



The Center For

Law Enforcement Technology, Training, & Research

Provider of the Florida Integrated Network for Data Exchange & Retrieval



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Special Announcement:

The next consortium meeting will be held at the LETTR offices on Tuesday, Dec. 2nd from 10:00am-12:00pm

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Agenda For Next Consortium Meeting

The next Law Enforcement Data Sharing Consortium (LEDSC) meeting will be held on December 2nd at the LETTR offices in Orlando. On the agenda for this meeting is, most importantly, the elections of new consortium officers. Due to the fact that Detective Jim McClure is vacating the Chairmanship position, the

need to find a new Chair for the LEDSC is paramount. Current Vice Chair of the LEDCS, Chief Joseph Hellebrand of the Melbourne Police Department, has offered to run for the position of Chair. Lieutenant Chad Parker of the Collier County Sheriff's Office has offered to run for the position of Vice Chair. If there are other mem-

bers of the Consortium who would like to be consider for the positions of Chair or Vice Chair, please contact Jim McClure. Voting for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair will take place at the December meeting. Another item on the agenda is the discussion of the MOUs for Region 5. Currently, new MOUs have (continue page 2)

FINDER Gets an Update

The engineering team at LETTR works hard to keep the FINDER system updated and working smoothly. This month, FINDER got a mini-makeover from the development team; these enhancements provide new features to FINDER, fix some existing bugs, and offer several cosmetic changes. In order to continuously improve the functionality of FINDER, the development team has enhanced FINDER with some new features. These new features include a "data expungement" utility, which allows system administrators to remove from the FINDER system any cases that have been sealed. Another new feature added for system administrators is a "Query Count" tool; this tool provides a count of query logs rather than the full, often time-consuming, detailed reports of

each query made to the system. The final new feature added to FINDER is called the "Query Broker." This feature works behind the scene of FINDER to increase the system's processing time; in short, users will now be getting faster returns on queries made to the system. The development team has also fixed several bugs that were found to be in the past version. The first fix now allows the users, who are searching for pawn information, to query by dealer code. The team also enhanced the ability to search jewelry, now allowing the users to search on a jewelry stones. A final fix now allows users to export their query results into Excel; the previous version merely opened the Excel spreadsheet in a web-browser window. Now, the returns can be exported directly to the Ex-

cel program. Finally, the team improved FINDER with several cosmetic changes. Along with correcting several typos, the first cosmetic change simply altered the way in which the details of various reports are displayed. The greatest cosmetic change, however, involved the returns in the Link Analysis option. The previous version of FINDER returned all agencies, whether or not those agencies offered any reports or information. The new cosmetic enhancement elevates this; the Link Analysis returns have been modified to avoid showing agencies that are either unavailable or give zero hits to the query. These new features, bug fixes, and cosmetic enhancements are further examples of how the LETTR engineering team is working to keep FINDER at its best.



On the Agenda

been distributed to Region 5. These agencies are requested to complete and return these MOUs to the Center for Law Enforcement Technology Training, and Research office as soon as possible. Another important topic on the agenda is a discussion on the status of the critical update installations. Some agencies have yet to schedule the installa-

tion of the critical update for FINDER. Without this update, these agencies will get a return that other agencies are unavailable when attempting to query more than 63 agencies at a time. Another item on the agenda will be the introduction to the new online meeting feature. Please see the article below for a more detailed descrip-

tion on this exciting new feature being offered by LETTR to our Law Enforcement Data Sharing Consortium members. Finally, since it's the holiday season, refreshments will be served immediately following this meeting. Please make plans to stay afterwards and socialize with your fellow agencies and LEDSC members!

*[With FINDER] "We find success on everything from pawn, to citations, to offenses."
-Heidi Hunter,
Palm Bay PD*

Consortium Meetings Going Live Online

In order to best serve our members, the Center for Law Enforcement Technology, Training, and Research is proud to announce that the monthly Law Enforcement Data Sharing Consortium meetings are now available online. Those members who are unable to make the drive to Orlando will now have the opportunity to view the consortium meetings live through the LETTR website. The online meetings will offer access to two live

streaming videos: one showing the meeting's presenter and the other showing the PowerPoints being displayed to the live audience. There will also be an interactive "chat-room" available, which will allow the online members to ask questions of the presenter during the meeting. In order to access the secure online meeting viewers, members must first be able to access a web-browser with open internet capabilities; if your agency has a firewall or

blocking software which prevents users from reaching the web, members should request access from their agency. The members must then obtain the username and password from Dr. Jennifer Sumner by email at JSumner@mail.ucf.edu or by phone at 407-882-0550. Once members have the username and password, they can then visit the www.LETTR.org website and click on the "live consortium meetings" link in order to view the sessions.

Spotlight Agency: Palm Bay P.D.



