



THE PALI INFORMANT

Winter 2012

2012 and Beyond! PALI Programs and Events

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As 2012 comes to a close and 2013 begins, it's a good time to look at some of the networking and educational opportunities that PALI has provided, and will be providing as we move into the new year.

Our ongoing free lunch program continues, and it's exactly what it sounds like: every licensed investigator we can find in a given area receives an invitation to a free lunch. This is a great opportunity for investigators to network and become acquainted with their colleagues in the area. As the name implies, there is no charge for this lunch, whether you're a PALI member or not.

PALI also offers regional seminars on an occasional basis. In 2012, the seminar "The Role of the Private Investigator and Security Expert in Negligent Security Litigation" was presented in both eastern and western Pennsylvania by Jim Carino and Bill Blake.

Our usual big event for the year is the Annual Seminar, which in 2012 again took place in Harrisburg and featured a number of great speakers, including Michele Stuart, Russell Kolins, Lisa Reed, Chris Finley and Dave Ziegler. The Seminar is also a great networking opportunity.

In 2013, we will also be participating in the PI Magazine East Coast Superconference at the Tropicana Resort and Casino in Atlantic City, NJ from June 26 through June 28. This is not an annual event, so mark your calendar to be a part of it, and watch as more details emerge!

2013 is also an election year, which makes our own Annual Seminar even more important. We are always looking for people who want to be a part of shaping PALI's future, so you may want to consider seeking office on the PALI board.

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Any questions, suggestions or submissions for this newsletter may be addressed to its editor, Bill Everman, by e-mail to wheverman@comcast.net, by telephone at 610-494-0635, or by mail to PO Box 2006, Aston, PA 19014. Many thanks to Greg Pirnik for his help in editing, and to former newsletter committee members Barbara Thompson and Bob Kozura for their invaluable assistance.

From The President

by Jeffrey Stein

Dear PALI Members, Friends and Colleagues,

As I look back on this past year, I reflect on many milestones that I personally and professionally have accomplished in 2012.

How was your year? Did you accomplish your goals? How does the upcoming New Year look for you both personally and professionally?

For PALI, we have accomplished a lot for our members, clients and professional colleagues. A brief recap of some of PALI's accomplishments in 2012 includes:

-A brand new PALI website: Our old website served us well over the years, but was outdated, built on an older platform that was susceptible to viruses and not very user friendly. We did our best to redesign our website, and added some new features, including a directory that randomizes our members when searched, so for those of you with names that are further down in the alphabet, you will not be last all the time when searches are conducted. Each time a search is entered, the program will list the matching members in a random order.

-Member Benefits: Please let me start off by saying that you get back what you put in. Be involved! This includes attending our conferences, lunches, and mini seminars. Network with your peers. Be heard. We have several opportunities on different committees; run for a seat on the Board. Be active in educational and meaningful conversations on our list serves. Write an article for our newsletter. Offer to be a speaker. The list goes on and on. The folks that are seen and heard from more frequently are also the ones that are receiving more business from our members. People like to put a name with a face and vice versa.

We are also actively working on creating more value for our members. Beginning this year (2013) all paid members in good standing will receive a subscription to PI Magazine when you renew. We have negotiated a preferred rate with AFLAC for PALI members, so if you are interested in learning more about AFLAC supplemental insurance please call PALI's AFLAC Rep, Connie Nour Hinkle at her office at 610792.4240 or on her mobile at 484.832.1614.

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Act 235 Certification and recertification's for PALI members is available at a discounted price thanks to long time members Bob Meinert and Lou gentile of CSI Corporate Security & Investigations in Monaca, PA.

We have more member benefit programs that we are working on and we will announce them as they come to fruition. If you have any ideas, suggestions or contacts for us with any programs that you feel can be beneficial to our members, please let one of the board members know and we will explore your ideas and suggestions.

-Membership and Renewals: We have now added online payment options, where you can now pay with a credit card. Welcome to the 21st century!

