

Fire Investigators Strike Force
www.fisf.org
Minutes of January 13, 2010

Next Meeting: February 10, 2010

Program: Tracing records: cell phone, I-Pass

Location: **Salvation Army 8354 W. Foster Av. Norridge, IL 60706 (NE corner of Cumberland and Foster)**

Time: 0900

President Kushner opened the meeting at 0900 hrs.

- A moment of silence was held for all who passed away in 2009.
- A motion was made and 2nd to accept the December Minutes. The motion passed.
- A motion was made and 2nd to accept the Treasurers Report. The motion passed. A copy of the report is available on this web site.
- Changes need to be made to the training schedule due to speaker and facility availability.
- **Important note:** The May Seminar will be **May 19** instead of May 12!
- Polo shirts with embroidered examples of our logo were brought to the meeting. When all of the information regarding styles and price have been decided on, the information will be posted on our web site.
- Applications for the Harry P. Schafer Award are due by April 5, 2010. You may submit an application to any Board member or member of the Training Committee. Applications are available on the web site.
- Fire Investigation Mods I, II, and III will be held in Elk grove in March.
- Please register your e-mail address at our website; it is the quickest way for you to get updates.
- The Board decided against adding extra applications such as password protected areas, photo links, or a bulletin board to our web site. These applications cost extra money and require someone to monitor them on a daily basis.
- The South Suburban Fire Investigators Task Force will be hosting an Advanced Origin and Cause Investigation class March 1-5 at the Orland Fire Protection District. For more information go to www.ssfif.org.
- **Fires:** *Wilmette* had a fire that didn't stay in the fire place. *Prospect Heights* had a fire, in a two story house, that is under investigation. In *Port Barrington* an Administrative Warrant was needed to do the investigation because the owners were uncooperative. Remember; a fire investigator can get an Administrative Warrant, but as soon as you find evidence of a possible crime, you must get a peace officer to get a Criminal Warrant. *Cicero* had a basement fire in an apartment building that had stores on the street level. It appears that there was high pressure in the gas lines. Flames were reported to be shooting 8 inches high out of the stove tops. A cap was found to be missing off of the gas meter; it is not known if the meter was tampered with.

Packard Engineering currently has the meter. *Elk Grove* had a fire in a Frigidare brand dryer. The exact cause is still under investigation.

- Larry Matkaitis, a 30 year veteran of the Chicago Fire Department, has been named the new Illinois State Fire Marshal. Our congratulations to Mr. Matkaitis.

Our speaker was Officer Brian Vivona of the Elk Grove Police Department. Brian gave two presentations on fires that occurred in Elk Grove. One was the Foods 4 Less arson fire and the second was a fatal car fire. Both investigations were aided with videos supplied by security cameras. One investigation also had a video taken by a citizen on a cell phone. Brian went into great detail as to how both investigations proceeded. The arson fire resulted in an arrest and conviction. (The defendant received 6 years.) The cause of the car fire was undetermined.

Mary Lacy, of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, told everyone that if an owner refuses to let you view security videos, contact her office and she will get a Grand Jury subpoena that will allow you to take everything. (Owners might be more cooperative if they think all of their equipment is going to be gone for a while.)

Brian also reminded everyone that all of us are, on average, on video 10 to 15 times a day. Check all surrounding businesses if you have a fire. You might be surprised who has video and from how far away it was filmed.

Respectfully Submitted,
John T. Gilleran
Secretary F.I.S.F.