

A Note from Brandy Lord INspi Treasurer

I am pleased to share that Dean Gluth and I teamed up in Washington, D.C. for the National Council of Investigation and Security Services (NCISS) annual "Hit the Hill" event. After a five-year hiatus, due to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, it was invigorating to once again engage with Senate and House Representatives to advocate for our profession and discuss pertinent legislation.

During our time in the nation's capital, we had the opportunity to meet with Indiana and Illinois leaders to address key issues that could significantly impact our profession. These discussions were crucial in ensuring that the voices of investigators were heard on Capitol Hill.

Among the topics we discussed were legislative measures aimed at safeguarding the rights and interests of both clients and professionals in the field. Our interactions with lawmakers were productive and impactful.

We are grateful for the opportunity to represent the Indiana (and Illinois) investigative community on a national platform.

As we return home, energized by our experiences in Washington, D.C., we remain committed to our profession and serving our clients.

Thank you to those who are members of NCISS! If you are not a member, please join today! NCISS is the only legislative council and is crucial to our national voice.

2024 NCISS "Hit the Hill" Submitted by Dean Gluth



On Tuesday May 7, 2024, Brandy Lord (Past INspi President & current Treasurer) and Dean Gluth (proud INspi member) participated in the NCISS (National Council of Investigation & Security Services) "Hit the Hill" event when we (and many other licensed private detectives from across the country) met with our Senators and Congressmen/Congresswomen to advise them of our professional interests (some in support of, and some opposing positions) relative to several pending Bills, current laws or mandates recently put in place by some Federal Agencies.



Specifically, we discussed "Data Privacy" Bills because information is critical to the work of private detectives. However, private detectives are NOT the target of the legislation as we are not "social media" companies, nor "data brokers," and we do not collect, package, or sell the information acquired during the course of an investigation. Therefore, our OPPOSITION to the Bills (as currently written) HR-1165 (the "Data Privacy Act of 2023"), the "Americans Privacy Rights Act," and S-262 (the "Stop Spying Bosses Act") was meant to advise them that even though our profession depends on access to personal data, legislation or regulation governing the use and disposition of gathered information must be carefully written to maintain legal exemptions for legal and lawful licensed private detectives because we still require access to important information to protect the interests of the individuals, companies, law firms and insurance carriers that hire us for legitimate purposes in the course of legal proceedings.

Additionally, we discussed our SUPPORT for House Resolution 1165 and Senate Resolution 63 and the Bills HR-5513 and S-3018 (to amend the "Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938" and the "National Labor Relations Act"). All these above-mentioned Bills and Congressional resolutions attempt to clarify the IRS definition of an "employee" and "independent contractor."



Basically, the new legal definition within the proposed Federal Regulations would continue to allow private detectives (that often subcontract other private detectives) the ability to use and subcontract them (and other service providers) in the course of conducting our legal and lawful investigations that often cross state lines (which sometimes we cannot cross due to state licensing concerns).

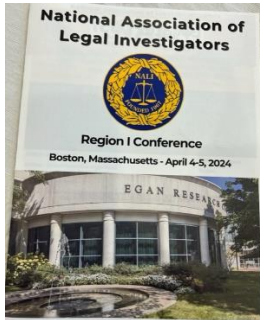
In summary, Brandy and Dean met with the Congressional staffers for the following Senators and House of Representative Members:

- Senator Todd Young (R-Indiana)
- Senator Mike Braun (R-Indiana)
- Representative Rudy Yakym III (R-Indiana)
- Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-Illinois)
- Senator Dick Durbin (D-Illinois)
- Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-Illinois), and
- Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska)



Conferences and Upcoming Events

NALI Conference in Boston



Several INspi members had the privilege of attending the National Association of Legal Investigators Conference in Boston. We had an excellent speaker line up and engaging discussions with valuable insight. It was a fantastic opportunity to network, learn, and stay updated on the latest trends in our field. Shout out to INspi's past president and chairman of our board, George Gergis as he is also the National Director of NALI.



Editor's Note: Thank you to George Gergis and Brandy Lord for attending this event and bringing back, to each and every member's benefit, all they have learned.

