

# Some say graffiti indicates arrival of violent gang

## Some students say 'Crips' moving in

By Scott Williams  
Of The Examiner

Graffiti spray-painted around Blue Springs and claiming an association with a major West Coast street gang has raised concerns that the gang, already battling police in Kansas City, is now branching out into the suburbs.

At several locations in Blue Springs, including outside a high school and near police headquarters, graffiti was found this week depicting the words "Thirteenth Street Crips" and the letters "T.S.C."

A Los Angeles-based street gang known as the Crips is believed to be making efforts to establish operations in Kansas City and several other cities, primarily for trafficking narcotics.

Police in Kansas City and Blue Springs say it is unlikely that the Crips, who are mostly black, would attempt a maneuver so bold as infiltrating a predominantly white, middle-class suburb.

But the FBI and Los Angeles police say quite the opposite, describing the Crips as an aggressive and enterprising bunch who would find Blue Springs and its large youth population alluring.

Los Angeles police spokesman Lt. Fred Nixon said the Crips and other major street gangs have attempted to set up operations in the suburbs of other large cities.

"They'll go wherever they think they might prevail," Nixon said. "They send out what amounts to an advance team to sort of test the waters."

Students at Blue Springs High School say the situation here already is that serious.

Several students who were interviewed separately this week said they are aware of a Crips presence at the school and know of people who have been physically assaulted by members of the Thirteenth Street Crips.

"They've been moving out into the area, and

they're in Blue Springs now," one student said. "They just recently started making themselves known."

Asked about drug-trafficking, the student said she could attest only to a widespread presence of narcotics in the high school and the city in general.

"In Blue Springs, you can get any drug you want," she said. "I've had people ask me if I want to buy drugs I've never even heard of."

According to the FBI, a suspected member of the Crips was arrested with 20 pounds of cocaine this spring after arriving in Kansas City with the cargo on an Amtrak train from Los Angeles.

Blue Springs Police Sgt. Bob Ahring said his department's informants within the local schools have not reported any recent street-gang activity.

Ahring said police have seen the graffiti around town but have not detected any gang-style violence or drug-trafficking.

"We don't have any Crips here, and they don't advertise by spray-painting bridge pillars," he said. "I just think it's a group of vandals who have nothing better to do."

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Beneath the Walnut Street bridge, behind police headquarters, appears the graffiti that, according to local students, signals the arrival of a major street gang: 'Thirteenth Street Crips-T.S.C. 13.'