



IL

CRA

SUMMER

2022

www.ilcra.org

ad infinitum

ILLINOIS
COURT
REPORTERS
ASSOCIATION

In this issue

- 4** Call for Nominations
Board Meeting
Distinguished Service Award
Outstanding Educator
Student Scholarship Essay Contest
- 5** Renew Membership
Jerk Dogs 1 & 2
- 6** Lake Land College
- 7** Happiness in Court Reporting
- 8** Annual Convention
- 9** Grassroots Outreach

Advertisers

- 2** Lexitas
- 6** Worth Business Equipment
Lake Land College
- 7** L & L Reporting

President's Message



THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER ARE HERE

Where has the year gone? It seems like we were just scrambling to contact our leaders in Springfield to intercept a bill and now we're looking at summer. Let's face it, summer in Illinois is not long enough, so we make the most of it when it's here, whether it is taking time for family vacations, catching up on projects, or just relaxing. It is a good time to recharge before the fall when things start to ramp up, which brings me to something we all need to think about...Work/life balance and self-care.

While this job is rewarding on so many levels, if we don't put ourselves first sometimes, it can burn you out fast. With the fall lineup of trials on the horizon, we

all know what that means for work/life balance. Some struggle to walk away and take a break. Others make time no matter what. I struggle with the first, and I have spoken with other reporters who do the same. Finding ways to relax, recharge, or rest will only make us better as reporters. While we are always striving to improve our skills, we need to make sure the spark is there as well.

I hope everyone enjoys their summer, and I look forward to seeing you personally in Springfield this fall! Take time for you!

Mary Ann Casale
CSR, RDR, CLVS, CMRS, CLR



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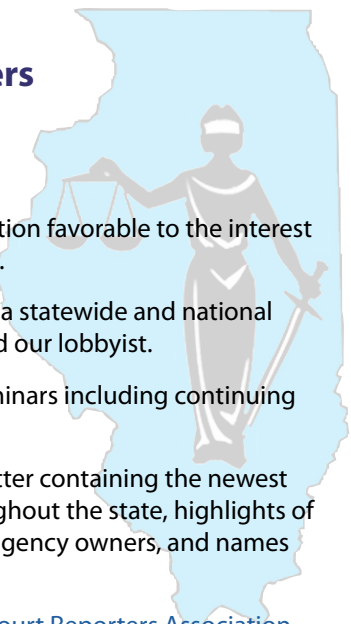
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What ILCRA Does for Illinois Reporters

- **Works** to maintain your right to be certified.
- **Monitors, promotes, and lobbies** to pass legislation favorable to the interest of court reporters, captioners and CART providers.
- **Monitors** legislation affecting our professions on a statewide and national basis through both our Legislative Committee and our lobbyist.
- **Sponsors** an annual conference and one-day seminars including continuing education and the latest in reporting technology.
- **Publishes** *Ad Infinitum*, a quarterly online newsletter containing the newest up-to-the-minute reporting developments throughout the state, highlights of board meetings, advertisements of vendors and agency owners, and names and telephone numbers of ILCRA officers.
- **Serves** as an affiliated state unit of the [National Court Reporters Association](#).
- **Offers** members significantly reduced rates for the conventions and seminars.
- **Awards** Student Scholarships, a Distinguished Service Award, an Award of Excellence for an Outstanding Educator, and conducts [speed contests](#) each year.
- **Provides** resources on the ILCRA website, including the CSR Act, Court Reporters' Act, Rules and Regulations of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Transcript Act, and ILCRA Bylaws. It also includes officers' names and contact information as well as Committees and Committee Members. ILCRA Member Information is included on the website under "Find a Reporter."
- **Offers** an Online Student Mentor Program.
- **Promotes** student recruitment.
- **Organizes** letter-writing campaigns on issues affecting our professions.
- **Sends** representative members to legislative boot camps, leadership conferences, and the national convention for training and education.
- **Provides** reporters for demonstrations on request and attends career days throughout the state.
- **Provides** free CART brochures to its members.
- **Provides** a court reporters network through Constant Contact which allows ILCRA to immediately be in touch with members via email.
- **Serves** the membership with the phone number 703-729-4861 and a [website](#).
- **Provides** an association management company to assist members.



ILCRA MISSION STATEMENT

To maintain standards of excellence in verbatim shorthand reporting, to provide continuing educational opportunities and advocate technological advancements, and to promote a spirit of mutual assistance between the profession of verbatim shorthand reporting and its consumers.

