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Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, Inc., (TBFAA) is a non-profit organization of security professionals who have joined together to enrich the industry by providing membership training and representing the membership as a whole in the Texas Legislature, the Texas Private Security Bureau and the Texas Fire Marshal's Office among many other programs.

The TRANSMITTER is published by the Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, a Texas not for profit association.
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Kelly Ryan

In our fast-paced world, we are continually facing new challenges, and when it comes to Texas Private Security licensing, we have certainly had our fair share of challenges! Keeping up with Texas Online Private Security (TOPS) requires time, but don’t forget the basics!

Did your security or fire alarm company take advantage of 2016 year-end deals and get new vehicles? Don’t forget that the beautiful new wrap on that vehicle still needs to have your company license information on it! Refer to Private Security Administrative Rule 35.8 and Texas Department of Insurance Fire Alarm Rule 34.610 to make sure you are compliant. (Now would be a good time to go ahead and download a current copy of both rule books!)

Did you have changes with any security employees recently? Make sure you don’t forget to submit the employee termination forms to the DPS. The DPS form “PSP-19B” was last updated June of 2016, so make sure you are using the correct form when submitting employee termination notices. The latest form is available on the DPS Regulatory Services website.

Very recently, I was contacted by one of the largest police departments in Texas about the PSP-53. In case you don’t remember, all security alarm companies in Texas are required to submit the PSP-53 upon any completed installation – monitored or not. Even if you primarily install in a municipality that once declined receiving the activation forms, now is a good time to check again, and don’t forget to remind your customers of any alarm permit requirements!

Have you made sure all your security licensed employee folders are current? Do you have a copy of their pre-employment background check in their file? In a recent conversation, I was asked what a security company should do if they didn’t have a copy of the pre-employment background check. After a nice conversation with a lead investigator from the DPS, it was determined that a failure to provide the pre-employment background check was much worse than having one done after employment occurred. (Of course, he did ask that the company immediately begin pre-employment checks, to which the company did comply!)

The above examples are just a few of the “basics” that all security & fire alarm licensed companies need to remember. There are many more, but the point is, even though we are busy, let’s all make sure we are not forgetting the basics. Stay informed! Be sure to join and participate in your local and state alarm association – your involvement is the key to success!

Message from the President

Jeff Bright
Email — president@tbfaa.org

In our fast-paced world, we are continually facing new challenges, and when it comes to Texas Private Security licensing, we have certainly had our fair share of challenges! Keeping up with Texas Online Private Security (TOPS) requires time, but don’t forget the basics!

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Private Security Program Updates

TOPS Login Changes

DPS Website

Accounts will now use email address and a user created password for login. There will be an activation email sent as part of the account setup. Once you click on the link to activate the account, you may login from any device without having to re-activate. The user will choose and answer security questions to enable password reset functionality and continue to ensure your information is secure.

Password requirements are 12-20 characters in length and must contain at least 2 upper case, 2 lower case, 2 numbers and 2 special characters.

The captcha function will be activated after multiple incorrect login attempts.

Existing users will need to create an account on their first interaction with TOPS. New applicants will be able to complete and pay for an application, then will be directed to create an account once DPS receives the completed and paid application. User guides are located on the Application Instructions page.

NOTE: Applicants or companies should complete and pay for any outstanding applications before 5pm on 2/27 (all unpaid applications will be deleted in order to move to the new login format).

Program Information

The Private Security Program has transitioned to a new online application process and a new licensing database called Texas Online Private Security System (TOPS). TOPS is more user-friendly, provides faster application processing, allows communication by email, and includes real time licensing and registration information. TOPS has allowed for the following program changes:

**Emails** – All correspondence will be sent via email. Visit TOPS to provide your email address

**Company Affiliations** – Individuals may submit and make payment for an application for registration without being affiliated with a company. The pocket card will not be mailed until the applicant is affiliated with a company.

**Pocket Cards** – All pocket cards will be mailed to individual registrants. Please ensure the mailing address is current by visiting TOPS

**Synchronized Expiration Dates** – An individual will have one expiration date for each of the following registration/license types:

- All their Unarmed registrations
- All their Owner/Manager registrations
- All their Instructors licenses
- All their Commission and Personal Protection Officers registrations

**Background Check Required** – Background checks are now required on renewal applications as well as all armed (commissioned) applications regardless current or previous registrations held. There is a $25 FBI background check fee for this. If the applicant receives an email stating, “Background Required”, no action on the part of the applicant is required, as the crime records department is attempting to use fingerprints on file whenever possible. If there are no fingerprints on file or the fingerprints are of poor quality, the applicant will receive a second email stating, “Fingerprints required”. In those rare cases, the applicant will need to submit fingerprints. Please see fingerprint instructions for more information.

