



G.A.I.N.

GANG ACTIVITY INFORMATION NETWORK



Volume 3, Issue 2

February 2007

United States
Department
Of Justice



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POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

Preventing Violent Crime a Top Priority

Article published in USA Today

1/29/2007 Washington, DC | The Bush administration is proposing a \$200 million grant program to help law enforcement agencies respond to surging violent-crime rates in cities across the nation, Justice Department officials said Monday.



The program would help local and state police agencies pay for officers' overtime, equipment and other expenses stemming from new regional task forces aimed at curbing violent crime. The program has not been announced publicly; Attorney General Alberto Gonzales is scheduled to begin briefing law enforcement officials on it this week.

The task forces would be staffed with federal, state and local officers to deal with a range of growing crime problems, including recent increases in gang-related violence, gun-related crimes and illegal sales of methamphetamine. The grant plan marks the administration's broadest recognition yet of the threat posed by rising violent-crime rates. The FBI reports that violent crimes — homicides, rapes, robberies and aggravated assaults — increased 2.3% nationwide in 2005 compared with 2004, the first such rise since 1991. The trend has continued through the first half of 2006, the FBI reports.

If approved by Congress as part of President Bush's spending plan for the budget year that begins in October, the program also would symbolize a renewed interest in federal funding for local police initiatives, which often have taken a backseat to homeland security programs since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The grant program — known as the Violent Crime Reduction Partnership Initiative — would not, however, be designed to help police agencies hire new officers. Instead, it is intended to help state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies form partnership with federal law enforcement agencies to combat violent crime. It would allow local and state agencies to apply for grants of \$30,000-\$200,000 to better deploy and equip officers who make up the anti-crime task forces, said Herraiz and Assistant Attorney General Rachel Brand, the Justice Department's director legal policy.

See the Full Story: http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2007-01-29-feds-crime-program_x.htm

See FY08 Budget Proposal: http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2007/February/07_ag_072.html

Cellblock on Lockdown After Fight That Injured 2

Article published by the Associated Press

01/31/2007 Michigan City, IN | An Indiana State Prison cellblock remained on lockdown for a fifth day Tuesday after a fight involving inmates belonging to rival gangs, a prison spokesman said.

Cellblock B, which houses about 300 inmates, was to remain on lockdown indefinitely while prison officials continued their investigation into the Thursday night fight in which two prisoners suffered injuries serious enough to require hospital treatment.

The lockdown that began after the incident initially applied to the whole prison but was lifted for all other cellblocks on Monday, prison spokesman Barry Nothstine said.

During lockdowns, prisoners generally are confined to their cells while guards look for weapons and other contraband.

Full Story: <http://www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007701310411>



Gang-Related Murder Suspect Turns Himself In

Article published by The Times

01/12/2007 Crown Point, IN | One of two Gary men charged with a gang-related killing turned himself in Thursday. Gail Walton, 19, faces 65 years in prison for the Aug. 14 fatal shooting of DeAndre Hicks, 21, outside the Miller Village apartments. Kenneth "Punchy" Lee, 22, also charged in Hicks' death, remains at large.

A probable cause affidavit filed in Criminal Court alleges Walton, known on the streets as Dinky, shot Hicks in the neck. It states Lee dragged a woman out of the apartment complex and forced her at gunpoint to drive him and Walton away from the scene. She said Walton and Lee were throwing things out the window during the drive.

Court records show Walton also is charged with robbery in a separate incident and wanted for failing to appear at court hearings scheduled in the robbery case after the August shooting.

Full Story: http://nwitimes.com/articles/2007/01/12/news/lake_county/c68e031e272747f28625726100015d58.txt

Portage School Cop to Hold Forum on Gangs

Article published by the Times

01/07/2007 Portage, IN | The man patrolling Portage's students wants to school the community.



School Resource Officer Cpl. Troy Williams will host an open forum next month to discuss various student-related issues, including Internet safety, gangs and drugs. He'll provide details on current problems in the district's schools, as well as allow residents to share their concerns with him.

