



# InfoLink

Information for Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Professionals

## FARA InfoLink July, 2013

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### 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:

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## A Different Approach On Attending the FARA Training Symposium!

By Debbie Hansen CAM, Naperville Illinois

Each year the conference committee works together to create the best symposium yet! Taking recommendations from the association and learning best practice from past events, the group works to create an environment that encourages networking, alarm reduction education and hopefully some fun while doing it!

I thought I'd take another approach to convincing everyone to attend our next symposium by listing the top 6 reasons why you **should not** join us in Baltimore!

1. I'm allergic to Baltimore and will go into anaphylactic shock as soon as I'm near the city limits!
2. I've met every false alarm reduction unit in the United States/Canada and am on a first name basis; (I'm networked to the max)!
3. I've met every person in the alarm industry and again am on a first name basis; (no need to meet those associate FARA members in attendance)!
4. Every night I'm connected to a knowledge enhancing computer that updates my brain while I sleep so that I am aware of all the new technology available in the alarm industry!
5. Even though my city is overflowing with surplus money, I don't want to burden them with the expense of my training/travel!
6. I am **always** on the winning team of FARA Jeopardy! I know it ALL!!



Now, if you can meet any of the above criteria, well then I'd say you might not benefit from attending our next symposium! But if not, you don't want to miss your chance to network, learn, sit the exam and become a certified alarm manager!

Even those well seasoned alarm reduction units walk away with a new understanding and better methods for false alarm reduction, so don't miss your opportunity to do the same. Lastly, don't forget to apply for institute funding if travel funding is prohibited by your city!

**See you in Baltimore! No excuses!!**

## Membership Committee Update

Debbie Hansen, Membership Committee

The membership Committee would like to welcome our newest member, "Champaign Illinois" to FARA! Located southwest of Chicago and home of the "Fighting Illini", they hope to use the resources available with FARA to update their alarm ordinance and reduce false alarms throughout their city.

Hopefully we'll be able to welcome them in person next year when we all meet in Baltimore for the 2014 symposium!



## Oregon & SW Washington Chapter Formed

Brad Shipp, FARA

The FARA Board has approved the application from several FARA members in the State of Oregon and the Washington Counties of Clark, Skamania & Cowlitz to form a Chapter of FARA. FARA members in these areas automatically become members of the new chapter.

The following Initial Officers are proposed for the Oregon & SW Washington Chapter

- President – Roberta Smiley- Multnomah Co
- Secretary- Sharon Coughlin- Oregon City

One or more additional Directors can be elected now that the chapter is formed.

## FARA's Believe it or Not

By: Brad Shipp, FARA

From Recent News headlines –

- **AB: Amazing video surfaces of foiled coin store robbery**  
7.13.13 - CTV News - Firefighters entered the store and assisted in detaining the injured robbery suspect. Police officers responded to the initial alarm and placed the suspect in ... [More Info](#)
- **CT: Southington burglar leaves behind cell phone tracing him to the crime**  
7.13.13 - Newbriainherald - Justin Sieracki, 22, is accused of breaking into a car, setting off the vehicle's alarm, and then leaving behind his cell phone which police ... [More Info](#)
- **FL: Candy Trail Leads Police To Burglary Suspects**  
7.2.13 - WCTV - The store alarm malfunctioned and did not alert and the suspects later returned a ... The Alarm alerted during the second entrance and the suspects fled on foot ... [More Info](#)
- **ON: A squirrel blame for a slew of outages and fire alarms?**  
6.30.13 - globalnews.ca - KELOWNA – A busy few hours for fire crews in Kelowna Saturday. Firefighters dealt with upwards of 15 calls in just two hours between 11:15 am and 1:15 pm. [More Info](#)
- **TX: Out-of-shape thieves foiled by police during breastaurant burglary**  
6.27.13 - CultureMap Houston - Responding to a security alarm just before 3 a.m., law enforcement arrived at the restaurant's Kirby location to find two plasma screen televisions sitting by a side ... [More Info](#)
- **WA: Burglars steal kitchen sink — and nothing but the kitchen sink — out ...**  
6.25.13 - Bonney Lake and Sumner Courier-Herald - Alarm: At 10:21 a.m. June 12, officers were dispatched to an alarm from a residence. They found no sign of forced entry, and went around ... [More Info](#)
- **Stick it to 'em ... smoke alarm tester**  
6.25.13 - The Sun-The £1.75 hands with pointing fingers are designed to help householders push the test button on ceiling smoke alarms. But the 2ft-long taxpayer-funded ... [More Info](#)
- **KY: Burglar Alarm Finds Honesty Instead Of Burglary**  
6.26.13 - WTVQ - Officers said the alarm company watched surveillance that showed a woman entering the store, shopping around for a few minutes, then bringing her items to ... [More Info](#)

