

SDSU College Area Party Project (CAPP)

Once rated by Playboy Magazine as the #3 party school in America , the party atmosphere in the immediate area surrounding San Diego State University (SDSU) was well advertised. The 30,000-student body engaged in loud parties as one of their favorite extracurricular activities. The San Diego Police Department had the responsibility of responding to these party calls and developing a viable to solution to solve the community problems. These parties affected the residents in a negative manner and impacted their overall quality of life.

Sources of Information:

- College Area Community Council (CACC)
- San Diego State University Police (SDSU PD)
 - SDSU Administrators
- College area residents
- College area businesses
- San Diego Union-Tribune (local newspaper)
- Daily Aztec (SDSU Newspaper)
- Playboy Magazine
- City Council representatives

Symptoms:

- A high volume of police calls for service for party calls
- Traffic and pedestrian accidents
- Public intoxication and related activities including fights, vandalism, urinating in public, etc.

Analysis:

- SDPD Crime Analysis Unit statistics: A high number of calls for police service for loud parties in the college area
- Informal survey of community members and residential homeowners indicating the significance of the problem and supporting the need to address it
- Analysis of previous ineffective protocols to solve the problem

Response:

- Community and student education and awareness
- Law enforcement tactics, including the use of citations and custodial arrests, as a deterrent for hosting loud parties
- Utilizing the Courts and local prosecutors to assist with prosecution efforts
- Development of a Community Court as an alternative to the criminal court system
- The assessment of financial fines, probation, community service and criminal sentences to hold the party hosts accountable
- Utilized the Drug Abatement Response Team to issue letters to the property owners, stating their inherent liabilities for allowing these parties to continue

Short-term objectives:

- Simplify enforcement procedures by issuing citations which require minimal time
- Raise the level of awareness in the college area, sending a message of the negative consequences for hosting loud and disruptive parties
- Address resource intensive disturbance parties with an emphasis on hosts' responsibilities and liabilities

Long-term goals:

- Improve the communities' quality of life
- Reduce the number of calls for police service
- Improve the cohesive living environment between student-renter and working-homeowner

Assessment:

- High conviction rate of party hosts
- Community satisfaction
- Reduction in the number of repeat offenders
- Implementation of this plan throughout our department as an effective means to counter this problem

Our police department and the impacted community benefited greatly from this new protocol for addressing loud parties and the related issues. This problem solving initiative was adopted as a model by our organization.

SDSU College Area Party Project (CAPP)

SCANNING:

Historical:

For many years the San Diego State University (SDSU) area has been plagued with noise complaints related to college parties. Most of the complaints originated from residents who live in the immediate area of SDSU. The majority of the party attendees were 18 to 22 year old college students. The busiest time of the year had traditionally been the fall semester, commencing in September. The highest number of police calls-for-service generally fell on Friday and Saturday nights. With a combined student enrollment of over 30,000 students living on and off campus, this led to an ample supply of partygoers and party hosts. This year's incoming class is projected to be in excess of 6,000 freshmen. Approximately 3,000 of these freshmen will live in dormitories on campus. SDSU has typically had the overwhelming task of dealing with teenagers who are away from home for the first time, with little supervision.

In the early 1980's, an advertisement in Playboy Magazine ranked SDSU the #3 party school in America. The newfound freedom experienced by these students typically increased their willingness to party, consume excessive alcohol and engage in disruptive behaviors. The symptoms of this problem have included a high volume of calls for service for party calls, traffic and pedestrian accidents, public intoxication, fights, vandalism, urinating in public and other alcohol related crimes. These symptoms ultimately resulted in quality of life problems for the neighboring residents.

In the early 1980's, the San Diego Police Department utilized a low-key approach to attempt to remedy these issues. Verbal warnings were the common practice. If police officers had to return, the party hosts were arrested. In the 1990's, improved technology provided the officers with Mobile Data Terminals (In car computers), which allowed improved information flow between officers. A notification system was put in place and repeat offenders were documented in a computer database. For these repeat offenders, officers were instructed to shut down parties and not give any leniency to the party hosts. At this time, there was a low volume of custodial arrests and / or citations being issued. Verbal warnings were now being accompanied by written warnings. This included the possibility of a fine for cost recovery and a possible physical arrest, if the officers had to return.

The students adjusted their parties on busy Friday and Saturday nights. If the police came by, the party was shut down. However, if the police did not respond, the party went on all night long regardless of the neighboring residents voicing complaints. It was typical for citizens to call in complaints at 11:00 pm and not have the police respond until 4:00 am. Typically, by this time the party was over.

A significant symptom was the inordinate amount of police resources and out-of-service time spent handling calls of this nature. Ultimately, this negatively impacted the department's ability to respond to other priority issues needing police attention.

