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## **FARA 2011 Awards**

### **2011 Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award**

- Winner: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Charlotte, North Carolina
- Honorable Mention:
  - Louisville Metro Police Department, Louisville, Kentucky
  - Riverside Police Department, Riverside, California

### **2011 Industry False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award:**

- Winner: Monitronics, Dallas, Texas
- Honorable Mention:
  - Vintage Security, LLC, Jessup, Maryland

### **2011 False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award:**

- Winner: Joe Carr, United Central Control (UCC), San Antonio, Texas
- Honorable Mention:
  - Amy Lowe, Lynchburg Communications Center, Lynchburg, Virginia
  - CryWolf, Public Safety Corporation, Waldorf, Maryland
  - Deborah Hansen, Naperville Police Department, Naperville, Illinois
  - Frank Farren, Enable Point, Livonia, Michigan
  - Kathy Rudover, Windsor Police Service, Windsor, Ontario, Canada
  - National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA)

**Detail descriptions for each award follow**

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### **Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award**

**Description:** Alarm reduction program has shown meaningful or significant reduction in number of false of alarms over a 3 to 5 year period.

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**Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Winner**  
**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department**  
**Charlotte, NC**

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department started the false alarm reduction program in the spring of 1996. The years prior showed a steady trend of increased alarm calls. It reached a high of 20% of the total calls for service in 1995. Officers responded to everyone of the 106,061 alarm calls and only took 1,405 reports. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department used 69,670 officer hours to respond to those alarms. It was evident that something needed to be done.

An alarm ordinance was developed and presented to City Council. Along with the ordinance, was a proposal to implement a program that would outsource the tracking and billing, maintain a sworn officer as program manager, and establish a working relationship with alarm companies. City Council was very receptive to all but the cost it was going to require to start the program; \$800,000 upfront and \$4 million over the following 7 years. They tasked the police department to find an alternative where there would be zero cost to the tax payers and zero cost to the department.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department developed an RFP which reflected the "no cost task" and awarded the contract to an outsource vendor. The contract mandated that there would be a revenue share and the vendor would absorb the start-up costs. City Council was pleased with the solution **and to this day**, the tracking and billing is still outsourced.

The alarm ordinance has been relatively unchanged since 1996 and those being changes to definitions. The ordinance places a great deal of responsibility on the citizens of Charlotte. It requires registration of all alarm systems, whether they are monitored or not and the fine structure allows for the first two false alarms to be waived. The rest of the fine structure is as follows:

- #3, 4, and 5 = \$50 each
- #6 and 7 = \$100 each
- #8 and 9 = \$250 each
- #10 or more = \$500 each

One very important aspect of the ordinance is the no response policy. If an alarm user fails to register their alarm system, they will not receive police response to their alarm. The police are dispatched by permit only. If an alarm user fails to pay a fine after 30 days, they will not receive police response to their alarm until that fine has been paid. This policy has been strictly enforced and has helped us hold alarm users and alarm companies responsible.

**Evaluation of the last three years:**

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Number of Permits</b>	<b>139,250</b>	<b>155,254</b>	<b>185,000</b>
<b>Responses</b>	<b>63,598</b>	<b>59,273</b>	<b>60,105</b>
<b>Dispatch Rate</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.32</b>
<b>Percentage of total calls reduced</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>
<b>Officer hours responding reduced</b>	<b>33,063</b>	<b>29,311</b>	<b>27,577</b>

The False Alarm Reduction Unit of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department would like to be considered for the FARA Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award in part for the reduction from 106,061 responses in 1995 to 60,105 in 2010. We increased our permitted sites to over 185,000 and currently enjoy a dispatch rate of 0.32. The percentage of total calls have been drastically reduced to only 3.7%, an all time low since the inception of the program in 1996 (20% in 1996). The number of officer hours spent on alarm calls have been reduced to 27,577 hours, also an all time low since the inception of the program on 1996 (69,670 in 1996). Our success is evident in the above three year evaluation. We have increased the number of alarm permits by 45,750, and our numbers continue to decrease. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department spends no money for the alarm program. All salaries, postage, education materials, benefits, brochures, and notification stickers are paid for by the outsource vendor. The City has an added benefit of receiving a share of the revenue from the false alarm fines. The False Alarm Reduction Unit strives to build partnerships to prevent the next crime and enhance the quality of life.

