



# InfoLink

Information for Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Professionals

## FARA InfoLink 2017 Symposium Edition

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## Annual FARA Membership Meeting

*By: Sherry Couey*

The 2017 Annual Membership meeting was held on the final day of an exciting symposium. While members were able to enjoy some of the fantastic things that Nashville had to offer, it was time to get down to some FARA business. President Kerri McDonald gave the annual report updates which showed that the Association is in good financial health. She thanked the sponsors, board members, chapter presidents, committee chairs and of course the members for the many accomplishments FARA has achieved. She spoke about how the association was invited to speak at the Arizona Alarm Association in Phoenix Az. in August 2016. Sherry Couey, Board Secretary and Alarm Coordinator for the Fayetteville N.C. Police Department attended this event on FARA's behalf. She then wrapped up the president's report by thanking Brad Shipp, Executive Director for FARA. Brad works tirelessly for FARA and the association owes a great deal of its success to him and the work he performs.

As part of the General Membership meetings, Brad Shipp announced it was time for the elections of officers. This year, no one had announced intentions of running against the incumbents for positions up for re-election. Per the bylaws, the following were reelected to their positions:

- Vice President-Electronic Security, Nadya Morgan, Asst. Commissioner for Code Enforcement, City of Baltimore
- Secretary, Sherry Couey, Alarm Ordinance Coordinator, Fayetteville, N.C. Police Dept.
- Associate Director-Electronic Security, Kristina Walker, Dispatch Reduction Manager, Vector Security Networks

President McDonald appointed the following Committee Chairs:

- Symposium-Tammy Foxworthy and David Wilson
- Membership-Kristina Walker and Afornia Hawthorne
- Training and Communications- Sherry Couey
- Awards-Tammy Foxworthy and Kristina Walker
- Industry Liaison- Kerri McDonald

Vincent Ferraris and Greg Desau presented the Northwest Chapter report. The Mid-Atlantic Chapter report was presented by Alberto Hook and Kristina Walker.

The President also thanked volunteers, Tom Foxworthy and Morgan Walker for all their hard work and dedication to FARA by helping to staff the symposium.

## Norma C. Beaubien Public Safety Awards for 2017

*By: Sherry Couey*

The Norma C. Beaubien Member of the Year Award is presented to outstanding FARA members for their contributions to FARA, their agencies and the communities they serve.

The winners are selected by past winners of the award.

It is our honor to present the Norma C. Beaubien Public Safety Award to **Julie Rush** of Clackamas County Sheriff's Office in Clackamas Oregon.

Julie Rush attended her first symposium at Orlando in 2013.

Even though she was new to her department (hired in 2010) and is her department's first alarm ordinance coordinator, she jumped right in to volunteer on the Training and Certification Committee.

Julie gave the Training Committee Report at the 2014 Baltimore Symposium. She taught a class on What FARA has to offer at the 2016 Austin Symposium.

Julie has shown just as much dedication to their own department and local area. She has arranged several meetings at their agency and invited other alarm coordinators, public safety officials and alarm industry members. Some of these meetings have been on alarm ordinances, door to door sales, ASAP to PSAP and false alarm software options.

Julie helped to form FARA's Northwest Chapter and served as a Chapter Director.

Julie is always willing to join in and be a part of the group. She brings a positive attitude to her work that helps make the work enjoyable.

Congratulations Julie!



## W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award for 2016

By: Sherry Couey

The **W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award** is presented to outstanding FARA members for their contributions to FARA, their companies and the communities they serve.

The winner is selected by past winners of the award.

This year's winner is **Craig Bober** of Secure Alarms in Owings Mills, MD.

Craig has been working in the alarm business for over 30 years. He started installing alarms in the time when people still used keys to turn the alarms on an off, there was silver foil on every window, and there was a small reel-to-reel tape dialer that called the police when there was an alarm.

In 1990 he formed Secure Alarms and has seen many changes since then. He currently has 5 employees and the company installs, monitors and services commercial and residential fire and burglar alarms in the Maryland area. Craig and his company has a fine reputation for giving their customers the quality workmanship and customer service that has carried the company forward for many years.

Craig serves as President of the Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (MDBFAA) and Vice President of the National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA). He holds numerous certifications from several of the leading manufacturers, along with a degree in electronics.

Craig is a prime example of someone who is involved. He doesn't just attend, he participates. Outside of the alarm industry, he is the Vice President of the Buick Owners of Maryland, a Committee Member of the Reisterstown Improvement Association, and in his spare time he is an equestrian.

In presenting the award President McDonald shared what some FARA members think of him.

