

33 busted in S.I. cult bash

Thirty-three people were charged with trespassing on a Staten Island beach last night when police broke up their fiery celebration of the winter solstice.

Police said they were surprised at about 9:15 p.m. to come across members of the Mama Dama Healing Group on South Beach.

"They were lighting a fire and they were trespassing on the beach," said Sgt. Samuel Perez. "They were chanting, singing, and playing drums and other instruments."

Sandy Miller, a spokeswoman for the group, said members of the group ranged in age from 7 months to 74.

"They went there to do something beautiful," Miller said. "The police did not get it because law and order comes first."

She called the event "a cleansing ritual" to mark the longest night of the year.

Police said all in the group were released after they received summonses for trespassing.

*Philip Messing and
Bill Sanderson*