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For The Signal

## Film industry keeps SCV residents working

TV's 'Monk' spotted on COC campus

College of the Canyons' campus was the scene of bicycle stunts, a scuffle and some mock gunfire recently as the cable TV show "Monk" filmed on site.

In fact, Santa Clarita Valley locations appear regularly in the series about an obsessive-compulsive detective, said Jason Crawford, economic development and marketing manager for the city of Santa Clarita.

"They've always been a very professional crew, and we're always happy to get them up here," Crawford said.

The city also plays host to such TV shows as TNT's "Without a Trace," HBO's "Big Love," CBS's "NCIS" and "The Unit," FX's "The Riches" and NBC's "Knight Rider."

Most recently, CBS's "Eleventh Hour" was filmed at Central Park and MTV's "Parental Control" filmed at Begonias Lane Park.

College of the Canyons also regularly hosts many professional productions, which local film students are often able to visit.

When it comes to drawing film crews, last month was the most successful October since 2002, when the city's film office first opened.

Forty-two film permits were issued in October 2008, a 16 percent increase over October 2007. The 112 film days this October marks a 15 percent increase over last October 2007.

"One of the bright spots for the city right now is that location filming is on the rise, which means our locally based film companies are doing business, keeping our residents working, and contributing to our local economy," said Santa Clarita Mayor Bob Kellar.

The film industry is of particular importance to the economy of Santa Clarita.

"It's obviously a very tough economic time right now, so we're very fortunate that the film industry is going really strongly, said Crawford.

"Every year we see increases over the year before. We're doing all we can to attract more filming, because when they film up here, they spend money at local business and hire local residents," he said.

Location filming for October provided more than \$2.8 million for Santa Clarita businesses.

Part of attracting film productions to Santa Clarita is the permit process. Every time a

production films, whether for television, movie or commercials, it must obtain a permit from the city.

The city film office evaluates the impact on the community, traffic, road closures, safety concerns and other matters before issuing the permits. Santa Clarita's permit fees are the lowest in the Los Angeles area.

According to Crawford, the film office is "able to assess the filming and issue a permit in as little as a couple hours, which is quicker than most other cities."

The city also conducts regular outreach to production studios to promote Santa Clarita as a great place to film.

Another part of the filming process is providing service to members of the community who may be affected by the productions. The Film Office provides 24-7 assistance to residents.

"If there is a truck blocking their driveway or something, they can call us and we will resolve the problem," said Crawford.

Several new sound stages have been built in the Santa Clarita Valley during the past few years, and city officials hope to continue increasing their share of the film industry.

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