

Happy Birthday to Pauline Sander

Pauline Sander has attained and accomplished many milestones in her long and successful life. On June 12, she reaches yet another milestone; she turns 100 years old, joining an elite but quickly growing group of centenarians worldwide.

Pauline was born in Glasgow, Missouri (Howard County), one of eight children in a family who farmed about 150 acres of the rich Missouri River bottomlands. Barely 20 years old when the Great Depression struck, she wasn't a stranger to hard times and hard work, and her family made it through. She remembers her first church quite well, attending Salem Lutheran in the area of Forest Green and Salisbury.

Pauline married a farmer, and for nearly 55 years, they were constant companions as he not only farmed Missouri and Illinois but also worked the munitions factories in the California shipping yards and had a 40-year career as a master carpenter. During their years together, Pauline and her husband owned several pieces of property, often purchasing land or farms in disrepair. He would fix up and restore the home, and off they would be, selling that property and moving to another one. Buying and selling land was their passion, having once owned 11 acres off of West Watson (a historic building he restored) and roughly 600 acres in Jefferson County where the Jefferson County Community College (JeffCo) now stands. It's no surprise that one of Pauline's many mastered talents was selling real estate as a side job.



Although she grew up farming, Pauline was equally talented in business and banking. Long before women really broke into the banking industry, Pauline was instrumental in establishing a Boatman's Bank branch in Concord Village (around 1945). By working hard and attending night college courses to learn the banking and finance industry, she rose to the position of Assistant Vice President of Boatman's Bank before going on to establish and work many other banks and branches during her 20+ years in the industry. She speaks fondly of the many friends she made from the many different banks, some of which began with her in 1945, attended women's banking conventions together, and still keep in touch. Boatmen's Bank is now Bank of America, and some of her best memories are from her involvement with other people and the resulting relationships.

Pauline retired from banking at age 65, but her life did not stop. For the next 20 years, she drove for the Red Cross, delivering blood to hospitals throughout the St. Louis and Metro East region. Her route made a circle through North County, across the Mississippi to Alton, down the Great River Road, on to Belleville, and back into Missouri. The blood was packed in dry ice, and she delivered it in a company-furnished car, often being provided with a new car every other year for her use. Pauline felt this 'second career' (or third, if you count the real estate!) was a worthwhile cause, allowing her to interact with and help people on an ongoing and consistent basis.

In the history of St. Thomas Holy Spirit Lutheran, St. Thomas was the original church founded in 1961. In 1977, St. Thomas offered its facilities to a second congregation of about 150 souls that split from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to pursue new directions in mission and ministry. Pauline was one of the original members instrumental in launching that new church on February 10, 1977, and calling Rev. Alvin H. Sasse as pastor. It was Pauline who picked the name "Holy Spirit" Lutheran Church, knowing that no other church in the area (or even region!) carried that name. When the two churches merged, they became St. Thomas Holy Spirit, honoring the original church and pastor who started St. Thomas, yet retaining the Holy Spirit identity from their young history.

For the history buffs in the area, St. Thomas Holy Spirit would not be the only split/merger Pauline or the church would be involved in. At one time, the area in which St. Thomas Holy Spirit sits was registered as the city of Kirkwood. But in 1957, a portion of the town spun off from Kirkwood and, after a contest to name it, chose to be incorporated as the town of Sunset Hills.

Although she took many nighttime college courses during her career, Pauline always wished she had received a full college education. She feels that especially this Midwest area offers a great opportunity for education, with many of the country's top colleges right here in (eastern) Missouri. Her advice to the younger generation of today is to stay focused and take advantage of education..."Develop yourselves, work hard, and learn!" Pauline chuckles when she thinks back to all of her accomplishments in banking, real estate, and the Red Cross, all without ever using a computer!

Pauline has one daughter, Sandy Kuhn (Sandy and her husband, Robert, are also members of St. Thomas Holy Spirit), three grandchildren (Cindy Wagner is a member at STHS), and several great-grandchildren, the youngest of which is 16 years old.

Wishing all the best to Pauline as she crosses the 100 mark! Congratulations!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to PAULINE SANDER!



Photos and images provided by the family of Pauline Sander.