

Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board

David S. Moore

Contents

From the Editor	2
New Diplomates	3
The Gavel	4
The Board Room	6
A Letter from Joseph Parker	7
Continuing Education	8
ABFDE Shirts	12

The Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB), as it is presently known, was originally established in the mid- to late 1990s under the auspices of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), with grant assistance from NIJ, for the purpose of developing a voluntary program to objectively assess, recognize and monitor the various forensic specialty boards which seek accreditation. FSAB was incorporated as an independent organization in Colorado on June 23, 2000.

The ABFDE has actively participated in this process since the inception of FSAB. I presently serve as an FSAB director and ABFDE's representative to the FSAB Board.

In recent years, the directors of FSAB have been in the process of creating a variety of committees, standards for accrediting forensic specialty certification boards, an application form, a policy and procedures manual, internal rules and regulations, a website, fee structures and other various housekeeping functions. Many of the standards created by FSAB have had, and will continue to have, a direct impact on the ABFDE.

For instance, the FSAB requires that "Any grandfathered certificants must be subjected to examination or competency assessments no later than the regularly scheduled recertification for that individual, not to exceed a period of five years." Your ABFDE directors, of which I am one, have agreed and have established procedural requirements to insure that all of our grandfathered Diplomates will undergo the same testing process that our new applicants for certification must undergo and that the testing process must begin prior to the next recertification date. Grandfathers who are up for recertification in 2003 will be the first group to begin this process. I am in the 2003 year group and will undergo the testing process.

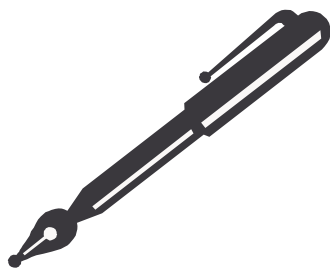
Other FSAB requirements will also impact directly on the ABFDE. Not only must grandfathered Diplomates be tested, but these tests must meet the criteria of being both reliable and valid. While I believe that our tests are reliable and valid, FSAB requires that ABFDE prove it. Members of the ABFDE Board are currently in the process of evaluating what needs to be done to meet these standards. The costs that will be associated with this process may also result in an increase of future ABFDE dues.

Presently, three FSAB evaluation committees have been established, and they are in the process of independently evaluating Mock Applications that have been submitted by three certifying

(continued on page 7)

From the Editor

Susan Morton
San Francisco, CA



Emanations from the Editor

The lethargy of summer is upon me, and inspiration for this column has not struck. I thought of another satisfying round of Denbeaux bashing, but even though he has provided ample grounds, my heart just isn't in it. I am beginning to feel like I am in a battle of wits with an unarmed person. In April, he testified in a will case in Stockton, California. He did add one new note to his tune—he has decided that the American Academy of Forensic Sciences is not a scientific body. He concludes this because they let in document examiners. Since he has already established that document examiners are not scientists, it follows that the Academy is not a scientific body. I love when they tick off our other forensic colleagues. It tends to rally the troops. I would be more upset about it if it had had any effect. In fact the jury not only found against Denbeaux's client, they recommended a stiff jail sentence. *In a civil proceeding.* They may have been a little fuzzy on the difference between civil and criminal court, but they had the right idea. To heap insult upon injury, the lawyer who abused Denbeaux so successfully was trying her first court case.

Denbeaux's argument about the Academy reminds me of my last visit to the doctor. Turns out I was suffering from tautology. I went because of stomach trouble, which the doctor diagnosed as due to stress caused by worrying about what was causing the stomach trouble.

Denbeaux & Co. are in for more rough road. The results of Dr. Srihari's research are going to be published in the Journal of Forensic Science this month. He used Artificial Intelligence (apparently he was unable to find enough of the regular kind) to examine many samples of writing. His program (did he call it NutraSmart™ like NutraSweet™?) is able to match samples of handwriting with 96% accuracy. Now if my accuracy were that bad, I would be shanking about one a month, and Martha Blake would have long since sent me to be retrained as something safer, like a WalMart greeter. However, it

(continued on page 7)

