

Guardian Angels spread wings in W-B community

Volunteer group holds open house at its headquarters on Hazle Avenue in effort to recruit members.

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WILKES-BARRE – Members of the Guardian Angels take very seriously their roles patrolling the city to help keep it safe.



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The Guardian Angels held an open house Saturday at their headquarters, the former White House Cafe on Hazle Avenue. From left are Jason Weston, Kristen Krushnowski, Greg Raup, Jason Gibbs, Andrew Petonak and David Irvin.

Fred Adams//For The Times Leader

To educate the community on its mission, the Wilkes-Barre chapter hosted a “Meet the Angels” open house Saturday afternoon by inviting people to come in and learn more about the nonprofit group.

“We can show a little of what we do, and you can see the Angels in the area,” said Jason Weston, leader of the local chapter.

The organization patrols the city on foot about three to four times a week in various sections. Member wear their trademark red berets, white shirts, red jackets, black pants and shoes and march in teams of four.

“We mix it up so people don’t know when we are out there. We mix it up so it is something that no one knows when we are out there. We do it during the day. We go at night sometimes. Weekends we will be out until early in the morning sometimes. Other times it is earlier in the night,” Weston said.

The group focuses patrols on Wilkes-Barre, but has also made rounds in neighboring communities, such as – Nanticoke, Pittston, Kingston and Hanover Township.

The chapter’s patrol leader determines where the group will walk during their outings. However, members also pay attention to media reports of problem areas and then try to give extra attention to those spots, Weston said.

The chapter currently has 10 members. New members are always welcome, he said.

There is no membership fee to join the organization he said, adding that volunteers need a willingness to get involved to patrol with other Angels throughout town.

“Obviously the more members we have the more areas of the city we can cover, the more nights we can go out, the more areas we can go out on a night,” Weston said.

Members don’t need any type of police or military background. They just have to be regular citizens interested in trying to deter crime by talking to people through conflict resolution and routine self-defense skills, he said.

Wilkes-Barre Crime Watch President Charlotte Raup praised the group for its continuous efforts to keep the city safe.

She noted it’s hard to determine how much crime the group has helped prevent because that information cannot be quantified.

“I’m sure it’s not hurting. It’s definitely helping. People feel a lot more safer when they see them around,” said Raup, whose husband is also an Angel member.

The Angels moved into their headquarters on Hazle Avenue in June 2008.

The site, formerly the White House Cafe, experienced a wave of violence in its final years as a bar.

To find out more

Anyone wishing to find out more about the organization or get information on how to join, should call 208-8900.