

Fire Investigators Strike Force

www.fisf.org

Minutes of December 10, 2014

Next Meeting: January 14, 2015

Program: TBA

Location: **Salvation Army 8354 W. Foster Av. Norridge, IL 60706 (NE corner of Cumberland and Foster)**

Time: 0900

President Kushner opened the meeting at 1100 hrs.

- Mitch wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and a Happy New Year.
- A moment of silence was held for all of our friends, relatives, and colleagues that are no longer with us.
- Nominations for the executive board, from the floor, were called for three times. A motion was made to nominate the current board. There was a 2nd to the nomination. A vote was called for and the board was re-elected unanimously. Once again your executive board is; President Mitch Kushner, Vice-president Stan Grygiel, Secretary John Gilleran and Treasurer Jeff Fleck. The Executive Director is Mike Schmitt.
- Arnie Witzke will continue to be the membership chairman. Thank you Arnie for all of your work.
- Thank you to our training committee members Mary Lacey, Dan Zerfass, Jeff Wynn, Chester Kraus (resigned from committee due to moving out of state), Jeff Eaton, George Lindemulder, Steve Tomzik and Ken Foszcz for all of the hard work that goes into presenting interesting and up-to-date trainings.
- A special thanks to LeeAnn Artstein, Administrative Clerk for the Northbrook Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau, for helping us maintain our training records.

- . On behalf of all the board members I would like to express our gratitude for your continued confidence in our ability to run this great organization.
- . Thank you to all of the departments and organizations that support the Strike Force. There are 194 departments as members (remember your police departments are automatically members); we average over 80 members at meetings and over 120 members at seminars.
- . 80 members attended today. It was good to see all of you.
- . A motion was made, and 2nd, to accept the November Minutes. The motion passed.
- . A motion was made, and 2nd, to accept the Treasurers Report. The motion passed.
- . Our congratulations to everyone who was promoted, or retired, this year.
- . Please remember to pay your dues.
- . **Please notify Arnie Witzke if you need to change your contact person.**
- . A new training schedule will be available soon at the website www.fisf.org.

Our speaker was our own Mitch Kushner and his alter ego “Self” (those in attendance know what I’m writing about). In summary: Mitch spoke about being properly prepared for court and how to answer the question, “How do you conduct your fire investigation?”. As an investigator you must anticipate that question will be asked by opposing council and you must be ready to give an answer that is well thought out, articulate and simple enough for a jury to understand. The other point that Mitch emphasized was that as an investigator you are entitled to your opinion and don’t let anyone else sway you from your opinion or intimidate you to change your opinion. That’s not to say that your opinion shouldn’t be challenged, in fact it should be challenged just as you should challenge others, that is all part of the Scientific Method of testing your hypothesis. But don’t change your opinion if you’re sure of the Origin

and Cause just to satisfy someone else, including your chief (we all know chief's that do not like "Undetermined" as an answer).

NOTE: During his presentation Mitch spoke about a multiple death case in Cicero that was the result of arson. The landlord who hired the arsonist was recently sentenced to life in prison.

Please remember all of our members of the armed forces who will not be home with their own families this holiday season because they are overseas protecting our families and our country.

On behalf of the board, have a Happy and Safe Holiday Season.

Respectfully Submitted,
John T. Gilleran
Secretary F.I.S.F.