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POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

Grant Will Help Combat Gang-Related Crime

07/22/2007 Lafayette, IN | When Tippecanoe County prosecutor Pat Harrington spoke to two senior government classes at Jefferson High School earlier this month, he asked students how many of them knew gang members or people who associated with gang members. "More than half of them raised their hands," Harrington said.



That's why Harrington is glad he has received informal notification that his office will be awarded a \$52,398 federal Project Safe Neighborhoods grant. The money will be used to start a multi-pronged effort to fight gang-related crime in the community.

Harrington said he plans to hire an investigator later this year and purchase six notebook computers. The equipment - will be used by his office, Lafayette police and Tippecanoe

County sheriff's deputies in both reactive and proactive approaches to fighting crimes such as drug dealing, weapons offenses, robberies, vandalism and school fights commonly associated with gang activity.

Suzanna Antibus thinks whoever Harrington hires for the job could learn a lot by spending a week looking out her living room window. The drug activity is easy to spot, she said. But other longtime Lafayette residents might be shocked by a few lines from the needs statement that helped convince the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute to award the grant to Tippecanoe County: "Thirteen known gangs actively recruit members within the County. Most are first generation gang-affiliated members, having moved here from larger cities in Indiana, Illinois and Missouri."

Harrington said that information comes from book-in records at the Tippecanoe County Jail. New inmates are asked about gang affiliation and are inclined to be truthful to avoid being placed in jail pods with members of rival gangs, he said.

The Lafayette Police Department's school resource officer attributes at least half of the arrests for fights and drug use at Jefferson High School to "Lafayette's emerging gang problem," according to the grant application.

Full Story: <http://www.jconline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070722/NEWS/707220362/1152/NEWS>

Acting U.S. Attorney Keeps Eye on Violence, Corruption

Article published in the South Bend Tribune

08/01/2007 Hammond, IN | It's sort of like always being the bridesmaid and never the bride. But that is fine with Interim U.S. Attorney David Capp, who was just appointed to the "acting" job for the third time in the last 14 years. From his office in Hammond, he oversees the three northern Indiana district offices for at least the next seven months. His former boss, U.S. Attorney Joseph Van Bokkelen, just became a federal judge.



Capp, 57, is a career prosecutor -- he's been in the U.S. attorney's office since 1985 -- and says he's not into politics. "We will very much continue our focus on the gun violence," Capp said, "and on our relationships with the St. Joseph County prosecutor and the South Bend and county police."

He added that the region's gangs and violent crime problems will be an area in which he anticipates continuing to work with local law enforcement agencies. Capp also said he intends to keep fighting public corruption, in which he's been involved for 22 years. It's also an area Van Bokkelen strengthened and became noted for during the last six years with prosecutions of about 40 public officials, many in Lake County.

To help expand his office's efforts, Capp is pleased that he will be able to add four attorneys to the staff this fall. Three will be in the Hammond office, and one in South Bend. The new South Bend assistant U.S. attorney will be Frank Schaffer, a chief deputy prosecutor for St. Joseph County Prosecutor Michael Dvorak. "He will be able to hit the ground running and become an important part of our efforts to handle gang violence and street crime," Capp said of Schaffer's many years of experience as a prosecutor of major crimes.

Toward that end, Capp wants to work with local police in neighborhoods. "We can make a big difference in a neighborhood very quickly," he explained, "by bringing in our resources in small cases." Those may be cases involving felons with guns or those possessing guns and drugs.

Multi-agency units like the Project Disarm Task Force come up with many of the cases. "We have a lot of tools in our arsenals that our state counterparts don't," Capp noted. That includes the ability to keep defendants in custody without bond until trial, or, frequently, longer sentences than can be obtained in state court.

Full Story: <http://www.southbendtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070801/News01/708010342&SearchID=73289442414424>

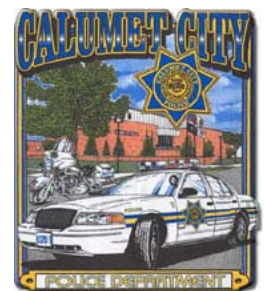


Gangs a Top Priority for New Cal City Chief

Article published by the Times

07/09/2007 Calumet City, IL | Targeting gangs, steering youth toward positive activities and rallying neighborhoods to curb crime are key goals of Calumet City's new police chief. Russell Larson, whom the mayor and City Council appointed as chief from June 8 to April 30, said he has inherited an "excellent" Police Department.

