



InfoLink

Information for Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Professionals

FARA Infolink Special Annual Training Symposium Issue May, 2006

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10th Annual FARA Conference Held

The False Alarm Reduction Association held its 10th Annual International Training Symposium in San Francisco, California from April 24 through April 28, 2006. The 10-year milestone was recognized through displays, remembrances from those who have been there from the beginning, and through special awards. This training symposium marked the highest ever attendance, with a diverse array of classes comprised of lecture, hands on learning, panel discussions, interactive group exercises and even a game! Built in networking time proved to be invaluable, with many questions asked and answered outside of a regular structured learning environment. We were also very fortunate to have members of the California and North Texas Alarm Associations participate on some of our panels to provide an inside view of what the alarm industry is doing to combat false alarms.



If you were unable to attend the training symposium this year, read through this special edition of the InfoLink to find out what you missed and then use this information to help you gain approval to attend next year's training symposium in Dallas, Texas from April 23 through April 27, 2007! We will be staying at the Radisson Hotel in Central Dallas, and the Training and Certification Committee will begin, in the very near future, to plan the training courses and other events to be held. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to learn more about false alarm management and how you can assist your department and community in dealing with this issue.

Thanks!

The FARA Board of Directors extends a huge thank you to all of our sponsors, who so generously contributed to the success of the FARA Training Symposium:

- ADS Security – 10-Year Anniversary Lunch
- AOT Public Safety Corp. – Breaks
- Brinks Home Security – Membership and Awards Lunch
- Protection One - Breaks
- Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC) – Grants
- Vector Security, Inc. – Vendor Presentation Lunch



A very special thank you to Betty Lou Bell and Robbie Hanson, who so graciously donated so much of their time to manning the registration desk, answering questions, selling raffle tickets and FARA memorabilia and generally keeping the symposium running smoothly. Your dedication and efforts to assist the membership is greatly appreciated by all!

FARA Jeopardy

The FARA Conference Committee constantly looks for ways to provide innovative and exciting training to its members. FARA Jeopardy, and other alarm management games that have been played at previous training symposiums, such as FARA Feud and FARA Wheel of Fortune, spawned from the understanding that training should include at least two things; i.e., it should be interactive and should be fun to promote learning.



Rick Moore of AOT Public Safety Corp. and past Treasurer of FARA once again served as Master of Ceremonies and hosted a very competitive game of FARA Jeopardy, which served to teach attendees about alarm management issues in a fun atmosphere. The interactive nature of FARA Jeopardy also helped to develop camaraderie among teammates and provided a forum for all attendees to get to know each other a little better. FARA Jeopardy was deemed a huge success with two teams winning the final FARA Jeopardy round. Winners were able to select one item from the FARA Memorabilia table including leather bags, day planners, shirts, portfolios and paper weights. Fun was definitely had by all!

Specialized Training

The annual FARA Training Symposium is designed to provide courses and interactive discussion panels, which will give alarm management professionals the tools they need to develop, implement and maintain successful false alarm reduction programs. At the San Francisco training symposium, FARA members were exposed to a wide variety of topics and training formats; everything from understanding how alarm systems operate to working with the media. We had a great group of instructors and panelists this year, and owe each one of them a debt of gratitude for taking time out of their busy schedules to help us all learn more about alarm management programs.

Following is a synopsis of the training provided, as well as the instructors and panelists, who provided the training:

New and Existing Member Sessions



FARA members, both public safety and associate, who were new to FARA training symposiums or to alarm management issues in general, attended a workshop, given by FARA President Norma Beaubien, to better prepare them for what to expect from the training symposium. Attendees were provided with some history on the creation of FARA, its structure, philosophy, bylaws, committees and certification program. The workshop also outlined various alarm industry groups that could be used as a resource, how they worked and how to begin a dialogue if one did not already exist. Attendees also learned about what to expect from the training symposium and how to get the most out of each class. There was wonderful participation from those in attendance and many, many great questions were asked and answered.



All those not attending the new member session attended an existing FARA member session, moderated by Associate Director Kathleen Schraufnagel.

