



# SOUTH PASADENA NEIGHBORS

The Official Community Newsletter ❖ Volume 4, No. 3 ❖ Winter, 1999

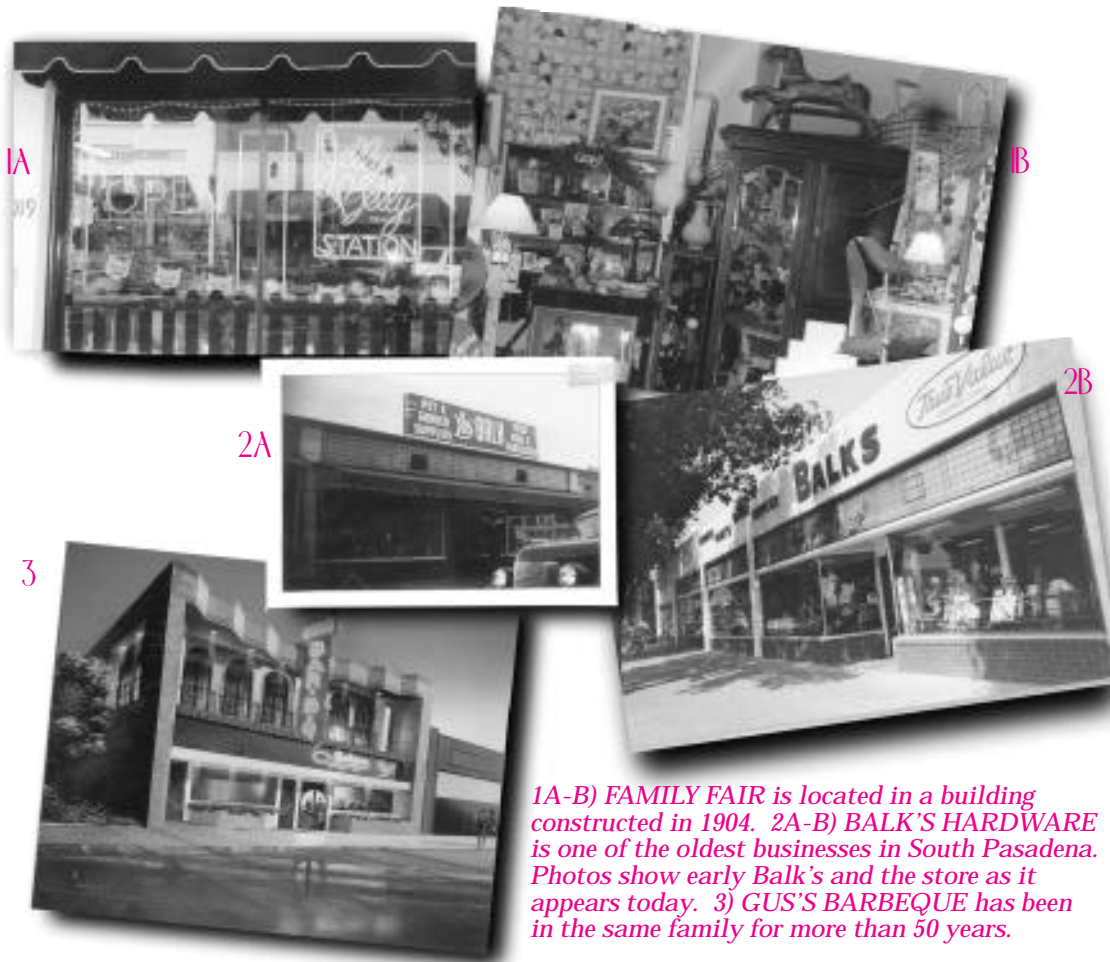
## Shop for the Holidays in South Pasadena!

**O**ne of the most unique and attractive aspects of the City of South Pasadena is its small town, family-oriented ambience. The City has the best of all worlds – a community that prides itself on its historic neighborhoods, a vibrant business community and a strategic location close | to major regional cultural and civic institutions.

Take a relaxing stroll around the Mission West District, on Fair Oaks Avenue, or on Mission Street, and you'll come across numerous family-owned businesses offering a wide variety of products and services. Many of these establishments have remained in the same family for a generation or more.

