



FIRE & INVESTIGATOR

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Cover images courtesy of IAAI Photo Contest Winners see page 9.



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president's perspective



George A. Coddling, IAAI-CFI, MIAAI

It is a great honor to assume the position of the International Association of Arson Investigators president for a year beginning April 2016. If you don't know me, I will just tell you that I bring a somewhat unusual background to this position as I am a prosecuting attorney for the state government, and also a fire investigator for the fire department. I have civil litigation and insurance experience, and have worked as a police officer and a firefighter. So other than the scientific and technical fields, I have experience in many of the primary areas represented by this Association.

Between my time as Director and a member of the Executive Team, I've been on the Board for over 10 years now and I've seen so many people work hard to keep this organization running, including you, our executives, committee chairs, past presidents, and others. Our Executive Director and office staff are committed and working very hard as well. I am confident by everyone's commitment and am glad there is a great talent behind this Association to keep it functioning so smoothly.

One of the biggest pieces of news for this year is that our membership has hit the 9,000 mark. In spite of tightening budgets, it's nice to see that people recognize the need to be a member of the IAAI and the benefits of doing so. Of course, between the IAAI and its affiliated chapters, we have two or three times that many people in our larger family.

A number of good things have been accomplished by the IAAI recently. One recent event I am proud of is a unanimous Board statement, drafted by the Public Advisory Committee, supporting the review of past convictions where fire science and methodology were called into question. As a prosecutor I think it's important that we acknowledge these issues and work to find ways to correct any injustices that might be found.

In other news, we began a public information officer (PIO) program to designate senior members who can quickly respond to press questions and provide relevant information and statements, increasing our public profile. We have developed and strengthened our relationships and partnerships with other associations and entities as never before. Our web platform, CFTrainer.Net®, is increasing the number of available modules and has tens of thousands of users worldwide.

Importantly, our IAAI-CFI® recently received accreditation not only from the venerable Pro Board, but also from the Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board, (FSAB). This gives our program credibility not only from the fire service side, but from the forensic sciences community as well. As you may know, there is a major push underway in the forensic community to define -- and improve -- the

IAAI leaders FOUNDATION, INC. update

Board of Directors



David R. Sneed
President



Joe Sesniak
Vice President



Rick Jones
Director-at-Large



Dan Hebert
Secretary/Treasurer



George Coddling
Director



Scott Bennett
Director



Dan Heenan
Director

The 2016 ITC in Orlando, Florida is over, and the IAAI Foundation Board is celebrating a very successful year. The Board had the pleasure of meeting the five recipients of the newly designed JCW-RD Scholarships, which provides financial assistance to attend the ITC or similar training. We congratulate Jerome Duet, Michael Forbes, Adam Johnson, Matthew Peters and Kathleen Summersgill for their dedication and desire to improve their careers in the Fire Investigation profession.

I want to remind everyone that the IAAI Foundation is accepting applications for the 2017 John Charles Wilson-Robert Doran Sr. Scholarship program until August 1, 2016. The John C. Wilson-Robert Doran Sr. scholarships provide financial aid to IAAI and IAAI Chapter members to offset the costs of registration and lodging while attending the ITC or similar approved training events, it is not intended to cover all of the cost of attendance. Applications and additional information about the program and the Foundation can be obtained from the Foundation website at www.iaaifoundation.org.

We are happy to share the good news that the raffle for the Indian® Chief Dark Horse® motorcycle was a huge success! Although ticket sales started slowly, through the diligent and endless efforts of Dan Hebert and the gang from Louisiana we reached our established goal of



and . . . the winning ticket for the Indian motorcycle purchased by Mr. Robert Wisniewski of New York was present at the conference and after some deliberation he accepted the \$13,000 cash prize instead of the motorcycle. Robert Wisniewski is



executive director's view

Deborah Keeler



*talk about the overwhelming duties
ilities they face every day and the
on the road five days a week, ...*

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On Thursday after the last class, tickets were drawn, and we announce the winning ticket for the motorcycle, was purchased by Wisniewski of New York. Wisniewski was present at the conference some discussion decided to the \$13,000 cash prize instead of the. The second place ticket, winning the graphed Arnold Palmer poster, is Mr. mon. We congratulate both Robert ski and Rod Ammon for their support foundation. On behalf of the Foundation of Directors, we wish to express our appreciation to everyone who supported endeavor and purchased a ticket. We want k Mr. Mark Svare especially for providing his Indian Chief Dark Horse bike as a during the ITC to promote sales. of the ITC, general elections in two new additions to

ered at the volunteers that tion. They are very busy classes and conferences, often at the many different events round the world. Moreover, this air full-time jobs and lives at 'the road' right alongside them, is much as half of each month under if anyone else feels the es it's like, "the hurrier I go, the more these days, with less. holding tight to their budgets. take on added duties & g or departing staff are not 're supposed to be happy Well, I am happy. Serving mbers, is an honor and a nging position and requires

4. You email the person in the next office or the desk next to yours to ask if they have time to talk.
5. You turn the car around to go back and get your cellphone when you accidentally left it, even if you'll only be gone a few minutes.
6. You call your house from the driveway to get help carrying things in.
7. You don't communicate with friends and family because you 'don't have their email' or they're 'not on Facebook.'
8. You answer every call, regardless of whether it's a convenient time for you or whether you know who is calling. Just in case.
9. You tilt your head sideways to smile :-)
10. You're nodding your head as you read