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**Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention**  
**Louisville Metro Police Department**  
**False Alarm Reduction Program**  
**Louisville, KY**

LMPD's program began on June 1, 2005 and continues to be a strong force in the reduction of false alarms in Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky. A major benefit of LMPD's alarm program is that it now has a more accurate way to accumulate information on false alarms.

Before the program began in June 2005, LMPD was working under two CADs, one for the County of Jefferson and one for the City of Louisville. Estimates ranged as high as 45,000 annual false alarms dispatched for both CAD systems. After the city/county governments merged, Louisville Metro Police Department – False Alarm Reduction Unit (FARU) ended the 2010 year at 20,957 false alarms dispatched. This figure is a reduction of 53% of false alarms dispatched since the false alarm reduction program began.

While LMPD had an increase at the end of 2010 of 4% of false alarms dispatched, the FARU added an additional 7,500 alarm users for the year. Currently, we have approximately 71,000 false alarm users registered in Louisville/Jefferson County, KY. Over 70% of registered alarm users in Louisville have never had a false alarm.

A major effort has been made to work with our industry, and false alarm top offenders, to help in the reduction of false burglar alarms. LMPD – FARU is extremely satisfied with the efforts of the False Alarm Reduction Program. The FARU works diligently in our reduction efforts by getting the entire department involved. The false alarm reduction administrator works with the majors and lieutenants at the LMPD to control the top offenders of false burglar alarms.

LMPD – FARU is also involved in our community by attending monthly meetings with the Mayor and other governmental officials. The Louisville Metro Police Department also takes part in community festivals to educate all citizens to the many services that are offered by LMPD.

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## Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention Riverside Police Department Riverside, CA

The Riverside Police Department has had an alarm ordinance for over thirty years. Throughout the years there have been changes to the ordinance and its enforcement. One of the most significant changes to the ordinance occurred in July, 2008.

The changes, approved by City Council, included increased accountability of alarm companies, enhanced call verification and increased false alarm response penalties for permitted and non-permitted locations. Since these changes were implemented there has been a reduction of false alarms, increase in permitted locations and higher cost recovery. Over all, from fiscal year 2006-2007 to fiscal year 2009-2010, there was a 15% decrease in false alarm responses and a 54% increase in cost recovery.

One of the most significant decreases was a 41% reduction of the police dispatch rate. Police dispatch rate may be the truest measure of false alarm reduction, as it calculates the number of false alarms dispatched relative to the total number of alarm users. The police dispatch rate is the only rate which takes into account the growth of the alarm user base.

	FY 2006-07	FY 2007-08	FY 2008-09	FY 2009-10
False Alarm Responses	10,638	10,484	8,813	9,039
Permitted Locations	14,445	15,805	17,576	18,610
Police Dispatch Rate	.69	.61	.44	.41
Cost Recovery	\$190,725	\$213,240	\$235,360	\$293,356

Based on this success, the Riverside Police Department Alarm Enforcement Unit is submitting this nomination for the FARA Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award.

RIVERSIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT ALARM ENFORCEMENT UNIT FY 2006-2007		RIVERSIDE POLCE DEPARTMENT ALARM ENFORCEMENT UNIT FY 2007-2008	
<i>Total Alarm Calls</i>	15,409	<i>Total Alarm Calls</i>	15,081
<i>False Alarm Responses</i>	10,638	<i>False Alarm Responses</i>	10,484
<i>Cancelled Alarm Calls</i>	4,552	<i>Cancelled Alarm Calls</i>	4,429
<i>Crime Reports</i>	219	<i>Crime Reports</i>	168
<i>False Alarm Rate</i>	98.0%	<i>False Alarm Rate</i>	98.4%
<i>Police Dispatch Rate</i>	0.69	<i>Police Dispatch Rate</i>	0.61
<i>Total Permitted Locations</i>	14,445	<i>Total Permitted Locations</i>	15,805
<i>Total Non-Permitted Locations</i>	1,002	<i>Total Non-Permitted Locations</i>	1,480
<i>Alarm Permits Issued in FY 2006-2007</i>	1,344	<i>Alarm Permits Issued in FY 2007-2008</i>	1,839
<i>Total Cost Recovery</i>	\$190,725	<i>Total Cost Recovery</i>	\$213,240
<i>False Alarm Penalties</i>	\$151,425	<i>False Alarm Penalties</i>	\$167,700
<i>Alarm Permit Fees</i>	\$39,300	<i>Alarm Permit Fees</i>	\$45,540

