

*A Note from the desk of*



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To the West Los Angeles Community,

I am reaching out to you as the Commanding Officer of West Los Angeles Division to provide you information on two recent incidents that occurred in the Brentwood Community. These incidents involved Palestinian Protest Groups targeting specific locations in the Brentwood Community based on individuals who reside or were visiting the residences.

The first incident occurred on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at approximately 1630 hours. A group of Pro-Palestinian protestors parked their vehicles at the Starbucks on Santa Monica Boulevard and walked to a private residence in the 150 block of Cliffwood Avenue. There was a Democratic National Convention fundraiser occurring with the guest speaker being the Vice President of the United States Kamala Harris. The group of protestors used bullhorns and amplified sound as well as threw "fake" blood on the sidewalk and driveway of the fundraising residence. Additionally, the group made small hand prints with the fake blood to simulate the bloody handprints of children. These acts of Vandalism occurred prior to the arrival of LAPD WLA Division officers and were reported by the United States Secret Service. When LAPD officers arrived, they attempted to gain voluntary compliance with the group to leave the area. The group refused to leave, and additional LAPD resources were requested to effect arrests on the protestors. As additional police units arrived, the group voluntarily dispersed southbound Cliffwood Avenue across Sunset Boulevard walking back towards their vehicles. While walking back to their vehicles, an altercation occurred between a few protestors and a private security guard resulting in pepper spray being used by the security guard and a protestor. There were no other incidents and the group left the area once they reached their vehicles. Crime reports for Vandalism, and Battery (Pepper Spray) were completed by WLA Division officers. The fake blood was washed down and dissolved leaving no permanent damage to the sidewalk or driveway.

The second incident occurred on November 23, 2023 (Thanksgiving), at a private residence in the 11900 block of Foxboro Drive. This was outside a private residence of a member of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. Again, a group of 25 Pro-Palestinian arrived on foot

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at the location and threw fake blood on the driveway and sidewalk, along with white bundles with fake blood on them simulating a bloody infant. They again used amplified bull horns for increased sound, distributed derogative flyers with the resident's picture, and ignited smoke bomb devices to simulate smoke from bombs being deployed. A neighbor exited his residence and confronted members of the group. He was subsequently struck with a pole and returned to his residence. As police were arriving the group voluntarily dispersed in a southbound direction. Vandalism and Assault with a Deadly Weapon crime reports were completed by WLA officers. There were no arrests made in either incident. The victim of the Assault was not seriously injured.

Protestors in both incidents wore similar clothing and face covering which makes it difficult to identify who the specific individuals were that committed the crimes. LAPD Major Crimes Division took investigative responsibility for the crimes and are investigating both incidents as "Hate Crimes." Video surveillance and physical evidence was collected from both scenes.

As tensions continue to escalate due to the Israel/Hamas conflict, we are seeing protests in the area also escalate to crimes of Vandalism and sometimes violence. Thankfully, no one has been seriously injured during any of the demonstrations thus far in West Los Angeles Division. We continue to provide extra patrol at our religious sites within the community, as well as additional department wide resources for pre-planned events such as large demonstrations at the Israeli Consulate and the Wilshire Federal Building. The challenge is and will continue to be the spontaneous protests, which occurred in these two incidents, and having the resources to quickly deploy to the locations. We ask that the community not engage these protestors but to call 911 to ensure an enhanced police response. Safety of the public is always are main concern, and although the protesters have a protected 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment Right to free speech, they do not have a right to commit crimes during their protests.

I will continue to update the community on any future events as they arise. Please contact your WLA Senior Lead Officer Matt Kirk with any questions or concerns. Stay safe and happy holidays.

Captain Rich Gabaldon

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