

the PRINT

The Official Publication of the Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers
An Association for Scientific Investigation and Identification Since 1937

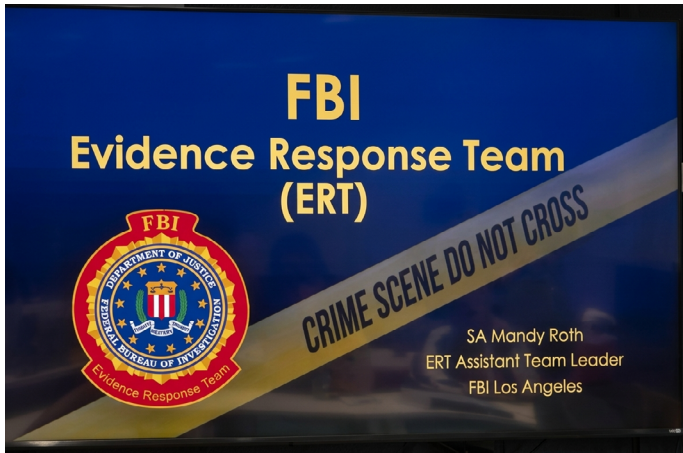
2026

OUTLINE

UPDATES . COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT . EDUCATION

Editorial Unit

1st Quarter, 2026



Discussion @ the February Meeting

DID SOMEONE SAY APRIL? ALREADY?!

- Officers
- President statement
- Executive Board Members
- 2026 SCAFO Conference Update
- Article - AFIS history by *1996 Past President, William (Bill) Leo*
- Member Spotlight - Jackie Thompson (LASD, Retired)
- Retirement - *2012 Past President, Lisa Jackson*
- February Meeting - Photos/Minutes
- In Memorium - *Rita Tillmann, 2002 Past President, Steve Tillmann's wife*
- Forensic Crosswords

A Piece of California Fingerprint History, 50 Years Ago. By William (Bill) Leo

I was going through some old materials and came across this document—it captures the very beginning of computerized fingerprint database searches in California. I was there when it all started.

Rockwell International Fingerprint Computer Division, based in Orange County, was at the forefront of this technology. In the late 1970s, Rockwell was not only the only vendor offering computerized fingerprint systems, but likely the first. Before California adopted the system, Rockwell had implemented a small nationwide system in Canada and another in Florida. The Canadian system achieved about a 1% hit rate, while Florida's system reached around 10%. At the time, it was widely believed that smaller, more localized databases produced better results due to their limited size...

[READ MORE... Pgs. 7 - 9](#)

It is time for another Member Spotlight! This quarter, we are celebrating Jackie Thompson, the attendance drawing winner at the February meeting, who also retired in 2022 as a Forensic Identification Specialist (FIS) with the L.A. County Sheriff Department. Jackie has been a dedicated SCAFO member for 25 years.

Retirement has been anything but quiet—she now owns a horse, enjoys river rafting, and has taken up dance and piano lessons, even composing two songs along the way! To top off her exciting new chapter, Jackie is also working as a part-time background extra for TV shows.

G o J a c k i e !

[READ MORE... Pg. 10](#)

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Resources

"Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere."

- President Theodore

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we move further into the year, I want to take a moment to reflect on recent activity within SCAFO and share a look at what lies ahead for our association.

Our February meeting was a great start to the year. We were fortunate to have an FBI Agent present and share her knowledge and perspective with our members. Presentations like this provide valuable insight into the evolving landscape of forensic identification and reinforce the importance of collaboration and continued learning within our profession.

Unfortunately, we made the difficult decision to cancel the April 4th meeting due to low member sign-ups. While these decisions are never easy, they also serve as an important reminder of how much our association depends on the engagement and participation of its members. Moving forward, we encourage everyone to continue supporting SCAFO by attending meetings and training opportunities whenever possible. Your participation helps ensure we can continue providing valuable educational experiences and maintaining a strong professional network.

Looking ahead, I encourage all members to mark their calendars for our upcoming SCAFO Educational Confer-

ence, October 1st and 2nd in Temecula. The conference continues to be one of the highlights of the year for our association, bringing together professionals from across Southern California to learn, share ideas, and strengthen the relationships that support our work. I look forward to seeing many of you there and to another outstanding program.

