

AD INFINITUM

Fall 2012

Illinois Court Reporters Association

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President's Message

Nancy LaBella, ILCRA President

Conventions, it seems, do not have the best reputations. When I told people I was heading to our convention, I heard things like, "Don't work too hard by the pool" and "I wish I had a 'convention,' so I could miss work." I'm not sure which conventions those folks had attended, but it certainly wasn't one of ours.

Were you a part of ILCRA's 2012 Annual Convention in Springfield this year? If not, you missed out on some great opportunities – opportunities to learn, network with other court reporters, CART providers, captioners, students, instructors, vendors, and even have fun while doing all that.

We all have many options when it comes to earning our Continuing Education Units. We can have small group training sessions with our CAT software vendors. We can attend seminars on a variety of topics, whether or not they increase our value in our profession. We can read an article and take a test. We can sit in front of our computers alone and watch a webinar. Yes, all of those things are available to us – and some of them come with valuable lessons. But I honestly don't think anything can replace the value of spending a couple of days with your colleagues attending what our feedback tells us was a successful convention.

Now, I know I speak with a biased view on attending ILCRA conventions and seminars. Heck, I have to be there, right? Well, almost 200 of our colleagues in the court reporting profession did not HAVE to be there. They chose to be there. Even though they had all those other options, they chose to attend ILCRA's convention. Whether it was because of convenience, an interest in the seminar presenters or just a burning desire to support their state association (I'm going to believe that was one of the reasons!), they were there. And from the looks on their faces, it



seems as though they did more than earn those CEUs. They enjoyed the experience and came away with an increased desire to plow ahead in these difficult economic times by making themselves more valuable to employers and consumers, by learning something new or honing their skills, by networking with others in the profession, and by gaining a renewed attitude that, yes, our profession is still alive and strong.

Okay, so you missed out on this year's opportunity. It's never too early to start planning for next year. Mark your calendars for September 19th through 22nd, 2013, to attend ILCRA's 2013 Annual Convention in Springfield. In the meantime, we will again be offering our one-day marathon seminar on March 23rd, 2013, in Oak Brook. Take this opportunity to spend time with others in the profession while continuing your education. By doing so, you are also supporting your state association. We strive to be the association you deserve – one that is looking out for YOUR best interests. One way we do that is by offering seminars that will keep you at the top of your profession.

So don't listen to people who say conventions are just "boondoggles" – meaningless parties or, according to Mr. Webster, "a wasteful or impractical project or activity." The ILCRA 2012 Annual Convention was far from that. If you were there, I am sure you agree. If you were not in attendance, I hope you will join us next year.

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312-435-6890; Shorewood, IL
labellaseppi@yahoo.com

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deb@musielakreporting.com

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racorson@yahoo.com

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217-273-5789; Caseyville, IL
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Word Ways

Bonni R. Shuttleworth

A word about where these terms originated. I have a handout from Joe Pudlo dated March, 1997, which he titled "A Court Reporter's Vocabulary" and advised reporters to write the words stenographically and become familiar with them. So using his advice, I am going to share the terms with you. I will list them here and hope you look up the meanings before you check your **answers on page 10**.

1. art deco
2. artifact
3. artifice
4. ascetic
5. ascribe
6. askance
7. assay
8. assiduous
9. assuage
10. assumpsit
11. astern
12. astigmatism
13. ATLA
14. athwart
15. at par
16. atrophy
17. attendant upon you
18. attenuate



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Check Out Our BRIEFS

Nancy LaBella, ILCRA President

Have you ever heard of the Hedman theory? My historical information – whether it is accurate or not, I am not quite sure – is that it was taught at one court reporting school in the Chicago area for five years. I was lucky enough to be a graduate of the last class that was taught Hedman in 1985 (if anyone asks, I tell them I was 12 at the time; I think I may change that to 10). For those of you not familiar with it, the major difference between Hedman theory and most others is the use of our asterisk key. We use it a lot! And we don't have to be acrobats to do that – our asterisk key is conveniently extended as a very narrow key between our vowels, and we use it to make them long. Okay, enough on the theory lesson. Many of the briefs below are from a fellow Hedman writer (thank you, Gayle!). You may have to tweak them a bit to work for your particular theory, but you might pick up some new tricks!

bilateral	PWHRAL	lower back pain	HROERP
carpal tunnel	KUPBL	Medical Center	PH*BG
carpal tunnel syndrome	KUPBLS	medication	PHAEGZ
chronic	KRO*PBG	neck pain	TPHAEUPB
condition	KEUGZ	nerve root	TPH-R
degenerative	TKEPBLG	pain level	PEFL
disk disease	TK-D	pain management	PAEPLT
doctor	TK-R	pain medication	PAEGZ
Doctor	TK-RBG	physical therapy	TPA*RP
Dr.	TKR-	physical therapist	TPA*RPT
emergency	PH-RPBLG	progress note	PRO*T
emergency room	PH*RPBLG	range of motion	R-PL
family	TPAEPL	right arm	RARPL
family doctor	TPAEPLD	right shoulder	ROULD
herniated disk	H-D	rotator cuff	R-BG
insurance	AOEUPBS	standard of care	ST*BG
left arm	HRARPL	symptom	SEUPLT
left shoulder	HROULD	syndrome	SAEPBD
low back	HROEB	therapist	THA*RPT
low back pain	HROEP	therapy	THA*RP
lower back	HROERB	traumatic	TRAUBG



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2012 Illinois Court Reporters Association Realtime/Speed Contests

Bonni R. Shuttleworth, Chair

Rita Corson, Co-Chair

A word from our sponsors: A big thank you to Donna Urlaub of Urlaub, Bowen & Associates for sponsoring the Realtime Contest. A big thank you to Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag of Sonntag Reporting for sponsoring the Speed Contest.

I would also like to thank Rita Corson for all her help and support. She is amazing and made my job so much easier.

A big, large, enormous thank you to Judy Lehman. There was a bit of a crisis this year, and Judy stepped in at the last minute to dictate the contests.

Again, another thank you to my graders. You are fabulous, and I am very grateful that you gave your time and expertise in grading the tests. This year we followed National's example and asked the contestants themselves to grade the first pass. It was a rewarding experience for all of us. Thank you, thank you.