In addition to conducting a question-and-answer period, Williams will distribute brochures containing background and precautionary information for parents.

He hopes the forum will help get more parents and residents involved and aware of the issues affecting their children. "The key is to educate and show them where the information can be gained," he said.

Full Story: http://nwitimes.com/articles/2007/01/07/news/porter_county/8b30df1ffbdce248625725c0006ba20.txt

Vandals Spray Paint Highland with Graffiti

Article published by the Times

01/27/2007 Highland, IN | Vandals are leaving their mark in town with at least 32 graffiti incidents reported since October. "It's pretty much all through town," Detective Shawn Anderson told a group of residents at a Crime Watch meeting Thursday night. The highest concentration is south of Ridge Road, he said. The department has some leads and those responsible might be of elementary and middle school age, Anderson said. "It's not gang graffiti."

Markley Park has suffered a lot of damage. The latest incident was reported Jan. 7 when a Little League official found a sign damaged on the concession stand. A word was also found painted on the side of the scorekeeper's building. On Jan. 13, symbols were found written with a marker on a women's bathroom door and a water fountain at Sheppard Park. "They have been using spray paint and markers along the business corridors and in the parks on park equipment," Mary Luptak, director of the Highland Chamber of Commerce, said in an e-mail to businesses and residents.

A business in the 9100 block of Indianapolis Boulevard reported graffiti spray painted on a fence on Dec. 29 and on the back doors on Dec. 31. The vandals also kicked in a fence panel. A pump at a gas station in the 8300 block of Kennedy Avenue was targeted Jan. 16. An officer inspected the writing and said it did not appear to be gang affiliated, but most like the work of "taggers."

Other businesses hit with graffiti are in the 3000-3100 blocks of 45th Street, and in the 8400 block of Kennedy. Even stop signs are not safe as graffiti was found on one in the 9400 block of Fifth Street on Dec. 30. A house was apparently hit with graffiti in the 3600 block of 44th Street when black paint was found on the brick exterior.

Full Story: http://nwitimes.com/articles/2007/01/27/news/lake_county/8bacf9e4ff3f263c862572700001b6d9.txt



Cops Arrest Eight, Shut Down West Side Heroin Market

Article published by the Chicago Tribune

01/28/2007 Chicago, IL | A West Side drug sting this month netted eight gang members alleged to have been dealing heroin near schools and churches, Chicago police said this weekend. The operation, which began last fall, focused on an open-air drug market in the 3900 block of West Grenshaw Avenue that was run by the New Breed Triple L street gang, police officials said Friday.

As part of the operation, undercover officers made several heroin buys from gang members, who police said sold the drugs in plastic bags imprinted with blue devil-face logos. Many of the transactions took place within 1,000 feet of schools and churches, officials said.

On Jan. 18, eight people were arrested and warrants were issued for five others. Police also bought or seized 165 grams of heroin, with an estimated street value of about \$25,000. About \$4,000 in illegal drug money also was confiscated, officials said.



Harrison District Cmdr. James Jackson said conflicts between the New Breeds and a rival gang, the Traveling Vice Lords, led to at least 19 area homicides last year. "It's no secret that gangs, guns and drugs contribute to the majority of street violence in our communities," Jackson said. "This investigation and subsequent arrests have sent a strong message to the gang members that we will not allow these open markets to continue to disrupt the community." In 2006, Chicago police shut 56 open-air drug markets, resulting in 598 arrests, officials said. This latest bust is the second market shut this year.

Full Story: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chicago/chi-0701280023jan28.1.7772262.story>

Number of Chicago Slayings up Slightly in 2006, Police Say

Article published by the Times

01/03/2007 Chicago, IL | The number of homicides in the city increased slightly in 2006, but remained under 500 for the third year in a row, according to police statistics. As of Monday afternoon, police had counted 466 Chicago slayings in 2006, about a 4 percent increase over the 447 in 2005 that marked a 40-year low.

