



Pearl Bassett

Marion, Indiana

A lifelong resident of Marion, Indiana, Pearl Bassett was born on April 28th, 1911. Pearl has been alive for over a century, having turned 107 years old in 2018. Pearl was notably the first Democratic Precinct Chairwoman in Grant County, Indiana. She also served as the first Black Secretary of the Grant County Democratic Central Committee.

During her many years in Grant County, Bassett helped establish the local NAACP chapter and the Urban League. She also formed and served as president over the local chapter of Women in the NAACP.



Photo Courtesy: YouTube.com

Bassett and six other women also filed suit to desegregate the Matter Park Pool in 1955, and she marched with 350 people to the Grant County Courthouse advocating civil rights in 1969.

Recognized for her ground-shaking activism and devotion to the social and civil rights of African Americans, she is the recipient of many local, state, and national honors including the NAACP Unsung Hero Award; the Francis Hook Award, the NAACP's highest honor for women; and the State of Indiana's Centurion Award.

In 2016, she was the oldest torchbearer to carry the torch during Indiana's 200th Bicentennial Anniversary. The Torch Relay was a six-week relay, which began in Corydon, the state's first capital, traveled through all 92 counties, and concluded October 15, 2016, with a celebration at the new plaza at the Statehouse in Indianapolis.

Pearl Bassett still resides in Marion, Indiana.

Sources:

- "Happy birthday, Pearl Bassett," *Chronicle-Tribune* (28 April 2018) <https://www.chronicle-tribune.com/common/story.php?ID=3712>
- Indiana Wesleyan University (ND). "Pearl Bassett." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beIpDmVGEuo>)