RIVERSIDE POLCE DEPARTMENT ALARM ENFORCEMENT UNIT FY 2008-2009		RIVERSIDE POLCE DEPARTMENT ALARM ENFORCEMENT UNIT FY 2009-2010	
<i>Total Alarm Calls</i>	12,795	<i>Total Alarm Calls</i>	13,279
<i>False Alarm Responses</i>	8,813	<i>False Alarm Responses</i>	9,039
<i>Cancelled Alarm Calls</i>	3,759	<i>Cancelled Alarm Calls</i>	4,091
<i>Crime Reports</i>	223	<i>Crime Reports</i>	149
<i>False Alarm Rate</i>	97.5%	<i>False Alarm Rate</i>	98.4%
<i>Police Dispatch Rate</i>	0.44	<i>Police Dispatch Rate</i>	0.41
<i>Total Permitted Locations</i>	17,576	<i>Total Permitted Locations</i>	18,610
<i>Total Non-Permitted Locations</i>	2,648	<i>Total Non-Permitted Locations</i>	3,253
<i>Alarm Permits Issued in FY 2008-2009</i>	1,305	<i>Alarm Permits Issued in FY 2009-2010</i>	1,049
<i>Total Cost Recovery</i>	\$235,360	<i>Total Cost Recovery</i>	\$293,356
<i>False Alarm Penalties</i>	\$172,550	<i>False Alarm Penalties</i>	\$235,250
<i>Alarm Permit Fees</i>	\$62,810	<i>Alarm Permit Fees</i>	\$58,106

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## False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award:

**Description:** Alarm reduction program has shown meaningful or significant reduction in number of false alarms over a 3 to 5 year period.

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## False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Winner Monitronics Dallas, TX

- **Our efforts include:**
  - Creating F.A.C.T. (False Alarm Control Team)
  - Enhanced verification on ALL accounts
  - Tracking and studying the false alarm rates
  - Commercial, residential, 2way, jurisdiction, dealer, age of account, geographic location, frequency of abuse, equipment type, etc
  - Personal calls to high offenders (alarms and dispatches)
  - Extensive employee training on how to address the problem
  - Central Station, Tech Support, Customer Service, Retention, Dealers, Dealer Support
  - Creating a Guard Service Coordinator – Verified Response
  - Building relationships with police officers & jurisdictions throughout the US
  - Email, bulk mailings, phone calls, visitations
  - Dallas – once a month meetings
- **Monitronics' ultimate goal is .450 by December 2011**
- **Welcome call campaign** process that is run each morning for newly purchased accounts which generates employee actions for the FACT team to work if one of the following excessive signal issues is found on an account:
  - 3 or more dispatches in the last 45 days

