

# Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

## Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: January 8, 2009

### **SHERIFF'S CRIME SUPPRESSION AND HUMAN SMUGGLING OPERATION COMES TO BUCKEYE AREA**

### **ARPAIO FOCUSES ON AREA AS GROWING NUMBER OF HOMICIDES ARE TIED TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION**

(Phoenix, AZ.) The first crime suppression/human smuggling operation of 2009 by Sheriff's immigration trained deputies and volunteer posse will occur on Friday afternoon, January 9 in the west valley area near Buckeye. Four other crime suppression/human smuggling operations took place in 2008 in cities throughout the valley.

Sheriff Joe Arpaio says the area is being targeted for the operation largely due to it being a dumping ground for homicide victims, most of who are believed to be illegal aliens.

The operation takes place near Interstate 10 and Miller Road where a few weeks ago, a burning body was discovered by a passer by. According to Sheriff's investigators, the body was a male subject in his 20's or 30's and was likely burned alive. The victims' hands and feet were tied. No other trauma was determined by the autopsy.

100 West Washington, Suite 1900, Phoenix, Arizona 85003

Phone: (602) 876-1801 Fax: (602) 258-2081

Media Contact: [SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov](mailto:SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov)

News Release

In the last five years, 11 other bodies have been found in the area, all homicide victims, many shot execution style and bound and tied. These 11 were determined to be illegal immigrants who were either killed nearby or killed elsewhere and dumped in area of I-10 and Miller Road.

“This area is a hotbed of human smuggling traffic much of which has bred violence,” Arpaio says. “The local news media has never given the correct proportional coverage of these murders. Had it done so, these homicides might have been solved by now.”

Arpaio says the west valley roadways are well travelled by human smugglers making their way with their human cargo to destinations in California or eastern U.S. cities. In 2008, the Sheriff’s human smuggling unit has made 180 felony arrests in the area including 22 coyotes and 158 of co-conspirators. In this same year (2008) and in this very area, Sheriff’s deputies took off 14 drop houses and confiscated over 650 pounds of marijuana during interdiction efforts.

In the jails since April 2007, over 20,500 inmates have been identified as illegal aliens and processed for deportation. The Sheriff’s Office remains the only law enforcement agency enforcing all aspects of the state human smuggling laws. County Attorney Andrew Thomas remains a critical partner with Sheriff Arpaio in this fight against illegal immigration.

Friday’s operation will include the use of deputies and volunteer posse numbering about 200 men and women. All laws, including traffic violations, will be enforced, Arpaio says. And in the course of their law enforcement duties, where illegal immigrants are found, they will be arrested and booked into jail. The Sheriff’s command post will be set up on Miller Road, north of I-10 where the Sheriff will kick off the operation with a briefing at 3PM. For more information, contact the public information office.

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