

Census 2010 on the way

By Lindsay Norman

There are mixed emotions about the upcoming Census of 2010 in the neighborhoods and communities across Phoenix.

The census helps to fund communities by allocating certain government funds based on population and need.

There is more than \$400 billion in federal funds at stake to distribute for such things as hospitals, schools, bridges, tunnels and other infrastructure.

The data also determines how many seats a state receives in the U.S House of Representatives.

Even though the focus of the census is to provide aid and resources, not all residents see it as a priority.

If residents choose not to participate via mail then the government will send out live census workers to gather the information face to face.

Roseann Feigenbaum was a crew leader in the last Census of 2000. She managed a crew of about a dozen that was assigned to gather such information that residents chose not to provide in the mailed-out survey.

They were given a list by the census bureau of residents that did not respond, and it was their job to obtain that information.

"It was not always easy, sometimes people just really do not want to give out

personal information," Feigenbaum said.

James Garcia, director of communications for the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, said there can be some challenges in the Hispanic community.

"It can be difficult to count our community because like many Americans there is a lack of awareness," he said.

Garcia said that Hispanic organizations are "hyperaware" of the importance and are trying to inform residents of the significance of the census.

"The better we do, the better we are represented," he said.

"It matters on so many levels that the count is accurate."

He wants to make sure people realize that census workers and the Census Bureau are not affiliated with law enforcement.

"This is especially hard in Arizona," Garcia said, because of the immigration issues the state faces.

The Census Bureau will start mailing out forms in March.

April 1 is National Census Day, a date by which residents are being asked to send back the forms.

Between April and July, census workers will visit households that did not respond through mail.

By next December, the bureau must deliver final population information to the president for apportionment.