Gang conflicts, including a drug turf dispute on the city's West Side that claimed 19 lives, largely account for the increase, said Police Superintendent Philip Cline. One of the city's biggest challenges is dealing with thousands of ex-convicts who are paroled and rejoin the narcotics trade each year, he said. "We get 20,000 people a year back to the city of Chicago, and unfortunately if they don't find jobs, that's what they're going to go back to," Cline said.

The police department launched a three-pronged attack on gangs, drugs and guns in 2003 after more than 600 homicides were recorded in Chicago for three straight years. Numbers were down about 25 percent in 2004, the first time the city finished a year with fewer than 500 homicides since 1965, when 395 were reported.

While Cline is troubled by the 2006 increase, he is encouraged by slayings remaining under 500 and by continued decreases in other serious crime categories. "Even though our murders were up a little bit, our violent crime continued to drop," Cline said.

Reports of aggravated assault and battery were down 4.5 percent and robberies were down by less than 1 percent in the first 11 months of the year, according to police statistics. "Fifteen consecutive years with decreases in crime is a real accomplishment," Cline said. "Three years under the 500 mark for homicides is also unprecedented progress."

Full Story: <http://nwitimes.com/articles/2007/01/03/news/illiana/72e01e60591d4756862572570082fa8f.txt>



Aurora Youth, 15, Dies from Gunshots

Article published by the Beacon News

01/22/2007 Aurora, IL | A 15-year-old Aurora boy died Sunday after being shot multiple times while walking with a friend Saturday afternoon in Aurora. Oscar Rodriguez of the 500 block of Gates Avenue died at 12:45 p.m. Sunday at Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge. He was brought there by helicopter after being shot twice in the head Saturday at 2 p.m. near High and Grove streets.

According to police, Rodriguez and a 16-year-old female friend were walking on Aurora's near East Side when a dark-colored SUV, possibly occupied by several Hispanic men, drove south on High Street. The men in the car yelled out several gang slogans and fired numerous shots, police said. The girl was not hit, but Rodriguez was shot multiple times, police said. He was taken to Provena Mercy Medical Center, but transferred to Lutheran General shortly after he arrived.

Rodriguez's death comes after a recent flare-up of gang related shootings in Aurora. Last week, two men were shot in gang-related shootings and another man narrowly missed being hit. Then between Saturday night and Sunday morning, two other people were wounded in shootings, one in the 100 block of South Lincoln Avenue and another apparently near Galena Boulevard and Farnsworth Avenue, Aurora police said. Both men suffered non life-threatening injuries, Aurora police spokesman Dan Ferrelli said. Ferrelli said the shootings are the results of a dispute between two gangs, and police have taken various steps, including shifting resources and manpower, to address the shootings.

Full Story: http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/beaconnews/news/222928,2_1_AU22_MURDER_S1.article

43 Alleged Gang Members Indicted in Cleveland

Published by the Coshocton Tribune

01/11/2007 Cleveland, OH | Forty-three people accused of being gang members who sold cocaine and terrorized a Cleveland neighborhood have been indicted in an 18-month investigation, the top federal prosecutor in northern Ohio said Wednesday. The indictment of those who investigators say are involved with the "7-Alls" gang was announced by U.S. Attorney Gregory A. White and officials from the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the city of Cleveland. Officers seized drugs, weapons and \$151,000 in the investigation, White said.

The charges include selling cocaine, conspiracy to sell cocaine and weapons counts. The indictments named as coconspirators two men apparently shot and killed by rival gangs during the investigation, White said. The "7-Alls" name derived from the gang's involvement in violent crimes in 70's-numbered streets east of downtown Cleveland, officials said.

Last year U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced \$15 million in federal grants to six areas, including Cleveland, to fight street gang violence. Grants also went to Los Angeles; Tampa, Fla.; Milwaukee; Dallas-Fort Worth and the Easton-Lancaster, Pa., corridor.