The biggest thank you goes to the contestants who make these contests exciting and fun. Yes, fun – just come and observe. There is a certain camaraderie among these “speedy” people. They encourage each other, they support each other, and they root for each other. Yet they are fiercely competitive.

Now on to the results of the Realtime Contest.

The Literary dictated at 180 words per minute, 900 words, 45 allowable errors.

This was from a commencement speech at George Washington University by someone who attended George Washington University but never finished.

Fred Jeske_____	96.56%
Kathryn Thomas_____	96.56%
Paula Campbell_____	96.89%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag_____	96.89%
Jennifer Costales_____	97.44%
Bernice Radavich_____	98.11%
Tana Hess_____	99.00%
Donna Urlaub_____	99.11%

The Realtime Contest two-voice dictated at 200 words per minute, 1000 words, 50 allowable errors. This was the testimony of a crash reconstruction state policeman.

Jennifer Costales_____	95.7%
Tana Hess_____	96.1%
Bernice Radavich_____	97.7%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag_____	97.8%
Donna Urlaub_____	98.2%

Continued on page 7

2012 Illinois Court Reporters Association Realtime/Speed Contests

Continued from page 6

Drum roll, please.

Seventh Place _____	Fred Jeske _____	95.08%
Sixth Place _____	Paula Campbell _____	95.69%
Fifth Place _____	Jennifer Costales _____	96.57%
Fourth Place _____	Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag _____	97.34%
Third Place _____	Tana Hess _____	97.55%
Second Place _____	Bernice Radavich _____	97.91%
First Place _____	Donna Urlaub _____	98.66%

Now for the Speed Contest.

The Literary dictated at 220 words per minute, 1100 words, 55 allowable errors. This was an essay about federal financial aid assistance for college students.

Donna Urlaub _____	97.6340%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag _____	97.9091%

The Legal Opinion dictated at 230 words per minute, 1150 words, 58 allowable errors. This was an appeal from a Chicago police officer regarding his disability benefits.

Donna Urlaub _____	96.2609%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag _____	96.7826%

The two-voice testimony dictated at 270 words per minute, 1350 words, 68 allowable errors. This was testimony from an insurance claims representative.

Paula Campbell _____	96.518%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag _____	98.963%
Donna Urlaub _____	99.333%

Another drum roll accompanied by trumpets.

Second Place _____	Donna Urlaub _____	97.74%
First Place _____	Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag _____	97.88%

Congratulations to all the contestants. You are the Olympic athletes of the court reporting profession. Students, did you know they practice for this contest? Yes, they practice. They are exceptional people, and I am proud to be a small part of the speed contest experience.

I know there are a lot of Merit writers out there; come and join all of us next year in Springfield. It is fun, exciting, and rewarding.

Distinguished Service Award Winner, Lyn Grooms

Speech by Jerry Wedeking, Past President of ILCRA

ILCRA's Mission Statement is 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 and its consumers.

This year's nominee for the ILCRA Distinguished Service Award epitomizes each of these standards.

The nominee has served as an official court reporter in both the state and federal courts, captioned for TV, and performed realtime for the deaf and hard of hearing in various venues, particularly the University of Illinois at both the Champaign/Urbana and Springfield campuses. She has served on the ILCRA Board tirelessly and unselfishly for so many years that no one has an accurate count. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Lyn Grooms, and as a special surprise, we have her mother, Mary, here.



Lyn was born and raised in Wisconsin on or near Lake Geneva. She lived with her family in Williams Bay where she attended kindergarten through high school. Her dad thought she might be interested in court reporting so he got a used Stenograph machine from a friend who was in the office supply business. She became interested and enrolled at Spencerian College in Milwaukee. After graduating she moved to Springfield where she became an official, and later moved over to the Federal Court to work with Judge Harlington Wood, Jr. After leaving the Federal District Court, Lyn became involved with realtime and captioning and working with the deaf and hard of hearing.

Living on the lake, Lyn and her brother spent almost every day at the beach and learned to scuba dive. Her mother was a mailwoman who delivered mail by boat to the residents on the lake.

Her father became interested in sports car racing, and the family became the pit crew. Lyn had the opportunity to drive a Ferrari on the course when a friend learned that she had just received her driver's license.

Lyn's father was a policeman, had firearms in the house and taught the whole family the care and handling of firearms. They were trained at the firing range, and Lyn became a better shot than some of the deputies. So don't mess around with Lyn.

Lyn was married for many years to Bob Grooms, who recently passed away. She has two step-daughters and three step-grandchildren.

She also has two Bernardanes (St. Bernard and Great Dane), Tiara and Hawk. She has always loved dogs and has had several of this breed over the years. If you ever visit Lyn at her home, be sure to announce yourself because Lyn will be there with Tiara and Hawk and a pistol.

Thank You

Lyn Grooms



Surprised? Uh-huh! Stunned? You betcha! Not even an inkling? Not a one! Disbelieving? No doubt about that! Speechless? Just about!

As I listened to my dear friend and colleague, Jerry Wedeking, all I could think of was, "oh, no, not me, I don't know what I can say, or should I just run for the door." In fact, I have no idea what I said upon being presented the Illinois Court Reporters Association 2012 Distinguished Service Award. No doubt I babbled; hop, skip and jumping from thought to thought – making no sense at all. Please allow me an opportunity to give the Association, its members, Board of Directors and DSA Nominating Committee, as well as students,

teachers, and others a proper thank you.

The DSA is such a distinguished honor to receive, and for me to be even a shadow in the footsteps of all of the exceptional recipients who have come before me is humbling. I asked myself, "What did I do to be accorded such an honor?" I can think of nothing except believing in my profession, and giving some of my time to return in a tiny way some of the bounties I have received as a result of choosing to be a court reporter.

As a court reporter in all arenas that I have been involved in (Freelancer, State Official, Federal Official, CART Provider and Closed Captioner), I have learned something from everyone that I have come in contact with; be it fellow reporters, colleagues or clients. It has been a privilege to work with some of the brightest and best reporters across this State, to be given the opportunity to serve on ILCRA's Board of Directors with the most dedicated people in our profession, and to be able to reach out in small ways to help influence and encourage court reporting students and prospective students. The court reporting students, their teachers and programs are this profession's future. They are to be nurtured along the way to see to it that court reporting continues forward in the decades to come as a viable, honorable profession.

