



Guardian Angels Coming to Santa Cruz

By Danny Wool Fri, Jun 25, 2010

While many Santa Cruz residents will be on the beach this Saturday, many others will be downtown to meet with members of the Guardian Angels from Santa Clara County. The group is evaluating the possibility of opening a local chapter here in response to growing gang violence.

The Guardian Angels were founded in New York City by Curtis Silwa over three decades ago. They quickly earned a reputation for sending uniformed vigilantes to patrol the subways and streets and combat violence there. A local chapter was launched in San Jose five years ago, but according to founder Grizzly Bear Farwell, the group keeps the uniform but avoids violence. "If we're at a crime scene," he said, "we call the police. We don't get mixed up with the suspects."

The Angels will be meeting at 600 Front Street at 11am on Saturday. In addition to speaking with local residents, they will be offering sample patrols of the area in small groups. The effort is being praised by local police and politicians, led by City Councilmember Ryan Coonerty, who said, "The key to safety is community involvement." Police Lieutenant called the effort "Fantastic," but noted that they should stick to what they plan on doing: observing, reporting and being a presence.

So be prepared for some community involvement this week, dressed in black and sporting the group's trademark red berets. Read more at the Santa Cruz Sentinel.