


CM#2011-42**INDIANA POLICE DEPARTMENT****CHIEF'S MEMO**

October 14, 2011

**TO:** Mayor George E. Hood

**FROM:** Chief Wm. C. Sutton 

**SUBJECT:** 2011 Homecoming Activities; Summary.

Beginning Thursday, September 29, the department's operational focus was turned to the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) Homecoming activities. Our goal was to provide service that would assure safety through visibility and swift action to whatever unlawful activity should occur while continuing to provide service for "routine" calls not related to the Homecoming activities.

It is expressly noted that each year we rely upon other agencies to assist in operational deployment in order to deal with the increased crowds and alcohol related activities within the Borough. Municipal departments contributing to our deployment efforts this year were Punxsutawney and Homer City Police Departments. Additionally, the Pennsylvania State Police again provided a significant increase in local patrol assistance and provided the services of their mounted patrol units. Also assisting was the Pennsylvania State Police Liquor Control Enforcement officers from the Punxsutawney station.

Contained herein is a summary of police response and overtime costs directly related to the IUP Homecoming events and related activities for the period of Thursday, September 29 through Sunday, October 2, 2011.

**Impact on daily calls for service**

To recognize the impact Homecoming and related activities had on the police department

I would first compare the average daily calls for service<sup>1</sup> for an entire year to those of the three days that highlighted Homecoming celebrations. During the entire year of 2010 IBPD Officers answered 9,344 calls for service. This equates to an average of 26 calls per day. During the three days of 2011 Homecoming activities, beginning 3:00 p.m. Thursday, September 29, through 3 p.m. on Sunday, October 2, there was an average of 89 calls per day, a 242% increase in the daily average calls for service for this period. It should be noted that these statistics do not include calls taken by other assisting agencies within the Borough during the Homecoming period. Additionally, these do not represent calls received after 3 p.m. on Sunday that may have been related to Homecoming activities, e.g. discovered vandalism, etc.

Following is an outline of agency responses during the aforementioned three-day period of Homecoming activities that resulted in arrests<sup>2</sup>:

**IBPD Arrests<sup>3</sup>**

Harassment	1
Criminal Mischief	1
Public Drunkenness	34
Disorderly Conduct	20
Underage Drinking	26
False ID	1
Public Urination	5
Drug Charges	4
Trespass	2

<sup>1</sup> The handling of a single call for service can range from minutes to hours to days, even to years, as presented in past annual reports. Therefore, calls for service are not a measurement of manpower needs as related to allotted time shift-to- shift. Rather, calls for service provide the number of police responses during a given period and represent a method of comparison to the *norm*.

<sup>2</sup> It is emphasized that these are incidents that resulted in arrest and these do not include calls responded to did not result in arrest, were founded crimes that require follow up investigated, or that were not criminal in nature.

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with Uniform Crime Reporting when an individual is charged with more than one offense only the highest graded offense is counted. Therefore, the actual number of lesser offenses, such as Public Drunkenness, even though a serious matter in our environment, will not reflect an accurate count..

### Serious Offenses Investigated

Not indicated above since no arrest has been made, there was one aggravated assault investigated. This incident involved a stabbing at 1020 Philadelphia Street. The victim was stabbed in the abdomen during a physical altercation involving several individuals. The suspect fled the area prior to police arrival and was not identified by anyone one of the several individuals at the scene. As of this writing the victim, an IUP student from Erie, underwent surgery for a nicked bowel and has been released from the Hospital. The investigation is ongoing.

It is expressly noted that although Indiana Borough experiences an inordinate number of assaults during the fall and spring semesters, there were no other assaults reported during this period.

### Other responses

Including the above outlined incidents of arrest, IBPD responded to and investigated a total of 268 calls for service during the three day period. In addition to the arrests enumerated above the remaining calls for service include those that may or may not have lead to an immediate arrest, are pending further investigation, or were not criminal in nature and may or may not have been a result of Homecoming activities, as well as routine traffic enforcement.

