

AND FINALLY ...



Mayor Pro Tem Naomi Soto, Little Beverly Hills Neighborhood Organization President Rod Davis, and Police Chief Andy Mills (at left). Officer Gale Eldridge at right.

When Palm Springs Police Officer Gale Eldridge became the first city officer killed in the line of duty on Jan. 18, 1961, it sparked a wave of community support. That support continued Sunday, thanks to members of a community organization who recently discovered the Eldridge family resided in their neighborhood.

Driving the news: The Little Beverly Hills Neighborhood Organization donated \$2,500 to the Palm Springs Police Officer's Association in memory of Officer Eldridge Sunday, presenting the check to Police Chief Andy Mills at an event held at Canopy Wine Lounge.

- The city of Palm Springs also issued a proclamation honoring Eldridge. The effort was driven by residents David Hyams and Brian Ramos, who discovered Eldridge was a neighborhood resident.
- Mayor Pro Tem Naomi Soto, who helped shepherd the proclamation through, was on hand Sunday to present it.

Looking back: During a confrontation with a suspected robber, Eldridge was shot in the abdomen by the suspect, who then accidentally fatally shot himself in the head. Eldridge collapsed in his patrol car while attempting to radio for help. He had served less than two years before his death at age 32.

- Eldridge, his wife Emelina, and their three children resided at 634 Bedford Drive, in what is now the Little Beverly Hills neighborhood.

Why it matters: Eldridge's sacrifice galvanized the community, resulting in a fundraising effort that collected over \$10,000 (\$105,000 in today's dollars) from approximately 350 contributors for his family.

His legacy lives on through four generations, including 16 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.