



# THE PALI INFORMANT

Summer 2016

## PALI Conference 2016

On behalf of my fellow PALI board members I would like to extend a personal invitation to all Licensed Private Investigators, Law Enforcement Personnel, Loss Prevention Professionals, Security and Investigative Professions along with any Criminal Justice Professors or Students to attend our annual investigators Conference September 12-13, 2016, and an additional full-day of pre-conference training on September 11, 2016.

PALI's Annual Investigators Conference is designed to provide an opportunity for educational excellence. It is estimated that 75-125 investigators, law enforcement personal and security professionals from across the Mid-Atlantic Region will be in attendance, with the national and local exhibitors and many well-known educational speakers. This is a wonderful opportunity to network with those who are dedicated to the advancement of investigative and security services.

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In addition to the informative and educational speakers who will address topics specific to you and your investigative needs, the seminar also provides a networking platform during social and business events, rekindling old friendships and making new ones while networking with professionals from several other disciplines. Additionally, special features of this year's conference include a tribute to 9/11 and its connection to PALI and its members; a tribute to the late Rick Payton, friend and former PALI President; and an Expert Panel to answer your questions and give advice on concerns you may be facing in your business.

We welcome PALI members and industry professionals to take advantage of the PALI member registration incentives and the opportunities available through sponsorships to promote your company and your business through the PALI conference website.

Our venue this year is the Hershey Lodge Resort located in Hershey, PA. This is a fantastic destination because it offers so many opportunities. If you aren't familiar with the story of Milton S. Hershey, who

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## PALI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Special thanks to Tom Correa, Rick Anderson and our Conference Committee for their contributions to this issue of the Informant!*

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opened the first world's modern chocolate factory and built a "model town" and boys' school around it, you have a chance to learn about it as a complimentary tour is included in the conference fee. Last, but not least, on day two of our conference, the entire town of Hershey will be celebrating "International Chocolate Day," which happens to be Milton Hershey's 159th birthday. There is a celebration in town that is very family oriented with hot air balloon rides, face painting, and lots of fun.

We look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones!

Bill Everman  
President, PALI

**Visit [www.pali.org](http://www.pali.org) for more information about the conference, or to register!**

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# **A Fresh Set of Eyes: Making the Case for Private Investigators in Cold Cases**

**by Sarah L. Stein, PhD**

*Editor's note: Sarah Stein will be a presenter at the 2016 PALI Conference.*

## **Introduction**

Since 1980, the United States has accumulated over 211,000 unsolved homicides. These cases are referred to as “cold” or “unresolved.” The terminology to be utilized in this article is as follows: a “cold” or “unresolved” case refers to a criminal investigation which has ceased forward momentum due to lack of sufficient information. Conversely, a “hot” case is a criminal investigation which is moving forward either due to new leads or the case being recent and well-covered by the media. This paper seeks to examine the volume and prevalence of unresolved cases in the United States, the methodology currently being used by law enforcement agencies to address this issue, review literature associated with utilizing private investigators in conjunction with law enforcement, and provide case examples of successful partnerships between law enforcement and private investigators.

## **Literature Review**

The concept of utilizing private investigators in conjunction with law enforcement to expedite the resolution of a case has been scrutinized since 1971, when Scott and McPherson examined the development of a private sector within the criminal justice system. Scott and McPherson (1971) articulated that many law enforcement agencies tend to overlook using private investigators as many of these individuals and agencies often conduct investigations outside of the public eye so to speak, coupled with the fact that law enforcement may believe that a private investigator's skill set is vastly different from that of a traditional police officer. This may be true in the sense that in some states, all that is required to be a private investigator is to take a course over several weeks versus the rigors of the police academy. However, in some states, such as Massachusetts, only individuals with at least three years of law enforcement experience are permitted to obtain a private investigator's license, thereby making the experience and training identical to that of traditional law enforcement.