Mark Your Calendars

INspi Annual Conference
September 25, 2024
South Bend

The planning committee is working extremely hard to put together a great conference for you. There are several presentations being discussed, some which have moved farther than others considering the availability of the speakers we have identified. Topics include Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its impact on professional investigators, case management and organization, accident reconstruction, the stress involved in daily activities required of a professional investigator, and several more. Please watch your email for more information as we lock down the presentations, but for now, make sure you will be joining us in September!



Annual Holiday Celebration
December 7, 2024
South Bend

Hope you are feeling lucky because this year, not only will you have a great time with your colleagues from all over the state, but you will have a chance to "test your skills" (if you like) as we are celebrating at Four Winds Casino in South Bend. The casino also has a hotel and we have reserved a block of rooms so that you can relax, enjoy your evening, and not have to worry about driving home.

Feel free to check out all that Four Winds has to offer at <https://fourwindscasino.com/southbend/>. It's a beautiful place with games if you like but lots of wonderful places to hear some music and just people watch. We are hoping you can join us and will be able to share room information going forward. Please plan to join us!

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Michael Brown, Principal, Opaque International Group, Saint John, Indiana

Chad Christensen, Principal, CC Investigations, Indianapolis, Indiana

Christine Koryta, Trace Alert, LLC, Bloomington, Indiana

Tech Tips

WORD UP: You're typing away, then you realize you're in Caps Lock mode. In Microsoft Word, hit **Shift + F3**. You'll shift between all caps, first letter capitalized and no caps. At this point, it doesn't work in Google Docs.

Quick security tip: Do you toss files into the recycle bin and think they're gone for good? Nope, those sneaky files can make a comeback using special software. If you want files truly gone, you have to overwrite them using specialized software like [Eraser](https://eraser.heidi.ie/).
<https://eraser.heidi.ie/>

Keyboard master: On a PC, press the **Windows key + a number** to launch or switch to the corresponding program on the taskbar. You can move programs around (just click, hold down and drag), so you can easily keep your browser in the first spot, for instance.

Magic Windows shortcut: Use **Windows key + V** to see your keyboard history. It's perfect for when you need something you copied recently but it wasn't the *last* thing you copied. Pin text you paste regularly to the top of the list.

Keep your history a mystery--Google always seems to know just what you want, and it's not in your head. It tracks every search, click, message and request. Now and then, clear your search history and activity. Here's how:

- Go to myaccount.google.com and log in.
- Click **Data & privacy** in the left-hand menu.
- You'll see checkmarks next to **Web & App Activity**, **Location History** and **YouTube History**. Click each one to adjust your settings. Toggle them **Off** to stop further tracking if you choose.

Pro tip: You can also set up auto-delete to clear future activity every three, 18 or 36 months.

Call me maybe: Delete your outgoing voicemail message if it uses your voice and replace it with the default included with your device. Why? Hackers can use your "voice fingerprint" to access voice-protected financial records — or pose as you to rip off your friends and relatives.

For your eyes only--If you have sensitive pics like your driver's license on your phone, set up a locked folder in Google Photos.

- Open the Google Photos app > Utilities > Set up Locked Folder. Follow the on-screen directions to finish up. Note: Anything stored there isn't backed up to the cloud. Wouldn't be very private that way.

Have an iPhone? You can store secret pics in the Notes app. Open the pic in the Photos app, tap the share icon and select Add to New Quick Note. Go into the note you want to protect, tap the three-dot icon in the upper right corner, and then choose Lock.

Calling all small-business owners--Here's a new term to know: "Typosquatting." It's also called "URL hijacking." How it works: Hackers register domain names *slightly* off from existing websites. If they target you, it could damage your business. Picture this: You want to visit Amazon, Macy's, or Nordstrom online, but instead, you accidentally type a variation of the site's name. Boom, you land on a page that looks just like the real one, with all the products and deals. But it's a fake. Hackers are crafty, setting up forms to snatch personal info. Since it looks real, it's super easy to get tricked. Imagine if they made a fake version of *your* site. If you own a website, check out HaveIBeenSquatted.com. Type in your site's name, and it shows you all the typo variants out there.

Spot the fake: Deepfake red flags--From speeches of world leaders to clips of our favorite celebrities, deepfake videos are everywhere you turn. There are tried-and-true ways to pick them out. I'll walk you through six tactics to help you become a deepfake super sleuth.

1. Face shape is a dead giveaway. In a deepfake, measurements and proportions are typically off, even if it's only slightly. The ears are the most challenging part of the face to fake, so start there.

