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August 2022

ASTEE Newsletter

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Message from the President

Dear ASTEE Members,

As the saying goes, time flies when you're having fun. The past few months have flown by as usual, and we are fast approaching the event that is on everyone's minds...and their travel funding requests! If you haven't heard, MAFS and ASTEE are joining forces again in 2022 for the MAFS Fall Meeting in Des Moines, Iowa. This is a meeting you will not want to



miss, as it is packed with opportunities for trace evidence practitioners. Workshop topics include pressure sensitive tape, explosives residues, fire debris, SEM/EDX, gasoline identification, physical fit, and a tire manufacturing plant tour. MAFS also has many fun after-hours activities planned like a brewery crawl, open house at a bonobo conservation program, Iowa Cubs baseball game, wine and cheese reception, student forum, trivia, and of course their signature Gala. The theme for this year's Gala is "Wizards of Forensic Science", and as always, costumes are highly recommended. What's more, I'm happy to announce that ASTEE will be hosting its own reception for members. Date, time, and event details will all be coming soon, but we hope to see you all there.

Earlier this year in March, I issued two challenges to the ASTEE membership for 2022: to consider serving on one of ASTEE's many committees, and to share the value you find in ASTEE with non-members to help our trace evidence community grow. I am

Message from the President continued...

excited to share that since March, you have really stepped up and made both happen. Multiple committees have welcomed new members in recent months who have never previously served ASTEE. Representation from new and diverse voices is something that will not only sustain trace evidence in future generations, but allow it to grow and evolve with new ideas. ASTEE has also seen many new applications for membership and a total of nine new members have been approved so far this year. I am very encouraged by the progress I see, and for your part in ASTEE's growth. I thank those of you who have taken on a new role of service or have tipped off a colleague that they were missing out on being a part of our wonderful, fulfilling professional community.

Since you have already answered the call for my two previous requests, I have another. This time I want to specially address the Regular, Charter, Founder, and Emeritus members in our ranks. You create your professional legacy on a daily basis, all throughout the many years of your career. Whether you spend 30 years behind one microscope honing your craft, or rising through the ranks all the way from lab technician to lab director, every experienced member of ASTEE has knowledge to share with the younger generation. I personally have benefited from so many great teachers, mentors, and advocates during the first decade of my career and I am so grateful for their invaluable time and attention. ASTEE members do a spectacular job of passing on their knowledge because we are all aware of how important experience is in this field. But I want to challenge you to do more. I want you to find a new way or a new person with whom to share your knowledge and experience. It could be as simple as a conversation at the upcoming MAFS-ASTEE meeting with a forensic science student who is interested in trace evidence. Or it could be an offer to take a new examiner under your wing in a long-term mentorship role. The goal is to find a new or different way to share your experience, whatever that may look like to you.

The success of this new request is much harder to gauge, and there is no metric at which I can look to show that it is happening or that it is working. So I implore you, if you think about this in the coming months and you take a new opportunity to pass on some trace evidence knowledge to a student, a trainee, or an examiner who is early in their career, please let me know about it. I want to know what our community is doing to pass on its institutional knowledge, and I want an opportunity to share these "good news stories" with the rest of ASTEE. As always, you can reach me at asteetrace@gmail.com or daniel.e.mabel.civ@army.mil.

Best regards,



Daniel Mabel (he/him/his)

2022 ASTEE President



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ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates

Awards Committee

Upcoming ASTEE Travel Awards

- A \$500 travel award to attend the joint Mid-Atlantic Association of Forensic Scientists and ASTEE meeting, which is being held from September 11 to 16, 2022, at Des Moines Marriott Downtown in Des Moines, Iowa. **Deadline: August 8, 2022.**
- A \$500 travel award to attend the Inter/Micro 2022 International Microscopy Conference, September 20 to 23, 2022, in Chicago. **Deadline: August 23, 2022.**

In order to be eligible for these awards, the applicant must be a member in good standing with ASTEE, traveling greater than 50 miles, and giving an oral or poster presentation. To be considered for this award, members should email an essay of a maximum of 1000 words detailing why they should be given this award, membership number, and details regarding the oral or poster presentation they will be giving at the meeting to the Awards Committee at Darrel.Hall@osp.oregon.gov.

