successor, Harry Reid. This began a path that took both to notable careers and forged a life-long friendship.

Reynaldo was a star baseball pitcher in high school; he was so good, in fact, that he was offered a contract to play in the major leagues. He turned that down, and instead accepted a baseball scholarship to Boise Junior College. Then, upon receipt of his Associate Arts degree from BJC, he was offered a full-ride scholarship to attend and play for Arizona State University in Tempe. Upon graduating from ASU, Reynaldo returned to southern Nevada to become a Civics teacher and coach (winning two State high school baseball championships, as well as one State championship for American Legion ball). He was the first Hispanic named to the Nevada State Coaches Hall of Fame.

His teaching career was interrupted for two years when he served on active duty in the US Navy (1962-1964).

Going from the classroom to become the first Hispanic employed by the National Education Association (in 1968) Reynaldo Martinez proved himself an all-star for the teachers' union as he helped pass the Bilingual Education Act (1968) and the creation of the cabinet level US Department of Education (1980).

Working as US Senator Harry Reid's Chief of Staff in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate for 16 years (the first Hispanic chief of staff in the upper chamber), Reynaldo was instrumental in keeping nuclear waste from being stored at Yucca Mountain. His involvement in establishing Great Basin National Park was also crucial to its designation, as was his behind the scenes work on the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA) pact with California, which was of great benefit to farmers in Churchill County and members of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe.

When a complete history of modern Nevada politics is written, Reynaldo Martinez's work organizing, and inspiring thousands of Hispanic voters and activists will be a powerful part of the story. It has made them one of the most powerful constituencies in the state and the nation.

One of Reynaldo's colleagues recently re-counted how "Reynaldo had a quiet demeanor and a soft voice, but those eyes... Those eyes told you you'd better get on with it, get it done, and get it done right. "

As gratifying as Reynaldo Martinez's life in education and politics turned out to be, none of it compared to the life he led as husband to his wife, Diane, of forty two years (Incline Village, NV), as father to two sons, Matt Rytting of Minneapolis, MN and Brandon Rytting of Rockville, MD; father-in-law to Sissy and Nathalie, and grandfather to six (Taylor, Jasmine, Hunter, Annika, Jacob and Hannah), and brother to sisters Gloria (Ferree), Ramona (Baughman), Rose (Crocetti), and Helen (Tope).

Reynaldo inspired so many, influenced more, and changed the national landscape for the betterment of us all.

In memory of his consequential life and devotion to education, Reynaldo's family has established the Reynaldo Martinez Teacher Inspiration Fund to be managed by The Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation. This memorial fund is designed to inspire and assist the teachers at two of his namesake schools: Reynaldo L Martinez Elementary School and Reynaldo Martinez Child Development Center, both of which are in North Las Vegas.

Tax deductible contributions to the Fund can be made by check to Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation. In the memo, designate Reynaldo Martinez. Address: 948 Incline Way, Incline Village NV 89451. You may also contribute online at Parasol.org/Martinez

A ceremony honoring Reynaldo's precious, transformational life is planned for Saturday, May 21, 2022, at 2 PM and will be held at the Reynaldo L. Martinez Elementary School, 350 E. Judson Ave., North Las Vegas, NV.