



Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office

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Date: 11/2/2014
Time: 1:45 a.m.

News Release

A Quiet Isla Vista Kept Safe During Halloween

Santa Barbara - The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office is pleased to report there were no major incidents in Isla Vista for Halloween weekend, with very few arrests and citations issued. Unlike previous Halloweens which attracted tens of thousands of people, many of them from out of town, this year the crowd was estimated at no more than a few thousand and consisted mostly of locals. Although final numbers are not yet available, there were less than 40 jail bookings (the vast majority for misdemeanor offenses), and less than 40 citations issued. As a comparison, in 2013 – a three day operation as opposed to two days this year – there were more than 200 jail bookings and almost 250 citations issued.

The Sheriff's Office attributes the decreased numbers in both attendance and arrests to a number of factors. First, a continuing, comprehensive campaign on the part of the University of California at Santa Barbara, the Isla Vista community, and the Santa Barbara community at large to keep the celebration local by discouraging out-of-area visitors from attending. Secondly, an enhanced law enforcement presence, with a large contingent of University of California officers brought in from other UC campuses, in addition to the traditional deployment of personnel from the Sheriff's Office and neighboring allied agencies. Third, the University sponsored a concert and a variety of other student-centered activities for the enjoyment of this year's Halloween celebrants. Lastly, heavy rain on Friday night discouraged out of town visitors and kept many local residents indoors.

The Sheriff's Office thanks the students of UCSB and Santa Barbara City College for their cooperation and good behavior, and for not inviting large numbers of out-of-town guests to attend. We also want to thank the multi-disciplinary "Isla Vista Safe" coalition, sponsored by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office, for their forward thinking and ongoing efforts to keep Isla Vista safe. Last but not least, we thank the many first responders from the University system, and both Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, for their professionalism and dedication in protecting Isla Vista. The Sheriff's Office believes a strong law enforcement presence is important in discouraging party-goers from violating laws and stopping incidents before they elevate to a serious level.

It will be several weeks before the actual costs of this year's Halloween operations can be determined. However, due to the diminished crowd size on both evenings, large numbers of first responders were released early which will reduce the previously estimated cost of law enforcement services.