So, what did I do to be honored in this way? Nothing special – just did my job to the best of my ability, gave a little of myself to the association and some students along the way. These are things so very many of my colleagues do day in and day out and something I encourage each and every member of this association to do, as they can help influence the future of this great career.

This would have been a bit of a speech I could have given if I had been prepared, but my dear friends were able to keep this award a complete surprise. And to think my own mother was in on "it" and didn't squeal is awesome. It was so very kind and thoughtful of you conspirators to bring my mother to the luncheon. She delighted in visiting with many acquaintances, in meeting so many of my friends, and in being able to see her daughter receive such a prestigious award. One thing that truly impressed her, aside from the camaraderie among all of the attendees, was the speed contest results – accuracy as well as the speeds. "WOW," she said. "Can they really write that fast?" I assured her it was true and that the reporters of the future will attain even greater heights of speed and accuracy, keeping this profession at the forefront of careers to choose from.

It was a day to remember, and I shall and do cherish this award. I accept it not for myself but on behalf of all court reporters who give of their time and energies to ensure that this profession endures. Thank you all very much!

Debbie Field, Recipient of the Award of Excellence for an Outstanding Educator

Bonni R. Shuttleworth, Chair



Debbie Field began teaching Speedbuilding at Prince Institute—Great Lakes when the campus opened in 2011. She previously worked at the Court Reporting Institute of America, where she led Speedbuilding classes. With many years of teaching experience, and degrees in education and administration, Debbie has spent most of her life educating others. She has a strong interest in motivational instruction, particularly in helping students discover how to identify and overcome hurdles in their path to success. Debbie grew up in the same Chicago suburb where she now resides with her family. She enjoys reading, playing the piano, experiencing the great outdoors, and discovering anything having to do with computers.

Word Ways

Answers according to Joe Pudlo

Continued from page 4

1. **art deco** design style of the '20s and '30s
2. **artifact** a usually simple object showing human workmanship or modification, as distinguished from a natural object
3. **artifice** craftiness and deceit
4. **ascetic** disposed to do without luxuries; austere
5. **ascribe** attribute; assign; impute; credit
6. **askance** with a side or oblique glance; sidewise; with disapproval, suspicion, or distrust
7. **assay** analysis to determine the presence, absence, or quantity of one or more components
8. **assiduous** unremitting attention
9. **assuage** to make less burdensome or painful; ease
10. **assumpsit** implied promise or undertaking
11. **astern** toward the end of a vessel; to the rear
12. **astigmatism** faulty vision
13. **ATLA** American Trial Lawyers' Association
14. **athwart** across, from one side to another; against; in opposition to
15. **at par** at a price equal to the face, or nominal, value of a security
16. **atrophy** any wasting away or diminution
17. **attendant upon you** one who owes a duty
18. **attenuate** to reduce the severity



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Continued from page 13

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Save the Date!

2013 ILCRA Annual Convention

September 19-22, 2013

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield, IL

Illinois Court Reporters Association Mission Statement

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Business Phone: () _____ Home Phone: () _____ FAX: () _____

Email Address: _____ An email address is required to receive exclusive member information.

Female

Date of Birth

Previous ILCRA Member? If yes, by what name?

Male

____/____/____

Yes No _____

PROFESSIONAL MEMBER -- FOR COURT REPORTERS – DUES \$110/YR

Primary Reporter: Freelance State Official Federal Official Captioner Hearing Legislative Industrial Commission

Primary Shorthand : (check only one) Machine Pitman Gregg Other _____

Support Services: Computer-Aided Transcription Conference Room Litigation Support Realtime Translation

Video Video Conferencing Closed Captioning

Certifications: (circle all that apply) RPR RMR RDR CLVS CMRS CRR CRI CPE FAPR CBC CCP

CSR State(s) _____ CSR# _____ Other: _____

Speed Contest Participant: ISRA/ILCRA Literary Legal/Jury Testimony Champion

NCRA Literary Legal/Jury Testimony Champion

Degrees: Associate's Associate of Business Associate of Science Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Business Adm. Bachelor of Science Master of Arts Master of Business Adm. Master of Science Doctor of Philosophy

Other: _____

Nonreporting Specialties: Attorney Notary Public

ASSOCIATE MEMBER -- DUES AS INDICATED (check one) Instructor - \$50 Student - \$40 Vendor -\$60

Retired -\$40 Other - \$60 _____ (Occupation)

The dues year is July 1 through June 30. Annual dues, payroll deduction card or credit card information must accompany application.

DISCOVER VISA MC AMERICAN EXPRESS CHECK ENCLOSED (Payable to ILCRA. \$10 returned check fee)

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Name on Card Signature of Cardholder _____

Members of ILCRA are required to adhere to ILCRA's Code of Ethics. If, as a member, you violate ILCRA's Code and your ILCRA membership is suspended or revoked, that information shall be published in the Ad Infinitum or other ILCRA Publications.

ROBERT P. FIELDS LEGACY FUND SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship was established by Donna Urlaub in memory of Robert Fields who passed away on March 2, 2011. Mr. Fields was a court reporting instructor for 53 years and was a teacher, mentor, and friend to many people. Two scholarships for \$500 each were presented to Tiffany Rogers, a student at John A. Logan College and Kimberly Kenny, an online student at College of Court Reporting.

Bob loved a game of chance, and this process would really appeal to him. Just the fact that the students are committed enough to come to a convention speaks volumes.

Thank you, Donna, for your generous support of this scholarship and congratulations to the two student recipients.

2012 Student Scholarship Essay Winner, Shannon Barnes

Court Reporting School: My Own Survival Guide

“What have I gotten myself into?” I am sure that this question runs through many court reporting students’ minds at one point or another. I asked myself this question after my first week of theory class. After that first week of court reporting school at The College of Court Reporting, I knew I was in for a challenge. I had to come up with a way to survive school. That is when I created the three P’s of court reporting.

An important aspect to surviving court reporting school is practice. Like people always say, practice makes perfect. Well, for court reporters, at least 95 percent perfect. Every week I practice on my machine for a minimum of 15 hours. Working on speedbuilding, completing drill work, and memorizing briefs and phrases are among my daily practice plan. By practicing every day on my machine, I know that I am one day closer to becoming a court reporter.

Perseverance is the second aspect in surviving court reporting school. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines perseverance as continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or delay in achieving success. Even though I know that school is very challenging, and I will not pass every speed test, I still persevere because I know that I am capable of succeeding.

