

THE PROGRAM TO SAVE THE TERRITORIAL PRISON

- Arizona State Parks has announced that, due to state budget deficits, the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park will close on March 29, 2010. The park was dedicated in January 1961 and is one of the iconic images of Arizona's history.
- In 2009, the City of Yuma and the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area partnered to keep the Quartermaster Depot (QMD) open to the public. The City leased the QMD from the state, and, in turn, entered into an agreement with the Heritage Area to operate the park.
- Facing its own fiscal challenges, the City of Yuma cannot provide financial support for the Territorial Prison, but it can facilitate the lease from the state and have the Heritage Area operate the park.
- The Heritage Area has reviewed the financial status of the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park. It runs at a \$140,000.00 annual deficit, with revenues of \$180,000.00 and expenses of \$320,000.00.
- The Heritage Area believes that it can in the first year save \$60,000.00 of annual operating expense, which still leaves a deficit of \$80,000.00. In addition, from experience with taking over the QMD, the Heritage Area wants to set aside \$20,000.00 for addressing immediate deferred maintenance items. Therefore, the Heritage Area needs to raise \$100,000.00.
- The Heritage Area has committed \$50,000.00 of the funding it receives from the National Park Service to help address the deficit. From the initial community response, the Heritage Area believes that the community will help, to raise the other \$50,000.00.
- A 60-day fundraising campaign will begin on Thursday, January 28, which will involve civic groups, the hotel and tourism industry, and residents and visitors who want to help. The campaign will involve a network of groups, and will include a number of special events.
- The Heritage Area believes that with creative marketing and community support, admissions revenues and retail sales can increase over time and reduce the need for an annual fundraising campaign. In other words, this is not a "forever" fundraising effort. It is needed to jumpstart the effort to save the Territorial Prison and preserve a key element of Yuma's heritage.
- The attached press release provides details of the proposed fundraising campaign.