**Payments** – Electronic Checks will only be accepted from licensed companies. All individual applicants must pay by credit/debit card.
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Our goal at NMC is to help you grow your business by substantially increasing your referrals. We continue to work hard on your behalf and continue to challenge ourselves in order to always achieve our stated goal. Your monitoring center should help you grow your business, not just respond to alarm signals. This is our mission.

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LRG Remembers September 11, 2001

By Malcolm Reed, Southwest Dispatch Center

During a conversation I had early in 2016 with Chris Lanier, president of LRG, Inc., Chris had casually mentioned that he was involved in the planning of a September 11th monument and memorial in his hometown of Jasper, Texas. Jasper, as you may know, is a town of just over 7,500 population in the lower Piney Woods region of Texas. Small-town “Hicksville” to me, having grown up in Dallas. As I was listening to Chris give me a few details about the planning of this “Hicksville” September 11th memorial and trying to comprehend how “Hicksville, Texas” could possibly pay a respectful tribute to the borough of Manhattan (1.6 million population), let alone the cities of New York (8.1 million population), Arlington, Virginia (190,000 population), and that peaceful community of Stonycreek, Pennsylvania (2,200+ population), when it occurred to me that size indeed had nothing to do with it. The horrifying events of September 11, 2001 could have occurred in Buford, Wyoming (population 1) and we as Americans would have been equally affected. Accordingly, I promptly booked a room at the Statler Hilton in Hicksville (aka, Holiday Inn Express in Jasper) and set out to plan my September 11, 2016 weekend. After all, Chris has been a friend of mine for more years than I can recall, and I’ve known his father Joe since the late 1970’s and my days at Smith Alarms; and I figured if this was something that close to Chris’s heart, then it must be worth the time investment for me to see with my own eyes.

Fast forward four or five months; the morning of the scheduled memorial dedication ceremony, September 10th, was hot and especially steamy in Jasper, and as soon as I stepped out of my car near the Jasper County Courthouse Square, my glasses and camera lenses completely fogged over because of the thick humidity. Lucky for me I was fairly early, which allowed the condensation on my camera equipment to dry. Within a few minutes of arriving at the ceremony area, located directly in front of LRG’s Main Street offices, I met a gentleman by the name of Roy James. Mr. James introduced himself, thanked me for coming all the way from Dallas, and gave me a brief lay-of-the-land, and then invited me to “make myself at home” while volunteers worked to set up chairs and put the final touches of what would soon be the ceremony stage and foregrounds. Whaaat; “Make myself at home”! What kind of invitation is that to a stranger arriving in Hicksville? We don’t invite strangers to make themselves at home anymore, we invite them to go home! I kept expecting Biff Tannen to drive by any second looking for Marty McFly so he could give Marty a noogie or a knuckle sandwich!

As it turns out, Mr. James, like Chris Lanier, was one of the individuals instrumental in organizing the Jasper September 11th Memorial. As I understand it, between the two of these gentleman and a small group of patriotic Americans, the Hicksville (my bad) Jasper September 11th Memorial was conceived, planned, built, and dedicated. While I don’t have a lot of the facts or history about the journey of this small Jasper, Texas group of patriots; what I do have is the knowledge, admiration and respect of the individuals who envisioned the memorial and worked to make it happen. I can tell you that the finished memorial is as impressive as any I’ve had the honor to see.

Early in 2016, Chris and his Jasper team had traveled to New York to receive the gift of an extremely dense piece of steel beam material which weighs more than two-hundred pounds, is just a couple square feet in size, and was once a part of one of the World Trade Center Tower’s support columns. As you remember, there were once three high-rise towers which made up the World Trade Center complex in Manhattan, all of which collapsed within a couple hours of the terrorist attacks on America that day. This small piece of steel is now the centerpiece of the Jasper September 11, 2001 Monument, memorializing the individuals and first responders who lost their lives on that sunny September morning. As I understand it, Mr. James had spent considerable time working with a custom granite fabricator designing the monument and incorporating the piece of World Trade Center history into it. I can personally attest that the time and energy was well worth the investment. Made from a grey granite with several polished sections, and embossed with a timeline of the events of September 11th on one side, and the American Flag and Statue of Liberty on the front, it is as impressive as it is moving.

