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### **QUEENS GUN BUYBACK PROGRAM NETS A RECORD 919 WEAPONS**

Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown, joined by New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly and six local church pastors, today announced that a record 919 weapons have been collected at six churches in the Rockaways and the southern part of Queens during Queens County's first-ever gun buyback program. Among the weapons recovered were more than 500 pistols, assault weapons and sawed-off shotguns.

District Attorney Brown said, "Our one-day gun buyback effort has proven to be a huge success— far exceeding our expectations – by taking more than 900 weapons out of circulation. I think it is fair to say that the citizens of Queens county are safer today as a result."

Mayor Bloomberg said, "Six churches in St. Albans, Jamaica, and the Rockaways helped us collect 919 guns – the most ever collected since we began our buyback program. That brings our total number of guns collected to over 3,500. That's 3,500 guns that won't end up on our streets in the hand of criminals, won't be involved in tragic household accidents or crimes, and won't ever be pointed at police officers or civilians."

Police Commissioner Kelly said, "Our partnership with the City's clergy and their congregations has worked miracles. Since 2002, the NYPD has taken 5,000 guns for the street through its program of offering \$100, no questions asked, to individuals who returned guns to any station house in the City. That's 5,000 guns over seven years. But over the course of just six Saturdays, we have recovered over 3,000 guns by having them turned in at houses of worship and by doubling the reward to \$200 with matching contributions from our district attorneys. It is a life saving program."

The Gun Buyback program, jointly sponsored by the District Attorney's Office and the NYPD, allowed individuals in possession of illegal or unwanted guns to anonymously trade them in for a \$200 bank card at the six participating churches. Functional BB guns and air pistols were exchanged for a \$20 bank card. The bank cards can be used as a debit card or cash and can be withdrawn at any ATM.

District Attorney Brown added, "The Queens Gun Buyback initiative is another example of the partnership that exists in this City between police, prosecutor and the communities that we serve to improve the quality of life of our residents and to lower the level of violence in the City."

(MORE)

The participating churches and their pastors included:

Macedonia Baptist Church  
330 Beach 67<sup>th</sup> Street, Far Rockaway  
Reverend Evan Gray

Evangel Temple  
227-10 Merrick Boulevard, Laurelton  
Pastor Alice Evers

First Baptist Church  
15-10 Redfern Avenue, Far Rockaway  
Reverend Duane M. Sleet

Majority Baptist Church  
115-21 Farmers Boulevard, Jamaica  
Reverend Darryl Frazier

Praise Tabernacle  
108-11 Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica  
Reverend Ceaser Beckett

Presbyterian Baptist Church  
190-04 119<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Saint Albans  
Reverend Dr. Edward David

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**Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).**