Full Story: <http://www.coshoctontribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070111/NEWS01/701110323/1002/NEWS01>



Federal Authorities Indict Gang Members on Racketeering Charges

Article published by WMC-TV 5 Action News

01/10/2007 Nashville, TN | Federal prosecutors in Nashville announced today that 13 alleged members of a national street gang have been indicted on racketeering charges for their involvement in the murders of rival gang members. The indictment claims Nashville members of the Los Angeles-based gang La Mara Salvatrucha killed three people and attempted to kill seven others.

U.S. Attorney Craig Morford said the individuals, some of them juveniles, represent both rank-and-file members and leaders of one of the largest and most violent street gangs in America. The indictment alleges the gang used violence, assaults, threats and intimidation to protect their power, territory and profits. The gang is believed to have preyed on rival gangs and others in Nashville's large Hispanic community.

Full Story: <http://www.wmcstations.com/Global/story.asp?S=5921895>



Charges Filed After Collinsville Gang Fight

Article published by the Belleville News-Democrat

01/16/2007 Collinsville, IL | A Fairmont City man has been charged in a gang-related stabbing at a dance party during the weekend. Hugo Valenzuela, 19, of 5533 Collinsville Road, Fairmont City, was charged Tuesday with aggravated battery, a felony. Valenzuela is accused of stabbing Jerardo Oseguera, 22, at a dance party in the early hours Sunday morning. Police were called to Zapata's Mexican Restaurant at about 2:30 a.m. Sunday in response to a fight among patrons.

"We believe it was a gang-related incident, and that's really all we can say about it," said Detective Sgt. Tom Coppotelli. "When you have two rival gangs in there, a minor incident can cause something like this. It becomes a volatile situation." Oseguera is still in intensive care at Anderson Hospital, but Coppotelli said his condition is listed as stable. Madison County Circuit Court Judge Charles Romani set bail at \$50,000. Valenzuela remains in custody at the Madison County Jail.

Full Story: http://www.belleville.com/mld/belleville/news/breaking_news/16474599.htm

16 Linked to Gang Accused of Selling Drugs

Article published by the Chicago Tribune

01/13/2007 Humboldt Park, IL | A West Side drug sting netted 16 gang members alleged to have been dealing fentanyl-laced heroin, police said Friday. The four-month operation focused on an open-air drug market on the 600 block of North Avers Avenue that was run by the Conservative Vice Lords street gang, said Sgt. Jeffrey Allen.

At a news conference, police showed video of dealers allegedly making drug-for-money exchanges as motorists stopped briefly along Avers in the Humboldt Park neighborhood. Five people were charged with Class X felony criminal drug conspiracy because the drug deals took place within 1,000 feet of a school and a church, police said.

Five others were charged with felony delivery of a controlled substance, and six juveniles were charged in a juvenile petition with delivery of a controlled substance. Police are still looking for four others.

Fentanyl is a synthetic drug that is mixed with heroin and other drugs to produce an extreme high.

Full Story: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-0701130190jan13,1,151475.story?coll=chi-newslocal-hed>



Graffiti Grows as Costly Nuisance for Nashville

Article published by the Tennessean

01/14/2007 Nashville, TN | The writing's on the wall. And on the bridge. On the boxcars in the rail yard. And your neighbor's garage. And all over the Wedgewood Avenue exit sign on Interstate 65. Graffiti scrawl is sprawling across Nashville. "We have no idea how they did it," said Tennessee Department of Transportation spokeswoman Julie Oaks. On Thursday, work crews finally covered the spray paint display over I-65 with a fresh, unblemished exit sign. "The only way we can figure is that somebody climbed up the cliff and out onto the sign."

The fact that someone was able to dangle over one of the busiest highways in Middle Tennessee long enough to completely cover the sign with paint — without breaking his neck or getting caught — has been a source of wonder and annoyance to thousands of commuters in recent weeks. Which is probably the reaction the unknown graffiti artist was going for.