As we enter the holiday season, *Neighbors* took a figurative 'walk' too and talked to some of the District's proprietors:

Family Fair, started in 1972 as an antique shop, has evolved into



*1A-B) FAMILY FAIR is located in a building constructed in 1904. 2A-B) BALK'S HARDWARE is one of the oldest businesses in South Pasadena. Photos show early Balk's and the store as it appears today. 3) GUS'S BARBEQUE has been in the same family for more than 50 years.*

a gift and candy shop, specializing in ceramics, jewelry, books, cards, cast iron toys, and more. Owners Dick and Clara Richards have been running the Mission Street shop since 1975. Family Fair is located in a building originally constructed in 1904.

Dick Richards said one of the best things about having a business in the Mission West District is that business owners really get to know their customers and develop long-term relationships.

"Many of the buildings in this area are listed on the National Register of Historic

Locations so it's a real disadvantage for anyone to attempt to tear anything down," he said. "Most have retrofitted instead which preserves the integrity and character of the neighborhood."

Richards and a number of other area business owners started the Mission West Association in 1977. The group was instrumental in working with the City to launch the weekly Farmers' Market on Thursdays from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The association also organizes a twice-yearly Arts and Crafts Festival, held during the last week of April

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## HOLIDAY SHOPPING

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and the first week of October. The latest festival featured arts and crafts and food items from more than a dozen local businesses.

One of the City's oldest businesses is Balk's Hardware on Mission Street. Established in 1936 by Les Balk, the family-owned business is now run by his daughter, Sharon Balk.

Balk's Hardware is one of a handful of remaining general stores in Los Angeles County, stocking everything from the odd-sized furnace filter to housewares to nuts and bolts (and yes, you can purchase just one nut or one bolt if that's all you need).

"We're the last of the Mohicans here," Balk likes to say. "We started out as a pet store and in fact to this day we still have a small pet department."

A short walk away on Fair Oaks Avenue is Gus's Barbeque. The popular eatery has been in the Tripodes family since 1946. The original building housing the restaurant dated back to 1922 but was destroyed during the 1987 Whittier earthquake. Gus's was forced to close for almost three years but reopened in 1990. Peter Tripodes, the current owner, said many of his customers have been dining on Gus's baby back ribs, Greek chicken and sandwiches for more than 40 years.

"We're unique - and lucky - because we're able to maintain our identity as an individual city that has a small town atmosphere, yet we're so close to L.A.," Tripodes said. "I went to school here and have lived in South Pasadena since 1950. It grows on you - a lot of people I know left but eventually came back because they loved the environment."

Julie Jorgensen has owned Sonnie's since 1984. The Fair Oaks shop opened in 1966 and offers customers an eclectic mix of clothing, textiles, housewares and gifts. Jorgensen said her clientele comes from all over the county and even out of state.

Every November, Jorgensen organizes an 'Artists Bazaar' at Sonnie's, inviting local and regional artists to exhibit their wares, ranging from jewelry to ceramics to clothing. She said that her customers constantly tell her that what brings them back to South Pasadena is two-fold - the quality of the products and services and the atmosphere.

"I'm a customer in the area myself," she said. "I have two children and I can take them with me anywhere - to a soda fountain, to the market, to the coffee shops - and feel safe and comfortable."

So as we approach the holidays, take a leisurely stroll downtown and support your local businesses!

## D.A.R.E. AND THE SOUTH PASADENA SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM

The South Pasadena Police Department provides two programs for the youth at South Pasadena Schools. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program has been taught in our schools since 1992. Since that time, thousands of children have learned to "Just Say No" to drugs. While the program is primarily geared towards fifth grade students with a 17-week core program, the Department provides valuable drug and violence information to K-4 students as well. This year's D.A.R.E. officers are DeAnn Wheelless, Daren Wong, and William Fry.

Officer Wheelless is assigned to Marengo School and has taught D.A.R.E. for three years. She has been in law enforcement since 1989, serving as a police dispatcher in South Pasadena for nine years, a Deputy at the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department for two years, and a police officer in South Pasadena since 1991. Officer Wheelless has two daughters, ages five and eight, and donates a lot of time at their schools.

Officer Wong is assigned to Arroyo Vista School. He has worked at the South Pasadena Police Department since 1991: first as a reserve officer for four years and then as a regular officer since 1995. Officer Wong has been heavily involved with the schools and the children in South Pasadena for some time, and he continues that with his D.A.R.E. work.

Officer Fry is the newest D.A.R.E. officer and is assigned to Monterey Hills School. He began his career in law enforcement as a volunteer with the El Monte Police Department and was hired as a police officer with South Pasadena in 1995. Officer Fry is active with the young, coaching youth baseball and enjoys spending as much time as possible with his seven-year-old daughter.



