

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: October 20, 2007

SHERIFF INVESTIGATES TORTURE OF ILLEGAL ALIENS

Arpaio: Illegal Immigration is Out of Control

phoenix drop house is site of brutal beatings

(Phoenix, AZ) Underscoring how big the illegal immigration problem is in the city of Phoenix, Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio today confirmed his deputies are investigating the beating and torturing of multiple illegal aliens among 54 arrested by the Sheriff's Illegal Immigration Interdiction (Triple I) Unit.

The Sheriff's Triple I unit and SWAT team broke down the door of an upscale Phoenix home, located at 9420 West Coolidge Lane in Phoenix, to find illegal aliens hiding inside. Among those hiding were seven human smugglers, also known as "coyotes."

The tip which led Sheriff's deputies to the drop house came from an earlier west valley human smuggling investigation, and is the third in a ring of related drop houses identified by the Sheriff's Triple I unit. To date, 80 arrests under both state and federal immigration laws have been attributed to this ring. Also, this drop house is the third illegal immigrant drop house uncovered by Arpaio's office in Phoenix within the last week.

During the investigation, Sheriff's deputies learned of torture and brutal beatings committed upon the illegals by their smugglers in the Coolidge home. According to deputies, at least seven suffered the beatings and torture. One man was assaulted, threatened with a gun, had a plastic bag placed over his head and then was submerged in a toilet filled with urine and feces. His pregnant spouse is hospitalized from a severe assault that likely caused her to abort her pregnancy.

Sheriff's deputies are also investigating crimes in which five other illegals had a gun put to their heads as money was demanded by the coyotes.

Sheriff Arpaio, a former Regional Director with the U.S. Federal Drug Enforcement Administration in Mexico, states that a common method of torture in Mexico is to place a plastic bag over a captive's head and then submerge it into water.

"It appears the illegal criminal element is entering this county and is bringing its methods of carnage, not only torture, but shooting police officers too," says Arpaio.

News Release

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Many of the illegals, including four children and a number of females, were screaming as Sheriff's deputies made entry into the home.

The house was void of all furniture, toilets were filled with human waste and buckets were dispersed throughout the home as makeshift toilets. There was very little evidence of food in the home.

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office continues to be the only Arizona law enforcement agency enforcing all aspects of state and federal immigration laws.

Despite vicious attacks against the Sheriff for his illegal immigration enforcement, Arpaio states he will be increasing his vigilance and cracking down against all illegal immigration everywhere in this county, including Phoenix.

"Evidently, Valley police chiefs and other critics don't feel enforcing illegal immigration laws is important," says the Sheriff. "However, every seasoned law enforcement officer knows that sometimes you must start at the bottom and work up to develop criminal intelligence and investigations. These recent investigations are a prime example."

The seven human smugglers are being booked into county jail on charges of aggravated assault, kidnapping, and illegal control of an enterprise, a well human smuggling for profit.

Contact SheriffMediaRequest@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov for inquiries.

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