

## Environmental Task Force Gears Up for Home Stretch Run

By Brian Simon

Sometimes when you want to get important things done, it's best to have a tight deadline. And when it comes to reducing our carbon footprint, time is certainly of the essence. Eighteen months, to be exact. That was the timeline given to the City of Manhattan Beach's Environmental Task Force to help implement the community's lofty and extensive environmental initiatives. Working under pressure has served the 19-member group well, as Manhattan Beach has quickly achieved a number of goals towards becoming the greenest city possible.

Formed in the fall of 2008 as a component of the City's Green Report, the Environmental Task Force celebrated its one-year anniversary on October 15, appropriately enough by meeting at the new Wells Fargo at 1129 North Sepulveda Boulevard. The branch is the bank's very first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold-certified building, reflecting standards designed to help protect and conserve natural resources.

The Task Force's Green Building Subcommittee was instrumental in setting LEED certification standards and other practices for local green building construction. Its recommendations included striving for LEED gold certification or better on new or renovated City buildings 5,000 square feet or larger, and for LEED silver status on new or renovated private non-residential projects 10,000 square feet or more.

Fostering green building development is just one focus for the Task Force, which is comprised of 14 local residents, two City Council members (Mayor Portia Cohen and Mayor Pro Tem Mitch Ward), School Board member Amy Howorth, and two student representatives. At its first meeting on October 15, 2008 the Task Force split into four committees, with each zeroing in on a specific environmental issue. These included development of a climate action plan, sustainable design, waste reduction and recycling, and water conservation and storm water management. Dozens of public and subcommittee meetings followed as the Task Force tackled its various topics and emerged with key recommendations that have helped shape local green policies.

Task Force input was instrumental in adoption of the City's new water conservation ordinance, which calls for a 10 percent reduction in water usage, prohibits landscape watering with potable water unless a timed sprinkler system is used or watering is done with a hand-held device, and limits landscape watering to twice-a-week, 15-minute per station intervals. A recent report indicates the new regulations are working. City water deliveries were down 22 percent and no citations had been issued. The Task Force also supported a tiered water rate structure as well as the "pay-as-you-throw" approach to solid waste rates.

Late last month, Manhattan Beach cemented its growing reputation as a leader in the green movement by hosting the largest climate action event in the nation. The so-called "350" event was one of more than 5,000

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## Mustangs' Impressive Offensive Line



The Mustangs' offensive line was instrumental in Mira Costa's win over Quartz Hills

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## Coordinating Council Hears Positive News from Doctor Berenson

By Karen King Russo

The November meeting of the Manhattan Beach Coordinating Council began with President Stewart Fournier thanking sponsors. "We are especially grateful in this economic climate that we still try to give five scholarships a year of about \$3,000 each," Rabbi Mark Hyman accompanied his invocation with a colorful story of a young Jewish student studying in Dubai. While there, the student gradually made a friend of a young Bedouin who could not believe there could be an American or a Jew who did not hate him.

Before hearing Dr. James Berenson, as is customary at all Coordinating Council meetings, student representatives gave the latest highlights of life at their schools. Grace Campbell of American Martyrs, Gurkiran Dhaliwal of Manhattan Beach Middle School (MBMS) and Shelby Adair of Mira Costa High School each spoke. Covering triumphs in a variety of sports, music programs, and charity projects including the UCLA Blood Drive, the sparkle in their eyes seemed most dazzling when talking about all the Halloween festivities.

Another monthly event is the awards to "Students of the Month," as chosen by their schools. Aaron Henning of American Martyrs, Madison Locicero of MBMS and Darwin Zwissler of Mira Costa were presented by enthusiastic faculty members, Mrs. Kerry Climaco, Mr. David Leey and Mr. Joel Carlson respectively. Mrs. Climaco spoke of Henning's character in being a volunteer who goes the extra mile, with always a kind word for others. The same could be said for Mr. Levy's comments on Madison Locicero, an up-and-coming drama student who goes out of her way to reach out and help others

students. Mr. Carlson, who teaches music, advised his younger students to emulate Zwissler, an outstanding tuba player, whether in wind ensemble or marching band. "Soak up everything you can learn from Darwin," Carlson said.

Each student was awarded certificates from Steven Napolitano, deputy to County Supervisor Don Knabe, Manhattan Beach City Council member Wayne Powell (on behalf of Mayor Portia Cohen), and representatives from the offices of State Legislator Ted Lieu and State Senator Jenny Orupeza.

Each student presented their parents with a colorful bouquet of flowers.

The speaker of the day, Dr. Berenson, is a specialist in myeloma and bone cancer research. His talk was given special significance to Coordinating Council members because of the testimonial of Manhattan Beach Police officer Mark Vasquez. Three years ago, Vasquez, at age 30 with a wife and two young children, was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. Thirty pounds lighter, weak, anemic and unable to work, his oncology

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## Santa Float Spared by Donations

By Evan Ortega

When Trilogy Spa owner Chandra Shaw cancelled her fundraiser to raise money for Manhattan Beach's popular Santa float recently, it wasn't because she was having difficulty raising money. The business owner, who has volunteered on the float as an elf, had planned the "Holiday Float FUN-raiser" after finding out that the float was in bad need of costly refurbishment. "We thought we were going to get increments of 20, 50 or 100 dollars," Shaw said. "The other donations that we had coming in were all in those increments."

After learning about the needed repairs, Gordon Cherniak and other members of the Manhattan Beach Property Owners Association had decided to cut a check for \$6,000 just hours before the fundraiser

was to begin. Jim and Colleen Fersch, of Manhattan Beach donated \$1,000. "We gave them a good slug; I think they were really flabbergasted," Cherniak recalled. "They were really appreciative."

Created in 1939, the organization sold some property recently and its members have been donating proceeds of the sale to local schools and charities. "We have this money and we're trying to put it back into the community in the form of legacy for us and helping the community," Cherniak said. "We're residents and we know what it means to the children and the community, and that's why we'd like to help."

Shaw was making final preparations on the day of the fundraiser when she

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