Historically, the previous enforcement and prosecution protocols relating to party calls were ineffective in preventing, deterring or avoiding the symptoms of these parties.

Specifically, there had not been aggressive follow-up, conviction and penalties assessed to those responsible for hosting the parties and creating the disturbance. Among other

reasons, this was due to inconsistent documentation of the cases. Other methods have been pursued, with a similar lack of consistency and success. An example of this is the cost recovery program. Another problem was the fact that up to this point, there was not a set procedure for officers to legally enter a residence and take action at a loud party call in which the party host refuses the officer's entry.

The primary sources of information for identifying the problems and bringing them to the police department's attention were the College Area Community Council (CACCC), SDSU PD, SDSU Administrators, SDSU Officers, College area residents and College area businesses. Secondary sources of information were San Diego Union-Tribune, Daily Aztec (SDSU Newspaper), Playboy Magazine and City Council representatives. The methods in which the problems were identified and corroborated included attending community meetings, accumulating statistical information from the SDPD Crime Analysis Unit (data relating to calls for police service), personal observations, information communicated during squad meetings and informal discussions with other officers and SDSU PD referrals.

The community and residents who were affected by the large parties told us the residual effects negatively impacted their quality of life and overall comfort. Additionally, they incurred the added tasks of cleaning up around their properties after the parties.

We realized taking the party and the party hosts out of the equation would make an immediate impact and reduce other related criminal violations, while improving quality of life issues.

ORIGIN:

This College community falls geographically within the Mid-City Division of the San Diego Police Department. Sgt Andrew Hoffman and his squad of officers were assigned to the College service area. The two officers who worked the SDSU beat were Casey Gini and Richard Fox. We decided to address this issue through the implementation of problem solving techniques and the development of community partnerships.

We determined the primary problem stemmed from the fact these large parties were under the direction and control of the party hosts, who were not being held accountable for their actions. The party hosts were typically 18-24 years of age, and either SDSU college students, Grossmont college students or enlisted military servicemen. The parties were typically held in single, detached multi bedroom (3-4) family homes in a predominantly residential area. The houses were in close proximity to SDSU, hence the clientele / guests were other students from the nearby dorms and campus apartments.

Analysis:

The units of analysis used to evaluate the problem were as follows:

- We reviewed the high number of calls for police service for loud parties, noise disturbances and general disturbances in the residential college area. The SDPD Crime Analysis Unit obtained this information from their computer database.
- During the initial stages of this information gathering process, we realized the importance of establishing community partnerships. This would enable us to establish a two way street for communication. We conducted an informal survey

of community members and residential homeowners. This survey information was an effective measure to analyze the significance of the problem.

- We reviewed and analyzed the results from previous attempts to address the problems using the College Area Party Plan (CAPP). This plan has resulted in 1st Response Notices (written warnings) being issued to party hosts. This plan was virtually ineffective.

A college student, working as a police department intern, was instrumental in analyzing pertinent data supplied by the Crime Analysis Unit. We believed involving this student would provide us with an important community component, which proved to be beneficial as we consistently heard a citizen's perspective of the problem. With the information supplied by the Crime Analysis Unit, our intern provided us with a break down of calls for service on a monthly, weekly and daily scale. The intern also broke down the average number of officers responding to these disturbance calls and determined the average length of time each officer spent at each call for service. The intern documented the Disposition of Officers actions for each of the calls and compiled a list of Repeat Offender Addresses. This list was forwarded to officers and used to identify and address potential repeat offenders. Additionally, the intern compiled a list of renters' names from the CAPP 1st response notification program. This information was also broken down to reflect the financial impact to the department for these party-based disturbance calls.

The following is a breakdown of the pertinent statistical data for one full year relating to these calls for service prior to the plans' implementation:

Jan 2001 to Dec 2001

Total calls for service: 489

Total out of service time: 25,538 minutes

Total number of officers assigned: 1,029

Average number of officers per call: 2.10

Average time spent by each officer at call: 24.87 minutes

Total cost for police services: \$24,363*

* The total cost for police services was calculated by using \$57.18 per officer per hour multiplied by the total minutes out of service time. This includes equipment costs.

The data reflected that ten (10) of the party locations accounted for 23% of all of the calls for police service. Additionally, 48% of calls for service were repeat offenders. We analyzed and compared the same statistical categories subsequent to the plans' implementation and completion (refer to Assessment).

Stakeholders

First and foremost the stakeholders who were immediately affected were the citizens residing in the immediate SDSU community. Their motivation for resolving this problem was enhanced peace of mind and improved quality of life.

The next stakeholder was the police department. The out of service time, fiscal impact and staffing needed to effectively address these calls for service was a major factor.