The existing member meeting provided information, identified the members desire to work more closely with the Installation Quality (IQ) program, and spotlighted the fact that our members are taking advantage of many of the resources on the FARA website. Members briefly discussed the security alarm industry's growing concern about the impact that Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is having on the transmission of alarm signals. VoIP allows phone calls to be made over an internet connection instead of through the traditional telephone service. This technology affects many industries and communities as well and the issues are currently being reviewed by Congress as part of the rewriting of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. While most of the members had not had to address VoIP issues yet there are some that are already using it as a means of communication and at least one state fire marshal's office has decided not to accept it as a viable means of transmitting fire alarm signals. All members were given a synopsis of the issues and a list of the members in Congress that are working on this issue in case wanted to contact them with any comments or concerns.

Members were advised that there is virtually never a response to IQ requests for FARA membership input on alarm company candidates seeking IQ certification. It was discovered that most members did not fully understand what IQ is or the potential importance FARA members can have in the certification of an alarm company. Members asked that information about the IQ program be added to the FARA website along with a link to the IQ website. Members agreed that now that they understood the importance of responding to requests to review alarm company candidates seeking IQ certification that they would take the time to provide positive and negative feedback where appropriate.

Fully two-thirds of the members in this session indicated that they have used one or more of the FARA bulletins and brochures in their communities/companies. Virtually all of them have used one or more of the manuals to assist them in the running of their departments. This was a very positive bit of news and members were advised that more documents would be created as needs were identified. One request that the Communications Committee will address is the creation of a flyer that explains Enhanced Call Verification to consumers to help dispel their concerns and answer the most often asked questions about ECV. Members have also found that the FARA Assistance Requests via email are a valuable source of information when they are working on ordinance and alarm management issues. Many members have initiated assistance requests and almost everyone indicated that they had responded to at least one request in the past year. The overall discussion was lively and informative and everyone was so interested that the meeting even spilled over into a break period! Everyone should look for more great resources on the FARA website in the coming year.

Understanding Alarms

As law enforcement alarm management professionals, we cannot effectively deal with false alarms unless we have a basic understanding of the equipment involved, how it works and how it is designed, installed and used. Dave LaBelle of ADT, who has more than 35 years of technical and management experience, provided this wonderful hands-on class, in which he described alarm components in use today, how they work and how they can prevent false alarms. We learned about various perimeter and interior protection devices, as well as outdoor and hold-up protection. Control panels were also discussed.

Proactive Alarm Industry False Alarm Prevention Steps

Diane McCarthy, False Alarm Program Manager for the City of San Francisco moderated a panel that included: Chris Russell, North Texas Alarm Association, Jon Sargent, ADT and the California Alarm Association (CAA), Rick Albertson, Sonitrol and Glen Mowrey, SIAC. Chris explained the effort to create a user training video and highlighted new requirements in Texas that were passed with the support of Texas Alarm Associations to mandate enhanced call verification, require the use of CP-01 compliant panels, expand user training and require notification of localities when each alarm is installed. Jon explained the CAA's efforts for effective ordinances and Rick provided an overview of technology for video and audio verification. Glen reviewed the resources that SIAC provides to industry and public safety.

Working With the Media

As government employees, we may not always have the authority to speak directly with the media and may, in fact, not even want to. However, in this class, instructor Stan Hanson, Palm Bay Police Department, and former Public Information Officer, showed us how we could foster good working relationships with the media to better get our message out.



We learned about the various types of media available to us, and which ones we could consider our "friends" and which we could not. We also learned that media takes many different forms, including postings on the sides of city buses and on billboards in our communities. Public service spots, radio programs, local cable networks, the Internet and the print media were also highlighted. False alarm reduction is not generally a "sexy" subject to the media, and we learned ways to work around that fact.

Getting Reductions in the Real World

FARA's "False Alarm Strategies" white paper was highlighted in this interactive course, designed to delve more deeply into each strategy and to discuss the pros and cons of each. FARA Executive Director Brad Shipp led the group discussion on various methods and asked for and received audience participation on specific initiatives taken by attendees that worked and those that did not and why. Some of the topics

touched upon included registration/permitting of alarm users with and without a commensurate fee, implementation of an existing ordinance vs. creating and passing a new one, imposition of false alarm fines/fees, and restricted response for habitual abusers. This class reinforced some of the issues faced when attempting to implement various strategies, which may be controversial, to reduce false alarms.