"The biggest challenge obviously right at this point in time is the gang activity here in town," Larson said, adding that the department is moving manpower to "saturate" hot spots and arrest those causing problems.



Gangs are a regional issue, Larson said, and he is excited about the department's participation in the Illiana Gang Task Force, which includes representatives from about a dozen suburban police departments, the Chicago Police Department, the U.S. attorney's office and prosecutors in Lake County, Ind., and Cook County.

"I think that's going to be a very effective program," Larson said. "This is daily constant mingling of departments and resources, the ability to follow a criminal from town to town and across state lines."

Full Story: <http://nwitimes.com/articles/2007/07/09/news/illiana/doc6f952625d7c4a25586257311007a3a5c.txt>

Local Street Crime on the Rise

Article published by The Journal and Courier

07/19/2007 Lafayette, IN | Jerry Kalal and his wife, Patty, moved to Tippecanoe County -- nearly sight unseen -- 13 months ago to escape crime and violence in Chicago. In 26 years there, it was easy to spot a drug deal taking place on the corner. When Kalal saw a similar sale in downtown Lafayette, he got angry. "Three times in a 10-day period I saw crack deals go down," Kalal said. "...Then I see the guy walk back to his car with Cook County plates. They're coming here because they've worn out their welcome in Chicago."



From 1999 to 2005, as the nation's rates for violent crime and property crime slowly declined, Tippecanoe County's have crept up, according to data compiled by the FBI. Some say that Lafayette's recent run of so-called street crimes -- robberies, narcotics sales, vandalism -- stems from outside influences such as Chicago and northwest Indiana. Whether it's true is up for debate.

Evidence of whether someone relocates to Tippecanoe County is not readily available in public records or crime statistics. The Tippecanoe County Jail tracks only current addresses and town of birth. But to law enforcement officers who deal with the issue daily, it's clear-cut.

During the past year, the Lafayette City Council established a graffiti ordinance meant to clean up the community and show gang members that they are not welcome. And the Lafayette Police Department just rolled out a Street Crimes Unit to help cut down on violence, gang activity, and drug use and dealing.

"I have noticed an increase in personal involvement of people from Chicago and Gary, both in the witness and suspect capacity," said Sgt. Tom Davidson, a detective who heads the new unit. When he was an investigator six years ago, Davidson said, "it was sporadic at best. Now, it's very consistent."

A scarcity of federally subsidized housing in Chicago could be a factor in the influx, according to Tippecanoe County prosecutor Pat Harrington. "Chicago has a two- to 2 1/2-year wait for HUD housing, but if you come to Tippecanoe County, it's a two- to three-month wait," Harrington said.

Tippecanoe County should welcome the law-abiding citizens who want to live here, Harrington said. But Chicago people bearing Department of Housing and Urban Development vouchers are not welcome if they bring criminal histories and gang connections with them, he said. "We already have enough of a local crime issue," Harrington said. "We don't need any additional strain on our law enforcement resources."

Full Story: <http://www.jconline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070719/NEWS03/707190324/1152/NEWS>



Police To Launch Gang Unit

Article published by WANE-TV

07/11/2007 Fort Wayne, IN | Wednesday morning, law enforcement officials from several different agencies announced details of a Gang Unit being formed in Fort Wayne. Fort Wayne Police Chief Rusty York will be joined by Mayor Graham Richard, an ATF agent and a representative from the Allen County Prosecutor's office.

A press release issued by the FWPD describes the main objective of the Gang Unit will be to fight gang violence within the city. This will be accomplished through various investigative techniques which include targeted enforcement, surveillance, undercover operations and interaction with community leaders.

"Our officers have a tremendous amount of information and will continue gathering more to make sure gangs do not become a problem in Fort Wayne," Police Chief Rusty York said.

The Gang Unit will be made up of a Fort Wayne Police Department supervisor, four uniformed FWPD officers and an ATF officer. Police say of the 15 homicides in Fort Wayne this year nine of them are gang-related. The police also say they are on pace to confiscate nearly 700 weapons in 2007.