The students themselves were stakeholders as well. They attended these parties and used them as social meetings. This not only presented a community problem, but also diminished their abilities to study, hence receive the best possible education.

The landlords who rent out the houses used for the parties were also stakeholders.

Peripheral stakeholders included nearby businesses, both private and government, which were impacted by the college area parties. The jails, the Detox center, the hospitals and the Courts all had a stake as they provided their respective services.

Previous system of response:

We also analyzed the previous protocol for addressing these party calls. The problem with college-based parties had been addressed in a four-step process. First, responding officers would issue a written warning called a 1st Response Notice. The party hosts signed this and it outlined various problems caused by the party and the potential prosecution of the party hosts if officers had to return. The party was typically shut down and officers left. If an officer returned, a citizen's arrest was sought. If the reporting party did not want to make an arrest, the host could not be prosecuted and the party continued. If the reporting party was willing to make an arrest, the party was shut down and the host was arrested for misdemeanor charges.

The Community Relations Officer (CRO), who issued the party host a CAPP letter, pursued the next step. The letter notified the tenants they would be included in a notification system, which would inform the responding officers they were repeat offenders. Additionally, The CRO sent a letter to the landlord informing them of the tenant's actions of hosting a large party.

The police department learned the college students knew they could host large parties with little or no consequences. The students knew there was a delayed response time on Friday and Saturday nights, allowing their parties to continue long into the night before the police arrived. Our analysis revealed the police department's prolonged response time and lack of consistent enforcement was ineffective in dealing with the problem.

Additionally, due to the lack of an established protocol and an uncoordinated effort on the police department's part, hosts felt comfortable running these events, with little potential repercussion.

Bill Taitano, the CRO assigned to the SDSU area, responded to many community meetings in this area. The CACC was the most outspoken organization. With this type of open forum, the community members provided a variety of suggestions and requests for the police department. They communicated routinely with Taitano and voiced their unhappiness with this serious community problem. The community lashed out. And in response a front-page article was written in the San Diego Union-Tribune newspaper. This article addressed the overwhelming party problem and the related nuisance / quality of life issues it presented.

Officers Casey Gini and Richard Fox spoke about the problem at the Police Department's Problem Solving Meeting. Officers who were well versed with problem solving techniques typically attended these meetings. During this meeting, input and suggestions were aired and all suggestions, feedback and options were documented. Some of the suggestions and feedback received during this meeting were exchanged with other officers involved with the project as well as the outside agencies who were assisting.

A meeting with the SDSU Administration was conducted to gain knowledge on their position for enforcement and response to the problems. The SDSU Administration was restricted to on campus, student related issues. They had no jurisdiction over off campus issues, like the problems arising from these loud parties. The administrators, who were well aware of all pertinent student issues, offered many useful ideas and thought provoking suggestions, some of which were utilized.

In addition to **meeting** with these community groups and members, we met with representatives from our own City Attorney's Office who were assigned to the Neighborhood Prosecution Unit. We were able to address the problems and receive clarification on responses and enforcement actions to remedy the problem.

RESPONSE:

We addressed five different areas during our response phase. The first was education and awareness through the media, the Daily Aztec, local television networks and the freshman orientation at the dorms. We discussed issues about their responsibilities to the neighboring community and alcohol awareness. This initial step seemed to get the student party hosts' attention and increase their awareness on the implications and potential liabilities of hosting large parties.

We decided to utilize law enforcement tactics, including the use of citations and custodial arrests, as a deterrent for hosting loud parties. The courts and prosecutors assisted in the prosecution of the party hosts by assessing financial fines, probation, community service and imposing criminal sentences.

We pursued the SDSU Administration and discussed students having restrictions on registration, expulsion, probation and other administrative repercussions. Through our meetings with SDSU, we were informed this option, including a penalty phase was extremely limited in scope.

We were met with resistance and apathy from landlords who were reluctant to place restrictions on tenant leases, evictions, higher rent, and civil fines for parties thrown in their rental properties. The Drug Abatement Response Team' s liaison Officer

Cimmarusti assisted us by issuing letters to the property owners, stating their inherent liabilities for allowing these parties to continue.

The primary response was to hold the hosts of these parties accountable for their actions. To do so we looked at the most feasible routes to accomplish our goals. Ultimately, we used four of the five response alternatives listed above. We used education, law enforcement, the DART program, and the Courts to curb the party hosts' behavior and alter the college area mentality relating to these parties.

We contacted several media outlets to advertise our law enforcement position on party enforcement. There were televised news programs explaining our position regarding loud parties. We also used the school newspaper, as well as the city newspaper, to advertise our first two weekend party enforcement statistics, in terms of arrests and citations.