The aforementioned data does not include the numerous parking complaints handled and vehicles towed as a result of parade preparations as well as several other "routine" calls not related to Homecoming activities, such as animal complaints, alarms, and other miscellaneous calls for service.

### Arrests by other assisting agencies

**Pennsylvania Liquor Control Enforcement** again this year reduced their activities significantly compared to years past. Of particular note is one administrative citation was issued to Lebrato's (formerly Boomerang's) for selling alcohol to a minor. Additionally, LCE officers made the following arrests: three (3) underage drinking; and one (1) public drunkenness.

**Pennsylvania State Police** reported the following arrests: three (3) drug arrests; nineteen (19) traffic citations; forty-two (42) traffic warnings; three (3) DUI; and thirteen (13) unspecified summary arrests, as well as numerous assist responses to IBPD officers. The PSP Mounted Unit provides tactical support mainly in crowd control and omnipresence and generally do not participate in the arrest function.

It is expressly noted that in addition to the responses outlined, these agencies provided countless responses in backing up and assisting IBPD officers. While only one or even a few persons were arrested in most incidents, backup officers were instrumental in controlling bystanders and larger than normal crowds during these incidents.

**IUP Police arrests during the same period (comparison of campus activity)**

IUP Police reported that they made twenty-one (21) arrests during the period, including two (2) harassment; seventeen (17) public drunkenness; thirty-three (33) underage drinking; five (5) disorderly conduct; two (2) harassment; one (1) trespass; one (1) criminal mischief; two (2) simple assault; seven (7) drug arrest

The above incidents represent those resulting in arrest. IUP Police did not report their total calls for service for the period.

It is noted there was a 33% increase in total overtime for the period as compared to 2010. The increase is largely due to investigation of the one critical incident (stabbing) that took place Saturday evening. It is further noted that investigation of the incident continues beyond the Homecoming period, which will largely be covered by on duty time but additional overtime is likely to result. Following is a breakdown of overtime for the period:

<u>IBPD Overtime</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Costs<sup>4</sup></u>
Parade	94	\$2,824.34
Weekend (1500 Thursday – 1500 Sunday)	169	\$4,889.93
2011 Totals	263	\$7,718.27
2010 Totals (for comparison)	213.75	\$5,802.05

**Assisting Agencies**

With the continued enhanced assistance provided by the Pennsylvania State Police, assistance from other local agencies has become less essential during Homecoming celebration activities. This year officers from Homer City Police Department assisted during all three evenings/mornings during the period and officers from Punxsutawney Police Department assisted Friday and Saturday evenings into the morning hours. There is no cost to the Borough for this assistance.

Also assisting was one (1) County Detective from the District Attorney's Office; eight (8) mounted units from Pennsylvania State Police; and an unspecified but greatly enhanced number of Troopers from the Indiana Station. Special recognition is given to State Correctional Institution Pine Grove for assisting with prisoner transport to the County Jail. STCIPG provided a transport vehicle and driver Friday and Saturday evenings. Also recognized is the assistance from Indiana Fire Association.

<sup>4</sup> All costs (including 2010 comparison) include 7.65% social security and Medicare costs to the Borough.

### Arrest and incident analysis

The number of calls for service experienced during the period reflects a 9% decrease compared to the calls for service experienced during the period in 2010. Of the ninety-four (94) arrests enumerated above, sixty-two (62) resulted in custodial arrest. The decrease in calls for service is largely contributed to the inclement weather.

Based on the student referrals made, of the ninety-four (94) arrests by IBPD during the period at least thirty-three (33) were of students. As in years past there is a significant number of police contacts made with visitors to the area as opposed to students residing here and in attendance at IUP.

Alcohol continues to be the main theme of the Homecoming celebration. Blood alcohol content (BAC) percentages continue to be remarkably high, which is a great concern to safety and welfare among the student population participating more aggressively in alcohol consumption. Most incidents and arrests involved students and persons not associated with any organized group, e.g. fraternities. Once again the most remarkable observation was the apparent increase in persons and large groups in and about town throughout the Homecoming celebration activities. A most prominent police presence is responsible for keeping control of such a large gathering and it is noted that many disturbances go unreported due to immediate control by observing officers. Overall, this years Homecoming was mild with respect to the number of disturbances, custodial arrests and serious incidents encountered.