Meredith Wivell from Frederick Police Department and FARA's Mid-Atlantic Chapter President wrote:

*"Craig is an asset to both the industry and to FARA. As a small business owner, you know he not only works hard on his own, but also works hard for other's interests too. He cares about others and how things might impact them. This was demonstrated in his efforts with promoting community outreach communication to the elderly population alongside FARA. His eagerness and willingness to support the local mid-Atlantic chapter of FARA, especially through our annual joint meeting, is important to the success of meeting the group's goals. Craig is the President of the Maryland Burglar & Fire Alarm Association and tackles duties such as the annual golf outing which is probably the most important event of the year. His loyalty and commitment to problem solving false alarm reduction efforts is commendable and very much appreciated. FARA hopes to continue building on this relationship for years to come."*

Steve Heggemann from Baltimore County Maryland Alarm Reduction Section and FARA's Treasurer had this to say:

*"If I was trying to design a partner from the alarm industry to work with to reduce false alarms Craig would be the end product. He has extensive knowledge of the alarm industry, he knows what will work in a business environment, he believes that reducing false dispatches will greatly benefit the alarm industry, our citizens and public safety. He has the integrity to speak the truth, even when it is inconvenient and the maturity to know that compromising is not surrendering. We in the Mid-Atlantic are very fortunate to have Craig working with FARA Thank you again for all you do."*



## Opening Session

By *Tammy Foxworthy*

President **Kerri McDonald** opened the 20th annual FARA Symposium welcoming attendees, sponsors and special guests. Next, attendees introduced themselves, where they are from and what they want to get out of the symposium. Nineteen new attendees were among the 54 attendees in Nashville.

As part of celebrating FARA's 20th Symposium, a session of FARA trivia was held.

- What year were the FARA Public Safety Member of the Year and Associate Member of the Year awards renamed to Norma C. Beaubien and W. Rex Bell awards? - 2006.
- Who was the chair of the Newsletter Committee in 2001? - *Rick Moore*.
- Which symposium was FARA invaded by moths? - *Albuquerque 2012*.

Correct answers received a rubber duck thrown by Kristina Walker, Membership Committee Co-Chair.

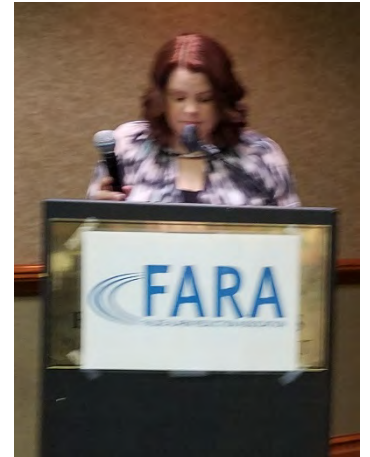
Fundraising activities were a 50/50 raffle, a live auction for the donated FARA cross stitched items from Rick Moore and raffle drawings for the donated items from some of the attending agencies. The 50/50 raffle had the biggest money pot in FARA history at \$810.

President McDonald reminded everyone the Grupio app was available for this year's symposium. The app contains the symposium schedule, attendees, speakers, presentations and more.

Attendees were urged to complete symposium evaluations. The symposium committee utilizes them to help create the next symposium. Everyone who submitted an evaluation had their name placed into a drawing for a gift card donated by CryWolf.

Tampa, Florida has been selected as the site for FARA's annual symposium in 2019.

**We hope to see you in Seattle, WA in 2018. Stay tuned for more details.**



## Install A DIY System

By: *Kristina Walker*

We had the honor to have Lowes DIY Operations Manager **Laura Mitchell** at symposium this year to help with the 2 DIY kits that Lowes donated to FARA to use for the class. After the class the two kits were raffled off to 2 lucky members of FARA.

We divided the members up into 2 groups so they could all have a chance to see, touch and play with the DIY systems. Each group then tried to get the system up and running and monitored with the Central Station. Laura was able to use the training module to show the team how to setup the systems and register them with the CS.

There were a few bumps in the road to getting them setup, but at the end we were all successful at doing so.





Attendees all got a good look into the negatives and positives with the DIY systems. Laura learned about issues that the DIY industry needs to work on, She gained an understanding of the importance of working with the local municipalities so much so that Lowes IRIS DIY team has joined FARA.

We are so very appreciative of Lowes and Laura for being a big part of our training symposium as well as the generous donation of the alarm systems.

Congratulations to our big DIY winners Debbie Hanson from Naperville and Susan Shirer Montgomery, TX. We hope you are enjoying your new DIY alarm systems.

We look forward to working with Laura and the Lowes team in the future

Let's give Laura and Lowes a big huge welcome to FARA!

## Introduction How Apps and PERS are changing alarm systems

By: Kerri McDonald

This session was presented by **Kelly Ryan**, who was representing the Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association and Dispatch Center, LTD. Kelly gave a great overview on exactly what Apps and PERS are, how they are changing alarm systems and the impact may have on public safety.



Kelly started his presentation off with explaining PERS, Personal Emergency Reporting System.

PERS is typically know as medical panic button and often marketed to senior citizens. We learned the projected market size of PERS is expecting tremendous growth within the next few years. We also learned with updated technology, PERS are now mobile and can be taken almost anywhere.

Next, Kelly was able to provide us an enlighten view on Apps and how they have changed the alarm industry. He explained how manufacturers and app companies are coming together to give consumers more peace of mind with convenience.

