



# G.A.I.N.

GANG ACTIVITY INFORMATION NETWORK



Volume 4, Issue 9

September 2008

United States  
Department  
Of Justice



U.S. Attorney's  
Office  
Northern District of  
Indiana

5400 Federal Plaza  
Suite 1500  
Hammond, IN 46320  
219.937.5500

David Capp  
United States Attorney

### Inside This Issue

Headline News	Page 1
Local News	Page 2
Regional News	Page 3
National News	Page 4
Special Feature	Page 7



This collection of open source information is offered for informational purposes only. It is not, and should not be, construed as official evaluated intelligence. Points of view or opinions are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice or the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Indiana.

**POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS**

## YouTube Video Shows Gang Celebration After Shooting

Article Published by KMTV Action 3 News

**08/29/08 Omaha, NE** | Caught in celebration, gang members post their party on the internet after an Omaha Police Officer is gunned down.

The video posted this week on Youtube.com show three young men smiling, drinking, watching the news coverage of the police shooting and flashing gang signs. With the music of rapper Tupac Shakur playing in the background, they look in the camera and say, "5-0 got shot. 5-0 got shot tonight, 5-0 got shot,\*\* the police." 5-0 is gang slang for police.

Gang members flash the gang signs as they celebrate the shooting of a police officer. Officer Paul Latschar almost died after he was shot August 20th. Police say a known gang member opened fire on Latschar and his partner after they stopped the suspect's car. Corey Allen is being held on \$15 million bond.

There is also gang graffiti that reads "shoot the cop", underneath a Millard bridge near 144th and Old L Street. A former gang member himself and now Director of the Boy's and Girl's Club Alberto Gonzalez watched the video, "That's crazy, that's crazy, but I'm not surprised." Gonzalez believes the messages of hate can't be ignored. "These kids are very dangerous kids, to me all hard core on this You Tube." Gonzalez says he doesn't like giving the gang members attention by recognizing the video, but believes parents need to know what's going on in their basements.

Omaha Police are aware of the video and take the threat serious. Lt. Darci Tierney says, "The reality is there are those in the community who do think that way and that makes our job so dangerous." Tierney says, "You don't want to give anyone that credibility but we have to take the threat seriously." Gonzalez says, "This stuff is ridiculous and it's a vicious, vicious cycle."

Police say similar disrespectful videos and graffiti showed up after Sgt. Jason Pratt was shot and killed by a gang member in September of 2002 and when Officer Jimmy Wilson Junior was killed by a gang member in August of 1995. Videos like this have also worked against gang members. Police have arrested suspects after appearing in such videos. One weapon even though it was against his probation.

Source: [http://www.action3news.com/Global/story.asp?S=8923761&nav=menu550\\_2](http://www.action3news.com/Global/story.asp?S=8923761&nav=menu550_2)



## Court Security Officer Charged With Gang Recruitment

Article published by The Times

**09/03/2008 Crown Point, IN** | A Lake County court security officer was fired Wednesday and faces a felony charge of recruiting for the Latin Kings street gang, a Lake County police spokesman said.

Jesse Escobedo, 30, called the prospective gang member from his cell phone Aug. 5 in a parking lot near the intersection of 93rd Avenue and Taft Street in Crown Point, Lake County Criminal Court records allege. Escobedo, of Hammond, worked security at the Lake County Government Complex, which is located at that intersection. Escobedo was fired and taken into custody Wednesday on a felony charge of criminal gang recruitment, sheriff's spokesman Mike Higgins said. The Lake County Drug Task Force investigated Escobedo on allegations of gang activity, Higgins said.

At the time of the alleged offense, Escobedo was recruiting for the Hessville chapter of the Latin Kings, police said. Escobedo told the prospective gang member that his brother, Tony, was running the gang, court records state. Police said Escobedo told the prospective member they were "protected with guns and had cocaine to sell for money."

Sheriff Rogelio "Roy" Dominguez fired Escobedo on Wednesday for "conduct unbecoming a county employee," Higgins said. Escobedo had been a court security officer since 2004, police said.