ILCRA Call For Nominations

Nominating Committee Chair, Georgia Northway, is now accepting nominations for the following ILCRA offices. Please consider nominating a colleague or yourself to help lead the organization.

These positions are for the 2022-2024 two-year term:

- Region Two Freelance
- Region Two Official
- Legislative Representative

For more information on the positions and the nomination form please [click here](#).

Notice of ILCRA Board Meeting at Convention

The ILCRA Board of Directors will have their in-person Board meeting at 7 pm on Thursday, October 6, 2022, at the President Abraham Lincoln Springfield Doubletree Hotel. ILCRA members in good standing are welcome to attend.

ILCRA Distinguished Service Award

It is our pleasure once again to seek nominations for the ILCRA Distinguished Service Award.

The purpose of this award is to encourage and recognize work amounting to distinguished service for the benefit of the court reporting and captioning industries by an individual of ILCRA. That may include work as a member, committee member, officer of the Association, for Ad Infinitum, in state or local affairs, or public relations.

We are seeking someone who has added to the quality of our profession, improved the way it is perceived by other professionals or the general public, or who has helped our fellow reporters and captioners to focus on how they can better meet the demands of technology and the changing judicial and captioning industries.

Take time now to nominate that special person who deserves to be the next DSA award winner.

[2022 DSA Nomination Form.](#)

Do You Know an Outstanding Educator?

It is time once again to call for nominations for the ILCRA annual Award of Excellence to an outstanding educator.

The guidelines are:

1. The nominee must be or have been on the faculty of a court reporter training program.
2. Nominations must be received by September 9, 2022.

Although not required, it is helpful in the selection process if the nominee is an associate member of ILCRA.

Nominations may be submitted by students, fellow faculty, administrators, or ILCRA members to: dwenhold@kmgnet.com

Nomination Form can be downloaded [here](#).

Court Reporting Students: Win \$1,000 in ILCRA's Student Scholarship Essay Contest!

Students, you could win \$1,000, plus a complimentary registration to the 2022 ILCRA Annual Convention in Springfield, Illinois, on October 6-8, 2022. The prize also includes hotel accommodations for one night, a \$50 mileage stipend, and a one-year Associate Membership in the Illinois Court Reporters Association. The winner will become a member of the ILCRA Student Scholarship Committee for the following year. Second place (\$500) and Third place (\$300) prizes will also be awarded.

To enter the contest, complete the application [here](#) and compose a one-page, typewritten, double-spaced essay on the topic picked by the committee (included in the online form).

Entries must be received by Friday, September 16, 2022. Submit to ilcrascholarship@gmail.com.

It's time to renew your ILCRA membership!

2022, so far, is a great year for membership and the only reason is because of people like you. We crushed the sneak attack by the digital proponents in the legislature because of the membership's ability to mobilize and for the fact that we had funds to pay our lobbyist. That only happened because dues were paid by you and your colleagues.

It's that time again for your dues renewal. For those that have already renewed, thank you! For those that have not yet done so please log onto the ILCRA website (<https://www.ilcra.org/>) and sign in to renew your membership.

Please take a moment today, right now, to do that. ILCRA has not raised the membership rate for over a decade but that will change in the fall of 2022. Act now to get the same great rate.

Have no doubt we have not seen the last of the digital push and we will need every dollar to fight back those forces. We cannot do it without you so please renew today. Thank you for all you do and together we stand strong.

Renew now!

Jerk Dogs 1 and 2 and Facebook

**By Stephanie Battaglia,
CSR, RMR, CRR
(a/k/a Jerk Dog Mom)**

Some of you are quite familiar with Jerk Dogs 1 and 2, my Golden Retrievers who are now aged 2-1/2 and 2. Some of you are well acquainted with Baby the Raccoon. And of course, so many of us hold Dammitmaggie so near to our hearts after the recent loss of her mother, Cindy Merrell, a beloved reporter who has recently passed. And I cannot forget to mention Starfish the cat. There are so many to name.

If you aren't aware of the Facebook group Court Reporters and Their Fur Babies and you have a love of all animals, furry or not, come check out this incredible group. We are an amazing group of

3000+ members.

This group is truly amazing. Every day many of our members post cute pictures, silly pictures, crazy pictures, and even the absolutely unimaginable. Videos are the best. There's a reporter in this group that lives on a farm, and she was commenting about how her pig was on the porch flipping furniture while she was trying to take a Zoom deposition. I did name her Jerk Pig that day. We have snakes, fish, birds, turtles as well. And if you need help with an issue regarding pet care, you can definitely get many ideas of what to do.

