



# SOUTH PASADENA NEIGHBORS

The Official Community Newsletter ♦ [www.ci.south-pasadena.ca.us](http://www.ci.south-pasadena.ca.us) ♦ Vol. 6#4 ♦ Spring 2002

## City Names New Police Chief



**D**aniel Watson, a 28-year veteran of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), was sworn in as the new police chief of South Pasadena in January. He succeeds Michael Berkow, who resigned last July to become Irvine's police chief.

Chief Watson, who held the rank of commander when selected, was chosen by City Manager Sean Joyce and approved by the City Council after an extensive search-and-selection process. He will lead a department of 36 sworn and 15 civilian police personnel with a budget of \$5 million.

James Anthony, a retired police chief from Glendale, served as interim police chief from July to January, when Watson was appointed.

A life-long resident of Glendale, Watson became a police officer in 1973 and rose through the ranks of sergeant, lieutenant and captain, carrying different specialties. He was watch commander in two different Los Angeles neighborhoods, and culminated his career with the LAPD as the department ombudsman officer, overseeing the resolution of internal personnel conflicts. He holds both bachelor and master's degrees in public administration from USC.

Chief Watson may be reached by email at [dwatson@ci.south-pasadena.ca.us](mailto:dwatson@ci.south-pasadena.ca.us) or by telephone at 626-403-7270.

## Voters to Decide on Utility Tax

**O**n April 9, South Pasadena residents will vote on whether to continue the City's five-percent utility-users tax for another five years. The utility tax, established in 1988 and last reaffirmed by the voters in 1997, is a levy on the residential and commercial consumption of electricity, gas, water, cable television, and telephone services. The tax exempts limited-income individuals and disabled veterans. Without a positive vote, the tax is scheduled to expire on July 31.

The utility tax generates \$1.8 million annually for the City's General Fund. This currently represents 13 percent of total General Fund collections and is the second-largest revenue source for the City after property taxes (33 percent), and sales tax revenues (11 percent).

While the property tax portion of our revenues is relatively large, the City actually receives less than 20 percent of your property tax payments. The State of California cut the City's share of property taxes in both 1993 and 1994 in order to balance the state budget. In addition, South Pasadena actually receives only one percent of sales tax generated on purchases within the city.

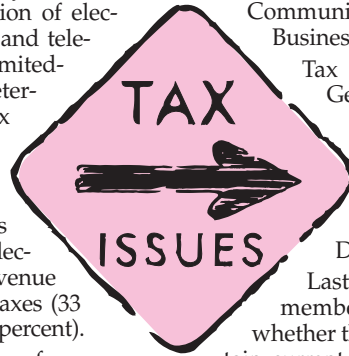
Nearly 60 percent of General Fund revenues are earmarked for police and fire protection, the cost of which is greater than the combined revenue

from property, utility, and sales taxes. Remaining costs are met by other General Fund revenues and by restricted funds. These include Gas Tax, Water and Sewer Funds, Local Transit Return Funds, Landscaping and Lighting District Funds, Community Development Block Grant, and Business Improvement Tax Funds.

Tax proceeds are used to support all General Fund activities and comprise about two-thirds of the City's annual expenditures. They support operations of eight departments, including the Police Department's \$4.8 million budget and the Fire Department's \$2.9 million budget.

Last fall, the City Council appointed a 15-member ad hoc committee to consider whether the utility tax was still needed to maintain current services. After extensive review that included evaluation of potential reductions in City services that could be made necessary by loss of the tax, the committee unanimously concluded that the tax "is essential" to preserve the small-town, residential character of our City.

Have any questions about the City's budget and finances? Please contact Finance Director Josh Betta at (626) 403-7252. For more information on the coming April 9 election, contact City Clerk Sally Kilby at (626) 403-7232.



## New Fire Department Rescue Ambulance

**T**he South Pasadena Fire Department has purchased a new state-of-the-art 2001 Ford/Road Rescue ambulance, which replaces a 1995 Ford/Horton.

The Road Rescue vehicle, built in Minnesota, was based on design specifications already submitted by the Arcadia and Pasadena Fire Departments. This speeded up delivery time and ensured the vehicle would come in under budget.

