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5th ANNUAL FARA CONFERENCE DEEMED HUGE SUCCESS! AWARDS PRESENTED AND NEW OFFICERS ELECTED

Rockville, MD. The Board of Directors of the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) announced today that the annual FARA conference, held in Kansas City, Missouri, from April 24 through April 27, 2001, was a huge success.

Conference attendees had a wide variety of training classes, workshops, and seminars to choose from this year, including Creating, Revising and Maintaining an Alarm Ordinance, Non-Response and Lawsuits, Alarm User Awareness School, Hands-on Alarm Equipment, and Ratings and Penalties for Alarm Companies. Some of the training classes were videotaped, and the Board is currently working on a plan for distribution to interested parties. All of the training provided received excellent marks from the participants.

FARA conducted its first ever False Alarm Jeopardy, which was met with rousing competition, strategy, and great fun. The "winners" were presented with FARA polo shirts. "We wanted to provide training opportunities at this conference that were unique and not strictly lecture. False Alarm Jeopardy gave us the chance to teach about alarm equipment, the alarm industry, FARA and what it has to offer members, alarm ordinances, and alarm history without the structured classroom atmosphere," said FARA President Norma Beaubien. Other examples of non-structured training included the "How Would You Handle This?" roundtable where small groups, comprised of law enforcement and alarm industry representatives, were able to discuss various scenarios and describe to the group how each municipality or alarm industry representative would handle the situation. Attendees were also able to share their own municipality's successes with the group, which provided substantive ideas about new initiatives that could be implemented by false alarm reduction professionals across the country.

At its General Membership meeting, the FARA membership elected new officers and directors. James Cogswell of the Leawood Police Department in Kansas became FARA's new 1st Vice President, Shanna Werner of the Salt Lake City Police Department in Utah retained her position as Secretary, and Amy Lobdell of the Portland Police Bureau in Oregon and Michele Johnson of the Toledo Police Department in Ohio were elected to fill At-Large Director positions. The Associate Members of FARA also elected Kathleen Schraufnagel of Brink's Home Security to serve as Associate Director. Each elected officer and director will serve a two-year term.

FARA also presented its 5th Annual FARA Member of the Year and FARA Associate Member of the Year awards at its awards luncheon held on Friday, April 27, 2001. The FARA Member of the Year Award was presented to James Cogswell, Alarm Coordinator for the Leawood Police Department and FARA's Conference Committee Chair. Beaubien praised Cogswell and said, "Jim's tremendous contributions to ensuring the success of the FARA Conference and his willingness to pitch in and help wherever there was a need, all while coordinating the false alarm reduction efforts for the City of Leawood, made him an outstanding choice for FARA Member of the Year."

The Associate Member of the Year Award was presented to Kathleen Schraufnagel, Coordinator of Industry and Government Relations for Brink's Home Security and the new Associate Director on the FARA Board. "Kathleen is a fabulous alarm industry representative for FARA, who has spearheaded such initiatives as the Model Burglar Alarm Ordinance, the draft Model Fire Alarm Ordinance, and False Alarm Prevention Month, among other things. She truly cares a great deal about the false alarm issue and works very hard with law enforcement to develop partnerships and successful programs," lauded Beaubien.

Overall, the participants deemed the conference a huge success. Conference evaluation forms completed by the attendees were extremely positive and included praise, such as: "I think FARA is a valuable resource for law enforcement officials," "Great job – excellent seminar!" "FARA Jeopardy – Great learning tool." Beaubien concluded, "This year's conference was, without a doubt, the best one FARA has ever conducted. All of the wonderful people who attended and participated, who shared their successes and who gave us new ideas, definitely helped make this conference an exciting and worthwhile learning experience."

The False Alarm Reduction Association, established in 1997, is an organization of public safety false alarm reduction professionals and alarm industry representatives, whose main mission is to provide a forum for the exchange of information on successful false alarm reduction programs, to serve as a clearinghouse for agencies seeking to reduce false alarms and to foster an environment of cooperation among law enforcement, the alarm industry and the alarm user.

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