



# **ARSON HOTLINE**

***June 12, 2009***

## President's Message

As most everyone expected in these economic conditions, we hear about more arson fires everyday. I would guess it is going to get worse before it gets better. WAIC continues to improve our tools to combat arson.

Recently WAIC started its own website to better serve cooperation between fire, police, insurance, and private industry personnel. The website is: [www.WIArsonHotline.org](http://www.WIArsonHotline.org)

Our **WISCONSIN ARSON HOTLINE (800-362-3005)** for an anonymous arson fire tip leading to the arrest and conviction of an arsonist remains the "heart" of WAIC commitment to combat area. Rewards from a \$5000.00 fund are available to the tipster(s).

Free publications for distribution at the arson fire scene and/or surroundings are available. Some of the publications are in multiple languages.

While this past winter has been unseasonably cold, let's hope it is not a "HOT" summer from an arson standpoint.

William H. Schultz,  
President  
Wisconsin Arson Insurance Council

[William.schultz@fmglobal.com](mailto:William.schultz@fmglobal.com)

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Editor – Paul Hansen (EFI Global)

Editor's Notes:

A word about anonymity on the on-line tip e-mails: the anonymous tips should truly be untraceable as they go through a double-blind system of anonymous e-mail sites before they reach the fire marshal's office. It would take several subpoenas and, I am told, an infinite amount of time, perseverance, and luck, to trace one of these back to its sender. Obviously, we won't be awarding tips sent in this manner. The "normal" tips, those from people hoping for an award, do not get such treatment and go to the fire marshal's office through our web site.

Also, the newsletter will once again be coming out every two months, both in your e-mail/snail mail and on the website.

Paul Hansen P.E.  
editor

No Fires



### **First Scholarship Recipient for I.A.A.I. Conference in Stevens Point, WI**

I.A.A.I. began what we hope is to be an annual tradition by awarding a scholarship for attending the I.A.A.I. summer conference in Stevens Point. In this time of tight budgets, this year's recipient could not otherwise have gone to the conference. Chad Garcia, of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department was awarded the scholarship and did attend the conference. For those who don't know Chad, he was involved in an arson investigation involving a fatality in Cambridge, Wisconsin last year. Unbeknownst to us and to him, he was scheduled to be awarded the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award at the conference. Our scholarship made it possible for him to receive this award at the conference. We should all feel good about this one. Congratulations from all of us, Chad!

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# WAIC Board Meeting

## March 17, 2009

### REPORTS:

**Awards:** One official tip through the tip line, but it was not an arson case. Tony Martinez will get WAIC information regarding the Burlington Coat Factory fire.

**Membership:** 32 paid members as of 3/17/2009.

**Sustaining Membership:** Waiting for Paul to get the website up.

**Publicity:**

**Press release to be sent out to various law enforcement/fire department publications.** Bill Schultz to do after the website has more information.

**Website ([www.WIArsonHotline.org](http://www.WIArsonHotline.org)) Update status: – Paul Hansen will provide an update.**

**Posters, magnets, coasters, door hangers, etc.:** Randy is to look into the cost of business cards. Barry stated he will need to get the WAIC flyer to the IAAI around May 20<sup>th</sup>. (for the IAAI mailing)

**Scholarships for IAAI June Seminar:**

**Applications received?** One application so far (Wausau Fire Dept.) Applications due by 4/15/09. **Do we need a meeting in April to approve applications?** Rick will send out an e-mail (4/20/09), which will be a synopsis of all the applicants.

### OLD BUSINESS:

**Newsletter status:** Should be on the website by March 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Other:**

### NEW BUSINESS:

**Publicity:** Gary Streicher to get a price on pens for IAAI conference. (WAIC non-profit)

Tony suggested looking into purchasing yard signs with the WAIC info. A suggestion was made to utilize existing signs and putting instructions on the website on how to create your own signs with the posters.

