

# Manhattan Beach Sun

The Weekly Newspaper of Manhattan Beach

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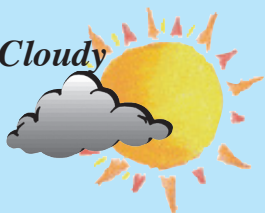
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## Weekend Weather Forecast

### Friday

Partly Cloudy

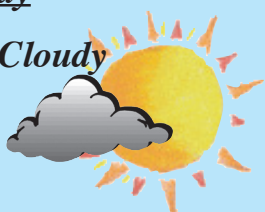
66°



### Saturday

Partly Cloudy

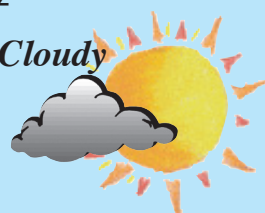
65°



### Sunday

Partly Cloudy

65°



## Remembering Our Heroes



Photo by Rob Fiore. Flags flying in honor of our veterans and soldiers in active duty.

## Downtown Merchants to Kick Off Holiday Season

By Evan Ortega

Santa Claus is coming to town--Downtown Manhattan Beach to be specific. Downtown store and restaurant owners are hoping thousands of people will attend the City's annual Holiday Open House and Pier Lighting on Wednesday, November 18. Carolers, musicians, reindeer and Santa Claus himself will be on hand as visitors peruse downtown shops and watch as Mayor Portia Cohen flips on the Pier's holiday lights at 7 p.m.

Cohen said this year will mark the 15th anniversary of the Holiday Open House and 20th anniversary of the Pier Lighting, but that both are being held together for the first time because of financial constraints. "I am thrilled that the City takes time to welcome in the holidays in a non-denominational celebration, particularly partnering with our local merchants to show appreciation to the customers and patrons," Cohen said. "You're seeing the school district, business community and residents come together to celebrate the holidays and that's the definition of community. And I love it."

Stores will extend their hours until 9 p.m. and many have partnered with local restaurants to have food tastings, said Mary Ann Varni, Executive Director of the Downtown Manhattan Beach Business and Professional Association. "I think it's a tradition that the holidays are all about, being with family and sharing and being together," Varni said. "I think it's just a great tradition for the community to come together and start celebrating the holiday season and get a jump on their shopping."

Varni said that singers and musicians from Manhattan Beach Middle School and Mira Costa will perform, along with the Hyperion Outfall Serenaders band. "The Holiday Open House has traditionally been the kickoff to the holiday season...it's a great day for people to start shopping Downtown," Varni said. "It's

a very festive and a great community event."

Kids of all ages seem to enjoy the event and will have the opportunity to sit on Santa's lap, Varni noted. "We will have live reindeer on Manhattan Avenue--that's always fun for the kids and everyone to see," she said, adding that a live camel and wise men will be making an appearance near the corner of Manhattan Avenue and 15th Street.

The Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce will spend \$10,000 this year on holiday lights for the downtown area with the help of community members who have sent in donations, while the City will cover the cost for holiday lights on the Pier. "We were afraid we wouldn't be able to hang the lights this

year because of the cuts from the City, but our residents have been very generous," said Chamber President Helen Duncan. "We will collect enough money from the residents...to hang the lights this year and we are so grateful to them...this is a great community where people really chip in."

Duncan estimated the Chamber has raised \$9,000 so far by soliciting donations from residents through the mail, and said residents can still send in donations by visiting the website [manhattanbeachchamber.net](http://manhattanbeachchamber.net). Donors who give at least \$25 will receive a holiday ornament. "The people of Manhattan Beach

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## What is the Manhattan Beach Cultural Heritage Conservancy?

By Jan Dennis

Manhattan Beach has been losing its historical landmarks at an alarming rate. After several hearings, discussions with staff and the persistence of a few dedicated residents, the City has recognized the value of historical preservation. In 2006 as a first step, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2089. The goal of the ordinance is to "Safeguard the City's heritage by encouraging the recognition and voluntary protection of landmarks which represent significant elements of the City's history and culture."

A committee of eight, who meet once a month, are given assignments such as interviewing prospective candidates,

photographing landmarks, writing promotional/newspaper articles and working with the city staff.

The Manhattan Beach Cultural Heritage Conservancy (MB-CHC) with great passion has been trying to make the community aware of the historical treasures located here in town. Historical preservation is an important element in the retention of the basic character and soul of a community. You too have an opportunity to participate in the recognition of properties of historical and architectural significance.

On October 16, 2007, through the

See Conservancy, page 8