Kelly was truly a knowledgeable presenter and we were very grateful to have him at the FARA Symposium.

## How to Deal With New Technology in Real Life

By: Vinnie Ferraris

**Craig Allen**, from Charlotte-Mecklenburg North Carolina, presented on how technology affects alarm response and how it is applied to registering fees and fines.



Due to the diversity of FARA and our members, some jurisdictions look at technology differently than others. For example:

- Some jurisdictions state that if the alarm company calls in the alarm then they need a permit but if they have a DIY that is self-monitored they do not need to register
- If the alarm user calls in the alarm on a "self-monitored" device, some jurisdictions code this as a call for service, not an alarm response.
- Other jurisdictions state if the alarm requires police response, monitored or self-monitored, then the alarm user needs to have an alarm permit.
- Baltimore County, Maryland is an example of an agency that views the self-monitored alarms as a call for service, because if the alarm user is seeing someone in their house it is viewed as a crime and police will be responding.



A very valuable takeaway from the class was in regards to Central Stations and how they view video alarms. Central stations typically receive a “7 second” video clip of the activity and then, based on the video clip, have to determine if police response is necessary or not. Due to liability and limited information, the call taker takes everything into consideration within the short period of time and then makes the determination for police response. 7 seconds is a very limited duration of time to really understand what is happening.

Another tip is to speak with your elected leaders, managers and attorneys to see what your jurisdiction wants to implement and how they want to structure the fines and fees. It might be wise to incorporate the DIY and self-monitored alarms into your ordinances if you choose to code DIY or self-monitored as permit systems. Also, reach out to our members who have implemented this or have chosen not to incorporate self-monitored systems in their alarm program. Both have good arguments why and why not.

## Scavenger Hunt

By: Kerri McDonald

Every few years the Symposium Committee decides we need work on our team building skills with a Scavenger Hunt. All I can say is this one will go down in FARA history as one of the greatest!

The Membership Committee was in charge of breaking us into groups and designating team captains. Our all male team captains got to wear headbands with fuzzy colorful balls. I guess the Membership Committee wanted to make sure the team members wouldn't lose their fearless leader.

The first task was to get to downtown where we would find all the clues. One team had their own vehicle, while the rest of had to wait for the hotel shuttle, Uber or Lyft. But it seems one team captain was able convinced a local person to take them in their truck.



The Winning Team

Of course the scavenger hunt had to be on a warm, humid afternoon. After a few blocks of running around I tried to convince my team to be the designated losers and go listen to music. Some teams used Lyft or Uber, and I even heard a rumor that someone was a “trunk monkey”. However, I think all the teams persisted and made it to the finish line.

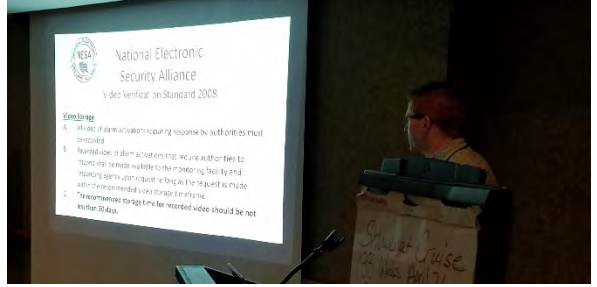
A special thank you goes out to David Wilson and Brad Shipp for putting the scavenger hunt together.

## Video Best Practices

By: Julie Rush

**Jordan Brown**, Regional Manager at Guard Tronic, Inc. in Fort Smith, AR, discussed video best practices, and the documents that provide guidelines and standards for industry to follow. These standards were adopted by consensus, with the intent of increasing efficiencies, reducing false alarms, and achieving effective and reliable video installation and monitoring.

Jordan detailed the video verification standards as outlined by the National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA). Standards include operator viewing and training, video storage and quality, and camera installation. The Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA) and the Security Industry Association (SIA), have also produced documents that provide guidelines and best practices for video installation and use.





Also discussed were the two most common methods for video detection, they include: 1) Alarm systems that are separate from a camera system and 2) Motion detectors that have cameras built in. One allows the central station to go back in time to see what tripped the alarm, the other provides live, real time video. The advantages and disadvantages ranged from picture quality, length of the video clip, and varying degrees of determining what tripped the alarm.

When it comes to best practices in video verification, Jordan explained that the decision to dispatch is based solely at the discretion of the central station operators, and their interpretation of what they are seeing. The simple presence of a person at the premises does not constitute probable cause to believe they are there for nefarious reasons. Using this logic, the Partnership for Priority Video Alarm Response (PPVAR), developed guidelines to assist in threat evaluation. The three levels used to determine the validity of

the video being viewed are:

- Level 1: Assigned when actionable video shows no apparent human activity;
- Level 2: Shows human activity but no discernible, suspicious or criminal activity, and no apparent criminal activity about to take place; and
- Level 3: The highest priority tier; shows suspicious or criminal human activity either in progress, having just occurred, or about to take place.

Following the threat level model, central stations can better define the actions that an operator takes, resulting in the reduction of dispatches for non-threats.