The ambulance's hand-made aluminum module is set atop a Ford E-450 chassis and is powered by a 7.3-liter power-stroke diesel engine. The ambulance incorporates all of the latest in communications technology compatible with surrounding Fire and EMS agencies and has a full complement of Advanced Life Support equipment. It's staffed 24 hours a day by two Firefighter/Paramedics and is dispatched on all medical and fire responses.



# Community Facilities Task Force Looks Ahead

The Community Facilities Task Force, established last July to explore ways to expand the South Pasadena Public Library's facilities, is now also investigating current and future senior and recreational needs (not including field sports).

The 13-member group, chaired by longtime resident Philip Swan, includes members from the City Council, the Library Board of Trustees, the Senior Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the South Pasadena Unified School District, and the community-at-large.

The Task Force indicated that the library has pressing needs for additional space. Shelving is crowded in key areas of the collection. Adding shelving would require the elimination of seating areas. Space and electrical connections are no longer available for additional computers. Most storytimes and children's programs must be held in the Community Room, far from the books, videos, and other materials designed to encourage children to love reading. The highly successful Friends' Bookstore, which raises money to benefit the library, is also in need of additional space.

While the needs of the Community Services Department are not as immediate, it also faces problems in the near future. At present, the City has no official Community Center. Instead, the 20-year-old Senior Center by day is functioning as a Community Center by night, with recreational classes offered evenings and weekends.

Since recreation and senior citizens services were combined in 1996, participation in recreation classes has increased 26 percent. Forty

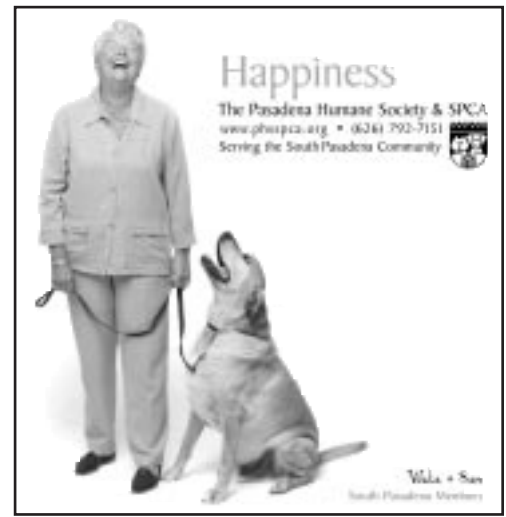
recreational classes are now offered instead of seven. Dial-a-ride trips have increased 22 percent with no additional vans, and new programs such as Concerts in the Park have been added.

The Senior Center and existing City facilities cannot keep up with community demand, and maximum use of these facilities will soon be reached. Arts and crafts classes are being held in rooms with no sinks or running water; dance and martial arts classes are held in rooms with no wood floors or mirrors; and there are no small, private rooms for case workers to meet regularly with seniors and their families.

There is also no adequate space for after school and summer teen programs, nor are there adequate local meeting facilities for Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and other local youth groups. Expanded programs for seniors, such as computer classes or inter-generational programs that would bring seniors together with community teenagers are not feasible in the current facility.

Although the Community Facilities Task Force has identified several possible solutions, input from a broad cross-section of the community is needed before any building plan is developed.

With authorization from the City Council, the Task Force is currently researching and applying for grants to fund a professional, community-wide needs assessment. The results of that assessment, which will be done later this year, will be used to formulate a proposal for a Community Center to better serve senior citizens, library patrons and all residents of South Pasadena.



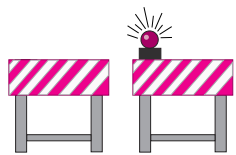
## Calling All Dog Owners!

It's that time of year again! The Annual Rabies Clinic will be held on April 18, at 6 p.m. at the City Fire Station at 817 Mound Avenue. Come license your pet and receive a vaccination for a minimal fee. Look for an insert in your March/April water bill with more details including hours and all other specifics. Hope to see you and your dog there!



## Exhibit Extended

Don't forget to visit the Pasadena Historical Museum to see South Pasadena's contribution to the entertainment industry over the last century! The exhibit has been extended until March 24. For more information, please call the Pasadena Historical Museum at 470 West Walnut Street in Pasadena at (626) 577-1660.



