

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

***September 12, 2007***

***News Brief from the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office:***

The August 11, 2007 death of Chandler police dog, Bandit, and the subsequent arrest of his partner and caretaker, Chandler Sgt. Thomas Lovejoy, has sparked such controversy that today, the Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police, at the urging of some police unions, issued a "resolution" decrying Sheriff Arpaio's decision to book the officer into jail.

The Sheriff's Office believes that the "resolution" is an attempt to shift the public's focus away from the Chandler officer by blaming Sheriff Arpaio for overreacting to the situation. Arpaio, however, remains steadfast about his policy to arrest and book into jail anyone found abusing or neglecting animals.

Some misunderstandings about the facts of the case are apparent in news articles and public comment.

They include the following:

- \* The investigation into Bandit's untimely death was the responsibility and jurisdiction of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, not the Chandler Police Department, because Sgt. Lovejoy lives in a county island in Chandler, not inside the Chandler city limits.
- \* The Sheriff's Office was not notified about the incident by Sgt. Lovejoy, his superiors or anyone else in the Chandler Police Department until three days after the dog died of heat prostration, after being left unattended inside the Sgt's police vehicle for over 13 hours. By the time Sheriff's detectives launched their investigation to determine whether the facts of the case warranted any criminal charges, the dog's body had already been disposed of and the vehicle cleaned out.
- \* Though Arpaio made the decision to arrest and book Lovejoy into jail, it was conducted in such a way to protect the officer. Arrangements were made with the court ahead of the time to streamline the booking process. Lovejoy was supposed to be on admin leave but was in fact at work when detectives contacted him and asked him to meet them at the jail. Lovejoy was seen by a judge and out of jail in just over an hour.

Unions also criticized Arpaio for holding a press conference telling of the arrest. From the beginning, Bandit's death was a high profile case covered by all local media outlets. The press conference was held to coincide with the time of Lovejoy's arrest to keep cameras away from Lovejoy and his family.

The Sheriff maintains the investigation surrounding the facts of Bandit's death was fair and thorough.

Today's letter of "resolution" suggests that the Arizona Police Chiefs Association believes the Sheriff should have treated Sgt. Lovejoy differently than any other member of the community who the Sheriff's

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Office might arrest for animal abuse or neglect. Arpaio says if Lovejoy got a break then everyone else would demand a 'get out of jail free' card as well.

Additionally, the chiefs' suggestion that Lovejoy's crime of animal neglect did not rise to the level of requiring a jail booking is to suggest that all misdemeanors should be handled only as cite and release cases. Yet many police departments here and throughout the nation routinely arrest and book people into jail for various misdemeanors including DUIs, speeding, etc.

Sheriff Arpaio is in Massachusetts today speaking to the New England Police Association but is aware of the Arizona Police Chief Association's actions. He is outraged by their "resolution" and their attempt to make him the bad guy.

Lisa Allen, the Sheriff's Director of Media Relations, says, the police chiefs seem to be attempting to tell the elected Sheriff how to run his office.

"What they are also saying is that this police officer deserves special treatment and I can assure you that when it comes to animal abuse and neglect, no one gets special treatment where Sheriff Arpaio is concerned."

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