Source: [http://www.thetimesonline.com/articles/2008/09/04/news/top\\_news/doc6ecb6b493c5cb501862574ba00005e19.txt](http://www.thetimesonline.com/articles/2008/09/04/news/top_news/doc6ecb6b493c5cb501862574ba00005e19.txt)



## Bicyclist is Critically Beaten in What Police Call a Gang Attack

Article published by the IndyStar

**09/01/2008 Indianapolis, IN** | A 47-year-old Indianapolis man remained in critical condition Sunday with head injuries after he was attacked Friday in the 2200 block of East 10th Street by about 15 youths suspected of being gang members.

Derek Rowlette remained hospitalized at Wishard Memorial Hospital after undergoing brain surgery Saturday, said Lt. Jeff Duhamell, a spokesman for the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. Duhamell said no arrests had been made. Police responding to what first was reported as a person struck by a vehicle found Rowlette unconscious, his mouth and head bleeding, on the sidewalk near the intersection of East 10th Street and Jefferson Avenue about 5:30 p.m. Friday. Witnesses told investigators they saw several young males, believed to be juveniles, attack Rowlette and take his bicycle. Several of the youths also were riding bikes, witnesses told police.

An IMPD report on the incident said there have been "high levels of gang activity in the area," including 10th and 11th streets near Jefferson, Hamilton and Tuxedo. "Gangs have been involved in (fights), shootings and several assaults on elderly victims over the summer months," the report stated. Some of the gangs identified in the report included City Boys, East Side Gangsters, Knockout Boys and Ratchet Boys. "(There) are active gangs known to be causing problems on a routine basis in the area," the report said.

Source: <http://www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080901/NEWS02/309010346>

## Animal Crimes Unit Now Part of Gang Investigations

Article published by Chicago Tribune

**08/29/2008 Chicago, IL** | Track a dog fighting ring in the city, and Chicago police say there's likely a gang member behind it. Gang members see the dogs like cars and guns: status symbols used for toys, intimidation and protection, and in the end, discard them at will, police said. Of all the people arrested for animal crimes between 2000 and 2004, almost 60 percent admitted being gang members, and 70 percent had previous drug-related arrests, said Sgt. Brian Degenhardt, whose research on the nexus in 2006 led to the department's creation of an Animal Crime Unit. Two years later, the unit is growing again—to 10 officers from about four—and will be part of the gang investigations section. Degenhardt hopes moving the unit, which worked in the past under the special functions group, will allow for surveillance against dog fighting groups and eventually the ability to make bigger cases. Since being restructured Aug. 14, the unit has rescued 19 dogs, including 16 pit bulls, from dog fighting suspects, executed three search warrants and found four illegal guns, Degenhardt said.



Being able to arrest a suspected gang member on dog fighting charges, while not the sexiest or heaviest crime, helps police, said Gang Investigations Section Cmdr. Leo Schmitz. "They're breaking the law, so this is one more way that we can get at the gangs," Schmitz said. Gang members gamble on the fights, use the dogs as protection on the "tip," or where drugs are stored, and consider the blood lines of winning dogs a status symbol, Degenhardt said. Some gangs use the bloody sport to desensitize younger gang members, Degenhardt said. "It's initiation through the blood," he said. "They use them to deaden their senses to violence."

One of the key differences in the new unit is that officers can work in civilian clothes, conducting surveillance that will allow them to catch dogfighters in the act, Degenhardt said. That could lead to more serious convictions, he said.

Animal rights groups applaud the department's work. "I've been really impressed with the Chicago Police Department and how they're attacking this," said Ann Chynoweth, senior director of the animal cruelty and fighting campaign for the Humane Society of the United States. "They're willing to fight this not only for the animals, but for the safety of the community."

Degenhardt said the work is a passion of all of the officers in the unit, who care for animals and about making their city safer. "If I take a gang member off the street two hours, or two days or two years, he's now not available to fire that handgun that can hit an innocent child," Degenhardt said.

Source: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-abuse-gangs-29-aug29.0.2590476.story>



## Elgin Group Holds Meeting to Fight Gang Violence

Article published by the Daily Harold

**07/18/2008 Chicago, IL** | The Gifford Park Association, which oversees the Elgin Historic District, has called for a special meeting with police to discuss ways to curb gang violence in the wake of a drive-by shooting. "Anyone shooting a gun in broad daylight is alarming," said Fran Cella, the Gifford Park Association board member organizing the Tuesday meeting, which is open to the public.

