



Perris Press Release

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Christmas Parade Grand Marshal Announced!

Native Perris resident Mary Ashley has been named grand marshal of the City's 23rd annual Christmas Parade on Dec. 10.

Because the City of Perris celebrated its Centennial in 2011, the theme of the upcoming parade reflects that milestone—"One Hundred Years of Christmas Spirit."

The parade features classic cars, floats, marching bands, military units and drill teams. The parade begins at 10 a.m. at Perris High School, Perris Boulevard and Nuevo Road, and ends at Perris Boulevard and Second Street.

"This parade has become one of our City's signature events and we take great pride in presenting it to the public," said Perris Mayor Daryl Busch. "It is one of the oldest holiday parades in Riverside County and we always attract a great crowd."

The Mayor said that as usual, the parade will be led by an elephant from the Perris-based group, Have Trunk Will Travel.

Prizes will be awarded for the best floats, vehicles, dance units, equestrian units and other top entries.

Mary Ashley is well known throughout the Perris community. She is the wife of Riverside County Supervisor and Perris resident Marion Ashley and the couple frequently attends City events together.

She was born in 1936 to parents Tom and Margaret Hanifin and grew up in a family of seven—six girls and a boy.

She attended Perris Elementary School and was in the very first kindergarten class. She graduated from Perris Union High School in 1954.

Growing up she was active in the Girl Scouts.

In 1955 she married her high school sweetheart, Marion Ashley.

Mayor Busch said that the choice of Mary Ashley to serve as grand marshal makes perfect sense in 2011 when the City celebrated its Centennial.

"She was born here, she went to school here and she raised a family here," Busch said. "She's an icon of our community.

To have someone who is so deeply rooted in Perris' history serve as our grand marshal is a no-brainer."

Mary and Marion Ashley are the proud parents of six children. Those include one daughter, Marianne, and five sons, Mickey, John, Steve, Tom and Kevin. They also have 19 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Mary Ashley has always been involved in working in the community.

She has been an active member of St. James Catholic Church in Perris and has been a board member at both St. James School and Notre Dame High School. She is a former member of the Riverside County Mental Health Board, is a current member of the Riverside County Regional Medical Center Foundation Board and is on their Festival of Trees fundraising committee that has raised a substantial amount of funds for the hospital over the past several years.

She was recognized by the County of Riverside for her outstanding contribution as one of the founding members of the Riverside County Regional Medical Center Foundation. She was active in the Perris Relay for Life and helped raise funds for the American Cancer Society.

Mary and Marion Ashley are lifetime members of the Perris Valley Historical Museum and have been one of their best supporters.



Mary Ashley will serve as grand marshal of Perris' 23rd annual Christmas Parade. Here she is pictured at left with her sisters, Katie Keyes and Betty Walker at the recent Centennial Exhibit at the Southern California Fair.



As usual, this year's parade will be led by Tai, a 42-year-old Asian elephant who came courtesy of Have Trunk Will Travel, a private business that provides elephants for parades and movies.