



SLEUTH SCOOP



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ISSUE 1

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Charles Eric "Charlie" Gordon, Esq. — Four Decades of Investigative Excellence



In this inaugural issue of Sleuth Scoop, we proudly honor Charles "Charlie" Eric Gordon, Esq., the longest continuously active member of the Society of Professional Investigators (SPI), as he marked an **extraordinary 40 years** with the organization this March. Recently, Newsletter Editor, and SPI Board Member, Robert Fried, sat down with Charlie to reflect on this very special milestone.

"I love SPI, it's not just an organization, it's part of my history, part of my life."

From Law to Investigation

Charlie's investigative career began during the 1974 recession, when he took a job as a debt collector and discovered his knack for skip tracing—locating hard-to-find individuals. While in law school, he managed a skip-tracing department focused on student loans. His legal background eventually led him to investigative roles such as judge and special investigative counsel during the Parking Violations Bureau scandal.

After being admitted to the bar, Charlie worked in a law firm that shared office space with renowned Private Investigator Jerry Martin, who became a lifelong mentor. "He was an autodidact, incredibly creative," Charlie recalls. "I learned a tremendous amount from him."

As a practicing attorney, Charlie is not required to hold a Private Investigator license, something he once had to clarify to the Department of State. "General Business Law Section 83 is clear – an attorney practicing law doesn't need a PI license."

Today, Charlie focuses on finding missing heirs, witnesses, and shareholders, using what he calls "attorney intelligence". He also investigates rent stabilization fraud.

A Lifelong SPI Legacy

Charlie joined SPI in 1985 as an associate member. He later made history as SPI's first life member—a concept he proposed during Bruce Sackman's presidency.

Over four decades, Charlie has served SPI as Membership Director, Social Director, and Public Relations Director.

His institutional knowledge connects SPI's present with its past. Charlie traces the organization's roots to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner to the CIA. He recounted how most of the founding members were OSS alumni—lawyers, police, and those involved in intelligence work.

He recalled the late 1990s – when attendance at meetings dropped to just six members. "Dave Zeldin saved SPI from the ashes. Bruce Sackman expanded it. Paul Babakitis has grown it even more."

International Reach

In 2019, Charlie joined President Sackman and fellow members on an SPI trip to London and Wales, where the group visited 10 Downing Street with a police escort, the U.S. Consulate, and attended a conference with the Association of British Investigators (ABI).

"It was a great trip, we really bonded," Charlie said. "And I've even gotten business from it, just from spending time with our UK counterparts."

He's also a life member of the World Association of Detectives (WAD).

SPI Camaraderie & Culture

The camaraderie is what makes SPI special! Charlie reminisced about the group's events at Forlini's Restaurant, where members would enjoy a lively happy hour before meetings. "We ran the joint. It felt like a family."

To this day, Charlie appreciates the SPI tradition of member introductions at each meeting. "It's good to hear everyone's background. That connection that's what makes SPI feel like home."

Looking to the Future

As SPI moves forward, Charlie believes its strength lies in its intergenerational learning and shared mission. "Keep learning," he advised. "You don't have to master every new tool, but go to meetings, listen, share, and grow."

Though he joked about not fully embracing AI, Charlie is quick to learn from younger members with expertise in Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) and other emerging specialties. "You talk, you share—that's how we evolve."

His parting wisdom? "Be an ambassador for SPI, wherever you go."

Honoring Charlie's Distinguished Service

On March 13, 2025, SPI honored Charlie at Tony's DiNapoli East in New York City for his Distinguished Service and four decades of contribution to the organization.

CHARLES-ERIC GORDON



SPI PRESIDENT
PAUL BABAKITIS

Charles-Eric Gordon, Esq Contact Information

Law Office Of Charles-Eric Gordon
P.O. Box 514, Plainview, NY 11803-0514
(516) 433-5065 / sleuth32@aol.com



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DEPUTY CHIEF COLON IS

Retiring

After **35** Years

DEPUTY CHIEF COLON, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR PROFESSIONAL LAW-ENFORCEMENT, AND A LONGTIME SPI MEMBER, RETIRES FROM THE NYPD. WE WISH CHIEF COLON CONTINUED SUCCESS AS HE EMBARKS ON HIS NEXT OPPORTUNITIES!

THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATORS

CIGAR NIGHT



May 21
6 PM

Leonard's Palazzo
555 Northern Blvd
Great Neck, NY 11021



\$160 PER PERSON
OPEN BAR / BUFFET
3 PREMIUM CIGARS INCLUDED



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treasurer@spinyc.org