At first sight it occurred to me that there are at least two subtle yet intentional reminders built into the monument design. The resemblance image of the twin towers, and the number 11. As I mentally told myself to “look with your eyes, not with your hands”, I was continually compelled to touch different sections of the monument, especially that piece of dense cold steel that once helped support one of the tallest buildings on earth. Not only are you compelled to touch that particular piece of steel, for some reason you are drawn to place your entire hand against it almost as if you expect to receive some kind of spiritual knowledge by doing so. While that did not happen for me, I do have to say that I did feel a kind of bond with the former building and the individuals who lost their lives on that day and in the days and years since. I personally don’t think you can be fully American if that full-hand touch doesn’t cause you to connect in some way to that sunny September morning, and remember those horrifying scenes on the television and thinking about all the people who suffered that fate.

Continued on page 22
Helping You Make the Complex Simple

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Teresa Gonzalez, president of United Central Control, was awarded the Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA)’s highest honor, the Stanley C. Lott Award, at the 2016 Annual Meeting.

"On behalf of CSAA, I am thrilled that Teresa has been selected as the recipient of the 2016 Stanley C. Lott Award," said Pamela J. Petrow, president of CSAA. "This award is not presented each year, but reserved for the very special recognition of individuals who have made significant contributions to the security industry over an extended period of time. Teresa’s efforts distinguish her among the volunteers who move CSAA forward -- this award is well deserved."

Teresa Gonzalez has 25 years of experience in central station operations and technology, including 15 years managing personnel, business operations and technical advancements in the central station. She joined UCC in 1997 and served as UCC Vice President and General Manager until being promoted to President in 2008. She is a member of the CSAA Board of Directors and a Co-Chair of the CSAA Education Committee.

“I am very humbled and honored to have been selected to receive this award,” said Gonzalez. “It is definitely an unexpected but pleasant surprise! Over the last 15 years, it has been a gratifying experience to work with and share ideas with other CSAA members who are passionate about this industry and its professionalism, especially all those who have contributed to the education committee over the years. I also feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from so many great leaders at CSAA. I am grateful to them for their support and friendship.”

As chair of the CSAA Education Committee, Gonzalez has been a driving force behind creating and updating CSAA’s educational content, one of the Association’s most important programs. “Be it upgrades to existing programs, such as the Distance Learning Programs for frontline staff, or bringing in relevant speakers for the Fall Operations Conference and CSAA Annual Meeting, Teresa’s vision has been critical in our effort to create relevant content that our business members can use to improve performance and bottom line results,” said Petrow. “As we have been working to advance CSAA, her work in the area of education has significantly contributed to our success.”

“It’s an exciting time to be a part of CSAA,” said Gonzalez. “Under the leadership of President Pam Petrow, Executive Director Jay Hauhn, and all the support staff, CSAA has had new direction and positive change. Board members have a renewed commitment of participation, a common goal and desire to re-create value and relevance for our members, and to continue the furtherance of professionalism in our industry. I am proud and thankful to work with such exceptional people.”

Fire Marshal Reminder: Current Registration/License Numbers

As of March 1, 2017, all companies and licensees should be displaying only your currently issued Registration and License numbers. This includes service tags, labels, vehicles, signs and business forms. After March 1, 2017, the old numbers must not be used or displayed.

In March 2012, the State Fire Marshal’s Office began the conversion to a new licensing software program. For many companies and licensees, this resulted in being issued a new unique number. In order to lessen the impact of the changes, the State Fire Marshal’s Office agreed that there would be a transition period of five (5) years to allow companies to deplete their stock of service tags and business forms bearing the old numbers.

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Mitch Reitman named to SSI Industry Hall of Fame Class of 2017

By Scott Goldfine · March 16, 2017 · Security Sales & Integration

The fabric of the electronic security industry is woven from a rich tapestry of individuals committed to doing the right thing for their companies, colleagues and customers.

Prominently exemplifying those virtues and attaining exceptional career achievement are the common threads that bind those extraordinary practitioners who attain entry into the SSI Industry Hall of Fame.

This year, five such professionals who have stitched together remarkable accomplishments have been chosen to receive that lofty honor. It has been written here before, but bears revisiting to bring to fore what makes this distinction so praiseworthy.

Typically, the term “hall of fame” conjures thoughts of those who excelled on sports fields or entertainment stages. Not to denigrate such programs and institutions or besmirch the deserving people saluted for those endeavors, but it’s certainly not life and death.