PALI does our best to monitor and take action on any legislation that may affect our profession. This year I along with Barbara Thompson had the opportunity to provide verbal testimony to the house judiciary committee regarding a bill that was being introduced about online impersonation, HB 2249.

So as you can see our Board has been very busy in 2012 and we will carry this momentum into 2013.

On behalf of the entire PALI Board of Directors, I hope that you and your families had a very happy Holiday Season and we all wish you and yours a very safe, happy and prosperous New Year!

Best Regards,

Jeff Stein, LPI, CCDI

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The Quickest Path To Independence

by Gregory Pirnik

For anyone wondering whether PALI membership is worth the investment, a quick story:

A client recently came to me because his 17-year-old daughter was involved in an obsessive online relationship and had become increasingly reclusive and withdrawn. All he had was the first name of what his daughter described as an “edgy” British kid living in the UK. She was hounding him to visit Manchester, UK, and given the perks that come with being an international airline pilot, he had agreed to take her there to celebrate her 18th birthday in July. That was before his ex-wife discovered diary entries revealing that their daughter secretly planned to run away with this unknown person upon arrival at their Manchester hotel.

The client’s main objective was to determine whether the person communicating with his daughter was indeed a British kid of similar age, or something else. He also mentioned an underlying concern that this might be a potential kidnapping scenario, and while not one to feed a client’s fear, I would have been remiss not to blend in a threat assessment given his status as a commercial pilot. In this particular case phone records were not an option. Unlike most teens these days, his daughter didn’t even want a phone. Her laptop was the only device she used.

Let me add also, although I come from a military and LE background, I was no high-level operator or super-sleuth detective before entering the private sector. Even after 10 years as a PI, my operation remains a regional “boutique firm”, and I no longer desire to serve anywhere other than US soil. A critical observer might say this one was over my head, and truth be told, the thought crossed my mind. I’m in business to find needs and fill them, however, and we don’t need all the answers. We just need to know where to get them.

Since a computer forensic exam was the first step, my first call went to Rick Carpenter at INA in Harrisburg. Access to the daughter’s new MacBook Air was problematic, but the client presented her old laptop, certain the suspicious communications and talk about visiting England began prior to replacing it. This wasn’t my first time working with Rick or Joe Henderson, their Director of Digital Forensics, so I knew we’d have all available subject identifiers from that laptop within days. It was the first time the computer we examined belonged to a juvenile, however, and when the initial review of chat messages revealed that the client’s daughter was sharing pornographic images of herself with a number of contacts and “camming” (performing real-time via webcam), it also became the first time I found myself up against child pornography laws. Having Joe’s guidance through that potential minefield on the way to our objective was a blessing.

As for the threat assessment, Manchester didn’t sound like a hot bed of terrorist activity to me, but I hardly have my finger on the pulse of terrorist activity in the UK. I needed a brief on any organizations currently operating in that area that may consider kidnapping a viable option for gaining control of a commercial plane. That required two calls. One response is an opinion, after all, while a consistent response from multiple sources becomes credible intelligence. My first call went to Jim Carino, mentor-extraordinaire whose network extends to corners of the globe I can’t begin to pronounce, let alone spell. My second call went to

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Warren Levicoff, who has maintained a London office for 15 years. (This request for assistance actually went via email to both simultaneously, so should count as only one more call.)

The next day I had responses from three trusted operatives in the UK, and learned that while England is currently rated 'low risk' on the World Threat Assessment map, that rating is by global comparison with areas like the Middle East, Africa and Mexico. In fact, certain areas of Manchester contain predominately Muslim communities, not all of which are considered 'tame'. Anti-terrorism raids have taken place in Manchester as well as other UK cities. Manchester Airport (Ringway) is a UK major international hub, after Heathrow, and as such remains on high alert, although these days UK Airports all have a high degree of security surrounding them.