Overall, the session gave an excellent overview of some of the elements required for video best practices. The standards, if followed, could not only reduce costly and unnecessary false alarms, but would enhance the ability of first responders to make expedient and appropriate decisions.

## Solving Issues with Elderly & Special Needs Users

By: Kerri McDonald

This class was presented from three different perspectives, **Sherry Couey** from Fayetteville Police Dept., **Craig Bober** of Secure Alarms, Inc. and **Dan Wornell** from ADS Security.

Sherry started the class by talking about some of the problems elderly and special needs alarm users face. Often people think an alarm system will help improve their quality of life but because of physical or mental challenges they struggle with operating the system correctly.

Dan Wornell, who is a Customer Support Center Manager for ADS Security in Nashville Tennessee, was able to provide us his insight on how he would address some of these unique issues. One recommendation he gave us was to have the monitoring station make additional call beyond the standard two call verification.

Our last presenter was Craig Bober who is the owner of Secure Alarms, Inc. in Owings Mills Maryland. Craig was able to explain the type of equipment an alarm dealer could install or have the customer use that may help them to operate their alarm system. Craig was kind enough to bring several pieces of equipment along with him to demonstrate how they work. This was a very informative class and I would like to thank all three of the presenters for all their hard work!



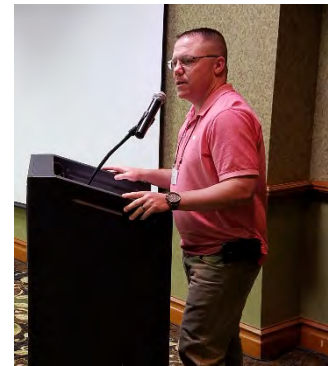


## Tabletop Exercise – Build the Perfect Program

By: *Debbie Hansen*

Two of our sessions on Wednesday were spent participating in a tabletop exercise to find solutions to various “false alarm” scenarios that the attendees may find themselves in or may be currently experiencing.

**Tom Gregory** of Harford County Maryland, split the attendees into five groups, instructed them to create a name for themselves and gave them each a different “problem” to solve.



The names were creative and included: “Trunk Monkeys”, “Fixer Uppers”, “Expanding Fire”, “Newbies” and “Smokey and her Bandits”.

The groups spent the first session discussing possible solutions to their particular scenario and the second session was used to share the group’s solutions with everyone.

Lots of great information was shared during both sessions and the networking and team building made possible by the discussion in

small groups was a great exercise for all of us that participated.

## False or Real – You Be the Judge

By: *Greg DeSau*

**Kevin Blackwell**, of Attleboro Police Department in Attleboro Massachusetts, used the class to highlight the tough task a central station has when receiving alarm events via motion sensor, video or a combination of the two.

Several real-life videos and photos were presented, asking the question: “what’s happening here”?

One example was a grainy night-time video of a man with what looked to be a large stick, in a parking lot that was closed to the public, which turned out to be a firefighter in an *adjacent* building, carrying a firehose – completely legitimate and not a false alarm.

Others were smoke detectors going off because of spiders inside, rats in a restaurant, a man using the showers at a fitness club after hours and a video of a dog that escaped a veterinary hospital by opening all of the doors by itself.



The technology has improved immensely over the years, but there may always be a lack of solid information about the call and that will or should require a human’s eye and experience.

My take-away from this class is the central station technicians, whose job it is to quickly review a 3-second video or still-frame, and determine whether the police should be called, have to act quickly to call the PSAP and that is leading to a high number of false alarms.

## Regulating Fire Alarms

By: Kerri McDonald



**Jim Cogswell**, from Leawood Police Department in Leawood Kansas, started our day by talking about regulating fire alarms. Even though only a handful of attendees regulate both burglar and fire alarms Jim was able to provide us a good insight on differences and similarities of the two. Jim gave us examples of how he has been able to reduce false fire alarms in his city and then opened up the discussion to the attendees.

**Tammy Foxworthy** from the City of Olathe Kansas presented two different scenarios asking for input on whether to charge for a false fire alarm or not. First scenario: Firefighters responded a business for an alarm on a building. While en route, dispatch notified that there was no fire, but the occupant needed assistance resetting the alarm. Firefighters arrived and found that a pull station had been activated and assisted with resetting the pull

station. The answer was to charge them for a false alarm since they should put a pull station cover to help prevent false fire alarms from malicious or accidental activation.

Second scenario: Firefighters responded to an automatic alarm at automotive dealership; the building was checked to find no signs of smoke/fire conditions and/or broken sprinkler heads. Severe weather in the area knocked out power which may have caused a loss in pressure of the system. Firefighters advised to have system serviced by technician to resume normal operations. The answer is to charge them for the nuisance alarm but if they fix the system, waive the charge.

Jim wrapped up the session by reminding us, even if we don't regulate fire alarms we can still take back information and pass it along to our Fire Departments.

