



# ABFDE News

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## THE GAVEL

KIRSTEN SINGER, PRESIDENT



### Hello Diplomates!

The ABFDE Board of Directors held its annual meeting this month in Phoenix, AZ. The weather outside was hot, but tempers stayed cool and we finished the meeting a half day ahead of schedule.

Elections were held to fill/renew 2-year terms for the Executive Committee with the following results: President -- Kirsten Singer; Vice President -- Lisa Hanson; Secretary -- Bonnie Beal; and Treasurer -- Jim Green. Each person ran unopposed. We are sad to see Kathy Annunziata Nicolaides step down, but understand that sometimes life gets in the way of work. Kathy definitely left the Board better than she found it; she worked effectively as the website liaison with our Leaver webmasters; she updated ABFDE forms, with a colorized logo; created the Legal Library with Marie Durina, and always contributed to any correspondence or article that needed her superlative editorial skills. Bonnie thinks she has big shoes to fill, but I say Bonnie has big feet and can do it!

Once the Meeting Minutes are posted on the ABFDE website, I will email all Diplomates with that information.

New Directors Jan Masson, Sean Espley, and Gary Licht will officially be on board July 1, 2013.

ABFDE will conduct pilot testing on the ACT updated written test questions at the ASQDE meeting in Indianapolis, on Saturday, August 17 prior to the start of the meeting on Sunday, August 18. The Board is requesting that attending Diplomates participate in this very important project. Of course,

*(The Gavel continues on Page 3)*

Re-Accredited by  
FSAB in 2012



# Come Take the Test

## CALLING ALL DIPLOMATES

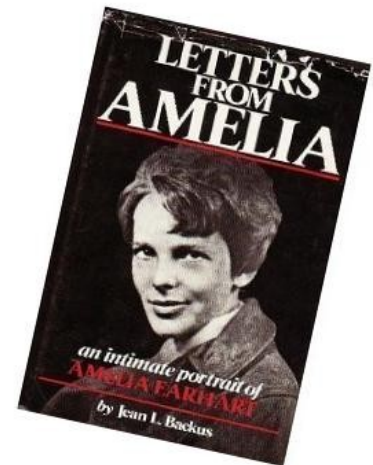
By Bonnie L. Beal, Director

Our first new multiple question test has been completed and has gone through the first pilot testing. We would like to thank those who took the pilot test and provided feedback. At our last Board meeting, the entire Board had a chance to review and tweak the test questions. The next pilot testing will be at the ASQDE meeting this coming August.

It is recommended we have at least 50 Diplomates take the test prior to using the test for new applicants. We encourage all of you to take part in this important update to the testing criteria. Please make time to come on Saturday, August 24th, at 1pm before the ASQDE meeting and take the pilot test. The test is taken anonymously and is an invaluable help to the ABFDE. You will gain extra points towards certification.

### *Speaking of Pilots...*

**Amelia Earhart** — pioneering aviator, bestselling author, and one altogether fierce lady — must have known that when she sat down on the morning of February 7th, 1931, and penned this exacting, resolute letter to her publicist and future husband, George Putnam, that marriage, like most things in life: you get out of it exactly what you put in. Found in the out-of-print volume *Letters from Amelia, 1901-1937*, it spells out (typo notwithstanding) exactly what Earhart wanted — and didn't want — in a marriage, a bold testament to her independent spirit and liberal mindset just before the golden age of the housewife and shortly after the era of Victorian sexism.



Dear GPP

There are some things which should be writ before we are married -- things we have talked over before -- most of them.

You must know again my reluctance to marry, my feeling that I shatter thereby chances in work which means most to me. I feel the move just now as foolish as anything I could do. I know there may be compensations but have no heart to look ahead.

On our life together I want you to understand I shall not hold you to any mideaevil code of faithfulness to me

From: [www.BrainPickings.org](http://www.BrainPickings.org), December 11, 2012.

# The Gavel

Continued from Page 1

recertification points will be awarded! Please contact Kirsten Singer if you intend to participate or have any questions.

The updated ABFDE brochure, "Profile of a Forensic Document Examiner" is available upon request. The brochures are printed on high quality paper and many FDEs have found them effective and impressive for presentations to attorneys and judges. Please contact Jim Josey or Marie Durina if you are interested in distributing them or wish to have a few on hand for educating purposes. The first 25 brochures are free, then cost \$16.25 for each additional 25 brochures, plus mailing cost.



