

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: July 7, 2009

SHERIFF'S OFFICE RAIDS MERCADO

Arrests Illegal Aliens Selling Pirated Movies Still in Theaters

(Phoenix, AZ) Sheriff's deputies arrested Karina Romero-Figueroa (24) and Judith Romero-Figueroa (27) this morning at the Mercado off of the U.S. 60 on two counts of or unlawfully manufacturing or distributing transferred sounds or images without name of the manufacturer for pirating movies and music, which is a class-three felony. The two suspects are being held in the county jail without bond.

One suspect who fled deputies, leaving two teenage children behind, is still at large. Those children are currently with Child Protective Services. The two suspects in custody have admitted to selling these pirated movies and music titles for the past year at the Mercado for five dollars a piece.

"We have received intelligence indicating that illegal aliens are believed to be heavily involved in this type of activity locally and I will be working closely with these companies to crack down on the problem" Arpaio says.

Sheriff's officials were contacted with the information leading to the arrests by a local private investigation firm that is working for the Recording Industry of America. During the raid, deputies recovered 1,252 movies and over 1,800 music CD's and MP3's. Some of the movie titles included Transformers, Ice Age, and Up, all of which are still in theaters.

The early morning raid comes just hours after a news conference where Sheriff Arpaio and his attorneys announced their disappointment in the way that the U.S. Department of Justice's civil investigation is being conducted.

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“I will say it again; I am not going to be deterred by the Justice Department’s attempt to intimidate me from doing my job” Arpaio says.

Since the civil investigation was launched by the Justice Department in March of this year, the Sheriff’s Office has arrested and booked over 4,000 illegal aliens.



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