The last, and for me, the most important aspect is patience. I have to admit that there have been times when I want to give up, or better yet, throw my machine out the window. Before I get to the point where my machine is laying in the yard in a million pieces, I remind myself that great court reporters are not built in a day. It takes a lot of time, energy, and patience to be a successful court reporter.

Even though it will take a little while longer, I look forward to the day when I pass my last 225 words per minute test. I will know that practice, perseverance, and patience contributed to that speed test pass. I know that by the end of my court reporting education, I will no longer be asking what I got myself into. I look forward to the day when I say, “I did it! I survived!”



Tech Tidbit #102: *Inexpensive Security*

Gregg Marshall, CPMR, CSP, CMC

My stepmother, a great lady, bought herself a notebook computer about a year ago to replace a failed netbook. It came with McAfee security software, so she kept it and didn't really think about it again until a couple of months ago. Then the bundled subscription expired and she couldn't get the website to accept her credit card. So I got a call.

Rather than pay for their service, I uninstalled McAfee and installed Microsoft's own Security Essentials, which is free, from <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/security-essentials>. About an hour later, her computer had adequate virus and malware protection and I think (but haven't actually run any benchmarks), it runs faster than most of the larger security suites on the market.

It doesn't do everything, but coupled with a little common sense, it can be totally effective against most bad things that can happen on the Internet.

And bad things happen. There was a very public case of a Wired magazine writer's Macbook and iPhone being hacked and their contents wiped clean. It took sending the computer to a data recovery service to get photos and other files that weren't backed up, except to iCloud, which was also wiped clean. And recently, 12 million Apple ID's were stolen from an FBI laptop (I sort of wonder why the FBI had them anyway) and 1 million published on the Internet.

So it isn't just PCs that can be attacked; any computer is vulnerable.

One of the lessons learned from the Wired disaster was that your email is a vital part of your security. The hacker got into that person's email, and then used most websites' password reset feature to email new passwords to that account. Your email account should have passwords at least as strong as any bank account you have. If your email has two-level security, where to log in you need your cell phone to receive a second password to use, turn it on. That's a pain for most routine email, so I've actually set up another, special Gmail address just as my security email. It has two-level security, and I've set as many of my important accounts as possible to have this special email address for password resets.

I also never open any email file attachment that doesn't come from a trusted source. And I even question trusted sources if I'm not expecting the file. I'm especially leery of a random .zip file, although even a simple photo.jpg file can contain a virus (which I hope Security Essentials will protect me from).

I've also received enough phishing emails that I now pretty much discount any email suggesting I need to log in and do something for any account. The phishing emails often have really obvious URL issues, but a few have done a good job hiding the fact you aren't going where you want to go that I've gotten pretty paranoid about them (just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't out to get you). It only takes a minute longer to actually type in the URL. Of course I'm a web marketer's worst nightmare because they lose all that tracking information, but at least I'm secure.

I'm also relatively careful, probably not careful enough, to make sure that when I log in that the website's login page is protected by SSL, which can be recognized by https instead of http. I won't use my credit union's website; right now the security certificate for their on-line portal, which looks like they use some third party service, doesn't show their name, but Jack Henry and Associates. Even though I get there via a link from their website, the mismatch in the security certificate is too much of a red flag.

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What ILCRA Does for Illinois Reporters

- Works to maintain your right to be certified.
- Administers the RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, CBC, and CCP examinations and publishes the dates of the tests in Ad Infinitum.
- 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 the 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 a Student Scholarship, 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 an 800 phone number, 1-800-656-2467 and a website www.ilcra.com.
- Provides a full-time staff person, our Executive Director, to assist members.

Tech Tidbit #102: *Inexpensive Security*

Continued from page 19

One area I have to admit I am not careful with is when I'm on an open wireless connection, like at Starbucks or the airport. I know that any traffic sent over those networks is wide open for anyone to monitor. There's an add-on for Firefox called Firesheep that anyone can download. Fortunately I can't remember ever checking my bank balance or other financial site from Starbucks, but it is an area I need to work on to make myself more secure.

Are you doing these simple, free things to keep your computer and on-line accounts secure?

Gregg Marshall, CPMR, CSP, CMC is a speaker, author and consultant. He can be reached by e-mail at [gmarshall\[at\] vendor-tech.com](mailto:gmarshall@vendor-tech.com), or visit his website at <http://www.vendor-tech.com>.

Veterans History Project

Jill M. Layton, ILCRA Immediate Past President

When asked about the three Bronze Stars he received while serving in the Korean War, one veteran said, "Well, I always felt it was part of my job but they thought it was something extra special that I did to give me the Bronze Stars." This Veteran's interview was just one of the 11 interviews conducted at the Veterans Affairs Illiana Health Care System in Danville on Saturday, August 11th during the Veterans History Project (VHP). VHP honors American war veterans and civilian workers who supported them by collecting and preserving personal stories and other documents. In October of 2000, the U.S. Congress voted unanimously for legislation to create the Veterans History Project at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

Mandy Pearson of Vandalia, Jill Bleskey of Lakewood, Joni Markel of Sidell, Julie Myers of Oakwood, Jill Layton of Toledo, and Brandy Bradley of Indiana were the six court reporters who volunteered to record the stories told by these heroes. Each of the reporters remarked what a rewarding experience it was and volunteered for the next VHP! Those who conducted the interviews were volunteers from the local American Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons of the American Legion. The stories collected were from veterans who served in World War II all the way to the current conflict. Each veteran will receive a copy of his interview, and the originals were sent to the Library of Congress in Washington DC. In addition, the Library of Congress was sent a copy of the transcript on a CD and an audio which was made from our courtreporting software and the required forms. Some of the veterans gave vivid details of their service. Others did not talk about the details of the battles they experienced, but spoke about where they were stationed and what they did or saw or ate! There were tears shed and laughter heard during the interviews.

Each veteran's story is a bit of our history which the Library of Congress wants to preserve. Each and every one of you can do this as a project in your area with several veterans and court reporters, or you can even do it on a one-on-one basis.

The information and forms are available at www.loc.gov/vets. Beth Kilker of NCRA (bkilker@ncra.org) is wonderful to answer any questions you may have. Or you may contact Jill Layton at Jill.LaytonCSR@gmail.com. Please encourage your local Legion or VFW posts to take part in hosting a VHP in an effort to gather and preserve these stories. They may think they were just doing their job but every single veteran is a hero.