This was good information in a general sense, but I was concerned with more specific red flags. Considering the pornographic nature of the daughter's interaction with an as-yet unknown subject, one particular news feed stood out. A BBC News headline on May 9 – the same day I sent my emails – read, ***Rochdale Grooming Trial: Nine Men Jailed***. A major kidnapping and abuse trial had just ended in Rochdale, involving nine men who ran a child sexual exploitation ring in Greater Manchester. According to the article, the men plied their victims with drink and drugs so they could pass them around for sex. The MO didn't fit exactly, with victims' ages ranging between 13 and 16. Yet I couldn't help remembering the client describing his daughter as immature, still carrying a teddy bear along on the few occasions when she leaves home.

“The client's daughter planned to run away with an unknown person...”

Meanwhile, back at the INA ranch, Joe drilled into the mountain of digital evidence recovered by mining Skype activity and struck a major vein. Given our briefing and some key search terms gleaned from the diary, he quickly plucked identifiers for two primary subjects from the many more casual contacts. He converted his data into a format I could work with and we soon confirmed the name of the subject referred to in the diary entries, but the fairly common name of someone believed to be an 18-year-old British kid was less-than-stellar fodder for our databases. Chat messages soon yielded additional details such as a mother's name, the frequent mention of a grandfather and a dog. The mother's name panned out better on Facebook with two possibles in England, the closest two hours north of Manchester, in a place called Derbyshire. Our subject claimed to live in mom's basement, but so might anyone posing as an 18-year-old kid to lure a young girl to a Manchester hotel.

It was time for boots on the ground in the UK, so Warren Levicoff enlisted the services of a trusted local asset. We briefed our UK agent, and two days later we were dialed in on the Derbyshire address listed to a woman believed to be our subject's mother. All that remained was to confirm whether our subject lived with his mother at that address, and whether he was indeed communicating with our client's daughter. All signs indicated that the edgy British boy existed, but we had to verify that he was the one behind the communication rather than some other wolf in sheep's clothing. Our client gave the green light for surveillance, and our UK agent dispatched accordingly.

The forensic examination produced helpful information, but still only gave us a window into the past. Our client decided his daughter's new laptop held the key to what was currently happening, and security software was installed on her MacBook Air to open a real-time channel. While waiting for the surveillance re-

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port we continued with a line-by-line review of seemingly endless chat messages that began reading like the screenplay from a pornographic rendition of *The Titanic*. We saw no evidence of probing by our subject regarding the client's job, but we had only a snapshot of communication from one channel, with no way of knowing what had already passed between them. What we did get was a clear impression that the person communicating with the client's daughter was manipulative and possessive enough to convince her that she no longer needed anyone but him. We fed new tidbits of relevant info to our field agent daily.

The case took an unexpected turn when a call came from the client informing us that pornographic images of his daughter had been sent to him, his ex-wife and his daughter's school from her email account. The principal had seized his daughter's laptop and called police, who turned the laptop over to a county detective in charge of child crimes. We had lost our line on the subject and any advantage real-time monitoring gave us, but the last chat messages left little doubt that the daughter's "edgy Brit" had been the source of the email, a fact all but confirmed when the daughter admitted she had provided her boyfriend with her password to prove her trust and commitment to him.

I was a bit conflicted over this turn of events. I expected a call from the county detective before long, asking to compare notes at the very least. In a perfect world, one might even expect a county-level sex crimes unit, with its resources and a reach extending beyond our own, to identify the subject and resolve the matter relatively quickly, and in a manner certainly more cost-effective. My client had intended to handle the matter

privately, but the email to school was clearly a game changer. We saw it as an act of humiliation by an as-yet unknown subject attempting to further alienate the victim from friends and family prior to her Manchester trip, but I also knew it was now more likely that this case would be consigned to the compost heap on a county detectives desk, only to be shoveled aside eventually as little more than a harassment by communication. In reality, nothing screws up a good private investigation faster than police involvement.

