



ASTEE

American Society of Trace Evidence Examiners

November 2011

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ASTEE at a Glance

2011 is shaping up to be a great year for trace evidence. There are a great many events and training opportunities dedicated to trace evidence lined up in various locations around the United States.

Some events of note include the 2011 annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences during which there will be several trace related workshops both on and off site. ASTEE will be making their presence known at this meeting through a joint workshop in conjunction with the McCrone Research Institute to be held on the Friday prior to the start of the meeting (see page 12 for the flyer). In addition to this workshop, we will be hosting a business meeting/member reception to be held the evening of Monday, February 21st. The planning for this reception is ongoing. Further details will be provided via e-mail shortly.

Of major note is the announcement of the 2011 Trace Evidence Symposium to be held in Kansas City, Missouri between August 8th through 11th. The call for papers is now open at:

<http://projects.nfstc.org/trace/2011/call/index.php>

This event will be a must attend for anyone interested in trace evidence. ASTEE will be planning an additional business meeting for this event as well.

Chris Bommarito has been hard at work assembling the next issue of the journal which should be released shortly. On this note, any individuals submitting abstracts for presentation at the 2011 Trace Evidence Symposium will be encouraged to submit their written work for publication in the Journal of ASTEE. There is no better way to reach a trace based target audience.

(cont. on page 2)

ASTEE at a Glance *(Cont. From Page 1)*

In the meantime, if you have any work that you would like to submit, please contact Chris at:

bommaric@michigan.gov

In our last newsletter, we issued a call for volunteers to staff the many open positions in the organization. We received a healthy response to this call. At this time, we would like to welcome the following individuals to the committees and positions listed below:

Regional Representatives:

Ted Schwartz-Northeast

Thomas Simpson-Mid-Atlantic

Jen Remy-Southeast

Suzanne Noffsinger-Midwest

Rhonda Banks-Northwest

Marty Fink-California

Brad Rogers-Southwest

Patrick Buzzini-Academic Representative

Membership Committee:

Diana Wright, Lisa Schwenk, and Michelle Palmer-MacBay

Education Committee:

Andrew Bowen, Sarah Walbridge-Jones, and Jeremiah Morris.

Webmaster:

Bryan Holden

Newsletter Editor:

Alice Ammen

We would like to thank all of these individuals for their willingness to get involved.

We would also like to thank **Kelly Brinsko** and **Thom Hopen** for their excellent contributions to this newsletter. Please be sure to read their articles on pages 5 through 8.



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think forward

Spectroscopy

Membership

We currently have 210 members and are looking to increase this number as we go. If anybody knows of anyone who would like to join, we have included a membership application on page 11. Additional membership information can be found on the website.

Most of our members have paid their 2010 dues, but there are a few stragglers. For those of you who have not had the opportunity to pay, please contact our Treasurer **Sandy Parent** at **Sandy.Parent@txdps.state.tx.us** ASAP. We do have a PayPal option available for payments.

Training and Events

2010 Pattern and Impression Evidence Symposium

This past August, the National Institute of Justice sponsored a Pattern and Impression Evidence Symposium in Clearwater Beach, Florida. This event was attended by over 300 individuals from various disciplines including forensic scientists, identification specialists, academic scientists, legal scholars, attorneys, and judges.

Amongst the attendees, ASTEE was well represented with approximately 20 members attending, numerous of whom made substantial contributions to the program.

The format of the event was similar to that of the past Trace Evidence Symposium with several workshops, various panel discussions, and technical sessions. Some highlights of note included discussions on the scientific validity of pattern and impression evidence, research into the quantitation of individuality, and numerous presentations discussing the practical aspects of performing impression examinations and comparisons.

Upcoming Events

AAFS 2011

We are currently planning to host a member reception at the upcoming meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences in Chicago scheduled to take place the week of February 21st. The reception has tentatively been scheduled for the evening of Monday, February 21st from 8 to 10pm at one of the academy sites. Additional information will be available via e-mail and on the website as the planning for this event develops.

2011 Trace Evidence Symposium

The location of the next Trace Evidence Symposium has been set and the call for papers is currently open. Hopefully you will be able to make your way to Kansas City, Missouri for what promises to be another excellent event.

Information for the symposium can be found at: <http://projects.nfstc.org/trace/2011/>

We will be organizing a business meeting and reception to be held during this event as well.