While police investigate Friday's shooting as a gang-related incident, they also have beefed up presence in the city's oldest neighborhood with increased patrols, said Lt. Sean Rafferty. "I can't tell you how many officers, but the officers have been paying closer attention to the area," Rafferty said. No arrests have been made in Friday's shooting that injured a 21-year-old man in the foot and that has some residents concerned it could trigger a rise in

violence. However, residents like Jeff McIntire, who lives in the same block where the shooting took place, say Friday's incident should be viewed in context. "I see that the neighborhood's improving," said McIntire, a four-year resident of the area. "Compared to when we first moved here, things are much better."

Last July, 18-year-old Julian Mascote and 21-year-old Francisco Franco were slain by a masked shooter in a gang-related incident that injured three others in the neighborhood on North Street near College Avenue. In response to the violence and other east side shootings last summer, neighbors staged a peace walk with city leaders and the city formed a committee to look at gang intervention and prevention programs. Neighbors rallied together last summer, but went their separate ways once the gang violence appeared to calm down, Cella said.

Tuesday's meeting, scheduled for 7 p.m. at Holy Trinity Church, will help bring people back to the fray, she said. "What tends to happen ... is that there's a lot of interest in these types of incidents when they happen, but when nothing is happening in the neighborhood, it's very hard to mobilize people," said Cella, a former member of the city's street gang prevention and intervention committee.

At around 3:35 p.m., Friday's shooter fired "multiple rounds," from a passing vehicle at an unarmed victim in the 100 block of North Gifford Street between Division and Park streets, Rafferty said. "It's not some random act," said Rafferty, who declined to name the type of gun used. "The victim was the intended target, by all indications."

Source: <http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=231610&src=5>



## School Administrators Police Clothing on Campus

Article published by MercuryNews.com

**09/02/2008 San Jose, CA** | Red shoelaces. A Nike swoosh. A knit beanie. While in most settings they're innocuous accessories, on some school campuses they're fashions that administrators battle to help keep gangs at bay. These subtle signs may identify a gang member or new recruit. And as students settle into a new school year, educators are all eyes, ears and intuition — learning, among other things, what is the latest in gang fashion. Many teachers know that, in addition to the familiar red and blue and 13 and 14, Nike Cortez athletic shoes with a red swoosh are favored by one gang. But wearing a black swoosh might get you into trouble in some places. One year, one San Jose neighborhood gang adopted pink. An eyebrow shaved in three spots could declare gang affiliation. What kids wear to schools says much about who they are and what they're about. In the first weeks of school, teachers and principals are seizing the chance to set expectations, delineate limitations and claim campuses as their own.



The schools that don't clearly set those rules likely will pay for it all year long, educators say, as kids are experts at testing the limits of tolerance. "The first few weeks are critical. You need to set a tone that lets kids know the rules are going to be enforced," said Hector Flores, associate principal at Andrew Hill High School, which last year sent 300 students to in-house suspension — a kind of study hall — for violating dress codes on the first day of school. The San Jose school has "common dress," meaning students can wear only black, white, gray or, beginning this year, gold— in part to banish any trace

of gang affiliation. Granted, the concern with gang-related appearance applies to only a small percentage of valley students. For the rest, "It's really a simple thing," said Karen Robinson, principal of Crittenden Middle School in Mountain View. "Girls wear their clothes too small and boys wear their clothes too big. We have to try to get them to wear clothes that fit."

Educators are trying to deliver the message that dress and behavior make a difference. Boys wearing hair "high and tight" — gangster-style close-cropped sides with a buzz cut on top — "doesn't make you a bad person," said San Jose police Sgt. Manny Ramirez, one of the eight San Jose police officers responsible for keeping tabs on the 300 schools in the city. But "if you're in the wrong place at the wrong time, an innocent person could be mistaken for what they're not."

Full Story: [http://www.mercurynews.com/education/ci\\_10365210?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.mercurynews.com/education/ci_10365210?nclick_check=1)



## First Person Sentenced Under New State Gang Law

Article published by the [IdahoStatesman.com](http://www.idahostatesman.com)

**0/30/2008 Caldwell, ID** | The first person charged under Idaho's 2-year-old gang law has been sentenced to up to 10 years in prison.

