

# **A InfoLink**

Information for Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Professionals

# FARA InfoLink February, 2012

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2012 Symposium Packets were mailed to you!

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# Login to FARA's New Web Site or Else!

The new face of FARA was recently unveiled at <a href="https://www.faraonline.org">www.faraonline.org</a>. The new website has given FARA a fresh, new look and provides opportunities for growth and new perspectives within the alarm reduction community.

The website committee is anxious for the FARA membership to experience the most important facet of FARA to its fullest extent. Each member must register with the site in order to take advantage of the benefits offered. Current members will need to fill out a registration form (no payment required) on line.

Please download and follow the step by step instructions to register on the site.

We will need to start adding members with an assigned user name and password for those who have not yet registered on the new web site. Please help us out and register today so you can create your own easy to remember user name and password.

You will need to enter *http://* when entering the website address. A confirmation will be emailed within 72 hours of completion.

The registration process will also allow FARA the opportunity to update current information so all members are able to access the most up to date information.

Please contact any member of the website committee with any questions.

If you have any questions, concerns or problems registering please contact any member of the website committee (see below for list of website committee members).

Sincerely,

Stacey Peacock Website Committee Chair

#### **Website Committee**

Brad Shipp – Ex Officio
 Stacey Peacock - Chair
 Pam Lambird
 Amy Lowe
 April Simmons
 Cindy Smith
 bradshipp@4yoursolution.com
peacocks@barnstablepolice.com

Shellie Reid Shellie.reid@loudoun.gov
 Kristina Walker Klwalker@vectorsecurity.com

# Come to Beautiful Albuquerque for the FARA Training Symposium!!

By: David Wilson, Conference Committee



We are ready! The classes have been set. The instructors and moderators have been selected. We only need you to show up for this excellent training. So, finalize your plans for the Albuquerque symposium. Where's the place to be for the dates of May 1, 2 &3? Albuquerque, New Mexico!

You may visit <a href="www.itsatrip.org">www.itsatrip.org</a> to view what's happening in Albuquerque during the symposium dates. This is a great website for visitors to search out activities and events in Albuquerque.

Time is running out for you to apply for FARA Institute Reimbursement funds. The FARA Institute allowed 49 public safety members to attend the FARA Training Symposiums in 2010 and 2011 by funding some of their travel expenses. So, it's time to submit your request for permission to attend this awesome training opportunity; then complete the reimbursement application and return it as soon as possible. Institute funds are limited and are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Don't procrastinate, or you will only be hearing about the great training other FARA member received.

The Conference Committee is busy planning the 2013 symposium in Orlando, Florida. We need your suggestions as to what training or events would help make this a great symposium. Please submit your ideas/suggestions for 2013 to any Conference Committee member for consideration.

#### **COME TO ALBUQUERQUE!!!**

# Thanks to Institute Sponsors!

Without the FARA Institute and our generous contributors, FARA training symposiums would not be possible. Many, many heartfelt thanks go out to all of our Institute donors as follows:

**Platinum** (\$3000 or more donation)

National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA) Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA)

**Gold** (\$1000)

Canadian Security Association (CANASA)
Installation Quality Certification Board
Maryland Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (MDBFAA)
Monitronics Security
Vector Security, Inc.

**Sponsor** (\$250)

Homesafe Security Systems
United Central Control

# **Membership Committee**

By: Patricia Ball, City of Kirkland

When you find a good thing, you want to share it. FARA Membership is a good thing. The Membership Committee has been busy getting the word out to the names many of you submitted via our HUGE cinnamon roll contest at the San Antonio symposium.

While we are fresh out of cinnamon rolls, we want to remind you that our \$20.00, gift card of your choice, incentive continues for those FARA members who refer a new member. Be on the watch for those jurisdictions in your area who are either implementing a new false alarm reduction ordinance or those who are making changes to an existing ordinance. We want to come along side and offer our expertise while making the advantages of FARA membership known.

What are those advantages? Who in your area would benefit from FARA? These are a couple of the questions recently sent out in a FARA assistance request. If you have not done so, please take the time to respond. We recognize that growing and maintaining a strong membership is an effort that we all share and benefit from.