- 7 or more high priority alarms in the last 45 days.
- **Weekly Jurisdiction Dispatch Ratio**
  - Sites by Jurisdiction
  - Summary by Rate over 1000 Sites
  - Target
- **F.A.C.T. – False Alarm Control Team**
  - Five full time employees with supervision dedicated 100% solely to only reducing false alarms. The whole company is involved in the F.A.C.T. initiative through monthly meetings. Each department (dealer bulletins, newsletters, etc) assists in spreading the word. Listed below are the main duties summarized.
- **Excessive Signal project**
  - Contact customers who have experienced 3 or more alarms in a 24 hour period
- **Excessive Dispatch project**
  - Contact customers who have experienced more than 5 dispatches in a month
- **No Codeword project**
  - Dispatches due to Invalid/No Codeword
  - Contact customers who have experienced an unnecessary dispatch due to forgotten passcode
- **New Account Actions in Business**
  - Contact customers who have installed system within last 45 days and have experienced 7 signals or 3 dispatches
- **Top 9 Jurisdiction Report**
  - Contact top 20 customers in the 9 jurisdictions that have the most dispatches (Chicago, Detroit, Memphis, Cleveland, DeKalb, Montgomery, Orange County, Atlanta and Knox County)
- **Building relationships with Jurisdictions**
  - Email, bulk mailings, phone calls, visitations
  - Dallas – once a month false alarm prevention hearings
  - Phone/Mail/Email communication with other jurisdictions
- **Contact Lists**
  - Enhanced verification on all accounts
  - Updating contact lists with the most recent numbers
  - Updating lists that have no numbers/disconnected numbers
  - Adjusting contact lists to serve customer needs
  - Calling several or all contacts to verify alarm legitimacy prior to dispatching

## Results

### David Wilson, Mecklenburg, NC

- 2009 – 3039 accounts- 759 alarms dispatched = .249 dispatch rate
- 2010 – 3284 accounts- 745 alarms dispatched = .226 dispatch rate

### Steve Heggemann, Manager - Baltimore County Alarm Reduction Team

- Calendar Year False Alarm Dispatch Rate
  - 2009 .328
  - 2010 .264

### Roberta Smiley- Multnomah County Sheriff's Office

- 12/30/2009 -
  - 466 permits attributed to Monitronics
  - 116 false alarms in 2009 attributed to Monitronics customers
  - .240 false alarms per permit
- 12/30/2010 -
  - 514 permits attributed to Monitronics
  - 117 false alarms in 2010 attributed to Monitronics customers
  - .220 false alarms per permit

### Diana McInelly- Pierce County Sheriff's Department

- I wanted to send a formal appreciation notice for the impressive reduction of non-verified alarm calls during the month of August! In January 2009, Monitronics had 41 nonverified alarm calls. In July there were 26. And in August there were only 5 calls! That is the most significant reduction made by any

single alarm company so far. Whatever procedures you have put in place are working effectively and successfully! Most alarm companies had a reduction of about half their previous numbers during the month of August. The highest number of non-verified alarm calls in 2009 for all alarm companies combined was 192; August had a total of 105—that's nearly half what dispatch was handling previously. As a result of the reduction improvement, the fee for nonverified alarm calls has been reduced from \$100 per call to \$50 per call. Also, any alarm company that has 5 or less non-verified alarm calls in any given month will not be charged a fee. So Monitronics will not be receiving any non-verified alarm call fees for the month of August. This kind of reduction will free up valuable dispatch and deputy time for responding to emergencies faster; thank you for your help!

### **Overall Results**

- We began our serious push for false alarm reduction in August 2010.
  - August 1, 2010- Rate .671
  - Aug-Dec-2010 - Rate .556
  - Jan -Dec, 2010 – Rate .636
  - Jan- Feb 2011 – Rate .499

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## **False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention** **Vintage Security** **Jessup, MD**

Vintage Security has instituted several outstanding false alarm prevention initiatives over the past several years, which has helped to reduce false alarms for all of their customers as well as reduce the number of times public safety officers have to respond. They instituted a program where they track all false alarms for their customers and then reach out to them to determine the cause and fix the problem. After the first false alarm from each customer, Vintage Security sends a post card advising that authorities were sent and to request that the customer call if service or training is needed. If a second false alarm occurs, Vintage personnel personally contact the customer to follow up utilizing a specific script so that all tools available to help the customer prevent future false alarms are discussed. Vintage offers additional free system demonstrations to retrain alarm users. Vintage employs Enhanced Call Verification on all of their accounts, which means that an initial phone call is made to the site after a burglar alarm activation in an attempt to determine its validity. If no answer, a second call is made to a different phone number, generally a responsible party's cell phone. These two calls are made *prior* to requesting law enforcement dispatch in an attempt to avoid an unnecessary dispatch. All systems installed by Vintage Security comply with SIA ANSI CP-01 Control Panel Standard for false alarm prevention. Vintage Security is an Installation Quality certified company, which means that they meet or exceed the strict requirements of the IQ program in terms of equipment installation and false alarm prevention.