Do you have any stories you would like to share about stupid criminals or 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 [news@faraonline.org](mailto:news@faraonline.org) and we'll put them in the next InfoLink for all to share!

## AR: Fmr. Bryant officer given the city's highest honor

6.29.13 – KATV

Bryant (KATV) - A former Bryant police officer is given the city's highest honor for his bravery. Thursday night Scott Johnson was given the city's medal of valor. He was shot three times in a burglary this year.

Dozens showed up to the ceremony, from the state's highest officials to fellow officers from Illinois. All gathered to recognize him for his quick thinking during a deadly shoot out this April.

"It just was kind of second nature," said Scott Johnson. "It just took off."

It was a split second decision that Johnson made on the night of April 2nd. He responded to a burglar alarm going off at a Fred's store in Bryant to find Tommy O'Dell who was wanted in Mattoon, Illinois for murder. O'Dell shot him three times, Johnson fired back killing him.

"I don't really know how to take it. Obviously, God was looking out for me," said Johnson. "I've been to church every Sunday since."

Thursday night he was honored for his bravery. Attorney General Dustin McDaniel, the mayor of Bryant, Jill Dabbs and many others attended. Also in attendance was Mattoon Chief of Police, Jeff Branson, who drove nearly eight hours to personally thank Johnson.

"It was an honor for us and a privilege to honor Scott Johnson today for his bravery and his valor in a very serious situation," said Branson. "We are just very thankful that he didn't get hurt any worse than he did."

But a humble Johnson says he's grateful for the recognition but is looking forward to things getting back to normal for him. "Hopefully that it's all done and over with and I can go back to doing my thing and living my life," he said.

Johnson has made a full recovery. He was shot twice in the hand once in the shoulder. He is back at work but as a detective this time.

This is only the third time the city of Bryant has given the medal of valor.

[More Info](#)

## Benefits of Text & Email Notices

*By: Joe Carr, UCC*

Sometimes new technology has unintended benefits. Take, for example, one service recently added by several alarm equipment manufacturers; the ability to automatically notify alarm users by text or email of alarm events.

Most of these enhanced systems come complete with a smart phone "app" that allows remote access to arm or disarm the alarm system and view cameras from anywhere. This service is normally tied to other enhanced services including thermostat control, remote door locks and the ability to turn lights on and off. The monitored customer has the choice of what signals they want to be notified on.



In the case of a burglary signal, the customer can elect to receive a text message and video clip as soon as the siren sounds. This is sent prior to the 30 second dialer delay required by CPO1. Now the alarm system owner is notified even before the alarm monitoring company receives the burglary signal. This gives the customer a chance to view available video, or check the alarm system and contact the monitoring center to cancel the alarm prior to police dispatch.

This can eliminate request for dispatch on a false alarm. Another benefit is that the alarm user is more likely to answer the phone call from the central station because they are expecting the call. Not all cell phones show the alarm monitoring company caller ID properly so some people are reluctant to answer an unknown caller. The net result is fewer requests for dispatch to the police thus reducing false alarms.

As technology advances, the alarm industry will continue to work toward false alarm reduction.

## Better Business Bureau Reports Medical Alert Scam Targets Middle ...

*7.13.13 - Clarksville Online*

BBB has received numerous complaints and inquiries concerning the calls in the past several weeks.

The "scams against seniors" has reached a super-low point with this con job. Who doesn't know a senior who fears a break-in? Or a widow who wonders what would happen in a medical emergency? Why not tug at the heartstrings a little more and claim that someone cares so much about them that a loved one or medical professional even signed them up for this "free service"?