We elected to utilize the applicable laws set forth in the San Diego Municipal Code for criminal enforcement. The appropriate violation prohibited the use of loud amplified music which was audible from a distance of fifty feet. This enforcement section was applicable between the hours of 10:00 pm and 8:00 am. This Municipal Code section gave the officers the flexibility to enforce a misdemeanor section that resulted in the issuance of a citation. If the officers believed the offense would continue, they had the option to make a physical arrest and book the subject into jail.

The City Attorney's Office, working closely with the Mid-City Division, assigned a Neighborhood Prosecutor, Chandani Flinn, to assist with the project. Through the work of the City Attorney's Office, a cutting edge progressive idea was brought to the

community. Additionally, the City Attorney's Office developed sentencing options for students to attend alcohol and community living classes at SDSU.

Working in conjunction with the community and the police department, the City Attorney's Office developed a Mid-City Community Court Program. The community members offered their desires and expectations for a restitution program for the crimes committed. This would occur during the meetings with the Police Department and City Attorney's office. The offenders, who were cited for the loud disturbing music, had the option to attend a criminal court hearing with a jury trial and face the standard fines, probation and possible jail time. They also had the option to have their case heard at Community Court. This court proceeding allowed the violation to be dropped, upon the successful completion of the court-imposed provisions. In lieu of criminal court, the offender would accept responsibility for the criminal act of disturbing the peace and face a panel of community members. The panel was given guidelines for issuing penalties. These sanctions would include community work service, attendance at rehabilitative programs, payment of a fine and possibly writing a letter of apology to the Daily Aztec newspaper. The violators would also sit in front of community residents who would have the opportunity to explain the injustice, pains and discomforts they and their families experienced at the heels of these loud and disturbing parties.

The resources used during this project included the following agencies / equipment: Patrol officers assigned to SDSU PD, patrol officers assigned to SDPD members of the SD City Attorney's Office, SD Superior Court, the Mid-City Community Court Program, County Jail, Prisoner Vans, Mobile Command Trailer (used for Command Post), SDPD Vice Detectives, Alcohol Beverage Control Agents, Union-Tribune (local San Diego

newspaper, local television networks, Bicycle Team, Neighborhood Policing Team, video equipment, College Area Community Council, College Faith Presbyterian Church (meetings held at this location).

We started attending line-ups for patrol officers to educate them on the applicable Municipal Code violations and how to write the corresponding report. We also attended meetings with the College Area Community Council (CACC) for recommendations and feedback. Meetings with the City Attorney's Office were needed for final clarification and legal guidelines for report writing and issuing citations.

One problem we encountered was a lack of conformity and continuity among officers working different shifts. It was difficult because of officer's independent priorities.

Another problem was the staffing limitations. Priority-one responses superseded the calls for noise disturbances. Another difficulty was the lack of acceptance by the Courts and Judges working with the City Attorney's Office to determine sentencing. Both the 4th Amendment and warrant-less entry to a house were difficult to address. The representatives from the City Attorney's Office could not correct this problem.

The existing cost recovery system which was in place, was not geared for low amounts of money to be recovered, hence it was ineffective toward college students.

Over the first two weekends of the plan's implementation, in order to make a strong impact, we utilized a **multi-** agency task force. Our goal was to introduce the enforcement posture to both the officers and Student-Party-Hosts in a quick definitive way. During the initial phase of our plan titled, SDSU College Area Party Plan 2002, we utilized twenty (20) officers per night. This team included our own uniformed officers along with members of SDSU PD, UCSD PD, Alcohol Beverage Control, the Vice Unit,

The Bicycle Team and the Neighborhood Policing Team. We included some of these outside agencies and special investigative units because they possessed expertise with this type of enforcement.

Subsequent to the initial phase (at the completion of the first two weekends), we predominantly utilized two (2) patrol officers enforcing the appropriate sections of the San Diego Municipal Code. The patrol officers, who responded to these party calls, issued violators tickets. On Friday and Saturday nights, two-officer units were assigned to the College area to specifically respond to loud party calls. This special detail lasted through the fall semester. After the Christmas break, the special detail was continued and implemented for the first month of the spring semester.

The short-term goals from the implementation of this phase of the plan were as follows:

- First and foremost, we wanted to simplify enforcement procedures by issuing citations that require minimal time.
- Secondly, we wanted to raise the level of awareness in the college area and send a message there are negative consequences to hosting parties, which disturb the peace of other citizens.
- The third goal was to address resource intensive disturbance parties with our emphasis on host's responsibilities and liabilities.

The project's long-term goal was to increase the communities' quality of life, reduce the number of calls for police service and improve the cohesive living environment between student-renter and working-homeowner.

