



RHODE ISLAND CRIMINALISTICS ASSOCIATION
c/o Rhode Island State Crime Lab
048 Fogarty Hall – URI
41 Lower College Road
Kingston, RI 02881
Phone: 401-874-2893

March 1, 2024

TO: ALL RICA MEMBERS & ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
FROM: DENNIS C. HILLIARD, TREASURER
RE: ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF RICA

The **ANNIVERSARY Meeting** of the Rhode Island Criminalistics Association will be held on **Thursday, March 28, 2022**. This is the **70th Anniversary of RICA**, having first met in East Providence in May 1954.

The meeting will be held at the Greenwood Inn Restaurant in Warwick. Cocktails and appetizers at 6:00 PM, meeting at 6:30 PM and dinner at 6:45 PM. **Cost is \$35.00 per attendee**. The Greenwood Inn in Warwick, RI: <http://www.greenwoodinnri.com/>, is located at 1350 Jefferson Blvd, Warwick, RI 02886, 401-738-3334. **Reservations are limited to 50 attendees**, so get your reservation in promptly.

Please call the Laboratory at 874-5056 or email dhilliard@uri.edu with your reservation(s) by COB Friday, March 22, 2024.

You can send a check made payable to RICA to: Dennis Hilliard, 41 Lower College Road, 048 Fogarty Hall, Kingston, RI 02881-1966. You can also pay by cash or check at the door. Venmo is also an option: use @Dennis-Hilliard-1, put RICA Dinner in the “What’s it for?” line and make the transaction private.

Remember to bring some raffle cash with you.

MENU

Appetizers: Stuffed Mushrooms and Calamari

Entree (select one per attendee): each served w/ chicken soup & salad.

Pot Roast w/ potato & vegetable
St. Chicken Parmesan w/ pasta
Veal Parmesan w/ pasta
Baked St. Scrod w/ potato & vegetable
Eggplant Parmesan w/ pasta

RICA Annual 2024 dues of \$15.00 are due by 1/1/24. RICA 2024 dues will be collected at this meeting.

• SERVICE & TRAINING

The December RICA meeting, held at the Carriage Inn, was well attended by eighty members and guests; everyone enjoyed the food and the raffle. Special thanks to Wakefield Liquors, Tino Natale, Len Andrews, and Bren Zabinski for raffle contributions, and to Barbara Fraiser for assisting with the dinner attendee sign-ins and selling raffle tickets. The President, Secretary and Treasurer were present. The raffle netted \$430.00. A motion was made to donate \$250.00 each to Amos House, the RI Food Bank, and the Jonnycake Center of Peace Dale (in memory of Helen Palmer). The motion was seconded and passed. RICA/RISCL challenge coins that depict the State Crime Laboratory, and the RICA emblems were given to members who attended the meeting. Coins are also available for purchase at \$5.00 per coin. Nominations for officers: President: Tino Natale ('14); Vice President: James Desmarias ('08); Secretary: Jane Northup ('11); Treasurer: Dennis Hilliard ('77). No other nominations were offered, so the current officers remain in their positions for the following year. RICA Directors are: John J. Dube ('91), Michael P. Clancy ('96) and James Clift ('02).

Progress Report for 2023 January – December: There was a 33.3% decrease (539 vs. 809) in the number of new cases and a 27.8% decrease (2,976 vs. 4,122) in the number of exhibits submitted to the Laboratory from January 1 to December 30, 2023, compared to the same period in 2022. Significant increases were in ADW, Auto Theft, Homicide, and Stalking, Harass, Kidnap & Trespass. The largest decreases were in Arson, Firearms Violations, Robbery, and Stolen Property. Backlogs are down for 2023 versus those in 2022. The RI State Crime Laboratory Commission met on January 17, 2024, at the Attorney General's Office in Cranston.

Kit Beagan ('05) continues to work part-time as the NIBIN Technician until April 6, 2024. The position of Technician I (Evidence and NIBIN) was updated to add the responsibilities of an Information Technologist (IT). The position was approved and advertised in December 2023. A search committee reviewed six applications and interviewed three candidates. Edmund Poirier was hired and began work on February 26, 2024. Alec Wyers ('23) continues his training as a Firearm and Toolmark Examiner. Amy Duhaime and Dennis Hilliard attended the NEAFS conference. Neil Clapperton, Emilio Alvarado, and Alec Wyers attended the NorthEast Firearms Examiners meeting. The Laboratory hosted a three-day workshop on Courtroom Testimony in January. The workshop was presented by TriTech training in partnership with the International Association for Identification.

The 2023-2024 BCI course, which began on September 8, 2023, will conclude on April 5, 2024 with 36 graduates. This course continues to be in high demand in RI and Southeast MA. New members were voted into RICA: Paul Lupien, RIDOC, '23; Michael Grandchamp, NKPD '87, reinstatement; Associate Membership: Roland Daigle, RI DOA, 23 and Danny Sendroff, USDHS-HIS/ICE '23.

The Forensic Science Partnership (FSP) is in its 25th year of seminar programs relevant to criminal investigations and forensic science. Many of the previous seminars were recorded and are available for viewing through the [FSP website](#). The schedule for the Spring 2024 seminars is posted at the website. A particularly interesting presentation was provided by Mark Desire of the NYC OCME on his experiences during the [9/11 response](#).

• FUNDING

The proposed FY2024 budget is in progress, and we have submitted the FY2025 request. If you meet with your State Representatives and/or Senators, remind them of the work of the State Crime Laboratory and ask them to support our FY2025 budget request.

As always, if you have an opportunity to speak with our Federal Senators and Representatives or their staff members, remind them of the importance of federal grant programs. We rely on Byrne/JAG and Coverdell Grant awards to maintain our accreditation and provide equipment, supplies, and training opportunities not covered in the budget.

• PERSONALS

James Medeiros ('05) will serve as the President of the New England Division of the International Association for Identification (NEDIAI) for 2024. Their [Annual Meeting](#) will be held in Newport, RI, October 14-17, 2024.

Dennis Hilliard ('77) was honored by the NorthEastern Association of Forensic Scientists (NEAFS) with their Meritorious Service Award. The award was presented at the [Annual Meeting of NEAFS](#) in November.

David Thatcher ('92) reported that his son, Eric, was recently diagnosed as experiencing "chronic intestinal failure" relating to a transplant he received in 2016. A fundraiser was held on January 28, 2024, of which the membership was notified. The Executive Board of RICA authorized a donation of \$500 toward Eric's fundraiser. David reported that the fundraiser was a great success and thanked the RICA for its generous support.