

ANTEMORTEM

Volume 1 | Issue 1 | 2nd Quarter

IAPEM Conference

This years Illinois Association of Property and Evidence Managers (IAPEM) Conference, which was held in Hoffman Estates IL, was a big hit. 136 people attended along with numerous vendors. As with all IAPEM events, the food was AWESOME!

www.iapem.org

Tips and Tricks

Many crime scenes contain bio-hazards such as blood. It's very important to clean non-disposable equipment with a 10% bleach solution to decontaminate them. One piece of equipment that often gets overlooked is the tripod. Cut the fingers off a nitrile glove and pull them over the feet of the tripod. Once you are done at the scene, pull them off and dispose of them appropriately.



Welcome to the First Issue

I would like to welcome everyone to the first issue of Antemortem. This will be a quarterly newsletter written for Evidence Technicians and Forensic Investigators. The newsletter will contain short articles that cover such topics as: current news and law updates, conference and training reviews, tips and tricks, photography, refresher training, etc. Upcoming training and conferences will also be listed. My motto is "Forensic Excellence through Training." The more exposure to training and real crime scenes a Forensic Investigator receives the better they become at processing crime scenes. If you know anyone that would like to be put on this mailing list, have them e-mail me at donald@aegisblueforensics.com.

"Forensic Excellence Through Training"



Organizations

Joining various forensic related organizations is beneficial to any Forensic Investigator. Below is a list of a few that are either local to Illinois or are national organizations.

International Association for Identification (IAI) - www.theiai.org

Illinois Division IAI (ILIAI) - www.id-iai.org

Illinois Association of Property and Evidence Manager (IAPEM) - www.iapem.org

Definition of the Quarter

Antemortem: preceding death.

an*te*mor*tem

[latin ante - before, mort - death]

An Evidence Technician's job is to identify, collect and preserve items of evidentiary value. Much of this evidence is used during the investigation to attempt to determine what happened prior to and leading up to death.

First Midwest Forensic Training Conference

The Suburban Law Enforcement Academy (SLEA) at the College of DuPage (COD) will be hosting the first Annual Midwest Forensic Training Conference on January 8th, 2015. The focus of this conference will be practical hands-on training that puts the attendees into mock/real scenes of various types. Attendees will actually be documenting, collecting and packaging real evidence from fire scenes, vehicle shootings, mock sex assault scenes, etc. Each workshop begins with a lecture then ends with some type of practical lab or exercise. I have attached the conference brochure and registration form with this newsletter.

Stay up to date with all conference information at www.facebook.com/MidwestForensicTrainingConference

Chemical Testing Verification Procedures

It is important to conduct positive and negative control tests when using most any chemical test or procedure. One of the most common chemical tests used by Evidence Technicians is the phenolphthalein field presumptive test used to detect the presence of blood. Before testing any sample you need to ensure your chemicals are viable and not contaminated. To conduct a positive control test, take a swab and rub it over the blood sample strip that comes with the kit. Use a drop of sterile water if needed. Conduct the test according to the instructions that came with the kit (alcohol, phenolphthalein, hydrogen peroxide). A positive pink reaction should occur within the first few seconds after adding the hydrogen peroxide. If a pink reaction is observed on any previous step, your bottle tips are probably contaminated. Clean the equipment and redo the test. If it is the same, discard the chemicals for a new kit. If a pink reaction is not observed after adding the hydrogen peroxide, then the chemicals are not viable. Acquire new chemicals. Next, conduct a negative control test. Take a swab and perform the test without swabbing the blood swatch. There should be no reaction. The swab should stay white. The chemical that actually comes in the kit is phenolphthalin, and it is usually a pale yellow color. If a pink reaction is observed, something is wrong with your chemicals or the equipment is contaminated.

Stay Tuned

Next issue will include articles such as: macro photography, managing major crime scenes and how to collect touch DNA.

Legal

An Evidence Technician's job, at its core, is a search and seizure. We search for evidence then collect (seize) it. Never assume you have legal justification to be in a scene and process it just because you were dispatched to it. If it's a basic burglary to motor vehicle, get verbal consent from the victim (owner of vehicle) prior to processing. If it's a homicide or major crime, the States Attorney will more than likely require you get a search warrant. Always ask yourself:

- who has authority to give consent.
- Who has a reasonable expectation of privacy for the areas involved

Always consider if a warrant is needed. It takes longer to get, but it takes the decision off of you and puts it on the judge.

