The Guardian Angels Encyclopedia Article

The Guardian Angels

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The Guardian Angels

Founded by Curtis Sliwa in 1979, the Guardian Angels are a volunteer organization dedicated to protecting law-abiding citizens from violent crime on the New York subway. The organization subsequently spread throughout the United States, and 'chapters' were established in cities in Canada, South America, Australia, and Europe. The members, who wear a uniform of red berets and white sweatshirts, carry no weapons, but undergo training in martial arts, first aid, and instruction in citizen's arrest laws. In 1993, revelations that Sliwa had staged some of the Angels' much-publicized successes caused the decline of many chapters. However, while law enforcement agencies have tended to skepticism about the Angels' effectiveness in crime prevention, their presence has frequently shamed authorities into improving policing on subway systems.

Further Reading:

Haskins, James. *The Guardian Angels.* Hillside, New Jersey, Enslow Publishers, 1983.

Sliwa, Curtis, and Murray Schwartz. *Street Smart: The Guardian Angel Guide to Safe Living.* Reading, Massachusetts, Addison Wesley Publishing, 1982.