

Mayor Sinnott Announces Graffiti Task Force

Date: March 20, 2008

Contact: Jill Chiccarino Beck 814/870-1204

jbeck@erie.pa.us

ERIE, PA (March 20, 2008) - At a press conference on Thursday, March 20th Mayor Joseph E. Sinnott announced that the Graffiti Task Force is in place and will operate under the direction of District Justice Tom Carney. The group will work jointly to identify and remove graffiti from across the City of Erie. Focused on identifying and prosecuting "taggers" to the fullest extent of the law, the Mayor's Graffiti Task Force will pursue full restitution from the taggers for their crimes.

The group, including local businessmen Christopher Hitz of Advanced Drying and Restoration and Dennis Braendel II of Braendel Painting and Services will assist the City of Erie and local business in removing graffiti from their property. Members of the Mayor's Graffiti Task Force also include Ernie Scutella of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Tom "Tippy" Dwardanski of the Erie Downtown Improvement District Member and local businessman, John Tretter a Business Agent with Laborers Local 603, David Grabelski of Mercyhurst College, Dr. Maria Garase of Gannon University, Wally Brown of the Little Italy Neighborhood Crime Watch Committee and local realtor.

Braendel Painting and Services will aide in restoring walls, signs and painted surfaces tagged with graffiti. Advanced Drying and Restoration will utilize ARMEX Blast Media, an environmentally sensible, baking soda based abrasive to assist in the removal of tagged property.

To report graffiti within the City of Erie, please contact Judge Tom Carney's Office at 451-6528. Citizens can also contact Assistant to Mayor Sinnott, Laura Schaaf at 870-1206 or from the City of Erie website, www.erie.pa.us under 'Contact Us', select the Graffiti Task Force Feedback link.

###