Following Scott and McPherson (1971), Becker (1974) studied what place private police have in society. Becker made a point of emphasizing the extent to which private policing activities are regulated, and this point is also contemporary in nature. If law enforcement is to work with private investigators, said investigators must be held to the same standards of ethics, confidentiality, and legal procedure. If the standards are not maintained or regulated, it would be possibly detrimental to the outcome of a case.

Spitzer and Scull (1977) elaborated on the research of their colleagues by examining financial incentives for utilizing private police. The authors argued that as the economy develops, profit-driven policing agencies must be considered as an integral part of the United States labor force. Citing Klare (1975, p. 487), the authors state that revenues of private investigation agencies “more than tripled between 1963 and 1969, rising from \$93 million to \$312 million, and nearly doubled in the next five years.” It is true that private investigation agencies do contribute to the American economy and this is of value, but the main thesis of this article remains that while there is profit to be made, the more compelling reason to incorporate private investigators into public investigations is to assist traditional law enforcement to bring resolution to the more than 200,000 unsolved homicides in the United States, and to provide some measure of comfort to victim's families.

Shearing and Stenning (1983) put forth the argument that traditional models of social control had not yet ac-

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counted for the presence of private security and investigative agencies. The authors stated that while private security and investigative agencies experienced a period of exponential growth since 1960, their role in social control was nevertheless observed as being merely assistants to traditional law enforcement. One of the most important points made by Shearing and Stenning (1983) related to private security and investigations, is that it is “victim-oriented” (p. 493). This is one of the most critical differentiating factors between traditional law enforcement and private investigators or case consultants. Consultants traditionally become much more familiar with a victim’s family and loved ones than traditional law enforcement or detectives, simply because they spend more time with them during the course of their investigation and analysis. Therefore, the attachment and devotion to these longterm, unresolved cases tends to be greater for private investigators and consultants as they do not experience the same pressure as sworn law enforcement to solve incoming cases and discard grieving families simply because a case is old.

Cunningham and Taylor (1984) conducted a study for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to determine the approximate amount of private security agencies in the United States, as well as their defined roles, and the level of cooperation between law enforcement agencies and private security agencies. To accomplish this, a survey was distributed to 400 individuals in law enforcement, contract, and proprietary security, as well as 1600 law enforcement and private security administrators. Cunningham and Taylor (1984) discovered that the resources available to private security agencies, even in 1984, far exceeded those available to public law enforcement. Further, the authors articulated that there was very little cooperation between public and private law enforcement, and that many sworn law enforcement personnel viewed private security as being insignificant in regards to reducing and or solving crimes. Unfortunately, this attitude appears to be pervasive in contemporary law enforcement culture as well – many individuals, often with terminal degrees in criminal justice and investigative experience, are merely viewed as a nuisance rather than a resource to law enforcement.

Marx (1987) articulated the utility of intermingling public and private police, specifically in reference to undercover operations. Marx (1987) cites several high profile investigations that benefitted, and were ultimately solves as a direct resolute of collaboration between private and public police, including the FBI-IBM sting. Marx (1987) cites that one of the primary reasons private investigators and/or agencies are contracted by public law enforcement agencies is that public agencies are overworked and may not have the time nor the resources to investigate lesser or older crimes. Once again, this issue that was identified in the 1980s as being relevant, can still be observed to be true in contemporary police culture and speaks to the growing need for collaborating between private and public investigative sectors.

Prenzler and King (2002) conducted a study on private investigators specifically in Australia. The authors approximated that there are 25,000 private investigators in Australia, essentially twice the size of public law enforcement personnel. Forty interviews were conducted in Queensland and New South Wales to de-

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# A Guide to Conference Presentations

We are excited about the quality and variety of presentations at this year's conference. Here's an idea of the things you can expect to hear about:

**The Evolution of Terrorism** will be presented by Don L. Hubbard, the former Managing Director of Global Security for the PricewaterhouseCoopers Network of firms. Formerly, Don was Staff Vice President, Security for Trans World Airlines. He was also President of International Aviation Security, Inc., a subsidiary of TWA, which provided security services to 15 airlines and 3 airports at 21 locations throughout Europe and the Middle East. He spent nine years as a Special Agent and Supervisory Special Agent in the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Prior to the FBI, he was a Commissioned Officer in the U.S. Army's Military Police Corps.

