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OPERATION FALCON 2007 NETS THOUSANDS OF FUGITIVES

Three-Month Operation Targets Communities, Violent Offenders Nationwide

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. Marshals Service, assisted by federal, state and local law enforcement, arrested 6,406 fugitives and cleared 8,219 warrants in 27 operations across 22 states as part of Operation FALCON-2007 (Federal and Local Cops Organized Nationally), Acting Deputy Attorney General Craig Morford, and U.S. Marshals Service Director John Clark announced today. Starting in Baton Rouge and concluding in Philadelphia, Operation FALCON-2007 brought together the talents and resources of 22 federal agencies, 70 state agencies, 206 county sheriffs departments and 242 police departments, to again make the program a success.

For this year's FALCON operation, the fourth of its kind, the U.S. Marshals Service stepped away from its traditional week-long national fugitive sweep, and instead orchestrated a series of specifically targeted citywide and regional fugitive apprehension efforts beginning in June and continuing for four months. Using information obtained from a variety of sources such as the Department of Justice Safe Communities Program, the Gang Targeting Enforcement Coordination Center (GangTECC) and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), 27 areas were identified and targeted for fugitive apprehension and removal. A complete listing of areas targeted can be found at <http://www.usmarshals.gov/falcon07>.

Since its inception in 2005, Operation FALCON has made over 36,500 arrests and cleared over 45,000 warrants. It continues to be the largest and most successful fugitive apprehension effort in U.S. Marshals history.

In Operation FALCON-2007, as in prior operations, an emphasis was placed on the capture of violent gang members and sex offenders. Nationwide, the operation arrested 300 gang members and 542 sex offenders. Among those brought in:

- William Caldwell was arrested on July 10, 2007 in the Middle District of Louisiana by a team of investigators participating in Operation FALCON 2007. The West Feliciana Parish (LA) Sheriff's Office wanted Caldwell for 192 counts of molestation of a juvenile and 192 counts of sexual battery after he allegedly molested a female minor over a seven-year period. Investigators identified Caldwell's location, responded to that site, and safely took him into custody.
- Casey Smith, a documented member of the "Gangster Disciple 99" gang, surrendered to authorities in St. Louis, Mo., on July 12, 2007, after a team of investigators assigned to Operation FALCON 2007 in the Eastern District of Missouri notified his family that they were pursuing him. The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department wanted Smith for statutory rape of a victim under fourteen, as well as for child molestation. The St. Louis County Police Department also wanted Smith for assault, trespassing, and other charges. Smith has an

extensive criminal history of more than twenty-nine arrests for rape, sexual assault, child molestation, statutory rape, assault, narcotics violations, burglary, theft, and probation violations.

“Operation FALCON is a text book example of how law enforcement can and should work,” said Acting Deputy Attorney General Craig Morford. “Under the leadership of the U.S. Marshals Service, hundreds of federal, state and local law enforcement officers pooled their resources and worked together to remove violent offenders, drug dealers, gang members, sexual predators, and other fugitives from our streets. This cooperative effort has made our communities safer and promotes future cooperative efforts by law enforcement agencies at every level of government.”

U.S. Marshals Director Clark has overseen three of the four FALCON operations since becoming head of the agency in March 2006. “I continue to be impressed with the remarkable results that can be achieved when all of law enforcement comes together,” said Director Clark. “What started three years ago as a promising concept has materialized into the most effective fugitive apprehension effort in the long history of the U.S. Marshals.

“Most importantly, by taking large numbers of violent fugitives off the street, we put an immediate end to their unlawful activities. This is significant, since many of these criminals have a long history of violence and abuse. Our actions have spared families, friends and entire communities the anguish of becoming victims at the hands of these repeat offenders,” Clark said.

“Operation FALCON is doing an outstanding job apprehending fugitives accused of sex crimes against children, taking them off the streets and bringing them to justice,” said NCMEC President and CEO Ernie Allen. “Children are safer as a result of this important program.”

In addition to the numerous gang members and sex offenders apprehended during Operation FALCON-2007, 73 homicide arrests were made and 328 persons were apprehended on weapons charges. Authorities also seized 249 weapons.

The Commander for this year’s Operation FALCON, Chief David Harlow, praised the results and believes the operation met its objectives.

“With the lessons learned from the three prior FALCON operations, we felt the time was right to step back from a large, broad-brush fugitive sweep and instead target specific types of offenders in the communities where these criminals were prevalent,” said Harlow. “What FALCON 2007 showed us was that we could successfully take this large scale, multi-agency concept and not only apply it to specific areas, but support the operations over an extended period of time.”

The concept behind broad, interagency law enforcement operations such as Operation FALCON evolved largely from smaller, local/regional task forces. Groups such as these have historically combined local, state and federal agencies to find and apprehend area fugitives. The U.S. Marshals adopted such interagency teamwork in the early 1980s, when they combined their resources and expertise in fugitive apprehension with the local knowledge and unique insight of officers on the street level. Operation FALCON brought this concept to an unprecedented, national scale in 2005.

In order to provide participating agencies with broader jurisdictional authority, all state and local law enforcement officers are sworn in as Special Deputy U.S. Marshals immediately prior to the start of a FALCON operation. Throughout the course of the local operations, this special authority from the U.S.

Marshals Service empowered all local and state law enforcement officers to cross traditional lines of jurisdiction to track down and arrest targeted fugitives.

Director Clark credits this overwhelming support of law enforcement nationwide for the continued success of Operation FALCON. "Though the Marshals are oftentimes the public face of these operations, we have hundreds of agencies and thousands of dedicated law enforcement officers behind this effort. It's a lot of work with many long hours, but everyone is determined to make it happen," said Clark. "We have cops onboard who aren't concerned about punching the clock, but are committed to tracking down and arresting these violent fugitives. I thank them for their continued assistance."

Operation FALCON photos, fact sheets, lists of participating agencies, statistics, graphics and more are available to the media at www.usmarshals.gov/falcon07.

B-Roll: The following are the satellite coordinates and time for the Operation Falcon 2007 B-Roll Pkg.

Date: Wednesday, October 31, 2007, 3:00-4:00 p.m. E.D.T.

AMC5-13K Analog
Located at 78.95 degrees West
U/L Freq: 14396 H
D/L Freq: 12096 V

For more information about the U.S. Marshals Service, visit <http://www.usmarshals.gov>

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