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Dora Nelson Museum Shows Appreciation for City's Support



Representatives of the Dora Nelson African-American Art & History Museum present Perris City Councilmembers and administration representatives with plaques and certificates for their support of recent renovations at the museum in Downtown Perris: City Councilman David Starr Rabb, City Manager Richard Belmudez, Mayor Pro Tem Rita Rogers, Mayor Daryl Busch, City Councilwoman Tonya Burke, Interim Museum Chair Ruth Jackson, City Councilman Mark Yarbrough and Museum Executive Director Lovella Singer.

Representatives of the Dora Nelson African-American Art & History Museum thanked the City of Perris for its support to improve the site prior to a recent visit from national dignitaries.

The City provided staff from the City Engineer's office and assisted in volunteer efforts on major renovations at the Dora Nelson museum on East Seventh Street—including a new roof, flooring, interior walls, fencing, painting, signage and landscaping.

The upgrades were completed shortly before a contingent from the Association of African-American Museums toured the Nelson museum in August.

Nelson museum executive director Lovella Singer and interim chairwoman Ruth Jackson presented plaques and certificates of appreciation Tuesday (Oct. 11) to Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, Mayor Pro Tem Rita Rogers and City Councilmembers Tonya Burke, David Starr Rabb and Mark Yarbrough.

Jackson praised the City for its role in upgrading the Nelson museum, housed in a modest building in Downtown Perris.

"It would not have been possible to complete the renovations without the help of the City of Perris, local churches and volunteers," Jackson said.

Singer, the daughter of Nelson museum founder Alberta Mable Kearney, voiced similar sentiments. She said the City "made a commitment and followed through on it."

"Words can't express my appreciation for what you have done," Singer said.

Kearney was honored in May as the Perris Citizen of the Year in appreciation for her "achievements, dedication and unwavering commitment to the City of Perris."

Kearney attended the August reception at the Nelson museum, accepting the accolades from the East Coast dignitaries who said that her efforts helped preserve and chronicle the accomplishments of African-Americans and others in the Perris Valley. The museum is named after a former slave who moved to Perris and founded the City's first black church in a building that Kearney bought and inadvertently tore down without realizing its historical significance. She dedicated herself to Nelson's memory and eventually acquired several items belonging to her.

Sadly, Kearney died just a month after the reception at the age of 95.

Others honored by the Nelson museum included City Engineer Habib Motlagh, project manager Dawn Fiscus, Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley and several businesses and individuals who donated time and materials to complete the renovation efforts.

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