

# Homicides up sharply in county during '79

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Homicides were up sharply in Santa Barbara County in 1979, according to a report issued by Sheriff John W. Carpenter.

A total of 27 persons were homicide victims in the county during the year, the largest number in the past 10 years and possibly the largest in recent history, Carpenter said.

He said eight of the homicides were in the sheriff's jurisdiction, eight in the city of Santa Barbara, five at the Federal Corrections Institute at Lompoc, four in Santa Maria, and one

each in Lompoc and Carpinteria.

Firearms were used in 16 of the deaths, 10 were stabbings, and one was a strangling, according to the report. The average age of the victims was 32, twice as many were males as females, and they included 13 whites, 8 with Spanish surnames, 5 blacks and one native American.

There have been a total of 198 homicides in the county since 1960, nearly two-thirds of them in the incorporated cities.

Carpenter noted that increased killing is also reflected in state and national statistics.

There are many theories on the reasons for the increase, he said. "One that has considerable merit is that people today tend to blame others more frequently for their problems and failures than themselves. Therefore, they strike out at others, instead of doing harm to themselves."

The fact that the nation's suicide rate hasn't risen with the population may support this theory, he said.

"Of considerable concern to us in recent years has been the random killing or the motiveless murder, where the victim doesn't know the killer, or the killing just for the so-called fun of it," Carpenter said. "Ten years ago, about nine out of ten victims knew their killers, and there was a definable motive. Today, about two-thirds of the victims don't know their killers."

## SHERIFF'S BLOTTER

Goleta Valley News 10-10-79

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A 32-year-old Queen Anne Lane resident reported that she and her boyfriend were awakened in their bedroom at 2 a.m. by an intruder shining a flashlight in their faces.

After searching the house for money and threatening to kill both of them, the woman continued, the intruder forced her to lie up her boyfriend and then to lie down nude on the living room floor.

The victim explained that she was afraid the suspect was about to rape her, but that her boyfriend escaped into the backyard at that moment and began yelling for assistance, causing the intruder to flee.