

COMMUNITY PROFILE

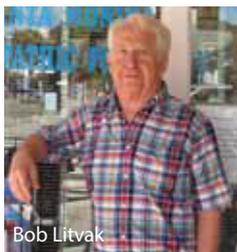
SANTA MONICA HOMEOPATHIC PHARMACY

68 Years of Knowledge, Care, Integrity, Service

By Maria Fotopoulos



Bob's Uncle Frank with Mary & Norman in 1950



Bob Litvak

When Bob Litvak looks back on nearly 70 years of the business started by his parents, he believes the longevity is due to the core values his family lived.

Mary and Norman Litvak approached their lives and business, the Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy, with knowledge and a high level of care, service and integrity.

"I put those four words up on the store

windows," says Bob. They are a reminder of his parents' legacy and guiding principals for each day.

Bob remembers a 1951 conversation in which his father said he didn't become a pharmacist to sell things to harm people. "Some pharmacies would sell anything to make money, but that wasn't my dad's sensibility," says Bob. In the early 1960s, the pharmacy stopped selling tobacco products and all narcotic drugs. "My parents were pretty amazing people," Bob says.

Today, Bob manages the pharmacy, along with his brother, Don, but they didn't envision their futures in the business when they were younger. "My parents worked 10 hours a days, six days a week, and my brother and I both had our own career aspirations," says Bob. But, eventually, they both joined the family business, and other family members have worked in the pharmacy through the years.

In addition to homeopathics—preparations derived from plants and herbs—which Norman introduced to the pharmacy in 1944, customers shopping at Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy will find Chinese and Western herbs, amino acids, aromatherapy products, glandulars, minerals, teas and vitamins, as well as skin care products and gift items.

A full complement of staff educated in acupuncture, chiropractics, herbs, homeopathy and nutrition—many, certified or licensed practitioners—is available to consult with customers, including some who have been with the pharmacy for more than 20 years. Whether a consultation requires five or 45 minutes, the herbalists, homeopaths, nutritionists and other staff help at no charge—that's just part of the service at Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy.

Bob says they also will refer customers to local practitioners. He believes the pharmacy may have also played a small role helping many chiropractors, acupuncturists and homeopaths establish themselves on the Westside. "I think maybe they settled on the Westside because they had a place they could send their patients."

The pharmacy draws customers from Australia, South Africa, Europe and Asia. Bob says visitors from abroad will say, "I was told when I get to Santa Monica, I have to come to your store." But most of Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy's business come from the Westside.

"It is very rewarding helping people," says Bob. "It's been fun too because some of our customers have been coming here for years; we know them well, and we've seen their kids grow up."

Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy
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Mary & Norman in 1980