

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: March 27, 2008

ARPAIO'S CRIME SUPPRESSION OPERATION MIGRATES NORTH TO BELL ROAD

Sheriff, Deputies and Posse Prepared for Protesters & Activists on Both Sides of Illegal Immigration Issue

(Phoenix, Arizona) Hundreds of the Sheriff's volunteer armed posse members and deputies will migrate today, March 27, 2008, from central Phoenix and the Thomas Road area to 25th Street and Bell Road in an attempt to help business owners there with the growing amount of crime associated with illegal immigration.

Intimation of customers and creating an atmosphere detrimental to business as well as physical deterioration of the area are some of the problems business owners there say are associated with the growing number of day laborers in the area. They are precisely the same complaints made by business owners like Pruitt's Furniture Store in the Thomas Road area.

The Sheriff's operation moves north because of a recent written request to Sheriff Joe Arpaio by ten business owners along 25th Street and Bell seeking the Sheriff's assistance in quelling the problem. The Thomas Road crime suppression operation around Pruitt's Furniture Store occurred over a two month time period and resulted in 134 people arrested, 94 of whom were determined to be in the United States illegally.

"Just last weekend, our Thomas Road operation netted 55 arrests in only 10 hours, 67% of whom were illegal aliens," Arpaio says. "I have no doubt that the Bell Road operation will see an even larger number of arrests."

According to the business owners who contacted the Sheriff, there are two legal day laborer centers in the Bell Road area which are "magnets for more illegal aliens." Their letter to the Sheriff stated that while businesses there are receiving little help from the city of Phoenix, patriotic motorcycle groups such as the Freedom Riders, Riders USA and Riders against Illegal Immigration came to their rescue and, at least for a time, helped reduce crime.

News Release

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The Sheriff says his deputies and posse are prepared for what could be a confrontation between these motorcycle groups and illegal alien activists.

“My hope is that cool heads will prevail,” Arpaio says. “There will be a zero tolerance policy in this operation toward any amount of violence or disruption of the peace.”

Meanwhile, the Sheriff’s illegal immigration fight in the county continues. Yesterday, deputies conducted a traffic stop on a Chevy Tahoe on US 60 and Mile Post 127, north of the city of Surprise. Inside the vehicle, which was stopped for speeding, were 12 people, all of whom were determined to be in the U.S. illegally and are now subject to prosecution or deportation.

The Bell Road operation will begin at 4PM on Thursday, March 27, 2008 with a briefing to the posse and deputies by the Sheriff. The command post and jail wagons will be posted at the intersection of Bell and Cave Creek Roads. For more information, email SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov .

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