



RHODE ISLAND CRIMINALISTICS ASSOCIATION
c/o Rhode Island State Crime Lab
048 Fogarty Hall – URI
41 Lower College Road
Kingston, RI 02881
Phone: 401-874-5056

November 19, 2024

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

The **ANNUAL Meeting** of the Rhode Island Criminalistics Association will be held on **Tuesday, December 17, 2024**. **RICA Association officers** will be nominated and voted on at this meeting.

The meeting will be held at Richard's Pub in East Greenwich. Cocktails and appetizers at 6:00 PM, meeting at 6:30 PM and dinner at 6:45 PM. **Cost is \$45.00 per member or guest.**

Please call the Laboratory at 874-5056 or email dhilliard@uri.edu with your reservation(s) by COB Tuesday, December 10, 2024. We need a minimum of 40 reservations.

You can send a check made out 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 option: @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.

Richard's Pub <https://richardspubri.com/>, is located at 3347 South County Trail, East Greenwich, RI 02818, 401-884-2880.

MENU

***Appetizers:* Mozzarella Sticks and Baked Stuffed Mushrooms**

***Entree (Buffet Style):* Yankee Pot Roast, Baked Stuffed Chicken Breast, and Baked Stuffed Flounder
Tossed Salad, Potato & Vegetable, Rolls & Butter, Coffee**

***Vegetarian option available upon request**

RICA Annual 2025 dues of \$15.00 are due by 1/1/25. Dues can be collected at this meeting.

• SERVICE & TRAINING

The September RICA meeting, held at East Warren Rod & Gun Club, Warren, RI, was attended by fifty members and guests; everyone enjoyed the food and the raffle. Special thanks to Wakefield Liquors for raffle contributions. Only the Treasurer was present. RICA/RISCL challenge coins were given to members who attended this meeting and had not attended a previous meeting.

For the period of January to September 2024, there was a 26.5% decrease (313 vs. 426) in the number of new cases and a 33.0% decrease (1645 vs. 2457) in the number of exhibits submitted to the Laboratory from January 1 to September 30, 2024, compared to the same period in 2023. The types of cases which increased this period, compared to the same period last year, include: Assault, Drug Related Crimes, Robbery and Stolen Property. The largest increase was in Drug Related Crimes (7 vs. 1). The types of cases which decreased this period, compared to the same period last year, include: Arson, ADW, Auto Theft, Breaking & Entering, Firearms Violations, Larceny, Hit & Run, Sexual Assault, and Vandalism. The largest decrease was in Firearms Violations (147 vs. 243).

Laboratory staff made fifteen (15) presentations during this period. Laboratory staff members attended thirty-eight (38) training programs, on-line and in-person. There were seventeen (17) tours of the State Crime Laboratory and two (2) interviews. The Laboratory hosted two students for internships this summer.

Alec Wyers continues his training as a Firearm and Toolmark Examiner, beginning his attendance in the ATF's National Firearms Examiner Academy in October. Ed Poirier continues to work on updating the Laboratory's IT structure and is currently working on revising our website and updating our backup systems.

The 2024-2025 BCI course began on September 6, 2024, with 35 attendees. The 2025-26 class already has 29 seats filled. If your department plans to send an officer to the 2025-2026 class they should request to hold a spot now.

The Forensic Science Partnership (FSP) is in its 26th 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 Fall 2024 term has been posted at the website. If you are interested in providing a seminar please send an email to dhilliard@uri.edu.

The Laboratory experienced a non-conformity in the firearms section of the Laboratory in August. This led to an assessment of the section by an outside consultant whose report was made public in October. Here is a link to the [independent report](#). The Laboratory, the State Crime Laboratory Commission and the University of Rhode Island have been working to resolve the issues cited in the report. As a result of the non-conformity one staff member has retired and one has resigned effective September 21, 2024. A third staff member will retire effective December 3, 2024. State Forensic Laboratories in CT, MA, and NH have assisted with re-examining cases that had or have scheduled court dates. The Laboratory has contracted with qualified examiners to work on cases in the Laboratory or to provide external verifications on priority cases. Two FA examiner positions will be advertised soon.

• FUNDING

The FY2026 budget has been submitted. 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 FY2026 budget request.

The Laboratory relies on Byrne/JAG and Coverdell Grant awards to maintain our accreditation and provide equipment, supplies, and training opportunities not covered in the state funded budget. The funds from the Byrne/JAG 2018 Under 10K award were used to purchase AFIX Tracker software, a Multi-Modal Automated Biometric Identification System that includes fingerprint and palmprint searching capabilities.

• PERSONALS

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

John "Jack" LeClaire ('88) [passed away on October 29th, 2024](#), at the age of 75. He was an officer for the Pawtucket Police Department from 1977 until his retirement in 1994. After which he continued to work for the Pawtucket Police department in different capacities until 2012. Jack was a past President of RICA. Following his retirement, he worked as a private investigator and polygraph technician from 1994 to 2012 and served as an instructor in the Professional Investigations Certificate Program at Boston University.

Michael Lawing ('07) passed away suddenly on October 20, 2024, he was a 23-year veteran of the Richmond, RI Police Department and also served in the U.S. Marine Corps. <https://gfme.co/4eWhg3E>