

Halloween

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events will be very fun."

McCrae stressed that many of these events have been planned regardless of what happened in the past.

In 1996, what was supposed to be a small party turned into a nightmare for its hosts.

"We were just having a small Halloween party with some of our close friends," said party host Nygil Murrell (ODE, Nov. 4, 1996). "Then more people came and more people came — we didn't invite that many."

Murrell said they tried to shut the party down early, but then more people were physically trying to break into their house.

Eugene Police Sgt. Dave Poppe said after the people outside the party were asked to disperse, a few complied. But about 20 others shouted insults and threw bottles and rocks at the officers.

After police requested reinforcements, the crowd finally dispersed.

In 1997, police were forced to use tear gas to break up a crowd of about 300 people on Alder Street. On Nov. 3, 1997, the Emerald reported drunken partygoers throwing bottles, tearing down light poles and ripping out stop signs in a riot.

West University resident and student Daniel Smyth said he saw several fights take place, cars being rocked back and forth and people firing gunshots into the air.

The problem began when the party hosts prevented more people from entering their house. The crowd outside grew larger and proceeded to move north on Alder Street as a total of 40 officers used tear gas to disperse the crowd.

Neighborhood resident Ryan Nelson, who witnessed the clash, said police should accept part of the blame for the evening. He said police used "general bully-

ing" and an "abuse of power" in order to control the situation.

"I think it could have been handled a hell of a lot better," Nelson said.

Last year, another unruly crowd gathered after the Eugene Fire Department responded to a fire at Campus Quads on 16th Avenue and Alder Street. Police later responded to an illegal party on 15th Avenue and proceeded to issue a handful of citations to intoxicated minors.

The crowd on Alder Street swelled to approximately 100 people. Soon after, people began to throw rocks and bottles at the police officers. Twelve people were arrested, but only four were identified as University students.

Some blamed the police.

In a letter to the editor (ODE Nov. 4, 1998), University junior Matthew Rutman wrote: "In my opinion, a lot of the violent acts were in response to the presence and manner of the police at the scene."

Others blamed the media.

In an Emerald article following the riot (ODE Nov. 2, 1998), University Senate President Matt Olsen expressed his disgust with the presence of television crews before anything happened.

"They're just looking for sensational, cost-effective news," Olsen said.

But ultimately, members of the community blamed the volatile mix of alcohol and irresponsibility.

In a message to the irresponsible partygoers (ODE Nov. 13, 1998), sociology major Arwen Maas-DeSpain expressed her anger as a mother and student.

"You had the choice to be responsible," Maas-DeSpain wrote. "Your actions precipitated the tear gas. That tear gas caused pain and suffering to people who didn't choose to be involved."

During the evening's rampage, Maas-DeSpain was walking home from Safeway with her



Students enjoy their evening across the street from the Campbell Club co-op moments before last year's Halloween riot broke.

Scott Barnett Emerald

baby on her back, downwind of the tear gas.

"With my eyes, nose and throat burning, I ran in the opposite direction," Maas-DeSpain said. "Any moment I expected my baby to burst out screaming in pain."

Late-night clashes between students and police are nothing new to college campuses across the

country. In fact, when compared with other college towns, Eugene has escaped relatively unscathed.

In 1998 at Ohio University, approximately 2,000 people clashed with police. In the same year at the University of Connecticut, 2,000 people turned a "Spring Weekend" party into a fight with police, and again at Michigan State University, a

peaceful protest turned into a 3,000-person brawl between police and protesters. All of this happened within the span of two months.

"This is not fun for anyone — students, the University, police," Sgt. Gilliam said. "If something happens again, it's a black eye on the University and the city of Eugene."

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