Editor Susan Morton

Assistant Editor Kathleen Storer

Board Reports

The Gavel Jan Seaman Kelly

The Board Room Paige E. Doherty

Continuing Education David S. Moore

Contributors

Bonnie Beal

Sean Espley

Joseph Merydith

David S. Moore

Darlene Morin

Joseph Parker

Lurline Trizna

Todd Welch

Composer

IntelliType

Mail or fax contributions to:

Susan Morton, Editor
ABFDE News

San Francisco Police Department
Crime Laboratory
850 Bryant Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
Tel: (415) 671-3196
Fax (415) 671-3280

semortonsf@aol.com

Deadline for the next issue is:

September 20th

Advertising matter that appears in the ABFDE News implies neither endorsement nor recommendation by The American Board of Forensic Document Examiners, Inc.



BONNIE BEAL has been with the Indiana State Police (ISP) Laboratory since 1998, where she began her training as a forensic document examiner under the tutelage of certified document examiners Fred Panhorst and Diane Tolliver. Before coming to the ISP, Bonnie received an Associate of Science degree in dental hygiene in 1985 from Valencia Community College in Orlando, Florida. After working as a dental hygienist for five years, Bonnie decided to return to school to obtain a degree in forensic science.

(continued on page 9)

DARLENE L. MORIN is a forensic document examiner with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service Forensic Document Laboratory in McLean, Virginia. She completed her training in 1998, under the instruction of Jim Lerner and Gideon Epstein.

In 1990, Darlene received a Bachelor of Arts in law/justice from Glassboro State College in New Jersey, and in 1993, she received a Master of Forensic Sciences from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.



(continued on page 9)



SEAN ESPLEY is currently employed at the California Department of Justice in Sacramento as a forensic document examiner.

He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from California State University, Sacramento, in December 1996.

Sean began his career at the California DOJ in August 1996 as a student volunteer. His official training began in early 1997, under the direction of Bill Connor, David Crowe and David Moore. When his official two-

(continued on page 9)

Welcome A-Board!

ABFDE certifies new Diplomates

LURLINE A.

TRIZNA is a forensic document examiner with the INS in McLean, Virginia, where she received her training in QD. Lurline's interest in forensic document examination developed during an internship with the USPIS Lab in Washington, D.C. while completing her graduate degree at The George Washington University. Lurline is a Provisional Member of the QD section of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. Lurline spends her free time chasing after her three children, ages 6, 4 and 3.



JOSEPH MERYDITH is presently employed by the California Department of Justice in Sacramento. His educational background consists of a Bachelor of Science degree from California State University, Sacramento. Joseph was originally introduced to the field of questioned documents by his grandfather, Terrence

Pascoe. Joe started training with Terry in 1997, and then also received some training from Floyd Whiting. Joe finished his training in 2000 at the Department of Justice, Terry's former employer.

(continued on page 9)

TODD W. WELCH is a forensic document examiner with the Michigan State Police. He also works privately, and in 1996, he cofounded Riley, Welch & Associates Forensic Document Examinations, Inc. with his partner Tom Riley. Todd completed his three-year training period in 1996, and has worked in the Questioned Document Unit at the Lansing Laboratory from 1993 to the present. A 1987 graduate of Saginaw Valley State College, Todd received a B.A. degree in Criminal Justice.



(continued on page 9)

The Gavel

A Message from Our President

Jan Seaman Kelly
Las Vegas, NV



There are four steps to accomplishment: Plan Purposefully. Prepare Prayerfully. Proceed Positively. Pursue Persistently.

—Anonymous

“The objective for every appointed Director should be to serve the Diplomates and the forensic document profession...”

The ABFDE Board of Directors Annual Meeting was held in Washington, D.C. May 17th through May 19th. Please read Secretary Paige Doherty's "The Board Room" article, which is a summary of the Minutes. Three of the items discussed at the meeting—the Code of Conduct of Directors and Committee Members, public relations, and the increase of dues—will be addressed in more detail in this article.

I am in my final year as president of this outstanding organization. It continues to be an honor to serve each of you. My priorities include establishing of an organized public relations program and addressing housekeeping issues regarding the operation of the BOD. The establishment of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for each committee is in the process of completion. The SOP details the responsibilities of each committee and the procedures to execute those duties. The Code of Conduct is another housekeeping issue and is discussed below.

