



ASTEE

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2023

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December 2023

ASTEE Newsletter

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Message from the President

Greetings Trace Examiners,

The joint meeting between ASTEE and the Northwest Association of Forensic Scientists (NWAFFS) in Salt Lake City was a great success.

Kelsey Winters and **Brenda Christy's** workshop on gasoline and **Sandra Koch's** workshop in hair were well attended and fantastic learning experiences from these experts.

You should have received an invitation to apply for the ASTEE workshop to be hosted by the Hamilton County Coroner's Crime Laboratory April 16-18 on Basic Tapes. **Andria Mehlretter** and **Will Randle** will be the instructors. This workshop will fill up fast and only accommodate 20 students. It will also be free registration sponsored by FTCOE! The lunches will be sponsored by ASTEE and the FSIO Forensic Institute of Ohio.

You received an email to support the Outreach Committee by sending ideas, PowerPoints, Information sheets, or anything you can think of to help spread the awareness of Trace Evidence. We have contributions from **Katie Igowsky** MN BCA, **Emily Weber** Hamilton County, **Kelsey Winters** VA DFS, and **Stephen Favela** TX DPS. Check it out at our [ASTEE Outreach folder Google Drive](#).

Your Board of Directors have voted to create a new Distinguished Member level. You should have received an email inviting you to apply for this level of membership if you have the established qualifications. We have so many great scientists who have given tremendous time and expertise to ASTEE, and now they can be recognized for their support.

It has been a privilege and honor to serve you as President and we can look forward to a better year in 2024 with President **Katie Igowsky!**

Merry Christmas!

Michael A. Trimpe
Hamilton County Coroner's Crime Laboratory Director
2023 ASTEE President



A bit of Fun...

Chrissie Down Under Wordsearch

B	G	A	L	O	X	R	Q	Q	S	T	G	X	O
V	T	T	R	U	B	A	C	V	B	E	B	B	U
Y	S	N	C	S	N	T	R	K	R	O	T	O	Q
P	K	A	B	B	Q	A	C	C	L	B	E	O	I
A	O	S	S	N	W	A	R	P	C	S	A	M	C
V	B	G	A	T	B	B	I	B	H	N	N	E	H
L	I	N	M	A	Y	O	C	E	R	E	Y	R	K
O	H	I	C	H	E	X	K	A	I	E	X	Y	U
V	K	F	O	U	R	I	E	C	S	Q	E	O	A
A	T	R	R	C	V	N	T	H	S	B	I	R	K
U	S	U	O	R	T	G	T	Q	I	H	R	N	K
A	V	S	I	O	H	D	N	C	E	E	A	R	O
Y	V	S	A	U	N	A	M	D	N	T	K	K	U
I	R	R	Q	S	B	Y	A	S	T	U	R	T	Q



PAVLOVA
CRICKET
QUOKKA
SURFING SANTA
BOXING DAY
CHRISSIE
UTE
BEACH
BOOMER
PRAWNS
BBQ

As a challenge — define each of the Aussie terms listed above. See page 12 for the answers...

Important Dates

January 1, 2024	Due Date for AAFS Travel Award
February 19—24, 2024	2024 American Academy of Forensic Science Conference, Denver CO
April 1, 2024	Deadline for applications for ASTEE Basic Tapes workshop
April 16—18, 2024	ASTEE workshop to be hosted by the Hamilton County Coroner's Crime Laboratory on Basic Tapes
June 11-14, 2024	Inter/Micro 2024, Chicago

Multi-Functional Analytical Workstation for Forensic Laboratories

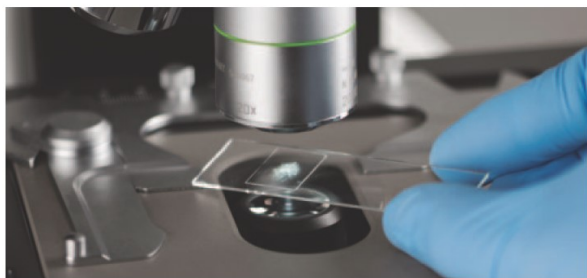
ffTA

TRACE
EVIDENCE
ANALYSIS

The All-in-One Workstation for Trace Evidence Analysis



A modular system, the ffTA is built around a single microscope



Analyze a wide variety of evidence types



ffTA casework management software

A powerful and flexible multi-functional system, ffTA provides the crime laboratory with a range of analytical facilities on a single microscope, operated through a single PC.