## Take a Walk in Their Shoes – Retail- Big Box, Fast Food & Chain Stores

By: Thomas Gregory

During the week of April 24<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> I had the opportunity to attend the 2017 FARA International Annual Training Symposium held at the Embassy Suites- Nashville at Vanderbilt Nashville, TN. This was my second consecutive FARA symposium I have attended and I would like to first commend the FARA Symposium Committee for an outstanding job creating an interactive class syllabus and itinerary as well as several creative team building events that kept members engaged and enthused the entire week.



Now, I would like to focus this discussion on one particular class that really impacted all attendees and created great dialog among all FARA members. This class was called "Take a Walk in Their Shoes – retail big box, fast food and chain stores." The class was moderated by **Deborah Hansen**, **Kerri McDonald** and **Kristina Walker**. The class allowed members to hear from a panel of users to learn how they confront false alarms and cope with regulations. The group also discussed what impacts them and what gets their attention. From this discussion members focused on unique locations and questioned if businesses have more false alarms and how do we solve these problems.

First, the group created a list of the “major problem” customers and recognized the following businesses within their jurisdictions. This list is in no particular order:

- Advanced Auto
- Ashley Furniture
- Bank of America
- Big Lots
- Bonefish Grill
- Capital One
- Chili’s
- Dollar General
- Home Depot
- O’Reilly Auto Parts
- Ra Sushi
- Rita’s Italian Ice
- Ross
- Starbucks
- Time Warner
- Tractor Supply Co.

Attendees shared their points of contact for these companies and we have [created a page on the FARA website to show the information.](#)

The group also identified unique situations.

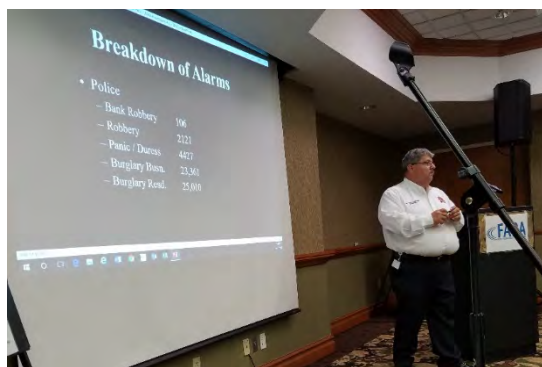
Kristina Walker discussed how birds can affect motion detectors. The scenario involved birds that were activating motion detectors during closed hours of operation. The remedy for this problem was for the business’ to stop dispatching on a motion detector unless another sensor activated.

Another unique situation Kristina Walker mentioned was an incident where a family of owls nested in the rafters of a Home Depot store within her jurisdiction. The owls routinely set off motion detectors during off hours. We discovered there was not a 100 percent cure to this situation. The remedy was for the store to turn off the motion detectors in the vicinity. It was also discussed the possibility of having the Department of Natural Resources respond to rescue the owls due to their federally protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Members also discussed how small-pet businesses that sell dog food, cat food and small animal foods combat against rat and insect infiltration. We discovered that motion detectors aimed at the store floors may pick up the motion of mice and rats.

Finally, members addressed solutions to solve these problems. Members suggested looking to companies and their alarm companies to create dialog with one another regarding their best practices. We also added that officers who respond to these types of alarms can add comments. Officers can also note specific locations where the motion detectors sense motion within that business so the user can address the problem. And during holiday season members suggested that alarm companies mail out bulletins to the business addressing issues that may occur for “holiday” business. These solutions were suggested and agreed by the majority of the FARA membership.

## “Take A Walk in Their Shoes” – PSAP Dispatchers

*By: Jim Cogswell*



Presented by **Bruce Sanschargin**, Quality Assurance & CALEA Manager at the Metro Nashville Department of Emergency Communications in Nashville Tennessee.

Nashville D.E.C. dispatches police, fire and EMS calls for the City of Nashville, Davidson County and five other cities within the county. The joint dispatch center was established in 2002 for the largest county in Tennessee with 657 square miles and 1.4 million people.

The center is authorized 190 full-time employees and new employees will spend 1 to 2 years training first as call-takers before moving on to police and/or fire dispatching. They have found that the extensive training

lessens the turn-over or burn-out of their employees.

The most recent yearly figures show that the Center handled 1.7 million calls, including 1.3 million police calls and 129,287 fire and/or EMS calls. For alarm activation calls, 55,000 were burglar alarms, 10,729 were for fire alarms and 803 were medical calls.

Nashville, as part of the training program, cross trains with alarm monitoring centers, especially ADS, so that both understand what information is needed for an alarm activation call.

A unique feature of Nashville's system is a mobile unit Field Incident Response Situation Team that will go out on-scene for major police/fire/EMS events, including pre-planned ones such as a parade, Titan's home game, etc. The mobile unit will handle all calls and dispatching for the duration of the event relieving the Center to handle the "normal" calls for service.



## Open Forum

By Craig Allen

The last session of the symposium was facilitated by **Rick Moore** of CryWolf in Waldorf Maryland. Rick as always did an amazing job of keeping the conversation going during the Open Forum discussion. This was a time designed for participants to get those questions answered that may not have been during the previous sessions as well as sharing of success stories.