### Planning for the event

Saturday's parade was again met with an enhance police omnipresence. It is expressly noted that the current parade route, which was changed in 2007, as well as the earlier starting time of 10:00 a.m., continues to provide a safer and easier controlled environment for the event. Despite inclement weather the event was well attended.

Patrol Division Sergeant William Vojtek orchestrated the Operations Plan for the 2011 Homecoming activities. With respect to evening and early morning activities, a well planned deployment of officers, both IBPD and assisting agencies, created an organized omnipresence that circumvented many incidents before they could develop. This also provided a swift response and action to disturbance calls. The enhanced assistance from Pennsylvania State Police enabled IBPD to provide more consistent deployment of manpower throughout the Borough.

The temporary holding facility in the Borough Police garage provided a safe environment for both the officers and arrestees while preserving the integrity and security of the municipal building. With the County Jail being moved several miles out of town, the additional assistance from State Correctional Institution Pine Grove, in the way of a transport vehicle and driver, made a significant impact on the ability to keep officers deployed in the assigned areas.

Of paramount concern was the inability for IBPD officers to communicate with PSP officers. In the past this was not an issue, in that PSP was given permission to transmit on IBPD frequency, in which IBPD is under license with FCC. Upon license renewal, IBPD was forced to change from wideband to narrowband due to FCC placing restrictions on wideband usage. This is of no consequence to daily operations, in that IBPD communication area is quite small, and IBPD officers experience no problems communicating.<sup>5</sup> However, this change prevents PSP from receiving and transmitted on IBPD frequency. For Homecoming period PSP officers were issued portable radios in order to communicate with IBPS officers. The radios were provided by IBPD and our vendor, at no cost, Frank Renosky, Citizen's Radio, Inc. A very special thank you is in order for Mr. Renosky's service, which is above and beyond expectations.

### Conclusion

The following is largely reiterated from past Homecomings:

Alcohol consumption continues to be a main focus of the activities during the period and lends itself to the general climate of defiance, free spirit and a substantial increase in large gatherings. There is also an influx of visitors to the area, most of who engage heavily in the alcohol related activities.

The three days of Homecoming activities places an increased burden on the police department, obviously indicated by the tremendous increase in daily calls for service and the human resources required to deal with these. And, while the aforementioned call and arrest data provide some indication of manpower needs during the period -- the potential for greater adverse behavior, e.g. rioting, cannot be overlooked. Control of criminal acts through arrest is accounted for however the ability to control the overall crowds and potential of greater adverse behavior cannot be measured. An enhanced omnipresence has been the most successful tool to this endeavor.

The 2011 Homecoming celebration mirrors that of years past, in that visitors and students are instilled with high emotions regarding "their" University's Homecoming while much of the celebration is found off campus where the greatest opportunities exist. There is an incredible burden to the community that results from the activities during this period, in which alcohol continues to be the paramount focus. IUP provides various organized activities during the Homecoming celebration, but these are seemingly limited in comparison to the number of students and visitors who elect to "party" in and about town. In essence, the streets of Indiana Borough are turned over to numerous students and visitors wishing to "party" during this period. In short, Homecoming places a great burden on Borough resources and takes a toll on the community's tolerance of the associated alarming and annoying activities.

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<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that Indiana County 911 is in the process of changing their communication system to a 800 MGH Trunk system, which would force IBPD to change its current system at a significant cost that has not been earmarked, referenced in several annual reports. This matter will be discussed in upcoming Public Safety Committee meetings.

The 2011 Homecoming activities brought forth a seemingly "milder" celebration than in the past. Police department efforts to enhance a successful Homecoming celebration in the future will continue to incorporate careful planning of manpower allocations and maintaining a continued and ongoing dialogue with IUP officials and student leaders.

With emphasis I commend all IBPD officers for their commitment during this most trying period. Additionally, recognition of the abilities of my staff and supervisory level officers is in order and I commend them for their focused commitment and successful deployment of resources during the period.

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