Then, of course, stick someone on a fixed income with a big bill, if they fall for the phony pitch.

[More Info](#)

## Former Police Chief Launches A Social Network For Cops

6.29.13 - Reuters

The network, known as BlueLine, will be launched globally at the International Association of Police Chiefs annual conference in Philadelphia in October. BlueLine is part of a growing trend in high-tech information-sharing among law enforcement agencies that proponents say is producing a force-multiplying effect on crime-fighting in an era of dwindling police budgets and manpower.

[More Info](#)

## News on Door to Door Sales

Courtesy of NESAs

- **Don't be Alarmed by that Knock on the Door**  
7.9.13- Better Business Bureau - As the weather heats up across the U.S., more sales people go door-to-door to sell home alarm systems. While most "door knockers" are legitimate Door to Door ... [More Info](#)
- **Consumers Say Vision Security Mised Them On Alarm Sales, BBB ...**  
7.9.13 - STLtoday.com - St. Louis, Mo., July 9, 2013 – The Better Business Bureau (BBB) is warning area residents to be on the lookout for door-to-door salespeople offering free security ...[More Info](#)
- **BBB Tips on Choosing a Security System**  
7.10.13 - Gilmer Mirror - Although no alarm system will make your home completely burglar-proof, a home security system reduces your chances of being burglarized by up to 400 ... [More Info](#)
- **News conference to address alarm company scams in River Region**  
7.11.13 - Montgomery Advertiser - News conference to address alarm company scams in River Region ... to address door-to-door scam artists selling overpriced alarm equipment in the area. [More Info](#)
- **Watch out for these senior scams**  
7.11.13 - South Bend Tribune - The alarm, warns the recording, is necessary to protect against a long list of dangers, ... It claims that you can get an alarm system worth several hundred dollars ... [More Info](#)
- **AL: Scams set off alarms: CrimeStoppers, state board warn of security ...**  
7.13.13 - Montgomery Advertiser - Sounding the alarm on security system scams: Tony Garrett with CrimeStoppers and Lynne Taunton with the Alabama Electronic Security Board of Licensure ...[More Info](#)
- **Vivint diversifying sales model**  
6.26.13 - Provo, Utah - Vivint is not just a door-knocking company anymore. It's opening a new 400-employee sales center to diversity its sales model. Vivint's Josh Houser tells Security Systems News how much of an increase in inside sales the company is aiming for and what this new center means for the summer sales program. [More Info](#)
- **WV: Be Aware Of Scams**  
6.26.13 - Wetzel Chronicle - The recording warns the alarm is necessary to protect against a long list of dangers, ... It claims that you can get an alarm system worth several hundred dollars ...[More Info](#)
- **Some security system sales are alarming**  
6.27.13 - Allentown Morning Call - A few local homeowners are sounding the alarm against some alarm salesmen, saying they've acted just as deviously as the devils that security systems are ...[More Info](#)

## Public Safety Updates

Courtesy of NESAs

- **CA: Running For Office In Santa Monica To Cost \$25**  
6.29.13 - Santa Monica Mirror - Previously, a fine was assessed on the third occurrence of a false alarm. ... City staff estimates the fine for second false alarms would generate \$175,246 in ... [More Info](#)
- **FL: 'Confusing' alarm systems often lead to false calls, fines**  
7.6.13 - Palm Beach Daily News - That gecko that sets off a motion detector, that clap of thunder that triggers a glass-break alarm and that burnt toast smoke making its way to a smoke detector are leading to hundreds of false-alarm calls for police and fire-rescue responders - and ... [More Info](#)
- **GA: Georgia sheriff proposes downtown safety plan, new tax to fund it**  
7.11.13 - The Augusta Chronicle - Sheriff Richard Roundtree's recommendation for improving downtown safety includes closing a section of Riverwalk Augusta, Ga., overnight, installing 32 security cameras and implementing new taxes to fund a "Continually patrolled district." [More Info](#)