**Heating Up Cold Cases** will be presented by Dr. Sarah Stein, a consultant for The Center for the Resolution of Unresolved Crime ([www.thecruc.com](http://www.thecruc.com)). Dr. Stein has co-authored two texts on cold cases, and published articles related to the topic. Dr. Stein's areas of expertise include cold cases and missing persons; she consults regularly for law enforcement agencies and families in the United States and internationally.

**Changing the Game of Business to Increase Your Profits and Learn the Red Flags and Inner Workings of Online Dating** will be presented by Diana L. Garren, the founder and CEO of True Perceptions, Inc.®, expert marketing professional, experienced business consultant, and author of *Who Is the Real Man Behind the Screen?* For over a decade Diana has consulted exclusively with investigative agencies, security companies, process serving companies, and attorneys in the areas of business development, sales, marketing, branding, and perception management.

**Strategic Surveillance in 2016** will be presented by Sean L. Hall, LPI, the CEO of Lancaster Detective Agency, Inc. Sean has been a Private Investigator for almost 20 years, during which time he has conducted investigations for private, civil, and criminal cases. Sean uses the latest technology for his investigations, and is regarded as an expert in surveillance. He also has developed a case management program – Case Point – in order to provide a new way for PIs to manage their investigations. Sean has been involved with several TV shows as a private investigator.

**Independent Contractors vs. Misclassified Employee – and other DOL Initiatives that Impact Your Business** will be presented by Anne M. Lavelle, Esq. of Cohen & Grigsby. Anne has devoted almost two decades to representing employers with respect to employment, benefit and regulatory compliance issues, including ERISA, PPACA (health care reform), HIPAA, COBRA, Title VII, FMLA and ADA. She is a Director in the ERISA and Employee Benefits, Employment Litigation, Labor and Employment, and Healthcare Practice Groups.

The conference will also include an **Expert Panel**, in which questions from attendees will be answered by seasoned professionals, including:

A prolific writer, Kitty Hailey, CLI has long been an advocate of professionalism for private investigators. Her most recent publication is the third edition of her *CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT: Standards and Ethics for the Investigative Profession*.

David Ziegler began working in the private sector after a highly successful 28 year career as a Federal Criminal Investigator with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF). David has considerable



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knowledge in of the use of technology in investigative work, and is an expert on computer database research and digital resources.

Jim Carino, BA, MA has a total of 59 years in the investigative and security industries and has been a Licensed PI for 31 years. Retired AFOSI Special Agent, USAF, with his last position as Director of Criminal Investigations. Jim is the Founder of Intellenet; Co-Founder and former President/Board Chair of PALI; Member of ASIS, CPP, and Vidocq. Jim is a subject matter expert on security negligence/premises liability. He was also an Adjunct Instructor in CJ and Security courses at Alvernia College and St Joseph University.

Robert E. Meinert, BA has a resume of achievements in both his academic and law enforcement careers which has spanned over 50 years. Robert's career began serving in US Army where he obtained the rank of Sergeant. His law enforcement accomplishments include Commander of Homicide for Allegheny County and Allegheny County Police Homicide Division, as well as Director of Security for Bell Atlantic Corporation. Robert is the co-founder of the Pennsylvania Association of Private Investigators (PALI), a member of Intellenet, and Past President and Life Member of the Western Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association.

