

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
Santa Barbara Downtown Organization

Give the Gift of a Healthy Ocean for the Holidays

The Downtown Holiday Parade, *Sea Shells and Sleigh Bells*, on Friday, December 7th will celebrate one of our town's most precious resources, the ocean. This year's theme provides the community with an opportunity to reflect on the incredible impact the ocean has on our lives and our town, while also reminding the public to treat it kindly.

In keeping with the sea theme, this year's parade will be visited by all sorts of sea creatures, even a famous one. The giant helium balloons, which had a tremendously popular debut in last year's parade, will return again in both holiday and marine animal designs. Check out the school of larger-than-life tropical fish as they float down State Street. Also not to be missed is the giant 45 foot long orca whale, the parade's largest helium balloon yet. In addition to these sea animals, the most famous sea sponge on the planet will make a special appearance, as well. Don't miss SpongeBob SquarePants as he makes a rare journey to our town from his pineapple under the sea. He will greet the children of Santa Barbara and spread the word about protecting his home in the Pacific Ocean. SpongeBob will be joined by the Holiday Prince and Fairy as they lead this year's parade and light up State Street from a horse-drawn carriage.

Also doing their part to enhance the ocean theme are the over 3,000 parade participants who were encouraged to think about the ocean when creating their floats and costumes. Participants were also urged to make their entries as environmentally conscious as possible, by using recycled or recyclable materials. While there are still a certain number of traditional vehicles in the parade, many entrants will be gliding down State Street in electric cars, bikes, wagons, Segways, and on foot. Everyone participating in the parade, even spectators, can use the parade as an opportunity to appreciate the beautiful natural environment that we call home. In the spirit of this season of giving, one

of the best gifts we can give to our community and future generations are clean creeks and a healthy ocean.

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