

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: November 24, 2010

AS SHERIFF'S POSSE GEARS UP FOR HOLIDAY MALL PROGRAM,

ONE MAJOR MALL REFUSES POSSE'S PROTECTION

(Phoenix, AZ) It's that time of year again when valley malls turn to Sheriff Arpaio's all volunteer posse to offer provide law enforcement protection to shoppers at major malls throughout the entire valley. **This year's kickoff will be Friday, November 26th at 5PM at the Paradise Valley Mall.**

Holiday shoppers have come to count on the Sheriff's uniformed posse patrol protecting them as they make their way into the malls with money in their pockets and as they exit the malls with presents and packages in hand.

Since 1993, when Sheriff Joe Arpaio sent the posse to the malls in response to a series of car jackings occurring that year, the volunteer posse has contributed virtually thousands upon thousands of hours of nearly free law enforcement protection to nearly every major mall in town.

The 3000 manned posse is an all volunteer force of qualified and trained men and women who work under the authority of the Sheriff's deputies.

Since its inception, Sheriff Arpaio says, virtually no acts of violence have occurred in the malls on the posse's watch, a fact which makes Arpaio proud.

That's why when one major valley mall this year refused the posse's protection, Arpaio was concerned.

MetroCenter, a longtime partner with the Sheriff's Office in the posse mall program, this year told the Sheriff's Office that MetroCenter doesn't need the additional protection for its shoppers that the posse has provided for years in the past.

News Release

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MetroCenter was once owned by Westcor but according to published reports, was taken over in April of this year by a Chicago based company, Jones, Lang and LaSalle. Its Chairman is Sheila Penrose who also serves on the Board of Directors for the McDonald's Restaurants chain.

In March of this year, and shortly before MetroCenter's take over by Jones, Lang and LaSalle, Sheriff Arpaio's deputies made national news when they raided four local McDonald's restaurants and arrested many illegal immigrants for identity theft.

Arpaio wonders if politics is at play with the posse.

"I hope that politics wouldn't be more important than public safety and that the power players at the corporate level in Chicago are not making a subtle statement by refusing my posse's offer of law enforcement protection at that mall." Arpaio says about MetroCenter's decision.

Arpaio stated that if something serious does occur at the MetroCenter Mall, he will not hesitate to mobilize a crime suppression unit in order to protect the public.

For the last several years, the holiday mall patrol event kickoff has been adjacent to MetroCenter Mall, this year it has been moved to Paradise Valley Mall, southeast parking lot at:

**4568 E Cactus Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85032**

Kickoff with about 100 volunteer posse members and Sheriff Joe Arpaio's posse briefing will occur on Friday November 26, 2010 at 5PM. The posses utilizes all kinds of equipment in its protection detail which will be on display at the kickoff including cars, jeeps, horses, helicopters, booking vans and the Sheriff's Command Post 18 wheeler. END

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