Source: *Wane-TV of Fort Wayne*

Police Arrest Mexican Gang Members

Article published by The Indianapolis Star

07/20/2007 Indianapolis, IN | Federal and local law enforcement agents this week arrested 14 illegal immigrant street gang members in Indianapolis. The suspects, all Mexican nationals, are members of the Sur-13 and Norteños-14 street gangs, according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials.



"Street gangs pose a growing public safety threat to communities across the nation," Daniel Dill, resident agent-in-charge of the ICE office in Indianapolis, said in a written statement. "Working in partnership with local law enforcement to take these individuals off the streets and remove them from the United States is a priority for ICE."

The FBI's Safe Streets Taskforce, Indiana State Police, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police assisted ICE in the arrests. Agents seized about two pounds of marijuana, half-an-ounce of cocaine, a handgun, a sawed-off .22-caliber rifle and \$5,000 during a raid late Wednesday.

The suspects include 12 members of the Sur-13 gang and two members of the Norteños-14 gang, officials said. Daniel Mendez-Salinas, 20, one of the arrested Norteños 14 members, was turned over the Hendricks County authorities where he will answer to drunken driving charges before being deported, officials said. José Pichardo-Lozano, 34, a member of Sur-13, was carrying cocaine, a compact digital scale and other drug paraphernalia when he was arrested, officials said. Pichardo-Lozano will be deported after he answers to a charge of cocaine dealing, officials said.

Twelve other gang members are in federal custody and will be deported. Immigration agents have arrested more than 4,500 street gang members nationwide since launching a crackdown in 2005.

Source: The Indianapolis Star



Bayh Legislation Cracks Down on Gang Recruiting

Article published by WTHR News

07/27/2007 Indianapolis, IN | Senator Evan Bayh is putting street gangs on notice. Bayh is co-sponsor of a bill that makes recruiting and criminal activities of gangs a federal crime. According to the FBI, there are now more gang members in the US, an estimated 800,000, than there are police. In Marion County alone, law enforcement estimates more than 1,600 gang members. We have to punish those people who are about recruiting our young men and women from the streets to sell drugs and participate in gangs," said Sgt. Timothy Knight, IMPD.



For the first time, that punishment could become a federal crime. Indiana Senator Evan Bayh is co-sponsor of anti-gang legislation, that would among other things, stiffen the penalties for gang recruiting, especially if the member is a minor. "For the first time, we make recruiting young people into gangs a federal offense. We can prosecute people who lure young people into participating in gangs by making that a federal crime," said Bayh.

Bayh is also throwing his support behind a bill that doubles funding for community policing to over \$1.1 billion nationally. The bill would set aside over \$9 million to hire extra law enforcement in Indiana. "The federal government needs to step up, provide more resources to our cities and towns and help fund policemen and women fighting the crime problem we currently have," said the senator.

Youth mentors from Indianapolis are more blunt in assessing the city's gang problems. "We are definitely at war. Make no mistake. And it's one we can't afford to lose," said Tony Wallace, Security Dads founder. That war could soon put street gangs in the crosshairs of the federal government, no longer content to watch American street gang membership grow. The bill was overwhelmingly approved by the Senate judiciary committee last month and now goes to the full Senate.

Source: WTHR News

U.S. Marshals Nab Indiana Gang Fugitive

Article published by KPHO 5 News

07/03/2007 Phoenix, AZ | PHOENIX -- A fugitive member of the Black Gangster Disciples Street Gang in Indiana was arrested after U.S. Marshals surrounded a Phoenix apartment complex, investigators said.

Anthony Carr surrendered peacefully on Tuesday after tactical agents called him on the telephone and asked to give himself up. Carr, considered armed and extremely dangerous, was wanted in connection with an AK-47 shooting in Chicago that left one man dead and several other people wounded.



Law enforcement authorities said they tracked Carr to an near 30th Street and Roosevelt. U.S. Marshal Task Force members said they set up surveillance on the apartment and confirmed he was there.

"If Mr. Carr thinks he can come to this city and hide, he is wrong", said U.S. Marshal David Gonzales. He was transported to the Fourth Avenue Jail where he awaits extradition to Illinois.