Code of Conduct of Directors and Committee Members

The Code of Conduct for Directors and Committee Members was drafted to provide assurance to the Diplomates that the Directors and committee members are accountable for their conduct during their service on the

Board. As stated in past "Gavel" articles, appointment to the Board is both a privilege and honor. The objective for every appointed Director should be to serve the Diplomates and the forensic document profession, not to add a distinguished credential to a *curriculum vitae*.

The Code of Conduct details the responsibilities of the members of the Executive Committee, the directors, and committee members (Director or non-Director) regarding Integrity, Confidentiality, and Return of Board Property. One of the requirements to become certified and to remain certified is to be a person of integrity. Integrity is included as the primary conduct because every director who serves on the Board should be beyond reproach.

Confidentiality is always a concern of the Board, and great care must be taken to protect it. A director must have open communication with the Diplomates but, at the same time, not fear he/she is disseminating confidential information. Therefore, the Code of Conduct allows a director to discuss information the Board does not consider confidential. Breaching confidentiality is considered so egregious by the current BOD that the recommended disciplinary action is removal from the Board.

(continued on page 5)

Gavel

(continued from page 4)

Failure of a former director to return Board property is a legitimate concern of the BOD. In discussing this issue with past presidents, this failure has occurred periodically over the last 15 years. Now that we have entered the age of FSAB, this type of misconduct can be detrimental to ABFDE. Therefore, failure to return Board property will lead to loss of certification and, if necessary, legal action to retrieve the property.

Dues Increase

Increasing the dues was discussed at length during the BOD meeting. The Financial Planning Committee will determine a budget before the BOD assesses the amount of the increase. Annual dues were designed to fund the costs of the annual Board meeting and operating expenses of ABFDE. In 1997, ABFDE sponsored workshops to provide the additional monies to fund the skyrocketing operation costs and special projects of ABFDE.

Annual dues were raised to \$100 in 1996. Test validation, FSAB, public relations, a standardized training program, and implementation of proper accounting practices are current commitments of ABFDE. Each of these projects will benefit every Diplomat and our profession. But each one comes with its own price tag. It is hoped the dues increase and the justification for the increase will be announced in the next newsletter. The increase is effective July 1, 2003.

Public Relations

One of my top priorities as President is to establish an effective public relations program, to include seeking the services of a professional public relations consultant, publishing articles in as many journals as possible whose subscribers are from the legal community, and to offer speakers at the various judicial colleges. The Board embraced Tom Vastrick's suggestion to prepare a PowerPoint presentation describing ABFDE and the forensic document profession. This presentation would be distributed at no cost to Diplomates, or any legitimate FDE, as a demonstration tool when speaking to judges or attorneys. To accomplish these tasks, we need volunteers to assist with writing and preparing presentations. Please contact Joyce Lauterbach. I know she will appreciate your help.

Joyce Lauterbach, Chair of the Public Relations Committee, revised the ABFDE trifold brochure. It is now available to Diplomates at a cost of \$15 for a package of 25 brochures. This handsome brochure discusses ABFDE's background, objectives and the certification testing process. The qualifications one must have to qualify as a candidate of testing is also discussed. Please mail your check to the Administration Office in Houston. If you plan to attend the ASQDE meeting and would like to purchase the brochure pack, please contact Joyce and she will bring your order to the meeting.

ABFDE Shirts

This newsletter contains an order form (back cover) for those of you who wish to order a shirt with the embroidered ABFDE logo. The shirts are top-of-the-line quality, can be purchased with or without a pocket, and are available in several solid colors. The profit from the shirts and the trifold brochures is minimal. The intent of offering these items is not to obtain a huge profit but to encourage Diplomates to express their pride in ABFDE certification.

If you plan to attend the ASQDE Meeting and would like an ABFDE shirt, mail your order form, along with payment, and I will order the shirts and deliver them at the San Diego meeting.

Daubert Group

The Daubert Seminar held in Las Vegas was an outstanding success. The quality of speakers and the information they disseminated created an unprecedented plea from attendees to hold another Daubert seminar next year. The Daubert II Seminar is already in the planning stages, and several latent print examiners and FDEs accepted assignments that will be presented next June in Las Vegas.

