Written by Christie James
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Local Law Enforcement is working together to fight the growth of gangs and vandalism in the area. And they are enlisting the aide of local businesses owners in the effort. According to Capt. Main of the Boone Police and Watauga County Sheriff Len Hagaman, The Watauga County Sheriff's Office and Boone Police have joined together over the last several months to document and investigate gang tagging and other markings on and around private and public buildings.

Tagging is how gangs mark their territory and recruit members. They paint symbols on buildings with spray paint and permanent markers. Local law enforcement agencies have evidence that of a local group of person's wanting to start a gang, and are working together to prevent that development. They are hoping that business owners can help by checking their property daily for vandalism or damage. If you find that damage, take photographs as evidence, and contact a local law enforcement agency. They ask that business owners report any groups gathering regularly in or at your place of business. Also, consider posting no trespassing or loitering signs and installing video surveillance cameras inside and out. They ask that you keep an eye out for the initials or words *Crips, SUR 13, MS 13, K.A.O.S., a* three pointed crown painted on various items, and individuals or several persons wearing the same colors, especially bandanas of the same colors. Report suspicious activity and learn more about how you can help by calling The Watauga County Sheriff's Office, Boone Police, or Crimestoppers at 262-4555.