

420 CELEBRATION

Thousands bake in heat

Annual celebration of marijuana lights up UCSC as temperatures reach 84 degrees



As the clock strikes 4:20 p.m. a collective puff of smoke fills the air above Porter Meadow on UC Santa Cruz campus on Friday.

JON WEIAND/SENTINEL

By **STEPHEN BAXTER**

sbaxter@santacruzsentinel.com

SANTA CRUZ — Throngs of red-eyed marijuana fans cheered at the strike of 4:20 p.m. Friday in celebration of the annual 420 event at UC Santa Cruz. Then a cloud of smoke billowed into the air.

Music, conversation and a hot afternoon greeted more than 2,000 people at Porter College Meadow. Temperatures reached 84 degrees and sent participants searching for shade under a grove of trees.

"I think it's a good thing, apart from just smoking," said Ever Barraza, a senior sociology major. "Society looks down on drugs in general, but this is something where everyone can just come and get along."

Contrary to that vibe, UCSC officials stressed that the event is unsanctioned and unwelcome. It brings outsiders on to campus and snarls traffic and parking, said UCSC spokesman Jim Burns.

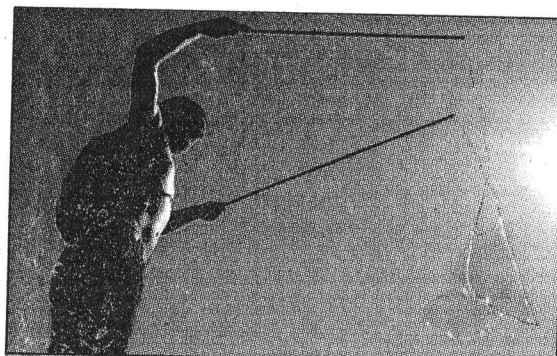
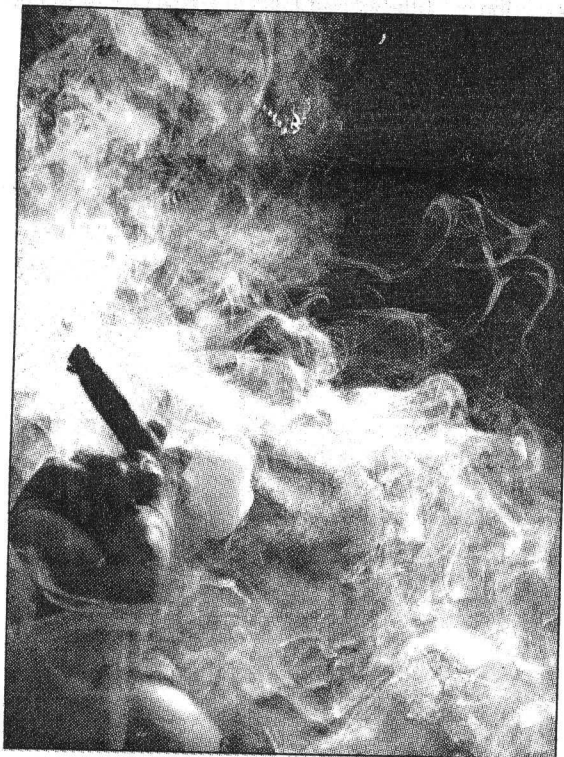
A 28-year-old, who is not a student, was arrested about 1:30 p.m. on suspicion of felony possession of marijuana for sale, said UCSC Police Chief Nader Oweis.

An officer spotted Isaac Collins of Santa Cruz in Porter College Meadow openly selling marijuana and marijuana-laced food, Oweis said. Authorities did not disclose how much cannabis was found on him.

While hundreds of students smoked freely in the meadow, about a dozen were cited for marijuana possession during traffic stops on campus roads, Burns said.

The heat may have drawn more people to the event, police said.

"It's cooking today," said UCSC police Sgt. Mark Larson.



42112
ON THE NET

4:20 AT UCSC

VIDEO: View a video of marijuana's biggest day at UC Santa Cruz at www.santacruzsentinel.com or scan this code with your smartphone



MIDDLE LEFT:
A man's face is masked by smoke as the clock strikes 4:20 p.m. at Porter Meadow on UC Santa Cruz campus Friday.

JON WEIAND/SENTINEL

LEFT: As one bubble pops another forms as a man celebrates April 20th at Porter Meadow on UC Santa Cruz Campus Friday.

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SEE 420 ON A2

420

Continued from A1

Authorities said about 20 police were on campus, including extra officers from other University of California campuses and California Highway Patrol. Burns estimated that presence cost \$15,000.

"It costs us money we really don't have," Burns said of the event.

"Our priority at this point is really just public safety. We would rather the event go away, but our No. 1 priority with that many people here is that no one gets hurt."

Stereos played Sublime and The Doors. Young women in bikinis swung hula hoops and smoked out of bong and pipes. They passed around joints.

Some came for the spectacle.

"I came to watch people be goofy," said Rebecca Gonzalez, a junior. "It's kind of fun to watch."

One of the myths of the origin of 420 is that it is a police code for marijuana smoking in progress. In fact, a group of San Rafael students coined the term in the early 1970s after they habitually met at 4:20 p.m. to smoke marijuana.

The time and date stuck. The date became an international holiday for marijuana.

Willie, a senior engineering student, celebrated by smoking weed in the shade wearing Ray-Ban sunglasses and a T-shirt.

"I'm feeling great," said Willie. He declined to give his last name for fear of prosecution.

"I probably smoked like three joints today," he said.

The first came at 4:20 a.m., the latest at 4:20 p.m. What was it like to smoke pot at 4:20 a.m. on 4/20?

"It's about a 12-hour time difference," he said.

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The sun was shining strong enough for a smoker to light his pipe using a magnifying glass at Porter Meadow on UC Santa Cruz Campus Friday.

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