Inter/Micro's 62nd Anniversary and McCrone Research Institute's Golden Jubilee

Article Contributed By **Kelly Brinsko**

Inter/Micro, the premier microscopy conference held every year in Chicago, celebrated its 62nd anniversary July 12 – 16, 2010. In order to also commemorate McCrone Research Institute's Golden Jubilee, the meeting took place at the Institute's lab and classrooms instead of a stodgy hotel, which lent the gathering an air of camaraderie and charm. Presentations on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday covered all things microscopy, while a two-day Animal Hair Identification Workshop on Thursday and Friday, led by ASTEE member **Jason Beckert** of Microtrace, rounded out the meeting. Several other ASTEE members attended and participated as well: **Brendan Nytes**, **Bernadette O'Reilly**, and **Chris Palenik** from Microtrace, **Pete Diaczuk** from John Jay College, **Andrew Bowen** from Stoney Forensic, and **Sebastian Sparenga**, **Meggan King**, and myself from McRI. Presentation topics included:

- Cyanoacrylate as an Embedding Medium for Fiber Cross-sections, by Sebastian Sparenga
- The Sugary Sweet Side of Microscopy, which determined the optical properties for the artificial sweetener sucralose, by Meggan King
- The Great Mouse Detective, in which Brendan Nytes presented case examples of food contaminants, including mice (in whole or pieces)
- Fungi as Forensic Tools, by Bernadette O'Reilly
- The Hammer is Back, in which Pete Diaczuk used high-speed photography to investigate "hammer bounce," where the hammer of a revolver strikes the primer twice (I was hoping Pete would wear parachute pants and retitle his talk "Stop...Hammertime!" but perhaps I'm dating myself)
- A Method for Isolating Trace Evidence from Plastic Explosive Samples, by Andy Bowen
- Microcrystal Tests for the Detection of Cathinone and Cathine in Khat, by Kelly Brinsko
- A Dog by Any Name: The Microscopical Identification of the Hair of the Japanese Raccoon Dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*), by Jason Beckert

Look for many of these talks to appear as articles in The Microscope or the Journal of ASTEE!

The intimate and welcoming atmosphere of Inter/Micro became even more friendly (and boisterous!) during Monday's Backyard Bar-B-Que, which preceded world-renowned microscopist and scientist Brian Ford's annual evening presentation. Brian's talk this year was entitled "Censoring the Cell: How the Microscope is Abused by the Media." As he hails from Britain, many of Brian's criticisms were directed at the BBC, though we all know American media has these issues as well (CSI, anyone?).

(Continued on following page)

Inter/Micro's 62nd Anniversary and McCrone Research Institute's Golden Jubilee

(Cont. from page 5)

More food and drink followed at the Wine & Cheese Reception on Tuesday evening. Meeting attendees had a chance to mingle with each other and exhibitors, as well as place bids for the silent auction. Among the items listed were an Olympus POS Microscope, several sets of Cargille refractive index liquids (generously donated by Cargille), and numerous books on microscopy.

Inter/Micro also brings together the members of the State Microscopical Society of Illinois for their annual banquet and award ceremony. The Émile Chamot Award was presented to ASTEE member Skip Palenik for his numerous contributions in the field of microchemistry. As Skip could not attend (for the first time in decades!), Chris Palenik accepted the award in his absence.

Inter/Micro remains one of the few meetings with a large focus on forensic microscopy. For this reason, I encourage all ASTEE members to attend and participate in this worthwhile and enriching meeting. Mark your calendars for next summer, 11 – 15 July 2011. For those of you attending the AAFS meeting in Chicago during snowy, blustery February, Inter/Micro is your chance to actually enjoy Chicago!



Call for papers is now open, For more information visit:

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/events/trace-evidence-symposium/>

Inter/Micro's 62nd Anniversary and McCrone Research Institute's Golden Jubilee



Chris Palenik accepting Chamot award on behalf of Skip



Animal Hair Workshop



Pete Diaczuk all dressed up and giving his presentation



Pete Diaczuk and Ming Zhou (John Jay grad & future ASTEE member)