Pro tip: Pause a potential deepfake video and see if the structure of the face feels "off." Your brain can perceive this pretty well since we look at real faces so often.

2. Go to the source. Is that social media vid the real thing or a clone with a different message? Find the original footage.

Pro tip: Search related keywords on Google and social media platforms like YouTube, TikTok and Instagram. If you're struggling with ways to search, you can even take screenshots of critical parts of the video and do a [reverse image search](#).

3. Watch the mannerisms and expressions. They're as unique as fingerprints. President Obama's signature head lift and slight frown were present whenever he'd say, "Hi, everybody" in his weekly addresses. If the star of a video seems like an impersonator, they very well could be.

Pro tip: Watch a few videos of the person in the potential deepfake and compare.

4. Look deep(fake) into their eyes. Along with ears and face shape, deepfakes aren't the best at eyes. Eye alignment is especially tricky to duplicate.

Pro tip: Pause and check out a still frame of the video. Hit pause a few times to see if both eyes look in the same direction.

5. Look for glitches. Deepfakes are the most convincing when the subject is facing the camera directly. Once a person starts to turn to the side and move, glitches may appear.

Pro tip: Note any points where the AI-generated face slips off the real person in the footage. It's crazy when you catch it!

6. The mouth isn't moving right. Our mouths move in specific positions when we make different letter sounds. These shapes are tricky to match with an AI overlay. In fact, researchers found roughly one-third of deepfake videos can't match the original speaker's "m," "b" and "p" sounds.

Pro tip: Watch carefully. In a deepfake, the mouth may make the wrong shape, failing to match the audio.

Editor's Note: Hope you enjoy these Tech Tips, compliments of Kim Komando. You might enjoy her daily newsletter packed with these kinds of tips. Simply go to her website at komando.com and sign up—it's free.

Building a Lead-Generating Website:

Attract Clients and Grow Your PI Business

Christin Hirleman—WBI Consulting Group (WBICG.com)

Your website is often the first point of contact with potential clients, and its effectiveness can significantly impact your lead generation and business growth. This article is the first of a four-part series aimed at helping INspi members maximize their online presence in ways that are likely to increase traffic and conversions.

Let's explore website optimization best practices for search engine rankings and positive user experience.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): Getting Found by Potential Clients

Whether prospective clients are searching for their problem – “find a missing person,” or their solution – “private investigator Indianapolis,” you want your website to be among the top results they see. Here's how SEO can help:

- **Know Your Keywords:** Identify the terms people use to search for your investigative services. Target a mix of broad terms (e.g., “security consultant Indiana”) and long-tail keywords that are more specific (e.g., “forensic document examination Fort Wayne”). Integrate these keywords throughout your website, including titles, meta descriptions, page body text, and image alt text.
- **Content is King:** Search engines favor websites with high-quality, informative content relevant to your target audience. Here are some content ideas:
 - Common challenges & how your investigative approach helps you address them.
 - Success stories (without revealing client identities) showcasing your expertise and the positive outcomes you've achieved.
 - Informative articles about investigative services you offer.
- **Optimize for Performance:** Search engines are getting “smarter” regarding user experience. Great content on a slow-loading website will likely land outside the coveted top three search result positions.
 - Use Google's PageSpeed Insights Tool (<https://pagespeed.web.dev/>) to ensure your website is mobile-friendly and loads quickly (ideally under 3 seconds).
 - Verify that you have a clean, crawlable page structure for search engines. Tools like Google Search Console can help identify and fix technical SEO issues.

User Experience (UX): Creating a User-Friendly Experience

Search engine ranking is important, but a user-friendly website is essential to convert visitors into leads. Here's a basic primer on how to optimize your UX:

- **Clear Navigation:** Don't make users work to find the information they need. Design a straightforward and intuitive website navigation menu with well-labeled categories and subcategories. Consider a site search function for added convenience.
- **Mobile-First Design:** Remember, most users today browse the web on smartphones. Ensure your website looks good and functions flawlessly on all devices. A responsive website design, automatically adapting to different screen sizes, is nonnegotiable in 2024.
- **Calls to Action (CTAs):** Tell visitors what you want them to do next! Use strong CTAs throughout your website, encouraging visitors to contact you for a consultation, download a free brochure, or learn more about specific services. Clearly display your contact information and offer multiple ways for potential clients to reach you (phone, email, contact form).