Simona Manzanares, 29, will serve two years for felony gang recruiting before she is eligible for parole. A second felony charge, alleging she provided a gun to a gang member, was dropped as part of a July plea agreement. Caldwell Police Chief Chris Allgood, whose officers arrested Manzanares in early 2007, said the prison sentence helps send a message that the community won't tolerate gang crime.

Defense attorney Richard Harris said earlier that he likely will appeal Manzanares' case to the Idaho Supreme Court. He said the Idaho Criminal Gang Enforcement Act impinges on constitutional rights of assembly and association, and it "dragnets legal conduct in with what they consider illegal conduct." Police say Manzanares led a female gang in Caldwell and recruited teens and children through social events.

Source: <http://www.idahostatesman.com/166/story/488094.html>



## West Coast Gangs are Making InRoads

Article published by the [Washington Post](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

**08/29/2008 Washington, DC** | The emergence of Bloods and Crips, gangs that originated on the West Coast and are establishing themselves in the Washington area, has contributed to several homicides in Prince George's County this year and has become a growing concern in the District, law enforcement officials said.



Bloods, and to a lesser degree their rival Crips, are suspects in several crimes in a wide swath from Prince William County to Baltimore. "We are seeing their numbers growing right now," said Capt. Bill Lynn, commander of the Prince George's police gang unit. "The Crips and Bloods are the focus for law enforcement now, not only here but around the region, because of the violence they perpetrate."



In the District's Trinidad neighborhood, which had a spate of violence this summer, young people are wearing the Bloods' colors, flashing the gang's hand signs and selling drugs near a community recreation center, authorities said. Police said they have not tied Bloods to any homicides in the Northeast neighborhood.

In Montgomery County, authorities linked a shooting and three stabbings near the Shady Grove Metro station in November to a feud between Bloods and Crips; two men have been convicted in the case. And in Baltimore, a federal grand jury in February indicted 28 members of a gang called the Tree Top Piru Bloods on charges including murder, robbery, drug trafficking and witness intimidation.

In Prince William, two members of a Bloods "set," or group, were convicted last year on a gang statute after breaking into a police officer's house to steal guns and attacking his girlfriend.

Full Story: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/28/AR2008082803488.html>

## Federal Indictment Accuses Six Israelis of Working with LA Street Gang to Distribute Ecstasy

Article published by the StarTribune

**08/26/2008 Los Angeles, CA** | A man suspected of being one of Israel's most powerful crime bosses is charged with using a Los Angeles gang to distribute a million Ecstasy pills and paying one of the gang's members to kill a man for stealing a large drug shipment. Itzhak Abergil, who prosecutors believe is one of the largest importers of narcotics into the United States, is among seven men listed in a 32-count federal indictment that alleges murder and international drug trafficking.

Abergil and his brother Mier Abergil were arrested Sunday in Israel. They face extradition to Los Angeles, where Itzhak Abergil would be charged with murder and his brother with racketeering and conspiracy. The others listed on the indictment include four Israelis and a Los Angeles man suspected of being part of the gang that worked with the Abergils.



"This is a significant racketeering case involving alleged criminal activity spanning the globe," said Thom Mrozek, spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office in California. The indictment alleges the Abergil family is a small but powerful group with a "propensity for violence in Israel and around the world." The family and another group allegedly used members of the Vineland Boyz gang to traffic Ecstasy.

Full Story: <http://www.startribune.com/nation/27511344.html?elr=KArks:DCIUMEaPc:UiD3aPc:Yvc:aULPOL7POLanchO7DiU>



## El Paso Police Warned of Mexican Drug Gang Threat

Article Published by the Houston Chronicle

**08/25/08 El Paso, TX** | El Paso police have been put on special alert following what a spokesman called a "credible" warning that Mexican gangsters would begin targeting victims inside the United States, according to an Associated Press report on Monday. "We received credible information that drug cartels in Mexico have given permission to hit targets on the U.S. side of the border," El Paso police spokesman officer Chris Mears told the wire service. "One of the first things we did was to notify all officers in our department of the situation." Mears was unavailable to expand on his interview with the AP, but an El Paso County Sheriff's Department spokesman said the threat, which was circulated among law enforcement agencies last week, was nothing out of the ordinary. "We get intelligence and that sort of information all the time," said Jesse Tovar, who said sheriff's deputies were

put on heightened alert but characterized the warning as routine. "We can't say it won't happen; it just hasn't happened here."



