



# Department of Justice

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## **BILLY JACK FITZMORRIS SENTENCED TO 80 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR ESCAPE, BANK ROBBERIES, GUN CRIMES, HOSTAGE TAKING**

*Sentence will be consecutive to 35-year sentence for drug crime*

COLUMBUS –Billy Jack Fitzmorris, age 36, was sentenced to a total of 960 months imprisonment as punishment for seven crimes he committed following his escape from custody at a hospital in Youngstown on April 2, 2007.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, in conjunction with Keith L. Bennett, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Christopher Sadowski, Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Marshal Jim Wahrab, Hilliard Police Chief Rodney D. Garnett, Upper Arlington Police Chief Brian Quinn, Powell Police Chief Gary Vest, Franklin County Sheriff Jim Karnes, Delaware County Sheriff Walter Davis, Acting Columbus Police Chief Walter Distelzweig, and Ohio State Highway Patrol Colonel Richard H. Collins, announced the sentence handed down today by United States District Judge Gregory L. Frost.

Judge Frost ordered the sentence to be served after Fitzmorris completes a 35-year sentence imposed on him on August 14, 2008 for drug trafficking.

A United States District Court jury convicted Fitzmorris on September 17, 2008 of one count of escape, two counts of armed bank robbery, two counts of using a firearm in a crime of violence, one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm, and one count of hostage taking

On the day of his escape, Fitzmorris left Youngstown and robbed the First Citizens National Bank on Sawmill Parkway in Powell carrying a .38 caliber Smith and Wesson revolver taken from a corrections officer during Fitzmorris' escape. Later that same day, he robbed the Ohio Savings Bank on Lane Avenue in Upper Arlington with the same weapon.

Fitzmorris then fled to a business in Hilliard where he took a hostage before a standoff with law enforcement officers and agents. Fitzmorris was arrested after the standoff was resolved and has been in custody since his arrest.

"Fitzmorris left a wake of pain as a result of his one-day crime spree," Lockhart said. "Communication and cooperation between federal, state and local law enforcement agents and officers helped quickly end this one-man crime ring," Lockhart said.

Fitzmorris' sentence consists of 60 months for escape, 300 months for armed bank robbery of the First Citizens Bank, 300 months for armed bank robbery of the Ohio Savings Bank, 120 months for being a felon in possession of a firearm, and 360 months for taking a hostage. All those sentences are to run concurrently.

Additionally, Fitzmorris was sentenced to 300 months for each of the two charges of using a firearm in a crime of violence. Each of those sentences will run consecutive to the first 360 months.

Prosecutors asked that the Bureau of Prisons place Fitzmorris in the federal supermax prison in Colorado.

Lockhart commended the cooperative investigation by the agencies mentioned above, along with the Youngstown offices of ATF and the Marshals Service, the Youngstown Police and other federal state and local agencies, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Kevin W. Kelley, who prosecuted the case.

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