There you have it—you're ready to rebuild your own website! If that's overly optimistic, we welcome you to ask for help. Outsourcing to experts is a valuable way to save your sanity when optimizing or rebuilding your website. Visit WBICG.com and use the “Contact Us” page if you have questions; we're here to help.

Member Spotlight—Laura Schook



Tell us a little about you and your company. I worked for the Louisville Public Defender for 3.5 years before deciding to go out on my own as a private contractor. My reason for making this leap was that I was overwhelmed with too many cases, and I could not give the clients the attention they deserved. Since going out on my own, I have kept my caseload low, and my teams have resolved many cases with favorable results for clients.

How long have you been a member of INspi? I have been a member since 2021.

How has INspi been helpful to you? I went to my first conference last year and met so many fantastic people. I felt welcomed by a group of professionals that made me feel valued and respected.

What inspired you to become a private investigator? I am a former law enforcement officer with 20 years of experience. In 2017, I graduated from Indiana University with a degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice and two minors in psychology and interdisciplinary studies. While in college I read Bryan Stevenson's book *Just Mercy*. This is when I knew what my next career would be. If you haven't read the book, I highly recommend it. And when you finish that read Michelle Alexander's book *The New Jim Crow*.

What is the most interesting case you have worked on? My niche is Death Penalty work. Not all my cases are death noticed but the majority of them are. I have two favorite cases. The *Commonwealth of Kentucky v. Guy Marcus Allen* AND *Commonwealth of Kentucky v. Aaron Hernandez*. Both Mr. Allen and Mr. Hernandez were death noticed cases. Both Mr. Allen and Mr. Hernandez are free men today after the trial process. It was my greatest honor to work with both men and their defenders.

What is the most challenging case you have worked on? I would say the two cases I mentioned above. Nothing is more stressful or scary than working for the innocent that you fear may be swallowed up by the system.

What is your favorite part of being a private investigator? I love being a part of the teams I am on. I get to work with the most talented defenders, paralegals, and mitigation specialists. They are not just work colleagues, they are friends who I admire and respect.

What is your least favorite part of being a private investigator? Currently, I don't have any complaints. I make my own hours, I choose who I work with, I feel valued and have a purpose. It never feels like work.

What are some common misconceptions about private investigators? That we all case cheating spouses. I get calls like this often and when I do I point the caller to the INspi website and direct them to the directory to select someone who offers this service.

How do you stay up-to-day with the latest techniques and technologies? I go to conferences and try to catch webinars when I have free time. Right now, I am chasing training on Geo-Fencing. This technology is going to be part of every criminal case in the future. We need to understand it, its limitations, and flaws.

What advice would you give to someone considering becoming a private investigator? Know your laws, state statues, and civil rights.

What is the most important thing you have learned as you have moved through your career as a private investigator? To not give up. Even the most challenging tasks can be mastered with intentional effort.

What are some of the biggest challenges facing private investigators today? I think many people would agree that the world can be a dangerous place. Almost everyone is armed anymore and many people we encounter are mentally ill. Investigators need to know who they are going to talk to, and they need to know who is behind the doors they plan to knock on. Do your homework before going into the field. Safety should always be a priority.