D.A.R.E. Officer  
DeAnn Wheelless

Officer Matthew Ronnie is the School Resource Officer (SRO), a new program started in 1998 for the youth at South Pasadena's Middle and High Schools. Officer Ronnie serves as a liaison between the police department, the school district, and the community. He handles law enforcement issues related to the schools. The police department strives to increase public awareness of school safety issues, and the SRO, working in partnership with the

school staff, is developing innovative concepts in this area. These include the Bicycle Safety Program and Good Behavior Citations. Officer Ronnie is heavily involved in combating youth violence within the community.

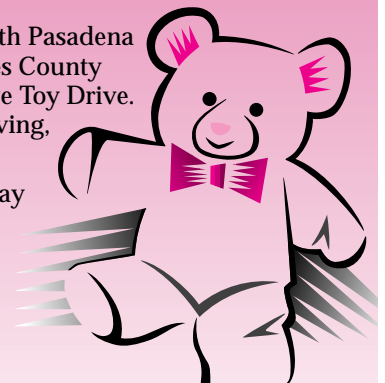
Officer Ronnie has been with the South Pasadena Police Department for 10 years. He is a passionate runner who enjoys mountain biking and photography.

In the Autumn 1999 issue of Neighbors, the toll free number for Southern California Edison was incorrectly listed. The correct number is (800) 655-4555.

## SPARK OF LOVE TOY DRIVE

With the arrival of the Christmas season, the South Pasadena Fire Department, in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, is participating in the Spark of Love Toy Drive. The toy drive began Nov. 26, the day after Thanksgiving, and extends until December 24th.

Only new unwrapped gifts are accepted. They may be deposited in the boxes in the lobbies of the Fire and Police Departments. The gifts will be distributed to burn victims and needy families in our community. Items for older children such as teenagers are especially needed.





# POLICE DEPARTMENT UPGRADES FACILITY

For years, the South Pasadena Police Department called a converted grocery store home. In 1987, the City of South Pasadena's Civic Center, which included the present police station, was opened. Since that time it has been in use 24 hours a day, seven days a week for 13 years. As with any facility that is being continually used, some repairs, a facelift, and improvements were well in order.

Sergeant Michael Neff was given the task of coordinating repairs and necessary changes to the police facility. The project is now completed and the changes are not only highly visible, but have greatly improved working conditions and service to the public.

The original facility did not include any rooms designed to conduct interviews, something police do on a daily basis. Two much-needed interview rooms were built so the public no longer has to be interviewed in the police lobby.

The Detective Bureau was completely upgraded with individual work stations built and space added to accommodate citizen volunteers working on crime analysis. The City's arson investigator shares office space with the police detective staff. Arrangements were made to include new computer technology that the detectives use on a daily basis.

The Watch Commander's office was upgraded with desks provided for each supervisor. Under the old system, they all shared one desk. This is particularly important as the sergeants now have projects to work on and responsibility for specific neighborhoods.

Other changes were made to cut the

noise and distraction that dispatchers suffered with the old configuration and to enhance the employee break room, making it more professional and more comfortable.

The police practice shooting range received much-needed upgrades. The previous range backstop was steel and sand and resulted in a significant amount of lead dust (a dangerous substance) being put into the air. The new backstop is made of rubber and absorbs the bullet, ensuring a lead free environment. The walls and ceilings were upgraded with sound-absorbing foam or rubber and, importantly, a new target system was added. This state-of-the-art system allows for enhanced tactical, realistic shooting in a variety of conditions.

Other upgrades included painting the entire facility, obtaining historic pictures of the police department and its members to decorate the walls, replacing the carpeting with tile, building a supply storage closet, upgrading lighting, removing a counter top in the PBX office and replacing it with a desk making the office more usable, remodeling the briefing room, and converting a sleep room into a computer room, to house the department's computer server and related equipment.

These changes have gone a long way towards improving the facility where the men and women of the Police Department work every day. Most importantly, it enhances the City's ability to serve the public. An open house was held on Nov. 6 to display the facility.



Records Clerk Linda Lindgren at her desk in the upgraded Watch Commander's office. The insert shows Officer Bill Earley practicing at the new shooting range.

## FIRST THURSDAYS

'First Thursdays' will be a unique feature of the Farmers' Market. On the first Thursday of each month, businesses adjacent to the Farmers' Market will stay open later to allow shoppers to enjoy refreshments, discounts, raffles, free antique appraisals, and other special events sponsored by the Mission West merchants. **FIRST THURSDAYS** begins October 7.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### DECEMBER 11

South Pasadena School District  
5-K/10-K Run  
8:00 a.m. at the High School Gymnasium.