Tommie Cisna of the Mattoon Sons of the Americal Legion and court reporter Mandy Pearson



Jill Bleskey



Joni Markel

“DOES THE JURY HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?”

Kathleen M. Grove, CSR, RPR, CRR, CLVS

There I was, at the end of a particularly difficult expert witness on a medical malpractice trial. It is 4:30 when counsel declared, “No further questions,” and I joyfully thought to myself, “This is perfect. I’m going to be able to pick up the dry cleaning, return that lamp before the store closes, get to the grocery store, and still make it to my 7:00 engagement,” when what do I hear? I must be mistaken, because I thought I just heard the judge ask, “Does the jury have any questions?” WHAT?

After I recovered from my initial shock, I have to tell you, I really enjoyed the new process that went into effect July 1, 2012, in the form of Illinois Supreme Court Rule 243. This rule gives discretion to the trial judge as to whether they will allow jurors in a civil trial to submit written questions of a witness at the conclusion of their testimony.

Our process was as follows: The jurors submitted written questions to the bailiff. They had been instructed ahead of time -- I obviously missed the memo -- they were not to discuss these questions with one another. The court, attorneys, and myself retired to chambers. The questions were read, and the attorneys had the opportunity to object and make their arguments with the judge making the decision as to which questions would be asked of the witness.



After returning to the courtroom – okay, so I don’t HAVE to return that lamp – the witness was asked the jurors’ questions that had survived the in camera discussions. Done deal, right? Off to the grocery store - wait, I thought I heard the judge ask, “Does counsel have any questions based on those questions and answers?” We’re all eating mac-n-cheese tonight.

All complaining aside, this was a fascinating window into the world of jurors’ minds during a complicated trial. I was beyond impressed by the questions the jurors were asking. They really were listening! When we were in chambers discussing the submitted questions, plaintiff’s counsel remarked, “That’s the last time I leave a nurse on the jury.”

Now, I’m no lawyer, but it seemed to me they could take several things from these questions including but not limited to – oops, I slipped into lawyer mode there – some insight into what the jury felt was important with a witness or in the case, areas of confusion they may need to address with this witness or future witnesses, and whether a change in strategy might be in order.

After the trial I asked both the judge and counsel for their perspectives on the process. Judge Hollis Webster from the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, DuPage County, ever the temperate jurist, said, “This process gives the jury a heightened ability to participate in the process and, therefore, I believe, improves attention and comprehension. Both should benefit the deliberation process. The problem for attorneys is that the questions to experts often seek information and opinions that fall outside of previous disclosures. Also, there is often a scope problem. However, in balance, the opportunity to increase juror participation and comprehension far outweighs the small bit of control that attorneys must give up.”

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“DOES THE JURY HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?”

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Bill Cunningham from the firm of Cunningham, Meyer & Vedrine, P.C., in Warrenville and Chicago commented, “I have had two trials where this was used with expert witnesses who testified. Despite a relatively good experience with jurors who asked good questions, I would not want it if I had a choice. There are problems that we experienced. For example, one of our experts had to give an evidence deposition. That expert could not be asked jury questions. What do you do in that situation? Might some attorneys decide strategically to take evidence depositions so as not to subject the witness to jury questions? I simply feel there are too many downsides, and I feel I lose a certain measure of control over the case when jurors are allowed to ask questions.” I don’t know about you, but at every jury trial I have reported, I continually scan the jury with thoughts of whether they are paying attention and whether they are “getting it.” It is so nice to finally have answers to those questions, and those answers just reinforce my faith in our jury system.



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MacCormac College Mini Convention

Mary A. Trezzo, CSR, RPR

On May 17th of this year, I received an email from Vernita Allen-Williams, VP of ILCRA and a personal long-time friend, asking if I would agree to be one of a panel of four to present to MacCormac College court reporting students at their Mini Convention in July. My initial reaction was sure, as it wouldn't be too difficult to do this for maybe 10 minutes, my assumption, with the four of us covering a 45 minute slot.

However, the emails that followed stated MacCormac wanted us to fill a two hour time slot, presenting on Ethics, Etiquette and Stress, and the importance of supporting your state and national associations. Wow, I thought, two hours means 25 minutes each, closing with a Q&A session. I have to admit my skepticism kicked in, doubting I personally would be able to come up with enough material to fill my slot, let alone two hours as a whole panel.

Well, I was pleasantly surprised when my skepticism was quashed and completely uncalled for when the moderator from MacCormac had to literally cut off our presentation because we had gone OVER our time slot and the students had to attend their scheduled lunch.

Through her knowledge and experience, Vernita put together a panel of four with diverse expertise and familiarity. The panel consisted of Kathie Grove, ILCRA Treasurer, who spoke from her experience as a freelance court reporter and agency owner. Bonni Shuttleworth, ILCRA Education Liaison, also agreed to participate on the panel, sharing her abundant experience from many years as a teacher. Vernita presented on her expertise in the area of court reporter etiquette as an official court reporter. And I was assigned to discuss ethics from an official court reporter's perspective.

The MacCormac students were amazing. There were 31 students in attendance. We received very intelligent questions from the students that were appropriate to the profession and applicable to the topics. Some of the students had their machines out, taking down the presentation.

Kathie started the presentation by demonstrating the position on how a court reporter should sit and the location of exactly where their machine should be placed. She shared a plethora of helpful information on what to expect when freelancing in depositions. They even laughed at some of Kathie's jokes.

The students and the panel all participated in doing Bonni's stretching exercises. Some approached Bonni afterwards, inquiring where they can find more information on the exercises she shared. I think this was proactive thinking on their part, trying to thwart possible injury many years down the road in their careers as court reporters.

Vernita covered a couple of topics. Of course, she very passionately stressed the importance of becoming a member of ILCRA and NCRA, even as a student, and the many benefits you receive from your participation in these professional associations.

Etiquette as an official court reporter was another topic Vernita covered with the students. She discussed how to address the judge and counsel when the record is being compromised while court is in session. I'll share a secret with you, I even call Vernita when I have a question on dealing with difficult situations while I'm in court. From a professional perspective, I feel etiquette and ethics is a specialty Vernita possesses.