Rick highlighted the awesome work being done in Suffolk County, NY, by newcomers to FARA, Donna Bellone and Petrina Hubner. These ladies have successfully implemented a new alarm management program in their jurisdiction, beginning June 2016, in which over 6 million dollars in new income has been raised for the County, mainly through required registrations. They are also seeing a dramatic decrease in calls for service to false alarms.



During this session the importance of being a FARA member and having access to the resources FARA offers was also highlighted.

What I realized at the symposium is we have the same problem of too many false alarms, that every jurisdiction is different in how their program is run and there is no one magic solution to zero false alarms. See you next year in Seattle.

## FARA's Believe it or Not

By: Brad Shipp

- **BC: Cougar commute: Big cats caught strolling through SkyTrain station ...**  
4.23.17 - Vancouver Sun - TransLink said the pair triggered an intrusion alarm at about 4:15 a.m., but it's unclear how they were able to access or leave the tracks. Staff searching the line ... [More Info](#)
- **CT: Photogenic bear visits New Milford back yard**  
5.22.17 - Danbury News Times - He turned on the house's alarm system, but the bear ignored the racket and hung around long enough for Kratky to take some photos. Bear sightings aren't all ... [More Info](#)
- **FL: Again? Woman gets locked in Titusville CVS**  
5.22.17 - WKMG Orlando - But as she walked toward the front of the store to check out, just minutes after the 10 p.m. closing, she triggered a motion sensor alarm and found herself ... [More Info](#)
- **IN: 'Beaking and entering'? A cop, an alarm and a turkey**  
4.30.17 - Indianapolis Star - The Hendricks County Sheriff showed some levity while telling the story on Facebook of what deputy John Pionke found when responding to a report of an alarm ... [More Info](#)
- **OH: Deer crashes through dental office window**  
5.16.17 - WDTN - Chrissy Gray of the Smile Innovations Dentist Office told 2 NEWS, "Another employee called me and said our alarm is going off. Do not go in the office. A deer ... [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 [bradshipp@4yoursolution.com](mailto:bradshipp@4yoursolution.com) and we'll put them in the next InfoLink for all to share!

## News on Door to Door Sales

*Courtesy of NESAs*

- **Call Kurtis: Sounding the Alarm on Security System Scam Artists**  
5.10.17 - CBS Sacramento - CBS13 - Every year about this time, alarm companies fan out and start knocking on doors. Most of the companies are legit, but some tactics ... [More Info](#)
- **BBB Teams with ADT and Trade Associations to Help Consumers ...**  
5.10.17 - Better Business Bureau - ... consumers victimized by fraudulent door-to-door home security sales every summer, the Better Business Bureau is sounding the alarm about deceptive tactics ... [More Info](#)
- **Peak Alarm warns of fake security companies out to swindle ...**  
5.11.17 - IT Business Net - "Peak Alarm cares about providing quality services for our client base, to ensure that their security is secured. This is why we would like to inform you about the ... [More Info](#)
- **Beware of alarm service calling scam**  
5.16.17 - KXXV News Channel 25 - A City of Woodway news release is warning you that there is a company doing automated calls to homeowners trying to sell alarm monitoring services for your ... [More Info](#)
- **KNOCK KNOCK! It's An Alarm Salesman (Or Is It A Scammer?)**  
5.18.17 - WFMY News 2 - You get up and look through the peep hole to see what looks like a salesman who says he saw the alarm sign in your yard and wants to ask you about it. [More Info](#)
- **Connecticut BBB warns of door-to-door scams**  
5.22.17 - CT Post - Deceptive sales tactics — The most common scams that fall into this category include trying to sign up consumers with electricity wholesalers or alarm ... [More Info](#)
- **Door-to-door salesman found guilty of murder in shooting death of ...**  
5.22.17 - FOX 29 - He was selling alarm systems in a Stone Oak neighborhood in November of 2015 when Kerry O'Toole, 53, was shot and killed. Amezquita claimed he shot ... [More Info](#)
- **Home security door-to-door scams on the rise in Utah**  
5.27.17 - fox13now.com - A sales man from Blayden Capital, who was a contractor for ADT, convinced her to switch alarm companies and promised to buy out her current contract. [More Info](#)

