

# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

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## Pittsburg anti-violence forum seeks broader audience

By Rick Radin  
Contra Costa Times

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Sponsors of an anti-violence forum in Pittsburg next weekend want to include parents and other adults in the discussion of East County gang violence and what can be done to prevent it.

The Oct. 29 Peace in the Streets Forum at Pittsburg High School will help acquaint older residents with the challenges of dealing with gang culture, said Ed Diokno, a spokesman for the event's sponsor, Supervisor Federal Glover of Pittsburg.

"In the past, we have had day-long 'gang summits,' but we've never been able to attract the attention of a whole lot of adults," Diokno said.

A major objective of the half-day event will be to familiarize adults with identifying gang members and to explain how gangs appeal to youths from poor, dysfunctional families who lack direction and feel powerless to change their situation.

"(The word) 'CAL' doesn't necessarily mean their kid wants to go to college, and wearing all red or blue means more than just wearing a favorite color," Diokno said.

The forum will conclude a week of community events, including a prayer walk sponsored by New Birth Church in Pittsburg and a Stop the Violence March and Festival for Peace sponsored by Do The Word Ministries in Antioch, both Saturday.

New Birth Church is also holding a town-hall meeting on making communities safer Monday evening.

The Oct. 29 forum will also inform lay out alternatives to gang participation, including job training, counseling, safe recreation,

after-school programs and tutoring.

The overall goal is to help parents, social workers and school officials intervene before youths enter the juvenile justice system, Diokno said.

"Prevention and intervention is more important and more effective than suppression," he said. "Witness the 70 percent recidivism rate of the formerly incarcerated."

Representatives from the sheriff's, district attorney's and public defender's offices will participate in a panel discussion along with the Pittsburg and Antioch police chiefs. Larry Wallace, director of the state Division of Law Enforcement, will give the keynote speech.

Another session, this one directed at youth, will be folded into the Youth Summit held in March, Diokno said.

**Contact Rick Radin at 925-779-7166.**

If YOU GO

What: Peace in the Streets Forum

When: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Oct. 29

Where: Pittsburg High School, 1750 Harbor St.

Information: Call 925-427-8138.

What: Pittsburg Prayer Walk

When: Saturday. Prayer service 6:30 a.m., with walk at 7:30 a.m. following DeAnza Trail to Crestview Avenue.

Where: New Birth Church, 1411 E. Leland Road, Pittsburg



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Information: Call 925-439-8989  
What: Stop the Violence March and Festival for Peace  
When: 10:30 a.m. Saturday  
Where: E. 18 and A streets, Antioch  
Information: Call 925-978-4839  
What: Town Hall meeting  
When: 7 to 9 p.m. Monday  
Where: 1411 E. Leland Road, Pittsburg  
Information: Call 925-439-8989

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