As we continue through the year, I encourage all members to remain engaged with the association by attending meetings, participating in training opportunities, and supporting one another within this profession. SCAFO has always been built on a strong foundation of collaboration, mentorship, and professionalism, and it is through the active involvement of our members that we continue to grow and evolve.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the identification profession and for the role each of you plays in supporting SCAFO. Together, we will continue to strengthen our association and move our profession forward.

Respectfully,
Lindsey Olson, 2026 SCAFO President

THE 2026 SCAFO EXECUTIVE BOARD



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Lindsey Olson



1st VP
Natalie Popovich



2nd VP
Magda Perez



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Director
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Historian
Cynthia Fortier



Paliamentarian
Cynthia Williamson



Editor/Web Manager
Omolola Odeniyi



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!
PRICING INCLUDES LUNCH BOTH DAYS OF CONFERENCE!

Early bird pricing ends July 31st!

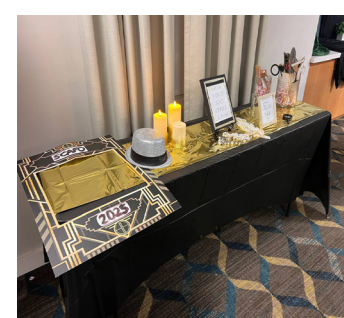
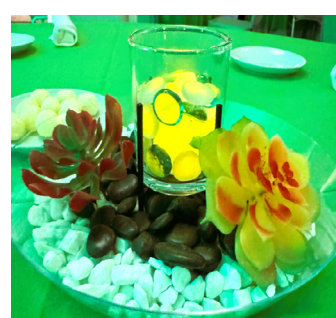
Early Bird Pricing:

Member pricing Full Registration: \$275

Non-Member pricing Full Registration: \$300

October 1st - 2nd, 2026

HILTON GARDEN INN - TEMECULA
 28210 JEFFERSON AVE, TEMECULA CA 92590



Click [here](#) to review and download photos from the 2022 - 2025 Conferences

A Piece of California Fingerprint History, 50 Years...

OPINION | *By William (Bill) Leo, 1996 Past President*



I was going through some old materials and came across this document—it captures the very beginning of computerized fingerprint database searches in California. I was there when it all started.

Rockwell International Fingerprint Computer Division, based in Orange County, was at the forefront of this technology. In the late 1970s, Rockwell was the only and I believe the first fingerprint computer vendor.

Before California adopted the system, Rockwell had implemented a small nationwide system in Canada and another in Florida. The Canadian system achieved about a 1% hit rate, while Florida's system reached around 10%. At the time, it was widely believed that smaller, more localized databases produced better results due to their limited size.

When California's system went online, it was divided into two separate databases: AFIS, which used thumbprints to identify arrestees, and ALPS, designed to search latent prints recovered from crime scenes.

The first version of the California Automated Latent Print System (ALPS) included only eight fingers per individual. The little fingers were intentionally excluded to conserve database space and allow for more entries. At that time, little fingers accounted for roughly 20% of the database but contributed only about a 2% hit rate.

Over the past 50 years, the technology has advanced tremendously. Despite these innovations, the foundation of solving crimes through latent prints remains unchanged: it still depends on skilled forensic specialists recovering usable prints from crime scenes to find the bad guys.

8

AUTOMATED LATENT PRINT SYSTEM
by Cornace V. Sanders
Manager, Latent Print Section
California Department of Justice

The Latent Fingerprint Section of the California Department of Justice and Rockwell International have collaborated to develop a prototype of an Automated Latent Fingerprint System. This system will have the ability to search a latent fingerprint of an unknown subject against a select file of fingerprints of known subjects.

Approximately two years ago the Project SEARCH Committee recommended that a study of the "state-of-the-art" be made to determine the need and potential of an automated system such as this to serve the criminal justice agencies of California. After many months of individual and collective effort, a prototype system was approved for a six-month test period. This test period is to begin March 1, 1976.

The initial data base will consist of 12,000 offenders (certain parolees and convicted burglars). These subjects have been selected from eight geographical locations into which the State has been divided.

Each subject's fingerprints will be classified by a Fingerprint Reader (FINDER) and the classification is to be combined with descriptors including: which finger, type of pattern, type of crime, geographic area, and a control number. This information is then stored on magnetic tape on a mini-computer.