## Street Improvement Projects For Fiscal Year 2001-2002

Street	Description
Garfield Avenue	Street resurfacing and repair of curbs and gutters from Grevelia Street to Monterey Road
Stoney Drive	Street resurfacing from Arroyo Drive to the on-street parking area for Arroyo Park
Oneonta Drive	Street resurfacing from Summit Drive to Bonita Drive
Bonita Drive	Street resurfacing from Gillette Crescent to Meridian Avenue
Oakhill Avenue	Realignment and reconstruction of the roadway from Monterey Road to Short Way
St. Albans	Reconstruction of the roadway from Brunswick Avenue to Warwick Avenue
Oaklawn Bridge	Restoration of the parapet walls and bridge deck of this historic bridge and removal of the center pier in the railroad right of way from Fremont Avenue to Oaklawn Avenue
Bushnell Avenue	Curb and gutter repairs from Oak Street to Huntington Drive

## CITY OFFICIALS

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## CITY EVENTS

### MARCH 5

Primary election

### MARCH 20

City Council Reorganization  
City Council Chambers, 7:30 p.m.

### APRIL 6-7

Mission West Street Festival, Mission and Fremont  
Saturday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Sunday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### APRIL 9

Special Municipal Election – Measure U  
Utility Tax Renewals

### APRIL 17

City Council Reorganization  
Council Chambers, 7:30 p.m.

### MAY 6-10

Public Service Recognition Week

### MAY 27

Memorial Day  
City Hall, Library, Community Services Closed

## LIBRARY EVENTS

### MARCH 5

Voting for L. A. County Primary  
Community Room, 115 El Centro Street

### MARCH 14

Free "Families for Literacy Reading Club"  
Community Room – 3:30-6:30 p.m.  
Call (626) 294-4807 to pre-register

### MARCH 24

Restoration Concert: The Marsh/Ponce Trio  
Community Room – 4 p.m.  
Call (626) 799-0670 for more information

### MARCH 31

Easter Sunday: Library Closed

### APRIL 18

National Library Week/Springfest Program  
Community Room – 3-6 p.m.  
For more information, call (626) 403-7358

### APRIL 25

Literacy Program  
Call (626) 294-4807 for more information

### MAY 5

Restoration Concert: The Primavera Piano Trio  
Community Room – 4 p.m.  
Call (626) 799-0670 for more information

## COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPT.

### THROUGH APRIL 9

Free tax assistance for seniors (Senior Center)

### MARCH 4

Registration for spring recreation (Senior Center)

### MARCH 11

Senior Health Fair (Senior Center), 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Free health screenings, consultations. Osteoporosis and stroke testing available for a fee. For seniors 50 and over. Vendors include American Red Cross, Huntington Memorial Hospital, and San Gabriel Valley Dental Society.

### MARCH 15

Senior St. Patrick's Luncheon (Senior Center)

### MARCH 22

Senior Birthday Celebration Luncheon (Senior Center)

### APRIL 8-12

Spring break day camp (Orange Grove Park)

### APRIL 18

Spring Fest (Senior Center/Library), 3:30-6:30 p.m.  
Story telling, arts and crafts, games.

### APRIL 26

Senior birthday celebration luncheon (Senior Center)

### JUNE 18-AUGUST 24

Summer camp (Orange Grove Park)  
For more information on Community Services Department activities, please call (626) 403-7360.



## Ralphs Grocery Approved

Construction should be starting soon on the expansion of the existing Ralphs supermarket at the southwest corner of Huntington Drive and Garfield Avenue, approved by the Planning Commission last year.



The remodeling project includes a 14,000-square-foot market expansion with a new front facade, totally redesigned parking with trees and landscaping, and a new San Marino Nursery building.

## Mission District Loft Project Approved

Following approval by the Design Review Board, the Planning Commission approved on December 3 a proposal by DECOMA Industries to develop the "Mission District Loft Project" within the walls of the existing vacant storage building at 812 Fremont Avenue. The adaptive re-use of the structure would include ground floor retail facing Fremont Avenue and about 17 residential loft units.

The proposal also includes semi-subterranean parking to the north of the building incorporating the City's employee parking lot. Additional approval of a Development Agreement by the City Council is also needed for the construction of the parking structure. Construction is anticipated to begin this fall.

