



# G.A.I.N.

GANG ACTIVITY INFORMATION NETWORK



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**POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS**

## U.S. Attorney's Office to Sponsor Gang Conference

**3/14/2007 Hammond, IN** | The U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Indiana, will sponsor a district-wide gang conference March 14-15, 2007. The conference, Gangs and Violent Crimes – Law Enforcement Strategies for Success, is part of a national anti-gang initiative aimed at reducing gang activity through law enforcement training and awareness.

The two-day conference will take place in West Lafayette, Indiana. It will feature speakers spanning the country that specialize in various areas including: gang identification, intelligence, suppression, education and prosecution. The conference will also include several networking opportunities with Local, State and Federal law enforcement personnel from throughout the Northern District of Indiana, as well as various other regions.

This will be the seventh District Gang Seminar/ Training that the U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Indiana, has conducted since Attorney General Alberto Gonzales asked for a National Gang Initiative to be created in May 2005. This Office is committed to the fight against gangs, drugs and gun violence. We are hopeful that this conference will continue to build on the Anti-Gang Initiative strategy, that this Office was asked to create, with the ultimate collective goal being the detection, deterrence and disruption of gangs and criminal organizations along with their criminal activities in Indiana.

The Conference is officially closed for registration, as the event has reached full capacity. If you are interested in future training opportunities focused on anti-gang strategies, identification and other gang-related topics, please visit the U.S. Attorney's training website, or contact a representative with the Law Enforcement Coordination Committee at (219) 937-5500.

See the current training available: [www.keepingourcommunitiesafe.us/upcomingtraining.htm](http://www.keepingourcommunitiesafe.us/upcomingtraining.htm)



## Two Gunned Down in Griffith Lounge Lot

Article published in the Times

**2/26/2007 Griffith, IN** | A splotch of frozen blood marked the lounge parking lot that was the scene of a double homicide that preceded a police chase early Sunday.

Police arrested three men suspected in the shooting deaths of Gonzalo Diaz, 28, of 436 Spruce St., Hammond, and James Walsh, 34, of 10523 S. Avenue J, Chicago, according to Griffith police and a spokesman for the Lake County coroner's office.

Diaz and Walsh were shot multiple times about 3:30 a.m. in the parking lot of Soprano's Restaurant and Lounge on Broad Street at Griffith's southern edge, Griffith Police Chief Ron Kottka said. "We don't have many murders," Kottka said.

Police found shell casings from different caliber weapons at the scene, Kottka said. Kottka had not seen a crime lab report on the shootings, so he said he could not detail what kinds of guns were used, whether the victims were armed or whether the victims fired back.

Diaz and Walsh were in the lounge together before the shooting, but the suspected shooters were not, Kottka said. One of the victims was sitting in a vehicle and the other victim was outside the car, Kottka said.



**See the Full Story:** [http://nwtimes.com/articles/2007/02/26/news/top\\_news/doc331652547130300b8625728e00102027.txt](http://nwtimes.com/articles/2007/02/26/news/top_news/doc331652547130300b8625728e00102027.txt)



## Lafayette Graffiti Ordinance Labeled

Article published by Journal and Courier

**02/06/2007 Lafayette, IN** | Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski wants to set the record straight on a proposed ordinance to force property owners to remove graffiti or face fines.

The idea is not to punish victims of graffiti. The idea is "to get those people who don't clean up graffiti to communicate with us," he said Monday night during the Lafayette City Council meeting.



The ordinance would require property owners to remove graffiti within 10 days of notification or face fines up to \$1,000, plus the cost of having the city do it for them.

Currently, there is no ordinance to force the removal of graffiti on private property.

Council members voted 5-2 to table the proposal for one month to get more public input. "We need to do more public awareness," said Councilman Steve Meyer, D-at large.

If a property owner has difficulty removing graffiti due to time constraints, financial constraints, physical problems or similar reasons "all we need those people to do is call us," Roswarski said.

If they do that, the city will work with them to get the graffiti removed as soon as possible, Roswarski said.

"At the end of the day, we've got to have something to protect our community," Roswarski said.