Source: KPHO 5 News

Regional ★

Gang's Memorial Event Ends in Fatal Shooting

Article published by the Chicago Tribune

07/17/2007 Chicago, IL | At a weekend memorial party for a gang member killed two years ago, a fight erupted among members of the same Chicago street gang, ending in a fatal shooting in the West Humboldt Park neighborhood, prosecutors said Monday.

Circuit Judge Maura Slattery Boyle ordered Mariano Hernandez, who lives in the 900 block of North Pulaski Road, held without bail Monday in the fatal shooting of Jesus Ramirez, 21, of Chicago. A second victim, Francisco Ramirez, 54, also of Chicago, was shot and wounded in the leg.

The deadly confrontation came after members of the La Raza street gang gathered in the 4400 block of West Cortez Avenue for the memorial shortly after midnight Saturday, prosecutors said. A quarrel allegedly led to a fistfight.

"After the fistfight ended, [Hernandez] produced a handgun and opened fire on the group, striking one victim in the head and a second victim in the left leg," Assistant State's Atty. Katherine Malloy said in court.

Source: Chicago Tribune



Boy Beaten into Coma in Attack at S.W. Side Park

Article published by the Chicago Sun Times

07/17/2007 Chicago, IL | Extra Chicago Police patrolled a tense Scottsdale neighborhood Monday following a series of violent incidents that culminated with the savage beating of a 16-year-old boy in Durkin Park on the Southwest Side over the weekend. Richard Valdez was attacked from behind as he walked through the park at 8445 S. Kolin with a friend, neighbors said. Valdez was beaten on the head and back, and a family friend said the attack left shoe prints on his face. He was in a coma at Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn. The Chicago Police Department's civil rights unit is investigating Valdez's beating as a possible hate crime, said police spokeswoman Monique Bond. Witnesses described potentially racist language between the black and Hispanic teens in the park, officials said. But they also are investigating whether gang affiliations played a role in the beating. Two "persons of interest" were being held for questioning in the attack, police said.

Full Story: <http://www.suntimes.com/news/metro/471139,CST-NWS-park17.article>

'Ghetto Tour' Showcases Chicago Projects

Article published by the Associated Press

07/23/2007 Chicago, IL | The yellow school bus rumbles through vacant lots and past demolished buildings on a tour of what was once one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the country.

For the woman with the microphone, the "Ghetto Bus Tour" is the last gasp in a crusade to tell a different story about Chicago's notorious housing projects, something other than well-known tales about gang violence so fierce that residents slept in their bathtubs to avoid bullets.

"I want you to see what I see," says Beauty Turner, after leading the group off the bus to a weedy lot where the Robert Taylor Homes once stood. "To hear the voices of the voiceless."



Turner, a former Robert Taylor Homes resident, has been one of the most vocal critics of the Chicago Housing Authority's \$1.6 billion "Plan for Transformation," which since the late 1990s has demolished 50 of the 53 public housing high-rises, including Cabrini-Green, and replaced them with mixed-income housing.

City officials have heralded the plan. But Turner believes the city once accused of leaving residents to be victimized by violent drug-dealing gangs is now pushing those same people from their homes without giving them all a place to go.

Full Story: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/23/AR2007072300343.html>

MS-13 Gang Seeks to Unite Nationwide

Article published by the Washington Times



07/25/2007 Washington, DC | The international street gang MS-13 is unifying its violent members across the U.S., including the D.C. area, attempting to strengthen its criminal operation by creating a single organization. "Traditionally, the gang consisted of loosely affiliated groups known as cliques; however, law enforcement officials have reported increased coordination of criminal activity among Mara Salvatrucha cliques in the Atlanta, Dallas, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and New York metropolitan areas," states a confidential letter sent out earlier this month from the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District of Illinois. "MS-13 is attempting to become a unified criminal enterprise operating under one leadership."

The Washington Times has obtained a copy of the letter and an Army intelligence presentation on the growth of MS-13, or Mara Salvatrucha. Federal law-enforcement agents say the gang is adopting tactics used by major Mexican and Colombian drug-trafficking groups and has become a gun-for-hire for many major Central and South American drug-trafficking cartels. "Indications that previously independent cliques are forming alliances with other MS-13 cliques, as well as with other gangs to facilitate criminal activity, further heighten the threat," the letter continued. "It would be dangerous to look at MS-13 as just another street gang."