Upon meeting with the county detective, my client came away feeling he had been treated more like a suspect than the father, a victim. The kicker came when he told the detective he was working with private investigators, at which point the detective became angry, told him our involvement meant there was very little he could do. In the days that followed, calls to the detective went unreturned, a predictable stalemate made even more unfortunate when activity began originating again from his daughters email account, after an intervention team had already transported her to an intensive out-of-state wilderness camp for troubled youth with no Internet access. The client assumed the county detective was attempting to ensnare local predators, as he had suggested they sometimes do.

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The email to school turned out to be a watershed moment in the case from the client's standpoint. Prior to receiving the pornographic email, his ex-wife had been kept in the dark about our investigation. The client planned to use our results as leverage to convince her that their daughter was in need of intervention. His ex-wife had shared with him the diary entries about her plans to run away, but refused to consider that she might have significant issues, especially if that might suggest her home wasn't the healthiest environment after all. Until a boy no one knew arrived on the ex-wife's doorstep to inquire after their daughter, scaring her enough to sign on for the intervention. The client made his status inquiry to the county detective more official by way of a letter. Only then did he confirm what we already suspected. The detective wasn't the one accessing the email account. The subject was still using it, trying to reestablish contact with the client's daughter.

Although frustrated by the dismissive attitude of local authorities, our client remained determined to pursue the matter by whatever means necessary. We now had a verified address for the subject in Derbyshire. He wasn't observed outside his residence during surveillance, but a pretext with his mother confirmed that he lived there, and all but confirmed that we were indeed dealing with an 18-year-old British kid. Our local agent arranged a meeting with police and provided an itinerary with public train schedules. We provided the client with copies of our computer forensic and surveillance reports to give the Derbyshire authorities a schematic of the stateside investigation leading to their doorstep. Our client flew to Manchester, our agent provided escort from his hotel to the meeting, and we waited, hoping he would be well received.

We didn't wait long. Text messages soon confirmed that our client met for nearly five hours with two highly professional and interested Detective Constables and gave them an eight-page statement. On June 21st a warrant was sworn out and executed the following day at the suspect's home. He was arrested on suspicion of distributing indecent images of a child, a search was conducted of his home and several computers/laptops were seized. The subject was interviewed regarding the information and statement our client had provided and admitted the circumstances. He was then bailed pending a full examination of his computers.

I told you all that to tell you this:

First, my heartfelt thanks to fellow PALI members Rick Carpenter and Joe Henderson of INA, Warren Levicoff, and by extension, Ted Potter of D-Tect Investigations in Bolton, UK, who readily relates to American football analogies even though we play with a pointy ball. It's all about getting across a goal line, after all, and this effort would have fallen short if not for Ted to carry us into the end zone. And, of course, to Jim Carino, who continues to facilitate the connections that matter when we need them most, and who continues to build into the lives of others rather than letting his legacy ride.

Secondly, I think we all liked the idea of gaining independence when casting off whatever past life came before this, and I suspect the dream of financial independence keeps us all doing what we do to some degree. But I also believe it's possible to value independence too highly, if by doing so we cut ourselves off from our community. I barely participated in this particular investigation, and yet it's one of the more satisfying cases I've been involved with. It's humbling for me to know that we're able to reach across the pond and resolve a case when local authorities dead-ended. I'm little more than an ex-cop with a camera most days, but for a few days in June I was a part of something bigger, none of which would have happened without PALI members coming together to serve legitimate needs. Independence is great to a degree, but in our line of work strategic partnerships can mean the difference between success and failure.

PIs Making a Difference!

How Investigators Give Back to Their Communities

by Bill Everman

It started with a private investigator just wanting to help, and ended up with that investigator behind bars, waiting to be bailed out. What happened? Read on for the answer...