The Daubert Group has assisted 22 FDEs with their Daubert hearing or a hearing that might include Daubert-type questions. The Group has received offers of assistance from several FDEs. The additional help should allow us to continue to have articles scanned so the requested information can be placed on a CD or e-mailed to the requestor. There are also several other tasks regarding reliability and validity that need to be assigned. Please contact Kirsten Jackson, Kathleen Storer or me for details.



The Board Room

Paige Doherty, Secretary
Denver, CO

“The Board decided to issue certificates, write letters or present some other token of appreciation to any individual who assists the Board with projects.”

The annual Board of Directors meeting of the ABFDE was held May 17 through 19, 2002, in Washington, D.C. Those in attendance were President Jan Kelly, Vice President Brian Carney, Secretary Paige Doherty, Treasurer Joyce Lauterbach, and Directors Howard Birnbaum, Gregory Floyd, Randy Gibson, Derek Hammond, Andre Moenssens, David Moore, Fred Panhorst and Tom Riley. Director Gerald Richards was unable to attend.

The following summary is based on the notes of the secretary and does not reflect the official meeting Minutes.

President Kelly called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. on May 17, 2002. Secretary Doherty presented the Minutes of the 2001 Board of Directors meeting. Chairpersons then presented detailed reports on each of the following standing committees:

Continuing Education Dave Moore
Credentials Paige Doherty
Financial Planning ... Joyce Lauterbach
FSAB Liaison Dave Moore
Forms and Publications ... Dave Moore
Professional Review Brian Carney
Public Relations Joyce Lauterbach
Recertification Paige Doherty
Rules and Procedures Dave Moore
Test Preparation Jerry Richards
Test Validation Howard Birnbaum
Testing Brian Carney

As part of the FSAB Liaison Report, Dave Moore discussed numerous issues pertaining to the Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB). First, it was noted that most of FSAB's

requirements were established upon its inception, but their test validation requirements have not been fully defined. Per FSAB requirements, the Board does not have to keep all testing records, only statistical data. It may be beneficial to keep retired written and practical tests, along with results from written exams, for statistical purposes. This information may be retained anonymously and still satisfy FSAB.

Second, when the Board applies for accreditation, FSAB inspectors review randomly selected Diplomate's files kept at the Administrative Offices. This year, Director Moore will conduct a pilot audit to determine if our records will be acceptable for FSAB accreditation. He will randomly review two files he maintains as Recertification Manager, including one seasoned examiner and one newer Diplomate and compare his file to the administrative file in Houston. President Kelly stressed that the files are Board property, and anything lacking in these files is a reflection of the ABFDE, not the Diplomate.

Third, FSAB requires an expiration date designating the period of validity on the certificates. During the upcoming year, the Forms and Publications Committee will design a recertification sticker to affix to the certificates.

Finally, FSAB requires a bylaws statement defining the use of the ABFDE logo by a Diplomate. Director Panhorst will draft this statement to include the restrictions of use.

Jan Kelly's top priority during her presidency is to develop a public relations (PR) campaign, especially in light of the Daubert challenges and the need for positive recognition of Board. The Public Relations Committee has explored numerous avenues to promote the ABFDE. One is through the distribution of the trifold brochures, "ABFDE and Qualifications of Forensic Document Examiners." Another suggestion submitted by Diplomate

(continued on page 10)

1 July 2002

To My Friends in ABFDE,

I am writing to ask that the ABFDE Board of Directors consider granting credit for recertification points to ABFDE Diplomates who participate in SWGDOC sessions, ASTM subcommittee meetings and for those serving as a member of the ABFDE Board of Directors.

Recent SWGDOC meetings have involved 4½ days of grueling work to establish written guidelines for our discipline.

The ASTM sessions are similarly grueling days, producing the final version of guidelines for our field. I have seen pictures of the parties at ABFDE director meetings, but I suspect they actually do work, too (Derek and Fred in my office claim they do).

Fred Panhorst has explained that the previous reasoning for not granting credits for SWGDOC and ASTM was because "they do not involve training." Fred also related that serving on the ABFDE and attending ABFDE Board of

Director meetings does not merit recertification points, since it does not "involve training."

