

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT caravan makes every party

BY FRANK GEORGE

Numerous National Night Out block parties took place in Hughson Aug. 5. City and county officials, Hughson Police Services and Hughson Fire Protection District personnel did their best to attend every one of them.

"It's unbelievable the support just by first responders, the deputies – unbelievable turnout," District 2 Supervisor Vito Chiesa said.

Chiesa said fellow Stanislaus County supervisors said they'd be attending one or two parties. Chiesa was scheduled to attend 18.

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Hughson Fire Protection District and Hughson Police Services personnel share a laugh with Hughson city officials at the Samaritan Village National Night Out ice cream social Aug. 5. From left to right are Ron Callahan (fire district) Deputy Dennis Wallace (police services) Community Development Director Jaylen French, City Manager Raul Mendez, Chief Darin Gharat (police services) George Carr and Bud Hill (city councilmen) and Jeff Garcia (fire district). (PHOTO BY FRANK GEORGE)

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Two caravans, consisting of City of Hughson electric, Hughson Police Services, Stanislaus County STARS, Pro Transport-1 and Hughson Fire Protection vehicles participated.

The convoy's first stop was Samaritan Village, where an ice cream social serenaded by Sunshine Strummers, a ukulele ensemble from Turlock, was taking place. Hughson Historical Society also hosted an event, as did Keith and Janice Herring.

"I'm pretty sure my wife was approached by organizers," Keith Herring said, asked

why they chose to host a party.

Herring stayed busy grilling chicken and hot dogs as the city assemblage mingled with other attendees. Sirens and lights announced their arrival at the neighborhood parties and reminded residents of the nationwide event.

"Our street used to be the kids street where it was crazy action every night now," Keith Herring explained. "Now it's the middle-aged street."

National Night Out, "America's Night Out Against Crime," began in 1984 as an effort to promote involvement in crime prevention activities, police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie. It's also designed

to send a message to criminals, letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back. NNO takes place first Tuesday in August.

Citizens for a Healthy Community provided hosts with a NNO Party Kit, which included bottled water, party supplies and toys for children. Cindy Morphy, Citizens committee member, expressed thanks to the party hosts and public agencies that participated.

"A special thanks to Raul Mendez, our city manager, who organized us all," Morphy added. "It was a fabulous event and promising to only get bigger and better each year."



Stanislaus County District 2 Supervisor Vito Chiesa and Hughson Mayor Matt Beekman prepare to join the National Night Out Caravan Aug. 5. Maria Avila, Tanya Nichols, Rev. Ernest Spears and many others hosted block parties in an effort to promote crime prevention. (PHOTO BY FRANK GEORGE)



People converse at Janice and Keith Herring's National Night Out block party Aug. 5. Sirens and lights announced their arrival at the neighborhood parties and reminded residents of the nationwide event. (PHOTO BY FRANK GEORGE)