Research Grant Award

ASTEE wants to support your research ideas. The Research Grant Award provides \$500 for a project that will advance the field of Trace evidence. Applicants must have proof of membership in ASTEE and submit a written research proposal. The award recipient will provide a summary of their research results to the ASTEE Board of Directors within one year of receiving the grant. **Deadline: August 3, 2022**

The Professional Development Award Is Back!

The ASTEE Professional Development Award is meant to promote and support training in the field of Trace Evidence. Professional development activities not only deepen our knowledge and skills as professionals, they also energize us with a new enthusiasm. This has a profound impact on the advancement of the field and furthers the mission objectives of ASTEE. This award is offered in partnership with the McCrone Research Institute in Chicago, IL. Applicants must be current ASTEE members in good standing. The award is given in the form of funding for any upcoming McCrone Research Institute class and up to a \$500 reimbursement for travel. Virtual training courses qualify for this award but will not include the \$500 travel stipend. **Deadline: September 16, 2022.**

Go to asteetrace.org/awards for more information about the awards program.

Publications Committee

Newsletter

We are always looking for new content to share with ASTEE Members! Please send any ideas for ASTEE Newsletter content, including *News You Can Use* topics, to Kiersten Coffin (Kiersten.Coffin@dps.texas.gov).

JASTEE

The JASTEE team is pleased to report that there are a few manuscripts in the peer review process. We hope to publish these papers in an issue of JASTEE in the coming months. Please continue to consider JASTEE for publishing your work in the field of Trace Evidence!

ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates continued...

Education Committee

The Education Committee is pleased to announce a webinar entitled “Hair Root Staining – What Can Hematoxylin Do For Your Laboratory?” on Tuesday, August 16, 2022 from 1-2 pt EST, hosted by FTCoE/RTI. The instructor will be Evie Nguyen from the NC State Crime Laboratory. Additional information and webinar registration can be found here: <https://forensiccoe.org/webinar-2022-hair-root-staining/>

Elections Committee

ASTEE Election- Coming October 2022

ASTEE will be holding elections in October for the following 2023 Board of Directors positions:

- President-Elect (1-year term, then serves as President for 1 year): Fulfills the President’s duties should the president be absent, leave office or become incapacitated. The President’s duties include: presiding at meetings; conducting the business of the Society, and promoting the fulfillment of the Society’s objectives.
- Treasurer (2-year term): Keeps Society financial records, safeguards its funds, keeps the membership list current, notifies the membership chair of address changes, deposits all monies received by the Society in accounts approved by the Board, files the Society (Corporate) Annual Report, and submits the corporate renewal fee.
- Director (3-year term): Act at the direction of the executive board (President, President- Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary) to carry out assigned tasks on behalf of the Society. Directors are voting members of the Board.

Serving on the ASTEE Board is a great way to contribute to the organization and to have a positive impact on the forensic science community. If you are interested in serving on the ASTEE Board of Directors in any of these positions, please send a photo along with a brief bio detailing your qualifications and the reasons why you would like to serve on the Board to Katie Igowsky, Katherine.Igowsky@state.mn.us, by September 9, 2022. The election will take place via electronic ballot in October.

Research Committee

The ASTEE Research Committee has recently added a new topic to the ASTEE Forum!

<https://forum.asteetrace.org/category/17/research-needs>

The “Research Needs” section contains lists of trace evidence research ideas organized into various subcategories based on the type of evidence involved. This listing has largely been taken from a document developed several years ago by the Research Committee, and includes items for hairs, fibers/fabric, glass, paint, tape, lubricants, soil, GSR, explosives, and fire debris, as well as miscellaneous and general trace. ASTEE members are encouraged to reply to the appropriate topics with any new ideas, in addition to any current or anticipated research needs that may arise from casework. Members may also choose to “watch” certain topics and be alerted via email when a new item is posted.

Please reach out with any questions or comments!

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ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates continued...

Administrative and Bylaws Committee

The Board of Directors is reviewing amendments to the Bylaws and Admin Rules that will be put for a vote by the membership in the fall.

MAFS and ASTEE 2022 Annual Meeting

The Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists (MAFS) has partnered with the American Society of Trace Evidence Examiners (ASTEE) for their 2022 Annual Meeting! The meeting will be held Sunday, 9/11 through Friday, 9/16, in Des Moines, IA. The theme of the 2022 meeting is "Wizards of Forensic Science". There are two tracks of Trace Evidence related workshops; topics include pressure sensitive tapes, fire debris analysis, SEM interpretation, and physical fits.

