

NEWSRELEASE

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Paul Babeu, Sheriff

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 9th, 2011

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PCSO “Citizens on Patrol” Program Explorers New Unit in the Unincorporated Areas of Coolidge

In response to requests for a Citizens on Patrol (COP) Unit in the unincorporated areas in Coolidge and surrounding Central Arizona College, the Pinal County Sheriff's Citizens on Patrol Program will be conducting an informational meeting for residents.

The meeting will be held on **May 17, 2011, in Room T116 (on the first floor) in the T Building (Sheldon Building). Doors will open at 6:00 PM and the meeting will commence at 6:15 PM.** Lt. Ruben Leos, Pinal County Sheriff's Region Commander and Pat Prince, Citizens on Patrol Program Director, will be conducting the meeting along with volunteers representing units located in Arizona City, Gold Canyon, San Tan Valley East and San Tan Valley West.

The Citizens on Patrol Program assists the Sheriff's Office and their communities through regular patrols reporting "suspicious" activity and notifying the Sheriff's Office. COP volunteers do not take enforcement action; they serve as the "eyes and ears" of law enforcement by observing and reporting, and they have the ability to communicate directly with the Sheriff's staff by radio.

Prince reported that members of the Citizens on Patrol Program volunteered over 8,471 hours during 2010 with a wage equivalency savings to Pinal county taxpayers of \$175,193! During the first quarter of 2011, COP members volunteered 3,299.5 hours with a wage equivalency of \$68,794.58. Prince commented that the program's rapid growth is the direct result of Sheriff Paul Babeu's commitment to support and provide the tools necessary for the program to be successful. In addition, Prince credits the dedication of the volunteers in patrolling to create a visual deterrent to crime in their communities. She stated, "Our volunteers entered the program wanting to be active in keeping their families safe, protecting their property and the integrity of their communities; they are proud to be a part of the solution to crime and to serve with Sheriff Paul Babeu, the National Sheriff of the Year."

Volunteers with the COP Program must reside in an unincorporated area of Pinal County, be at least 21 years of age, possess a valid Arizona driver's license, and pass a background investigation including but not limited to a wants and warrants, criminal history and driving record check. In addition, volunteers must attend and successfully complete the COP Academy.

Citizens on Patrol is an excellent program that allows citizens to be proactive in being part of the solution to preventing crime by patrolling their own neighborhoods to identify suspicious activity or potential crimes. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with COP, please attend our informational meeting or contact COP Program Director, Pat Prince at 480 671 4847 or 480 982 2241 or by email at patprince6064@msn.com.

Sheriff Paul Babeu stated, “The objective of our Citizens on Patrol program is to enhance and support the Sheriff’s Office by freeing up deputies for higher priority duties. The Citizens on Patrol will provide more eyes and ears on the streets observing and reporting crime and/or suspicious activity.”