

Meet Dan Miller- Nevada County District 3 Supervisor

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NON PARTISAN POLITICS

Many things set Dan Miller apart from his opponent and non-partisan politics is on that list. Every board, be it Nevada County Board of Supervisors, Grass Valley City Council, NUHS Board of Trustees, Planning Commission or the Sierra College Foundation have all been non-partisan boards. "I don't believe there is room in local government for elected officials to engage in partisan politics as it halts intelligent debate. When on the Grass Valley City Council, we were always a mixed group of political parties, yet always left our political leanings at home. And for that reason, we got along and we got things done." says Dan.

COMMUNITY ROOTS

Dan Miller spent his youth growing up in Mountain View, CA, until 1962 when his family moved to Grass Valley following his freshman year in high school. Dan graduated from Nevada Union High School. He then attended Sierra College and a semester at San Francisco State University before he was drafted into the Army. Trained as an airborne combat medic, he spent 18 months in Germany during the Viet Nam war, and as he put it, "I never put a band aid on anyone the entire time."

After the Army, it was back to Grass Valley and then a year in San Francisco as the assistant manager at Winterland Arena. For the next five years he was on the road with Holiday On Ice where he worked his way up to stage manager in charge of production logistics and moving the show from one city to the next across North America.

Dan then felt called to attend Bible College. He went into the ministry and spent five years with an independent Christian organization in American Samoa and Mexico where he learned to speak fluent Spanish. In the early 80's Dan returned to Nevada County to work for Hedman Furniture, owned by his family since the early 1970's, while earning a degree in Journalism at Sacramento State. Dan married his wife, Roxanne in 1987 and became a step-father to two great daughters, Lisa and Sonia and their son Brendon joined the family in 1988.

Dan and Roxanne opened their children's store, Future Generations, in downtown Grass Valley in 1990. Roxanne recently retired the store after 27 successful years in downtown. Dan worked for Hooper and Weaver Mortuary for nine years and then went

into the insurance field while assisting the furniture side of Future Generations. He remains an independent insurance agent.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

Every decision made by Dan Miller is done with great thought and with an eye toward incorporating the facts with the opinions of his constituents. "I do my best to make decisions based on fact rather than emotion. People who know me know that I do not always tell them what they want to hear, but I always listen and carefully consider the outcomes. I am an easy person to talk to," says Dan. Of course, part of being an elected official is dealing with angry constituents, all who have a different idea about which problems are the most pressing and how to solve them. Dan's policy has always been to keep an open door, an open mind and gather information to form a solution that works best for the community while protecting the county from lawsuits.

Case in point: A recent example was the Dollar General decision in Alta Sierra. Dan and the other Supervisors had to look at the zoning that was surrounding the location. They then had to make a decision not just on what some residents wanted, but what was the most prudent outcome which is Dan's guiding principle in every decision he makes as a Supervisor. Had the vote been different, litigation was a strong possibility that could have cost the county hundreds of thousands of dollars and still resulted in Dollar General breaking ground anyway as has happened in other locations.

The issue of homelessness is more than complex. If there was a clear answer, all counties would be doing it. The Board of Supervisors has homelessness placed in high priority for 2018. In discussion it is noted that when mental hospitals were closed during the Ronald Reagan era, it was hoped that halfway houses and medication would be a good solution. That clearly has not worked as mental illness and addiction is rampant in California and there are no state facilities to house and treat people. Community groups are trying to pick up the slack but you cannot force people into treatment. The Board of Supervisors is taking a holistic approach to get people into housing first. This way they can work on keeping families together, overcoming addictions, and finding employment. The Board is seeking to find a location for a "day center" where the homeless can take a shower, wash their clothes, receive county social services and get into programs and not be out on the streets in the hot or cold elements during the day. The ultimate goal is a 24/7 facility here in Nevada County near needed services.

Affordable housing is on that priority list also. The county just spent \$900,000 to extend the water line for Higgins MarketPlace and there are two properties recently rezoned there to build multi-family housing. "There has to be a change in the way we view single family housing," he said.

In addition, a new sewer line was installed in Penn Valley which will allow a 35 Unit low-income senior housing project to be built there. This is the first project that the Regional

Housing Authority and Nevada County have worked on together and Dan serves as chairperson on that Commission.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

When looking to what lies ahead for our community, Dan sees that the future is tied to smaller tech companies. Our community has gone through cycles. Mining, timber, construction, and high tech which has now leveled off. Spiral internet is going forward with a \$16 million high speed internet grant and they could break ground within a year. This will supply a resurgence to our high tech industry and home businesses as Nevada County is such a desirable place to live. It is important to note that Sierra College is promoting their Industrial Arts Program and offering certificates that students can use to gain employment in the trade and manufacturing. We need to take a serious look at vocational education. The trades offer a living wage and companies are looking for applicants to fill apprenticeships...and no one is talking about it. It is also exciting to see the opening of the Fire Academy here at the Nevada County campus of Sierra College.

KNOWLEDGE COUNTS

The role of a County Supervisor presents a large learning curve. Collaboration without established relationships with all department heads, staff and entities would be a huge speed bump for all involved. The following list of experience directly translates to those essential relationships which Dan has fostered for years:

16 years on Grass Valley City Council with 4 years as Mayor.

1997-2001 Grass Valley Planning Commission.

2001 -2005 Nevada Joint Union High School District Board of Trustees and served as its President 2003-2005.

Founding President, Sierra College Foundation, Nevada County Campus.

As Supervisor, Dan represented the Board on a number of committees and commissions including:

The Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste Commission

The Audit Review Committee

The Budget Review Committee

The Grass Valley Redevelopment Dissolution Oversight Board

The Mental Health Advisory Board

Dan is currently on the board of the Nevada County Transportation Commission, LAFCO, Nevada County Facilities Committee and is now the Chair for the Regional Housing Authority. He is also the county representative to the Rural County Representatives of California.

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