

May, 2008 - Monthly Update

FYI, this update is sent each month to all IAI board members, officers, committee chairs, regional representatives, division secretaries, certification board chairs and secretaries, division editors and IAI staff. This update contains information that is of particular interest to these groups. It is sent by e-mail to all those for whom I have an e-mail address and by regular mail to the rest. **If you receive this by regular mail but have an e-mail account**, please let me know and I will add your e-mail address to the distribution list. It is much more efficient and cost effective to send it that way.

Hello again from the IAI office.

2008 Louisville Conference

If you are planning to attend the Louisville Conference, please make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. The Hyatt and Marriott Hotels are sold out but there are rooms available (at least at the time I'm writing this) at the overflow hotels. Please visit the Conference section of the IAI's website to register for the conference or make hotel reservations.

Several administrative events will take place during the conference. As has been our custom, on Tuesday morning, August 19th, a meeting will be held of all certification board chairs and secretaries. Please mark that on your calendar as this is the only time during the entire year when all certification board officers are able to meet and discuss matters of mutual interest. Pat Davis, Chair of the Certification Quality Assurance Committee and I will co-chair the meeting.

The annual breakfast for division secretaries, presidents and regional representatives in attendance will be held on Wednesday, August 20th, from 7-9 a.m. This is the once a year opportunity for the division leadership to visit with each other and exchange ideas with staff and myself from the IAI office. Again, please mark this event on your calendars.

The IAI's Board of Directors will meet on August 15th, 16th and 17th. If anyone has items to be considered by the board, please send them to the Board Chair, Diana Castro at Diana.Castro@theiai.org or to me at iaisecty@theiai.org

Identification News Newsletter

Just a reminder that Jon Stimac, Editor of Identification News, welcomes articles that might be of interest to IAI members. That includes division news, committee news or reports, certification board information etc. Please contact Jon at jon.stimac@theiai.org if you would like more information or if you have information for the Newsletter.

National Forensic Science Technology Center (NFSTC)

As you may know, the IAI is a member organization of the NFSTC in Largo, Florida. For the past several years I have been fortunate to serve on the Board of Directors for NFSTC and as Chair of the Board for the last year.

On May 19th, the annual Member's Meeting of member organizations was held at the NFSTC in Largo. Board Member Mike Campbell is the IAI's representative to the NFSTC. The purpose of the annual Member's Meeting is to elect board members for the upcoming year. Due to resignations, two new board members were added at that meeting, Kelly Gibbs from the

Department of Homeland Security and Susan Scholl Uremovich, a crime laboratory director from Virginia. Carl Selavka and myself were re-elected to another three-year term. I'm honored to report that I was again elected by the board to the position of chair for the upcoming year.

NFSTC is an important partner with the IAI particularly in conjunction with our training efforts. NFSTC applied for and received an NIJ grant to conduct a series of fingerprint courses designed to bring a fingerprint examiner from the entry level up to a level of expertise able to successfully pass the IAI's certification examination. It is anticipated this series of courses will begin late in 2008 and progress in blocks into 2009. The application process is being developed and will be announced as soon as it is available. There will be no cost to the students for travel, lodging or per diem to attend this series of courses.

More information will be provided as it develops.

As the Chair of the Board of NFSTC, I am also an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors of ASCLD, the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors. On May 30 and June 1, I had the opportunity to attend the spring ASCLD Board Meeting in Salt Lake City. This is another opportunity to network with other aspects of the forensics community, both from the perspective of the NFSTC as well as the IAI.

International Association of Forensic Sciences (IAFS)

Some of you may be interested in the triennial meeting of the IAFS to be held in New Orleans, LA on July 21-25, 2008. If interested, please visit the IAFS website at <http://www.iafs2008.com/>

Fingerprint Information

The following information was received from Frank Shonberger, the Secretary of the Florida Division of the IAI. He received it from Christina Barber an IAI member who works at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

New fingerprint breakthrough by forensic scientists

Published by Ather for [University of Leicester](#) in [Communities](#)
Monday 2nd June 2008 - 12:19pm

University of Leicester and Northamptonshire Police research reveals new techniques for identifying prints on metal

Forensic scientists at the University of Leicester, working with Northamptonshire Police, have announced a major breakthrough in crime detection which could lead to hundreds of cold cases being reopened.

The University's Forensic Research Centre has been working with Northamptonshire Police's scientific support unit to develop new ways of taking fingerprints from a crime scene.

Researchers in the University Department of Chemistry and the Police's scientific support unit have developed the method that enables scientists to visualise fingerprints even after the print itself has been removed. They conducted a study into the way fingerprints can corrode metal surfaces. The technique can enhance after firing a fingerprint that has been deposited on a small calibre metal cartridge case before it is fired.

Dr John Bond, Honorary Fellow at the University of Leicester and Scientific Support Manager at Northamptonshire Police said: For the first time we can get prints from people who handled a cartridge before it was fired.

"Wiping it down, washing it in hot soapy water makes no difference - and the heat of the shot helps the process we use.

The procedure works by applying an electric charge to a metal - say a gun or bullet - which has been coated in a fine conducting powder, similar to that used in photocopiers.

Even if the fingerprint has been washed off, it leaves a slight corrosion on the metal and this attracts the powder when the charge is applied, so showing up a residual fingerprint.

The technique works on everything from bullet casings to machine guns. Even if heat vaporises normal clues, police will be able to prove who handled a particular gun.

Dr. Bonds initial findings, which prompted the joint study, have been announced in a paper in the American Journal of Forensic Science.

Professor Rob Hillman of the Department of Chemistry added: It is very satisfying to see excellent fundamental science being applied to a practical problem. We are delighted to have the opportunity to collaborate with Dr. Bond and his colleagues and we look forward to some very exciting chemistry and its application to forensic science.

As a result of the research, cases dating back decades could be reopened because the underlying print never disappears, say the scientists. The technique also works in cases where prints may be left on other metals.

Dr Bond added: "It's certainly possible hundreds of cold cases could be reopened because with this method the only way to avoid a fingerprint being detected is through abrasive cleaning as that takes a layer off the metal.

Dr Emma Palmer, Director of the Forensic Research Centre said: This collaboration between the University of Leicester and Northamptonshire Police is an excellent example of applying research to a practical problem in crime detection.

Dr Bond and Professor Rob Hillman of the Chemistry Department at the University now intend to take this research forward via a three-year Ph.D. studentship to commence next academic year. The new project will explore further the corrosion of metal by fingerprint residue and investigate how it might be used to detect more crime with forensic science.

Joe Polski