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106 Year-old Resident Honored at City Council Meeting



Perris Mayor Michael Vargas reads a Certificate of Recognition for Theldora Sanders during the Oct. 10 City Council meeting.

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Perris resident Theldora Sanders was born a year before the Titanic sank, three years prior to the outbreak of World War I, when the U.S. numbered only 46 states and almost a decade before the first radio station went on the air.

Born in North Carolina, raised in Pennsylvania and a California resident since 1963, Sanders spends her days in her apartment not far from City Hall, crocheting, working crossword puzzles and watching episodes of her favorite program—home improvement show "Fixer Upper."

The City of Perris Oct. 10 presented Sanders with a Certificate of Recognition as she prepared to celebrate her birthday—her 106th birthday. Mayor Michael Vargas was joined by Mayor Pro Tem David Starr Rabb and Councilmembers Tonya Burke, Malcolm Corona and Rita Rogers as they left their seats on the dais to greet Sanders. Rogers began an impromptu rendition of "Happy Birthday" and was soon joined by her colleagues and dozens of others in the audience.

Beside the City's recognition, Sanders received awards from Assemblyman Jose Medina, State Senator Richard Roth and U.S. Rep. Mark Takano.

"Thank you," she said.



Perris resident Theldora Sanders, who turns 106 years old Oct. 13, with Perris City Councilmembers Malcolm Corona, Rita Rogers, Tonya Burke, Mayor Pro Tem David Starr Rabb and Mayor Michael Vargas at the Oct. 10 City Council meeting.

Sanders was born in Durham, North Carolina on Oct. 13, 1911 to Lena and Percy Tate, a "jack-of-all-trades and the best dad in the world." She was one of three children born to the couple but unfortunately, her sister died at nine months and her brother died at 2.

The family moved to Pennsylvania in 1912. By the time Sanders was 10, she was working washing and ironing t-shirts for family members and friends.

"I've been washing ever since," she said.

Sanders graduated high school in 1929 and married two years later. Her union with Carl Shelton lasted 43 years and included a move from Pennsylvania to Los Angeles, where he worked for the think-tank Rand Corporation. Sanders remembers the couple purchasing a Ford Sedan for \$608 in the 1930s. Monthly payments: \$15.

"We wondered how we were going to pay for it!" she said.



Theldora Sanders at her home with a picture she painted.

Sanders' husband died in 1981, the same year she moved to Perris. A second marriage to Floyd Sanders ended with his death in 1988. Theldora Sanders attended Good Hope Baptist Church for many years and held a driver's license until she was 101. Today, she and caregiver Carrie Sinclair make regular trips to the Perris Walmart and Stater Bros. grocery store.

"She's beautiful person who's in excellent health," Sinclair said. "She has a wonderful personality, a very good memory and I've been blessed to know her."

Sanders keeps her own records, gets around with a walker, crochets, cleans her apartment and handles her own finances without the aid of reading glasses.

Her diet is a healthy one, consisting of everyday favorites of whole grain breads and peanut butter, honey and raspberries. Her favorite treat: vanilla ice cream.

"I don't smoke or drink, never have," she said. "Maybe that's why I've lived so long."



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