Agents for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) say that the gangs' tactics are terroristic but question whether the small groups can unify under one leader. "These gang members are some of the most brutal people we have ever encountered," said a DEA intelligence officer on the condition of anonymity. "Whether they are unifying, well that's more difficult to tell. In some cases yes and in other cases no. But a unified criminal enterprise between all groups — it could happen. We'll have to wait and see. What we know is that they're getting stronger."

According to the DEA, the gangs' major source of income is narcotics and arms trafficking. Human trafficking and extortion also are becoming lucrative enterprises for them. MS-13, which began as a Los Angeles street gang, is responsible for thousands of killings and mutilations in the United States, Mexico and Central America. MS-13 rival gang Mara 18, based in El Salvador, is just as violent and recruited more members internationally, said detective Patrick Word of Gaithersburg, president of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Gang Investigators Network.

Full Story: <http://washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070725/NATION/107250083/1001>

Gangs Spreading in the Military

Article published by CBS News

07/28/2007 Washington, DC | .S. Army Sgt. Juwan Johnson got a hero's welcome while home on leave in June of 2004. "Not only did I love my son - but my god - I liked the man he was becoming," his mother, Stephanie Cockrell, remembers. But that trip home was the last time his family saw him alive.

When Johnson died, he wasn't in a war zone, he was in Germany. "He had finished his term in Iraq," his mother said. "I talked to him the day before his death. He said, 'Mom, I'm in the process of discharging out. I'll be out in two weeks'."

On July 3, 2005, Sgt. Johnson went to a park not far from his base in Germany to be initiated into the 'Gangster Disciples,' a notorious Chicago-based street gang. He was beaten by eight other soldiers in a "jump-in" - an initiation rite common to many gangs. "My son never spoke of joining a gang," Cockrell told CBS News correspondent Thalia Assuras.

Johnson died that night from his injuries. His son, Juwan Jr., was born five months later. "I feel like I didn't prepare him enough to deal with this and I should have," his mother said. "But how would I have known there were gangs in the military? I could have had that talk with him."

Evidence of gang culture and gang activity in the military is increasing so much an FBI report calls it "a threat to law enforcement and national security." The signs are chilling: Marines in gang attire on Parris Island; paratroopers flashing gang hand signs at a nightclub near Ft. Bragg; infantrymen showing-off gang tattoos at Ft. Hood. "It's obvious that many of these people do not give up their gang affiliations," said Hunter Glass, a retired police detective in Fayetteville, North Carolina, the home of Ft. Bragg and the 82nd Airborne. He monitors gang activity at the base and across the military. "If we weren't in the middle of fighting a war, yes, I think the military would have a lot more control over this issue," Glass said. "But with a war going on, I think it's difficult to do."

Gang activity clues are appearing in Iraq and Afghanistan, too. Gang graffiti is sprayed on blast walls – even on Humvees. Kilroy – the doodle made famous by U.S. soldiers in World War II – is here, but so is the star emblem of the Gangster Disciples.

Full Story: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/07/28/eveningnews/main3107316.shtml>



Shavon Striggles, a Marine corporal, poses in gang colors inside the barracks on Parris Island.

Are Gangs Using Military Training?

Article published by CBS News

07/29/2007 Columbia, SC | Like most American cities, Columbia, South Carolina, has its share of problems, but nothing prepared the Sheriff Leon Lott for what his department discovered last August. Four U.S. Marines – who proudly snapped pictures of each other – were recruiting local kids, some as young as 13, into the Crips street gang. The leader was a lance corporal. It's a concern also raised by the FBI. In a recent report the agency warned: "Military training could ultimately result in more sophisticated and deadly gangs ... as well deadly assaults on law enforcement officers."

CBS News has learned that military police have briefed local authorities in major cities, including New York, about the rising danger that gang members in the military could share their skills with gangs on the streets. That could include combat, logistics, and even emergency medical skills.

"We heard about it in other places," Lott said. "We didn't think Columbia, South Carolina would be a place where the military would have influence on our gangs, but we had it." But there was an incident in which a disturbed Marine used his training to kill two policemen. In January, 2005, the Marine, who police say was associated with the Norteno street gang, shot to death two policeman outside a convenience store in California. Surveillance video shows him using a technique marines call "cutting the pie" – instead of cowering, he boldly attacks.