- **GA: Overactive alarms warrant fines for business owners**  
7.5.13 - WFXL FOX 31 - When severe weather happens officials often get called out to businesses for overactive alarms. However when a business is closed, what do officials do when ... [More Info](#)
- **MD: Pr. George's permit office to open Monday, pledging faster service**  
6.28.13 – Washington Post - The new office in Largo will be a one-stop spot for permit and license applications, among other functions. [More Info](#)
- **MI: City of Plymouth Ordinance #2013-01**  
6.24.13 - Hometownlife.com - Alarm user is defined as any person on whose premises an alarm system is ... If, however, an alarm system on a motor vehicle is connected with an alarm...[More Info](#)
- **NC: City considering false alarm fees**  
6.26.13 - SecurityInfoWatch - Two officers arrive to find a sheepish homeowner and a false alarm. ... Of the 25,670 burglary alarm calls made to Wilson police in a recent five-year period, a full ...[More Info](#)
- **NC: Council to consider increased fees**  
7.7.13 - Carolinacoastonline - ... operational permits, civil citations for false fire alarm trips and other fees for merchants licenses, parade permits and parks and recreation program fees. [More info](#)
- **OH: Cincinnati police changing policy for non-violent incidents**  
7.9.13 - Cincinnati.com - These involved responding to false alarms, certain types of report writing, and time spent attempting to notify the complainants about unsolvable cases," the ... [More Info](#)
- **OH: Cincinnati Police Changing Procedures**  
7.11.13 - WKRC TV Cincinnati - Alarm companies will have to contact homeowners twice before asking officers to respond to a ... The department will still immediately respond to panic alarms. [More Info](#)
- **OH: Dayton, Ohio police crack down on rising false alarm calls**  
7.8.13 - Security Info Watch - City's police chief says he may even push for an alarm verification policy ... [More Info](#)
- **OH: Plain Township trustees meeting of July 9**  
7.10.13 Canton Repository- NW and Robert McClain at 2315 54th St. NE for having a fourth false alarm in a calendar year. ... NW was fined \$150 for having a fourth and fifth false alarm. [More Info](#)
- **OK: City enforcing swimming pool ordinance in Ada**  
7.11.13 - KXII-TV - Public Safety Director Gene Linton said, city buildings must also have an alarm or lock on doors that lead to the pool. He says the ordinance is meant to protect ... [More Info](#)
- **OK: Council votes to hike rates**  
6.26.13 - The Lawton Constitution - City administrators had calculated the new fee could generate \$300,000 in new revenue, but council members removed that fee and a proposal for a new alarm ... [More Info](#)
- **ON: Windsor fire officials release results of smoke alarm campaign**  
6.29.13 - CTV News - Windsor Fire and Rescue Services members and volunteers have completed its first round of the "Wake up! Get a Working Smoke Alarm" educational campaign. [More Info](#)
- **PA: Lower Macungie gets tough on false alarms**  
6.26.13 - Allentown Morning Call - Lower Macungie Township is cracking down on businesses and homeowners whose alarm systems prompt what turn out to be needless responses to their ...[More Info](#)
- **SC: False alarm program seems to be working in Horry**  
7.12.13 - MyrtleBeachOnline.com - Myrtle Beach, S.C. — A new program to reduce the number of false alarms received by law enforcement in Horry County seems to be working. The Sun ...[More Info](#)
- **SC: False alarms grow for Horry County, create bigger headache than ...**  
7.12.13 - MyrtleBeachOnline.com - In 2010, Horry County Police logged more than 14,400 false alarms from businesses and homes and two years later, as county officials tried to institute a ... [More Info](#)
- **TN: Councilman proposes 'Do Not Respond' list for repeat false secur ...**  
7.3.13 - WMC-TV - Memphis taxpayers spend \$3 million each year on false home alarm calls. The city council is voting on whether to start a Do Not Respond list for the ... [More Info](#)
- **TN: Memphis City Council alarm fee ordinance moves forward**  
7.3.13 - SecurityInfoWatch - It did pass an ordinance on second reading to increase fees and fines for false alarms for homeowners and businesses. An address can now have five false... [More Info](#)
- **TX: City Council works to revise renaming policy**  
6.25.13 - Belton Journal - Police Chief Gene Ellis also presented an ordinance for approval to reduce the amount of false burglar alarms in residences and homes. The ordinance ... [More Info](#)
- **TX: False Alarm Ordinance Now in Effect in Denison**  
7.3.13 - KTEN - Denison, TX - The city of Denison is enforcing a new city ordinance that requires all alarm systems within city limits to be registered with the Denison Police ... [More Info](#)
- **VA: 98% of house alarm calls are false, and residents can be fined**  
7.5.13 - wtvr.com - But officials told CBS 6 News that house alarms also come with problems. ... Nolan said the number of false alarm calls has gone down from around 19,000 to ...[More Info](#)

