

Beat: Health

World's oldest living man dies in New York at age 112

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USPA News - Born just before the assassination of U.S. President William McKinley and more than a decade before the outbreak of World War I, Salustiano Sanchez-Blazquez, the world's oldest living man, died Friday at a nursing home in the U.S. state of New York. He was 112 years old.

Guinness World Records senior gerontology consultant Robert Young confirmed Sunday that Sanchez-Blazquez died on Friday afternoon at the Riverwood Health Care Center in Grand Island, a town and island in western New York. His official cause of death was not immediately known. Sanchez-Blazquez was recognized in June as the world's oldest living man after the death of 116-year-old Japanese man Jiroemon Kimura, who is now the world's oldest verified male in recorded history. Sanchez-Blazquez was 112 years and 97 days old when he died on Friday afternoon. Sanchez-Blazquez was born on June 8, 1901, in the village of El Tejado de Bejar in the Spanish province of Salamanca. He was known in his early years for his talent playing on a double reed instrument known as a dulzania and earned pocket money by playing at village celebrations and weddings. At the age of seventeen, Sanchez-Blazquez, along with his older brother Pedro and a small group of friends, traveled to Cuba to pursue work, eventually getting jobs working the sugar cane fields. He then traveled on to the United States and arrived at Ellis Island in August 1920 before taking up a job in the booming coal mines in Kentucky. Sanchez-Blazquez would eventually move to the Niagara Falls area of New York in the early 1930s and lived there until his death on Friday. He married Pearl, the love of his life, in 1934 and had two children with her. His extended family included seven grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren and five great-great grandchildren. Affectionately known as "Shorty" by his family and friends, his hobbies over the years have included working in his garden, taking long walks, nightly gin rummy games with friends, crossword puzzles, and spending time with his family. His wife died in 1988, and he also survived other relatives such as his brother Pedro and sister Nicholasa. But Sanchez-Blazquez remained humble despite being named the world's oldest living man, saying he did not feel he had accomplished anything special because he "happens to be living longer than other men." He credited his longevity to consuming one banana per day and his daily Anacin. Sanchez-Blazquez will be buried during a private service at the Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Lewiston, New York, according to M.J. Colucci & Son Funeral Chapels. The oldest undisputed person to have ever lived in the world was Jeanne Calment who died in France in 1997 at the age of 122 years and 164 days. The oldest undisputed person ever from the United States was Sarah Knauss who died in December 1999 at the age of 119 years and 97 days.

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