

Two illegal aliens arrested for smuggling children

by Cheryl McDermott

Two Mexican nationals were arrested today for smuggling five unaccompanied minors into Maricopa County, Arizona, authorities reported. Sheriff's deputies performed a traffic stop on a caravan transporting "human cargo" near Wickenburg, and found five juveniles and 13 co-conspirators.

Luis E. Ruiz Valencia and Froylan Hernandez-Lopez were taken into custody and according to Sheriff Joe Arpaio, the first two to be charged under the new state law against human smuggling of minors. The class-two felony is punishable by four to ten years in prison for a first offense.

The 13 co-conspirators were booked under the state felony human smuggling law, and the juveniles arrested and processed under federal immigration law.

Arpaio said his office continues to be the only Arizona law enforcement agency arresting illegal aliens under all aspects of the relatively new state law, and under federal immigration laws. The Sheriff's deputies and volunteer posse operations have resulted in 523 arrests under state law, and 71 arrests under federal law.

Sheriff Arpaio said, "I promised to arrest those violating the law, including illegal aliens encountered by my deputies patrolling Maricopa County."

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