Real World Exercises

Based on lessons learned from the Getting Reductions in the Real World class, each different table, which was comprised of both public safety and alarm industry professionals, worked through specific exercises on many of the 20 strategies outlined in the white paper.



The groups were charged with reviewing the various issues raised and coming to a consensus on how they would address each one. Groups discussed such topics as how to gain greater cooperation from alarm companies in the permit/registration process when the ordinance does not compel them to do so, possible or perceived liability for instituting a non-response provision, spearheading an initiative to target chronic alarm abusers, instituting verified response, requiring alarm companies to collect fees and fines and pass them on to the municipality, and the pros and cons of outsourcing management of your false alarm reduction program. This interactive class was a real eye-opener for many, as it brought to light many issues and concerns that they had not previously heard.

Alarm Management – San Francisco Style

Diane McCarthy, False Alarm Program Manager for the City of San Francisco discussed how her city's program came about and many of the pitfalls she encountered in trying to implement the ordinance passed by her city council. The San Francisco ordinance requires that alarm companies must give the city data on their customers and must collect the fees. The California Alarm Association (CAA) sued the city on three separate occasions, claiming that to collect fees was overly burdensome to the alarm industry. The city prevailed all three times. CAA President Jon Sargent also talked about the lawsuits and gave the alarm industry's perspective on a variety of issues before them.



We also learned about the specifics of the San Francisco alarm ordinance and of Diane's outreach efforts to the community prior to after implementation of the ordinance. Diane appeared on local television news programs, conducted radio interviews, attended community police meetings, and got the word out in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Even given the early problems with implementation of the alarm ordinance, Diane, the CAA and local alarm companies have a good working relationship, which has resulted in a 24% reduction in billable false alarms and a 32% reduction overall.

Effective Ordinance Management

As we all learned throughout the week, there are many different methods in false alarm reduction programs.



This panel discussion, comprised of Officer Brad Wahab, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Major Scott Waddell, Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, and Alison Turgeon, Alarm Coordinator, Calgary Police Service, talked about various ways each had implemented false alarm reduction programs, some of their challenges, and some of their successes. Brad discussed the entire outsourcing process, who does what, and his specific role as contract administrator. Scott shared his goal to get an ordinance passed in his county, the analysis he conducted in terms of wasted patrol time, costs and gathering meaningful

statistics, and how he was able to get the ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors. Alison spoke about some very unique provisions contained in her bylaw, such as charging alarm companies \$75 per false alarm instead of charging the alarm user and the fact that police do not respond to commercial alarms between the hours of 7:00 am and 5:00 pm.

The panelists also discussed some of the problems they had with implementation, as well as issues they are concerned with at the present time. Finally, they discussed new initiatives they are trying to implement to further reduce false dispatches. The beauty of this panel was that it was interactive with the audience, who asked probing, relevant questions of each panelist. This was an incredibly successful panel discussion, with many new ideas and problem-solving discussions taking place.

Take a Walk in the Alarm User's Shoes

For the first time ever, FARA training symposium attendees were exposed to a class in which the alarm user was featured. Take a Walk in the User's Shoes, with instructors Kevin Anderson and Kelly Maceranka of Chico's, a large national retail store, revealed what it is like to be the end user of an alarm system and the entity subject to the imposition of fines or fees for false alarm activations. Kevin and Kelly shared the scope of the Chico's enterprise, with hundreds of stores nationwide, and with over 500 different alarm ordinances covering those stores. They explained how registration/permitting processes were different in each, and how that impacted their ability to conform to the mandates of the ordinance. Kelly also explained how she routinely experienced problems getting support from various police departments.



Once again, the audience took the opportunity to ask numerous questions and provide suggestions on how the national chains could make it easier for public safety to assist them. In the ensuing discussion, the group suggested that FARA develop another manual specifically for the alarm user, which would contain best practices on registration, compliance, building cooperative working relationships with public safety, and the reduction of false alarms. This class was very thought-provoking and gave us all an opportunity to learn of the frustrations alarm users face when trying to comply with an alarm ordinance.

