

FROM THE DESK OF THE POLICE CHIEF

## Halloween Safety

By Ryan Thompson, Pine Knoll Shores Police Chief

Ghosts, ghouls, goblins, ninjas and superheroes will soon invade our neighborhoods—and they will be looking for candy and treats. That's right; it is almost time for Halloween. I am convinced that adults love Halloween just as much as children do. Not only do we get to watch our children dress up, have fun and hang out with their friends and neighbors, we get to go through the candy first to make sure it is safe . . . and by "go through," I mean pick out the best and eat it.

Over the past 11 years, I have seen the number of children trick-or-treating in Pine Knoll Shores increase quite a bit. Typically, children gather at Brock Basin on Halloween and go out together as a group. We normally don't have any issues on Halloween other than a speeder here and there, and that is usually prevented with the presence of a few of our police officers.

Here are some good safety tips and advice to make sure Halloween is safe and enjoyable for everyone:

- Plan extra time if traveling through residential areas—and slow down. Kids are excited on Halloween and don't always look before crossing the street. I can't emphasize this enough.
- Make sure that children are supervised by an adult or by a responsible youth at least 12 years of age.
- Make sure children trick-or-treat in a group.
- Plan and discuss the route trick-or-treaters intend to use. Know the names of older children's companions.
- Teach your children to trick-or-treat only in well-lit areas and never go into a stranger's home or car. Go over this with your children as Halloween gets closer.
- Establish a return time for trick-or-treaters, and inspect the candy before children eat it.
- If trick-or-treating after dark, make sure someone in the group has a flashlight so drivers are able to clearly see the group.
- Don't assume that drivers can see your group after dark. Gather children off the roadway when drivers approach your group.
- Discourage inexperienced drivers from driving on Halloween.

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## PUBLIC SAFETY

### POLICE

During August, there were 3 arrests; 46 911 hang-ups; 6 alarm activations; 5 animal calls; 1 larceny call; 5 disturbance calls; 33 assist Fire/EMS calls; 3 motor vehicle collisions; 5 assist other agency calls; 412 traffic stops; 72 citations issued, which included 19 speeding, 1 stop sign/stop light, 12 registration/inspection, 16 license revoked/expired, 28 other traffic violations and 9 drug violations; 74 beach patrols; 385 business checks; 739 foot patrols; and 169 residence checks. Police personnel participated in 11 training hours. Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) worked 36.5 hours.

### FIRE AND EMS

During August, responders handled 3 fires, 26 rescue and emergency medical service incidents; 1 service call; 2 hazardous condition (no fire) calls; 1 overpressure rupture, explosion, overheat (no fire) call; 2 good intent calls; 9 false alarm and false calls; and 1 special incident call. Personnel participated in 321 training hours.

REMINDER: Lock your doors, especially your vehicles, and don't leave valuables in sight. Report suspicious people or vehicles to dispatch (726-1911) so that the police can be notified. You are not "bothering" the police if you call to report something that doesn't look right. They prefer to assess the situation rather than find out after the fact that you had noticed something and didn't report it. Alert citizens are assets to the community.

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