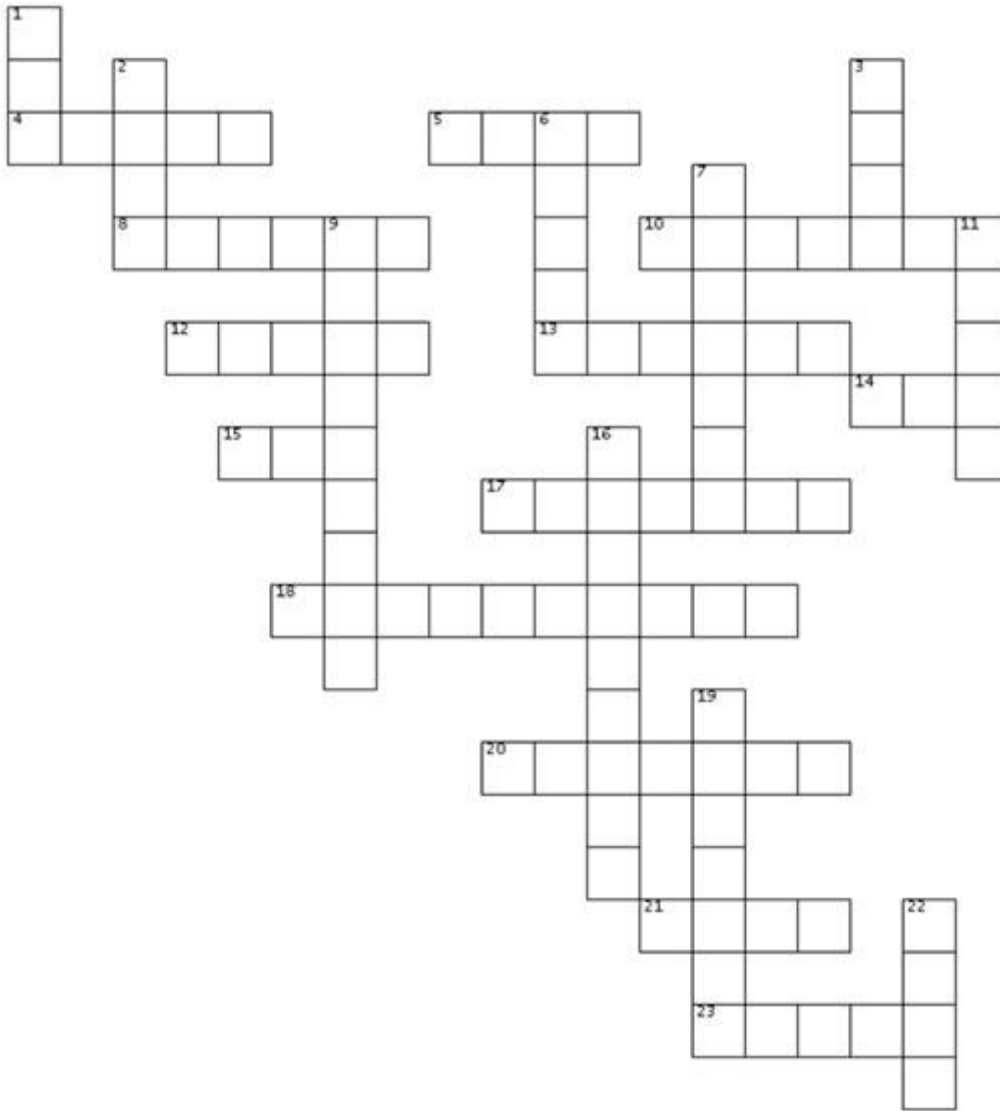
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The National Council of
Investigation & Security Services
The National Voice of the Private Investigation & Security Professions

WBI Consulting Group

And Now...A Little Bit of Fun



ACROSS

4. Check out _____ .com if I could use some help with my website
5. _____ search function will add convenience for your website visitors
8. You can set up a _____ folder in Google Photos to protect sensitive pics
10. Niche is death _____ work
12. An investigative plan should describe the _____ and focus of the investigation
13. Software that permanently deletes files in the recycle bin
14. _____ words that help people find your website
15. Search engine optimization
17. An established _____ is necessary to document the relationship with the client
18. Thought to be a part of every criminal case in the future
20. We always want to rate the highest in this category
21. Content is _____
23. Our national voice

DOWN

1. She was formerly in _____ enforcement
2. It's okay to "hit" this one
3. Target
6. Number of maximum seconds it should take for your website to load
7. First point of contact with potential clients; a lead generator
9. Some PIs are subcontractors, and some are _____
11. Indiana Representative
16. This message should be replaced with the default included in your device for safety
19. Goals should be consistent with prevailing laws and guidelines as well as the _____
22. Each assignment we accept more than likely has a _____ number or identifier

If you need a hint, go to the last page and you will find a word list that may help. Good luck!

And Now...A Little Bit of Fun (cont.)

Here's the word list:

WBICG
Mission
Goal
Case
Process
Scope
Website
SEO
King
Three
Site
Law
Key
Penalty
Geofencing
Quality
Eraser
Voicemail
Locked
Hill
NCISS
Yakym
Employees

Editor's Note: Of course I didn't alphabetize it which would have made it easier. I have to challenge you just a little.