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MacCormac College Mini Convention

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Ethics as an official court reporter was my topic to present. I shared some of my own personal stories on sticky situations I've had while in court. As an officer of the court, I told the students how I felt I had an ethical duty to report to a deputy while on a break how I personally witnessed a gang banger in the galley motioning a very threatening gesture to the witness on the stand. Although the witness declined to acknowledge seeing it, it was something I felt professionally obligated to report. That was one of a couple of situations I was able to share. However, there are many, many more we all store in our journal of experiences as time goes by. Funny, I didn't think I had much material to share, and I didn't get to everything I had prepared.

Speaking on behalf of the panel, presenting to MacCormac's court reporting students and the feedback ILCRA received was so positive and encouraging. It's these kinds of experiences that strengthen our plight to keep fighting ILCRA's winning battle to support the profession of court reporting.

Below is a response we received from the Court Reporting Department at MacCormac College. It is certainly something ILCRA can be proud of.

I want to thank ILCRA for their gracious and generous participation in our Mini Convention. The presentation of your panel was a great window into some of the nuts and bolts of reporting that support that great edifice we know as court reporting. Your presentation was friendly yet professional, informative yet not overly complex and I think greatly enhanced the professional image of court reporting for all of our students. I think it also instilled in them an inclination to become involved in their professional organizations, both state and national.

Needless to say, the ILCRA contribution was a great asset to our Mini Convention which could not have been the same without it. We have had an immense amount of positive feedback on the entire day.

The number of students attending during your presentation was 31. This is not counting the staff of MacCormac, other professionals or other presenters.

State Leadership Conference

Stephanie K. Rennegarbe

On August 8, 2012, ILCRA board members Nancy LaBella, Kathie Grove and I attended the State Leadership Conference at the NCRA Convention held in Philadelphia. It was a busy day with an overwhelming amount of information. Attendees from all states gathered at this pre-convention conference to get tips and insights on various topics.

We were welcomed by Doug Friend, outgoing President of NCRA. As always, Doug has been a wonderful friend and leader to all of us and has done a fantastic job in his role as President.

Jim Cudahy, the new CEO and Executive Director of NCRA introduced himself. His topic was "Vision for NCRA's Future." Jim was previously on the NCRA staff before obtaining his new position and has a good understanding of the organization and of the needs of all of us. Among many topics he covered, he reaffirmed the current statistics that show a 20 percent increase in student enrollment and the expected growth for Court Reporters,

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State Leadership Conference

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Captioners and CART writers. He reiterated NCRA's commitment and availability to us and their willingness to share information they learn. One of the projects accomplished this past year is the NCRA Institute which gives online testing to the test takers. Jim informed us that February 10-16 is Court Reporting Week, and that Boot Camp will once again take place in 2013, beginning on March 3rd.

"Fear Factor – Overcoming the Fear of Public Speaking" was the next presentation. While public speaking is a fear for many of us, Dave Wenhold told those in attendance that this fear is self-imposed and is a chain reaction. Dave's enthusiasm speaks volumes to his audience. His tips were well-absorbed by the attendees. He said one of the key parts of public speaking is to be yourself, and to speak slowly and pause. Easier said than done, Dave!

Bruce Matthews gave a presentation on "The Color of Money: Your State's Finances." He shared his expertise with the members and explained budgets, expenses, and also gave plans to help the State organizations have a sound financial future.

"Hop on Board NCRA's TRAIN!" Taking Realtime Awareness and Innovation Nationwide is the newest initiative for 2012. The TRAIN program will provide members the opportunity to glean tips on motivating reporters to become realtime proficient. There was a TRAIN presentation at our own Illinois convention in September that explained the concept and motivating tips to get all reporters to become realtime proficient. This grassroots vision is for training writers and passing information onto reporters with the hope of keeping all reporters moving forward in the technological track. If we want to keep our jobs and make the profession stronger, we must continue to aspire to be the best and meet the challenges. It's the key to our strength!

Sara Wood, NCRA Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications, presented "Communicating with your Members and the Press." She explained how to get your point across to the media and the press. Sara is always available to our members and will help anyone that needs it. We need effective communication to gain an advantage in our efforts.

Next we moved on with Adam Finkel and Brandon Schall, both Government Relations Specialists at NCRA. Their topic dealt with building effective strategic alliances and coalitions which are critical to navigating legislative and public relations campaigns. Having supporters for our profession can move the interests of court reporters in a strong way. We always need to be our strongest advocates, but oftentimes it's imperative to have others who support us. Adam is always accessible to all members of the State Associations and the members of NCRA. His track record speaks for itself, and his genuine interest speaks volumes.

Our last seminar was called "The Final Round: Ask the Experts." This was the opportunity for attendees to ask NCRA staff and Board members questions. After a long and very informative day, the energy levels were dwindling, but without a doubt, we gained a great deal of knowledge. Soon-to-be-installed President Tami Smith shared her enthusiasm and concluded the meeting. It was a very informative day, and we all walked away with a wealth of knowledge.

Leadership is a busy and interactive day that everyone values. We are in an ever-changing profession, and we have to be willing to make changes to keep up with technology. We appreciate our ILCRA members and want to help everyone in the best possible way. While some things are impossible to conquer and avoid, the board genuinely cares about our members, the issues they face, and are concerned about the constant struggles we are facing. By attending the Leadership Conference, we believe that it makes us more knowledgeable of the issues that all states face, including ours, but at the same time reminds us that we are not alone and all the states have very similar issues and hurdles.

My Goal Is To Be Part of the One Percent

Jim DeCrescenzo, FAPR, RDR, CRR, CLVS

Having more money than we can ever spend is appealing to many people. It is also totally unrealistic. Most of us toil day in and day out to keep the income stream consistent, and we hope that it consistently goes up enough to keep ahead of inflation and maybe address college costs and eventual retirement. Having recently emerged from the Great Recession, I'm happy to say growth is just now returning to the court reporting market in Philadelphia.



Financial well being and being part of the not-so-popular One Percent of wealthy Americans is not what I'm referring to in the title. (Who would want to be lambasted daily in the media?) I'm talking about my daily goal of improving my Realtime Coach score on practice takes by only one percent. If I achieve the one percent improvement, I'm happy.