# FARA's

# Training & Certification Committee Wants YOU



# To become a

# **Certified Alarm Manager**

Taking the certification exam is easy if you follow these steps:

- 1. Gather the materials
- 2. Read the materials
- 3. Organize the materials
- 4. Take the exam

The committee will be with you every step of the way. Make the decision now to join us on this journey!

#### **Certification Exam Prep**

#### Brought to you by the Training & Certification Committee

Step 2- This month, your assignment is to:

1. Gather and read the following materials from the FARA website. (Be sure to print or save them to your zip drive as was done last month)

Public Safety Tips	
□ l+Duress = False Alarms	□ Alarm System Fundamentals
☐ Billing Options	□ Common Entry and Exit Errors
□ Communication Reduces False Alarms	☐ Education Reduces False Alarms
🗆 Evaluate, Adjust & Succeed	☐ False Alarms Quantified
☐ How to Pass Your Ordinance	☐ How to Succeed in Your Alarm Unit
□ Major Causes of False Alarms	□ Major Impacts of False Alarms
☐ Make a List and Check it Twice	□ Prime Solutions to False Alarms
Standards Can Reduce False Alarms	☐ Standards Can Reduce False Alarms
□ What to do After a False Alarm	
Proactive Alarm Company False Alarm Prevention	

#### 2. Decide how to organize the materials.

While taking the exam it will be imperative that your materials be well organized. Many successful test takers use some kind of Color Code to organize the publications. For example, you might put orange tabs for quides and blue for publications. Sticky notes, index dividers, and tabs are all handy ways to organize the binder. An easy solution might be to put a sticky note "tab" on a publication with the objective that the publication answered written on it.

Last year, one exam taker used the electronic option and created a folder for each objective on a zip drive. Each publication was then saved to that folder and renamed with the objective that it answered. Example: The publication "Make a List and Check it Twice" was renamed "3.2.4 Make a List and Check it Twice" and was saved to objective folder 3.

- 3. Print (or save) the 6 exam objectives and all of their components from the FARA website at <a href="http://faraonline.org/members-2/certification/">http://faraonline.org/members-2/certification/</a>.
  - 1. General Preparation & Definitions
  - 2. False Alarm Reduction Strategies

  - 3. Alarm Systems
    4. Program Development
    5. Program Implementation
  - 6. Program Evaluation & Reporting
- 4. Find the publications that match the points in objectives 1 and 3. Start matching the publications you have read to the objective they best match. Keep in mind that some publications will meet more than one objective. Read more at http://faraonline.org/members-2/certification/. (Hint: If you are observant, you may notice that objectives 1 and 3 are assigned this month. It might just be that the publications assigned this month and last month best match the objectives in these categories).

# **Training and Certification Committee Update**

By: Sherry Couey, Fayetteville Police, NC, T&C Committee member

The Training and Certification Committee has been hard at work on developing online PowerPoint presentations for the FARA website. These presentations will be based on FARA brochures and literature, such as False Alarm Tips for Residents, Business, Worship Facilities, etc. Once the Committee has completed the work on these projects and met with Board approval, they will become available for our members to utilize in their efforts to educate the public on the issue of false alarms.

<sup>\*\*</sup>If you missed Step 1, it may be found in the January 2012 edition of the FARA InfoLink on the website at http://faraonline.org/members-2/newsletters/

In other news, are you one of those FARA members who recently received an email about your CAM recertification? If so, you may notice, the process just got easier. So, if you haven't taken advantage of this opportunity, then it is time to toss those excuses to the wayside! It just got easier! If you need a little encouragement, then keep on reading for our next CAM Spotlight! This edition's lights are shining brightly on none other than Stacey Peacock of Barnstable, MA!

# **CAM Spotlight – Stacey Peacock**

By: Sherry Couey, Fayetteville Police, NC, T&C Committee member

**BIO:** Stacey Peacock, CAM

#### **Current Position**

Alarm Administrator at the Barnstable Police Department - Barnstable, Massachusetts

#### Hobbies or Interests

Stacey likes to cook, listen to music, read and take long walks at the beach. She enjoys teaching yoga as well as taking yoga classes and meditation. Her favorite activities are swimming in the ocean and boogie boarding.