SSI’s Industry Hall of Fame, on the other hand, honors those whose efforts have had life-and-death consequences. Every person serving in the security/life-safety industry plays a role in the grand scheme to protect people and property. SSI’s Hall calls out those who have made the most significant contributions to this mission.

The Class of 2017 is composed of a pair of security installation and monitored services firm founders who have both given back immeasurably to the industry; an icon who played a pivotal role in launching today’s security alarm business and founded one of the biggest names in security manufacturing; the person probably most closely associated with network video surveillance who has helped guide his company from a tiny to a top market presence; and a master of checks and balances who has promoted and elevated business professionalism among alarm dealers and their trade associations.

In alphabetical order, they are: Dan Budinoff, president of Stamford, Conn.-based Security Specialists; Maurice Coleman, late founder and executive leader of ADEMCO (now part of Honeywell); John Lombardi, CEO of Fishkill, N.Y.-based CIA Security; Fredrik Nilsson, vice president of the Americas for Axis Communications; and Mitch Reitman, principal of Fort Worth, Texas-based Reitman Consulting Group.

**MITCH REITMAN**
Founder and Principal, Reitman Consulting Group

**Why He’s Being Inducted**

More than two decades setting a professional business standard within the electronic security industry; spreading the word of accounting and accountability

Very involved in local, state and national security trade associations, serving on boards with ESA, AIREF, Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (among others), and handles financial reporting and taxes for 20+ local associations

- Provides financial consulting, valuation, general accounting services, transactional services, tax compliance, and tax representation services to security companies in 23 states, Mexico, Canada and the EEC
- Firm has participated in more than $750 million of security industry transactions and prepared

100+ alarm company valuations
- Participated in more than $400 million of alarm account transactions as vice president of acquisitions for Select Security and director of acquisitions and business development for Protection One
- Shares best practices with industry at large through speaking engagements and trade publication articles

**Keys to Success**

“My father was a great role model. I have had some great interactions with incredible business leaders, during my time in public accounting and in the security industry and I have learned a lot from them.

Continued on Page 19

Bio: Mitch Reitman

- Born in 1958 in Birmingham, Ala.
- Brother to two sisters, father was a physician in the U.S. Navy and later ran a private practice; mother was a homemaker
- Has one son
- Earned BBA at the University of Texas and BS & MS degrees in Accounting at the University of North Texas; passed CPA exam in 1990
- Began accounting career with two large national firms, Coopers and Lybrand (now Price Waterhouse Coopers) and Kenneth Leventhal (now Ernst & Young)
- Other interests include cooking, bicycling and volunteer work
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- Roast & Toast Dinner after the Trade Show
- Pool Party with Cash Bar After Roast & Toast

Make sure to visit www.tbfaa.org to register.
In public accounting, I was in the Emerging Business Group. We worked with Compaq Computer, On the Border restaurants and other fast-growing, market-changing businesses. I developed relationships with some incredibly bright entrepreneurs who helped shape who I am today.

I have also developed relationships with many of the sharpest people in our industry that inform how I go about my business in 2017. That includes individuals associated with Protection One, Select Security, and the state and national alarm associations.

Professional and Personal Inspiration
What motivates me professionally is being able to offer value to entrepreneurs and visionary business people who need reliable and relevant information to grow their businesses and achieve their goals.

I am also working with state and local security associations to establish scholarship programs for the children of first responders. I believe this is a great way for the industry to improve its relationship with the first responders.

My firm distributes and administers programs for several of these and it is very rewarding. I have been the blood drive chair for my Rotary Club for many years. I believe that assisting our blood banks is an excellent way to help the community.

Balancing Technology and Business
“The industry is moving more and more from detecting and reporting events to providing information to customers. Internet-enabled cameras and alarm panels can provide users with information about their businesses instead of waiting on an event that may or may not ever come.

Controlling access and environment, and eliminating human error are huge areas for growth in the industry. But the market is getting more competitive and business owners have to understand their financial situation.

Now, more than ever, it is important to be competitive and profitable. Even when it comes time to sell, businesses that are profitable from sources over and above the margins from their RMR will command premium prices.”

Biggest Wish for Industry Change
“Only a small percentage of companies invest time in the trade associations and the resources that they have to offer. Many owners don’t get involved until they are faced with an issue such as verified response.