A Border Patrol spokesman said the information was taken seriously because it was thought to come from inside one of the smuggling organizations currently waging a turf war in Ciudad Juarez. "We do take that information seriously," said Doug Mosier, the spokesman, who added that it was passed on to Border Patrol agents and to other law enforcement agencies. "We never dismiss it, for obvious reasons."

Representatives for several federal agencies in El Paso contacted by the Houston Chronicle said they had not heard of any extraordinary alert. About 5,000 people have been killed in gangland-style slayings across Mexico in the past 21 months. There have been nearly 800 killings this year alone in Ciudad Juarez, the city of 1.3 million across the Rio Grande from El Paso, according to police and media tallies. Among the victims were several

people killed just after midnight Sunday morning in a Juarez nightclub. Still, the violence has not spilled over the Rio Grande significantly. El Paso remains one of the safest cities in the U.S., in terms of violent crime.

Source: <http://www.chron.com/dispatch/story.mpl/metropolitan/5965643.html>



*Special Feature* 

## U.S. Says Prisoner Runs Gang From Cell

Article published by the Sun

**08/23/2008 Baltimore, MD** | The man convicted of orchestrating the January 2005 firebombing of the Harwood Community Association president's home has continued to act as a Baltimore gang leader from his prison cell in Beaumont, Texas, a federal prosecutor said in a court hearing yesterday.

Terrence Smith, 28, returned to Baltimore to be resentenced after the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit ruled that U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz did not adequately explain why he exceeded federal sentencing guidelines in sending Smith to prison for 80 years. Yesterday, the judge again sentenced Smith to 80 years, calling him "a dangerous person." There is "no question that this was an attempted murder," Motz said. "It was a botched job, but that doesn't change the intent."

Smith was one of eight defendants convicted of firebombing the home of Edna McAbier, whose community activism and repeated calls to police about drug dealing made her the target of a violent drug gang affiliated with the Bloods. McAbier was not injured because the Molotov cocktails hurtled at her property fizzled, causing about \$100 in damage. But authorities argued the significance of the firebombing was that it reinforced residents' worst fears of witness intimidation and retaliation. After the attack, McAbier left her home of 30 years, passing through a dozen hotel rooms as she awaited the suspects' trials, she told The Sun two years ago. McAbier was in court yesterday but did not testify or talk to reporters. From the bench, Motz asked after her, and she replied, "I'm doing very well, your honor."



In a system with no parole, Smith's 80 years is tantamount to a life sentence. It was the harshest punishment given to any of the firebombing defendants. Yet Smith is still "coordinating gang activity" from his federal prison cell in Texas, said Assistant U.S. Attorney A. David Copperthite.

In an intercepted letter and in two recorded phone calls to his brother this year, Smith laid out a plan for bringing Baltimore Bloods factions under the more established West Coast gang, Copperthite said, entering the letter and recorded calls into evidence. "He has continued to make Baltimore a much less safe city," Copperthite said. When he stood to address the court, Smith said, "I am what I am. ... There's no dispute that I'm a gang member."

Much of his visible skin is covered in tattoos. Growing up on Greenmount Avenue, he said, boys either became basketball players or drug dealers. But, Smith insisted, he had "no motive" to hurt McAbier and said he felt he was taking the blame for his co-defendants' behavior. He also said he believed prosecutors and the judge were "stuck on my criminal history." Smith was a suspect in several killings but was never convicted. Baltimore prosecutors dropped two murder charges he faced because of uncooperative witnesses.

During Smith's trial in the firebombing, one fellow gang member, who received a sentence of 12 years in exchange for his cooperation, testified that Smith admitted to killing one woman years earlier and then devising another woman's shooting death a week after the firebombing.