Please also consider submitting a poster or presentation related to Trace Evidence analysis! This could include original research or an interesting case study. [Meeting Information, Registration, and Call for Papers](#)

Deadlines: Early Bird Registration - 8/22; Registration: 9/9; Call for Papers: 8/12

Note: ASTEE members can register for the meeting and for workshops at the MAFS member price!

Important Dates / Deadlines

August 3, 2022	Deadline for ASTEE Research Grant Award applications
August 8, 2022	Deadline for ASTEE MAFS Annual meeting attendance award applications
August 12, 2022	Close of Call for Papers for presentation at MAFS Annual meeting
August 23, 2022	Deadline for ASTEE Inter/Micro attendance award applications
September 9, 2022	Registration deadline for MAFS Annual meeting
September 9, 2022	Deadline for ASTEE Board Nominations
September 11-16, 2022	Mid-Atlantic Association of Forensic Scientists and ASTEE Annual meeting, held at Des Moines Marriott Downtown in Des Moines, Iowa.
September 16, 2022	Deadline for the ASTEE/McCrone Institute Professional Development award applications
October 2022	ASTEE Electronic Ballot for Board of Directors Elections

UV-VIS ABSORBANCE

UV-VIS REFLECTANCE

UV-VIS FLUORESCENCE

RAMAN

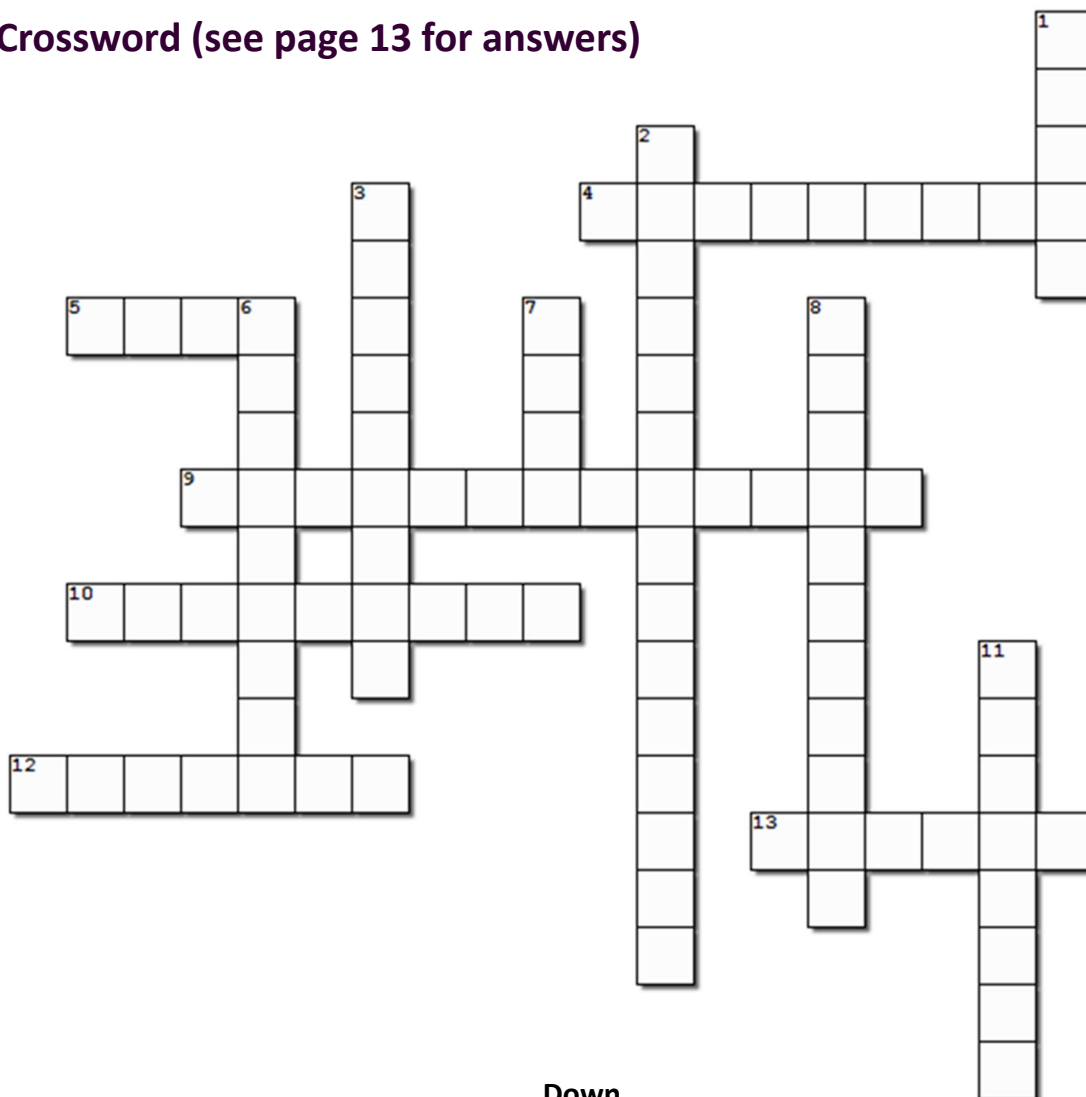
UV-VIS POLARIZATION

GLASS REFRACTIVE INDEX

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ASTEE Crossword (see page 13 for answers)



Across

4. Will you be attending the next Wizard's Convention (annual meeting)? Quick, where will it be?!
5. Your potion accidentally created an explosion. What instrument can you use to determine which ignitable liquids may have contributed?
9. That pesky ogre won't stop eating your magic healing tomatoes. But he's left an impression in the dust...which lifting technique can you use?
10. It's Wizard Independence Day! You get busy creating your favorite red fireworks...what chemical do you use to produce this color?
12. The theme of this year's annual meeting is..." _____ of Forensic Science!"
13. Great news – wizarding robes are now bulletproof! What fiber type are they likely composed of?

Down

1. Bad news...the ogre who steals your magic tomatoes wears brand new Air Force Ones, giving you only this type of characteristic to compare.
2. Your invisibility cloak is here! What feature of the cloak has to be the same as air to make you disappear?
3. You've finally got your wand – it has unicorn hair in the core! The unicorn hair has the same scale pattern as horses, which is what?
6. When cleaning your trunk from magic school, you find a Munsell Color Chart from Herbology Class. What was this used to characterize again?
7. Paint that makes your car "invisible" has recently been developed. What sample introduction technique can be used with the GCMS to determine its composition?
