



WHILE NEARLY 40,000 MINERS AND SUPPLIERS met a few miles away at MINExpo International '96, a thousand children and well-wishers sat in the bright Nevada sun as Governor Bob Miller lauded their efforts and fired mining trivia questions at the students. The extraordinary occasion was the opening of the McCaw School of Mines at an elementary school in Henderson, Nev.

What started as a papier-mâché model of a unique mining experience three years ago had become a 4,500-square-foot reality at McCaw when its School of Mines and "Gordy's Jewel of the Desert" mine officially opened at the dedica-

dence Mine; supporters like Walt Lombardo, Nevada Department of Minerals; the Henderson mayor; local business people; and the extraordinary contributions

of architect Bill Snyder. Snyder drew up the plans, and many of his firm's employees and hundreds of other people donated their time and materials to building the project.

The schoolchildren were at all times integral to the project as well as the focus of it. And the benefit will go far beyond McCaw Elementary School — the mine replica and attendant exhibits will become a field trip destina-



tion for students throughout Clark County. It is expected that about 300 students a day will tour the mine and learn about the importance of mining to Nevada and the country. Kids will be outfitted with a hard hat and other items required in "real" mines in order to truly simulate the mine experience.

The children's enthusiasm was very apparent to attendees of the Mining Hall of Fame Induction Banquet two days before the dedication. Dr. Dobry brought several of her students to the event, where they regaled anyone who would listen with stories about their exciting mine project. It was a refreshing reminder to the mining executives gathered there of the positive role our schools can have in improving the public's knowledge of and appreciation for mining and minerals.

Minor Miners

by Carol Sheppard

New McCaw School of Mines teaches students about the importance of mining today.

tion ceremony September 11th.

"The ceremony represents the culmination of thousands of hours of work by hundreds of people, including the kids," said Dr. Janet Dobry, principal of McCaw Elementary School. "We really worked hard to make this project for the kids, and we definitely achieved that goal."

The concept was born in the fall of 1993 when Dr. Dobry requested assistance in obtaining rock and mineral exhibits for the school's Caboose/Geology Museum, and the question was asked: "Is there a wider, more challenging vision for the school that would include a rock and mineral display?" Dobry challenged the school staff and students for the vision.

McCaw teachers recognized the significance mining has had on their state and the interest mining would be to children of all ages. They felt inspired to bring the mining experience to their own "backyard."

Various concepts were formulated to capture a learning experience centered around "mining in Nevada." Ideas ranged from a papier-mâché mine tunnel constructed in a classroom to an extensive, multi-storied, replica of a mine.

A more grandiose project became the goal with the help of mine employees such as John Landreth, Molycorp, and Lee Smith, Indepen-



McCaw students were NMA guests at MINExpo International '96.