Ask the Experts

This interactive group discussion, moderated by Steve Heggemann of the Baltimore County Alarm Reduction Team, opened up the floor for any questions, concerns or issues attendees wanted to raise, which may not have been covered in a previous workshop or class.



There was wonderful participation from the group and the hour flew by. Some of the issues covered included how to justify a registration and/or renewal fee, how to handle false alarms from schools, on-line access to alarm user accounts by alarm company representatives, and community relations initiatives. We also delved into the issue of how to handle non-monitored accounts, as well as dealing with major alarm abusers. The group was energized and even talked about possible False Alarm Prevention Month activities in November by suggesting that we unify and advertise false alarm prevention on billboards across the nation. This was an excellent hands-on discussion group, which benefited all who attended.

Vendor Show and Exposition

The FARA Board of Directors would like to extend a very special thank you to our Vendor Show and Exposition participants: **AOT Public Safety Corp., California Alarm Association, Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA), Digital Design Group, Inc., Enable Point, and HDL Companies.** All of the vendors were given an opportunity to speak to the entire group about their particular service and/or product. We had a diverse group of alarm associations and suppliers of false alarm tracking and billing software represented. Members spent time at each booth talking with vendors and observing first-hand what each software program could provide.





The California Alarm Association provided us with copies of their fabulous newsletter, The Mirror, and spoke with members about their efforts to reduce false alarms in California.



The Central Station Alarm Association provided us with a birds-eye view of the CSAA on-line alarm user training course, which they have graciously enabled public safety members to view free of charge.



We thank all of our vendors, who so generously provided information on their specific products or services, which are designed to reduce false alarms or assist in the management and billing of false alarms.

Professional Certification Program

FARA's one-of-a-kind Professional Certification Exam was given again at this year's training symposium. Attainment of the "Certified Alarm Manager" status, through successful completion of the exam, signifies a proficient and significant level of expertise in the management, coordination, preparation and implementation of a false alarm reduction program.

Sgt. Yvonne Bolton, Honolulu Police Department, Deborah Hansen, Naperville Police Department, Kerri McDonald, Riverside Police Department, Natasha Nesbitt, Spartanburg Public Safety Department, Christine VanGeest, Hamilton Police Service, FARU and Yvonne Bolton, Honolulu Police Department joined the ranks of those professionals, who have achieved the "Certified Alarm Manager" designation by successfully completing the FARA Certified False Alarm Reduction Professional Exam. Congratulations to our newest members of this elite club!

10 Year Remembrances

FARA reached a real milestone with the San Francisco training symposium, which marked the 10th year we have been holding successful training courses for our members. It is hard to believe that FARA has accomplished so very much in that time period, and sometimes it seems like just yesterday that we all started down this road to unite public safety false alarm reduction professionals. Visit our web site at www.faraonline.org to view a wonderful 10-Year Anniversary slide show, which includes highlights from all of FARA's 10 conferences/training symposiums and also lists some of our greatest accomplishments. Next, we will take a short walk down memory lane to each of those 10 conferences.



Our very first training symposium, which was then called a “conference,” was held in May 1997 in Atlanta, Georgia. We co-located with the National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, and FARA’s entire conference, including a general membership meeting, lasted only one day.

We next headed to San Antonio, Texas, in 1998 where we, once again, co-located with the NBFAA. Whoever thought that going to San Antonio in June was a good idea, absolutely had to love hot, hot, hot weather. FARA’s portion of the conference started to grow, and we had events, which spanned a three-day period. We participated for the first time in joint panel discussions with the alarm industry on two different topics; i.e., alarm equipment standards and alarm ordinances.

In May 1999 FARA held its own annual conference in San Diego, California, as NBFAA was going to Puerto Rico, for which local public safety alarm professionals were generally not going to get approval to attend. FARA started branching out in its training agenda and included a mock trial, which was an incredible experience for all.

Next on the agenda was Nashville in April 2000, where we were growing by leaps and bounds. The conference now encompassed four full days of training, committee meetings, general membership and board meetings, and social events. The Wild Horse Saloon hosted FARA to a wonderful evening out, where one member was having such a fabulous time, that she broke her wrist and was carted out by about fifteen testosterone-laden men!