To search a latent fingerprint impression requires an analyst using an Encoder, through means of electronics, to graphically display the ridge flow and minutiae of the suspect print. The code or classification developed on the Encoder is compatible with the classification developed by the FINDER.

The code from the Encoder, together with all known descriptors, crime pattern, area, etc., is addressed to the computer where a search is made and respondents are listed by Bureau of Identification file number. These respondents' fingerprints are compared with the latent print for possible identification.

The development of the Automated Latent Print System (ALPS), containing a file of 250,000 subjects, will be of benefit to law enforcement agencies throughout California. Although the obtaining of a prototype has been successful, much work is ahead before a permanent working system can be realized. The order of priorities and funding are only two of the major problems to be confronted.

As potential users of ALPS, criminal justice agencies in California will be contacted for input, advice and ideas. Many have been contacted already and the cooperation received has been beyond expectation. The eventual success of ALPS will be an achievement of unparalleled magnitude in the fight against crime.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jackie Thompson



After a distinguished 31-year career with the L.A. County Sheriff's Department, Jackie Thompson retired in 2022 as a Forensic Identification Specialist (FIS). A dedicated member of SCAFO for 25 years, Jackie's journey into forensics began while working as a jail matron. While live-scanning women in custody, her curiosity was sparked, leading her to pursue the Henry Fingerprint Classification course at ELA College, an AA in Administration of Justice, and a Forensic Identification certificate from Rio Hondo College.

For Jackie, the most rewarding moments of her 13 years as an FIS were the "hits"—developing latent prints in the field and seeing them come to life through AFIS comparisons and DNA matches. Within the SCAFO community, she remains an active presence, citing the haunting "Black Dahlia" presentation as her all-time favorite.

In retirement, Jackie is anything but idle. When she isn't on the trails hiking or river rafting, she is spending time with her horse or practicing for her next dance and piano lessons (she already has two songs down!). You might even spot her on the small screen, where she works part-time as a background extra for TV shows.



CELEBRATING PAST PRESIDENTS!



"This photo captures four Past Presidents and a Life Member, representing nearly two centuries of expertise in Latent Print Comparisons. From left to right: Steve Tillman, Susan Garcia, Bill Leo, Craig Johnson, and Dale Falicon."

"It was a privilege to catch up with these old friends and former colleagues while Bill and Craig were in town from Texas to testify in a legacy LASD homicide case. Seeing such a wealth of knowledge and dedication in one frame was a wonderful reminder of the deep roots and enduring connections within our field."

- Susan Garcia, 2006 Past President



TYPE
Party

CODE
Freedom

PASSPORT NO.
050534

"I am immensely proud of my forensic journey, rising from student worker to Forensic Administrator. This path allowed for continuous growth, supported by mentors like Susan Garcia, Bill Leo, and AFIS guru Ray Clara, whose expertise fueled my passion for the craft. Serving as the first African American female president of SCAFO (in 2012) was a transformative honor. Though I don't miss tracking the gavel, the role deepened my respect for our community. I've grown significantly through this leadership experience and hope my journey inspires other young women to pursue leadership roles within SCAFO and the broader forensic field."

- Revised excerpts from an interview with SCAFO Historian, Cynthia Fortier

...Hearty wishes to you on your retirement, Lisa!

FBI Evidence Response Team (ERT)

Presentation by SA Mandy Roth | ERT Assitant Team Leader FBI Los Angeles



SA Mandy Roth with
2026 President, Lindsey Olson



SA Mandy Roth with
Kenneth Montgomery
Supervisor, Santa Barbara Sheriff County
Forensics Bureau (Host Agency)

MINUTES

February 2026 Meeting

DATE: February 7, 2025
LOCATION: Procore, Carpinteria, CA
HOST(S): Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office
SECRETARY: Dennise Hernandez

CALL TO ORDER: 1243 hours by President Lindsey

Cynthia Williamson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Lindsey Olson held a moment of silence for fallen law enforcement personnel

ATTENDANCE:

PAST PRESIDENTS' Present: Cynthia Fortier (2013), Josie Mejia (2017, 2024), Cynthia Williamson (2022)

