



CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

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Contact:

Neal Buccino, NJ State Parole Board, 609-292-4031 office; 609-468-9728 cell; neal.buccino@spb.state.nj.us

Paul Loriquet, NJ Department of Law and Public Safety, 609-292-4791, paul.loriquet@lps.state.nj.us

Fugitive Safe Surrender Total: 3,901 Voluntarily Turned Themselves In

New Jersey's FSS Record Total: 10,249 Voluntary Surrenders in Three FSS Events

NEW BRUNSWICK – Approximately 3,901 wanted persons from across New Jersey voluntarily turned themselves in at Fugitive Safe Surrender, held November 3-6, 2010 at First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset, NJ. Because not all cases have been processed, the total is still being counted and is expected to approximate 4,000.

To put this event's numbers in perspective:

- ***New Jersey's Fugitive Safe Surrender total has now topped 10,000.*** A total of 10,249 individuals have turned themselves in at the state's three Fugitive Safe Surrender events (including 2,245 at FSS-Camden in November 2008 and 4,103 at FSS-Newark in November 2009).
- Additionally, FSS-Newark, FSS-Central Jersey and FSS-Camden had the ***third, fourth and fifth highest turnouts*** among the approximately 20 FSS events held ***nationwide***. (The top two were held in two of America's largest cities: FSS-Cleveland, with 7,431 individuals surrendering in September 2010, and FSS-Detroit, with 6,500 in June 2008).
- More people turned themselves in at ***this single FSS event*** in New Brunswick and Somerset, than the ***combined turnout for three*** recent Fugitive Safe Surrender events in ***much larger cities***: Philadelphia (1,248 individuals in September 2008), Wilmington, Delaware (1,073 in April 2009) and Washington, D.C. (530 in November 2007).
- ***Each person*** who voluntarily surrenders represents an ***estimated savings of \$420*** to local governments (counting the jail and police manpower costs involved in arresting and holding someone wanted on a traffic warrant or other municipal warrant) – resources that can now be dedicated to other public safety matters. This estimate ***does not include*** the collection of fines, court fees and driver's license restoration fees that would otherwise go unpaid, and other benefits realized when individuals are free to stop hiding from the law and begin contributing to their families and society.
- ***Each person*** who surrenders also removes the threat of ***potential to danger to law enforcement***, the individual's ***community and family***, and the individual ***him- or herself***. During the past five years, approximately 29 police officers nationwide have been killed while interacting with wanted fugitives, many of whom were wanted for minor, non-felony offenses, according to research of the Officer Down Memorial Page.

Of the 3,901 individuals who turned themselves in at Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey:

- An estimated ***71 percent*** had at least one warrant arising from ***municipal courts*** (including disorderly persons offenses, municipal ordinance violations or traffic violations)

- An estimated **15 percent** had at least one **superior court** warrant (including criminal matters, or family court matters)
- An estimated **14 percent** had **no warrants**.
- Additionally, **half of one percent** of the total (approximately **20 individuals**) were taken into custody. These individuals were wanted for violent crimes, had a history of violent crime, or had warrants from other states whose authorities demanded extradition.

New Jersey Attorney General Paula T. Dow, State Parole Board Chairman James T. Plousis and the Reverend Dr. DeForest B. Soaries Jr., Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, lauded the event during a media conference this afternoon. They were joined by Middlesex County Prosecutor Bruce J. Kaplan, Somerset County Prosecutor Geoffrey D. Soriano, Mercer County Prosecutor Joseph L. Bocchini, Jr., Monmouth County Prosecutor Luis A. Valentin, Somerset County Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano, Jr., the Reverend DeForest B. Soaries, Jr., Lori Scott Pickens, Director of Community Outreach at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, and other leaders of the initiative.

"More than 10,000 fugitives turned themselves in during the last three years in the northern, southern and central regions of New Jersey," Attorney General Dow said. "Ten thousand people who are no longer living in fear. Ten thousand people who are extremely grateful. Ten thousand people who are getting a second chance. We are more than thrilled with the success of this life-altering program. It is truly a win-win for fugitives, by giving them a second chance in life, and for law enforcement, by providing them with an extra layer of safety."

"Fugitive Safe Surrender has exceeded its goals in New Jersey," Parole Chairman – and former US Marshal – Plousis said. "In a very significant way, what we have achieved continues to remove significant dangers for law enforcement and for the individuals who took the important step of turning themselves in to justice and beginning to live up to their obligations."

"First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens chose to participate in this program because its emphasis is on upholding the rule of law, and encouraging people to take responsibility for their actions," Pastor Soaries said. "Rather than being given amnesty, they are held accountable and required to make some amends to society for what they have done. Sometimes good people commit bad actions. For those people, this is a limited opportunity to come forward and make things right."

"More than 250 individuals from all walks of life worked as volunteers during Fugitive Safe Surrender," said Lori Scott-Pickens of Rutgers University, who coordinated the recruitment, training and activity of the volunteers who helped make the operation possible. "This was a diverse group of individuals who spoke seven different languages, and we must acknowledge the Salvation Army, First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, The Nicholson Foundation and the Tzu Chi Foundation, which supplied the majority of the volunteers for this project."

Fugitive Safe Surrender represented an unprecedented, multi-agency collaboration in Middlesex, Somerset, Mercer and Monmouth counties. The opportunity to surrender was available to U.S. citizens and legal residents who had outstanding warrants from any state, county or municipal agency within New Jersey. Fugitive Safe Surrender is not an amnesty program, but offered favorable consideration to those who voluntarily turned themselves in. It was made possible through a partnership by the Office of the Attorney General and the U.S. Marshals Service, Rutgers University, the State Parole Board and a host of agencies and organizations at the Federal, state, county, municipal, community-based and faith-based levels.

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