

**Maricopa County Sheriff's Office**  
**Joe Arpaio, Sheriff**



*News Release:*

**ARPAIO CONCLUDES**  
**OPERATION DESERT SKY**

**289 ARRESTS**  
**INCLUDING 250 ILLEGAL ALIENS**  
**& 6000 POUNDS OF MARIJUANA SEIZED**

Date 05/12/11

(Phoenix, AZ) Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio says 'Operation Desert Sky,' a month long effort by deputies and air posse to curb the influx of drugs and human smuggling through the southernmost borders of the county, has concluded with the seizure of 2300 pounds of drugs last night in the Vekol Valley.

Sheriff Arpaio says the operation netted 289 arrests, 250 of whom were determined to be illegal aliens. Of those arrested, 95 were jailed on the class four felony charge of human smuggling/co-conspiracy.

In a news conference this afternoon, Arpaio displayed the marijuana seized in the operation – drugs carried over the border by illegal aliens either on backpack or in vehicles. Guns and vehicles were also taken in as evidence from the operation.

“An operation like this is the right thing to do from a law enforcement perspective,” says Arpaio.

100 West Washington, Suite 1900, Phoenix, Arizona 85003  
Phone: (602) 876-1801 Fax: (602) 258-2081  
Media Contact: [SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov](mailto:SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov)

**News Release**

**Arpaio served as the top Federal law enforcement official with the US Drug Enforcement administration in Mexico, Latin America, Texas and Arizona and does not fully agree with the rhetoric out of Washington these days that our borders are more secure than ever.**

**Arpaio says that while Operation Desert Sky, which used air posse planes to help track moving targets, was successful; the work to curb crime including illegal immigration will now shift to the urban areas of Maricopa County.**

**A crime suppression/illegal immigration sweep is slated in the near future, he says, which will concentrate in the Phoenix area including the Grand Mercado Swap Meet area, where recently an off duty police officer was killed.**

**100 West Washington, Suite 1900, Phoenix, Arizona 85003  
Phone: (602) 876-1801 Fax: (602) 258-2081  
Media Contact: [SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov](mailto:SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov)**