Depending on the magnitude of the party, we would utilize a designated undercover team of officers. The primary focus of this team would be to identify the party hosts, the people serving alcoholic beverages and underage subjects consuming alcoholic beverages. After these identifications were made, the uniformed officers responded and the undercover officers would point out the specific offenders for appropriate enforcement.

We utilized a Video Unit to effectively document the series of events at each party. This would assist with future criminal prosecution efforts.

ASSESSMENT:

We determined several means of measuring the success of the program. First, was the ability to measure the conviction rate. Secondly, the measure of community satisfaction was reflected in the reduction in the number of calls for service for noise complaints.

A third measure was the reduction of repeat offenders.

During the initial phase of the plan, which encompassed the first 4 weekend nights, we compiled the following statistics:

- 49 tickets issued to party hosts
- 117 tickets were issued for alcohol violations, which included open containers and minors in possession.

After a six-month period we conducted our initial evaluation of the project. This revealed there had not been any repeat calls to the same locations where citations had been issued.

An overall reduction in calls for service for noise disturbances had also occurred.

From September 2002, when the plan was first implemented, through March 2003, we compiled the following enforcement statistics:

- 101 citations were issued
- A conviction of rate 87%
- 9 cases dismissed
- 27 cases are pending court proceedings
- In 3 cases the subjects failed to appear which resulted in the issuance of arrest warrants

During the implementation of the plan, we attended CACC community meetings in order to receive ongoing feedback and suggestions regarding the projects. In March of 2003, we met the same community group and they voiced tremendous appreciation for our enforcement efforts and the highly visible results. The success of these joint projects has prompted the CACC members to address other community problems including traffic, graffiti and neighbor disputes.

The short-term response goals which were set forth were accomplished. We were able to effectively refine the protocol relating to loud party enforcement. We were also successful at raising the level of awareness in the community, sending a strong message about our new enforcement posture. Lastly, we were successful at holding the party hosts accountable for their actions. This was evidenced by the fact we had no repeat offenders during the plans' implementation.

The project's long-term goals were also accomplished. We enhanced the college community's overall quality of life by addressing these parties. We reduced the number

of calls for police service and improved the cohesive living environment between student-renter and working-homeowner.

The intern who assisted with this case compiled our statistical data. The following is a comparison for the five-month period after the CAPP plan in September 2002 was implemented. This chart depicts the effectiveness of the plan:

Days: Friday, Saturday & Sunday only	Oct '01 to Feb '02	Oct '02 to Feb '03
Total calls for service	127	118
Total out of service time (Minutes)	7,680	6,180
Total number of officers assigned	255	248
Average number of officers per call	2.00	2.10
Average time spent by each officer at call	30.24	24.94
Total cost for police services	\$7,319	\$5,889

There were no reported repeat offenders during the five-month period following the implementation of the CAPP plan.

Our police department and the impacted community benefited greatly from this new protocol for addressing loud parties and the related issues. Like any other problem, without consistent enforcement and periodic monitoring, the problems are likely to recur. The officers assigned to this area will remain diligent at monitoring the activity, collecting and analyzing statistical data and communicating with the college community. By utilizing these techniques, the police department could prevent the problem from reaching the magnitude we experienced prior to commencing the SDSU College Area Party Project. This problem solving initiative has been adopted by our organization and is currently being taught to officers at other divisions for implementation and use.

REFERENCE LIST:

Harvard's School of Public Health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 55(2002) 425-435. "Secondhand effects of student alcohol use reported by neighbors of colleges: the role of alcohol outlets."

Criminology, Stephen E. Bown, Finn-Aage Esbensen and Gilbert Geis. Anderson publishing co. 2001

San Diego Union-Tribune, Debora Ensor, July 2, 2002, B1

San Diego Union-Tribune, Joe Hughes, December 22, 2003, B1

San Diego Union-Tribune, Editorial, December 28, 2002, B8

SDSU Daily Aztec, Leslie Hackett, October 2, 2002, A1

San Diego Municipal Code section 59.5.0502 (b)(2)(a)

California Penal Code Section 415.2

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Sergeant Andrew Hoffman
Email: ahoffman@pd.sandiego.gov
San Diego Police Department
Mid-City Division
4310 Landis St
San Diego, CA 92105
Work: 619-516-3044
Fax:619-516-3058

Officer Richard Fox
Email: rafox@pd.sandiego.gov
San Diego Police Department
Mid-City Division
4310 Landis St
San Diego, CA 92105
Work: 619-516-3000
Fax:619-516-3058

Officer Casey Gini
Email: cgini@pd.sandieRO.gov
San Diego Police Department
Mid-City Division
4310 Landis St
San Diego, CA 92105
Work: 619-516-3000
Fax:619-516-3058

Coping with unruly college neighbors | Study finds life near students can be trying.