Kansas City, Missouri was the host city for FARA’s April 2001 conference. FARA rolled out it’s first FARA Jeopardy game, in which it became so boisterous that we were asked by hotel management to “keep it down” as the group in the room next to us could not hear their speakers!

Portland, Oregon was our next stop in April 2002. FARA took another huge step forward in offering the first-ever Professional Certification Exam to 13 willing participants. The training offered at the conference included a panel format for the first time, which was extremely successful.

We then headed to majestic New Orleans, Louisiana in April 2003, where some of our members became very familiar with a certain lamp post in the city and a jumping grenade. This marked the last year that we held committee meetings at the training symposiums.

In April 2004 we visited Bloomington, Minnesota, home of the Mall of America, for our annual training symposium. This symposium introduced the most diverse array of classes and workshops ever provided and included the first-ever look at the proposed Regional Training Course. FARA also gave its first Achievement Awards in 2004.

Miami, Florida was our next to last stop in May 2005, where we were treated to some of the best food we have ever had! Casino Night was introduced and we had some big winners at the slots. This symposium also marked the most successful Silent Auction we have ever held with almost \$1000 in bids.

For our 10th year, San Francisco, California, was the selected location, and you have just finished reading all about how successful that training symposium was! You definitely will not want to miss our next training symposium scheduled for April 23-27, 2007 in Dallas, Texas.

FARA Annual Awards Renamed

During the Anniversary Lunch held to commemorate the 10 year history of FARA. Brad Shipp, FARA Executive Director, surprised Norma Beaubien and Rex Bell with the news that the Board had decided to rename the FARA Member of the Year Award as the Norma C. Beaubien FARA Member of the Year Award and to rename the FARA Associate Member of the Year Award as the W. Rex Bell FARA Associate Member of the Year Award. The dedication of both awards was made to acknowledge the commitment of both Norma and Rex to the goal of false alarm reduction and a small way to acknowledge the impact that both have had to the continued success of FARA as an association.

FARA Member of the Year Award

The FARA Member of the Year Award was presented to **Officer Brad Wahab**, of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, for his immeasurable contributions to both FARA and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. Brad was honored, first and foremost, for the incredibly outstanding job he did over the past year as a member of the Communications Committee. He proved himself to be an invaluable resource and a hard worker, who was always willing to lend a helping hand wherever it was needed. He reviewed all new publications and made substantive comments and suggestions on each, as well as on those materials up for regular review.



Brad volunteered for the unenviable task of working on the subcommittee charged with reviewing and suggesting revisions to the FARA/NBFAA Model Burglar Alarm Ordinance. The subcommittee convened four separate teleconferences to go over the numerous suggestions that had been made. Brad was on each and every one of those calls, sometimes calling from home outside his regular work shift. We were all introduced to his baby daughter, who attended some of those calls with us! He brought a new perspective to the ordinance and fresh eyes, which it sorely needed. The teleconferences were long and arduous, but he stayed with them until the end. He represented both FARA and Charlotte-Mecklenburg well. He was also instrumental in helping to develop the brand new Executive Summary (the FARA approved version), which is in great demand.

While Brad was new to FARA just prior to last year's training symposium in Miami, he attended that training and jumped in with both feet to help the Communications Committee. Over the past year, he utilized the resources of FARA to get the most out of his membership, which we strongly encourage. He also volunteered to hold a class at the Dallas training symposium on third-party administration of alarm management programs. He put together a matrix of jurisdictions like his own and how they respond and/or handle duress and hold-up alarms. Finally, he visited the Atlanta Police Department with his Sergeant and Glen Mowrey, SIAC, to assist in their development and implementation of an alarm management program for Atlanta. He created a PowerPoint presentation to outline the main points and talked with individuals in their Police and IT departments about the options available. He promoted FARA and our training symposium as well.

Brad has been a tremendous asset to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's alarm management program as well. He worked on judging and selecting a new outsource company to handle the third-party administration of his program and assisted in a smooth transition from one company to another. He also continued to reduce false alarms in his county and has shown a real sustained successful program of which he can be very proud.