The associations have a lot to offer and are very dependent on bright owners to volunteer for the betterment of the industry. It would be great if more large, successful firms, and their owners, recognized this and contributed more time and money.”
News

Two Industry Veterans Pass Away

Earl Wayne Lanier, Jr.
Earl Wayne Lanier, Jr., born December 4, 1957, in Fort Worth, Texas, passed away November 4, 2016, in Houston, Texas, at the age of 58.
Earl worked with EN-TOUCH Alarm Systems, Inc. of Houston Texas a long time member of TBFAA and HGCAA.

Samuel L. "Sam" Brown
Samuel L Brown passed on October 16, 2016. As the owner of BMA Systems, Inc., Sam was a very early supporter and contributor of the Dallas County Burglar & Fire Alarm Association, known today as the North Texas Alarm Association.

HGCAA Supports Camp Hope with Donations

By: John C. Helweg, HGCAA President

This year one of the organizations the Houston Gulf Coast Alarm Association (HGCAA) decided to help was a local Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) treatment location for Veterans in Houston called Camp Hope.

Camp Hope is a facility that Veterans, and in some instances their families, can stay for up to 6 months to get Peer to Peer help/counseling with PTSD.

We voted to donate $500 and we collected about $200 additional in donation items. A car load of items were donated that consisted of: a vacuum cleaner, body wash, shampoo, deodorant (men’s and women’s), toilet paper, paper towels, dish liquid, cleaning wipes, all-purpose cleaner, trash bags and about $75 in Walmart gift certificates.

When we delivered the donation we were shown around by one of the current residents. He took us through the property and explained how the living quarters are setup, went through what a typical day consists of for them during treatment and took us to a multipurpose building where they have meetings, family events and church.

The Veteran we spoke with said that he owes his life to Camp Hope right now. He said that he was at rock bottom when someone suggested that he contact Camp Hope to see if they could help him. He has a great outlook on the future now and said that he had about 3 more months in treatment and that he was looking forward to finishing up and helping other vets as they come in to the program.

If you know a veteran that is struggling with PTSD, I would urge you to put them in contact with Camp Hope or the PTSD Foundation of America on their website www.ptsdusa.org or on the Veteran’s line 877-717-PTSD (7873).
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Level 1 Class

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8 Hour -1 day Residential Fire Alarm Technician


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Continued from page 12

That, did in fact happen to me. The coldness of that full-hand touch was perhaps another subtle remembrance, yet that connection is what impacted me the most.

The Jasper congregation had brought several members of the New York Fire Department to Jasper to assist in the dedication of the monument. These were individuals who had responded to the World Trade Center Towers on September 11th. Chris has on several occasions since talked about how humble and respectful these individuals were, and how dedicated they remain to this day; the fact that they had witnessed such devastation and tragedy, yet would not hesitate to respond to the same type of event today if asked to do so. It illustrates more than just commitment to me. It illustrates the fiber of their being.

For those of you who know me well, you know that I love to find the humor and levity in most situations, and yes I’ve done so to a small degree in writing this piece as well. That said, please know that the somberness in my soul of the events which took place in these United States of America on September 11, 2001 are real and emotional to me. Chris Lanier had actually been in the World Trade Center complex just a few days prior to September 11th, 2001. I know the events impacted Chris’ life. I also know that every person reading this article remembers that particular September morning fifteen years ago with the same incredible detail as I. You remember who you were with, where you were at, and that horrifying live video feed of that second plane hitting the tower in great detail. I believe that image will never leave us. You remember that noxious feeling all Americans had that day, and the eerie stillness and quietness of our world in the following days when there were no planes in the skies overhead. I remember that left-over shock in the following days as we all treated each other with more respect and kindness. I remember my drives to work and home, and around town were much less hurried and confrontational, as they are today. I believe we all felt that same shock and emotional void in those September days. It is almost impossible for me to think back to that September day without getting emotional, even to this day. A ton of that emotion hit me this past September as I witnessed Chris Lanier and his group of Jasper neighbors pay homage and respect to the day in American history when more than 2,900 people were killed by terrorist. Small town perhaps, but of huge heart and spirit!

So if you ever find yourself in the lower Piney Woods region of East Texas, do yourself a big favor and drop by Jasper to see this incredible tribute to some of our country’s great heroes. After visiting the monument, don’t forget to walk across the street to the J.L. Lanier Building (established in 1912) and thank Chris Lanier (and wife Juli) for his community’s contribution to Remembering September 11, 2001. Speaking for me, I’d like to personally say “Thank You” to Chris, Roy, and their entire community for inviting me to “Make Myself at Home” during my brief visit to Hicksville (darn it, there I go again) Jasper, Texas.

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