EXECUTIVE BOARD Present: Lindsey Olson (President), Magda Perez (2nd VP), Dennise Hernandez (Secretary), Josie Mejia (Treasurer), Sarah Ragsdale (Sgt at Arms), Martin Briano (Director), Cynthia Fortier (Historian)

EXECUTIVE BOARD Absent: Natalie Popovich (1st VP), Denell Payne (Chairperson), Omolola Odeniyi (Editor), Adriana Tenorio (Director), Vivianna Torres (Director), Angel Gonzalez (Director)

MEMBERS & GUESTS PRESENT AT CONFERENCE: 23

OLD BUSINESS:

October 2025 meeting minutes

Motion to Accept: Cynthia Fortier
Second: Cynthia Williamson
All in favor

SECOND READING:

NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

FIRST READINGS:

NONE

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Reminder to pay 2026 dues; contact Secretary if you have any issues

UPCOMING TRAINING

Announce schedule of meetings

CSD IAI 5/11-15 in Palm Springs, CA

IAI 8/16-22 in St. Louis, MO

LA Intensive latent training with RS&A, Forensics 360

SCAFO Conference 10/1-2 in Temecula, CA

HIRING OPPORTUNITIES

NONE

Attendance Drawing for \$25: Jackie Thompson

50/50 Raffle: Melissa Sandoval

PRIZES:

Provided by: SCAFO, members of the Executive Board

NEXT MEETING:

Date: April 4th, 2026

Location: TBD

Price: TBD

Speaker: TBD

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Motion by: Martin Briano

Second: Cynthia Fortier

MEETING ADJOURNED: ~1400hrs

in

Loving Memory

Rita Tillmann
Jan 11, 1957 - Feb 25, 2026



At SCAFO's 60th Anniversary Dinner on the Queen Mary

It is with deep sadness that I inform you of the passing of my wife, Rita Tillmann. Rita was at my side at many SCAFO meetings and events throughout my time as a SCAFO member and Past President.

She organized my installation dinner when I became President and assisted me with hosting meetings and was always there to support me in all my endeavors. I will always remember a SCAFO meeting when we had a magician as entertainment and he needed an assistant. I jokingly volunteered my wife, and she grudgingly agreed and did help with the act, where he made her disappear in the floor of a tiny house, which I think only she could have fit in. I got a lot of grief from the other member wives over that one!

She always enjoyed coming to the meetings and hearing all the stories of cases that we all have investigated over the years.

By Steve Tillmann, 2002 Past President

IN LOVING MEMORY



RITA TILLMANN

Beloved Wife, Mother, Sister, Aunt, and Friend
 Jan 11, 1957 - Feb 25, 2026

The Tillmann family invite you to join them in celebrating Rita's life at a memorial Mass on

WEDNESDAY APRIL 8, 2026
 AT 10:00AM

SACRED HEART CHURCH
 344 W. WORKMAN ST
 COVINA, CA 91723

Reception to follow in Cavanaugh Hall

"Rita was lovely and very giving person... In fact, Steve was rarely seen at a SCAFO event without her. We are heartbroken to hear of her passing. Our hearts and prayers are with your family during this difficult time."

- Cynthia Fortier, 2013 Past President

CROSSWORDS: FINGERPRINT HISTORY

H J E N N I N G S X T S G B C
 C V N R U B P E H L I B E T L
 I M O S E H C R A C R R L K A
 T I V L P M K D N L T O E B S
 E N N N A O A A W I N P H O S
 C U U T L R R I L Z U O C W I
 U T Z L R F P L L H F Y S N F
 V I M Z X E O A X L I U R A I
 G A L T O N D N D M I F E S C
 N E S N O H P L A S F W H H A
 S D L U A F O D I S A T E B T
 C T S O A O R R U W D N I A I
 W X B C P I R I D O R K P U O
 X K S S D L E I F Y A M F G N
 S O U R C E B O O K C D L H X

Alphonse
 Bertillon
 Faulds
 Henry
 Jennings
 Madrid
 Sourcebook
 Whorls

Arches
 Classification
 Francis
 Hepburn
 Kollman
 Mayfield
 Volarpads
 Wilder

Ashbaugh
 Daoud
 Galton
 Herschel
 Loops
 Minutiae
 Vucetich
 William