Brian Ford, Meggan King, & Kelly Brinsko



Sebastian Sparenza giving his talk



Bernadette O'Reilly at the end of her talk



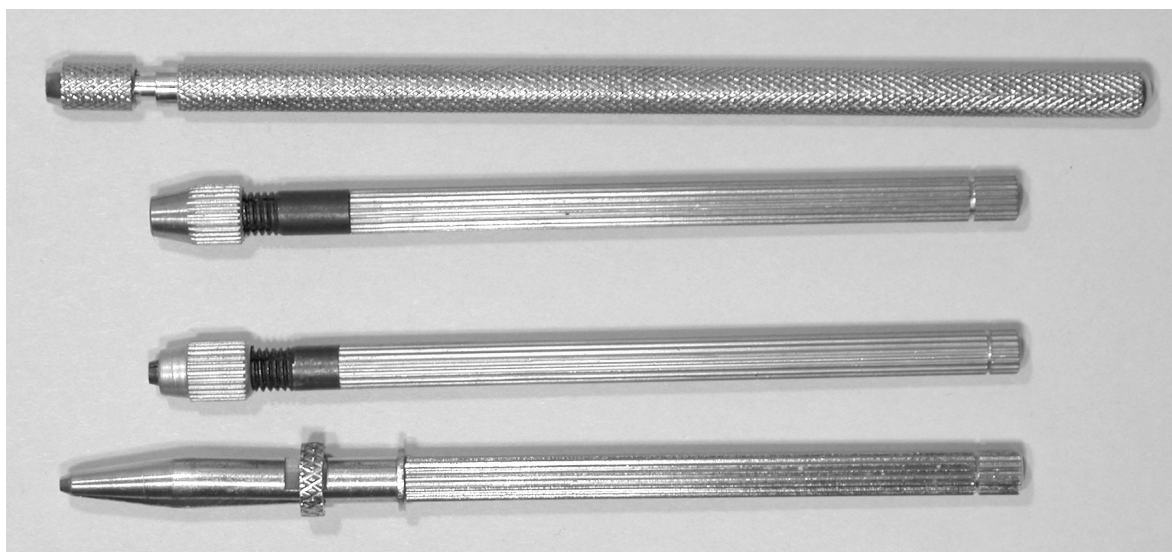
Azriel Gorski & Jay Beckert

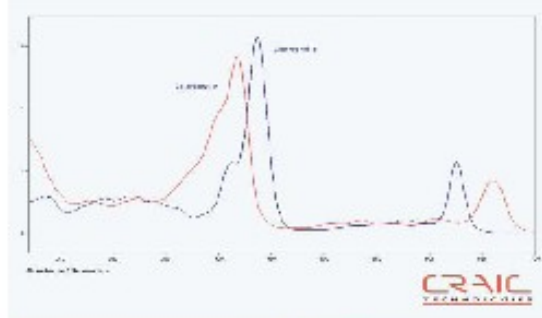
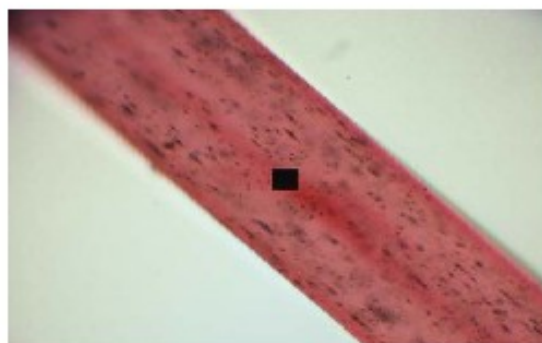
Tricks of the Trade

Tungsten Needle & Micro-Knife Holders

Forensic Chemist Thomas J. Hopen
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
Arson & Explosives Section
2600 Century Parkway, NE, Suite 400
Atlanta, GA 30345

This short article could be more appropriately titled "Tip of the Trade" rather than "Tricks of the Trade" and the name of Stephen Garten, now an IBIS Specialist with ATF, should appear rather than mine since he is the one responsible for finding these holders. Anyway, a few years back I was preparing to teach a "Gizmos & Gadgets" workshop (aka "Tricks of the Trade" workshop) for one of the regional forensic meetings, and I was having trouble finding inexpensive tungsten wire needle holders to include in a kit for the students. Stephen was a student intern working with me at that time and he went on-line and found a wonderful source for tungsten wire needle holders as well as other handy tools. The source is www.FindingKing.com. Once on the website, click on "Jewelers Tools" located on the left side of the page and then on "Pin Vices & Hand Drills" from the drop down menu. There you can browse and choose from a variety of tools that they offer for amazingly inexpensive prices. The one product they sell which I want to make you aware of is "Item #: Kit-9137". This item includes three different needle holders plus a holder which can be used for micro-knives. If one searches the site each holder can be bought individually ranging in price from ~ \$3 to \$5 but all four holders shown below (Item #: Kit-9137) can be purchased for less than \$9. If one only wants to purchase the bundle of tools, go to www.FindingKing.com then in the "Search" window type in "9137" and it will take you directly to "Item #: Kit-9137". Thank you Stephen - I owe you one – or maybe two!





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TECHNOLOGIES

Sixth National Sexual Assault Response Team Training Conference

**May 25 – 27, 2011
Austin, Texas**

The primary focus of the 2011 SART Training Conference will once again expand the capacity of SARTs to promote health and healing of sexual assault victims, hold sex offenders accountable for their crimes, and realize the hope of preventing further sexual violence in their communities.