*ditor's Note: A **rubric** is a word or section of text which is traditionally written or*

*printed in red ink to highlight it. The word derives from the Latin: rubrica, meaning red ochre or red chalk, and originates in Medieval illuminated manuscripts from the 13th century or earlier. In these, red letters were used to highlight initial capitals (particularly of psalms), section headings and names of religious significance, a practice known as rubrication, which was a separate stage in the production of a manuscript. Although red was most often used, other colors came into use from the late Middle Ages onwards, and the word rubric was used for these also.*

*Also known as an initial capital letter at the beginning of a text that is set in a larger point size. The practice of using a large letter to mark the start of a text has been around for almost two thousand years. Illustrated caps increased usability by marking important passages and guiding readers through the text. Unlike their historic counterparts, drop caps on the Web don't add value in terms of usability or readability—and they are hard for Web developers to control, often rendering differently across browsers.*

*As many FDEs know, a rubric is also a flourish after or below a signature.*

## Continuing Education

### August 2013

- 4-10** IAI Annual International Educational Conference  
Providence, RI  
[www.theiai.org/conference/2013/index.php](http://www.theiai.org/conference/2013/index.php)

### August 2013

- 24-29** American Society of Questioned Document Examiners  
Embassy Suites  
Indianapolis, IN  
[www.asqde.org](http://www.asqde.org)

### September-October 2013

- 30-4** Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists  
Crowne Plaza  
Dayton, OH  
[www.mafs.net](http://www.mafs.net)

### February 2014

- 17-22** American Academy of Forensic Sciences Meeting  
64th Annual Meeting  
Washington State Convention Center  
Seattle, WA  
<http://www.aafs.org/aafs-66th-annual-scientific-meeting>

### April 2014

- 24-26** Southeastern Association of Forensic Document Examiners  
Duluth, GA  
[www.safde.org](http://www.safde.org)

### May 2014

- 19-23** MAAFS  
The Penn State State College, PA  
[www.maafs.org](http://www.maafs.org)

Many Diplomates are members of multiple organizations. Please help spread the word about workshops and meetings relating to forensic document examination by e-mailing these events to the *ABFDE News* Editor, Diane K. Tolliver.

Continuing our professional education is necessary to maintain ABFDE certification. Please help the editor with this information.

Meeting announcements may be submitted to the editor at [TolliverD@aol.com](mailto:TolliverD@aol.com).

# ABFDE Treasurer's Report

By James A. Green, Treasurer

## **Audit**

In accordance with the SOP's, an external audit was requested on 1/26/13. All requested copies of cancelled checks and their related receipts, deposit documents, policies and other information, was provided to The Hobbs Group. As of the date of this report, the audit process has not been completed.

## **Filing of IRS 990-EZ**

Income and expense information was provided to the Hobbs Group to facilitate the preparation of the 2011 "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax" form. Allyson DeHart, an accountant with The Hobbs Group, filed the form on the Board's behalf in October, 2012. Total revenue for the fiscal year was \$28,988.

Payment in the amount of \$500 was made to the Hobbs Group on November 25, 2012 for the filing action.

## **Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)**

Form BRA-25 was not completed this year. The submission is required every other year and was properly filed in 2012.

## **B of D Liability Insurance – CFM Insurance Company**

A payment in the amount of \$3,960.00 was made to CFM on March 6, 2013. (The cost remained the same as billed over the past four years.)

## **Ames Fund**

During the past year, interest in the amount of \$19.68 was added to the prior balance in the fund of \$4,510.07. The current balance is \$4,599.85. As a reminder, the Ames account is not a separate fund; it is simply a dedicated balance that currently exists in the regular checking account.

## **Diplomate payments for dues**

2012 – 2013 dues payments totaled \$28,000.82.

## **District of Columbia representation**

Payment in the amount of \$96.41 was made to the Corporate Service Company on January 5, 2013 to maintain statutory representation in D.C. (Our corporation documents were initially filed in D.C.)

*Continued on Page 6*

# ***Treasurer's Report, continued***

*Continued from Page 5*

## **FSAB Accreditation**

A dues payment was made to FSAB in the amount of \$857 on 11/5/12.