For the first time, PALI will be providing a special training opportunity for new investigators, **PI 101: What To Do After You Get Your PI License**. This program will be presented by Jeffrey Stein, LPI, CCDI. Jeff has more than twenty years' experience in investigative and security services. Stein has conducted over one thousand internal and external interviews during the course of his career in the private sector. He has a broad range of training and experience that will be a great resource for anyone entering into the private investigation field. He is a member of, and sits on the Board of Directors for Intellenet, serves as the current Chairman of the Pennsylvania Association of Licensed Investigators, and sits on Crime Tech Solutions' Advisory Board.

Finally, Michael Gordon will be presenting **Social Media and Open Source Intelligence Training (OSINT)**, both as part of the conference, and in a special pre-conference training event for those who want even more information on this vital topic for modern investigators. Michael is a 29-year veteran of law enforcement. Michael founded Dataveillance, a social media and open source intelligence research company, in 2012. Dataveillance provides training to law enforcement, the legal community, hospitals and medical facilities, insurance companies, individuals working in human resources, corporate security professionals and IT divisions of corporations in conducting social media investigations or specific social media information gathering.

**If you're excited about the speakers and subjects being covered at our conference, it's easy to register. You can go to [www.pali.org](http://www.pali.org) and register online or by mail. Our web site also includes a direct link for registering at Hershey Lodge, <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/PALI2016>, which will ensure that you can obtain our discounted room rates when reserving your room online.**

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termine the following: “assess what it is they do, how effective they are, the legal and ethical issues facing private agents, and how their efforts can be maximized by their clients, most notable agencies affected by fraud’ (p. 1). The authors found a concerning trend which identified a significant amount of pressure being applies to private investigators to violate the law in order to facilitate the resolution of any given crime. An extremely important finding was that nearly all respondents indicated that the government should allow more access (though controlled in who is was distributed to) to investigative materials, especially if the release of said information could help provide justice to a victim and his or her family. Many families of unresolved cases are pleading with investigators to provide them with case information such as persons of interest, forensic information, etc. but all too frequently, law enforcement are fearful that the case would be jeopardized if such information is released. It is a delicate balance; understandably law enforcement wants to maintain the integrity of the case – however, there is a way to achieve this goal via having private investigators and/or analysts sign confidentiality agreements, only being able to review the materials in the station, etc.

Finally, Joh (2005) identified the fact that the United States’ War on Terror brought to light some significant questions about the role of policing in the United States. As Joh (2005) states, “When debating whether to authorize the agency that eventually became the Transportation Security Administration, members of Congress for the first time in a generation were forced to pose a fundamental question about the very nature of policing: is it necessarily a governmental function?” (p. 574, citing Mike Dorming’s Bush Signs Airport Security Bill, CHI. TRIB., Nov. 20, 2001). The War on Terror has in fact revitalized the position taken by many private investigators and contractors that one of the most successful ways to stymie crime is to collaborate between private and public sectors, increasing manpower, resources, and finances.

### **Current Standard Operating Procedures and Policy Implications**

According to Scripps News (2010), the states identified as having the highest unsolved crime rates are as follows: California (82,463), Texas (52,402), New York (45,740), Florida (31,715), Illinois (25,254), and Michigan (23,682). To address this large volume of unresolved cases, many departments have implemented unresolved or cold case units. Many of these units are staffed with Detectives who are brought out of retirement to view cold cases. While this approach may be logical given that the investigators have already undergone background checks and have investigative experience, there are drawbacks as well. The first problem that must be acknowledged is that of tunnel vision. If a retired detective is assigned to review a case he originally investigated, progress may be hindered due to the fact that the investigator has a preconceived notion of who committed the crime. The second challenge that must be addressed is that of department politics. Departments may place interest in one cold case over another simply due to the socioeconomic or political status of the victim; as such other cases may be ignored. Another model that departments (though fewer in number) are utilizing is combining law enforcement personnel with civilians. This model works to a department’s advantage given they can attain perspectives from civilians with occupations that differ from law enforcement, and may bring unique skill sets to the investigation. For example, the cold case team I have the privilege of working with at the University of New Haven was comprised of a professor with investigative experience (over 40 years), and students who’s areas of expertise ranged from criminalistics to behavioral analysis. The combination of personnel proved to be extremely valuable and influential to the resolution of cases. In addition to these two models, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has put a significant amount of funding towards DNA testing for unresolved cases. While this is a scientifically sound investment, the statistics of cold case analysis reveal that DNA is responsible for solving between only 27-30% of unresolved cases. While this percentage is not statistically insignificant, additional factors such as investigative techniques must be recognized and invested in to effectuate more resolutions. The following portion of this article will expound upon some of the research described above with reflections from personal experience, and will provide policy recommendations for law enforcement agencies as to how to work with the private sector to resolve cold cases.