The training in 2011 will add an additional concentration on responding to victims of sexual assault in Indian Country. This focus will serve to help practitioners increase their collective capacity to respond to sexual assault, provide them a forum to consider how to best facilitate healing and justice for Native victims, and ultimately meet the goal of developing sustainable and high-functioning SANE/SART programs in Tribal communities. It is essential to the success of Tribal SARTs that all disciplines involved receive adequate training and technical assistance.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

OVC has made numerous scholarships (up to \$1500.00 per person) available to encourage attendance at the conference:

- 25 SART team scholarships (100 individuals)
- 25 Tribal / Native Alaskan team scholarships (125 individuals)
- 50 Law Enforcement individual scholarships

For conference updates and scholarship applications, log on to:



www.sane-sart.com



Sponsor: SANE-SART Resource Service, Minneapolis, MN (612-873-2434)
with funding awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs,
U.S. Department of Justice, Grant No. 2009-VF-GX-K011

**SAVE THE
DATE**



**Registration
opens
November
2010**

ASTEE Membership Application

DIRECTIONS:

1. All information supplied on this form WILL be verified.
2. Type or print in ink and check your preferred mailing address.
3. Attach a copy of your curriculum vitae/resume and lists of applicable forensic coursework to this form.
4. Have two (2) current ASTEE members propose and second your membership application.
5. Enclose a check or money order (made payable to ASTEE), for the non-refundable \$5.00 application fee.
6. Mail application and fee to the Membership Chair (see address below).

Name:

Agency:

Title:

Preferred Mailing Address: ☐ HOME ☐ BUSINESS

Business Phone: () EXT. _____ E-mail Address:

Education and Experience: (attach Curriculum Vitae/resume and a list of applicable forensic course work)

Please select any disciplines in which you actively conduct analysis/examinations.

Administration	Forensic Education	Impression Evidence
Arson	General Unknowns	Ink
Explosives	Glass	Paints & Polymers
Fibers	Gunshot Residue	Physical Matches
Fire Debris	Hairs	Soil

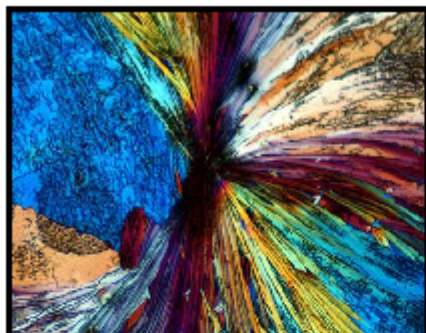
My signature acknowledges that all information on this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant Date

PROPOSAL FOR MEMBERSHIP:

ASTEE Member #1 Signature: Printed Name: Daytime phone: ()	ASTEE Member #2 Signature: Printed Name: Daytime phone: ()
ASTEE Membership Chair Amy Michaud ATF National Laboratory 6000 Ammendale Road Ammendale, MD 20705	For ASTEE Use Only Date application & fee received: Check No. ASTEE Membership No.

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT



Microchemical Analysis of Methamphetamine and Related Materials

Sponsored by ASTEE

To be held at

MCCRONE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
2820 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60616
www.mcricri.org

Friday, February 18, 2011 (the Friday prior to AAFS!)
8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A recent government study indicated that the use of methamphetamine is on the rise; accordingly, a national increase in illicit drug labs has been reported. With these trends in mind we will host a one-day workshop on the microchemical examination of methamphetamine and the articles associated with the clandestine production of this drug.

Instructor Jim Dunlop of the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office will include lectures and practical application exercises covering the examination and microchemical identification of methamphetamine, along with its precursors, reagents, and catalysts used during the synthesis. The workshop will feature a detailed explanation of the reagents used and how they are prepared, as well as new techniques developed to facilitate these examinations, such as a micro gas generator.



Microchemical analysis of several substances will be covered: Methamphetamine, Pseudoephedrine, Ammonia (ammonium), Iodine, Red Phosphorus, Sodium Hydroxide, Lithium, and Sulfuric Acid.

Students will receive a certificate from McCrone Research Institute after successful completion of this unique, hands-on workshop.



To register, contact Therese Newman
Phone: 312-842-7100
tnewman@mcricri.org

Cost: \$250
Cost for ASTEE Members: \$200
Lunch is included.





Treasurer/Dues Remittance

ASTEE

P.O. Box 10495
Austin, TX 78766

General Business

PO Box 10538
Trenton, NJ 08650

WWW.ASTEETRACE.ORG