## **PayPal usage**

PayPal was established to provide the convenience of payment for dues, workshops, etc. Approximately 30 Diplomates took advantage of making their dues payments via PayPal. As mentioned in the last report, PayPal receives \$7.55 for a \$250.00 payment. The cost is reasonable because of the assured payment, the ease of making a payment in US dollars from a foreign country as well as providing an expedient manner of payment common to other organizations.

## **Bank Account balances (3/31/13)**

CD: \$7,569.95 (Currently earning 10% interest. Expires 11/14/13.)

Savings: \$323.85 (Interest accumulates at .02 per month.)

Regular Checking: \$25,149.83 (April 1, 2012 balance: \$20,859.12.)

The two most recent Profit and Loss Statements are provided. It is encouraging to note a significant gain has been made in the restoration of funds. Our annual net income balance on 3/31/12 was \$7,704.64. On the same date this year, our annual net balance for the preceding year was \$4,275.87, a difference of + \$11,980.51.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Green  
Treasurer

***Continued on Page 7***

# Treasurer's Report continued

Continued from Page 6

## ABFDE Profit & Loss April 2011 through March 2012

### Profit & Loss

April 2011 through March 2012

#### Ordinary Income/Expense:

##### Income:

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| ABFDE/ASQDE workshop                   | \$ 3,324.00        |
| Application Fee                        | 250.00             |
| B of A error (fee reversal)            | 29.95              |
| Hilton – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed. Royalties | 1,026.97           |
| Membership dues                        | <u>\$31,230.45</u> |
| Total income:                          | \$35,861.37        |

##### Expenses:

|                               |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Dues and bank fee reversal    | \$ 290.00       |
| Board of Directors Mtg – 2011 | 8,439.38        |
| ACT, Inc., test validations   | 17,162.67       |
| ASQDE/ABFDE workshop - 2011   | 2,304.04        |
| Accounting fees               | 525.00          |
| Administration fees           | 6,564.30        |
| Bank fees                     | 97.90           |
| FSAB membership dues          | 1,872.00        |
| Insurance – B of D            | 3,960.00        |
| Legal fees                    | 407.69          |
| Non-profit Corporate filing   | 80.00           |
| Overpayment                   | 260.00          |
| Postage and Delivery          | 218.05          |
| Replacement check             | 162.00          |
| Supplies and Materials        | <u>1,460.10</u> |
| Total Expenses:               | \$43,566.01     |
| Net ordinary income:          | \$ 7,704.64     |

Continued on Page 8

# Treasurer's Report continued

Continued from Page 7

**ABFDE  
Profit &  
Loss  
April  
2012  
through  
March  
2013**

## Profit & Loss

April 2012 through March 2013

### Ordinary Income/Expense:

#### Income:

|                                      |                  |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Application Fee                      | \$ 1,250.00      |
| Coffee mug sales                     | 115.00           |
| Hilton 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed. Royalties | 712.87           |
| Membership dues                      | <u>28,000.82</u> |
| Total Income:                        | \$30,078.69      |

#### Expenses:

|                             |              |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| B of D Mtg – 2012           | \$11,237.91  |
| B of D Mtg – 2013 (partial) | 1,415.30     |
| ABFDE workshop – 2013       | 510.65       |
| Administration              | 7,086.72     |
| Bank error (fee reversal)   | -30.00       |
| Check copies                | 6.00         |
| FSAB membership dues        | 857.00       |
| Insurance – B of D          | 3,960.00     |
| Postage and Delivery        | 107.99       |
| Prep of 2011 Form 990       | 500.00       |
| Reconciliation of descrep.  | 44.95        |
| Statutory representation    | <u>96.41</u> |
| Total Expenses:             | \$25,807.98  |

Net Ordinary Income: \$ 4,270.71

### Other Income/Expense:

#### Other income:

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Donation            | \$ 5.00       |
| Interest earned     | <u>\$ .16</u> |
| Total Other Income: | \$ 5.16       |

## *Featured Laboratory: The U.S.A.C.I.L.*

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, located at the Gillem Enclave in Georgia, provides forensic laboratory services to Department of Defense investigative agencies and other Federal law enforcement agencies. USACIL is the only full service forensic laboratory in the DoD and trains special agents and investigators from the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines in the Special Agent Laboratory Training Course and manages the USACIDC criminalistics and visual information programs. The examiners and analysts testify in federal, military and state courts as well as multi-national courts.