## Public Safety Updates

*Courtesy of NESAs*

- **AB: Calgary police's new alarm fee irks business owner**  
5.19.17 - CBC.ca - A Calgary business owner says he shouldn't have to pay a fee to have police respond to alarm calls. Starting Jan. 1, 2017, police no longer respond to ... [More Info](#)
- **AR: PFD to crack down on false alarms**  
5.9.17 - KAIT - "There's a lot of times that we run on false alarms whether it's being in an industrial or commercial setting; and sometimes even residential," he said. "The alarm... [More Info](#)
- **AZ: Do you have a home security system? Here's what you need to know**  
4.18.17 - ABC15 Arizona - Alarm systems. So many people across the Valley have them, but did you know they could cost you more than that monthly fee if you're missing ... [More Info](#)
- **CO: Boulder's repeat false alarm violators exposed**  
5.9.17 - FOX31 Denver - Boulder, Colo. -- Fining City of Boulder businesses for repeatedly setting off false security alarms already seems to be working to reduce unnecessary police ... [More Info](#)
- **FL: Gun store alarm tripped? Call cops first, says Florida bill**  
4.20.17 - Bryan-College Station Eagle - Tallahassee, Fla. (AP) — Alarm monitoring companies would have to call police first instead of property owners if the alarm is triggered at a gun store under a ... [More Info](#)
- **FL: Miami Beach Offering Incentives to Homeowners to Share Security ...**  
5.24.17 - NBC 6 South Florida - ... permit fees and expedited permit approvals for homeowners who install a new or upgraded alarm system that includes security or surveillance cameras. [More Info](#)
- **FL: Palm Beach board: Fine contractors for false alarms**  
5.9.17 - Palm Beach Daily News - Palm Beach Fire Rescue spent 25 percent of its time last year responding to false alarms, the fire marshal said. [More Info](#)
- **GA: A false-alarm monitoring system was on hold, but some got ...**  
4.22.17 - The Telegraph - That didn't go over too well with police, considering implementation of the company's CryWolf false-alarm monitoring system had been put on hold indefinitely ... [More Info](#)
- **GA: Sandy Springs will consider changing alarm ordinance**  
5.3.17 - Atlanta Journal Constitution - Sandy Springs spokeswoman Sharon Kraun says the city is exploring changes to its "False Alarm" ordinance and, if approved, the changes would shift the ... [More Info](#)

- **GA: Warner Robins City Attorney now reviewing contract with false alarm ...**  
4.19.17 - 13WMAZ - The ordinance would fine businesses and homeowners after two false alarm calls, meaning the third false alarm would come with a \$50 fine. Eventually, those ... [More Info](#)
- **GA: WRPD: Disregard communication from CryWolf Alarm company**  
4.18.17 - 13WMAZ - The Warner Robins Police Department is asking homeowners and businesses to disregard recent letters from the CryWolf Alarm Solutions company. CryWolf is ... [More Info](#)
- **IL: City of Aurora Finance Committee Agenda met Feb. 14.**  
4.27.17 - DuPage Policy Journal - 17-00109 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 17, Article IV Regarding Fire Alarm Systems And Chapter 36, Article IV Regarding Police Alarm Systems. 17-00122 ... [More Info](#)
- **IL: Proposed ordinance would require Chicago hotels to provide panic buttons to some workers**  
5.4.17 - SIW - Hotels would also have to post sexual harassment and assault policies, promise no retaliation against workers that come forward... [More Info](#)
- **IN: Death of 22-year-old sparks carbon monoxide alarm ordinance**  
5.5.17 - The Republic - La Porte, Ind. - All new homes built in La Porte must have a carbon monoxide alarm under a new ordinance approved by the Indiana Fire Prevention and ... [More Info](#)
- **LA: NOPD to track false alarms, fine for multiple offenses**  
5.1.17 - WWL - The NOPD says they will start imposing fines for a second false alarm tripped at a business or home. After a fourth violation, they will stop responding until the ... [More Info](#)
- **NE: Neighbor billed for false alarm**  
4.18.17 – WOWT - Elkhorn, Neb. - An Elkhorn resident is angry that he's been billed for doing the right thing. Though the amount isn't much, he says the reason for the ... [More Info](#)
- **NJ: FDU challenges Florham Park false alarm ordinance**  
4.18.17 - New Jersey Hills - The university also is seeking to dismiss 12 complaints issued by borough Fire Official James Fonzi for causing a false fire alarm. [More Info](#)
- **NS: Cops warn against unlicensed alarm companies**  
4.27.17 - TheChronicleHerald.ca - Officers say people have been reporting the salespeople offering new or upgraded alarm systems, but the two companies involved are not licensed to operate in ... [More Info](#)
- **NY: Doyle Security Systems and Monroe County 911 Center adopt ...**  
5.22.17 - SecurityInfoWatch - The technology allows the Doyle Security monitoring center to transmit alarm signals directly to the 911 center and to first responders electronically instead of ... [More Info](#)
- **NY: Mohawk adopts local law to prevent false fire alarms**  
5.16.17 - The Recorder - Fonda - The Mohawk Town Board adopted an updated local law Thursday that is expected to eliminate the number of "false alarms" received by the volunteer ... [More Info](#)
- **OK: Amended alarm ordinance proposed for Owasso residents ...**  
5.11.17 - Tulsa World - An alarm panel at an Owasso business. The revised alarm ordinance would impose a \$100 alarm fee for local companies that register an alarm system. [More Info](#)
- **ON: Police board approves fees for funeral escorts**  
5.4.17 - Waterloo Record - Other services for which fees will increase include attending false alarms, collision reports for insurance companies, paid duty events and interviewing officers. [More Info](#)
- **TN: Shelby County Commission takes up Memphis crackdown on false ...**  
5.17.17 - WMC Action News 5 - Memphis City Council members cracked down on alarm abuse, and now their proposal made its way across the street to Shelby County Commissioners. [More Info](#)
- **TX: Highland Park (Texas) Adopts Automated Secure Alarm Protocol for ...**  
5.9.17 - Security Sales & Integration - Highland Park (Texas) Adopts Automated Secure Alarm Protocol for Faster Emergency Response. The town, located near Dallas, is the first to implement the ... [More Info](#)
- **WA: Kent police change false alarm policy**  
5.27.17 - KING5.com - Assistant Chief Eric Hemmen says the new policy does not impact residential alarms, bank alarms, hold up alarms, panic alarms, or other high-risk alarms. [More Info](#)
- **WA: LETTER: Council didn't reveal 'Capture Burglars in Action' ordinance ...**  
4.18.17 - The B-Town Blog - In 2004, Burien passed Ordinance 399 to reduce costly false alarms. By requiring alarm companies to verify a burglary in progress before calling Police, ~45 ... [More Info](#)
- **WA: Police in Kent., Wash., Will No Longer Respond to Nonverified Business Alarms**  
4.22.17 – Kent, WA - The new verified alarm-response policy will become effective June 1. [More Info](#)
- **WI: Village of Pewaukee looks to realign false fire alarm, fire inspection ...**  
5.18.17 - Lake Country Now - Village Of Pewaukee - False fire alarms in the village will get less expensive after a May 16 decision by the village board. The board will revise its policy on ... [More Info](#)