**Full Story:** <http://www.jconline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070206/NEWS02/702060330/1152/SPORTS06>

## Gangs in the Tri-State?

Article published by WFIE News 14

**03/01/2007 Vincennes, IN** | Vincennes police are still investigating a shoot out Tuesday between two men affiliated with gangs in Gary. But does this mean organized crime has made it's way to Knox County?

Just down the street from a neighbor, who chooses to remain anonymous, police say two males got into a shootout at this Vincennes apartment complex. The neighbor says, "I heard the gun shot and it woke her up and she was crying." While the dispute between 19-year-old Antonio Currie and 28-year-old Tremell Marberry was personal, police say they have ties to street gangs.



The neighbor says this worries her even more, "It's kind of scary. It really scared me because my husband works nights and I'm home alone every night with her and we thought we lived in a safe neighborhood, but obviously that's not the case."

Vincennes Police Sgt. Steve Chesser says there's no need to be alarmed just yet, "I don't think we have a gang problem. We have some people who have moved here from another area because we have a good community here."

Police say these individuals come to Vincennes so they can conduct their drug activity in this small quiet community that's just hours away from several bigger cities. Police say about five or six men affiliated with the gangster disciples have come from Hammond, Gary, and Indianapolis. Some of them have already been arrested by local authorities. Sgt. Chesser says they are watching, "We do want these people that are involved in criminal activity, drug trafficking, gangs that kind of thing to know that we're up on them and we know what they're about."

**Full Story:** <http://www.14wfie.com/Global/story.asp?S=6163764&nav=3w6o>



## Gang Members in Their Own Words

Article published by 24 Hour News 8

**02/17/2007 Grand Rapids, MI** | Recent clashes between two Grand Rapids gangs have resulted in a murder at a roller rink and a stabbing at a mall. The gangs are the Eastern Avenue Gang and Bemis Street Gang; names taken from streets that intersect in the city. 24 Hour News 8 sat down with some Eastern Avenue Gang members and local radio DJ Robert S. Womack at his station - WJNZ.

We asked one of the members what he sees in his future. "I don't know. I really can't even tell you right now what I'm gonna be," he answered. Is he scared? "No, I'm not scared, ' cause there's gonna be a day when I die," he continued.

We asked another member if he sees these incidents between the two gangs getting more violent. "Yeah, I see it getting' very violent because, I mean, we just took a big loss, you know what I'm sayin'?"

That loss was Kenneth Dear, a 16-year-old nicknamed Killa Ken, who was shot to death in November 2006 at the Fun Spot Roller Rink in November. He was a member of the Eastern Avenue Gang. Rival Bemis Street Gang member Giovanni Casper allegedly killed him. A stabbing at Woodland Mall in Kentwood on Saturday was in retaliation for Dear's murder, according to police.

These two gangs document their conflicts with each other on the Web site Bebo.com. The members we talked with say this violence cannot be stopped. The young men did express interest in a lasting peace, and say they tried a truce last year, but it lasted one day.



**Full Story:** <http://www.woodtv.com/Global/story.asp?S=6083391&nav=0Rce>

## ATF Busts Alleged Members of Violent Street Gang

Article published by KiroTV.com

**02/01/2007 Seattle, WA** | A federal grand jury in Seattle this week returned an indictment against an alleged member and an associate of the Norteno street gang, KIRO 7 Eyewitness News reported. Authorities are working to bring down the violent street gang in Seattle and the Puget Sound region.

The indictment is the latest step in a two month investigation by members of the Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Violent Gang task force.



U.S. Attorney Jeffrey C. Sullivan said two men were arrested in Lake Stevens Jan. 18.

During the course of the investigation, agents seized a stolen semiautomatic Uzi rifle, a stolen revolver and six kilos of cocaine worth more than \$100,000.

Authorities said the roots of the Norteno gang are in California, but law enforcement has been seeing the group becoming more active in the Seattle area and in Yakima.