What I love most about this group is after a bad day on the record I can come on this site and laugh and just relax. But mostly it is the human side that makes this group so special. When I was hospitalized last year with Covid so many members contacted me to

make sure I was okay, and make sure Jerk Dogs were okay as well. We get to express our feelings on this page, our love, our fears, and our absolute devotion to all animals, not just the four-legged furry ones. And when an animal crosses the rainbow bridge, there is no other group I would care to share my grief with and be there for those as well.

And if you are wondering why I call my dogs Jerk Dogs 1 and 2? Plain and simple, they are jerks. Think of them like teenaged boys, absolute jerks. They do stupid stuff every single day, have destroyed my backyard in their quest to dig a hole to China, are extremely dirty and smell.... but I still love them at the end of the day. I know they will be my protector if Stranger Danger ever does get into my home. I love them unconditionally.

Come check out our Facebook group. It will make your day.

Greetings from Lake Land College in Mattoon, Illinois!

By Lisa Earp
Business Instructor
Director of Court Reporting
Office Professionals Program Coordinator

We started a new Court Reporting and Captioning program in the fall 2021, and I am excited to share more information about our program.

Students can take all of their classes online which provides greater flexibility in scheduling. Our theory and speedbuilding classes are taught by working court reporters. So, from the very beginning, students form a connection with an instructor who knows exactly what students are feeling and experiencing. These courses also meet by Zoom so students can interact and connect with their instructor and classmates. To help further encourage students, we have established a mentor program.

Students have the ability to self-pace through the speedbuilding courses. Although the self-paced course concept is brand new to our college, we have already seen the success of this option. One of our students is already two semesters ahead of a traditional schedule!

Interested students complete special admission testing before being accepted. Once accepted, students are encouraged to use a rent-to-own option for their steno writer and enjoy free access to a CAT software through the college computer system. Lake

Land College uses a textbook rental program, which makes us an even more affordable option! Financial aid is available to eligible students.

A big thank you to advisory council members for helping us get this program started and for their continued guidance as we continue to grow our program. Our advisory council members are Rhonda Black, Melissa Clagg, Mary Danley, Courtney Goodner, LeAnn Hibler, Nancy Hopp, Jill Layton, Isaiah Roberts, Jeff Waite, and Sarah Wilhoit.

For more information, please email me at learp@lakelandcollege.edu. Please like and share our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LakeLandCollegeCourtReporting> to stay updated. Thank you!

COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING

- Online classes with Zoom component for theory and speedbuilding courses
- Self-paced speedbuilding classes
- Rent-to-own steno writer option
- Textbook rental program
- Core classes taught by court reporters
- Special admission process includes tests in English grammar, keyboarding, and interest inventory
- Affordable, pay as you go tuition



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The Happiness In Court Reporting

By Lori Kennedy

To quote Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort." Let's go back to Day 1 in court reporting school. Not only did we achieve learning the machine, have the thrill of creative ways to master tricky key combinations or resolving conflicts, creative ways to carve out time to practice, we mastered it. And we mastered it at 225 words per minute. Way to go, Court Reporters.

Tony Robbins has said, "Progress equals happiness." Well, my fellow reporters, we should be the happiest people on Earth. Let's go back to Year 1 on the job and the hours we spent researching for transcripts and making dictionary entries to today having those same words translate on our screens.

Now that's progress. Court Reporters, you rock.

A court reporter's skill is truly nothing short of amazing. Converting the spoken word to the written word at the speed of light at times is no easy task. There are still days after 24 years I stare at my screen in awe at my translation. Court Reporters, be proud.

"The present moment is filled with joy and happiness. If you are attentive, you will see it." —Thich Nhat Hanh

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! *Spread the word!*

Encourage someone you know to explore court reporting, captioning, and CART as a career. Ensuring that qualified reporters are in the field is the only way to protect the profession and to fight digital technologies from taking over our industry.