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This topic was naturally attractive to me given my work as a consultant for law enforcement and a private investigator for families. Through my work at the Center for the Resolution of Unresolved Crime (herein after referred to as The CRUC), my partner, Dr. James Adcock and I, may be contacted by either law Enforcement or a family requesting services. The law enforcement agencies who have requested both lectures and case reviews from us, ranging from the Netherlands to Santa Clara, CA, to Lubbock, TX have been extremely welcoming and cooperative in sharing information. Typically, when we are contacted by families, it is because law enforcement is at a standstill with the investigation, they will not share information with the family regarding the investigation, or a combination of both. For the past twelve, almost thirteen years, I have served as a private consultant and investigator to the family of murdered sixteen-year old life-guard Molly Bish in Warren, Massachusetts. To be honest, a large part of the reason I moved to Massachusetts from Georgia is so that I could finish the work that I started with Molly's family; I know that I will devote myself to Molly's case, and others, until they are resolved. When crimes that are so unspeakable happen, the least a family deserves is to know what happened to their son, daughter, sister, husband, etc.; even if the answer won't bring that person back, there will still be the measured comfort of knowing the individual responsible will not harm another innocent, and leave pools of grief behind in their wake.

I began working with Molly's family just shy of my twenty-first birthday, in December 2003. I am the age Molly would have been had she lived. I remembered reading about her case in high school in 2000 – when Molly's remains were found in 2003, I remember how saddened I was to learn of the outcome. Well into my studies at American University, I reached out to Molly's family by leaving a note on her website, offering whatever assistance I could as a naïve college student. I didn't expect anything to come of it. Yet, two weeks later, I received a call at home from Molly's Father, John Bish, asking me to come and visit the family in Massachusetts. So, I resolutely packed up my Volkswagen Beetle and made the trek from Washington, D.C. to rural Western Massachusetts.

In all my life, I will never forget the first time I visited Comins Pond, where Molly was taken from, with her Father. We were walking across the bridge to the beach, and I saw the yellow ribbons adorning the cold metal fence in remembrance of Molly. To this day, some of those faded, yellow ribbons still remain tied around telephone poles and lampposts, and every June 27, the anniversary of Molly's disappearance, the town of Warren is festooned with yellow; a reminder of an innocent life severed. John gently untied one of the ribbons and handed it to me, its frayed edges stirring in the cold winter wind. "We can't afford to pay you anything, but I hope that you will always remember Molly." With those words I knew; I knew I would go to my grave trying to solve the mystery of what happened to Molly; with her honey blonde hair, cornflower blue eyes, shy smile, and silly laugh, Molly had been taken and murdered from her post as a life-guard. She was there to protect children, and no one was there to protect her. This was unacceptable to me, even as a twenty year old college student.

Now, at thirty-two, I look back on that first day with John Bish as I write this article and I think with amazement how desperate for answers this family must have been, a mere three years into the investigation into Molly's disappearance and murder (which seems modest compared to the now fifteen years of hell they have endured), to seek answers from a twenty year old college student with, at that point, absolutely no investigative experience. Over the course of the next twelve years, I would come to know the reasons for their desperation.