He didn't mind so much when they picked his wife's roses. But when they stole the actual bush, well, that was a problem.

And when they urinated on the side of his house, had sex in his front yard and hid from police on his porch in the middle of the night, well, that bothered him, too.

That's why Vincent Hernon says he has called police about 400 times in the 31 years he has lived in his elegant, 2,500-square-foot College Area home, just a block from several fraternity houses at San Diego State University.

"These kids have no regard for other people's property," Hernon said. "The noise, the drunkenness, the music. At times we talked about moving, but my wife loved this house so much."

A study by Harvard University School of Public Health released Wednesday backs up Hernon's complaint: living near a college, especially one known for drinking, can substantially reduce the quality of life for nearby residents.

The study, published in the July issue of the international journal *Social Science & Medicine*, said people who live within a mile of a college are 135 percent more likely to be plagued by vandalism, assault, litter, drunkenness and other disturbances.

"I don't pretend that this is a major problem facing people living in America, but it is a regular source of annoyance, and it needs to be addressed at a national level," said Henry Wechsler, principal investigator of the study and director of the College Alcohol Studies at Harvard.

Wechsler has done numerous studies on alcohol and college students during the past decade. His earlier studies focused on binge drinking and found that two in five college students were binge drinkers.

For many residents of San Diego's college neighborhoods, the study offers no big surprises.

"When you buy near a university, you're not very smart if you don't take things like noise into consideration," said College Area homeowner Natalia Moorhead.

Reggie Smith, who lives in Linda Vista within walking distance of the University of San Diego, agrees.

"I think there are so many positives living close to a university," Smith said. "You have to be broad-minded enough to realize when 7,000 university students are within a mile of you, it's not going to be perfect. Some students don't behave, but then again, neither do some other people who live around you."

The Harvard study findings were based on a telephone survey of adults from 4,661 households in the United States. Residents living near a campus were asked if they witnessed negative consequences of others' drinking, such as litter, noise, public drunkenness, vandalism, fighting, vomit or urination.

It also reported that residents near colleges where 50 percent of students are found to binge drink were 81 percent more likely to experience these secondhand effects than those near colleges where fewer students binge drink.

Binge drinking for men is defined as consuming five or more drinks in a row once in a two-week period. For women it is defined as drinking four drinks in a row.

A poll conducted by SDSU last year said that 25 percent of SDSU's 34,000 students binge drink.

Scott Seevers, who has lived near SDSU for seven years, said he loses sleep about three times a year because of parties but otherwise likes the vibrancy, the diversity, even the downright hilarity.

"The college kids are just funny," Seevers said. "They put couches on the roof to party."

In a house a block away from Seevers on Baja Drive, the students who live there are digging up their front lawn to make a putting green.

These students also have parties every week, play Frisbee and football in the street while drinking beer and have police telling them to tone it down on a regular basis.

Still, said Justin Smilor, a third-year student at SDSU who lives in the house, they get along great with most of their neighbors.

"As long as you give your neighbors a heads-up, be polite and courteous, it really isn't a problem," Smilor said. "And we always clean up after parties. You can't get girls if you're a slob."

Smilor's house is one of about five rentals in the neighborhood, otherwise full of retirees and young families.

"My quality of life is good," said his neighbor, Phyllis Taylor. "But I don't pretend to live in San Marino."

Taylor said she calls police about three times a year because of noise, but her biggest problem is trash — she often finds herself on a Sunday morning walking around the neighborhood in her Sunday best, carrying a garbage bag and picking up beer cans.

"Then I put the bag full of beer cans on the doorstep of the house where the party was," Taylor said. "I let them know we're paying attention."

Taylor and other College Area residents say students are considerate before parties, often passing along their phone numbers hoping neighbors will call them first, before the police, if there's a problem.

That's because no one wants the wrath of the College Area Party Plan.

The plan, known as CAPP, allows neighbors to petition the police about a problem party house. If Officer Bill Taitano, who runs the program, agrees, he "capps" the house. That means the address is flagged, and the next time police show up, someone gets arrested and

can potentially be fined up to \$500. Police also have the authority to confiscate kegs, stereos, even band equipment.

A house also will get capped if there are two calls in a 30-day period. About 15 houses are currently capped, though Taitano said there's been as many as 35 on the list. Most are within a mile of the school.

Taitano said neighbors complain about more than parties, however. It's the trash. Screeching tires. Speeding. Broken beer bottles.

"I know SDSU had a reputation as a party college at one time. It may still be that way," Taitano said. "Some of the kids, they think, well what do these people expect, they live in a college area. But that doesn't fly with me."

It doesn't fly with on-campus police either.