Commenting on his award, FARA President Norma Beaubien said, "Brad has given more of his time to FARA in the past year than most members give over several years. He is an absolute delight to work with and truly embodies the criteria for which this award is bestowed. We recognize Brad for his selfless dedication to FARA, as well as to Charlotte-Mecklenburg and the entire police community in North America. Brad is richly deserving of the FARA Member of the Year Award, and I was honored to present it to him."

FARA Associate Member of the Year Award

The FARA Associate Member of the Year Award was presented to **Chris Russell**, Nova Internet Services and current President of the North Texas Alarm Association for his exceptional contributions to FARA, his industry and the community he serves. Chris is truly an "unsung" hero, who works in the background and looks for no recognition. He hosts the FARA web site free of charge and provides us with services which would otherwise cost the association a considerable amount of money. He was instrumental in setting up the new security provisions to safeguard our proprietary information. Even though we pay him no money, he is always quick to make requested changes and enhancements, which helps our entire membership.



Additionally, while he has not received the recognition he deserves, the initial idea on creating a false alarm prevention video was Chris's. He invited FARA to participate on the project, which we accepted without question. The video was created due to changes in the Texas alarm law and in an effort to get the word out to citizens about those changes. But, the video went well beyond the Texas alarm law into a false alarm prevention and best practices video. As FARA has members throughout North America, Chris agreed to have two separate videos created, one that had a section specific to Texas and one that had the

Texas specific material stripped out, but which still contained the great false alarm prevention material. After much hard work, a professional video was produced, of which we can all be proud. The video received its first wide-spread dissemination at our San Francisco training symposium, and it is our hope that public safety employees will use the video in training sessions throughout North America.

In addition to the above contributions over the past year, Chris was also instrumental in supporting and sponsoring the first ever Regional Training Course in Dallas, Texas. Not only did Chris support the effort, he attended the full session and made substantive contributions. Without his assistance, we do not believe the course would have been as successful as it was or would have been attended by so many people from both public safety and the alarm industry.

"I have personally worked with Chris on several initiatives over the past couple years and find him to be incredibly dedicated to false alarm reduction, to FARA and to the community he serves," said FARA President Norma Beaubien. "We are very fortunate to have someone of Chris's caliber working with us and believe he epitomizes the principles inherent in this award. It was my great honor to recognize Chris this year as the FARA Associate Member of the Year."

False Alarm Reduction Achievement Awards

Three awards were given this year to deserving recipients, which seek to recognize law enforcement and alarm industry initiatives that have shown meaningful or significant reduction in the number of false alarms over a three to five year period or which embody the FARA mission. We received many wonderful submissions this year for all three award categories. Attendees at the training symposium reviewed all of the nominations and voted on their favorite. FARA will continue to bestow these awards on an annual basis and will have symposium attendees select the winners. If you have or know of a program that you would like to nominate for next year, please forward your written nomination to FARA's Executive Director Brad Shipp at bradshipp@4yoursolution.com.

Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award

The Public Safety False Alarm Achievement Award was presented to the **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department** for its exceptional efforts and success in reducing false burglar alarms to which officers respond at virtually no cost to the city.



The Charlotte-Mecklenburg program, under the very capable direction of Alarm Administrator Officer Brad Wahab, administers a well-written, strictly enforced alarm ordinance, which has resulted in a sustained reduction in the number of false alarm responses from a high of 106,061 in 1995 to just 41,582 in 2005. A third-party administrator handles all of the registration and billing functions, leaving the Police Department time to deal with repeat offenders and enforcing the mandates of the alarm ordinance. The city also receives a portion of the revenue generated from false alarm fines.

Industry False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award

The Industry False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award was presented to **Vector Security, Inc.** of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for their exceptional dedication company-wide to the reduction of unnecessary dispatches.