# How long have you been a member of FARA and do you participate in any FARA committees or activities?

I have been a member of FARA since 2005. I started off participating in the membership committee. As of 2012 I am an active member of the Communications Committee, Chair of the Website committee and I sit on the FARA Board of Directors since 2011. Committee participation has been instrumental to the success of my alarm program =)

#### Certified Alarm Manager Experience

When you did you first obtain your certification?

I received my CAM certification in the Spring of 2010 at FARA's annual symposium in Buffalo, New York.

#### What made you decide to take the exam?

Receiving the CAM designation was a natural next step in my career as Alarm Administrator for the Town of Barnstable. I felt that it would bring a whole new level of professionalism and competency to my job and the Barnstable Police Department.

<u>Did you receive any response from employers, alarm industry, members of the community about your achievement?</u>

My employers were thrilled with my designation as it shines a positive light on the department as a whole and our mission to reduce false alarms.

<u>Do you think accomplishing your certification has benefited your career or position as an alarm manager/coordinator?</u> Has it made a difference in what you do?

I think regardless of what profession you are in, if you have a professional designation it kind of backs you up, in that it lets others know you are serious and knowledgeable about what you do. I think it has given me more credibility with the alarm industry and my customers as well as more credibility from within my department. When you have letters to back up your name (the CAM designation) It gives you more confidence as there is a societal understanding of professionalism and wisdom behind a professional designation. I think personally it has given me more confidence in myself, which is reflected in how I execute my job.

#### Do you think others could benefit from achieving their Certification status?

Achieving certification in essence makes your job easier. People have greater confidence in your competency and thus you do as well. The CAM designation allows one to bring a greater sense of professionalism to the table. There is a certain perception of you having a knowledge based edge over others who might not be so familiar with the ins and outs of alarm management and they look to you for assistance and solutions to their alarm issues. Certification status is a testament of your capacity for career based knowledge. It is impressive.

#### Where is your certificate now? (Displayed on wall? Hidden in a drawer?)

It was hanging on the wall of my old cubicle, but I have recently moved offices and now it is displayed on my desk.



# **News from the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of FARA**

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of FARA held its first 2012 quarterly meeting January 25, 2012 at Vector Security's National Service Center in Gainesville, VA. The meeting was preceded with a tour of the new facility. The expanded facility is the home of the National Accounts Division, servicing customers throughout North America.



Several jurisdictions are in different stages of revising and development of local alarm ordinances. Jim Eyler, Harford County, provided an update on the Harford County False Alarm Ordinance. Suggestions from FARA and Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (MDBFAA) were incorporated in the draft ordinance. Once the draft is put in legislative format it will be introduced, tentatively this spring.

Meredith Wivell, City of Frederick, spoke about the false alarm ordinance for the city. The ordinance is in the process of being updated and comments and suggestions were solicited from the group in regard to the current ordinance.

Guests included Lt. Theodore Belleavoine, St. Mary's County Sheriff. His county is in the initial stages of developing a false alarm ordinance. Chapter members offered any needed assistance.

Corporal Richard Colmus discussed issues Anne Arundel County has been experiencing with a few monitoring companies. The companies are not correctly implementing the requirements of the alarm ordinance on the process of how to identify themselves with 911 when requesting a dispatch. Options such as fines to modify behavior, contacting their alarm dealers or tracking phone numbers of the problem companies were suggested. Corpora; Colmus has been vigorously addressing this challenge.

A brief discussion was held on the success of the panel format at the September 2011 joint Chapter meeting with MDBFAA. It was suggested that the next joint meeting also include a panel discussion, but this time questions would be posed to public safety members by industry leaders.

There was discussion on how to increase FARA membership. One jurisdiction has been including the FARA membership brochure with all renewal notices being sent to alarm businesses as well as new alarm business registrants. The added insert does not increase postage cost and is a simple way to alert alarm businesses to the benefits of FARA membership.

There was extensive discussion on the fact that the industry is now manufacturing an upgrade feature that will allow +2 duress alarms. Because most alarm ordinances address "one plus" some companies/installers are skirting the issue and installing these systems because of the wording in alarm ordinances. It was suggested that new alarm ordinances and those that are being updated/revised should include "+ any sequence duress" as the wording.