Fraternity houses have even more stringent rules to live by.

Fraternities are required to get permits for large parties, limiting the number of people, the noise level and the hours — usually no later than midnight — and mandating trash pickup the next morning.

If a house violates the permit, gets five verified noise complaints in a semester or three in a 30-day period, it gets capped. That means no more permits, no more parties for 16 weeks.

"When they get near that threshold," said Doug Case, coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life at SDSU, "they suddenly become very cautious."

Though no fraternity houses have been capped in recent years, there have been 34 noise complaints against the 15 frat houses in the past academic year, Case said.

Some of the problems at SDSU will be solved when the new fraternity row opens at the beginning of the fall term, Case said. Half of the frat houses will move there, away from residential neighborhoods.

Near other local campuses, the problems aren't as severe. USD generally experiences fewer problems with its neighbors because there are fewer of them.

"There is a fair amount of buffer space between campus and other residential areas," said Larry Barnett, director of public safety for USD.

The University of California San Diego also generates fewer of these issues because many of its students commute and many can't afford to live in the nearby La Jolla area.

Deborah Ensor: (619) 542-4574; deborah.ensor@uniontrib.com

Credit: STAFF WRITER

Full Text:

Copyright SAN DIEGO UNION TRIBUNE PUBLISHING COMPANY Jul5, 2002

Does 'live and let live' encourage college parties?

Re: "Unruly neighbors" (A-1, July 3):

I agree with some of the comments made, as I live in an apartment complex near SDSU, which is trashed on a nightly basis, but especially the weekends. It is rather upsetting that some people think it is fun to destroy the walls and lights in the stairwell/ elevator or that they cannot seem to find the trash can and just leave their garbage in the hall for someone else to pick up.

But since I am a college student who likes to have a party every now and then, I put up with it. However, I feel that people who live near a college and are not students have no right to complain about it! I mean, if I did not go to State, there is no way I would ever think about living near there.

So as far as I am concerned, the people who do live in houses near a college are insane! They need to just realize that this is the way it is and move and leave all of us college kids alone to do what we please!

MELISSA DAVIS

San Diego

The problem has nothing to do with the location of the house, it is the practice of renting property to multiple tenants in areas that are zoned for single-family residences.

Greedy landlords who have no regard for their own property and the neighbors who put up with noise and lack of common decency are the cause.

For the last six years, I've dealt with a neighborhood house, rented to three **35-going-on-18-year-olds** who still think that the way to impress someone is by the size of their speakers.

When people are not paying full value for the residence that they are renting, it becomes easy to lose respect for where they temporarily live, and the "unruly neighbor" is born.

DAN ADAMS

San Diego

10/02/02

Local organizations crack down on parties

Law enforcement agents issue 165 misdemeanor arrests over two weekends

By Leslie Hackett

Assistant City Editor

Fifteen San Diego organizations joined forces in an effort to crack down on loud parties. While the majority of the project - the SDSU College Area Party Plan - took place during the first two weekends of school, the University Police Department at San Diego State has been continuing its efforts to help keep problems in the College Area community at a minimum.

Law enforcement agents issued a fair amount of arrests during the project. For the combined two weekends - a total of four nights - 165 misdemeanor arrests were made. For the most part, those in violation of the law were not booked into jail. Rather, officers issued citations to violators with their written promise to appear in court. The coalition set up a central command center, a large mobile trailer filled with computers and areas where officers could work. The headquarters were set up in the Faith Presbyterian Church parking lot near the corner of Campanile Drive and Montezuma Road. Since so many groups were involved in the project, the center acted as a central location where everyone could meet. If someone was arrested, the command center acted as a holding cell. When enough arrests were made, people were then transported to jail in a prisoner van.

Paperwork concerning the project was filled out and filed at the center. San Diego Police officers Richard Fox and Casey Gini, along with Sgt. Andrew Hoffman came up with the idea for the new project. Fox called the project a progressive approach to cracking down on College Area parties. The primary goal of the project was to reduce the number of calls for service regarding loud, disturbing parties by residents in the SDSU community. "We were hoping that by taking a firm enforcement stand, that the word would get out and people would not host large, multi-hundred parties," Fox said. "It doesn't seem to be a problem when there's 10, 15, 20 people. It's when there's 75, 125, up to 300 people that it becomes a problem."

Organizations involved said they felt the project was successful in meeting its goals. "We got a fairly good response from the houses that had been having problems," University Police Sgt.

