

Crowd out of hand at Veishea parties

Two arrested after fires were set and cars vandalized

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Veishea parties on Ash Avenue escalated into a riotous situation early Sunday morning when fires were set, cars were vandalized and bottles and cans were thrown at law enforcement officers and firefighters.

The incidents occurred when Ames Police were called to the 200 block of Ash Avenue to deal with a noise complaint when the incidents occurred. Officers were met with a crowd estimated at 500-700 people.

When police, Campus Security officers and Ames firefighters tried to approach the three fires,

"they were met with subjects throwing rocks, bottles and beer cans," according to a police statement.

Ames Police officer Mike Campbell received a laceration to his head after he was struck by a beer can. He was treated at Mary Greeley Medical Center. Other police officers and firefighters were injured, but did not require medical attention.

MARK MESSER, 27, of Des Moines and David Doser, 19, of Urbandale, were arrested for disorderly conduct, which Ames Police Chief Dennis Ballantine called "a bad ending to [Veishea]." No other arrests were made.

At least one Veishea float was burned in the incidents. Reports conflict as to what fueled two other fires. Ballantine said he believed parts of other Veishea floats were set on fire.

The incidents began while Ash Bash was held in the back parking lots of several fraternities along Ash Avenue.

Three parking lots were fenced off for the annual party, which is sponsored by five Iowa State fraternities — Kappa Sigma, Theta Delta Chi, Lambda Chi Alpha, Delta Sigma Phi and Theta Chi.

Thomas Thielen, ISU vice president for student affairs, said he met Monday morning with the

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fraternities that organized Ash Bash to "just sort out what actually happened."

"NO DECISION WAS made on any specific sanctions against the organizers of the party. I think the incident that occurred — it was too bad," Thielen said.

However, "I'm not sure any fraternity is at fault," Thielen said.

When contacted, members of the fraternities involved in Ash Bash said they were advised by Dean of Students Augustine Pounds not to comment on the situation until a uniform statement on the issue had

been developed.

Pounds said the meeting on Monday morning with Thielen and the student organizers helped to start her office in a new direction for open campus parties.

"We met [Monday morning] and the outcome of the meeting, after we compiled our facts, was the students suggesting we discontinue open parties," Pounds said.

SHE ALSO SAID the Office of Student Life has not and is not expected to levy any disciplinary sanctions on the sponsors of the party.

"We have not taken any punitive action against any of the houses involved because we would rather

work with them in a positive way and pursue that course instead of imposing disciplinary sanctions against them," Pounds said.

"We want to work with them to flesh out some policy about open parties. We expect these students to endorse it and help sell it to the greek system," she said.

Brett Jones, an Ash Bash organizer and vice president of Lambda Chi Alpha, said, "We are not eager to sponsor a party where people get so out of hand. It's not worth it.

However, "the people in the street with cans and bottles did not receive them from our party," Jones said. "People with cans and bottles were refused admission and no one was allowed to leave the party with any beer whatsoever. We had a 'drink it or dump it' policy."

Jones would not comment further on the incident until a uniform statement has been issued.

OTHER MEMBERS OF the fraternities involved in Ash Bash said they were also advised by Pounds not to comment on the situation until the statement is issued.

Thielen said University officials

will now more carefully examine large parties sponsored by student organizations.

"We'll be looking into the large parties that are sponsored by student organizations and left wide open to the public. That just doesn't make any sense," Thielen said.

Ames City Manager Steven Schainker said he would be preparing a report for the Ames City Council, concerning the incident.

A joint city/University policy regarding outdoor parties probably will be developed to ensure another incident like Sunday's will not happen again, Schainker said.

While University and city officials are taking steps to ensure such an incident will not happen again, ISU students are still talking about the Sunday morning incident.

Pat McAuley, JIMC 3, said, "There was total mayhem, the place was just insane. There were people on top of cars that were parked in the street, and people all over the front yards of the houses along Ash.

"People were trying to drive

down the street and I remember this one VW — there were about 15 guys just bouncing the hell out of it. One car was actually carried onto the sidewalk and tipped on its side," McAuley said.

"People were running around everywhere throwing beer bottles.

"WHEN I WAS a freshman the street was closed off for [Ash Bash]. It wasn't closed this year and when the band was done the people just came pouring out into the streets and yards," McAuley said.

Scott Dryer, JIMC 1, compared the scene to what he witnessed while on spring break in Florida.

"I went to [Fort] Lauderdale for spring break and it looked just like that. People were going nuts, throwing stuff around and bouncing cars. When the cops showed up people started throwing bottles and stuff at them. It was crazy," he said.

Tom Archer, Con E 2, said he was driving his car in that area when a man in the street stopped him "and said, 'You don't have any foreigners in there now, do you?' I said that I didn't," Archer said. "I flipped him an M & M and everything was cool."