

Santa Clarita sees boost in film shoots in 2011

By Bob Strauss, Staff Writer

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The Santa Clarita Valley Film Office reported that it issued 359 permits for 901 film days in the city during the calendar year, the most annually since the office was established in 2002. Previously, 2007 set the record for permits (329) and 2009 for film days (867).

In addition, a local economic impact of \$19,363,000 was ascribed to location production in 2011, a 7 percent increase over what film and TV companies spent at area businesses in 2010.

"We attribute our record success in 2011 to a variety of reasons," said Russell Sypowicz, economic development associate with the City of Santa Clarita. "The city understands the importance that the film industry plays in our local community, and thus puts an emphasis on being film-friendly and developing strong relationships with the film industry."

"These relationships, coupled with some of the lowest permit fees in the L.A. area, keep productions thinking of Santa Clarita," Sypowicz, who heads up the Film Office, continued. "Additionally, Santa Clarita was the first city in the L.A. area to implement a film incentive program, which when combined with the state's program, offers further subsidies to keep filming local."

Those incentives include refunding basic permit fees for productions based in Santa Clarita for four consecutive weeks or more, or that pull four or more separate permits in one fiscal year. The city also offers savings on fees for sheriff's deputies performing traffic and

safety control duties.

"Justified," "Franklin & Bash" and "NCIS" are some of the television series based in Santa Clarita. The upcoming, all-star "Gangster Squad" was one of the features shot there in 2011.

"Santa Clarita has put a lot of thought into attracting filming to this area," said Mark Horowitz, an executive producer of "NCIS," who added that he's seen remarkable growth in area production. "With the incentive program, their permit office, the way they organize themselves, it truly is a film-friendly community."