Full Story: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/07/29/eveningnews/main3108597.shtml>

Mother Suspected of Driving Son, Others to Kill Gang Rival

Published by 10News.com

07/08/2007 Long Beach, CA | The 30-year-old mother of a suspected gang member who allegedly drove seven minors to a park to kill a 13-year-old boy in a revenge attack is in jail Sunday, charged with murder. Eva Daley of Long Beach is charged with participating in the stabbing of Jose Cano, who was killed June 26 in Long Beach's 14th Street Park, according to a local newspaper.



Daley and the seven minors were arrested throughout the week and by Friday all had been charged at Long Beach Superior Court in connection with the slaying, police spokesman Jackie Bezart told the paper. Police did not release information about the arrests until Saturday. Daley is the only person charged as an adult.

Police say that Daley is the mother of a local gang member and that she drove the youths to the park knowing they intended to kill the victim. Cano was allegedly involved in a fight between two groups of gang members at the park in the 100 block of East 14th Street, shortly after 9 p.m., Bezart said.

The fight ended when Cano suffered multiple stab wounds to the upper body. Friends or relatives took him to a hospital where he died, said Officer Juan Gomez, also a Long Beach Police Department spokesman.

Nearby residents and homeless people in the park said the fight was revenge for an earlier incident in which a boy had been jumped by members of a rival gang. Police say the youth came back with his gang later that night to even the score.

Source: 10News.com



Gang Turf Battles Move to Web

Article published by the Herald-Tribune

07/06/2007 Bradenton, FL | Dozens of pictures and videos have been seized from MySpace accounts as investigators build a racketeering case against four Bradenton residents who are alleged members of the street gang SUR 13. Authorities used search warrants to seize the "documentary material" posted on MySpace pages that are private and cannot be viewed by the general public.

A Manatee County sheriff's detective said the images, which MySpace does not own, will be used in court against reputed members of SUR 13 -- the second gang in Bradenton to face racketeering allegations this year as part of a novel crime-fighting approach. The search warrants marked the first time investigators in Manatee have turned to MySpace to seize evidence in a gang-related criminal investigation.

But authorities across the country say gang members are increasingly using Internet sites to post photos and messages -- taking turf wars from the streets to cyberspace.



In gang cases, police routinely seize photos, videos and clothing when officers raid houses and search vehicles. But that is the old way. The new method, police say, is rooted in MySpace and other popular Web sites where users post photos and videos that in many cases can be viewed by anyone. Private pages are restricted to designated "friends" of the user.

For prosecutors, the images are essential to convince jurors at trial that a defendant is a member of a gang. In court, an alleged member of a gang routinely disavows his association. Gang members leave messages on Web sites about meetings and crimes that friends have committed, sheriff's detective Garrick M. Plonczynski said in court papers. Some gang members, he said, have posted videos on the Internet that document a crime.

Full Story: <http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20070706/NEWS/707060449>

Legal System Trying to Keep Up with Prolific Asian Gangs

Article published by the St. Petersburg Times

07/15/2007 St. Petersburg, FL | Men Sorn didn't have to tell deputies at the Pinellas County Jail that he was a gang member. The marks of his lifestyle covered his slender arms.



The word "Thug" was tattooed on his right forearm, "Life" on his left. Other tattoos included a dragon and the words "Cambodian" and "Khmer." But the most significant marking may have been three small dots on the web of his left hand: They stand for "my crazy life," and symbolize membership in the Asian Pride Gang.

Sorn was a gang leader who killed a rival Asian Pride member after a car chase and shootout in St. Petersburg, authorities said. He was found guilty last month and sentenced to 35 years in prison. Sorn, 23, said little before he was sentenced last month. But his case and other recent prosecutions have shed light on the most prolific gang type in south Pinellas County: Asians.

For more than 11 years, the Asian Pride Gang and a constellation of other gangs like the Everybody Killers and Southern Bloods have recruited dozens of youths, mostly from Southeast Asia. "A lot of their leaders are in prison now," said Aaron Slavin, a prosecutor for the Pinellas-Pasco State Attorney's Office who handles gang-related cases. "But they still have a lot of followers."