Nominations were solicited for the upcoming election for secretary, director and associate director. It's not too late to nominate a fellow member or self-nominate. There has been a core group of dedicated volunteers since the Chapter formed in May 2008. Challenge yourself to get more involved in 2012 – become a Board Member! Send nominations to Shellie Reid, Chapter President, at <a href="mailto:shellie.reid@loudoun.gov">shellie.reid@loudoun.gov</a> Elections will take place during the March 21, 2012 Chapter meeting to be held in Montgomery County, Maryland.

#### Featured Manual - Universal Alarm User Permit Guide

By Brad Shipp, FARA

In an effort to standardize forms used throughout North America, FARA has developed a Universal Alarm User Permit/Registration Form, hereinafter referred to as "permit." The reasons for such an undertaking are two-fold; first, it is much easier for new alarm units to develop a permit form that meets their needs if they have something to which to refer or to use in total.

Alarm companies will also find it much easier to have only one form to carry, instead of a separate one for each jurisdiction in which they do business. Second, the standardization of permit forms and the information requested will facilitate the electronic filing of permits.

The full list of FARA other publications can be accessed on our <u>web site</u>. Copies of manuals can be downloaded from the member's only site.

# Universal Alarm User Permit/Registration Form Guide Produced by the Patter Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) May not be reproduced by the Patter Alarm Reduction Association (FARA)

# Featured Bulletin - Include Your Alarm System in Your Disaster Plan

By Brad Shipp, FARA

Regardless of where you live in North America, disaster can strike your neighborhood. Whether natural or man-made, we are all vulnerable to disruptions in our lives. Be proactive; know what to do before the disaster hits. Work out a plan with your alarm company, public safety agency, family and friends.

The full list of FARA bulletins can be accessed on our web site.

We encourage you to use these informational bulletins as bill stuffers, handouts at meetings or to send to individual problem alarm users.



#### **FARA's Believe it or Not**

By: Lisa Espinosa, Newsletter Editor

#### Woman calls police about two alarms, but it was only her cell phone ...

2.2.12 - Plain Dealer - Cleveland, OH - A woman called police after hearing an alarm 8 p.m. Jan. 28. She thought it may be an alarm sounding at a nearby church. Police arrived at the church and spoke to the pastor who said that was not the case.

The woman called back later, again reporting an alarm. Police responded to her home and discovered that the sound was coming from the woman's cell phone to indicate it had a low battery. More Info



Do you have any stories you would like to share about strange, unusual, or funny reasons for false alarms? How about outlandish things that happen in the course of your usual work day? I know we all have them, so let's share and give everyone a chuckle! Please forward your stories to <a href="mailto:lespinosa@ci.beaverton.or.us">lespinosa@ci.beaverton.or.us</a> and we'll put them in the next InfoLink for all to share!

# **Greensboro Officer Injured In Single-Vehicle Car Wreck**

2.8.12 - My Fox 8 - Greensboro, NC

A Greensboro police officer was injured after his car flipped onto its roof Tuesday night on High Point Road near Alamance Road.

Officer P.T. Hannon, Jr. lost control of his vehicle around 9:45 p.m. while responding to a false alarm of a robbery at the Rite Aid at Mackay and High Point roads, authorities said.

Hannon is an entry level patrol officer in the Southern division. Officials said Hannon was treated and released for minor injuries. His car is totaled.

More Info

# **Fallen Sheriff's Deputy Remembered**

2.8.12 - The Tennessean - Pegram, TN

Saturday marked the 30-year anniversary of the death of Cheatham County sheriff's deputy Frank Jordan.

Jordan was fatally shot during a burglary at P&K Drug Store on Highway 70 in Pegram on Feb. 4, 1982.

Jordan was off duty when a silent alarm at the store signaled a burglary in progress. Jordan, whose home was a few blocks away, was alerted. He drove to the store, saw someone inside and radioed for help.

The Frank Jordan Memorial Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #81 in Cheatham County held a commemorative ceremony on Saturday.