Vintage is a contributing member of the Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association. They are also contributing members of FARA. One of their employees also serves as the Associate Director on the Board of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of FARA. Vintage hosted one of the most successful Mid-Atlantic meetings at their facility in Jessup, where they served as subject matter experts and answered numerous questions raised by area public safety in the areas of installation, service and monitoring. Vintage is also a contributor to the FARA Institute, which has allowed more public safety professionals to attend training symposiums than otherwise would have been able. In an effort to learn more about how public safety deals with false alarms, they also attended the Essentials of False Alarm Reduction course in Anne Arundel County in 2010.

Given all that they do to foster good relations with public safety and their impressive false alarm prevention programs, Vintage Security is richly deserving of this award.

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## **FARA Achievement Award:**

Description: Significant or meaningful contributions towards the FARA mission.

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### **FARA Achievement Award Winner**

**Joe Carr**

**United Central Control (UCC)**

**San Antonio, TX**

Joe has served as liaison with the Texas industry associations for the San Antonio Symposium. He coordinated the scavenger hunt and extensively promoted Texas Day to get the greatest participation at FARA's San Antonio training symposium by public safety and the alarm industry throughout Texas. He is teaching classes and has found speakers and panelists for several sessions. Joe attended the Regional Training Session in Dallas and attended and promoted the FARA classes at the TBFAA Dallas and San Antonio Conventions. Joe has been our "go to" guy on the ground in San Antonio, and we would never have been able to put on such a successful symposium without him. Joe definitely deserves to win this award as he epitomizes the description of this award by providing significant or meaningful contributions towards the FARA mission through his cooperative efforts and championing of FARA at all levels.

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### **FARA Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

**Amy Lowe**

**Lynchburg Communications Center**

**Lynchburg, VA**

Not only is she a one woman office, with lots of other duties besides false alarms, including payroll, but she's the head of the Professional Certification Sub-committee, on the fire committee and a board member. She also has 2 children and a husband. And not to mention she's just so darn cute and bubbly. Since she found FARA she has been full speed ahead, participating and helping when and where she can; I wish more members were half as involved as she has been. I don't think the word "no" is in her vocabulary as far as FARA is concerned.

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### **FARA Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

**CryWolf – Public Safety Corporation**

**Waldorf, MD**



For twelve years, Public Safety Corporation has provided false alarm solutions to local governments across the country. The company's CryWolf false alarm management software and services have helped reduce false alarms, increase collections, and improve false alarm processing for approximately 200 agencies supporting more than 450 cities, counties and other municipalities. Public Safety Corporation reports that CryWolf has helped public safety agencies throughout the United States and Canada reach the following significant goals:

- Manage false alarms for jurisdictions covering 47 million people in 31 states & Canadian provinces;
- Eliminate more than 250,000 false alarms annually;
- Register, permit or track more than 2 million alarm systems;
- Reduce response costs about \$15 million each year and recover another \$15 million annually to help offset the costs of responding to remaining false alarms.

The City of Spartanburg has been a CryWolf client since 2006. CryWolf has helped the City of Spartanburg register 3500 alarm systems and reduce false alarm by 75% in four years. Crywolf recently introduced a Dot.Net version that has helped Spartanburg save resources by emailing invoices instead of mailing them to some alarms users and all alarm companies. This has helped on printing cost since we are constantly being asked to do more with less.