Graffiti is on the rise in Nashville — from gang members scrawling hit lists and directions to drug buys on neighborhood corners, to exuberant, colorful displays by bored teenagers, to commissioned works of high art. Graffiti is different things to different people. TDOT looks at the I-65 paint job and sees yet another cleaning bill. It cost \$2,000 to make the Wedgewood exit legible again. Last year, TDOT spent more than \$240,000 on graffiti along its roads and bridges. "Every time we put up a new noise wall (along the interstate) it gets tagged immediately," Oaks said.



But graffiti is also the vibrant murals commissioned by businesses like home design firm Prix de Solde and Chromatics Photo Imaging in Nashville. And it produces illicit but lovely images like the racing thoroughbred someone stenciled on a wall behind Provence Bread and Café in Hillsboro Village.

"I can see the real art to it," said Nashville artist Herb Williams, who draws inspiration from the street for the stenciled works he creates in his studio above

The Arts Company downtown. "It's so immediate, there's a quality to it that's just so accessible ... graffiti has a huge meaning to me."

Full Story: <http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070114/NEWS01/701140381/0/COUNTY090104>

Deaths of Innocents Lead to L.A. Gang Crackdown

Article published by CNN

01/23/2007 Los Angeles, CA | A 14-year-old girl was killed by Hispanic gang members who police say were targeting blacks.

A 9-year-old girl died after being hit by a stray bullet as gang members exchanged shots near her home. A cop was wounded in a gunbattle with a suspected gangster. The soaring violence is prompting police and politicians to promise one of the toughest crackdowns against gangs in city history.



"This is the monster, this is what drives people's fears," said Deputy Chief Charles Beck, who oversees a South Los Angeles district where gang-related crime jumped 24 percent during the year ending in November.

However, the effort has met skepticism in the city that has an estimated 700 gangs with 40,000 members -- about four for every police officer -- and that gave birth to some of the nation's most notorious gangs, including the Crips, Bloods and Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13.

Violent year

"It's too big, it's too entrenched, it's too intimately connected with the urban setup here," Malcolm Klein, a gang expert at the University of Southern California, said of the gang problem. "You can reduce it. But the idea you can somehow eliminate it is ridiculous."

Gangs have thrived for generations in Los Angeles, but the especially violent past year caught police brass off guard. Citywide crime rates fell in 2006 but gang-related offenses increased 14 percent -- the first hike in four years. In the San Fernando Valley, gang murders, assaults, robberies and other crimes jumped 42 percent.

Full Story: <http://www.cnn.com/2007/US/01/22/la.gangs.ap/index.html>

L.A. Shifts Tactics Against Gangs

Article published by the Los Angeles Times

01/10/2007 Los Angeles, CA | Los Angeles' top law enforcement officials have agreed on a new attack on gang violence, one that focuses more enforcement on smaller neighborhood gangs and uses a new legal tool tried last year on skid row. The effort comes as L.A. officials are trying to quell a 14% increase in gang-related crime during the last year, marked by several high-profile incidents of race-motivated violence.



LAPD Chief William J. Bratton met this week with Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley and representatives of City Atty. Rocky Delgadillo to begin formulating the plan. Bratton announced Tuesday that his department is developing a "Top 10" list of gangs to target based on a complex formula — and then the three agencies will devote additional officers and attorneys specifically to those gangs. The campaign will include targeting the leaders and headquarters of the worst gangs.

Police have identified 720 street gangs in Los Angeles, with 39,315 members. But officials said a small number of them are causing a disproportionate amount of crime in the hardest-hit neighborhoods. The new strategy is something of a shift for law enforcement officials, who have until now focused much attention on larger gangs that run drug rings and other criminal enterprises.

Full Story: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-gangs10jan10.0.6060324.story?coll=la-home-local>

West Palm Safe Zones Would Ban Gangs

Article published by the Sun Sentinel

01/27/2007 West Palm Beach, FL | Los Angeles knows a thing or two about gangs and how to combat them. That's why West Palm Beach police are borrowing a tactic that has helped: court injunctions. Using the Los Angeles Police Department's approach, West Palm Beach Police Chief Delsa Bush asked Capt. Daniel Sargent to devise a plan with the city attorney.

