

LOCAL NEWS • News

# Pasadena's Garfield Heights homeowners offer a virtual look at 5 homes, 3 gardens in December

Charming historic Pasadena neighborhood has 'secret sauce' appeal



Classical detailing and original light fixtures shine in this historic Foursquare home in Garfield Heights. (Photos courtesy of Michael e. Stern/BuildABetterPhotograph.com)



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Yes, I am one of those people who look into lighted windows as we drive past. So you know I already have my ticket to the first-ever Virtual Home Tour presented by the Garfield Heights Neighborhood Association. For the admission price of \$25, viewers will get access to the tour from Sunday, Dec. 5, through Sunday, Dec. 12.

“(One of our tour contributors) asked, ‘What is the secret sauce of Garfield Heights?’ And we loved that question,” said Steve Preston, event chairman. “It caused us to think about those things that make this historic neighborhood unique: everything from the wide variety of front door designs (and how they “bid” visitors welcome) to the connections between food and friendship that play out among our residents. And of course, there’s our history and cultural diversity.”

Preston and his wife Janet Whaley have lived in Garfield Heights since 2004, and have been involved with the tour since 2007.

“Garfield Heights is remarkably diverse in age, ethnicity, culture and outlook, and more than that, people care,” Preston said. “Everyone works together for the betterment of our corner of the world.”

Registered in 1904, Pasadena’s second-oldest neighborhood was designated a Landmark District in 1998, and the area started holding in-person home tours shortly after. For its virtual version, neighbors contributed their professional skills to take photos and produce the video tour.

Every aspect of this tour – the cinematography, the direction and the production – was accomplished by volunteers who live in Garfield Heights, Preston said.

“I especially want to thank our director, Michael e. Stern, and cinematographer Carmen Delaney. We also have a committee of about 15 volunteers handling everything from program books to advertising to beautiful watercolor portraits of each house (which will be given as gifts to each homeowner). None of the team are paid, and all the proceeds go to support neighborhood projects.”

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But aside from original fixtures and intricate embellishments, the tour will also feature some of the people and many of the stories that make Garfield Heights a remarkable neighborhood.

Each home has a unique story. One home on the tour this year once hosted weddings, and another home on this year’s tour is owned by a former museum director, whose wide interests are reflected in the collections they display at home. One home in our neighborhood, but not on this year’s tour, was first owned by a teenage girl in 1912, a rare state of affairs at that time.

Highlights from this tour include a Victorian home with details in windows and woodwork throughout, as well as transom window operators and servant call buttons still in place and functioning; three Arts and Crafts homes and an American Foursquare style home with a bocce ball court and a surprise element you have to go on tour to see.

Event co-chair Sandra Davis and her husband Terrance have lived in Garfield Heights since 1991. The beauty of the place drew them in, but the caring neighbors keep them rooted.

“We liked the quality of the neighborhood, and we love the summertime here,” Davis said. “You can sit out outside. It’s so beautiful. We have a wood deck under a spreading oak tree out back. We love to sit out there.”

Suffice to say, this will be a unique home tour.

Garfield Heights is bounded by Marengo Avenue on the west (both sides of the street), Washington Boulevard on the north (south side only), Los Robles Avenue on the east (west side only) and Mountain Avenue on the south (north side of the street only). Most of the area’s homes were built between 1890 and 1920 and were designed by exemplary architects such as Greene & Greene, Meyer and Holler, Arthur Benton, Frederick Louis Roehrig and Sylvanus Marston.

For more information, email [info@garfieldheights.org](mailto:info@garfieldheights.org).  
[www.garfieldheights.org/virtual-home-tour-tickets.html](http://www.garfieldheights.org/virtual-home-tour-tickets.html)

*Anissa V. Rivera, columnist, “Mom’s the Word,” Pasadena Star-News, San Gabriel Valley Tribune, Whittier Daily News, Azusa Herald, Glendora Press and West*

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