



Nevada Silver & Blue is published quarterly by the Division of Marketing and Communications, University of Nevada, Reno.

© 2007 by the University of Nevada, Reno.

Reproduction in whole or part without written permission is prohibited.

Browse the rest of the issue in which this article appeared.

Contact us:

Nevada Silver & Blue

Jones Center/108

University of Nevada, Reno

Reno, Nevada 89557-0108

(775) 784-4941

FAX: (775) 784-1422

Email: <mailto:msilverblue@unr.edu>

- [Submit a letter to the editor](#)
- [Email addresses of staff members](#)
- [Subscribe to the print edition](#)

Other links to the University of Nevada, Reno:

- [Home page](#)
- [Alumni Association](#)
- [Giving to Nevada](#)
- [Wolf Pack Athletics](#)
- [Order an Academic Transcript](#)
- [Office for Prospective Students](#)
- [Nevada News](#)
- [Events](#)

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

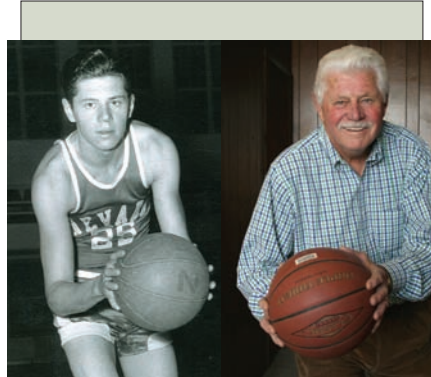
A lot of things: being a first-generation American, graduating from the University of Nevada, being on the Board of Trustees of First Interstate Bank for 25 years and on Saint Mary's Hospital's board for 22. I'm proud of having been chairman of the National Readymix Concrete Association and chairman of the Con-Expo Show in Las Vegas — the largest equipment show in the Western Hemisphere. I was president of the Nevada Associated General Contractors for two years. I'm proud of having been president and half-owner of C.B. Concrete. Our company developed the use of the first natural, lightweight aggregate for concrete in high-rise buildings. We supplied concrete for 99 percent of the high-rises in Reno, Sparks, Carson City and Lake Tahoe.

But I'm most proud of my wife of 56 years and of our family. We have four children who are all happily married and we have 11 grandchildren. We've stayed together in good times and bad. We are all in business together and have a lot of fun.

WHAT DO YOU REGRET?

I've always been very conservative and have let opportunities slip by. I should have moved to Las Vegas with my Readymix operation. As you know, Las Vegas has been booming the last 30 years.

The other regret I have is that I had an opportunity to buy virtually all of Storey County from Curtiss-Wright Corp. (manufacturer of jet engines). During



Bruno Benna '53 (education, business). Born: 1929 • The son of Italian immigrants, Benna was born, with a midwife's help, in his family's home in Garfield, N.J., about 10 miles from Manhattan. He came to Nevada on a basketball scholarship, played for legendary Coach Jake Lawlor, and has lived in Reno ever since. He met his future wife, Edna, at a Homecoming party at his fraternity house, Phi Sigma Kappa, in 1948. They married two years later. After graduation, he taught at Billingshurst Junior High School for one year. But with one child born and another on the way, he decided he needed to make more money. He accepted an offer to go to work for a former teammate of his, Ingvar Christensen, in the Christensen family's concrete business. The two have been business partners for 45 years — first in C.B. (for Christensen, Benna) Concrete Company and now, Rilite Aggregate Company.

World War II they bought all the available land in Storey County to test jet engines. Later on I could have bought it all for a million-three. At the time I didn't have a million-three. But if I'd been more aggressive I could have found the money somehow. Then, again, I wouldn't have had the time to spend with my family.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A NEW COLLEGE GRADUATE?

Get a job in your field, and if you find you don't like it, get out as soon as possible and never look back.

Give your employer a day's work for a day's pay.

Get involved in the community — in the arts, service clubs, the University, your church, different organizations — use your expertise, and it will come back tenfold.

Be social. Talk to a lot of people. Listen to what they have to say. Many times opportunities come up just by listening and talking. Take advantage of those opportunities.

When I was still going to school and tending bar at the Little Waldorf (located where the Eldorado Hotel is in downtown Reno) a businessman gave me some advice. I asked him, "What do I need to do to make money?" His answer was, "Think money 24 hours a day, and you can't miss. What you will miss is your family and life itself."

My other quote is from George Washington: "Get what you get honestly. Use what you get frugally. That's the way to live comfortably and die honorably."

WHAT I'VE DONE WITH MY LIFE asks an alum who has been out of school for a while to answer the three questions above. If you'd like to try your hand at this exercise in introspection, email your submission to silverblue@unr.edu, or send it via regular mail to: *Nevada Silver & Blue*, University of Nevada, Reno, Mail Stop 108, Reno, NV 89557-0108. Include a phone number where you can be reached. Don't exceed 650 words. The magazine will print one submission per issue. Others may be posted at the *Nevada Silver & Blue* website, www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue.