


# FORENSIC SCIENCE DIVISION


## Labyrinth – Quarterly Newsletter

March 2024

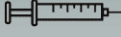


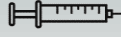
### Biology

 Congratulations to Jamie Bray-Tanner, the new Biology Section Supervisor!


 Submit all reference standards. If victim DNA may be present on an item, a victim standard is required for DNA analysis. Cases will not be analyzed without the necessary reference standards and reports indicating how the evidence was recovered and how it ties to the crime.


### Chemistry


 Reminder: Do not submit drug evidence, especially powders, in paper bags.

 Please remove batteries from vape pens before submitting. For chemical analysis, only submission of the inner cartridge is required.


### Evidence


 When submitting evidence to the lab via mail, please do not use the evidence packaging as the shipping container. Evidence packages should be placed in a shipping container and mailed that way.

 Do NOT seal shipping containers with evidence tape.


 PLEASE use the correct submission form. They are all online at <https://dojmt.gov/crime/forms>.

### Firearms


 All firearms submitted to the lab that do not have a firearms request will still be analyzed in the firearms section. They will be test fired and the test fired cartridge cases will be scanned into the 3D system. This will be communicated with the specific agency. A report will still be issued for this analysis.


 Photographs cannot be used for firearm & toolmark comparisons. If toolmark evidence is recovered, the entire item can be submitted or areas of interest may be casted.

### Latent Prints


 Please submit known elimination prints (victims, officers, etc.) that may have handled any of the items being analyzed for latents. This can reduce turnaround time and prevent unnecessary analysis if victim impressions can be identified from the beginning. All known records (even printed copies) are considered evidence and must be packaged with a seal/initials and listed as an item on the submission form.


### Toxicology

 The Toxicology department is testing out a new stop drug testing limit for DUI cases. Drug testing will be performed on cases with ethanol results below 0.16 g/dL. This differs from the previous limit of 0.10 g/dL.

 Toxicology is working on validating two new instruments. These instruments will help us improve the efficiency and scope of our testing.

### Miscellaneous

 Toxicology kits are expensive and have an expiration date. Please use them by the expiration date and do not order more than you will use.

 Lab office hours are 8-5, Monday-Friday. We are closed on federal holidays. Evidence is not accepted in person past 4pm.

# Labyrinth - continued

## DNA Analysis of Skeletal Remains

In January 2024, the Biology Section validated a new method to extract DNA from human bones and teeth. This method will allow agencies to submit unidentified remains for DNA analysis. Please note that these types of samples are extremely difficult, so it may not always be possible to generate a useable DNA profile. The process is laborious and time-consuming! If the remains are suspected to belong to a specific individual, please submit all available reference standards to help improve and expedite results. These may include items the individual was known to have used (toothbrush, hairbrush, clothing, etc.), parent or off-



spring reference standards (we can analyze kinship of these in house more quickly), or sibling reference standards (these will have to be outsourced for kinship analysis and will take more time). Profiles from unidentified remains are uploaded into the CODIS database for unidentified human remains. Contact the DNA section to discuss human remains cases and to determine the samples most likely to yield quality DNA results.

## DUI Crash Training

Ben Vetter from Breath Alcohol recently assisted in DUI Crash Scenario Training at MHP HQ in Boulder, MT. This training took place January 29-30 and February 5-6, to help give real world experience to new troopers in the MHP Advanced Academy. A fake crash was set up, and an actually impaired person was put in the vehicle. The new troopers were able to practice running a full crash and DUI arrest. Individuals participating as "drivers" had to maintain a Breath Alcohol Concentration between 0.080 and 0.140 for 10-12 hours.



## Employee Spotlight

Our Employee Spotlight is Employee of the Quarter Lynette Lançon! Lynette was born and raised in Missoula and earned a Bachelor's from the University of Montana. She joined the Lab in 2004 as a Firearms intern, then worked as a NIBIN Tech and Autopsy Assistant in 2005. She became a Firearms Examiner in 2008, becoming proficient in distance determination, shooting reconstruction, GSR, physical match, toolmarks, firearm identification, and serial number restoration. She is the Technical Leader for the Firearms section and has published two research papers, one on distance determination and the other on a presumptive test for primer residues. Lynette works with her husband, Doug, a fellow Firearms Examiner. They have a 9 year old daughter, Avery, two dogs, and a lizard. In her spare time, Lynette enjoys reading and fighting with Avery over the video game console. Over the last 20 years, Lynette has become a pillar of the lab and has earned the respect of her coworkers and our customers with her knowledge, dedication, and a lot of sass and sarcasm.



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