Police will present the proposal at 4 p.m. on Feb. 5 during a City Commission workshop in City Hall. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement said it has not heard of any other such strategy in the state. "It's going to be a thorn in their side," Sargent said, referring to gangs. The injunctions as well as a proposed ordinance would create "safe zones" that suspected gang members would be cited or arrested for violating, Sargent said.

The approach would be effective because gang members wouldn't take it seriously, he said. They would be served with an injunction against showing up in the designated safe zones. If they do, they would be in violation of the court order and would be arrested, Sargent said. Violations could land them in jail for a few days or longer, as well as subject them to fines, he said. "They are going to laugh at first, but that's what we want them to do," Sargent said. "You can't just go smack people down. This is going to give us a reason."

The northern end of the city has been cast with shades of violence since the crack cocaine epidemic struck South Florida in the 1980s, police said. Since then, there have been four principal gangs in the city, three of which have been disbanded, police said. The current gang that police are trying to dismantle is the Ace Click, which has been in the city since 1998. Police would create about a mile of safe zone for these gang members known for drug trafficking and violence. Like other gangs in the county, Ace Click members have been very visible on the Web site Myspace.com.

Full Story: <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/local/palmbeach/sfl-pgangs27jan27.0.7541565.story?coll=sfla-news-palm>



Brawl Prompts Restrictions

Article published by the Washington Post

01/05/2007 Potomac, MD | Administrators at Winston Churchill High School in Potomac said yesterday that they will enforce restrictions on certain types of clothing and other items associated with gangs, in response to a fight at the academically prestigious school that injured a student and a security staff employee and led police to charge four students with assault.

"I have resisted making the following decision, but now it's essential to guarantee the safety and security of all Churchill students and staff members," Principal Joan C. Benz wrote in a letter sent to parents yesterday. Effective Monday, her letter said, Churchill students will be barred from wearing hats -- except for those with religious or cultural significance -- bandannas, do-rags, skullcaps and hoods. It also said students will be prohibited from carrying flags, banners and pieces of fabric on themselves or their belongings.

The fight on Wednesday involved six male students who began arguing about 11:30 a.m. inside the school at 11300 Gainsborough Rd., police said. The two groups had quarreled before. As the dispute escalated, the students took the fight outside, prompting spectators to tag along.



A 52-year-old school security staff member who was present "was kicked, his glasses broken and he has cuts and scrapes on his face and arms," according to Benz's letter. One of the students who was later charged in the incident was treated at the school for "scratches and bruises," police said.

Police said four of the students charged are members of the local street gang 54 MOB, a black gang made up largely of teenagers who live in the Scotland neighborhood of Potomac.

Full Story: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/04/AR2007010401871.html>

FBI: Gang Members Joining Military

Article published by United Press International

01/05/2007 Potomac, MD | Motorcycle and street gang members have joined the U.S. military and served in Iraq, a new FBI report says. The FBI described the gang presence as a growing threat, the Chicago Sun-Times reported. The military enlistment of gang members could ultimately lead to the worldwide expansion of U.S.-based gangs, the report said.



The Defense Department does not track gang membership in the military. But FBI investigators believe the reduction in enlistment standards -- due to recruitment pressure related to the Iraq War -- has brought more gang members in.

Recruiters are not trained to look for signs of gang membership, the report said. Others ignore criminal records of willing volunteers -- such as the recruiter who concealed the fact that a member of the Latin Kings was awaiting trial for a razor assault on a New York police officer.

The FBI said some gangs recruit veterans or serving members of the military because of their experience with explosives and firearms. Other gang members may join up to get access to weapons and equipment.

Full Story: http://www.wetmtv.com/mostpopular/story.aspx?content_id=c3498572-e55b-4361-a0fb-890d91a0247a

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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