8. Who is ASTEE proud to call the Grand Wizard (President) for this term?
11. The centaur tried to prove he can drive with hooves again and broke the headlight. What should you look at to see if the headlights were on or off at impact?

May We Introduce You To...

May we introduce you to... Brooke Duke!

Occupation: I am a Special Agent Forensic Scientist Supervisor at the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Crime Laboratory in Nashville, TN.

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?

I am assigned to the Microanalysis Unit in which I perform case-work in paint and fiber analysis/comparisons, impression evidence, as well as physical comparisons and fracture matches.

What is your favorite quote?

“Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass... It’s about learning to dance in the rain.” -Vivian Greene

Who has been a mentor to you and how have they helped you?

My high school guidance counselor was one of the first people to push me out of my comfort zone. I was a super shy, reserved kid growing up. I absolutely hated any type of social interactions (especially phone conversations). She requested that I work in the office to file papers. Later that week, she “had to leave the office for a minute” and told me to take messages from anyone that called. I was petrified! But that one uncomfortable moment, made me realize that change isn’t always bad. To this day, we laugh about my reaction. She saw something in me that I didn’t know existed, and I am so thankful for her guidance.

What do you like to do in your down time?

I enjoy spending time outside whether that be biking or working out with my husband, walking the pups, or a long weekend spent at the lake.



May we introduce you to... Holly O'Neill

Occupation: Analytical chemist, Professor

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?

Random unknown substances analysis primarily for civil casework (trace drugs, poisons, etc.), fiber analysis and identification

What do you like to do in your down time?

Exercise and cook, decorate cakes

Tell us something that would surprise others about you.

I spent 2 years living in a train car in the desert

What is the most interesting place you have been?

Saddam Hussein's palace in Iraq



May We Introduce You To...continued

May we introduce you to... Jessica Rice

Occupation: Forensic Specialist IV at the Kansas City Police Crime Laboratory

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?
Gunshot Residue, Fire Debris, Glass, Fibers, Physical Match, and Hair Screening

What is the top activity on your bucket list?

Top activities on my bucket list are a trip through Greece and Italy and scuba diving in the Great Blue Hole off the coast of Belize (just have to get my scuba certification first J)

What do you like to do in your down time?

