

HALLOWEEN IN ISLA VISTA

The following Activity Report, prepared in accordance with the *California Penal Code, Sections 925 and 928*, pertains to the 2008 Halloween celebration in Isla Vista. Members of the 2008-2009 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury, accompanied by Santa Barbara County Sheriff's personnel, observed law enforcement, Search and Rescue and medical staff performing their duties. The purpose of this report is to give the public a glimpse of how the various agencies handle this annual event and the costs involved. Jury members accompanied by Santa Barbara County Sheriff's personnel, observed law enforcement, Search and Rescue and medical staff performing their duties.

The celebration in Isla Vista began in the 1980's and has increased in size ever since. Traditionally the celebration is a multi-day event. On Halloween night alone, in 2008 the number of participants was estimated at 50,000. This is an unsponsored event and as such no permits are required; therefore no entity or individual can be held accountable.

The Grand Jury learned from citation and arrest statistics provided by Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department that the overwhelming majority of offenders were from outside the area. In 2008, there were 438 *citations* issued; 23 were University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) students and 7 for Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) students. In addition, there were 220 *arrests*; 168 were for Drunk-in-Public, 18 were UCSB students and 9 SBCC students.

Approximately 300 law enforcement officers, medical emergency and Fire Department staff, as well as civilian personnel, were on duty. Agencies assigned to the event included:

- Santa Barbara County
 - Sheriff's Department
 - Sheriff's Mounted Patrol
 - Gang Task Force
 - Search and Rescue Team
 - Probation Department
 - Fire Department
 - Paramedics
 - Roads Department
 - Emergency Medical Services Agency
 - American Medical Response (contract ambulance service)
- Santa Barbara City Police Department
- Lompoc City Police Department
- California Highway Patrol
- California State Alcoholic Beverage Control Department
- University of California at Santa Barbara Police Department
- University of California at Los Angeles Police Department Bike Team
- Federal Bureau of Investigation

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Logistics in dealing with the large crowd included:

- The entire area was lit with portable flood lights.
- Significant groups of uniformed law enforcement personnel were on foot patrol and mounted units were available to assist with crowd control.
- Officers staffed barricades at key intersections to stop the influx of vehicular traffic.
- Bicycle patrols were used to augment the mobile units in handling calls for service outside the barricaded areas.
- The Search and Rescue Team provided assistance for those with medical emergencies.
- The medical triage center had a direct link with local hospitals to determine the availability of beds for those needing additional care. Fifty-five patients needed transportation to the hospital, which was double that of the 2007 event.

Contingency preparations by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department included the provision of riot gear and the anti-riot vehicle (the "Bear"). Law Enforcement agencies from Ventura and San Luis Obispo Counties were on standby to provide mutual aid should any large scale civil or criminal event occur.

The operational cost of a Halloween celebration in Isla Vista is high and varies with length and circumstances. In 2008 the cost for the Sheriff's Department alone, including planning, regular and overtime personnel and some logistical supplies, was approximately \$432,000. Other agencies incurred costs estimated to be in excess of \$250,000. The total cost of this 2008 Halloween event approached \$700,000.

The management of this event was accomplished in a very professional manner. Most participants in the 2008 celebration were generally respectful to law enforcement and each other. The Grand Jury commends the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department for its efforts in planning, training, organizing and coordinating of efforts, along with the many other agencies involved, providing a safe environment for thousands of participants and residents.

This report does not require a response.