Lowest Crime Rate in 39 Years – Governor Charlie Crist and Commissioner Gerald Bailey announced the state’s overall index crime rate has reached a 39-year low, declining by 6.4 percent in 2009. The number of violent crimes (murder, forcible sex offenses, robbery and aggravated assault) committed in Florida dropped 10 percent while the number of non-violent crimes (burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft) decreased 6.2 percent. The 2009 Annual Uniform Crime Report includes offenses reported during 2009 and data submitted by 409 of the 415 local, county and state law enforcement agencies. These agencies serve approximately 99.9 percent of the state’s population.

Florida’s Implementation of the Adam Walsh Act - The U.S. Department of Justice recognized Florida as having reached substantial implementation of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), Title I of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. The Act aligns sex offender registry standards across states and tightens requirements for offender registration and notification. Through the Act, Florida implemented several changes to the registry requirements including:

- Increased number of times per year sexual offenders and predators must register in person with their local sheriff's office;
- Required all registered sexual offenders and predators to register any e-mail or instant message address they may use prior to using it;
- Required juvenile sexual offenders to register if adjudicated of certain crimes committed after July 1, 2007;
- Increased minimum length of registration for sexual offenders while removing the ability for sexual predators to petition the court for removal from registration requirements; and
- Increased sexual offender/predator notification to the public, including free e-mail notifications made available to citizens through the Florida Offender Alert System. Over 100,000 people have subscribed to the program and more than two million notifications have been sent out.

Florida was the first state in the nation to list sexual offenders and predators on the Internet and to make the same information available through a 24-hour/day hotline. The registry houses data on over 54,000 registered sex offenders and predators and the Web site averages almost 550,000 searches per month.

ICE and FDLE Join Forces for Secure Communities - The Department and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced that ICE is using a new biometric information sharing capability in every Florida county to help federal immigration officials identify criminal aliens, both lawfully and unlawfully present in the United States, who are booked into local law enforcement’s custody for a crime. This capability is part of Secure Communities - a comprehensive strategy to improve and modernize the identification and removal of criminal aliens from the United States.

Formerly, during the booking process, arrestees’ fingerprints were checked for criminal history information only against the Department of Justice’s Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), a biometric database maintained by the FBI. With the implementation of Secure Communities, this fingerprint information is now automatically and simultaneously checked against both the FBI criminal history records and the biometrics-based immigration records in the Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT), which is maintained by the Department of Homeland Security. Florida was the third state to implement the program statewide.
Wanted! Reward for Capture! - The faces of 12 of Florida’s oldest and most violent prison escapees were displayed on digital billboards, websites and in newspapers across the state this past December as part of the “12 Days of Fugitives” campaign. This resulted in the capture of one of the individuals, Oscar Eugene Richardson, who escaped from the Kissimmee Work Release Center 30 years ago. Richardson, who escaped after serving less than two years of his 10-year sentence for armed robbery, was arrested in Ridgedale, Missouri and extradited to Florida where he is now serving the remainder of his sentence.

The campaign resulted in a number of tips and leads on the wanted men, which featured murderers, armed robbers and drug dealers who ranged in age from 49 to 75. The dirty dozen had one thing in common – they had escaped Department of Corrections (DOC) custody before completing their sentences. The campaign was designed to reach the public during the holiday season, when the wanted men were most likely to be contacting friends, family and loved ones. Over $22,000 in reward money was offered thanks to a partnership between FDLE, DOC and the Florida Police Chiefs Association.

FDLE Receives State and National Reaccreditation – The Department formally accepted its fourth consecutive state reaccreditation award from the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA) and fifth consecutive national reaccreditation award from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). FDLE’s national accreditation placed the agency in an elite category as a recipient of Meritorious Recognition, which is awarded to agencies that have maintained accreditation for 15 or more continuous years. The Department was also recognized as a CALEA Flagship Agency, which identifies the most successful CALEA-accredited agencies. The Department was initially accredited by CFA in 1996 and CALEA in 1990 and is accredited by the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors. Undergoing the voluntary accreditation process provides an independent quality assurance review and encourages intense self-scrutiny, resulting in more efficient and effective daily operations.