Full Story: http://www.sptimes.com/2007/07/15/Southpinellas/Legal_system_trying_t.shtml



Asian Gangs Among the Bloodiest

Article published by the Visalia Times-Delta

07/14/2007 Visalia, CA | It was supposed to be a happy occasion, a birthday party in a north Visalia neighborhood. But Sunday just after midnight, tragedy rolled down the 100 block of West Ferguson Avenue. Several gunshots from a passing car sent dozens of partygoers, mostly teenagers, scrambling for cover.

When the shooting ended and the car sped away, a 17-year-old boy lay on the driveway, blood pouring from his throat. Later, doctors discovered that the boy was at least partially paralyzed, Visalia Police Sgt. Allen Wightman said. Police have not identified the shooter, but some at the party told investigators they know who is responsible: the O.T. The letters stand for "Oriental Troops," one of five Asian street gangs known to operate in and around Visalia. The level of violence exhibited Sunday "would fit the types of crimes they do get involved in," said Lt. Jason Salazar, commander of the Visalia Police Department's Special Enforcement Unit.

In recent years, police say, the city's five Asian gangs — Oriental Troops, Lahu Pride Crips, Mongolian Boys Society, Crips and Mien Brotherhood — have amped up their level of violence. But the Oriental Troops are believed to have been involved in some of Visalia's highest-profile crimes in recent years, including the murder of a ninth-grader in 2005 and the 2006 death of Natividad "Natalie" Viscarra, a 21-year-old mother of two killed in a May 2006 drive-by shooting.

During a January court hearing for John Saesee and Raen See, the gang members charged in Viscarra's death, Visalia police Officer Nathan Flaw, testifying as a gang expert, described the Oriental Troops as Visalia's most vicious gang. A simple insult provides sufficient cause for a high-ranking member to commit murder, he said. "No insult goes unanswered in the gang culture," he testified.

Though violence may be up, the number of Asian-gang members is small compared with other ethnicity-based gangs, Visalia Police Sgt. Brian Winter said. Of the nearly 900 identified gang members in Visalia, he said, 104 belong to Asian gangs. Winter said the majority of those represent the four cultural tribes originating in Laos: Mien, Hmong, Lahu and Lao. Most Asian gang members are children or grandchildren of those who fled Laos after the end of the Vietnam war and eventually made their way to the United States, officials say. They speak English and are plugged into American culture. But their parents' unfamiliarity with that culture — and the inability of many to speak English — contributes to drug problems and gang activity, experts say.

Full Story: <http://www.visaliatimesdelta.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070714/NEWS01/707140329>

Authorities Try Pumping in Classical Music to Chase Gangs from Bus Stops

Published by Time Record News

07/30/2007 Tacoma, WA | City authorities, fed up with gang activity in public places, are taking Bach their bus stop. Transit workers are installing speakers this week to pump classical music from Seattle's KING-FM into the Tacoma Mall Transit Center. The tactic is designed to disperse young criminals who make drug deals at the bus stop or use public transportation to circulate between the mall and other trouble-prone places.

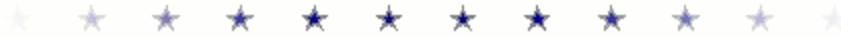


The attack by Bach, Brahms and Beethoven follows the theory that prompted the city to stage pinocle games on dangerous street corners: Jolting the routine in such spots throws criminals off balance. "It's based on routine activity theory and situational crime prevention. You mix different types of activities in locations that are crime-ridden to change the composition of the environment," said psychologist Jacqueline Helfgott, who chairs the Criminal Justice Department at Seattle University.

Skeptics include Tony Wilson, a bus driver for 18 years. "It could do one of two things: It could calm the beast, or it could just stir things up," Wilson said. "I think the reason we don't have music on the buses is that you can't please everyone. It would just cause drama."

If the stream of divertimentos, scherzos and polonaises reduces disorder at the mall, speakers may be installed at more bus stops, said Rod Baker, chief of public safety for Pierce Transit. "We want to create an atmosphere that is safe for our passengers," Baker said. "If this has an impact on encouraging people to move elsewhere instead of hanging around and loitering around an area, then why not?"