The USACIL has been an accredited forensic laboratory continuously since 1985, previously under the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB-Legacy Program). In February 2011, the USACIL was accredited by Forensic Quality Services – International (FQS-I), under the internationally recognized standards “ISO/IEC 17025-2005 General Requirement of the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories.” Of the Federal laboratories accredited by the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors - Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD-LAB), only the FBI Laboratory offers as many supporting forensic disciplines as the USACIL.

**Email address:** usarmy.gillem.usacil.mbx.dfscoe-email@mail.mil

**Mailing Address:**

U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory  
4930 North 31st Street  
Forest Park, Ga. 30297



**Front row: Marvin Reed, Branch Chief; back row Donald Moryan, Frederick Panhorst and Derek Hammond.**

*The Editor thanks Marvin Reed for honoring her request to submit a short article about their laboratory. Since then, Frederick Panhorst has retired from the USACIL.*

*If you would like to submit a brief article and photograph about your laboratory, please send it to [TolliverD@aol.com](mailto:TolliverD@aol.com).*

## Focus Stacking: Using Photoshop to Increase the Depth of Focus

By Bill Flynn

Forensic Document Examiners may find themselves facing a problem that is often encountered in high-magnification close-up photography, such as macro-photography or photomicrography. The problem arises upon trying to obtain sharp detail when there is thickness to the subject being imaged. The lack of sharpness is due to the typical shallow depth of field in close-up imaging. It may be necessary from time-to-time, however, to take macro images or photomicrographs of 3-dimensional evidence, such a fracture pattern on a wooden molding or a flaw that runs through multiple sheets of paper where it would be advantageous to have sharp focus through the entire thickness of the image. Some automated tools, available in Photoshop make it possible to obtain these highly detailed, high-magnification images of 3-D objects by using a process known as "focus-stacking."

The basic steps to produce a focus stacked image are: take multiple images of the object at different focus points (I usually start at the near point and change the focus to the far point of the object); use Photoshop to bring these images into several layers; and choose "Auto-Blend" to re-merge the



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## Focus Stacking: Using Photoshop to Increase the Depth of Focus

*Continued from Page 10*

layers into a single image with sharp focus at all points through the depth of the image.

I have found that the camera on our VSC-4C works perfectly to capture the series of images needed in the first step of the process. Set the VSC to manual focus and bump the focus point to the position on the object that is closest to the camera and capture the image. I like to save the images as "Stack 1," "Stack 2," etc. It is best to bias the images you capture so that more are captured at the close focus points and fewer at the far points because the depth of focus is even less at the shortest distances from the lens. In the illustration below, I took seven images of my watch, where "Focus Stack 1" is set at the nearest distance and Focus Stack 7 at the farthest.



**Processing in Photoshop: (Photoshop CS5 was used in this example)**

To create a focus-stacked image, open Photoshop and click "File," "Automate," then "Photomerge." In the Photomerge dialog box, choose "Auto" Layout, then locate the images you just took by clicking on the "Browse" button and selecting your item. Uncheck "Blend images Together" if it is selected, then click "OK."

When the main Photoshop screen opens, it will display all of your images as layers in the layers palette. Click on the topmost

layer, then Shift-click on the bottommost layer. This will select all of the layers.

Next click on the "Edit" menu and select "Auto Blend Layers." In the next screen, choose "Stack Images" and press "OK." Sit back and let Photoshop perform it's magic. In a few seconds, you should have a finished image that is in sharp focus through its entire depth.

***One image is focused at the near point, one at the far point and the third image is a blend of all seven focus stacked images.***

You can either select "Layers," "Flatten Image" and save the finished photo to a format like .jpg or leave the layers unflattened and save to a format like .tiff or .psd.

# Corner Radius Chart

Awareness of the many features of a document is critical in being able to distinguish differences among documents. Class characteristics include the shape of the corners of a document. Labels, sheets of paper, envelope flaps and other dye-cut documents are produced to specific measurements for the customer. While the FDE does not routinely measure the corners of these documents, awareness of the variation of sizes is important. The following **Corner Radius Chart** may be located at the website of **Matrix Label, Incorporated**, a printing facility in Plainfield, IN. It may be found online at [www.matrixlabel.com](http://www.matrixlabel.com)



# Staplers, Then and Now: The Winners and The Answers

**Marie Durina** (first respondent) and **Sandra Ramsey Lines** (second) were the only submissions to the Stapler Quiz in the January 2013 ABFDE News.

Their correct answers demonstrate an advanced level of knowledge about staplers which wins them a stapleless stapler as a prize.