The Worcester County District Attorney's Office in Massachusetts, along with the Worcester County Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit is tasked with solving the abduction and murder of Molly Bish. There have been two District Attorneys in office since Molly's death, numerous investigators, and no arrests. Law enforcement received over 70,000 tips in Molly's case, and the search for Molly (and subsequent recovery) was the largest and most costly in Massachusetts history. In 2010, a special grand jury was empaneled to hear evidence about Molly's case, and while primarily investigative in nature, the grand jury

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was dismissed without an indictment.

In 2014, I had an idea for a tip campaign. Former District Attorney John Conte constantly tried to appease both Molly's family and an anxious general public by stating that authorities were "one piece" of information away from solving Molly's case. Clearly, after fifteen years of investigation, this was not the case. So, I asked Molly's family if we could host a "Just One Piece" campaign to solicit information from the public. So in October of 2014, for one day, the Sturbridge Inn donated a conference room to me and my students from Western New England University, and we took tips by phone and from people walking in.

That day, four individuals came forward and presented information regarding a new person of interest never before known to police. To this day, I consider him to be the most promising suspect we have ever had in Molly's case, and I hope that one day soon Molly's family can go to her grave and tell her, "we got him." The academic information related to this research today came in a very surprising way. I had nearly fifty phone calls and forty walk-ins for that tip campaign. There were two common themes that I heard from every witness who came forward – each person either commented that this was the first time they came forward because they were intimidated by law enforcement and that this was such a nice setting in a hotel with food, drinks, a private investigator, and students, or tipsters said that they had phoned the authorities but never received a call back. I was astounded by this information. Granted, law enforcement had over 70,000 tips in Molly's case, but centralized information gathering techniques, such as the HITS program implemented in Washington State by Robert Keppel following the Ted Bundy murders, was never utilized. What surprised me more was how many people were intimidated by law enforcement, and did not share possible information regarding a homicide because of their lack of, or prior experiences with public law enforcement agencies.

To this day, the Worcester State Police Detective Unit refuses to share information with Molly's family or me regarding the contents of her case file. While this is their prerogative, I argue that it is short-sighted and ignorant to exercise it, to say the very least. We know from Robert Keppel's research that in 95% of unresolved cases, the perpetrator's name will appear in the case file in the first thirty days of the investigation. If an outside consultant such as myself with an expertise in long-term, unresolved or "cold" cases, as well as a terminal degree in criminal justice would be allowed access to the case file (providing of course a confidentiality agreement is signed), chances are that a resolution would be much more likely. This is due to the fact that often times, especially in high profile investigations, information can be overlooked or lost, especially in the first few months of active investigation when information flow is heavy. Further, there is the issue of tunnel vision. Investigators may have overlooked critical behavioral cues from a person of interest because of their focus on another individual and the real perpetrator may have been mistakenly excluded as a suspect.

From my past experiences consulting with law enforcement on long-term, unresolved cases, and serving as a private investigator to families, I offer several policy implications for public law enforcement agencies: First and foremost, do not be afraid to collaborate with private investigators in investigations. There are many individuals well qualified to review case files and make investigative suggestions, as well as many individuals who have had investigative experience and hold terminal degrees in either criminal justice or forensic science and may have valuable insights into case material. The second recommendation I would suggest is proactively reaching out to the public through private investigators to obtain information about cases. As stated earlier, many witnesses may be intimidated by law enforcement (especially those individuals with criminal records who may fear that blame for the crime would turn to them). Private investigators, providing they give all pertinent information to law enforcement, can serve nicely as a conduit between society and public law enforcement agencies. Finally, I would recommend that legislation be developed in each state that would mandate to some extent, cooperation between private investigators and public law enforcement agencies, particularly in long-term, unresolved cases. For example, legislation that would dic-

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tate that after a period of time, if public law enforcement has not resolved a case, a private investigator of the family's choosing could have access to all relevant investigative materials.

