

Ft. Pierce Police Department

News Release

February 16, 2011

R. Sean Baldwin

Chief of Police



920 S. U.S. #1
Ft. Pierce, FL 34950

. Fort Pierce Police Department to Host Press Conference- Announce Racketeering Charges on Local Gang Members

Fort Pierce Police, Florida: On Wednesday February 16, 2011 at 1:00 pm Chief R. Sean Baldwin will host a press conference to announce the arrest of five (5) members of a local street gang. Each gang member has been charged with Racketeering in violation of Florida State Statute 895.03 (3) and Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering in violation of Florida Statute 895.03 (4). The statutes are commonly referred to as the Florida R.I.C.O. Act and carry a maximum penalty of thirty years (30) in prison for each charge.

This investigation that resulted in the arrests of these five individuals began in March, 2009 after Fort Pierce had suffered several shooting incidents, in the previous month. Chief Baldwin, through our Operation Ceasefire effort launched the investigation by assigning one detective to work nearly full time targeting the 13th Street Gang. Detective David Jones worked in collaboration with agents from the Drug Enforcement Agency, Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, The Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the State Attorney's Office of the 19th Judicial Circuit to identify, investigate and arrest members from the 13th Street Gang.

Operation Ceasefire was implemented in Fort Pierce in March 2009, with an emphasis on community interaction and targeted law enforcement. It begins with the recognition that gang violence is destroying our community and it will not be tolerated. In March 2009, Chief Baldwin issued this warning to gang members "You have a choice to make. You will either stop the violence that is destroying our community, or you will spend your life in prison." Chief R. Sean Baldwin said "The arrest of these five individuals has taken place because these men have ignored our warnings and continued their illegal gang activity in Fort Pierce. We are committed to protecting our community and gang members need to head our warning... these arrests are only the beginning, we expect many more arrests as this investigation continues."

The press conference today will be held in the conference room of the Fort Pierce Police Department at 1:00 pm. There will be pictures of the arrested gang members, a display of some of the evidence recovered during the investigation and a statement from Chief Baldwin. Members of the Fort Pierce Police Department will be on hand to answer questions from our media partners and the complaint affidavit will be available as well.

Photo and Video Opportunities

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