By switching from module to module the operator is able to perform a wide range of analytical tasks to extract the maximum amount of forensic evidence in the shortest possible time.

ffTA modules include:

Raman Spectroscopy for the study of materials including paint chips, fibres, inks, and drugs.

UV-VIS-IR Microspectrometry non-destructive analysis of organic compounds including paint and fibres.

GRIM Glass RI Measurement analysis and grouping of glass fragments.

Fluorescent Imaging identification of biological samples, chemicals, and illegal substances.

Polarized Light Microscopy for the examination and identification of natural and synthetic fibres.

Digital Image Processing enhancement and comparison of images captured using a 5MP digital camera.

ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates

Awards Committee

New AAFS Travel Award being offered soon:

ASTEE is pleased to provide a \$500 travel award to attend the 2024 American Academy of Forensic Science Conference, February 19th - 24th in Denver, Colorado. More info about the conference can be found at: <https://www.aafs.org/annual-conference>.

In order to be eligible for the award, 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.

The above information should be emailed to: ASTEE Awards Committee asteeawards@gmail.com. In order to be considered for this award, applications must be received by January 1st 2024. If you have any questions, please contact us via email.

Question about an award? Ask us at ASTEEAwards@gmail.com. More information about our awards can be found at <https://www.asteetrace.org/awards>.

Thank you to Jennifer Chen, Michelle Drake, Dr. Geraldine Monjardez, Luther Schaeffer and Chad Schennum, for their continued service on the ASTEE Awards committee.

Communications Committee

We recently made some administrative updates to the ASTEE website, which will hopefully improve functionality for members when paying annual dues each year before 3/31:

Go to Account -> Settings -> Update payment info. If you previously set up an annual recurring subscription for your dues payments, you can now modify your credit card details (i.e., without canceling your annual subscription and having to re-subscribe).

Go to Account -> Settings -> Billing details. If you previously set up an annual recurring subscription for your dues payments, you can now view the next date your card will be charged.

Go to Account -> Settings -> Pay Now -> Set Up A Reminder Email. If you don't have an active annual recurring subscription, you can now set up an automatic email reminder to remember to pay your dues on a certain date in the future. Select the date in the future you wish to receive a reminder to either a) make a one-time payment or b) set up an annual recurring subscription. ASTEE will automatically email you an invoice on that date as a reminder. Please note, the email reminder is one-time-only (i.e., reminders will not be sent annually). Also, you will still need to make a dues payment (i.e., setting up a reminder email is not setting a date for a payment to be processed).

If you have any questions about the changes or about paying your dues, please email us at asteetrace@gmail.com and we'll be happy to help!



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JusticeTrax Cloud

JusticeTrax products are now available as SaaS installations.



ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates continued...

Education Committee

The Education Committee will have new leadership in 2024 as Jenny Lounsbury steps down as Chair in order to begin her new duties as Secretary. Kyle Mueller will be our new Chair. Thank you Jenny for your years of service! If you are interested in joining the Education Committee, please contact the committee at the email below.

Be sure to visit the ASTEE member forum! We have been posting various journal articles, conference materials, and online resources for your enjoyment. Please post anything you would like to share with the membership! If you have any questions, please contact the committee at the e-mail listed below.

If you have ideas for potential webinars, you can recommend someone (including yourself) who may be able to offer a workshop or webinar, or you or your laboratory are interested in hosting a workshop (virtual or otherwise), please send an e-mail to astee.edu.commitee@gmail.com.

Elections Committee

Here are the results of the 2023 ASTEE Election. Next year we will be looking to fill the President Elect, Treasurer, and a Director's position. Serving on the ASTEE Board of Directors is a great way to get involved in the forensic community and I would encourage you to think about running in 2024.

A huge thank you to those board members that will be stepping down. Your service to ASTEE not only strengthened this organization but also furthered Trace Evidence as a whole. Congratulations to the new board members and thank you to those who will be continuing their service!

