

## Guardian Angels spreading wings in Solano County

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More than a year has passed since the Solano Guardian Angels began their watch in Vallejo. Since then, they've spread their wings.

Much has changed with the citizen patrol group, which launched in September of last year at the request of Marc Garman, who runs the Vallejo Independent Bulletin blog.

"This model has become a role model chapter," said Cristina Fernandez, who heads the Oakland chapter and manages the other Northern California chapters.

The Guardian Angels is an international volunteer patrol organization founded in New York City and comes into communities by invitation only.

They regularly patrol areas such as downtown Vallejo and the Country Club Crest, acting as a liaison between the community and the police department and with a direct line to Vallejo Police Department dispatchers.

"They draw guns on us. ... We stand our ground. We're able to show them we're not going away," said current chapter leader Omar Martinez, who succeeded Garman and Gilberto Gonzales as head of the Guardian Angels.

The Guardian Angels do not carry weapons and instead focus on verbally de-escalating a situation.

"Ninety-nine percent of the time, it works," Martinez said.

They are also trained in self-defense techniques when de-escalation fails, Mart

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