



# The Oregon Fire Trail

## A 12-STEP PROGRAM FOR IMPROVED HEALTH & SAFETY

PRINTED WITH PERMISSION BY MICHAEL L. DONAHUE, IAAI-CFI

The health and safety of investigators working at fire scenes are among the most neglected areas of training throughout the fire investigation community and few organizations consider it a priority.

Before an organization can begin to develop an effective fire investigator occupational safety and health program, **all** personnel in the organization, especially investigators, need to have the proper “*safety mindset.*” This is an important first step in the identification, recognition and modification of attitudes and behaviors that are potentially detrimental to one’s safety and health. Safety is both an **attitude** and a **behavior**. The following 12 steps are intended as a guideline to assist agency administrators/managers and investigators in changing their behaviors to improve their overall safety and health and to effect positive organizational and operational changes to reduce the potential for future injury, exposure and chronic occupational illnesses and diseases.

1. *Admit Organizational and Behavioral Changes Are Needed.* Personnel must be receptive to wanting to change their attitudes and behavior.
2. *Seek Assistance and Support.* Investigators and managers should reach out to sources of information and assistance that can provide knowledge, expertise and experience to better manage and change beliefs.
3. *Turn Around the Problem.* A conscious decision to turn bad behaviors, practices and traditions into new positive beliefs and safe behaviors must be made.
4. *Take a Critical Look at Your Safety Sense.* Investigators should continuously analyze their beliefs, attitudes and actions with respect to their safety and health.

### IAAI—Hood to Coast

The IAAI was represented in the 2008 Hood to Coast race on August 22nd & 23rd. Team Fireflies was comprised of several members of the I.A.A.I. Including Chapter 31

Past President Cindy Hubert, Jeff Mack, Ryan Fields, Don Hickman, Jill Scott and Driver Marguerite Hickman. The Fireflies finished the race in a time of 30:05:05 and

finished 54th out of 84 in the division.



### Mark Your Calendars

The 2009 Advance Fire and Arson Seminar has been scheduled for September 21st - 24th and will be at the Hood River Inn in beautiful Hood River. Training topics to be determined. Mark your calendars now!



The fall seminar held at the Valley River Inn in Eugene was well attended and was accompanied by some great training both in the advanced track and the basic track. The basic track instructed by Jim Allen and Joe Konefal was a great success. The instruction was well presented and the attendees spoke very highly of the class. The advanced track included NFPA 921 update of the recent changes, Winning courtroom confrontations, geographic profiling, cross cultural interviewing and arson filicide. The training was well presented and very informative. The seminar was touted as “the best seminar we have ever had.” by one attendee.

The banquet was held on Wednesday night this year. The awards presentation was held after dinner along with the swearing in of the new officers. The Outstanding District award was presented to the Rogue Valley District. Outstanding Accomplishment Award was presented to Clatsop County Fire Investigation Team. The Donald G. Petruzzelli - Award of Recognition was presented to the Jackson County Juvenile Department. The William S. Hood - Life Membership Award was presented to Past President Cindy Hubert. The C. Walter Stickney Award for Distinguished Service was presented to Lou Bilancia. The Frank Herlinger – Investigator of the Year Award went to Mathieu LaCrosse of the Marion County Sheriff’s Office.

Dennis Shew was Sworn in as Present replacing outgoing President Ann Lewis. Susie Lovisco moved up to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President position and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President elect was Mo Austin from the Rogue District. Outgoing Directors Allen Periman, Bob Holland and Paul Tekorius were replaced by newly elected directors Janice Madden with the US Forest Service, Ed Bonollo with Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue and Robert Mottice with Gresham Fire Department. Thanks to all outgoing officers and directors for all your hard work and dedication to the organization.

## Oregon Arson Awards Fund

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NW Insurance Council and the Oregon Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) have introduced a new \$5,000 Arson Awards Fund designed to encourage citizens to step forward with information to help put arsonists behind bars. Along with the Awards program, the Oregon Chapter sponsors the Oregon Arson Hotline (800-452-7888)

These calls are handled by the Oregon State Police and are routed to the appropriate agency. If you receive credible information from a citizen leading to an arrest or conviction of arsonists, consider nominating them for the award. The Arson Awards Committee will review each nomination and determine the appropriate monetary award. For more

information on the Oregon Arson Awards Fund and the nomination process, visit <http://www.or-iaai.net/OCAAf.htm>. If you need signs to post at a fire scene call (503) 934-0243.