Upcoming Conferences

January 8th, 2015 - First Annual Midwest Forensic Training Conference (SLEA).

Dr. Clyde Snow Passes Away

Dr. Snow passed away May 16, 2014 at the age of 86. He was a world renown Forensic Anthropologist. In 1978, he testified before the House Select Committee on Assassinations about aspects of the Kennedy assassination. Since the 1970s, Dr. Snow worked with many human rights groups to identify remains in mass graves throughout the world to include Yugoslavia, Argentina, and Guatemala. Dr. Snow also worked on such notable cases as Nazi fugitive Josef Mengele, John Wayne Gacy and testified against Saddam Hussein in 2006. Take some time and research his incredible career and the cases he worked on.

Supervisors: Maintenance Budget

Organization budgets are different from department to department. A few things should always be budgeted for such as personal protective equipment (PPE). One item that usually gets overlooked is a maintenance budget. This is money that is reserved for the annual maintenance and repairing of the equipment in the Forensic Unit. Digital SLRs, video cameras and other equipment need to be serviced every year. For a minimal fee, a camera professional will clean the internal components of the camera, update any changes to the software and ensure the camera is working within specifications. Your cameras are one of the most used pieces of equipment and are usually one of the most important to document a scene. Take care of them.

Rapid DNA Approved by FBI

Last year the DuPage County Sheriff's Office had IntegenX, Inc. demonstrate the RapidHIT system, which is a rapid DNA system. The small unit was very easy to operate and developed DNA profiles for several of us in the class within 90 minutes. The FBI has recently approved the RapidHIT system to upload DNA profiles to the National DNA Index System (NDIS). Vince Figarelli, the Crime Lab Superintendent at the Arizona Department of Public Safety, talked about their plans to deploy the system state wide at the American Society of Crime Lab Directors Symposium in Scottsdale, AZ. This technology will be a big deal over the next several years, especially once the prices start coming down as they sell more units.

Upcoming Training

06/23/14-06/27/14 Bloodstain Evidence Pattern Analysis (SLEA)

07/15/14 Digital Evidence Processing (SLEA)

07/29/14-07/31 Advanced ET (SLEA)

08/04/14 Crime Scene Do Not Cross (SLEA)

08/05/14 From Scene to Lab (SLEA)

08/06/14 Prints and Footwear (SLEA)

08/27/14 Footwear Impression Workshop (SLEA)

09/10/14 Latent Print Workshop (SLEA)

09/15/14-09/19/14 Death Investigation II (SLEA)

09/23/14 Arson Investigation (SLEA)

08/25/14 - 08/27/14 Shooting Recon 2 (Northwestern Univ)

**To subscribe to this newsletter,
send an e-mail to
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Certified Crime Scene Reconstructionist (IAI)

The Certified Crime Scene Reconstructionist is a new certification that the IAI introduced last year. An applicant must meet the following criteria: 5 years experience in crime scene investigation, 120 hrs of board certified training, a 40hr minimum blood interpretation course, 40hrs total shooting reconstruction training and be published/teach/testify to something dealing with crime scene reconstruction. The test is 300 questions and is followed by 3 hours of practical exercises. Only 16 certifications have been issued so far. For more information refer to the IAI's web site at www.the-iai.org.

IL IAI 52nd Annual Conference

After attending the conference this year, the IL IAI President sent me this overview to share in this newsletter.

The Illinois Division of the International Association for Identification (IDIAI) hosted the 52nd Annual IDIAI conference May 19-22nd, 2014 at the Harrah's Casino & Hotel in Joliet Illinois. The event was well attended by over 115 local, county and state Crime Scene Investigators and Forensic Laboratory Examiners.

Looking forward the IDIAI is already planning a one day seminar for the Fall of 2014 to be held at the Aurora Police Department along with the 53rd Annual IDIAI conference in Spring 2015.

If you are a forensic professional please consider becoming a member. You can find out more by visiting the IDIAI web page at: www.id-iai.org

The Illinois Division, International Association for Identification is a non-profit organization aligned with the International Association for Identification. The IDIAI serves to further the profession of forensic identification and scientific crime detection by promoting research, scientific techniques, and standardization through training and communication. The IDIAI is a professional organization for law enforcement, crime lab personnel, and crime scene investigators.