



Guardian Angels begin lakefront patrol on North Side

May 27, 2010 5:29 AM

Following eight arrests Monday night along Chicago's North Side lakefront that raised safety concerns, the Guardian Angels began patrolling that area overnight.

Chicago police arrested six teens and two adults after responding to a fight, the assault of a jogger and a gang-related shooting in a span of three hours Monday night between North and Fullerton avenues along the lakefront.

Miguel Fuentes of the Angels' Chicago chapter, said 12 members are being dispatched daily on two shifts. Some of the Angels will ride bikes while others will walk, he said.

"It's about presence," Fuentes said.

Members will patrol in two shifts, from 7 p.m. To 2:30 a.m. and again from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"Last night the police were really receptive to us, and thanked us for being there," he said. "Last night was very peaceful.

"We will respond to any part of the lakefront if necessary. We are there as a visible deterrent, assist if we need to, and call police if we have to," he said.

The Angels are identifiable by their trademark red berets and white T-Shirts with a red logo that reads, "Guardian Angels Safety Patrol". Members will also be equipped with video cameras to document any incidents.

Asked at an event Wednesday night about safety along the lakefront, Mayor Richard Daley said "there are incidents every year on the beaches and parks. ... It doesn't say parks are unsafe. It's isolated incidents.

"We look at it very carefully. We make sure we have better lighting, better access. We make sure the beach patrol out there as early as possible. This is an early summer, much earlier than we've ever had it before."

This morning, Daley is scheduled to hold a press conference to announce a new curfew initiative.

--*Pat Curry*