2023 Election Results

Out of 261 eligible voters, 148 (57%) voters participated. The results are as follows:

President-Elect

Micheal Villarreal – 97%

Mary Keehan (write-in) – 1%

Kelsey Winters (write-in) – 1%

Troy Ernst (write-in) – 1%

Secretary

Dr. Jenny Lounsbury – 66%

Devin Crago – 34%

Director

Troy Nowak – 55%

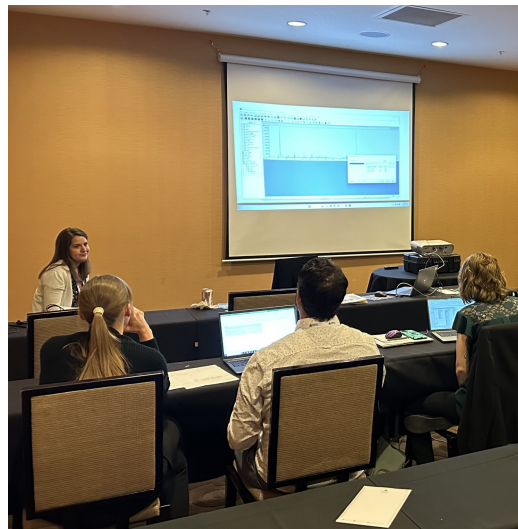
Kaitlin (Katie) Mertz – 30%

Stephanie Freiwald – 16%

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2023 ASTEE Election!

If you were not able to participate in the vote this year because of your membership status I would recommend you consider updating your membership status if you are eligible. Contact the ASTEE membership chair, Stephanie Freiwald, for more information at Stephanie.Freiwald@dps.texas.gov.

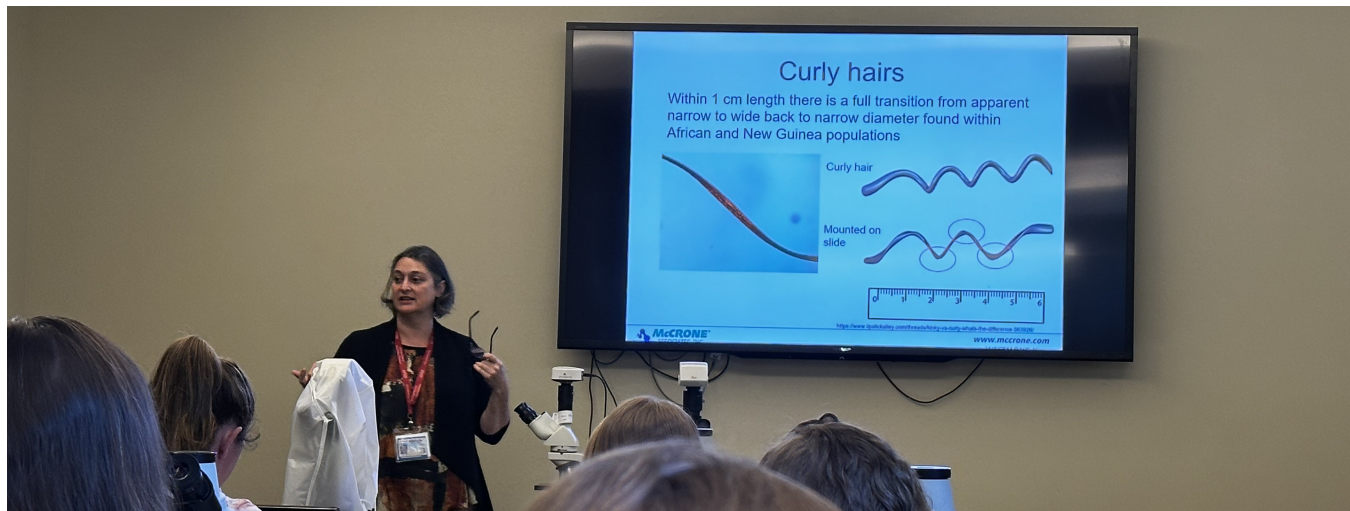
Joint ASTEE and the Northwest Association of Forensic Scientists Meeting September 25-27, 2023 Salt Lake City, Utah



Is Gasoline Present? - Using a statistically based method to graphically display the support for gasoline in an unknown sample instructed by Kelsey Winters and Brenda Christy



Joint ASTEE and the Northwest Association of Forensic Scientists Meeting September 25-27, 2023 Salt Lake City, Utah



Human Hair: A Review
of Features Related to
Ancestry and Somatic
Origin Workshop
instructed by Sandra
Koch