Source: Time Record News



Cities Try to Disrupt Gangs by Suing Them

Published by MSNBC

07/29/2007 Fort Worth, TX | Fed up with deadly drive-by shootings, incessant drug dealing and graffiti, cities nationwide are trying a different tactic to combat gangs: They're suing them. Fort Worth and San Francisco are among the latest to file lawsuits against gang members, asking courts for injunctions barring them from hanging out together on street corners, in cars or anywhere else in certain areas.

The injunctions are aimed at disrupting gang activity before it can escalate. They also give police legal reasons to stop and question gang members, who often are found with drugs or weapons, authorities said. In some cases, they don't allow gang members to even talk to people passing in cars or to carry spray paint. "It is another tool," said Kevin Rousseau, a Tarrant County assistant prosecutor in Fort Worth, which recently filed its first civil injunction against a gang. "This is more of a proactive approach."

Los Angeles now has 33 permanent injunctions involving 50 gangs, and studies have shown they do reduce crime, said Jonathan Diamond, a spokesman for the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. The injunctions prohibit gang members from associating with each other, carrying weapons, possessing drugs, committing crimes and displaying gang symbols in a safety zone — neighborhoods where suspected gang members live and are most active. Some injunctions set curfews for members and ban them from possessing alcohol in public areas — even if they're of legal drinking age.



Those who disobey the order face a misdemeanor charge and up to a year in jail. Prosecutors say the possibility of a jail stay — however short — is a strong deterrent, even for gang members who've already served hard time for other crimes. "Seven months in jail is a big penalty for sitting on the front porch or riding in the car with your gang buddies," said Kinley Heggland, senior assistant city attorney for Wichita Falls.

Last summer, Wichita Falls sued 15 members of the Varrio Carnales gang after escalating violence with a rival gang, including about 50 drive-by shootings in less than a year in that North Texas city of 100,000.

Full Story: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20025390/#storyContinued>

Gangs Suspected of Staging Dogfights

Published by the Chicago Tribune

07/06/2007 Chicago, IL | Using a different strategy to combat suspected gang activity, Chicago police said Thursday they searched a Southwest Side home and arrested three individuals on suspicion of dogfighting. The arrests were carried out by the eight-member animal crimes unit, which since November, has had a goal of stepping up hunts for gang-related dogfighting.

The high-stake wagers placed on the fights are especially appealing to gang members, said unit Officer Tom Barker. Since the beginning of the year, at least 300 dogs have been confiscated by the unit, he said. The majority were pit bull terriers that showed signs of being used as fighting dogs, officers said. More than a dozen individuals have been charged this year with felony dogfighting, police said.



Studies show that people who abuse animals are more likely to hurt people, said Cmdr. Wayne Gulliford, head of the special operations section, which oversees the animal crimes unit. The unit's job is to address aggravated batteries, homicides and gang activities by fighting the mistreatment of animals, he said. "This is a focused deployment," Gulliford said. "The search warrant to address the animal abuse is another tool. It does get us into their homes."

Thursday, Linda Johnston, 27, Larry Haynes, 21, and a 16-year-old boy were charged with one count of animal cruelty and one count of owning an animal for sport fighting, both misdemeanors. All three told officers they lived in the house, which had the initials "GDN" by the front door. Police said they believe "GDN" stands for a local gang.

A search warrant was obtained for the house in the 12000 block of South Lafayette Avenue after police received numerous complaints from community members -- from barking to dogfighting. In the garage, a pit bull was found tied to a treadmill, with no access to food or water, officers said. Several other dogs, including four puppies locked in the basement, were found in a similar situation.

Pieces of plywood jutting up from either side of the treadmill's conveyor belt formed the walls of a makeshift exercise cage. A leather leash tied fighting dogs to the machine; the technique is used to build endurance, officers said. "It's like blinders on a horse," Officer James Conlan said. Eight dogs, including the one found tied to the treadmill, were confiscated by Animal Care and Control, Barker said. Another, which was in the living room, was fatally shot when it attacked SWAT team members. Most of the dogs were found in the basement, surrounded by feces and urine, Barker said.

Source: Chicago Tribune

From the Editors

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter.
We are always trying to improve the quality and effectiveness of our products

If you have any comments, suggestions or articles that can be used in the "G.A.I.N." Newsletter please send them to:

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