**Full Story:** <http://www.kirotv.com/news/10902794/detail.html>



## Anti-Gang Effort Leads to RICO Indictment of Texas Syndicate Prison Gang

Press Release

**02/12/2007 Houston, TX** | An 11 count indictment charging 17 Houston area men with various murders, armed robberies and drug trafficking to gain or maintain entrance or increase their positions with the Texas Syndicate prison gang has been unsealed, Assistant Attorney



General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Don DeGabrielle of the Southern District of Texas, and FBI Special Agent-in-Charge Roderick Beverly of the Houston Division announced today. Fourteen defendants are charged with conspiracy to violate the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization statute, and face life imprisonment, if convicted.

"Prison gang activities reach far beyond the walls of a prison into the communities in which we live," said U.S. Attorney DeGabrielle. "This indictment represents the continuing cooperative law enforcement efforts in this district to combat this activity and stop the violence."

The Texas Syndicate, one of the dominant prison gangs in the state of Texas, originated during the 1970's and allegedly operates inside and outside jail and prison facilities as a criminal enterprise with the purpose of enriching the members and associates of the gang through the distribution of narcotics and robberies. It is alleged that members, prospects or potential members, and associates of the prison gang preserve and protect the territory and profits of their illegal enterprise through the use of intimidation, violence, threats of violence, assaults and murders. Bound by a strict set of rules, members of the gang are members for life and subject to strict and harsh discipline, including death, for violating the rules of the gang.

According to the indictment returned by a Houston grand jury on Thursday, Feb. 8, 2007, beginning in August 1999 through February 2006, the defendants were engaged in a pattern of racketeering activity through their membership or association with the Texas Syndicate prison gang, a criminal enterprise, and one or more of the defendants engaged in three murders, two attempted murders, conspiracy to commit murder, five aggravated robberies, or trafficked in cocaine and marijuana, all through and in aid of the criminal enterprise.

**Full Story:** <http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/02-12-2007/0004526068&EDATE=>



## Mean Streets, Gangs Going Digital

Article published by ABC News

**02/19/2007 Washington, DC** | Imagine being a prisoner in your own neighborhood. That's how Wichita, Kan., police Chief Norman Williams describes communities struggling with the unexpected and emerging epidemic of gang violence in U.S. cities. "They feel that there is no way out, that there's no hope, and so they just have to live with it. It has a tremendous impact on quality of life in a neighborhood," Williams said of those communities.

Williams says that there's a new generation of gang members, and that they're starting as young as ages 11 to 14. "The concerns you have with that generation is they do not have a criminal history. And so because they do not have a criminal history, we don't have a lot of information on them," Williams said.



According to a recent survey by the Justice Department, there are currently more than 21,000 gangs in the United States. Their membership is 700,000 strong and growing, and they're using the Internet to recruit members.

By posting online content that glorifies the thug lifestyle, gangs are using the Web to recruit — some using children as young as 8 years old as part of the online recruiting process, known as "Net Banging." They sell drugs and guns, run car theft and prostitution rings, and use "bling" — money, cars, and jewelry — to entice troubled teens from poor neighborhoods, many with little or no family to speak of.

And the types of gangs fueling the country's surge in violence run the gamut: international gangs like MS-13, the Bloods and Crips, motorcycle gangs and local street gangs.

**Full Story:** <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=2886482&page=1>



## Myspace.com Becoming Hangout for Street Gangs

Published by CBS 13 News

**02/20/2007 San Francisco, CA** | The newest controversy surrounding the website Myspace.com is surfacing in San Francisco, where gangs are now taking violence to the worldwide web.

Officer Len Broberg of the San Francisco gang task force has seen an alarming increase of postings by gang members in the Bay Area, like this posting by a street gang warning its rival that there will be a retaliation hit.

Here's one from someone wearing the color red, the color of the notorious Latino gang Nortenos. "You know, I'm gonna kill one of yours for killing one of mine." Read Broberg, seated at computer browsing gang sites. This Myspace member claims the gun he's holding is a b-b gun but Bogerg says the barrel is too big - and it's real. Guns are also for sale on Myspace.