## Mixed-Use Transit-Oriented Development



On January 16, the City Council certified the Environmental Impact Report for the Mission and Meridian mixed-use project. The project, proposed by Creative Housing Associates, includes developing about 4,500 square feet of retail, 67 residential units and 142 public parking spaces on the vacant land immediately south of Magnolia Street and west of Meridian Avenue.

The project is designed around a series of open courtyards with a craftsman identity typical of South Pasadena. It would also provide for needed parking near the future Gold Line station. The project requires approval from the Cultural Heritage

Commission for the relocation of the two structures located on the site, from the Design Review Board for an overall review of the project and from the Planning Commission for a Conditional Use Permit.

## Huntington Fremont Site

A commercial building is being proposed at the northwest corner of Huntington Drive and Fremont Avenue at 1318 Huntington Drive, consisting of a new 6,641-square-foot, one-story commercial building and 37 parking spaces. It includes a non-drive-through Kentucky Fried Chicken (relocating from 710 Fair Oaks Avenue) and retail uses.

After a meeting with the residential neighbors held by the developers, the proposed project was reviewed by the PM Design Review Board through a series of meetings with the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission. The project is scheduled for the March 25 Planning Commission meeting. For more information, please call Associate Planner Lisa Louie Flores at (626) 403-7228.



Arroyo Earth Day Walk

## Take a Walk with Us on Earth Day!

Come join us for South Pasadena's Second Annual Earth Day Walk along the historic arroyo. This year's event will be held on Saturday, April 20 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Arroyo Park on Stoney Drive.

Discover one of South Pasadena's last undeveloped areas and bring the kids for a great afternoon of fun and learning. For information and directions, call the Public Works Department at (626) 403-7240.

## FARMERS' MARKET



4-8 p.m.; Meridian Avenue and Mission Street every Thursday. A variety of local businesses in Mission West stay open until 8 p.m. Come visit and support your local merchants!

## Check Out the Library's Spring Specials



The South Pasadena Public Library and the South Pasadena Animal Commission will celebrate "Be Kind to Animals Week" again this year with an Art Contest. Animal Art Show contestants, who must be 13 years of age or younger, should deliver their entries to the Children's Department between March and mid-April. Award-winning entries will be displayed in the library during May. For more information, pick up the entry form in the Children's Department or call (626) 403-7358.

The Children's Department will also be celebrating National Library Week/Springfest from April 14-20. There will be a special program on Thursday, April 18, from 3-6 p.m. Also watch for the return of "Turn Off the TV Week" from April 22-28!

For more information about these special programs for children, or to find out about regularly scheduled Storytimes, Grandparents and Books Read-Alouds, and Parent's Internet Classes, be sure to visit the Library. You can also visit the Library's Web page on the City's Web site, or call the Children's Department at (626) 403-7358.

## Your Property Can Be A Movie Star-Take 2

The film companies are calling and we need your help!

Production companies call daily to find the "right" location for their next movie, television show, or commercial. These locations can be anything: a tree-lined street, a turn-of-the-century bungalow, a spooky mansion, a park, a woody condo, a golf course, a soda fountain, a polling site, an empty storefront, a parking lot, a bookstore—the list goes on.

Any locale is a potential location. While it is the City's job to make sure the film company complies with the rules of our film policy, we would also like to assist them—and interested property owners—in making a location match.

The South Pasadena Film Office is in the process of putting together a "locations library," thanks to your help. We have already catalogued many properties, but we need more! If you are interested in participating, please call the City's film liaison, Joan Aguado, at (626) 403-7263.

## Bilicke Water Tank To Be Repainted

It is anticipated that negotiations underway will result in completion of the repainting of the Bilicke Water Tank by the end of May.

San Diego-based Hallmark Painting was awarded a contract last March to repaint the Bilicke Water Tank. The contractor didn't meet the City's requirements for removing the existing lead-based paint on the tank, so last September the City Council declared the company to be in default of their contract.

Hallmark Painting's bonding company has proposed to take over the contract and complete the project. The bonding company's proposal is being reviewed by the city attorney and by the environmental and lead abatement consultant for the project.

## CITY COUNCIL

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Harry A. Knapp, *Mayor Pro Tem*  
Michael A. Cacciotti, *Councilmember*  
Dorothy M. Cohen, *Councilmember*  
David Saeta, *Councilmember*

Sally Kilby, *City Clerk*  
Victor Robinette, *City Treasurer*

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