

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



December 23, 2010

HUMAN SMUGGLING OPERATION RESULTS IN THE DEATH OF TWO ILLEGAL ALIENS

*Sheriff Arpaio concerned with new trends
in the danger of human and drug smugglers*

(Phoenix, AZ) Maricopa County Sheriff's deputies last night recovered two bodies out of a canal near Gila Bend off of old Highway 80. Deputies believe that the bodies are those of the same two suspects that fled on foot from a Sheriff's deputy during a traffic stop last week.

During the traffic stop, the deputy witnessed multiple suspects flee from their vehicle attempting to evade arrest. According to three suspects that were later apprehended by deputies, two others were missing and were believed to have gone into the canal.

After searching the canal later in the day with a submersible robot by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Dive Team, deputies discontinued searching because of the level of debris and the visibility of the water.

Sheriff Joe Arpaio says, "This situation of illegal immigration and human smuggling is becoming more and more dangerous to the public, law enforcement officials, and the illegal aliens being smuggled. We are noticing a new trend where multiple suspects will attempt to outrun deputies or they stop and scatter into the desert."

The traffic stop near Gila Bend last week was the second of two incidents in which illegal aliens fled from deputies and ended up in the canal. During the first incident, a deputy physically pulled a 16 year old boy out of the canal that could not swim, essentially saving his life.

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Maricopa County Sheriff's deputies have arrested 2,219 illegal aliens during the course of human smuggling investigations including 34 in the last several weeks. These investigations are also connected with international drug trafficking.

Sheriff Joe Arpaio intends to step up immigration enforcement by utilizing the illegal immigration enforcement posse that was sworn in last month consisting of many volunteers with a range of different professional backgrounds including ex military and law enforcement, actors, lawyers, and financial advisors to name a few. Arpaio also intends to increase efforts by conducting illegal immigration, crime suppression and employer sanction operations throughout the valley.

Sheriff Arpaio's message to Mexico, "Again, stay out of Maricopa County and also stop smuggling juveniles into the United States causing grave risk to these young people."

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