There are also tributes to gang members who have been killed. This 21-year-old was a member of the Bayview Gang big block. He's flashing the gang's sign and lists his address as: "da block"



Broberg also found one posting that included a picture of a rival gang member who was beaten and shot. He says the picture was a warning.

"They feel safe enough to post them either threats against rival gangs. They diss rival gangs and they also pose with guns. Ruggers, AK-47's, bullet proof vests." "They've also posted a couple of websites taking credit for having killed rival gang members."

**Full Story:** [http://cbs13.com/topstories/local\\_story\\_051131617.html](http://cbs13.com/topstories/local_story_051131617.html)

## Gang Members Donning Bulletproof Vests

Article published by KOBTV 4 News

**02/10/2007 Bernalillo County, NM** | Law officers involved in policing gangsters say they're seeing a disturbing trend: More gang members wearing bulletproof vests.

"We have people that are otherwise engaging in violent, malicious behavior that are hardening themselves as targets," said Bernalillo County sheriff's lieutenant Gregg Marcantell.

In the last six months, Bernalillo County deputies have confiscated six bulletproof vests from suspected gang members. Marcantell says each time a deputy found body armor on a suspected gang member, it's been during the investigation of a violent crime.



"The law enforcement community is running into these vests in conjunction of investigations into fire bombing, crack cocaine sales, armed robbery investigations," says Marcantell.

There is no law against owning a bulletproof vest, but in order to buy one you have to prove that you're a law enforcement officer.

However, Marcantell says, if you have one and you're not an officer, deputies will probably consider it, and you, to be suspicious.

**Full Story:** <http://www.kobtv.com/index.cfm?viewer=storyviewer&id=30336&cat=NMTOPSTORIES>



## Police Look to School to Help Curb Gang Violence

Article published by KTUU 2 News

**02/15/2007 Anchorage, AK** | How do you help a kid resist the temptation to join a gang? One way is to reach out to them in class. And do it in a school that police say has the highest ratio of gang involvement in its students. Police say they think stepping into the classroom is their best weapon in the fight to help kids fly right.

Seven thousand people live in Mountain View, and life here, according to those working to transform it, is both diverse and distressed. Last year aggravated assaults and drug offenses increased 30 percent from the year before, the mean income is half that of the rest of the city and its poverty rate is three times higher. "What's reflected in the community is reflected, unfortunately, in our schools," said Anchorage Police Department Capt. Gardner Cobb.

The Anchorage Police Department says five or six years ago, Clark Middle School gave rise to what is now the city's most violent gang and that at least four other gangs have started here over the past five years.

"There probably were family members that were parts of gangs and these children decided to become active gang members while they were students at Clark. I suspect there was no gang activity inside the school, and I want to emphasize that because we take a very strict position on gang activity of any kind in our schools," said Anchorage School District superintendent Carol Comeau.

But some forces require extra defenses, like gangs looking for recruits. And police want to give these students the upper hand. "So the younger that you can reach these young men and women with an anti-gang message, I think the more effective that you're going to be," Cobb said.

Police say in-school gang resistance programs could make a big difference. Since Clark has the highest ratio of gang involvement in its students, police say it's the best place to start, even though gangs reach students district-wide.

**Full Story:** <http://www.ktuu.com/Global/story.asp?S=6099974>

## San Marcos School District Uses Various Strategies to Stamp Out Gangs

Article published by the North County Times

**02/03/2007 San Marcos, CA** | While beefed-up safety measures have reduced gang activity at San Marcos Unified's high school campuses over the last decade, city schools are faced with a new problem, officials said last week ---- the recruitment of children by gangs at younger ages.

"All gangs are actively recruiting younger kids, especially at the middle schools," said Sgt. Gary Floyd, who is in charge of the gang unit in San Marcos and who worked as a detective for San Marcos Unified in the early 1990s. "Those kids are the most vulnerable."



To combat the problem, the district is using county and federal grant money on a variety of programs at middle and elementary school levels and in homes. For example, a specialist from the county's Safe Schools program has been hired to help parents learn to identify signs that their children might be involved with, or are being targeted by, gang members for recruitment.