Having a one percent improvement in my practice score makes significant progress an achievable goal. If it's done consistently, even a butt-kicking initial score of 60 becomes a 90 in less than two months. If I focus on incrementally improving the score, I'm given a goal and forced to practice with effort. Like many of us who have spent years practicing with tapes, many of the takes are committed to memory, and I always know when the difficult passage is coming. So I think to myself, did I do better this time than last? The end result is I have no idea. Sure, I can print out two takes and score them. But let's be real, that's not going to happen. Practicing takes discipline to make it part of my day. Printing out takes and scoring them is far beyond what I'm willing to do.

Realtime Coach gives me the instant feedback of the score after every take. That's what I need; let the computer do it, and let me know immediately. (Patience was never one of my virtues.) And that instant feedback has been invaluable to me. Adding the daily goal of a one percent improvement has forced me to do my best during practice. And there is no doubt that practicing each take with maximum effort leads to better muscle memory, pattern recognition, and retrieval. That's exactly what translates to better writing.

If you write better, you score higher. If you score higher, you feel better. If you feel better about your writing, you write better. The end result is all good. My wish is that we can all be part of the one percent.



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Interview with NCRA'S CEO, Jim Cudahy

Mary Burzynski, WCRA Immediate Past President

NOTE FROM YOUR ILCRA PRESIDENT: While attending NCRA's Annual Convention in Philadelphia this year, I had the pleasure of chatting with the Immediate Past President of the Wisconsin Court Reporters Association, Mary Burzynski, who informed me she was going to be interviewing Jim Cudahy, NCRA'S new CEO, for an article in WCRA's newsletter. She kindly invited me to join her. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to coordinate my time with them, but Mary offered to send us her article to reprint in the Ad Infinitum. She came through on that promise, and her article appears below. As a Chicago Bears fan, had I known the "slant" this article was going to take, I would have insisted on being there for the interview! In a show of goodwill to our neighbors to the north, we are reprinting her article anyway. Thanks, Mary! Go Bears!



This month we installed a new president of the National Court Reporters Association, but did you know that in June our new chief executive officer assumed his duties? After serving NCRA for 13 years, Mark Golden has moved on to pursue new challenges, and Jim Cudahy has taken over the role as our CEO.

Jim began his career with NCRA in 1992 by answering an ad in the Washington Post for a position as a marketing specialist. He was hired, and he served in that capacity until 1995. While Jim felt NCRA was a great place to work and he had great admiration for his boss, Jay Schaivo, he decided it was time to take his career elsewhere. For the next 13 years, he worked for two different associations and also had his own marketing and investment firm. In 2008, NCRA lured him back, and Jim assumed the duties of senior marketing executive, the position he held until recently. It seems that 13 may be a lucky number.

The East Coast is home for Jim. He was born in Framingham, Massachusetts, and has lived in the Washington, D.C. area for most of his life. He can claim a Midwestern connection though since he lived for a couple of years in Chicago. Jim earned his Bachelor's Degree at James Madison University. Because he is an avid baseball fan, his sophomore year of college he applied for an internship with his beloved Boston Red Sox. Alas, the honor went to someone else, but do not shed any tears for him. Jim may have struck out on that opportunity, but the next semester he hit a home run. He met his future wife, and they have been happily married for 21 years. Ever the romantic, Jim took his bride to Fenway Park on their honeymoon. They are the proud parents of three boys who are all competitive swimmers. Will we see one of these young men in the 2016 Olympics?

Our profession is being challenged by alternative technologies, but Jim plans to face these challenges full speed ahead. He is confident his background, knowledge, and experience are what we need to keep NCRA and the court reporting profession at the forefront of our ever-changing world. He says his major role is to listen, to listen to our concerns and to our ideas, and that is what he plans to do.

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Interview with NCRA'S CEO, Jim Cudahy

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Jim has big ideas for court reporter education and for our schools, but first we need students in our classrooms. NCRA has long been about grassroots efforts, a philosophy that continues today. Jim is organizing a campaign to promote careers in court reporting, CART, and captioning. His platform is to broadcast to our middle schools, high schools, career fairs, the person sitting next to you at the football game – wherever the message can be sent – about our fantastic careers. Who is the best person to deliver that message? You are. Under his leadership, NCRA will diligently work with us to attract skilled and qualified students. Not only will Jim assist us in enlisting top-notch candidates for our schools, his plan is to enhance our curriculum so that we can train the most highly-qualified court reporters, CART providers, and captioners and get them out into the workforce as soon as possible.

Another important element on Jim's to-do list is realtime reporting. He is a strong proponent of another one of NCRA's grassroots initiatives, TRAIN, Taking Realtime Awareness and Innovation Nationwide. This program is all about court reporters recruiting and assisting other court reporters who have not yet climbed aboard the realtime train. Realtime reporting sets us apart, and Jim is working to engineer our future so that we are at the front of the train, not in the caboose.

In closing, I have to inform you that Jim is not a Green Bay Packer fan. His loyalty, sorry to say, is to the New England Patriots. He admires and respects the passion, tradition, and the legacy of the Packers and their fans, but he supports Tom Brady and company, or at least he professes so. When I asked him to take a picture for our newsletter, his first question was would there be a cheesehead involved. I told him, as a matter of fact, there would be. You know what? I think he really is a Packer fan. He does look grand in a cheesehead!

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Meniere's Disease: Not Just Vertigo But Also Deafness

Catherine Armbrust Rajcan

Meniere's disease (MD) is perhaps not well known among people in the general public. This disease, medically referred to as endolymphatic hydrops, most often manifests itself by way of severe vertigo or dizziness accompanied by nausea, vomiting and sweating. According to PubMed Health, the National Institutes of Health online resource, additional symptoms include hearing loss accompanying the episodes, progressively getting worse over time, diarrhea, headaches, abdominal pain/discomfort, and uncontrollable eye movements. (PubMed) Individuals suffering from MD often experience ringing in the ear, or tinnitus, and an abnormal sense of pressure in the ear, and nystagmus is often clinically observed during the attacks of vertigo.

One of the ailments described within Otolaryngology: Head & Neck Surgery under the classification Peripheral Vestibular Disorders, is Meniere's disease; the larger category described as affecting 1 in 13 people in their lifetime. (Crane) The National Institutes of Health estimates that between 50,000 and 100,000 people develop Meniere's annually (PubMed) – slightly more often in women than men (Huppert); however, the cause of the disease remains unknown. Meniere's is distinguished from occasional transient episodes of dizziness by the fact that in cases of MD, the vertigo episodes last up to 24 hours.