In my free time I like to play as many different sports as possible (indoor soccer, softball, kickball, sand volleyball, basketball), attend KC Current and KC Glory games, travel, and try out new breweries.

What is the most interesting place you have been?

The most interesting place I've been is mainland Belize. There I got to go cave tubing as well as tour the Xunantunich Maya Ruins. Both places provide beautiful scenery and our guides really helped bring the history of those locations alive.



May we introduce you to... John Chester

Occupation: Forensic Scientist

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?
Fire Debris, Glass, Paint, Polymers, Fibers, Tapes, Footwear Impressions, Tire Track Impressions, Physical End Comparisons, Clandestine Laboratory Precursors and General Chemical Unknowns

What is your favorite quote?

"Travel changes you. As you move through this life and this world you change things slightly, you leave marks behind however small. And in return, life-and travel- leaves marks on you." – Anthony Bourdain, basically applying the Locard exchange principal to travel.

Who has been a mentor to you and how have they helped you?

There's too many to list but I have to mention Kathy Boone, Mark Aho-nen, Will Randle, Lee Bender and Dave Green . They've all helped shape the scientist I've become and inspire me to continue to improve over time.

Tell us something that would surprise others about you.

I'm adventurous when it comes to food. I've had potentially poisonous blowfish in Japan, a turban sea snail, rabbit, rattlesnake, alligator, squab and octopus. The weirder, the better.



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May We Introduce You To...continued

May we introduce you to... Michelle Mercer

Occupation:

Forensic Criminalist (Trace Evidence/Fire Debris Examiner) at the Monroe County Crime Laboratory in Rochester, NY. I am also a member of the OSAC Trace Materials Subcommittee and the chair of the Fiber Task Group. Please reach out if you are interested to get involved!

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?

I work on cases that encompass a variety of sub-disciplines including hair, fiber, impressions, tape, fire debris, and general physical & chemical id's and comparisons (such as bank dye, lachrymators, lubricants, plastics bags, etc.).

What is the top activity on your bucket list?

Right now, it is to see a synchronous firefly event in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

What do you like to do in your down time?

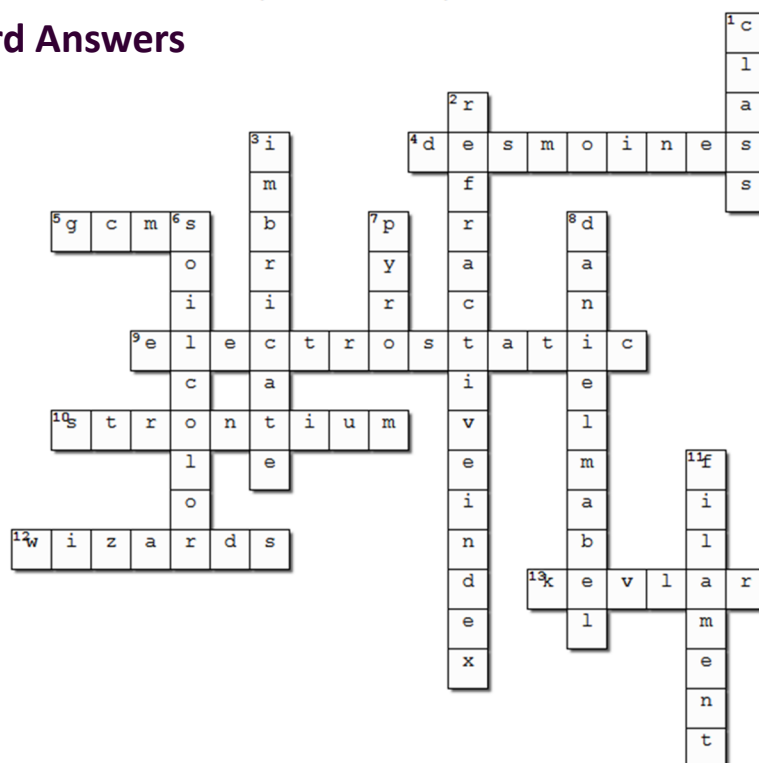
Read, watch romantic comedies, dance (see below), birding... generally hang out at home with my husband Dave and our cats, Jack & Cato. They love birding too!

Tell us something that would surprise others about you.

My husband and I perform traditional German folk dancing with our Vereins (clubs).



ASTEE Crossword Answers





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