



Perris Press Release

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer
Phone: 951-956-2120
jvargo@cityofperris.org

Salute to Veterans Parade Features Perris Grand Marshal

The City of Perris was well-represented at the recent Salute to Veterans Parade, an event that drew more than 9,000 participants and spectators.

Former City Councilwoman Joanne Evans was honored as parade grand marshal for her decades of commitment to the military and veterans on the local, regional, state and local level.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough attended with his son, Garrett, an Air Force veteran. Yarbrough's 21-year-old twins—Andrea and Schyler—could not make the show. Spc. Andrea Yarbrough is an information technology specialist with the Army in Germany. Marine Lance Cpl. Schuyler Yarbrough, a tanker called to active duty from his Reservist role, is on the front lines near the North-South Korean border as tensions in that hot-spot continue to simmer. He carried on the back of his car large portraits of his twins, both in dress military uniforms.



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough stands with his son, Air Force veteran Garrett Yarbrough, at the staging area of the Salute to Veterans Parade in Riverside. Between the two are photos of Mark Yarbrough's son, Schyler, and daughter, Andrea, both 21 and serving overseas.

Salute to Veterans



Parade Grand Marshal Joanne Evans, a former Perris City Councilmember, salutes the crowd during the annual Salute to Veterans Parade.

organizers hold the parade every April in Riverside as a way to say thanks to all the men and women who have put on a uniform in war or peace. This year's parade include marching bands, floats, color guards, military re-enactors, lots of vintage trucks and troop carriers, classic cars and a fife-and-drum corps.

"This is an opportunity for the veterans to get together, swap stories and be recognized for their service," said Ron Richmond, a retired firefighter and member of the parade organizing committee. "We want to thank them for their service." Richmond served in Vietnam with his two brothers and sister, who served in the Navy while working with the Red Cross. His twin brother, Robert, died recently as a result of wounds received in Vietnam more than 45 years ago.

Event organizers evaluated several candidates before selecting Joanne Evans as grand marshal. Parade marketing chairperson

Laura Densmore said Evans was "a most worthy recipient" of the honor, noting that she worked on the veterans-related issues for almost 40 years.

"It's an amazing resume," Densmore said. "It's really kind of incredible."

Evans served with the Marines from 1954-58. Since leaving active duty, Evans has served in various local, state and national capacities with the American Legion and has been honored for Public Relations work on behalf of the Legion. She served on the committee that worked to make the Riverside National Cemetery a reality. She has been a volunteer at the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Hospital in Loma Linda for decades, bringing Christmas cheer to former military personnel who live at the facility. Evans has organized Perris' Memorial Day Remembrance for more than 20 years.

She is a life member of The American Legion and Women Marine Association, the Marine Corps League, the American Legion Auxiliary and VFW Auxiliary and continues serving the member of Legion Post 595 in Perris, where presently she is the Unit President.

Evans worked as a public information officer for Cal-Fire, retiring after 34 years of service in 2005. She served on the Perris City Council from 2008 to 2012.

Evans said she was humbled by the award, considering that previous parade grand marshals included Medal of Honor recipient Lewis Millett, Air Force Brig. Gen. Stan Brown and Navy veteran and Stater Bros. market CEO Jack Brown.

"I'm overwhelmed," Evans said. "I enjoyed my military service because it taught me to be independent and to make the best out of every situation. We learned to be survivors."

Evans grew up in New York City during World War II, a time when residents saved newspapers, metal cans, grease and survived on rationed meat, sugar and gasoline. She still remembers the time when an air raid warden, spotting light leaking through blackout curtains after Evans opened them to look outside, gave her a tongue-lashing. When the war was over, Evans said she remembers submarines returning home traveling up and down the Hudson River and airplanes flying over the George Washington Bridge.

"The generation I was raised in grew up in a time of such great patriotism," she said. "You were proud to be an American and live in America."

Mayor Pro-Tem Yarbrough said his family is all about military service too. His grand-father, father, brothers and now children have or are serving.

"There is nothing more important than to maintain our sovereignty and we use our military to do so," he said. "It is our duty as Americans to make sure that those who are serving have everything they need and those who have served have everything they need to maintain their quality of life."

Yarbrough said he worries about daughter and son stationed overseas. He asked that everyone remember that every American in uniform took a pledge to put their own lives on hold while serving to protect the U.S. and its citizens.

"They are not in uniform for fun or for games," he said.

Event organizers said 2,000 people took part in the parade and another 7,000 watched along the parade route..



Participants in the annual Salute to Veterans Parade included Pearl Harbor survivors.



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem with Grand Marshal Joanne Evans before the start of festivities. Between them sits Iral Evans, Joanne Evans' husband.



Members of a color guard get ready to take their place at the April 20 Salute to Veterans Parade in Riverside.