

Former councilwoman, Patsy Mills, 91, honored

Jeff Piorkowski Special to Sun News

The room within the Mayfield Civic Center that usually serves as council chambers was used on Monday for a different reason. On that day, friends, former Village Council colleagues, well-wishers, police officers, and others came together to celebrate and congratulate former Councilwoman Lillian "Patsy" Mills for her longtime service to the village.

Mills, 91, did not seek re-election last November and served her final council meeting in December, capping 36 years of council service. But it is not just for her council service that Mills has been known. A friend to many during her 62 years living in Mayfield, Mills is a founding member of the Mayfield Garden Club, a longtime member of the Mayfield Women's Club, and has served many years with the Mayfield Township Historical Society, having served as president at one time of all of these organizations.

Mills said she was surprised and delighted by Monday's affair, in that she was told to be at the Civic Hall for another



Former Councilwoman Patsy Mills, seated at right, was the guest of honor at a celebration of her service to Mayfield. Shown with Mills at the celebration are her best friend, Betty Jo Mooney, seated left, Director of Administration Diane Wolgamuth, standing left, and Mayfield Mayor Brenda Bodnar. Jeff Piorkowski, Special to Sun News

reason. "I thought I was just coming to have cookies, and then I saw everyone. It's

wonderful."

Mayor Brenda Bodnar addressed the nearly 100 people assembled and compared Mills to the comic book character Wonder Woman. Bodnar said that when Wonder Woman debuted in 1941, she created a stir, but added, "We all know that the character was merely a pale imitation of the original wonder woman, our own Patsy Mills."

"Patsy Mills' super powers — no-nonsense leadership, service and integrity — were not conveyed to her in a bolt of lightning. Instead, they were earned and honed over many years of service to her family and community."

Bodnar added that, "Patsy has never been merely a member of the groups she joins. She is always both an insightful leader and the hardest worker. Top management and bottom line, all in one."

Mills was accompanied to the event by her best friend, Betty Jo Mooney, of Mayfield. Mooney said of Mills, "She's well-educated, she's very sincere about any decisions made."

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"I appreciate all of her being — her work on council and all the other things she has done, and as a friend."

When asked about Mills' service to the village, Director of Administration Diane Wolgamuth pointed to a recent occurrence in which she was surprised to see Mills at the Civic Center last month hanging spring wreaths on the main doors.

"She's not on council anymore, but she still made sure that there were wreaths hanging at city hall. That's how much she cares," Wolgamuth said.

Mayfield Township Historical Society President Joan Gottschling marvels at all Mills brings to the organization and the village.

"She (Mills) can tell you everything — why it happened, when it happened, where it happened, who it happened to. She can tell you what business was there and why it left. And she's very pragmatic. She says, 'The reason I do the things I do, make the decisions I do, is not because I want it. I look at the whole village, and I think, "What would be the best for the village?"' That's her philosophy."

Mills, asked for just a couple of highlights from her work over the years, told of being on council's Recreation Committee when it obtained lights for Wiley Park's ballfields, and of the Mayfield Garden Club's craft shows that annually raise money for high school students' scholarships.

Of her work, the mother of three and Collinwood High School graduate said, "I always try to get people involved because when people are involved they are really in tune with what's good for the village. You'd be surprised by how many people I got involved on the Recreation Committee that are still serving."

"We've had very good mayors," Mills said, noting that former Mayor Bruce Rinker was in attendance at her celebration. "Over the years, I can never remember having some of the troubles on the (council) floor that some of the other (communities) have had. We never had that. We did our due diligence, our homework."

Council approved a resolution of appreciation in Mills' honor. At the close of the resolution, it states that Mills' most common question is, "What can I do for you?"

It is that spirit of giving that brought so many people together in her honor Monday.