

# Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

## Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: April 13, 2008

### FORMER DRUG ADDICTS JOIN SHERIFF'S FEMALE CHAIN GANG

#### NEW UNIFORM AIMS TO DISCOURAGE DRUG USE

(Phoenix, AZ) In 1996, Sheriff Joe Arpaio started the only female chain gang in the United States. Now he is taking it to a new level. Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio is dressing out and sending out his female chain gang on Monday, April 14, 2008 to discourage young people from using drugs.

The 15 female inmates will be dressed in pink jail garb claiming "*I was a drug addict*" as they work on valley streets cleaning trash from an area near 40<sup>th</sup> Street on the south side of McDowell Road.

Arpaio assembled the female inmates for this chain gang detail from a large pool of convicted drug users currently housed in Tent City. On this chain, the majority of women (nearly half) considered meth their drug of choice.

The Sheriff says he is hopeful that the public display of these drug users will serve as yet another deterrent to young people.

"The women on this chain who used drugs have such sad and tragic stories about what it did to their lives," Arpaio says. "Each says they are willing to contribute to the effort of helping others make better choices than they did."

Some of the women on this chain are part of the Sheriff's ALPHA program, a six month course aimed at rehabilitating drug users. To date, over 6000 inmates have graduated from ALPHA which has a recidivism rate of only 15 percent.

Sheriff Arpaio will meet with the chain gang at 7:30am, Monday morning. Media is welcome to attend, contact [SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov](mailto:SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov) .

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