Credits are granted for being an officer of a QD professional organization. Arguably, serving as treasurer or secretary for ASQDE or SAFDE also does not involve "training." Also, those who put together forensic journals are not directly involved in "training," but they certainly deserve the credit they now receive. These merit recertification points for "service to our discipline."

If "service to our discipline" is a legitimate basis for granting officers in QD organizations recertification points, it does not seem unreasonable that SWGDOC, ASTM and ABFDE director participation should also merit recertification points. Additionally, the in-depth discussions and documentation of every aspect of QD examination techniques and related procedural matters involved with SWGDOC, ASTM and ABFDE director meetings are some of the best "refresher training" sessions you will ever attend.

Thank you for considering these issues.

Joe Parker

ABFDE Diplomate #257


Editor

(continued from page 2)

does clearly demonstrate that handwriting is identifiable.

Dr. Found at La Trobe University has also given us some very useful ammunition. He has replicated Dr. Kam's study proving that document examiners perform much better than lay people at not making wrong matches. Independently. On another continent. With no connection to Dr. Kam. And without taking 30 pieces of silver from the U.S. Justice Department.


I would like to think these two new pieces of research shoot more holes in the arguments posited by Denbeaux & Co. Alas, it is not really possible to shoot holes in smoke. However, there might be some entertainment value in hearing what they dream up to explain all this away.

On a happier note, starting in October this newsletter is going to have a new feature. Andy Szymanski is going to provide articles of a technical nature. There are many useful tips that are not elaborate enough for a peer-reviewed journal but should be passed around. If you have any ideas, I am sure Andy would be glad to hear them. 

FSAB

(continued from page 1)

bodies. These mock applications are "dry runs" to determine the type of problems that may surface during the accreditation process. One of these applications has been submitted by the Association of Forensic Document Examiners (AFDE). The current President of AFDE, Ms. Vickie L. Willard, has been an active participant in FSAB and a vocal advocate for her organization. The AFDE is already well along in the process of subjecting their testing process to validity and reliability requirements.

While many of the FSAB requirements seem to be quite burdensome, they will also serve to make our organization more professional and to standardize our procedures and testing process. In my opinion, all of this will ultimately serve to better our profession. As many of us have already learned in recent months, judges are beginning to critically evaluate and scrutinize the experts who appear before them. Part of that process is to evaluate the organizations that confer certification upon them. 

Continuing Education

David S. Moore
Fair Oaks, CA

August 2002

4-10 International Association for Identification 2002 Educational Conference

Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, NV

Contact: Candy Murray, Conference Coordinator
20601 Netherland Street, Orlando, FL 32835
(407) 568-7436 / Fax: (407) 568-7689
Conference@theiai.org

14-18 American Society of Questioned Document Examiners

Doubletree Hotel - Mission Valley, San Diego

Contact: Howard C. Rile, Jr.
100 Oceangate, Suite 670, Long Beach, CA 90802
(562) 901-3376 / Fax: (562) 901-3378
HCRQDE@aol.com

September 2002

2-7 International Association for Forensic Science Convention Centre Le Curum - Montpellier, France

Contact: Societe Internatinal du Congres et Services
337, rue de la Combe Caude,
34090 Montpellier, France
+33(0) 4 67 63 53 40 / Fax: +33(0) 4 67 41 54 27
www.iafs2002.com

October 2002

3-6 Southwestern Association of Forensic Document Examiners (SWAFDE) Fall 2002 Meeting

Ala Moana Hotel, Honolulu, Hawaii

Contact: David L. Oleksow
Forensic Science Laboratories, LLC
1901 First Avenue, 1st Floor, San Diego, CA
92101 (619) 595-7099 / Fax: (619) 238-6122
doleksow@att.net

February 2003

17-22 American Academy of Forensic Sciences 59th Annual Meeting

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago, IL

Contact: Jack Calvert
Calvert Forensic Enterprises
14716 Route 173 East, Harvard IL 60033-9195
(815) 648-2222 / Fax: (815) 648-2222
cfe@stans.com

March 2003

24-29 Canadian Society of Forensic Sciences 50th Annual Meeting

Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre Hotel,
Vancouver, BC

Contact: Canadian Society of Forensic Science
2660 Southvale Crescent, Suite 215
Ottawa, ON K1B 4W5 CANADA
(613) 738-0001 / Fax: (613) 738-1987
www.csfs.ca

