

Supervisor John Gioia's Weekly E-Update

March 5, 2010

Pride and Inspiration from "Operation Richmond," a Citizen Led Effort to Reduce Crime

If you live in Richmond like I do, you may have been visited this past week by fellow residents or faith leaders about the importance of standing together against violence and the need to channel youth to positive paths.

This is "Operation Richmond" in action. "Operation Richmond" is a grassroots citizen's effort to stop violence through community mobilization, education, and prayer.

It was launched in response to the brazen February 14 shooting at Richmond's New Gethsemane Church of God in Christ, when three men opened fire during Sunday service, wounding two others. Since then, "Operation Richmond" volunteers, primarily African American men, have been canvassing the city with their door-by-door message of peace with the goal of visiting 10,000 homes.

Gun violence is horrific wherever and whenever it occurs. But there is something especially frightening about shootings inside of a church during service. Houses of faith are usually regarded as sanctuaries from violence.

I applaud "Operation Richmond" for its quick and direct response. I've participated in some of its events and have been impressed by the energy and commitment of the hundreds of people involved.

Join me at some of their events this Saturday, March 6. There will be a Community Fair from 10 am to 3 pm at the Richmond Civic Center Plaza and a Mass Rally at 1:30 pm at the Richmond Civic Auditorium.

This week, on my recommendation, the Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a resolution supporting the efforts of "Operation Richmond."

As a strong supporter of citizen involvement in government, I'm inspired by "Operation Richmond". As the County Supervisor representing Richmond and West County, I've worked hard to develop and implement programs to prevent violence. "Operation Richmond" is teaching all of us of the importance of community participation in fighting crime.

I invite you to join me this weekend at the "Operation Richmond" Rally at 1:30 pm.

For more information, check its website at www.operationrichmond.org, or call 510-778-9942.

Many thanks to Operation Richmond's large and growing number of volunteers,

John Gioia

Chair, Contra Costa Board of Supervisors