

# International Association for Identification



## November, 2009 – IAI 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.

Hello again from the IAI office.

### *Monthly Update*

This *Monthly Update* is sent directly to those individuals noted in the above box. I have recently reviewed all the names on those e-mail lists and made several additions particularly for division secretary and regional representative positions. Some of you are therefore receiving this *Update* for the first time. Note that all IAI members have access to this update on the secure section of the IAI's website.

I am also going to begin sending the *Update* in .pdf format. That should preserve the fonts, logo etc. better than a Word file. Please let me know if this causes any problem.

Also see the next item that was first published in last month's *Update* for more information regarding the secure section of the site.

### *IAI Website*

A new "Members' Area" button has been added to the buttons on the Home Page of the IAI's website. Located in that area are the archived copies of the Monthly Update, the IAI's Operations Manual and the Certification Program Operations Manual. That section of the site is password protected. To access this Members' Area, please follow these instructions:

User Name: iaimember or update (case sensitive)

Password: 357cwv

Other items of interest to IAI members will be placed on that section of the site in the future.

### *International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Annual Conference*

As you may know, IAI board member Mike Campbell and I are members of the IACP's Forensics Committee. I'm finishing up this *Update* on the plane returning from San Diego where the 2008 IACP Conference is taking place. Although Mike was unable to attend this time, I was able to attend the meeting of the Forensics Committee meeting, participate in a Forensics

Committee sponsored plenary session featuring innovative crime solving methods and finally the award ceremony where the 2008 August Vollmer Awards for Excellence in Forensic Science were presented. Detail of those awards will be presented in my next *Identification News* column. Both Mike and I are strong advocates for forensic services provided in law enforcement agencies but outside of traditional crime laboratories i.e. identification units, crime scene units etc. and work hard to obtain increased representation from that sector of forensic science.

During the recent meeting, the IACP's Forensics Committee appointed a sub-committee to review and make recommendations for a course of action respecting the forthcoming National Academy of Sciences Committee (NAS) report dealing with the provision of forensic science service. I was appointed chair of that sub-committee. In that role, the sub-committee will evaluate the NAS report and make recommendations, through the Forensics Committee, to the Board of Directors of the IACP. Walter McNeil, Vice-President of the IACP and oversight person for the committee, offered to carry these recommendations to the IACP and navigate for the committee the IACP's organizational structure. Without knowing any specifics, it is widely felt there will be significant recommendations dealing with identification units, crime scene, fingerprint and other similar units within law enforcement agencies. These are likely to include recommendations dealing with accreditation, certification, standards, minimum training etc. These issues will affect police chiefs, and I suspect the IAI, in a significant way. Vice-President McNeil's offer to run interference for this issue with the IACP leadership is a huge success for the committee. More information on this as it develops.

## ***DNA***

After listening to a number of presentations here in San Diego, reading the literature and observing where the world is going, it is clear DNA is going to figure ever more prominently in the future of crime solving. A recent NIJ study showed that when DNA was collected from property crime scenes, a suspect was identified 31% of the time vs. 12% of the time using "conventional" methods including fingerprint processing. Similarly, suspects were arrested in 16% of those cases vs. 8% using non-DNA methods and 19% of the cases were accepted for prosecution vs. 8% for non-DNA methods. Cost is always a concern but more efficient methods and automation have reduced the cost for analyses from thousands of dollars down to, in some cases, a couple hundred dollars. There is also a developing body of evidence that private, accredited laboratories can provide this service at a reduced cost from public laboratories. That raises many issues, not the least of which is the FBI policy that private laboratories cannot upload data to CODIS without a technical review by a public laboratory. That redundant process results in an efficiency and cost "drag" on public laboratories, greatly reducing the cost benefit of outsourcing samples to private laboratories. Virtually the entire forensics community disagrees with that policy but the FBI is unwilling or unable to change it. The IACP, representing police chiefs and the CFSO, representing over 12,000 forensic practitioners, have passed resolutions urging the FBI to remove that restriction but to no avail. Nonetheless, balance the cost issues against the crimes prevented by taking these folks off the street and the numbers make great sense. Denver, a participant in a research program to collect DNA from property crimes, saw a 13% drop in each of the two years of the study resulting in a remarkable 26% drop in home burglaries. One arrested fellow admitted to over 1,000 home burglaries!!!! From a law enforcement point of view, these statistics are hard to argue with and have great appeal to police chiefs. I'm sure the same can be said for sheriffs. Fingerprints will always have a place in forensic science but there is no doubt DNA is here to stay and with costs coming down will assume an increasing role in crime scene investigation and forensic analysis.

## ***2009 IAI Membership Dues***

Invoices for 2009 IAI membership dues were mailed about ten days ago so by now, all members should be in receipt of their dues invoice. Dues for US members are \$70 per year; dues for non-US members are \$60 USD per year and dues for US student members are \$35 per year while dues for students outside the US are \$30 USD per year. We appreciate prompt payment of 2009 dues. Keep in mind that dues can be renewed via the IAI's website using any major credit card. If you simply need another hard copy renewal form, that is available as a .pdf download from the dues payment page of the site.

### ***January 2009 Mid-Year Board of Directors Meeting***

The Board of Directors of the association will hold its mid-year meeting in Orlando, Florida on January 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. If anyone has any issues to be brought to the attention of the board, please send them to Board Chair Ken Martin at [kenneth.martin@theiai.org](mailto:kenneth.martin@theiai.org) or to this office. I will forward anything sent here to Ken.

### ***ATTN: Division Secretaries & Editors***

In order to keep the division editors up to date with information and possible material for publication, I forward this *Monthly Update* to all division editors each month. That is done using a group e-mail list that I try to keep current. Below is a listing of all division editors for whom I have an e-mail address. Please review this list to find your division editor and let me know if the information is accurate. Also, if your editor is not listed here, please let me know and I'll be happy to add that person to the list.

At your convenience please also review your division's information on the IAI's website and let me know if any changes are required.

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### ***ATTN: Regional Representatives and Discipline Sub-Committee Chairs***

Over the past few months there have been a number of changes in both regional representatives and discipline sub-committee chairs. I have received inquiries from several of those folks asking about the duties of those positions. A short outline of those duties follows:

One of the primary duties of regional representatives and subcommittee chairs is to review and either approve or deny membership applications. Quite often I get inquiries asking if it is OK to

approve an applicant without a recommender listed on the membership application. It is IAI policy that we will consider for membership those who do not have a recommender. We know there are many well qualified folks who would like to join the association but do not know a member to recommend them. I advise prospective applicants who inquire if a recommender is necessary of the above policy. I also ask them to be sure to include complete information about themselves, their education and training and why they want to become a member. In addition, I request that they supply the name of their supervisor so their credentials can be verified if necessary.

The final decision to approve or deny rests with the regional representatives and discipline sub-committee chairs and both must approve. Please do not automatically disqualify an applicant due to lack of a recommender.

The other major duty of the discipline sub-committee chairs is to provide speakers and/or workshop instructors in their respective discipline for the annual educational conference. If any chair has questions in that regard, please contact Jim Gettemy, the IAI's Educational Program Coordinator, at [edplanner@theiai.org](mailto:edplanner@theiai.org)

*Joe Polski*