26 Forensic Examination of Electrophotographic (Toner-Based) Documents and Devices Workshop to be held at the CSFS Meeting

Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre Hotel,
Vancouver, BC

Contact: Canada Customs and Revenue Agency
Laboratory & Scientific Services
79 Bentley Avenue
Ottawa, ON K2E 6T7 CANADA
(613) 946-1098 / Fax: (815) 952-7825
tobin.lab.tanaka@ccra-adrc.gc.ca

This list of opportunities available to Diplomates seeking recertification credits may not be all-inclusive. Provide details of upcoming meetings or workshops you want included in this newsletter to

David S. Moore
Moore Document Laboratory
9010 Barrhill Way, Fair Oaks, California 95628
(916) 980-3205 / Fax: (916) 989-9674
dmoore@mooredocs.com

New Diplomates

(continued from page 3)

BEAL

Bonnie has always been interested in a career in forensic science and decided in 1991 to move to Colorado from Florida to achieve this career goal. In 1993, she returned to school and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry with an emphasis in criminalistics from the Metropolitan State College of Denver, Colorado. While in school in Colorado, Bonnie earned many awards for her academic achievements and presentations. During her education, she interned with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) under the supervision of document examiner Paige E. Doherty. While interning with CBI, Bonnie conducted her senior research project on the Electrostatic Detection Apparatus. She presented this research as a guest student at the October 1996 joint meeting of the Southwestern Association of Forensic Document Examiners and the Southwestern Association of Forensic Scientists.

Bonnie continues to maintain a high level of interest and participation in our profession and is a member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the American Society of Testing Materials and the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners.

Bonnie enjoys most forms of music (especially singing), working with the youth at her church and reading, and she takes great pleasure in hiking, scuba diving, swimming and other outdoor sports.

ESPLEY

year training program was coming to an end, Sean began to sign reports that dealt with the ESDA, VSC and some smaller handwriting cases. Although Sean is a relative newcomer to the field of forensic document examination, he is the "senior" examiner at the California DOJ.

As well as being a Diplomat of the ABFDE, Sean is also a member of the Southwestern Association of Forensic Document Examiners (SWAFDE).

Sean is an avid sports fan and participant. (Don't get him started on the Sacramento Kings!) He enjoys playing basketball, softball and working out whenever possible. There is nothing like working out those kinks from looking at documents all day. He also enjoys spending quality time with his wife, Angela, and their 14-month-old daughter, Alyssa.

MERYDITH

Along with being a new Diplomat of the ABFDE, Joe is also a member of the Southwestern Association of Forensic Document Examiners and is editor of The Southwestern Examiner. Even with his busy career, Joe finds time to relax. His hobbies include snowboarding, backpacking and kayaking; but most of all, he enjoys spending time with this wife, Amy, and their new son, Alexander. Who knows, perhaps one day Alexander will be a forensic document examiner, too.

MORIN

Prior to becoming a forensic document examiner, Darlene spent five years at The George Washington University Police Department working as a campus police officer, a supervisor and an inspector.

Darlene is currently an Affiliate Member of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners and a Provisional Member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, Questioned Documents Section.

Darlene's husband Mark is a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation field office in Washington, DC. He is also a member of their enhanced SWAT team. They have two extremely lovable and energetic children, Logan 3 and Madison 1½, and spend all of their time trying to keep up with them and their 125-pound Rottweiler dog named Ares.

WELCH

Todd's professional affiliations are the Midwestern Association of Forensic Sciences, Questioned Document Section of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, and the American Society of Testing and Materials.

Todd and his wife Kathryn are very active in their church. They have four beautiful children ranging in ages from 4 to 16. In his spare time, Todd enjoys coaching his kids in soccer, playing golf and fishing.

Board Room

(continued from page 6)

Tom Vastrick is to develop a generic PowerPoint presentation describing the ABFDE and distribute it to Diplomates.

Lastly, President Kelly contacted a professional consultant for estimates to develop a PR campaign. One consultant estimated it would take three to four months to put together a campaign, including creating a film on CD for distribution. He also recommended marketing through local legal organizations. The Board could reduce marketing costs by writing our own articles, then having a professional edit the articles. The PR Committee will contact associations who publish journals directed to the legal community, such as the National District Attorneys Association, the Justice Department, the American Judges Association, and various media sources. These periodicals may offer opportunities to publish articles about the ABFDE. President Kelly stressed that any articles written by Diplomates about the ABFDE need to be approved by the PR Committee.