Federal prosecutors can introduce evidence of other criminal conduct - even without an underlying conviction for that conduct - in arguing for a harsher sentence. After listening to Copperthite, the defense attorney and Smith, the judge immediately handed down the same sentence he had years ago. "The public needs to be protected from you," Motz told Smith. "If I failed to do it before, I think now I've explained why."

Source: <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/bal-md.smith23aug23,0,3719443.story>

## What are Prison Gangs?

Prison gangs are criminal organizations that operate within federal and state prison systems as self-perpetuating criminal entities; they also operate outside of prisons, typically through the activities of members who have been released from prison into communities. For instance, Barrio Azteca, one of the most violent prison gangs in the United States, has an estimated membership of 2,000 and operates in federal, state, and local corrections facilities in Texas and outside prison in communities within southwestern Texas and southeastern New Mexico. OMGs are criminal organizations whose members use their motorcycle club affiliation as a conduit for criminal activity. The Bandidos, one of the largest OMGs in the United States, has between 2,000 to 2,500 members in the United States and 13 other countries. According to the NDTs, OMGs are a growing criminal threat to the nation, particularly in terms of cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine trafficking.

Source: [www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov)

## Combating Gang Activity in Prison

While what works for one department/jurisdiction might not work for another, I can detail for you the success story that one state correctional department has enjoyed. Not all departments combat gang activity in the same manner. Some departments ignore the problem while gangs flourish and rule the roost right under the administrator's noses. Some departments mandate that identified gang members go through declassification programs and renounce their gang ties. Some departments simply lock up identified gang members and throw away the key while they're incarcerated, leaving them locked up in segregation.

The department I work for has settled somewhere in the middle of these approaches. Actually their answer was to build cells and make each individual inmate responsible for their own actions through the disciplinary process. But building cells, in my opinion, was the number one way to gain control of the gangs. Let me explain.

Like many other states in the late 1980's the public was fed up with crime and criminals. Tougher laws, stiffer sentences and more aggressive policing led to an explosion in the prison populations. In two years alone in the late 1980's my department built/opened ten prisons. These prisons were open bay dormitory style medium security institutions. They were quick to build and cheaper to construct than maximum security prisons. The concept of these prisons was "openness" where inmates had much more freedom of movement. These prisons were typically built for seven hundred and fifty inmates and only had thirty two traditional cells in the Special Housing Units (SHU, "disciplinary segregation").

The prison population continued to explode past the prison's capacities. Gymnasiums in several medium security prisons were double-bunked with two hundred inmates. Open bay dormitories built for fifty inmates were double-bunked with ninety inmates. This meant that prisons built for seven hundred fifty inmates suddenly had upward of thirteen hundred inmates in them, crammed into very tight quarters. These prisons still only had thirty two cells to lock up or segregate the trouble-makers.

In this timeframe the Latin Kings were battling the Five Percenters (Black inmates) for dominance among the prison population. Violence was rampant. Fights, stabbings and slashings were a daily occurrence. It was not uncommon at all to find weapons right on an inmate's person (this author has been to court several times to testify against inmates). The problem was, though, there was limited cell space to lock up the troublemakers and the inmates knew this. Inmates were in and out of the SHU so quickly sometimes that the joke was the SHU had a revolving door on it!

In the early 1990s the prison system seemed to level off for a short period of time. The Latin Kings and Netas had gained dominance over the Black inmate population (seen as the Five Percenters). Then came 1993, when Omar Porter (OG Mack) and Leonard McKenzie (OG Deadeye) formed the east coast version of the Bloods gang on Riker's Island. By 1994 the Bloods were in the state prisons and began to wreak havoc against the Hispanic inmates (Latin Kings and Netas) and the prison system.

The "gang war" between the Bloods and the Hispanic inmates (Latin Kings and Netas) was in full swing in 1996 when the department began to build the first of four thousand eight hundred "beds" in maximum security cells. These were the first maximum security cells that had been built in the state in over ten years. It was called "right sizing" the prison population. To put inmates who needed to be classified maximum security in maximum security prisons. Or inmates with long term disciplinary confinement sentences into disciplinary cells. This began by opening nine SHU-200 units, built to hold eighteen hundred inmates in disciplinary confinement. These units were one hundred cell double-occupancy stand-alone buildings, built inside of nine existing medium security prisons. The department was finally getting the cell space to lock up a lot of the troublemakers.