### DECEMBER 11

Parents' Afternoon Off  
10 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

### HOLIDAYS:

City offices and Library closed

### DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve  
(Library closed through December 26)

### DECEMBER 31

New Year's Eve  
(Library closed through January 1)

### JANUARY 17

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Library closed)

### FEBRUARY 21

President's Day (Library closed)

### RESTORATION CONCERTS:

#### JANUARY 23

Friends of Library Concert: Green Ensemble concert  
Library-Community Room  
4 p.m. - \$12 at door

#### MARCH 12

Friends of Library Concert: "Reed/Bovyer/Steinmetz"  
Library-Community Room  
4 p.m. - \$12 at door

### LIBRARY CALENDAR

#### DECEMBER 8

Children's Holiday Program: "Claus Family Christmas"  
Library-Community Room  
6:30 p.m.-Free

#### DECEMBER 11

Families for Literacy Program  
Library-Community Room  
9 a.m. - Pre-registration required  
Call (626) 294-4807

#### DECEMBER 18

Friends of the Library Holiday Tea  
Library  
2-5 p.m.

#### JANUARY 29

Families for Literacy Program  
Library-Community Room  
9 a.m. - Pre-registration required  
Call (626) 294-4807

# CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING 2000

The Christmas Tree Recycling program will operate as it has in years past. If you live in a house or duplex simply place your Christmas tree next to your trash containers and your tree will be recycled along with your green waste. Apartment and condo dwellers will receive a tree-recycling schedule in the mail.



Questions may be directed to the Public Works Department at (626) 403-7240.

# TIGER RUN OPEN TO ALL RUNNERS

The South Pasadena Booster Club is holding its annual 5K/10K Tiger Run on Saturday, Dec. 11. Open to runners of all ages, the 5K and 10K run starts at 8 a.m., followed by the 9 a.m. Tiger Cub run with a one lap race around the track.

Register from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the South Pasadena High School café on Dec. 10, or between 6:30 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. on the morning of the race.

For additional information, please call Theresa Molina at (626) 403-0752. Registration fee is \$12.00.



# SOME DON'TS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

**M**ost people know what to do to prepare for possible Y2K problems. But a list of what not to do on Jan. 1 is just as important:

- ◆ DON'T pick up the phone at 12:01 a.m. to wish loved ones a Happy New Year. Phone companies say there's a limit to how many receivers can get a dial tone at one time, regardless of Y2K-related problems.
- ◆ DON'T run into the yard at 11:59 p.m., Dec. 31 to welcome 2000 by firing a gun. That bullet fired straight up may come down on the skull of your neighbor.
- ◆ DON'T stockpile gasoline. Fill your car's gas tank several days before the year's end. Keeping big containers full of gasoline in the garage is an invitation to disaster.
- ◆ DON'T wait until 8 p.m. on Dec. 31 to go to an automated teller machine for cash. If everyone waits until the final hours of 1999 to stock up on cash for the long weekend, the machines will run dry and stir fears of bank failures. And don't keep large amounts of cash at home either - you could make yourself vulnerable to thieves.
- ◆ DON'T invite hordes over for a New Year's Eve dinner and then wait until 3 p.m. on Dec. 31 to buy your food and beverages. If huge crowds pack into grocery stores on the last day of the year, tempers could flare in long check-out lines and contribute to a panicky feeling that night.
- ◆ DON'T make elaborate travel plans for the first few days of January. Though airlines promise to be safe, no one can guarantee that airport computers won't mix up reservations or that traffic lights surrounding airports won't malfunction.

## Claus Family Christmas

Mark your holiday calendar now to join the Claus Family in the Community Room of the South Pasadena Public Library on Wednesday, Dec. 8 at 6:30 p.m.

Sponsored by the Friends of the South Pasadena Public Library, Inc., this special holiday program will feature a grand bell ringing entrance by the Claus Family. Traditional and modern Christmas stories will be told. In addition, many Christmas traditions from around the world will be shared, as well as Christmas carols and dances for all ages.

For more information about this free program, call the library's Children's Department at (626) 403-7358.

## CITY COUNCIL

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David Rose, *Councilmember*  
Paul Zee, *Councilmember*

Jeannine Gregory, *City Clerk*  
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City of South Pasadena  
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South Pasadena, CA 91030

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