Members met at noon at Pegram City Hall, where a flag was lowered to half-staff. A police convoy then headed to Ashland City to Forrest Hills Cemetery, where flowers were placed at his gravesite.

Several of Jordan's family members attended Saturday's ceremony.

At the cemetery, Cheatham County mayor David McCullough recognized Jordan for his service and all the men and women who put their lives on the line to serve and protect the public.

More Info

#### Joke of the Month

#### **Breaking Into A House**

A man went to the Police Station wishing to speak with the burglar who had broken into his house the night before.

"You'll get your chance in court." said the Desk Sergeant.

"No, no no!" said the man. "I want to know how he got into the house without waking my wife. I've been trying to do that for years!"

Do you have any great jokes to share? Please send them to <a href="lespinosa@beavertonoregon.gov">lespinosa@beavertonoregon.gov</a>

#### **News on Door to Door Sales**

Courtesy of NESA

- MO: Tornado victims dogged by home-security company
  - 2.6.12 Joplin Globe Joplin, MO A couple of years before, a young man came to their door selling home-security systems for a company called APX Alarm Security Solutions Inc. If they ... More Info
- UT: Better Business Bureau of Utah: complaints decreased 8.6 percent ...
   2.9.12 Deseret News Burglar alarms are meant to protect homes and businesses, but the companies offering the service were at the top of the ... More Info

#### **Public Safety Updates**

Courtesy of NESA

- AZ: Tussle in Tucson
  - 2.2.12 SSN Tucson, AZ Three alarm company owners say alarm ordinance revisions are an invasion of privacy, but an association exec calls the proposed rules "standard stuff." What's your opinion? More Info
- GA: Fayetteville false alarm ...
  - 2.8.12 NeighborNewspapers.com Fayetteville, GA False alarms for home and office security systems may be a thing of the past for the city of Fayetteville. During the council's Feb. More Info
- GA: Georgia Seeks to Implement Enhanced Call Verification
   1.24.12 Security Sales & Integration The Georgia House of Representatives is seeking to amend a state alarm law to require alarm companies to use alarm verification in an effort to conserve public safety resources, reports Examiner.com. More Info
- IL: Alarm Companies Sound Off On Wireless Dispatch Plan
   1.27.12 Elk Grove, IL Journal & Topics Newspapers Online Elk Grove Village Mayor Craig Johnson and village trustees backed off a plan to mandate a wireless fire alarm system requirement through ADT for new ... More Info
- IL: Elk Grove Village, Ill. pulls proposed fire alarm ordinance
   1.25.12 SecurityInfoWatch Discussion of fire alarms on city council agenda in nearby Elgin... More Info
- IL: Onerous proposals quashed in IL.
  2.2.12 SSN Arlington Heights, IL The security alarm industry scored two significant victories last week in an ongoing battle in this state over public entities monopolizing fire alarm monitoring. What tactics proved the most successful? More Info
- IL: Panel calls for city to process own parking tickets
  1.24.12 Alton Telegraph Alton, IL Within 180 days of implementation, the ordinance requires any alarm business operating in Alton to have at least one agent who completed Level 1 alarm ... More Info
- IL: Police Hope to Prevent Gun Shop Burglaries With New Ordinance
  1.24.12 Patch.com New Lenox, IL Firearms must be stored and protected by a silent alarm that will
  ... Downrange currently has an alarm system, but it directs to a central system before ... More Info
- MO: Our View: False alarms a costly distraction for police
   1.25.12 The Commercial Dispatch Columbus, MO Police responded to 229 alarm calls last month,
   77 of which were residential. Most of those were false alarms. But false or not, those calls mean ...
   More Info
- OH: Register your alarm system with Orange Village by today
   1.31.12 Plain Dealer Sun News Orange Village, OH Today is the last day for Orange residents to register their alarm system with the village. All residences and businesses that have ... More Info