The Test Preparation Committee continues to strive for a healthy database of both written and practical tests. Director Birnbaum estimates that he should have the database of 500 questions for the written test available for use by March. Currently, 100 questions with sources are available. President Kelly requested that each director prepare a practical problem on any topic to submit to Director Birnbaum by September 1. Diplomates are encouraged to do the same. A test validator will be sent a problem to work, without the answers, to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of a test and offer feedback. The emphasis will be on determining whether a practical problem tests minimum competency.

In his Test Validation Committee Report, Director Birnbaum said he is researching appropriate ground rules for validation methodology. A pilot written test will be administered next year, perhaps at the Spring SWAFDE meeting, as well as spring meetings of other regional organizations. Non-Diplomates and Diplomates, both grandfathered and certified by testing, may participate. The Board agreed that it should not pose a conflict for either non-Diplomates or grandfathered Diplomates to participate in the pilot testing. A sampling of written questions may also be available in the future for distribution to testing candidates as a study tool.

The directors decided to continue our policy of not distributing a mailing list to outside parties.

Director Gibson distributed the latest version of the Resource Kit to all Directors for review. Once he receives publishers' permission to include three articles, it will be ready to distribute to Diplomates. President Kelly commended Mel Cavanaugh, Hugh Curfman, Grant Sperry and Director Gibson for their efforts. The ABFDE will only distribute the Resource Kit to Diplomates and at workshops at no charge. Director Gibson suggested periodic updates on the website when new information comes available.

Secretary Doherty said the revised Syllabus will be mailed with the Resource Kit to Diplomates. The Board decided that the Syllabus and Objectives for Training would be distributed to non-Diplomates, at the discretion of the president, at no charge.

The Board voted to discontinue charging a fee to Diplomates who wish to post contact information on the website. The Directors believe that both the ABFDE and the examiner benefit from making this information readily available, especially for referral of Board-certified private examiners.

President Kelly had a Code of Conduct for Directors drafted because the Board does not have a procedure in place to insure the return of Board property and to maintain confidentiality of Board information. The Board concurred that a Code of Conduct should be added to Section V of the "Green Book" under the Duties of Officers and Committees.

Vice President Carney has received numerous complaints from Diplomates about the lack of a mechanism to address incompetence; therefore he recommended establishing a competency review board. Currently, the Board only has procedures for ethics complaints. The Committee to review competence or negligence issues will consist of Greg Floyd (Chair), Tom Riley, Fred Panhorst and Andre Moenssens. A report will be presented at the BOD meeting next year.

Director Hammond is in charge of coordinating workshops and seminars hosted by the ABFDE. He discussed the Daubert Workshop, which is scheduled to be held June 21 through 23 in Las Vegas. Diplomates would earn one recertification point per half-day attendance, as this is classified as a seminar, not a workshop. Attendee's will receive two CDs—one with the Resource Kit and one with handouts from speakers. Director Hammond will develop a long-term plan for ABFDE-sponsored workshops, perhaps up to two years in advance.

An examiner residing outside of the United States, Canada and Mexico recently inquired about

(continued on page 11)

Board Room

(continued from page 10)

applying for certification. The Board determined that the bylaws permit international examiners to apply for certification. The international examiner would need to petition the Board, and an evaluation may be conducted on the equivalency of his/her credentials.

The Charles Scott and New Horizon Awards will be presented at the ASQDE meeting in August, giving recognition to Diplomates who contribute significantly to legal and scientific research, respectively.

The consensus of the Board was that the Annual Update needs an ethics statement and signature line.

President Kelly explained that Kathleen Storer and Kirsten Jackson established the Daubert Group this year to address legal challenges to the document examination profession. This information service group has assisted 17 examiners in Daubert hearings to date. Current Daubert information will be posted on the ABFDE website on a regular basis.

President Kelly circulated catalogs of merchandise and discussed selling items with the ABFDE logo, such as shirts and jackets, on the website, in the newsletter and at workshops. The Board will not keep inventory but purchase items as needed.