## Industry News

- **I-View Now Forms Partnership with COPS Monitoring**  
4.17.17 - Security Sales & Integration - Las Vegas — The integration between COPS Monitoring and I-View Now, branded as OmniView, will give COPS operators the ability to verify alarms using ... [More Info](#)
- **Patent: Vivint 'Door Knock' Tech Might Help Identify Guests by ... - CE Pro**  
4.20.17 - CEPro - Security and home-automation giant Vivint Inc. files patent application for identifying guests through their “sound signatures” and running data through AI engine for predictive analytics. [More Info](#)
- **Vector Security integrates two of its business divisions**  
4.19.17 - Pittsburgh - Vector Security Inc., an integrator of physical security solutions based here, announced the integration of two of its business divisions—its National Accounts Division (NAD) and its wholly owned subsidiary, Industry Retail Group (IRG)—to form Vector Security Networks. [More Info](#)
- **Predictive Analytics Lets Home Security System Forecast Problems Before They Happen**  
5.2.17 - EH - OneEvent Technologies develops a smart wireless security system that monitors the home environment to identify potential risks like fire and flooding. [More Info](#)
- **Doyle Security becomes first in NY to adopt alarm program**  
5.2.17 - Rochester Business Journal - Doyle Security Systems Inc. has become the first company in the state to implement a program that allows over 10,000 alarm users in Monroe County to receive ... [More Info](#)
- **IP/Cellular Dual Path Alarm Communicators Dominate ISC 2017**  
5.5.17 - CEPro - As POTS lines disappear, security dealers are upgrading alarm panels with dual-path communicators that provide both IP (Wi-Fi or hardwired) and cellular connections to the central station. [More Info](#)
- **Vector Security Bestows 2017 Loss Prevention Foundation Scholarships**  
5.5.17 - SSI - The security provider doled nearly \$24,000 in scholarship awards to support loss prevention continuing education. [More Info](#)
- **Lowe's now offers inexpensive professional monitoring with its Iris ...**  
5.8.17 – TechHive - Here's a smart-home spin on a familiar philosophical question: If an alarm goes off in an empty house where there's no one to hear it, does it make a sound? [More Info](#)
- **UCC to Provide Monitoring Services for Lowe's DIY Iris Smart Home ...**  
5.9.17 -Security Sales & Integration - A new Alarm Tracker feature within the Iris user experience allows users to track security, smoke, CO and panic alarm activity in their home, and to see when ... [More Info](#)
- **Best Buy partners with Vivint to launch smart home service**  
5.4.17 – SIW - New service to be rolled out in retailer's stores this summer... [More Info](#)
- **Affiliated Monitoring Partners With Essence USA to Launch PERS Dealer Program**  
5.9.17 - SSI - The fully customizable program gives dealers a range of options about how to best run their PERS offerings, including order fulfillment. [More Info](#)
- **Alarm.com releases its actions for Google Assistant, including ...**  
5.20.17 - Android Police - Alarm.com users will be able to add their system under Google Assistant's Assistant apps section or by saying, "OK Google, talk to Alarm.com. [More Info](#)
- **Every home should have one ... a smoke alarm for tornadoes!**  
5.27.17 - KHOU - This simple device sniffs out bad weather and alerts you with an audible 90 dB alarm -- loud enough to wake you up. When a tornado moves into your county, ... [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:  
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10024 Vanderbilt Circle, Unit 4  
Rockville, MD 20850  
[bradshipp@4yoursolution.com](mailto: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

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