- SC: High number of false alarms seen as possible liability for fire ... 2.4.12 The Tand D.com Orangeburg, SC County Fire Commission officials say they are alarmed by the number of false alarms firefighters have to respond to on a monthly basis, ... More Info
- TN: Council discuss costs facing city
  - 2.7.12 Marshall County Tribune Lewisburg, TN False alarms create more expenses for the Fire Department than the Police Department, ... Nothing is done as a result of the first false alarm, other than a ... <u>More Info</u>
- TX: Alarm permit a must for home, businesses in county
   1.2 . 12 KFOX El Paso False alarms are wasting county sheriff deputies' time and could be putting people's lives in danger, the Sheriff's Office said. More Info
- TX: Dallas Police won't respond to shoplifting cases under \$50
  1.19.12 Security Info Watch Dallas, TX DPD puts shoplifting case burden on retailers. On January
  5th a new Dallas Police Department policy was put into place where they no longer respond to retailer's
  calls for shoplifting under \$50. There are some exceptions, however. More Info
- TX: Houston Updates Fees & Application
   2.10.12 Effective immediately, please delete all former copies of the Houston alarm application and use the application. For More Information visit the City web site

# **Industry News**

Courtesy of NESA

- American Fork alarm company Platinum Protection lays off most of staff
   2.2.12 Salt Lake Tribune A Utah-based home alarm company with customers around the country dismissed most of its employees Thursday in a restructuring with an uncertain future. Platinum Protection of American Fork, which in recent years said it had 140,000 installed customers in its first four years of business, dismissed 65 corporate employees, along with its sales and technical staff, said Mike Melzer, in-house legal counsel. He said the company would not be selling new accounts, but he did not know how many salespeople and technicians lost their jobs. More Info
- Future of American Fork alarm company unknown
   2.7.12 Daily Herald Now, it's anyone's guess whether Platinum Protection, a home-alarm company that touts more than 100000 customers, is tying up loose ends before calling it ... More Info
- Fire Alarms Need to Stop Crying Wolf
   2.10.12 Security Sales & Integration It is a sad and troubling fact that many people react to fire alarms with indifference. It's critical everyone associated with the life-safety mission put forth a committed and coordinated effort to reduce false or unwanted alarms, and in doing so restore the public's faith in electronic fire detection. More Info
- Carbon Monoxide Alarm End of Life Signal
   1.31.12 TribLocal The February 28, 2008 edition of the standard incorporates a major change that requires all CO alarms produced after August 1, 2009 to have an end-of-life ... More Info
- ADT Security Services alarm company settles suit with Contra Costa ...
   1.31.12 San Jose Mercury News A national alarm company agreed to pay a \$950000 civil penalty and provide restitution to some customers to settle a lawsuit by ... More Info
- Comcast Helps Power the Digital Home with the Launch of "Xfinity ...
   2.2.12 EON: Enhanced Online News Xfinity Home offers traditional home security components, like police and fire alarm protection backed by 24/7 professional monitoring, as well as the ... More Info
- Founders of McGinn, Smith & Co., Inc. Indicted
   1.27.12 WXXA -... which raised money from investors in connection with a loan of \$2.4 million to Firstline Security, Inc., a company that generated alarm contracts. More Info

# **Please Share Your Newsletters and Tips with Us**

We would like to see how you communicate with your alarm users. Please add FARA to your mailing list if you send out Newsletters or mailings with false alarm reduction information. Do you have a brochure that describes your ordinance or program? We would like to see it. Staff will review what we receive and share tips and information with your fellow members in later issues of this newsletter.

Please send your newsletters, tips and brochures to:
False Alarm Reduction Association
10024 Vanderbilt Circle, Unit 4
Rockville, MD 20850
bradshipp@4yoursolution.com

#### **FARA Mission Statement**

It is the mission of the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) to provide a forum for local government alarm ordinance professionals to exchange information on successful false alarm reduction programs, to serve as a clearinghouse for agencies seeking to reduce false alarms, and to foster an environment of cooperation among public safety, the alarm industry and the alarm users.

#### **Contact Us**

False Alarm Reduction Association 10024 Vanderbilt Circle, Unit 4 Rockville, MD 20850 Email: <u>info@faraonline.org</u> http://www.faraonline.org Comments and suggestions regarding FARA's InfoLink are both encouraged and welcomed. If you would like to submit an article for publication, or if you have any questions or concerns about this newsletter, please contact the FARA Board of Directors at 301/519-9237, or by e-mail at: info@faraonline.org

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