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# EDMONTON SUN

## Local Guardian Angels told to take back the neighbourhood

By **BROOKES MERRITT**

Wednesday's daylight slaying of a senior could be a watershed moment for Edmonton, the founder of the Guardian Angels said yesterday.

"This Clockwork Orange scenario is not going to end," said Curtis Sliwa, referring to Anthony Burgess's novel about violence.

"It's going to get worse unless you all stand up and take your neighbourhoods back.

"The police don't have the numbers to do it, the government isn't going to save your streets," said Sliwa, who was in Edmonton yesterday to open the local chapter's new headquarters.

"This horrific crime is a signal. It's time to change your mentality from fear to fighting back."

Sliwa was addressing the Edmonton chapter of the Guardian Angels, a New York-based citizens patrol group that has chapters across the globe and recently opened a chapter in the world's largest metropolis, Mexico City.

Local businessman Frank Flaman recently donated space for the Angels to train and gather at 8910 Yellowhead Trail, after being convinced the group could help reduce crime in the city.

"I fully support what they are trying to do," Flaman said.

Sliwa had a message for the six local members, including two new fledgling recruits: attack the fear that keeps Edmontonians from helping strangers.

"The mind-your-own-business attitude doesn't work. Go out on the streets and make people feel safe. Let them know that deranged people can't get away with attacking members of your city without fear."

He said Wednesday's random slaying of Hans Alberts, 77, in a west-end strip mall might have been averted if more people had adopted the values of the Guardian Angels, who vow to save others from danger if at all possible - even if that means putting themselves at risk.

"This (slaying) should never have happened," said Sliwa. "The police should have been responding to rescue this suspect from outraged citizens who had him detained and were ready to string him up from a pole."

Sliwa insisted, however, that the Guardian Angels exist to help police and to deter crime.

Members carry no weapons and are trained in martial arts techniques.

Local chapter head Dave Schroder said the group will now patrol areas in the west of the city, along with the 118 Avenue hooker stroll and the Greyhound bus depot downtown.



**Edmonton Guardian Angels chapter leader Dave Schroder, Allen St. Arnaud and Guardian Angels founder Curtis Sliwa lead a patrol at the Jasper Gates Centre yesterday. (Brendon Dlouhy/Sun)**