Washington Wire and Advocacy Committee Update



Advocacy of The Fire Caucus

Past President Roger Krupp,
Chairman, Advocacy Committee

It was good to see and speak with many of our committee members during the ITC in Orlando. Although not real busy we had a good year. We have been fighting to keep H.R. 1329 ATF Elimination Act from moving forward. It is the IAAI's position that elimination of the ATF is not in the best interest of public safety or the fire investigation community. We will continue our vigorous opposition to this bill. We will continue to see progress in updating the PSOB close loopholes regarding some fire investigators and police officers so they remain eligible for PSOB in the unfortunate event of an injury or death while performing their duties. This battle is being fought on the regulatory level as well as in Congress. We expect to see legislation in both the House and Senate addressing this problem in the very near future. We continue working with others to break the logjam

news and views from the Hill

Steve Austin,
IAAI Director of Governmental Affairs

of claims that have not been paid, some which have been pending for years. This is a top priority for IAAI. As reported during the ITC, IAAI has been active the last year with our involvement in several initiatives. We continue to be involved in the development of the National Fire Operations Reporting System (NFORS). NFORS is a database that will be released and beta tested this year with select fire departments. Once the testing is completed, the NFORS will be available to all fire departments. This system is being designed to collect data on fire response incidents. It will provide for documenting fire department operation efficiency. They have added a Fire Investigation Module to be completed by the department investigator to better capture origin and cause data, and remind the investigator to complete the NFIRs report as needed. They will

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The Possibility of Ignitable Liquid Contamination in Flooded Compartments

GAS-FIRED SPACE HEATERS:

Defective products, defective standards, and burned victims

Vytėnis (Vyto) Babrauskas, Ph.D.

Abstract

Space heaters are products which should operate in a safe manner. But some individuals receive severe, sometimes fatal burn injuries from gas-fired space heaters due to sustaining ignition of their clothing. This study examines the relevant product standards and provides data on ignition of clothing textiles from several exemplar heaters. The reasons for the injuries are found to be twofold:

(1) In North America, gas-fired space heaters are tested and Listed (i.e., approved) in accordance with a series of American National Standards Institute (ANSI) product standards. These standards contain provisions for the testing of clothing ignition potential. However, the provisions are inadequate and permit heaters to be Listed which can ignite fabrics in as short a time as 1 second. The defective testing procedures have persisted through numerous editions of the pertinent standards. This is likely due to imbalanced representation on the ANSI committee, which has dominant industry representation with few members who represent the interests of the general public and are technically knowledgeable in fabric flammability hazards.

(2) Some heater manufacturers merely submit their products for testing by Listing agencies, and fail to conduct meaningful testing which would reveal the clothing ignition hazards associated with their designs.

Manufacturers often consider that they have fulfilled their responsibility by providing product warnings. Such warnings are intrinsically ineffective in safeguarding consumers. Alternative designs exist

strategies or recourse to patented schemes. Congress should promulgate a mandatory regulation if unable to provide adequate protection of the against clothing ignitions in their standards.

Keywords: fabric flammability; gas-fired space heaters standards; injury statistics; thermal injury.

Introduction: hazards and injuries

In December 2009, a 21-year old woman pregnant with her first child, was socializing at a country store. She went to the unheated back room upon returning stopped by the gas-fired space heater (the store's only form of heat) to warm herself. She touched the heater "for a couple of seconds," then felt the back of her dress, made of a lightweight, synthetic fabric, was on fire. The young woman suffered 3rd degree burns (Figure 1) and lost her child in stillbirth during the accident. Even though the child did not survive, the woman survived, but with disfiguring injuries that will have for the rest of her life. The victim's attorney, purchaser nor the user of the heater are responsible for any of the features of the appliance, or the space heater providing warmth for the night.

Also in December 2009, the night a 70-year old woman was ignited by a gas-fired space heater in her own home. She died from her burn injuries. The young victim survived and the elderly are more likely to die from burn injuries than are younger persons. The 'burn severity index' A variety of studies have proposed¹⁻⁸, but they are all based on the percentage or greater fraction of total body surface area and extent of injuries, females are more likely to survive than males⁴, and some studies include additional variables, e.g., inhalation injuries.

Incidents such as cited above are neither rare nor unexpected, but they have occurred for decades. For example, in 1979¹⁰: "The victim was wearing a nightgown in the bedroom. He was

Fire investigation

Potential evidence in a flooded compartment (ignitable liquid) is often found in flooded locations. Examples of fuels for home fires are breached by the water into the structure. The area as the water in the basement. The fire in a compartment is building material. These results, the analysis when this

1st Place Accidental
Michael Forbes, IAAI-CFI

Fire & Rescue New South Wales



2016
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AWARDS
Photograph
Winners

Damage to a laptop from an explosion within the battery pack of the unit. The laptop was left on a desk plugged into a power outlet in the bedroom, charging. Fire damage shows the location of the two battery cells that exploded, left side.



2016
IAAI

Investigator of the Year

From 2010 through 2014, the Enid Fire Department had several suspicious fires with 17 of them still under investigation with the cause of "undetermined." One factor that tied all of the fires together was the location of an individual named Martin Painter, who has had previous arson convictions.

In at least two of the fires, a person matching Painter's description was observed in the area. On May 11, 2014, a



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