The next step was when Upstate Correctional Facility opened in 1999. Upstate brought on line twelve hundred more disciplinary confinement "beds" to lock up even more troublemakers. In less than three years the department had an additional three thousand disciplinary confinement cells to manage its prison population. Violence in the way of fights, disturbances, stabbings and slashings began to plummet. One facility alone, Collins Correctional Facility, documented a seventy-eight percent decrease in violence (comparisons of 1996 to 2001), having had averaged forty-one incidents a year, to only nine incidents in all of 2001. (DOCS Today magazine, January 2003).

"Right sizing" continued when Five Points Correctional Facility opened in 2000. Five Points is a fifteen hundred bed maximum security facility with inmates living in double-occupancy cells. This meant more maximum security inmates could be placed in a more secure setting as opposed to medium security. Violence and incidents of contraband continued to decline at a steady pace.

According to DOCS Today magazine, February 2003, then Commissioner Goord reported that incidents of inmate-on-staff assaults had declined thirty-eight percent, inmate-on-inmate assaults decreased forty-four percent and gang activity was down twelve percent. Commissioner Goord stated, "Inmates know that the department now has the disciplinary space to house them if needed, and that realization has helped fuel steep declines in inmate-on-staff and inmate-on-inmate assaults." (DOCS Today, April 2003).

The department also continued to prosecute inmates for crimes they committed while incarcerated in prison. The Inmate Prosecution Task Force successfully prosecuted one hundred twenty-one inmates in the year 2000 alone. (DOCS Today, April 2003). This reinforced the knowledge to the inmates that they would spend more time in prison for crimes they perpetrated.

The department introduced Body Orifice Scanning System (BOSS) chairs to many of its facilities between 2000 and 2003. These chairs scan inmates for the presence of metal (weapons) on their person or concealed inside their body. Then Commissioner Goord credited these machines in aiding a fifty-eight percent reduction in cut/stab incidents, from nineteen hundred ninety-two incidents in 1997 to only six hundred eight incidents in 2002.

It has been my experience that cells have been the number one project that the state embarked on that reduced violence and made the gangs easier to control. As then Commissioner Goord alluded to in April 2003, the department created the cell space to lock up the troublemaking inmates and they knew it. Now troublemaking gang members either stay locked up in disciplinary confinement (by committing more infractions while in the SHU), or they have conformed to the rules and regulations of the department and live relatively trouble free in general population.

As then Commissioner Goord stated in February 2003, "Inmate rule no. 105.12, "Unauthorized Activity or

Assembly”, is used by the staff to control gang activity. Our policy is that since each inmate comes to prison alone, they will do their time alone. We will not allow gangs to flourish. Inmates have learned through staff monitoring that they will be disciplined for such activity. Constant surveillance has led to a reduction in gang sanctions – from a high of one thousand eight hundred ninety-six in 1998, to one thousand one hundred forty-seven last year (2002).”



Statistics for 2003, the last I have access for, show that the department continues to enjoy a decline in violence. As published in August 2004, there was a forty-one percent decline in inmate-on-staff assaults (from nine hundred sixty-two in 1995 to five hundred sixty-eight in 2003) and an astonishing fifty-nine percent decrease in inmate-on-inmate assaults (from one thousand seven hundred forty-one in 1995, to seven hundred thirteen in 2003).

*John Hancock is the pseudonym of a twenty year veteran of a large Northeastern state correctional department. He is well versed in prison gangs and routinely investigates gangs, gang members and their activities at the maximum security facility that employs him. He is also a member of several gang investigators associations throughout the United States.*

Source: <http://www.corrections.com/news/article/18097>

## *From the Editors*



**Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. We are always trying to improve the quality and effectiveness of our newsletters and information.**

**If you have any comments, suggestions or articles that can be used in the “G.A.I.N.” Newsletter, please send them to:**

**L.E.C.C. Program  
C/O U.S. Attorney’s Office  
5400 Federal Plaza, Suite 1500  
Hammond, IN 46320  
Phone: (219) 937-5666  
Fax: (219) 937-5537  
E-mail: [ryan.holmes@usdoj.gov](mailto:ryan.holmes@usdoj.gov)**