Congratulations!  
This will be mailed to them.  
Thanks Marie and Sandra. for your submissions!

## 1. Who invented the stapler, when, and to whom was it presented?

The first stapler was believed to have been invented in France by the courts of King Louis XV in the 1700s, and presented to the King for his use. The staplers were hand crafted and staples used even had to have the royal seal on them! In the U.S. the first stapler was patented by Henry Heyl in 1877, but the first commercially successful stapler was patented by George McGill in 1879.

## 2. Provide the name of the inventor(s), country of origin, and date of first sales of the stapleless stapler.

The first "Stapleless Stapler" was invented in 1910 in the U.S. by George P. Bump and patented in 1913.

## 3. Name six parts of a conventional stapler with metal staples.

The arm, the spring steel and tooth, the carriage, the magazine cartridge, the base, and the pin. There is also another spring.

## 4. Describe 8 elements that may distinguish staples by class characteristics.

1. size of staple, 2. material used (i.e. zinc plated, stainless steel), 3. gauge of wire, 4. length of staple leg, 5. thickness of staple leg, 6. width of staple leg, 7. shape of crown (i.e. flat or curved), 8. width of crown, 9. angle of teeth.

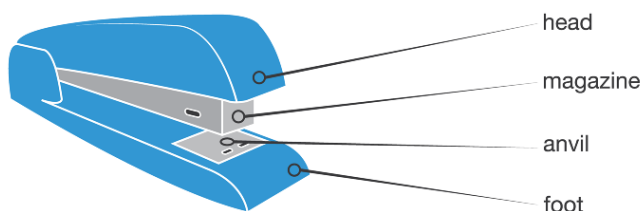
## 5. Describe 3 features in a stack of 5 sheets of paper that an FDE may look for when determining whether or not the original staple has been removed and a restaple of the same sheets has occurred.

Is there more than 1 pair of staple holes on each page? 2. Are the holes in relative position to one another (i.e. do they line up with one another?) If the staple has been removed and the pages then restapled, all 5 sheets should have the same number of holes. 3. Are the holes on each page equi-distant from one another (i.e. is there any difference in the width between the holes on each page indicating a different size staple or different stapler may have been used?) 4. Are there any marks on the back sides of the documents from crimping (bending of the legs) other than the last page that would indicate addition of page(s)?

## 6. What holds a row of staples together? What other functions does this serve?

A row of staples, known as a "staple strip", is held together by a silicone adhesive. This is because a full row offers stability to hold each staple in place.

There are usually 210 staples in a "staple strip". It would be very difficult to insert a single staple at a time into a stapler, and this would most likely cause a stapler to jam. The "strip" allows for insertion of many staples at once and holds them in place in the stapler to avoid these types of jams from occurring.



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Deadline for the next  
issue:

**SEPTEMBER 15,  
2013**

[www.abfde.org](http://www.abfde.org)

**2012-2013 Board Officers**

PRESIDENT.....Kirsten A. Singer  
VICE PRESIDENT.....Lisa M. Hanson  
SECRETARY.....Kathleen Annunziata Nicolaides  
TREASURER.....Jim Green

**2012-2013 Committee Chairs**

CONTINUING EDUCATION.....A. Frank Hicks  
CREDENTIALS.....Kathleen Annunziata Nicolaides  
HISTORIAN.....Kathleen Annunziata Nicolaides  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR.....Diane K. Tolliver  
NOMINATIONS.....A. Frank Hicks  
PUBLIC RELATIONS..... Marie Durina  
RECERTIFICATION.....Rick Horton  
RULES & PROCEDURES.....A. Frank Hicks  
TEST PREP & VALIDATION.....Rosalind Spencer  
TESTING.....Lisa M. Hanson  
WEBMASTER.....William Leaver  
WORKSHOP COORDINATOR.....L. Jim Josey



**ABFDE Testing Schedule**

The written and oral boards will be offered at the following national and regional forensic document conferences:

**August 2013 ASQDE, Indianapolis, IN**

Testing may also be available at other regional conferences during the year. If interested, contact Testing Chair Lisa Hanson at [Lisa.Hanson@state.mn.us](mailto:Lisa.Hanson@state.mn.us).

There are no  
secrets to success.  
It is the result of  
preparation, hard  
work, and learning  
from failure.

Colin Powell

[QuotePixel.com](http://QuotePixel.com)