

**FOR
IMMEDIATE
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**SAVE THE YUMA
TERRITORIAL
PRISON**

Groups have opportunity
to join Yuma Territorial
Prison's Chain Gang



It's an all too familiar story. A worthy cause mobilizes community members to right a wrong, take back their streets or save a treasured landmark. Sometimes "it takes a village." In Yuma, Arizona, home of the famed Yuma Territorial Prison, it takes a "chain gang."

The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area is announcing a campaign to save the Yuma Territorial Prison. The prison is on the list of 13 state parks Arizona officials are closing in response to budget cuts enacted late last year. Charles Flynn, Executive Director of the Heritage Area, announced last week that the agency would step forward to operate the prison with the hope that the Yuma community would step forward in the next 60 days to match the \$50,000 his agency has pledged.

"Many individuals have stepped forward asking how they can help," stated Flynn. We are asking them to mail contributions (made payable to "YCNHA" and mark "Save the Prison Fund" in the memo field) to YCNHA c/o The Foothills Bank, 2285 S. 4th Avenue, Yuma, Arizona, Yuma, AZ 85364. Groups wanting to help raise money are asked to become part of the Territorial Prison Chain Gang described as follows:

A group determines they would like to help save the prison in their own way. They might want to sell handmade art with depictions of the prison; hold a bake sale, create a fundraising event, or a door-to-door campaign.

The group registers in the program, and receives an official endorsement and marketing materials to assist them in their efforts.

The group is asked to invite another group to "link" to their program. This group then creates their own way of raising funds. After this new group links to their chain, they are asked to introduce another group to their chain, and so on.

A "lifer" is selected by the Heritage Area to head each chain. "Lifers" will keep the groups in their chain encouraged and provide support when needed. Each chain may have twenty links as a result of the care of this one "lifer."

There may be more than 40 chains with 20 links, all holding a variety of fundraisers throughout the Yuma area. The Chain and the group that raises the most money by March 10, 2010 (the 3:10 to Yuma fundraising event at the prison) will receive a variety of prizes including overnight camping stays at the prison, annual passes and entrance fees to planned special events. The Chain Gang will be immortalized in a mural on the wall of the Territorial Prison. Each group that helped will have their place on the wall.

For more information about the Yuma Territorial Prison Chain Gang, call Susan Sternitzke at 928-782-5712 or email SusanS@YumaHeritage.com

The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area office is located at 180 W. 1st Street Yuma, Arizona 85364.