As well, every grade in the district has adopted ongoing gang-prevention programs, officials said.

At the elementary level, programs such as "Peace Patrol" train fifth-graders to help them deal with discipline problems through counseling, officials said. The schools also have "bully boxes" placed around campuses to let students anonymously report conflicts.

Bob Harman, director of student services, said the district is paying special attention to San Marcos Elementary School, which is next to a city-owned field on San Marcos Boulevard where gang activity, including fights and shootings, has been reported over the years. It is the site that officials have been concerned with the most, he said.

**Full Story:** [http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2007/02/04/news/inland/21\\_48\\_002\\_3\\_07.txt](http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2007/02/04/news/inland/21_48_002_3_07.txt)



## 17-Year-Old Boy Shot at Flyer Party

Article published by the Inland Daily Bulletin

**02/06/2007 Rialto, CA** | A 17-year-old boy was shot and suffered moderate injuries after a flier party Friday. The incident was reported at 11:20 p.m. Friday in the 19000 block of Arbeth Street in Rialto, said San Bernardino County sheriff's Sgt. Tim O'Connell.

A flier party is one in which people take small fliers and pass them around to invite guests, O'Connell said.

Two different groups of juveniles and young adults – called party crews - showed up and their disagreement ended in gunfire, police said. The 17-year-old male was a passenger in a vehicle that was driving away, police said. He suffered injuries to his head and one of his hands. He was taken to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center in Colton.



Police said the party crews pattern themselves after street gangs, and they consider it to be a gang-related incident. "They display the same type of behavior," O'Connell said. "They dress alike and identify themselves with hand symbols."

No arrests have been made. Police said they are looking for at least two light-skinned, dark-haired male juveniles who are possibly armed with semiautomatic handguns. No suspect vehicle information was available.

## Happy Balloons and Homicide: Entering the Dangerous World of Flier Parties

Article published by LA Weekly

**Pacoima, CA** | On a recent Saturday night, the "party car" gets word from an undercover officer that a flier party with local gang members attending is about to start on Norris Avenue in Pacoima. Foothill Division Senior Lead Officer Jose Torres, who coordinates the Friday- and Saturday-night party detail, is worried because the house is located on Pacoima Blood gang turf.

Within 15 minutes of getting the call, Torres and five other officers pull up to a rented white bungalow. Teenagers are milling about on the front lawn and the street. They scatter when they see the cruisers roll up. Hip-hop music and loud voices blast from the backyard. The six officers walk to the side gate leading to the backyard party and tell the more than 250 partiers, most of whom are Latino and in their teens, to disperse. After a few minutes, the kids begrudgingly file past the officers. A teenager complains about losing his \$5 entrance fee. The officers continue to the backyard, which is completely dark except for the white Christmas lights around the DJ's amplifiers and turntables. The cops tell the DJ to pack it up. A handful of stragglers attempt to jump the back fence, but the officers corral them through the side gate. Bottles of beer are scattered on the grass.



One of the partiers, 26-year-old Hector, says he goes to flier parties a lot, since he can't get into bars because, as a resident of Mexico, he isn't eligible for a California ID. His friend Ricardo, the busted party's DJ, throws parties every weekend in the San Fernando Valley. Word of this party, says Hector, spread from fliers passed out at San Fernando High School. Officer Torres explains to Hector how dangerous these parties can be. His words fall on deaf ears. "We will see you next time?" asks Torres. "I guess you will," laughs Hector.

This type of intervention is relatively new. Last May, LAPD's Foothill Division, which patrols the Northeast San Fernando Valley neighborhoods of Sylmar, Pacoima, Arleta, Mission Hills, Sunland, Tujunga, Shadow Hills, Sun Valley, La Tuna Canyon and Lakeview Terrace, started a party-suppression detail, made up of overtime and reserve officers, in the hope of stemming the tide of flier-party violence that has spiked dramatically over the past year. As if to confirm the need for the detail, 27-year-old Antonio Vasquez and 23-year-old Hector Villareal, both DJ assistants, were gunned down by alleged gang members at a Sylmar party attended by hundreds of Sylmar High School students the very weekend the initiative was inaugurated.