**Next Board Meeting:** May 20, 2009

**Other:** Annual Meeting (Open forum format)

**ADJOURN:** 1253 hours

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## EDUCATION

The original article in its entirety can be seen at <http://news.medill.northwestern.edu/chicago/news.aspx?id> . Further information regarding this tour/field day at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, Illinois, can be found at <http://www.msichicago.org/education/field-trips/learning-labs/all-labs/museum-crime-lab/> . -Editor

### Detectives for a Day Find Clues with Forensics

by Noelle Radut, Nov 04, 2008

Dusting for fingerprints. Conducting pH tests on potentially poisoned Gatorade. Conducting fiber-trace analysis on hair samples found at the scene of a crime. Sounds like a job for a forensic scientist and on Monday, 18 teens got to test their investigative instincts with the pros, too.

On this Forensic Field Day kick-off at the Museum of Science and Industry, students from eight Chicago-area high schools and a Michigan high school joined their teachers and forensic experts to crack six simulated crime cases.

Each forensic team mixed students from different schools with a forensic expert and education facilitators from the museum to investigate each case. They followed the clues of one missing person case where a security guard found a bag of human bones and another case of a woman found unconscious in a locker room.

Students spent their morning sifting through their team's crime scene, collecting evidence and tagging it. Then they analyzed their evidence in the lab and performed different forensic tests to try to solve their cases. With their

teachers following along on the cases, many students said they were excited for a career in forensics.

“I really like science and I want to be an investigator and learn more than what I’m already doing,” said freshman Shai-Derius Hodges of Best Practice high school, who is doing independent forensic research at her school.

Fellow team member Shelbey Bartelheim, a sophomore at New Buffalo High School in New Buffalo, Mich. said she wants to be a chief medical examiner someday.

“These are the kinds of steps that people would do before I would get the actual body if it were like a homicide,” she explained while cutting strips of white paper to run an ink chromatography test to investigate for forgery.

Her team was investigating an alleged arson with the possibility of forged documents.

Patrick Brogan, a junior at Mather High School in Chicago, said he plans on joining the Marine Corps after graduating from high school. “Then I want to study criminal justice and become a police officer,” he said. A fellow Mather senior Charles Colone is also planning on becoming a Chicago cop.

Still, others aren’t sure if forensics is for them, but they were willing to consider it for a day.

“I’ve seen all the TV shows about stuff like this, so I thought it would be interesting to try it,” said Vanessa Lopez a sophomore at Wells Community Academy High School in Chicago. “So far I don’t know what I want to do and I’m still trying to figure that out.”

But it’s those TV shows that many teachers are using to create more interesting classes and spark forensic interest and research.

Vanessa’s chemistry teacher, Amar Patel, who also attended the event, did a similar crime scene investigation with his class as an introductory unit this school year. The students had to solve a case and then present their findings as a prosecutor would. The students who did best on their project were chosen to come to Forensic Field Day.

“I didn’t start with ‘open up your book with first page, first chapter, and then you’re going to have a test over it,’” Patel said. “It helped me establish rapport with the students and get to know them more because we were doing a lot more hands on and a lot of self-directed things.”

At the event, the investigative teams presented their findings in a seven-minute case presentation before a panel at the end of the day. Even the presentation simulated what forensic experts are often required to do when delivering their evidence before a judge while working on a crime case.

Forensic Field Day is an effort to introduce students to different careers in forensic science, said Jen Edginton, the event’s coordinator and a student programs facilitator. “[It’s] getting rid of all those myths that it’s running around with a gun and wearing suits and all that stuff.” Instead, she stressed, “it’s actually seeing that you can do this as a career.”

Detective Commander James Keith of the Olympia Fields Police Department agrees that forensics is most helpful when you work through it as you learn.

“The best teaching and the best way to learn is hands-on,” Keith said. “If I were to be training an investigator, the best training for him would be to probably be with me during the course of an investigation so that I can show him what to do and he can then do it himself.”

The museum is looking into making Forensic Field Day a bi-annual event.

No Fires



WAIC Membership Form Membership fee: \$15/annually

Send to:  
**WAIC C/O Allmark Services**  
P.O. Box 751  
Brookfield, Wisconsin 53008-0751

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

FAX NUMBER (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

**Membership dues to W.A.I.C. are Tax-Deductible**

ARSON HOTLINE  
Wisconsin Arson Insurance Council Newsletter

Paul Hansen, Editor  
[Paul\\_Hansen@EFIGlobal.com](mailto:Paul_Hansen@EFIGlobal.com)