

Sun City Posse marking 50 years

Being an unincorporated community within the county, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services for the age restricted community.

But MCSO is not alone. The Sun City Posse, while not a law enforcement agency, gives the deputies a hand by being the eyes and ears of the community. The group has been serving in that capacity for 50 years. Posse officials are marking the 50th anniversary year with monthly activities for its volunteers and two community celebrations.

The first of those community events is 1-4 p.m. Saturday, April 1, at the Posse headquarters, 10861 W. Sunland Drive. Called the Posse Jubilee, the event will have a street fair atmosphere. There will be face painting, balloon twisting, live music by the Lone Mountain Band and a bouncy house.

"People asked why we would have a bouncy house in a senior community," Toni Ashby, Posse buildings, grounds and special events officer. "We're sure some residents will have their grandchildren visiting."

The community event is designed to be fun for people of all ages, according to Theresa O'Dell, Posse public information officer.

The second community event will be in October.

"We had our monthly volunteer activities, but we also wanted to share this celebration with the community," said Sarah Davis, Posse commander.

MCSO and the Sun City Fire and Medical Department were invited to both community events, according to Danny Moore, Posse executive officer.

"Unless they are busy on calls, they will have vehicles at the events," he said.

Volunteer activities for the year include a casino night and silent auction in March, the annual appreciation dinner and Mother's Day cake in May, the release of a cookbook and Father's Day cake in June, an ice cream social in July, a variety talent show with pie in August, the Posse picnic in November and the holiday party in December.

Posse officials in September will install a time capsule in the wall of the headquarters lobby. The capsule will contain various Posse-related items. The idea will be to open the capsule in 50 years.

"We generally have a lot of people at our open houses," Davis said. "But we hope to exceed that at the community anniversary events."

Plans are still being made for the second community event in October, which could include other elements, according to Ashby.

"We still need sponsors for the community events," she said.

The Posse officially started in 1973. Prior to that year, a group of residents patrolled the streets on bicycles, golf cars and personal vehicles. They carried a roll of dimes so they could go to a phone booth to call in anything suspicious to MCSO.

The official Posse started with 33 applications for membership and grew to a peak of 270 members. That number dropped in recent years and Posse officials encourage residents to become part of the organization to help maintain regular patrols, assist at the headquarters and provide manpower for growing programs.