Vector voluntarily implemented Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) in September 2004 and demonstrated a huge 30% reduction in the number of requests for dispatch made to area public safety departments. In addition to voluntary implementation of ECV, Vector Security, Inc., developed an integrated approach to alarm management, which involves every facet of the company. Sales, installation, service, monitoring and management all bear responsibility for seeking and implementing solutions. Vector's false alarm reduction program, which has been in place for several years, includes internal and external training, counseling top offenders, inspecting system design, user training periods, and the use of control panels that are compliant with the ANSI/SIA Control Panel standard (CP-01). Their success in this endeavor shows that they have been extremely successful in reaching their goal, which, in turn, reduces the burden false alarms place on public safety agencies.

FARA Achievement Award

The FARA Achievement Award was presented to the **Kansas City Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (KCBFAA)** for their consistent willingness to work with local law enforcement agencies to solve both individual user false alarm problems, as well as working in areas of false alarm prevention and reduction on a broad scale.



Over the past year, the KCBFAA worked with a local city council to enact a new false alarm ordinance, modeled on the FARA/NBFAA Model Burglar Alarm Ordinance. KCBFAA members continually meet with local public safety false alarm reduction unit administrators and are more than willing to take phone calls when special problems arise.

Certificates of Appreciation

After six years of devoted service to the FARA Board, At-Large Director **Amy Lobdell** announced she was stepping down from her Board position to focus on home-schooling her two children.



Amy dedicated countless hours to both the FARA Board and to committees; namely, Conference for which she was chair, and Communications. Amy was recognized by the Board for her outstanding efforts in coordinating and conducting FARA's annual training symposiums. Amy did it all from selecting cities, researching hotels, creating training courses, obtaining instructors, scheduling events, and putting on the vendor exposition. She was recognized for writing manuals, reviewing publications, contributing to the newsletter, fostering great relationships with the alarm industry, and for contributing to the Board. Amy will remain an active participant in FARA and will continue to work on committees and attend training symposiums. The FARA Board is incredibly grateful to Amy for all of her service to the association. Amy received a plaque and a gift certificate to her favorite retail store as a small token of our appreciation.

After 10 years of dedicated service to FARA, **W. Rex Bell** elected not to run again for a Board seat in San Francisco.



Rex advised the Board that he was there when it all started, helped to grow the association over the years, that 10 years was long enough and it was time for new blood. Rex served the Board in several capacities over his 10-year span as an At-Large Director, as Secretary and as 2nd Vice President. Rex brought so very much to the table, with his knowledge and experience as an alarm company owner and as a public safety alarm administrator, that it will be nearly impossible to replace him. Rex was recognized for his leadership as chair of the Ways and Means Committee and for having the innate ability to get "blood out of a turnip." Rex also contributed articles to the FARA newsletter, reviewed and made suggestions on all publications, worked tirelessly to bring in new members and developed ways to increase FARA funds through initiatives such as the silent auction and 50/50 raffles. Rex is, and always has been, FARA's greatest champion, and he will be sorely missed on the Board. Rex received a plaque and a gift certificate to his favorite hotel chain as a small token of our appreciation.

General Membership Meeting

The 10th annual General Membership Meeting took place on Wednesday, April 26, 2006. Reports on the status of the association were given by the President and the Treasurer, as well as by all Committee Chairs on work that was accomplished over the past year. (To review a copy of the full annual report, please visit the web site, www.faraonline.org, under the "About Us" section.)

Members were asked for input on the initiatives included in the draft 2006-2007 Strategic Plan. President Beaubien appointed Committee Chairs, but asked for volunteers to replace the current Board members, who serve as committee chairs. She also urged everyone, regardless of how long they had been in the alarm management field, to get involved and provide input on committees.



Running unopposed, three individuals were elected to the Board by acclamation, including President Norma Beaubien, Treasurer Steve Heggemann, and At-Large Director Gerry Miller. As no member submitted a notice of intention to run for the 2nd Vice President seat, nominations were taken from the floor to fill the position vacated by W. Rex Bell. Stan Hanson received a nomination from the floor to serve as 2nd Vice President, and he was elected to that position unanimously.

