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# Press Release

## Week of Peace targets street violence and youth gangs

INFO: Ed Diokno, 925-427-8138

PITTSBURG (Oct. 12, 2011) – Violent crime has taken a downturn this year according to statistics gathered from Antioch and Pittsburg police departments.

At the same time, violent incidents among and by young people appear to be rising based on reports in the media and from school districts.

- Recently, two men shot a young man dead in Antioch in the Sycamore neighborhood. The men are still at large.
- A young man was shot while sitting in his car in Oakley. Police suspect it is gang-related.
- Two young men who are connected to a gang were arrested for shooting a man on an Antioch street.
- A member of an Aryan gang fatally stabbed a father in Bay Point.

“While the number of total violent crimes may have gone down, media reports indicate that gangs are involved in a greater percentage of the crimes committed in East County,” said Contra Costa Supervisor Federal Glover.

Criminal violence in East County has attracted the attention of one of the top law enforcement officials in the state. Larry Wallace, director of the Division of Law Enforcement in the Attorney General’s office, will be the keynote speaker at a local anti-violence and anti-gang forum, Peace in the Streets.

"Being smart on crime, that's a part of collaborating and working with local entities and other forms of law enforcement, other groups within the community ... not just a lock-'em-and-throw-away-the-key approach," said Wallace, who has been in law enforcement for 28 years.

While East County gang-related incidents pale in comparison to other parts of the Bay Area, Glover and the East County Gang Task Force want to make sure that it doesn’t get any worse.

Glover and the task force are sponsoring the Peace In The Streets Forum this Oct. 29, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Pittsburg High School.

Also featured during the forum will be panels composed of the county and city law enforcement agencies as well as members of the school districts and local community-based organizations who deal with at-risk youth. The forum is open to the public. Especially urged to attend are parents who want to prevent their kids from joining gangs, educators who want to learn the latest trends in local gangs and youth workers of the nonprofit agencies that offer services to parents and youth.

The forum caps a week of community events against violence. These include:

- Prayer Walk sponsored by New Birth Church in Pittsburg on Oct. 22. Corporate Prayer starts at 6:30 a.m. and the march will begin around 7:30 a.m. The route will follow the DeAnza Trail to Crestview Ave., the site of a recent shooting. For more info, call 925-439-8989.
- Stop The Violence March & Festival For Peace sponsored by Do The Word Ministries on Oct. 22 at 10:30 a.m. Assembly starts at 10:30 a.m. at East 18 and A streets in Antioch to Contra Loma Park where the Peace Festival will be located. For more info, call 925-978-4839.
- Town Hall by New Birth Church in Pittsburg, Oct. 24, 7 p.m.- 9 p.m. There will be a panel on safe communities featuring panelists from law enforcement, education and Supervisor Glover. For more info, call 925-439-8989.

Based on information shared by the gang task force, gangs are no longer just an urban problem, says Ed Diokno, who coordinates the task force for Glover. They are actively recruiting vulnerable young people in the suburbs. They use areas like East County as places to hide when the law clamps down on their activities in places like Oakland, San Francisco or Richmond.

“Parents and educators need to know the signs that their children might be at risk of being lured by the violent gang lifestyle,” said Glover. “None of us can afford to be bystanders.”

"The good thing to know is, we are not alone. There are resources and help available. There are people already working to stop the violence.

"We can reclaim the streets if we act as a community," says Glover.

“Hopefully, this forum and the events leading up to it will give the community the knowledge and resources to fight the street violence and gangs.”

Pre-register for the Peace In The Streets Forum at [www.cccounty.us/supervisorglover](http://www.cccounty.us/supervisorglover) or call 925-427-8138. Registration will also be accepted at the door. All the marches and the forum are free and open to the public.