Private investigators serve an essential need to victims and victims' families, and can be an enormous resource for public law enforcement agencies. Culturally, we have examined this issue in an academic arena since the 1970s. It is time that contemporary culture find a way to interweave public and private investigative services in order to improve measures of social control, so that we may resolve the over 200,000 unsolved homicides we have in the United States, so that we may identify the over 40,000 unidentified remains we have in morgues, and so that families, like Molly's, may be able to sleep at night knowing that the person who abducted and murdered their daughter, their sister, and their aunt, will never hurt them, or anyone else, ever again.

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# About This Issue of the *Informant*

This issue of the *Informant*, we're doing something different. In order to get information about the 2016 PALI conference to you in a timely manner, and also to be diligent stewards of the dues that our members pay, we will only be distributing this issue electronically. Moving forward, we will be considering, and experimenting with, different ways of getting information to not only our members, but when possible, all the professional private investigators in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

If you are a member of PALI, make sure that you are subscribed to PALI's e-mail discussion list. If you are not a member of PALI, we still want to keep you informed about developments in our profession, tools and techniques for investigators, and the ways in which PALI can help your business to thrive. If you need help subscribing to the members' e-mail list, please contact me, Bill Everman, at [wh-everman@comcast.net](mailto:wh-everman@comcast.net), or our executive secretary, Lindsay Kowalski, at [lkowalski@pali.org](mailto:lkowalski@pali.org). If you have not joined PALI but want to be sure to receive information from PALI, send us an e-mail with your contact information.



# Member Profile:

## Alex Soutos

### by Rick Anderson

PALI would like to introduce Alexander Soutos, the operator of Samos Investigations, Exton, PA--though many of you may know him already, since he is an active participant on PALI's e-mail list, an always present friendly face at PALI's conferences and other events, and someone who is always willing to help his fellow investigators.

Samos Investigations, LLC in Exton, PA is a boutique investigative company specializing in investigations for members of the legal community and the insurance industry. Alex enjoys how many first time clients contact his business asking for Mr. Samos. He explains to them that the firm is named after Samos, an island in Greece where his family members previously resided, and is then quick to add that Mr. Soutos is available to help them with their investigative needs.

Alex Soutos began his investigative career in 1983 as a Reserve Police Officer for the New Orleans Police Department. As a reserve officer he had full police powers and carried a firearm like any regular officer, but worked as a volunteer. It was interesting to be part of a reserve unit that included doctors, lawyers, bankers, and teachers among its members. After graduation Alex was assigned to the Special Traffic Investigative Unit and answered calls for routine traffic incidents, hit and run accidents as well as accidents involving major injuries. He was later transferred to a different district and covered a wider variety of major crimes.

During his time in the reserve unit, Alex investigated thousands of incidents and completed numerous detailed traffic accident reports. His field experience with New Orleans Police Department led him to an investigative position within the auto insurance industry.

Alex grew up in the Wayne, PA area and upon moving back to Pennsylvania, he worked in the claims departments of Nationwide and Progressive insurance companies in their auto theft investigative units.

In 2008, Alex moved into a field investigative position with a law firm that specialized in nursing home abuse cases. Alex enjoyed locating difficult to find witnesses, and conducting interviews and performing the detailed investigations related to the potential abuse cases.

In 2010, Alex decided that with his previous experience conducting investigations for the law enforcement, insurance and legal community, it was time to open his own boutique investigative agency. Since that time, Alex has kept busy conducting investigations mostly for law firms and the insurance industry.

Alex resides with his wife, who is a teacher, and they are proud parents of a middle school aged daughter who is First Violin and First chair in the String Orchestra. Alex also had another daughter who died at the age of 5 due to a medical error. Through these experiences, Alex has learned to be grateful at all times, because life can change so quickly.

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