Executive Director Brad Shipp discussed potential Bylaw amendments, including adding two additional seats to the Board of Directors, and broadening the scope of the association to become more active in fire related issues. The membership voted in favor of the structural changes to the Board, which will be implemented over the next two years. The Board will consist of:

President	3 At-Large Directors
Vice President – Electronic Security	Electronic Security Associate Director
Vice President – Fire Alarms	Fire Alarm Associate Director
Secretary	Vendor Associate Director
Treasurer	

Eight seats on the Board are exclusively for public safety professionals, and three seats are exclusively for associate members. To view the full ratified Bylaw, visit our web site at www.faraonline.org.

Board of Directors Meetings

The FARA Board of Directors held its bi-annual meeting to kick off the training symposium on Monday, April 24, 2006. The Board met again on Friday, April 28, 2006. Highlights of those two meetings are listed below.



The Board reviewed and approved the 2005 and projected 2006 budgets and received a report from FARA Treasurer Steve Heggemann that the association is doing extremely well financially. FARA Executive Director Brad Shipp reported that the association as a whole is also doing very well, with increased membership and attendance at the training symposium. The Board discussed the PDQ Award and our future participation in the program, as well as representation at ISC West for the award ceremony. There was detailed discussion on a possible FARA/NESA Certification program, FARA member participation on NESA committees, implementation of bylaw amendments, and a new CSAA on-line alarm user course.



Additional highlights include:

- Success of Assistance Requests
- Expansion of web site
- Regional training course scheduled for Brampton, Ontario May 31-June 1
- The need to set guidelines for the FARA Mentoring Program and adding that program to the Membership Committee's responsibilities
- Making the Ad Hoc Associate Committee a full FARA committee
- Dissolution of Conference Committee and transferring responsibility for the annual training symposium to the Training and Certification Committee
- Assignment of new members to a committee with their welcome materials
- Greater FARA participation in CSAA annual conferences
- Creation of a Fire Committee

Extras!

FARA and the North Texas Alarm Association rolled out the first mass distribution of the Alarm User Training Video, produced by the NTAA and sponsored, in part, by FARA. All symposium attendees received a copy of the DVD, which we hope will be used by public safety as a training aid in alarm user awareness classes, community meetings, fairs, neighborhood watch groups, Chamber of Commerce meetings and before other business groups to show how easy it can be to reduce and prevent false alarms. The DVD is also available on FARA's web site for viewing by consumers and other visitors to our site.

In another first for FARA training symposiums, FARA held a nightly hospitality suite for attendees to further network in a more relaxed manner. The hospitality suite was extremely successful and will be continued in future training symposiums, as it provides a mechanism for attendees to talk one-on-one with each other and raise questions or concerns that they may not feel comfortable doing in a classroom setting. Jim Cogswell proved to be an excellent host, as 80 people crashed his suite on a nightly basis. Many thanks to him for serving in this capacity.



The Silent Auction was a fantastic success this year! Diane McCarthy from our host city created fabulous theme baskets, which really showcased all portions of San Francisco, from Haight Ashbury to Chinatown, from Ghirardelli to Alcatraz, from Japantown to the Wine Country. The baskets brought in top dollar and were greatly appreciated by the bidders. With the baskets, a signed Shaq basketball jersey and all of the other wonderful items donated by individual members, there was certainly something for everyone to enjoy! Bidding was fast and furious right until the end. FARA earned over \$1200, which will be used to benefit the membership through written publications and further training opportunities. FARA thanks everyone, who so generously donated items to this incredibly successful fundraising endeavor.

Featured Bulletin - Burglar Alarm Systems and Apartments False Alarm Prevention and Security Tips

With modern technology providing for enhanced security systems, today's apartment renters are protecting their dwelling and their personal items from possible theft. Along with the new technology in security systems made possible today, many apartment complexes may provide the security system for your unit. With having the latest in security systems, comes the responsibility of the apartment dweller to prevent false alarm activations. This bulletin provides some basic alarm user tips that help minimize false alarm activations from your security system.



The full list of bulletins, which have been approved by the board, can be accessed on our web site at http://www.faraonline.org/html/consumer_tips.html

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 managers 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 law enforcement, the alarm industry and the alarm users.

Contact Us

False Alarm Reduction Association

10024 Vanderbilt Circle, Unit 4

Rockville, MD 20850

Email: info@faraonline.org

<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

Submitted articles in this newsletter are the expressed opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Officers and Directors of FARA.