The Board noted that dues have not increased since 1996. Unfortunately, however, the rumors of a much dreaded dues increase will become a reality in 2003, due to cost-of-living increases and upcoming expenditures such as FSAB accreditation, test validation and public relations. Before establishing the new dues amount, Treasurer Lauterbach and Director Hammond will conduct a cost analysis to project the future fiscal needs of the Board. This information will be related to the Diplomates prior to the increase.

Applicants for certification do not have a deadline for submitting application materials such as transcripts and references. The Board agreed that if an applicant's file remains inactive after 90 days notification, their application will be returned with the fee minus \$50 for expenses. The chairperson of the Credentials Committee should call the applicant and follow up with a letter explaining the 90-day limit.

The Board discussed procedures for testing of grandfathered Diplomates. Director Moore explained that FSAB does not require grandfathered Diplomates to take the same test as new applicants; however the test must include a written component. The consensus of the Board is that the test for grandfathered Diplomates should include the same components as new applicants: written, practical and oral.

In the event a grandfathered Diplomate fails the test, he/she will be afforded the same opportunities as a new applicant to retest. For example, if the Diplomate passed the written test but failed the practical problems, he/she can re-enter the testing process by retaking the practical problems. Director Moore will review FSAB requirements to determine what the Board needs to do to comply in both testing and recertification of grandfathered Diplomates.

The Board does not now have written Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for each standing committees. Each chairperson is drafting an SOP for his/her committee. Once the SOP's are finalized, Secretary Doherty will assemble SOP notebooks for distribution to all directors at next year's BOD meeting. The SOP notebooks will be returned to the Board when a Director completes his/her Board term.

The Directors discussed establishing a formal mechanism to recognize individuals who assist the Board with projects, such as donating the use of equipment or voluntarily providing extensive handwriting for test problems. The Board decided to issue certificates, write letters or present some other token of appreciation to any individual who assists the Board with projects.

Director Moore discussed adding sponsors as a means of enhancing the reputation of the Board. A sponsor recognizes the ABFDE as the sole certifying body for the profession. Interested organizations should submit a letter. One of the Directors will contact the four recognized regional organizations—SWAFDE, SAFDE, MAFS and MAAFS—and invite them to become sponsors of the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m. on Sunday, May 19, 2002.

Special Notice

Andre Moenssens is ailing. He collapsed while giving a lecture and was unable to be at the ABFDE Workshop in Las Vegas. He is recuperating in Indiana at the home of his son and expects to be up and around by the end of the summer. I know he would like to receive some cheerful greetings. I sure hope he gets well soon. Andre is the only lawyer I have ever met I would trust to hold the poker stakes.

—Ed.

We'll give you the shirt on your back



ABFDE T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

The ABFDE is offering quality polo/golf shirts with the ABFDE logo embroidered on the left side of the chest. The shirts are offered in multiple colors and sizes.

NO POCKET

Circle Color: Black / Burgundy / Dark Green
Navy / Purple / Yellow / White / Ivory / Red

Size: S-XL			
Size	@ \$29.50 ea.	Total \$	
2XL	@ \$31.50 ea.	Total \$	
3XL	@ \$35.50 ea.	Total \$	
4XL	@ \$37.00 ea.	Total \$	

Shipping: \$5.00 for the first two shirts; \$1.00 per shirt for each additional shirt.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Mail Order Form and Checks to:

Jan Seaman Kelly
Las Vegas Metropolitan Police
6767 West Charleston Boulevard
Las Vegas, NV 89146
(702) 229-3963
Fax: (702) 229-4101

WITH POCKET

Circle Color: Black / Dark Green Navy / Lt Blue

Size: S-XL			
Size	@ \$31.50 ea.	Total \$	
2XL	@ \$33.50 ea.	Total \$	
3XL	@ \$37.00 ea.	Total \$	
4XL	@ \$38.50 ea.	Total \$	

(I am going to order a green one so my Sweetie and I can dress alike. My Sweetie does not need a green shirt on account of being innately green due to being a parrot. —Ed.)



American Board of Forensic Document Examiners, Inc.

Administrative Office
7887 San Felipe
Suite 122
Houston, TX 77063