## Industry News

Courtesy of NESAs

- **Big disconnect: Telcos abandon copper lines**  
7.14.13 - The News Journal - But the box doesn't work with remote medical monitoring devices, home alarm systems or faxes. It can't accept collect calls or connect callers with an operator ... [More Info](#)
- **After Sandy soaked the phone lines, Mantoloking is going wireless**  
7.9.13 - The Star-Ledger - NJ.com - But the box doesn't work with remote medical monitoring devices, home alarm systems or faxes. It can't accept collect calls or connect callers with an operator ... [More Info](#)
- **Telcos face questions about the phasing out of POTS lines**  
7.8.13 - Security Info Watch - State regulators, consumer advocates concerned about how transition away from copper wiring will unfold ... [More Info](#)
- **Death of the landline?**  
7.6.13 - Washington Post - As the number of landline users continues to decline, many phone companies are questioning the relevance of the old copper wire safety net. [More Info](#)
- **NEMA Releases Training Materials aid fire, life safety workers.**  
7.10.13 - ThomasNet News - ... members including fire service/fire prevention officers, designers/engineers, fire alarm ... multi-criteria fire detection, and new alarm communication methods... [More Info](#)
- **Residential Security Growth to Outpace Commercial**  
7.12.13 - CEPro - IMS Research says residential security now accounts for 40.7% of the \$2.7B global alarm market, with an annual growth rate of 5.3% expected over the next five ... [More Info](#)
- **Property crimes get less police attention in Sacramento area**  
7.7.13 - Sacramento Bee - Installing a security alarm is probably the most obvious tactic. ... Michel, who also serves as president of the California Alarm Association, said about 20 percent ... [More Info](#)
- **New Md. Law Requires A Smoke Alarm On Each Level Of A Home**  
7.1.13 - CBS Local - The law requires that by January 1, 2018, a minimum of one smoke alarm is installed on every level of a home. Battery operated smoke alarms remain ... [More Info](#)
- **iControl Sues Alarm.com**  
7.10.13 - Multichannel News - The stakes in the home security and home automation sector appear to be rising after iControl filed a lawsuit alleging that Alarm.com and partner FrontPoint ... [More Info](#)
- **Monitronics to acquire 14th largest alarm company**  
7.11.13 - Englewood, Colo. - Monitronics will have more than one million subscribers when it completes the acquisition, announced today, of the 14th largest residential alarm monitoring company in the United States. [More Info](#)
- **ASG closes four deals in Q2**  
7.2.13 - Beltsville, MD - In the past three months, ASG Security closed four acquisitions that bring it a new office and additional RMR, accounts, and employees. [More Info](#)
- **DirectTV Enters The Home Security Market With Lifeshield Security ...**  
6.24.13 - Trefis -The siren detector can "hear" when a smoke alarm sounds and alerts the central ... Lifeshield offers good cellular based alarm systems with a simple setup and ... [More Info](#)
- **AT&T rolls out 'Digital Life' in five new markets**  
6.27.13 - Security Info Watch - As of today, AT&T customers in Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Portland, and San Antonio can purchase the company's "Digital Life" home security and automation service. In addition, the company also announced that its' Digital Life central station operators have achieved CSAA Five Diamond Certification. The company plans to introduce its home security offering in up to 50 markets by the end of 2013. [More Info](#)
- **Dynamark Security Centers Acquires Midwest Central Station**  
6.27.13 - Security Sales & Integration - Dynamark Security Centers, an independent dealer program, has expanded its footprint in the Midwest following its acquisition of Security Service Center (SSC), a central station... [read more](#)

## 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](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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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](mailto:info@faraonline.org)

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