Public Safety Corporation takes its role as an industry leader seriously by keeping up with the issues and trends that affect the alarm industry and by being committed the industry's associations. Public Safety Corporation has been an active member of FARA since 2001 supporting the association in variety of ways:

- Participating in the annual FARA Symposium for the past eleven years, both as a vendor in the Expo and as a presenter/trainer/moderator for several Symposium sessions.
- Generating interest from agencies that were not currently FARA members—Public Safety Corporation paid for first-time attendees of several agencies to attend the FARA Symposium.
- Contributing financially to the FARA Institute to help agencies attend the Symposium when budgets are tight.
- Sponsoring several dinners and lunches at the FARA Symposiums including the Awards Luncheon in 2010.
- Actively promoting FARA and encouraging all clients new and old to frequently visit the FARA website for pertinent alarm industry information.
- Contributing employee time and alarm industry insight and knowledge to support FARA. Employee Rick Moore served as a Vendor Associate Director on the FARA Board. Prior to joining CryWolf, Rick Moore, as a public safety member, was on the FARA Board of Directors as Treasurer for three years and Newsletter Committee Chair for two years; Stan Hanson was on the 2010 Conference Committee; and Jean Schommer currently participates on the Membership Committee. In 2004, as a public safety member, Rick Moore, was given the FARA Member of the Year award.
- Promoting attendance of the Symposium and maximizing the training experience for alarm personnel by scheduling the annual CryWolf Users Conference to coincide with the FARA Symposium for the past three years.

Public Safety Corporation knows and understands the business of false alarms.

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## **FARA Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

**Deborah Hansen**

**Naperville Police Department**

**Naperville, IL**

Debbie Hansen serves on the Board of Directors as the Vice President-Electronic Security. She also serves as Chair of FARA's Membership Committee. Debbie has served as chair of this committee for more than

one year and has done an outstanding job with very few contributing members. She instituted a call-back initiative where the committee contacts members who fail to renew to determine the reason and try to get them back into the fold. Debbie was also instrumental in creating a googledocs tracking system to track progress on the mentoring program with all new members to ensure that they are aware of all the association has to offer and what they can do for FARA. She has always responded to board requests for information and provided a verbal report at the mid-year meeting of the board. Debbie is a great asset to FARA and should be recognized for her on-going efforts.

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### **FARA Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

**Frank Farren  
Enable Point  
Livonia, MI**

Frank represents vendors on the FARA Board. He has helped the communications and membership committees set up goggle docs and facebook pages. He has surveyed fellow vendors about their wishes for the Symposium.

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### **FARA Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

**Kathy Rudover  
Windsor Police Service  
Windsor, ON**

Kathy Rudover has been a great help with the Fire Committee start up. She has been at each meeting, has constantly added new ideas and been a very good advocate for the new committee. What a great asset to the committee. Kathy has also been an active member of the Conference Committee and has helped to secure donations for our auctions.

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### **FARA Achievement Award Honorable Mention National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA)**

Since their inception, members of NESA have shown a great willingness to work with us on the false alarm issue. They have included FARA in their annual meetings and requested our participation on many of their committees. They are a major sponsor the FARA Institute. Without NESA's incredible support over the years, many public safety employees would not have been able to attend last year's symposium in Buffalo/Niagara Falls or this year in San Antonio.

NESA leaders have also helped support FARA by attending and participating in FARA training venues. Leaders served as instructors for two years at FARA training symposiums. Jordan Brown, current NESA President, gave one of the best classes in Buffalo/Niagara Falls on how to deal with specific types of alarm users; i.e., box stores, schools, residences, etc. Evaluation forms listed this as one of FARA's best classes.

Rex Adams, Immediate Past President of NESA, served as our host for a rousing game of FARA Falls. No one who was present will ever forget how memorable Rex made that class/game and how much fun he made it.

Members of NESA also have a great willingness to hear what public safety has to say and then to act on our suggestions, which is rare indeed. Representatives of NESA worked very hard with FARA to co-author our Guide to Alarm Equipment, which is a magnificent manual that describes major alarm system components and their individual functions, provides recommended applications and lists either the false alarm potential or false alarm prevention aspects of each. This guide is useful to public safety and alarm industry professionals alike and is a document of which we can all be proud.

NESA has spent significant efforts to work with FARA and public safety throughout North America and truly deserves to win this award.