The Palm Bay Police Department has been using FINDER in its operations since 2004. Heidi Hunter, Intelligence and Homeland Security Manager, has actually been a FINDER user since its creation in 2001 and was glad to hear that the Palm Bay Police Department was a subscriber when she started working there. Ms. Hunter says that she and her colleagues use FINDER "religiously" on a daily basis, finding much success with the system. "We find success on everything from pawn, to

citations, to offenses. It is rare to not get a hit when running a person's name, or even an alias through FINDER; eventually we will obtain several addresses, phone numbers, associate information, vehicle information, and employer information, just to mention a few." Hunter further elaborates, "Most of the agencies with FINDER are very thorough when they write reports, whether it's a traffic stop that may result in a vehicle search or it's a field contact with a suspicious person. Even hav-

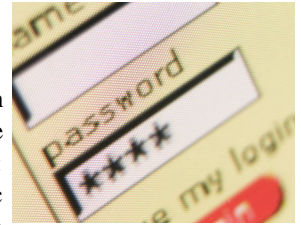
ing simple information like that can be beneficial; for example, it can help to dispute or to confirm an alibi by putting one or more subjects together in the time period before or after a crime." Ms. Hunter also serves the Palm Bay PD as the Forfeiture Manager and has found FINDER to be a tremendous asset in that capacity as well. When asked what she felt was the greatest benefit of FINDER to her agency, Hunter easily responds, "It is hard to remember how we did things before FINDER!"

Forgot your FINDER Username or Password?

The FINDER system has been designed to be one of the most user-friendly law enforcement information sharing systems available. The FINDER system, therefore, offers easy maintenance and manageability by each of its users. Once such component allows users to obtain their usernames and/or passwords in the event that they've been forgotten. In order to begin the process of retrieving a username or password, the user must first access the FINDER login page. On this page, the user will find the link

that is labeled: "Forgot Username/Password." Once the user clicks this link, he/she will be presented with a submission page; here, the user will have to input his or her current email address. (NOTE: the email address given by the user here must match the email address that was given when the account was first created). Once the user enters his/her email address and clicks the submit button, the system will send an email to the user. This email will give the user his/her FINDER "Username" and a generic

"Password." The user can then return to FINDER's login page and log into the system. NOTE: Since the user is given a generic password, he/she may want to change the password to something more familiar and easy to remember. In order to change a password, the user must login into the FINDER system and click on the MY ACCOUNT link located on the main screen. Clicking this link will open the "User Control Panel" and, from here, the user can access the "Change Password" feature.



Meet the LETTR Board: Joseph Hellebrand

Joseph Hellebrand is a 28 veteran of the Melbourne Police Department in Melbourne Florida. He has a Bachelors Degree in Public Administration and is currently completing his Masters Degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Central. Chief Hellebrand has completed over 4000 hours of law enforcement training. He is a graduate of the 197th Session of the FBI National Academy; the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar; and the

Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Executive Institute. Chief Hellebrand is currently serving as the Deputy Chief of Police of the Melbourne Police Department. He was promoted to Deputy Chief in 2005 after moving up through the ranks. During his career he has served in a variety of positions to include Police Officer, Field Training Officer, Canine Officer, Swat Officer/Team Leader, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Emergency Services Team Com-

mander, District Commander, Commander, and Deputy Chief of Police. Chief Hellebrand participates on several local advisory boards and is currently the Third Vice President for the Florida Chapter of the FBI Academy National Associates. He is also an instructor for the Police Standards and Training Commission and has taught Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement related classes at the both the College level and the Police Academy.

Behind the Scenes: Dan DeBlasio

The staff at the Center for Law Enforcement Technology, Training, and Research is comprised of individuals from all over the world. Dan DeBlasio, however, is a proud Florida native and one of the biggest fans of the University of Central Florida's football team. When not cheering on the UCF Knights, Dan is working away on the development of the FINDER system. Along with routine FINDER development, Dan's duties at LETTR include the testing of various systems and software; the quality assurance testing

of agency parsers; and the design and development of special technology projects. Outside of LETTR, Dan is a completing his graduate work in Computer Science where he is conducting research in Bioinformatics and the "low memory usage multiple alignments using RNA second structure." Having worked for LETTR for almost two years now, Dan enjoys the working environment and the energetic team at LETTR. "I love the fun, laid back environment of LETTR and, as a student, I appreciate the

ability to work right on the UCF campus. It's a great place to work, and it's a great fit for me." Dan is also appreciative of the importance of the FINDER system. When asked what he thought the greatest benefit of FINDER was to law enforcement, Dan says, "I think that, being able to get information regarding the history of a suspect, even if that information is for small crimes, helps greatly when the user has to approach that suspect; it's important to know the history of someone in order to be prepared."





LETTR

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The Center for Law Enforcement Technology, Training, & Research (LETTR) is a Florida, not-for-profit corporation. LETTR was formed in September 2007 by the University of Central Florida and members of the Florida Law Enforcement Data Sharing Consortium to consolidate the intellectual property and other resources associated with FINDER, the Florida Integrated Network for Data Exchange and Retrieval. FINDER is a set of computer applications that enable automated information sharing between police agencies.



**For comments or story suggestions, please
contact this newsletter's creator and author,
Dr. Jennifer Sumner, at
JSumner@mail.ucf.edu**