Since its inception, LAPD officials said, the "party car" broke up an average of five parties a night. But its winning streak came to an end on October 24, when Peter Cobian was shot dead, also in Sylmar. "They were on their way when the homicide occurred," said Foothill Division's Sergeant Jay Roberts.

Peter Cobian's demise has become all too familiar — a young man looking for fun ends up on the wrong end of a gun. If he hadn't been stood up, he might still be here. He'd planned to play pool with his neighbors, but by 9:30 p.m., the 6-foot-7-inch salesman hadn't heard from his friends. When three of his co-workers pulled up at his house in Highland Park and invited him to a pre-Halloween bash in Sylmar, Cobian, 24, decided to tag along. It was Saturday night, after all, and, like most single men his age, he wanted to have fun. The flier advertising the party promised half-price drinks, indoor/outdoor partying, Jell-O shots, happy balloons (nitrous oxide) and DJs playing all the best music.

Cobian, a Los Angeles native, drove in his 1994 gray Integra with a friend while his other two friends followed behind. The night was still pretty young by the time they arrived at 12866 Newton St., a vacant single-family home on a mostly Latino residential street near the 210 freeway that the party organizers had secretly secured. The group paid their \$3 fee and entered a space barren, save for the Halloween decorations hanging from the ceilings and walls. The Secret Society, the party crew hosting the bash, was selling drink tickets. Beer was \$2.

The party, which started around 8 p.m., was an eclectic cross section of young Los Angeles. Partiers ranged from local high school kids to young suburban professionals. The one thing they had in common was that they had managed to navigate their way through the secret codes and cues of the latest flier party and had found themselves here. By the end of the night, they would have another thing in common: This party, like so many others over the past year, would end in bloodshed and violence.



**Full Story:** <http://www.laweekly.com/general/features/happy-balloons-and-homicide/1136/>

## L.A. Summit Seeks to Sever International Gang Ties

Article published by CNN

**02/07/2007 Los Angeles, CA** | Los Angeles' pervasive and violent street gangs were once seen as a local problem and not part of an international criminal web, even though gangs such as MS-13 and 18th Street were oozing across borders into Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

A three-day summit beginning Wednesday in Los Angeles will reflect a new emphasis on international cooperation in fighting gangs. Top officials from several Central American and local U.S. police departments, along with the FBI, will focus on sharing information to stop gang members from bringing weapons, criminal plots, and rivalries across borders.



"Now it is most important to take advantage of technology, of our shared economic interests and of our information to find new ways to make sure these violent gangs don't continue to find ways of staying in the dark," said Rodrigo Avila Avilez, director general of El Salvador's national police.

Earlier this week in El Salvador, U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez announced an initiative to improve anti-gang cooperation between the two countries.

Avila Avilez estimated there were as many as 15,000 gang members in El Salvador, a country of about 6.8 million. There are about 6,000 gang members in Guatemala, a country of 12.3 million, said Ervin Johann Sperisen Vernon, director general of Guatemala's national police.

The spread of Los Angeles-style gangs to Central America is in part the result of mass deportations of young men indoctrinated in the city's violent streets after fleeing their home countries during the civil wars of the 1970s and '80s. In many cases, gang members raised in Los Angeles have more in common culturally with the city than their home countries, police officials said. "In El Salvador, they speak Spanglish, or Spanish with a Mexican accent," Avila Avilez said. "It gives them a privileged status among fellow gang members."

Robert B. Loosle, who oversees the FBI's gang investigations in Los Angeles, said crimes committed by gangs in Central America serve as a bellwether for potential criminal enterprises in the U.S. Particularly noteworthy, Loosle said, was a spike in extortion rackets committed by gangs in El Salvador. Armed members of MS-13 regularly shake down neighborhoods for protection money and demand taxes from bus and truck drivers passing through their turf. "Since members of gangs travel freely across borders, we need to pay attention to new trends they bring with them," Loosle said.

**Full Story:** <http://www.cnn.com/2007/US/02/07/gang.summit.ap/index.html>

## 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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