Local Court Reporter Training Programs

College of Court Reporting*

111 W. 10th Street, #111, Hobart, IN 46342
866.294.3974 www.ccr.edu

Lake Land College*

5001 Lake Land Blvd, Mattoon, IL 61938
217.234.5253 www.lakelandcollege.edu

MacCormac College*

29 E. Madison Street, Chicago, IL 60602
312.922.1884 www.maccormac.edu

South Suburban College*

16333 S. Kilbourn Ave., Oak Forest, IL 60452
708.596.2000 www.southsuburbancollege.edu

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ILCRA's Annual Convention

Save the Date —October 6-8

By **Dave Wenhold,**
ILCRA's Executive Director

I do the very best I know how – the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. Abraham Lincoln

Now that is a quote! And a great reason for attending the annual ILCRA convention in Springfield on October 6-8, 2022. ILCRA will be providing great seminars that will help YOU be the very best you can be. Knowledge is power and we all need to be on an "A" game to compete effectively every day.

Additionally, you will not want to miss out on the opportunity to network with your colleagues and relax and enjoy our epic reception on Friday night. Last year's fun and excitement was awesome, and we are just building on that wonderful experience this year.

Anyway, put the date in your calendar and be on the lookout for the registration to open up. The first 50 people that register will have a shot at winning a great gift. Don't miss out on attending the best, and most affordable, seminar this year.

Looking forward to seeing you in Springfield in October.

SAVE THE DATE

ILCRA 2022 Fall Conference

October 6-8, 2022

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel
Springfield, IL



Grassroots Outreach a Powerful Tool

By Brittan Bolin, ILCRA Lobbyist

ILCRA experienced a significant legislative challenge this spring, when legislation that would have superseded the Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporters Act and replaced it with an act licensing shorthand, voice and digital reporters was filed as an amendment to Senate Bill 1105.

While ILCRA leadership had information that this proposal was being discussed, the legislative language was only filed in the waning days of the spring 2022 legislative session. This meant the Association had to quickly develop a grassroots strategy to push back against the digital reporters, disseminate information and instruction to the membership, and mobilize members to contact lawmakers. And they did just that.

Armed with talking points, 500 individuals responded to the Call to Action from ILCRA. Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee who were the targeted audience for the outreach reported receiving anywhere from forty to eighty contacts on Monday, April 4, the day that Senate Bill 1105 could have been heard in committee. Because of this well-organized grassroots effort, the sponsor of the bill invoked a procedural move to indicate that the bill would not be moving this session, an exclamation point on a successful campaign for court reporters.

When done correctly, grassroots outreach is an incredibly powerful tool. To be successful grassroots campaigns must have the following qualities:

- A clear message consistent over multiple platforms. Whether calling or emailing legislators, ILCRA members were using the same talking points and delivering the same message.
- Everyone is on the same page. Unlike previous

legislative hearings, association members and court reporters were taking a unified position on Senate Bill 1105.

- Everyone did their part. The sheer volume of contacts stopped this bill in its tracks.
- Develop a coalition of stakeholders that have common interests. ILCRA communicated closely with other organizations, including the Illinois Bar Association, The Illinois Trial Lawyers Association and the National Verbatim Reporters Association regarding SB 1105. While ILCRA was the obvious “face” of the effort, other coalition members were having important conversations of their own and sharing information among all stakeholders.

While this was an impressive win, it is not the end of the war. The digital reporting industry will continue to push for licensure and legitimacy. That is why we must keep our tools sharp.

It is critical that members maintain momentum and work during the “off season” to ensure success next session. Here are a few action items that each member can take toward that goal:

- Send a letter or email to your Representative and Senator to discuss issues with digitals, the upcoming sunset of the Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporters Act, and the importance of the record;
- Invite them to speak at professional events;
- Engage with/follow your lawmakers on social media to keep abreast of opportunities for in-district engagement such as listening sessions and coffees.

Senate Bill 1105 is a great conversation starter for outreach to legislators, and the ILCRA website includes a wealth of information and tips on legislative advocacy. Please help keep our efforts on point as we prepare for the fall veto session and upcoming 103rd General Assembly.

Join ILCRA

**Membership with the Illinois Court Reporters Association has its privileges!
As a member, you receive exclusive benefits, including:**

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Discounted **ILCRA ANNUAL CONVENTION** and Seminar registration fees - a savings of \$100

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But wait, there is more! ILCRA members also receive the following valuable benefits:

Office Depot: 15% - 25% average annual savings on select paper and office supplies

Pengad: 10% off all full price products

ProCAT: 25% off WinnerXP Software; 15% off Impression Writer

RepAgencyWorks: 25% discount off the set-up fee for RepAgencyWorks Court Reporting Management Software

Reporting Solutions: 20% off PDF-it service

Click here to [JOIN or RENEW ONLINE!](#)

ad infinitum

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