Inter/Micro 2024

Chicago, June 11–14, 2024

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OSAC Update

The Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) Trace Materials Subcommittee met on September 19th 2023. The main highlights from this meeting are as follows:



- Sandy Koch, formerly at McCrone Associates, now at NIST, has been appointed as the new Chair of the Trace Materials Subcommittee
- OSAC 2022-N-0011 *Standard Practice for a Physical Fit Analysis Training Program* is now an OSAC Proposed Standard (as of November 7, 2023)
- OSAC 2022-S-0029 *Standard Guide for Interpretation and Reporting in Forensic Comparisons of Trace Materials* was rejected by the Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB) – document on hold pending FSSB discussion of interpretation scales for all disciplines
- Research & Development Needs have been updated ([OSAC Research and Development Needs | NIST](#))
- Videos have been added to the ***free*** Trace Evidence Collection App developed in collaboration with RTI ([Trace Evidence Collection: Crime Scene Investigation Guide Videos | NIST](#)) – available for download from Google Play and the App Store

Training Opportunity—Basic Tapes Workshop

ASTEE member should have received an email regarding ASTEE's Basic Tapes Workshop, which will be held at the Hamilton County Coroner's Crime Laboratory outside of Cincinnati, Ohio from 4/16-4/18/2024 and instructed by Andria Mehlretter of the FBI and Will Randle from the Missouri State Hwy Patrol Crime Laboratory.

Forensic analysis of pressure sensitive tapes, specifically duct tape, electrical tape, and packaging tapes, will be the subject of this three-day introductory-to-intermediate level workshop. The primary aim of this workshop is to familiarize students with the basics of forensic tape analysis, including tape fundamentals, sample preparation, data analysis, interpretation, and report writing. The maximum students for this workshop is 20. Preference will be given to ASTEE members, so apply for this workshop soon as it is expected it to fill up fast. There is no Registration Fee.

Please send your application (and any questions) to Mike Trimpe at michael.trimpe@hamilton-co.org by April 1st.



(image credit K.Pitts)

This workshop is sponsored by FTCOE (Forensic Technology Center of Excellence) & FSIO (Forensic Science Institute of Ohio)

UV-VIS ABSORBANCE

UV-VIS REFLECTANCE

UV-VIS FLUORESCENCE

RAMAN

UV-VIS POLARIZATION

GLASS REFRACTIVE INDEX

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May we introduce you to... Mackayla Bernard

Occupation: Forensic Scientist at the Texas Department of Public Safety Houston Crime Laboratory

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work? Hairs, Fibers, Paints and Polymers, Impressions (Footwear, tire, and fabric), Physical fit, Lamp Filaments, and soon to be Tape

What is your favorite quote?

"Fight for the things that you care about. But do it in a way that will lead others to join you" – Ruth Bader Ginsburg

What is the top activity on your bucket list? Go visit Ireland and Romania! I want to see it all but top on the list is visiting all the castles I can (top on the list are Blackrock castle and Bran Castle) and different sites such as the stone circles in Ireland (Beaghmore) and Merry Cemetery and the Statue of King Decebalus in Romania. I would love to visit every country but these two are my top priority!

What do you like to do in your down time? I really enjoy reading (specifically true crime, suspense, mystery, and horror), binge watching tv shows, doing anything crafty related, and recently have gotten into gardening!



Australian Christmas Word Search Challenge –Meanings



Quokka	A small marsupial, native to Rottnest Island, known as the happiest animal on earth
BBQ	Short for barbeque (also referred to as a "barbie") - the typical way of cooking an Aussie Christmas breakfast / lunch / dinner when it's over 40 °C (that's 100F)
beach	Place where lots of Aussie families hang out on Boxing Day
Boxing Day	The Public Holiday after Christmas Day
surfing Santa	It's too hot for the traditional suit, so Santa wears boardies and goes surfing to cool off
pavlova	Light and fluffy egg-white meringue, topped with cream and fresh fruit
prawns	Another favorite for Chrissie lunch – served cold and no, they aren't called shrimp...
Chrissie	Short for Christmas (Aussies shorten everything)
cricket	The game, not the insect (though they are there too), often played in the backyard or on the street
boomer	Name for large male kangaroos – google "six white boomers" for a Aussie Christmas song
ute	Short for utility vehicle – a car with an open-tray back – google "Aussie Jingle bells" for a version



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