## 23 Annual Advanced Fire & Arson Development School

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The 23rd Annual Advance Fire and Arson Development School will be held January 13th-16th, 2009 at the Red Lion Hotel in Medford.

Speakers will be Melody Burchyski speaking on “Getting your message out: Creating Effective Posters, Flyers and Web Pages” and “Techniques for Interviewing Young Children” Melody Burchyski has a Master's degree in

Family Studies and has worked with children and families for over 30 years. Jon Zelif speaking on “Public Trust and Uncompromising Integrity” John is the Chief of the Central Point Police Department. Chief Zelif is the Oregon State Chapter Director for the International Association of Ethics Trainers, is a member of the National Institute of Ethics, the Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police & the

International Association of Chiefs of Police.

For further information contact:

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5. *Admit Wrongs to Others.* Management and employees must make a serious commitment to confess their “safety sins.”
  6. *Be Ready to Change Your Behavior.* All personnel throughout the organization must adopt and embrace a proper “safety mindset” and use it all times for all investigative activities.
  7. *Assess Shortcomings and Deficiencies.* Organizations should continuously evaluate their safety polices, standard operating procedures, training and education programs, technology, equipment and resources.
  8. *Make a List (and check it twice).* Investigators should take some time to list all of the potential safety and health hazards, risks, and safety violations associated with their jobs that may cause harm to themselves or others.
  9. *Acknowledge Potential Harm.* Investigators should not be afraid or reluctant to share their safety and health “war” stories with others, including management.
  10. *Institute a Means for a Personal Inventory.* Investigators must continuously evaluate their actions, behaviors and attitudes to promptly identify problems and correct deviations from policies and SOPs that could spell trouble from a safety and health standpoint.
  11. *Continue to Train and Educate Yourself.* Personnel should take advantage of all available training and education opportunities.
  12. *Be willing to help other.* Investigators should not be selfish with their knowledge and abilities.

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## CFITrainer.net

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With budgets tightening and getting time away from work to attend training is getting harder, an option for training is CFITrainer.net CFITrainer.net is a comprehensive system that allows participants to register for programs, track their progress as they complete educational modules, take online evaluation tests regarding the information in the modules and

document their participation. The testing and documentation features are important to fire investigators who require credit for IAAI-CFI® certification. While CFITrainer.net will assist individuals seeking IAAI-CFI® certification, or recertification, the program is intended for and available to all fire investigators regardless of their level of training or certification. There are currently 16 training

programs available. For more information or to register visit the site at [www.CFITrainer.net](http://www.CFITrainer.net)

***Free Web Based  
Training***

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## Investigation Resource

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As we all know as fire investigators most items we find at the scene are unidentifiable masses of plastic and metal except for the bottom of the item that has been protected from the fire. Most products have there UPC coded on the bottom and therefore are still identifiable. There is a free website that can assist with identifying the item in question. [www.upcdatabase.com](http://www.upcdatabase.com) is a

website where you enter in the UPC codes and it will tell you with the item is and/or possibly just the manufacture. The only downfall with the site is that it is a free site ran by a private individual and may not have the items in the data base. Enter the entire number of the UPC As shown in the image “036000212709” and it will give you a brief description

of what the item is. As previously mention it is limited but may be a helpful resource for fire investigators.



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I.A.I. OREGON  
CHAPTER 31

## In Memoriam

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On December 12th, 2008 Oregon State Police Senior Trooper Bill Hakim and Woodburn Police Captain Tom Tennant were killed in the line of duty and Woodburn Police Chief Scott Russell was critically injured when an explosive device detonated at a Woodburn bank.

Hakim was an 11 year veteran of the Oregon State Police and was a Certified Hazardous Device Technician with the Arson and Explosives Section. Hakim was a member of the Mid-Willamette District of the IAAI and participated in various local fire investigation teams. Hakim was

a dedicated, thorough and knowledgeable technician and investigator.

Hakim is survived by his wife Terri, daughter Page and son Victor.

Tennant was a 28 year veteran of the Woodburn Police Department. Tennant is survived by his wife Mary, daughters Becky and Jenny and son Scott.

Russell who sustained life threatening injuries is continuing to receive medical treatment at Oregon Health & Sciences University.

**Senior Trooper Bill Hakim**  
8/31/1957 - 12/12/2008



**Captain Tom Tennant**  
2/20/1957 - 12/12/2008