If you've ever watched a private detective on television, you probably noticed a few things. If they're the hero of the show, they usually have a rivalry with the local police, break at least a couple of laws before the end of the episode, and end up rescuing someone or otherwise saving the day. They are also apparently independently wealthy, because they rarely if ever even discuss payment, let alone actually getting paid by their clients. While there's a world of difference between real PIs and their TV counterparts, we do share a few things in common: our work does make a positive difference in the world, and some of that good is done without regard to payment. Let's take this opportunity to recognize how PALI members serve their communities.

If you spend any time driving around Philadelphia, you may have noticed signs letting you know that Talone and Associates and Gill and Associates have adopted stretches of highway on the Schuylkill Expressway, periodically cleaning up those areas to the benefit of other motorists.

Far from maintaining the TV detective's rivalry with the police, George Kadash serves as the president of the Board of Directors of Montgomery County Camp Cadet. This is a State Police initiative that provides a one week summer camp to boys and girls 13 to 15 years old who express an interest in a law enforcement career. The Board of Directors raises funds for this 501 C 3 organization. The funding provides room, board and supplies for the campers, while the police officers who act as counselors donate their time.

Some members donate their investigative services to help the community. Warren Levicoff has served pro bono as chief investigator for Philadelphia's three legal aid services since 1990, among other charitable endeavors; Rick Anderson has conducted investigations for Philadelphia's Innocence Project.

Greg Pirnik, in addition to providing editorial support for this newsletter, also found time to run a half marathon to benefit Via of the Lehigh Valley, an organization which provides services for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

Many members also help in varied, anonymous ways; we know of one member who paid off layaway costs for Christmas gifts for a single mother of three.

The good work that investigators do, both professionally and in other ways like those described in this article, not only makes the world a better place, but also demonstrates good will for our profession.

Oh, and the PI who spent time in jail? That was PALI member Michele Harris, who volunteered to be "imprisoned" by the Muscular Dystrophy Association until sufficient "bail" was donated to the organization to regain her freedom.



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PALI, Harrisburg and Washington, DC

Working to Protect and Enhance Your Ability to Investigate

One of the important functions that PALI serves is to act as a voice for the investigative profession to the various branches and agencies of government that can make your job easier...or harder.

PALI keeps an eye on legislation that may affect our industry, and representatives of PALI have testified in Harrisburg on behalf of investigators. Most recently, President Jeff Stein and Secretary Barbara Thompson testified before the Pennsylvania House Judiciary Committee regarding HB2249, a bill which would limit online impersonation, and could potentially have affected the ability of private investigators to pretext and conduct undercover investigations. In its current form, the bill would appear to affect only those who would engage in impersonation while committing other illegal acts, such as making terroristic threats.

Over the years, PALI has also been engaged in ensuring that any changes to the laws governing the practice of private investigation in Pennsylvania will be beneficial changes. PALI's efforts have also helped to ensure that private investigators continue to be able to legally access motor vehicle information through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

PALI also supports the efforts of ISPLA and NCISS in providing a voice for the private investigation and security industries to the federal government.

PALI is always looking for people who can help us with our legislative and political work. If you are interested in politics; if you have worked in political campaigns; if you are experienced in lobbying; if you have helped to craft legislation, we would love to talk to you about being a part of PALI's legislative committee.



Help PALI, the Environment, and Yourself!

Sign up for the digital edition of the *PALI Informant*

If you haven't already, sign up for the digital version of the *PALI Informant*! The digital edition saves PALI printing and postage costs, helps the environment by reducing the use of paper, and helps you to dig deeper into subjects of interest to you by providing links to relevant web sites and e-mail addresses in articles and advertisements.

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We are strongly considering moving all PALI members to the digital-only delivery in the future, while still mailing printed newsletters to non-members and members who specifically request printed copies. We believe that the digital version adds value for our members, since they can follow links from articles and advertisements to more information, but we also believe that one of our responsibilities as the largest PI association in Pennsylvania is to keep non-members informed, and we have e-mail addresses for relatively few non-member investigators.

If you have thoughts on this prospective change, please e-mail Bill Everman at wheverman@comcast.net.

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