The San Diego Union-Tribune

HELEN K. COPLEY, *Chairman and Publisher Emeritus*

W. JEFF GATEWOOD
Founder, Oct. 19, 1858

JOHN D. SPRECKELS
Publisher, 1890-1926

COL. IRA C. COPLEY
Publisher, 1928-1947

JAMES S. COPLEY
Publisher, 1947-1973



A COPLEY
NEWSPAPER

DAVID C. COPLEY
Chairman and Publisher

KARIN E. WINNER
Editor

WILLIAM OSBORNE
Senior Editor/Opinion

ROBERT A. KITTLE
Editor of the Editorial Page

EDUCATION

Now hear this!

Police avert crime by dampening party noise

There's a saying about how to live a stress-free life: Don't sweat the small stuff. But San Diego cops are finding the opposite is true for public safety. If you sweat the small stuff, it won't turn into big stuff.

In the College Area, San Diego police from the Midcity Division unearthed a 1970s-era ordinance that was rarely used to crack down on loud parties, which have been the bane of the neighborhood for years. The city nuisance ordinance bans noise-making that can be heard from more than 50 feet away. So, when cops receive a complaint, they get a tape measure and head to the party. Just to make sure, they allow 75 feet before writing a ticket and, if the noise does not abate, shutting down the party.

This new enforcement has done more than provide peace and quiet and a better night's sleep for many residents. It also has resulted in arrests for serious crimes, including several felonies and alcohol-related offenses.

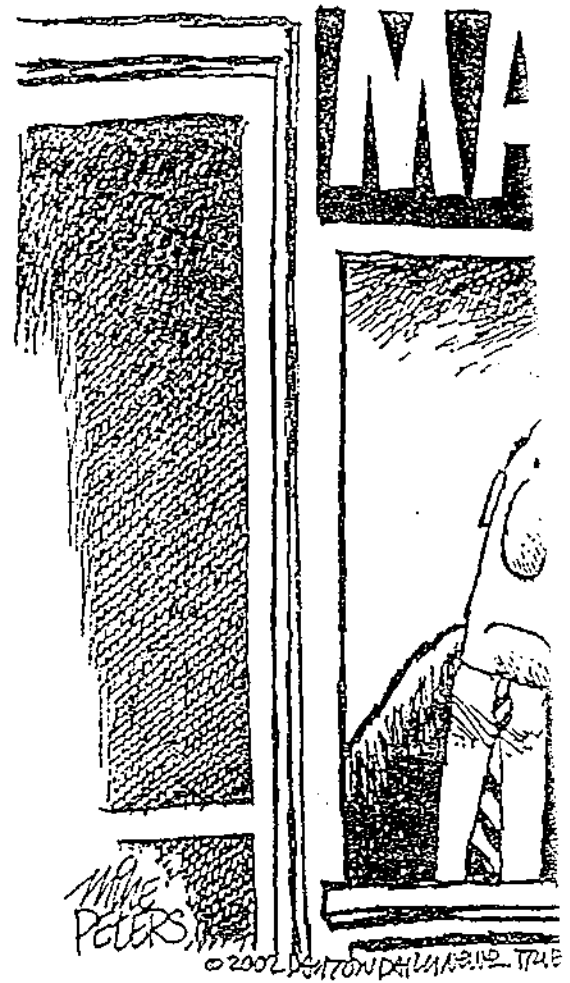
No doubt the noise enforcement can become a prevention tool. How many times have you

read about a beating or stabbing occurring in the early morning weekend hours following a party? Or about party guests becoming unruly late in the evening and the police being called? Ask the cops; it happens every weekend somewhere in San Diego County.

In New York City, crime dropped dramatically in the 1990s after police began enforcing all infractions of the law, and patting down suspects for weapons no matter how minor the crime. Former New York City Police Commissioner William Bratton says he will employ the same approach as the new Los Angeles police chief. He calls it the "broken window" approach of fixing small problems before they become big problems.

Midcity Division's effort is the same sort of police work. It can help prevent spirited parties from turning into drunken brawls. And while it might not make some SDSU students very happy, it will improve the neighborhood. It should be used in other communities and cities, too. And can we get traffic cops to carry tape measures? Maybe the 50-foot rule should apply to booming car stereos as well.

Mike Peters DAYTON DAILY NEWS



Daniel Weintraub THE SACRAMENT

Expert advice on

Walter Zelman has two words of advice for California's growing ranks of health care reformers: Don't overreach.

Zelman should know. A former consumer advocate and political watchdog, he jumped into the health care wars about 10 years ago, first in California and then onto the national stage. He played a key role in helping to draft former President Clinton's 1993 plan for universal health insurance, a proposal that was defeated in Congress and triggered a political backlash that helped Republicans seize control of the House of Representatives in the 1994 elections.

erage. And while having just spent the interests of Capitol, he also "If you want are going to have where your million people it: without putting ble. Solving the sured requires a political will and that recognize t more are going t help those who I Zelman's pref

