

International Association of Arson Investigators

IAAI — HAWAII CHAPTER

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5

MAY, 2008

Hawaii Chapter Newsletter



A chapter board meeting was held on May 28, 2008 in Honolulu. The annual training conference topic was discussed and it will be held Oct 21 & 22, 2008 (Tues & Wed) in Kihei, Maui. The exact agenda is still in the works but please mark your calendars. We

2008 IAAI Annual Training Conference

Denver, Colorado April 27-May 2

I would like to take some time in this month's newsletter to share some information from the annual training conference. A number of great speakers were present and valuable information was shared. I really enjoyed the Interview/ Interrogation presenta-

tion given by ATF Special Agent Mike Bryant. He mentioned some items here that are important when interviewing. 1. repeat the story to witness to confirm facts (paraphrase). 2. Make mistake and see if they "correct" the story. 3. guilty wants to keep the

will let you know when the registration is available. We are also working on a Maui hotel group rate. We will be introducing our new website soon at www.iaaihawaii.com Check back in a couple weeks. We will be posting more information that will also include our chapter bylaws.

As members, your feedback is valuable. Please let us know what type of training you are interested in.

Again, if you are serious about investigating fires

and their causes, you should be a member of the International. Go to www.firearson.com to sign up and to also take advantage of free fire investigation training at www.cfitrainer.net

Last thing: Pick up the 2008 edition of NFPA 921 *Guide for Fire & Explosion Investigations*. It has new definitions and a few chapters were updated. You may order them at www.nfpa.org

Aloha,
Val Martin
President

investigator confused. 4. innocent people usually call back. 5. guilty people rarely call back. 6. Ask open ended questions. 7. avoid leading questions. 8. avoid interrupting the witness. 9. have the witness recall in reverse order.

10. Use smell to recall thoughts (burnt debris). Remind them to call you if they remember anything.

Common interviewer mistakes include: 1. saying “this will take only a short time”. 2. checking your watch. 3. interruptions (phone, pager, radio, television). 4. working other cases simultaneously while interviewing. 5. speaking too quickly. 6. not pausing and waiting after witness speaks. 7. not watching witness facial expressions when answering.

Cognitive Interviewing is a series of memory-jogging techniques. 80% of a trial is testimonial; 20% of a trial is physical evidence; yet only 2% of the time is spent on training for testimonial portions of court.

Another speaker was Attorney Terry-Dawn Hewitt . She explained some pitfalls that are out there that can ruin your career. They are both for the private and public sectors. Refrain from doing the following. 1. Conflict of interest,-if it appears to be a conflict, it probably is. 2. committing perjury. 3. Expert telling client what client

wants to hear. 4. withholding information. 5. undue influence by third parties-*public influencing private*. 6. failure to follow established procedures of profession. 7. billing for services not rendered. 8. kickback or contingent fee arrangements. 9. lack of preparation. 10. failure to disclose limitations of the opinion. 11. discarding inconsistent data. 12. incompetence-failure to keep current on technology & field. 13. offering opinions outside of field of expertise. 14. tunnel vision-biased, preconceived notions.

A four day basic fire investigation track was taught for those that are new to the fire investigation field or just wanted to refine their skills.

Are you interested in becoming a certified fire investigator by the IAAI? You may check out what the requirements are to challenge the test at the firearson.com website. We have a proctor for the written portion here in Hawaii or you can take the exam at next years conference in Texas if you are approved by the review committee.

Next years conference will take place in Arlington, Texas May 17-22, 2009 at the Sheraton Arlington Hotel.

Something to think about:
Economic times are becoming tough for many of us and the future may be bleak if fuel continues to rise at its already high price. With 90% of Hawaii’s products coming from outside the state, nobody is immune.

It has been discussed in the past that the spiraling economic times can be a motive for arsonists. Although it is a desperate attempt, those in debt may feel that it is there only way out from under the mounting bills. I have seen past national statistics that show a correlation with arson related crimes. I personally have not had an experience recently. It is just something to think about and I am sure the insurance related members are aware of this. Many undetermined cases are just a second look away from being solved. It may include interviewing just one more witness. Be persistent and know that there are many of us behind you when you are conducting that investigation.

Articles are that of the writer and are not necessarily the opinions of the IAAI or the Hawaii Chapter of the IAAI.

Chapter Membership Information

On the front page you will see the officers contact information. Please feel free to contact any of us with any questions or concerns you may have during the year. I would like to keep this newsletter active so I will need your support. My goal

is to keep all members up to date with what is happening in our chapter. Please send us your current information, i.e. phone numbers, email address, and mailing address.

Please send let me know if you have any articles that you would like to include on a future newsletter.



Wear proper protective clothing & safety equipment when investigating fire