People who suffer from Meniere's experience an interference with the vestibular apparatus of the inner ear. The vestibular system controls static equilibrium, in other words, our sense of balance when the body is stationary but the position of the head may be moving. The mechanisms of the static equilibrium include the maculae – hair cell receptors - located within the vestibule in the inner ear, and the otoliths – small calcium stones suspended in the gelatinous otolithic membrane. This system then transmits signals along the vestibular nerve to the cranial nerve VIII. (Marieb)

According to the NIH, onset of MD may be due to head injury, middle ear infection, or syphilis; and several risk factors include: allergies, alcohol use, fatigue, recent viral illness, respiratory infection, smoking, stress, and use of certain medications, e.g., aspirin. However, because the etiology of the disease is unknown and it may appear spontaneously in individuals without the above-mentioned risk factors or precipitating causes, a diagnosis may initially be elusive.

In an effort to mitigate episodes, patients are advised to reduce water intake and avoid salt; avoid sudden movements, bright lights, TV, reading during attacks; eat a well-balanced diet, limit caffeine and alcohol intake; get adequate sleep, exercise regularly, and practice relaxation techniques.

Tests that have been traditionally utilized in diagnosing the patient's condition are electronystagmography, head CT scan or MRI scan, and audiological and audiometric technology. A study conducted by the Department of Surgery/Otolaryngology at the University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia in 2010 compared three audiometric testing methods of transtympanic electrocochleography to diagnose Meniere's disease: 1, click summing potential measurements; 2, tone burst summing potential amplitude measurements; and 3, biasing of the summing potential using a low frequency tone. (Isela) Biomechanically sound waves are transmitted along a pathway of the eardrum, ossicles, oval window, perilymph fluid, to the basilar membrane. The University of Sydney article bears out the presence of basilar membrane displacement in hydrops (Meniere's); a statistically reduced amount of "modulation in Meniere's ears compared with normal ears"; and finds that the stimulus bias ratio measures are the most sensitive diagnostic indicator of a patient having Meniere's disease. The highest degree of diagnostic certainty was achieved by combining and comparing the results achieved from the stimulus bias ratio measurement along with those of the tone burst amplitude measurement.

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Identifying a more accurate diagnostic tool should provide medical practitioners the opportunity to home in on the cause of the disease, and possibly in the near future a cure or at least successful palliative therapy. Until a cure is identified, the anecdotal treatments mentioned above continue to be recommended to individuals suspected as suffering from Meniere's disease. More extreme attempts to resolve severe cases of vertigo related to Meniere's include cutting the vestibular nerve – which does not damage hearing; direct application of the antibiotic gentamicin into the middle ear; and performing a surgical labyrinthectomy – which will result in hearing loss in the operated ear. In light of the disease being of biomechanical origin, it does not automatically follow that the contralateral ear will be affected.

Because the episodes of vertigo with MD can be extreme, patients are advised not to operate heavy machinery nor drive a car during an episode. While some people experience sudden onset of the symptom of dizziness, others recognize early indications prior to the episodes manifesting and can thus remove themselves from situations which may exacerbate the condition. Individuals who are unable to anticipate the onset of an "attack" are expected to self-initiate forfeiture of their driver's licenses.

The disease has a pattern of remaining chronic for a term oftentimes up to 10 to 20 years, with the symptom of vertigo being a primary cause of anxiety and negatively affecting quality of life. However, while the frequency of attacks improved (lessened) or even disappeared in the vast majority of Meniere-diagnosed patients followed over a 15-20 year period in studies concluded between 1991 and 2008, the severity and duration of the attacks increased among the patients during this time period. (Huppert)

In "Long-term course of Meniere's disease revisited," the authors note that hearing loss increases over the course of the disease, with the greatest degree of loss occurring within the first five to ten years (56% of patients), and moderating thereafter. The authors identify "drop attacks," that is, sudden falling spells, being experienced by some individuals separate and apart from vertigo and other common symptoms listed at the beginning of this article. The drop attacks are believed to result from a change in pressure gradients on the otolithic membranes, but they tend to vanish from the constellation for most patients over the course of the disease. (Huppert)

Despite the more accurate diagnostic tool referenced above in the Isela article, Huppert, Strupp and Brandt note there exists no "gold standard" for diagnosing the disease in its early stage."

As the disease progresses and takes hold, with or without a specific diagnosis, individuals afflicted with the condition experience a psychological impact as they tend to withdraw from social engagements, may become disabled for employment purposes, and are limited in their ability to utilize transportation opportunities. The resulting isolation and absence of a positive prognosis with Meniere's have been found to produce symptoms consistent with the conditions of post-traumatic stress disorder and health anxiety. (Kirby)

The importance of providing psychological treatment to individuals suffering from MD is emphasized in "Understanding psychological distress in Meniere's disease: a systematic review," as clinical evidence has emerged that these patients exhibit "worry about [their] illness, concern about pain and bodily preoccupation" regarding their medical conditions. The authors assert that because Meniere's "is a chronic, intermittent condition with high levels of uncertainty and no clear cause, sufferers may be at risk of developing health anxiety." People suffering from this disease have shown to possess 7 of the 13 components of PTSD, including

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“distress/impairment in social, occupational or other areas of functioning,’arousal causing sleeping problems,’arousal causing irritability,’reduced interest/participation in activities,’ and ‘restricted range of affect.” (Kirby)

Having spoken with several persons who have hearing loss, some of whom have been diagnosed with Meniere's, I have heard individuals among this population express gratitude for their feelings being validated by others diagnosed with the condition as well as the suggestions and tips they have received from their peers that have improved their lives.

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2012 National Committee of State Associations Annual Meeting

Nancy LaBella, ILCRA President

On August 9, 2012, ILCRA President-Elect Stephanie Rennegarbe and I attended the Annual Meeting of the National Committee of State Associations (NCSA) in Philadelphia. NCSA performs a critical role within the National Court Reporters Association through a forum for state leaders to discuss issues and propose improvements to NCRA's governance, policies and procedures. As an NCRA affiliate association, ILCRA is honored to be a part of this process.

One of the most important roles NCSA plays is in the submission of Resolutions and Position Statements that provide guidance to the NCRA Board of Directors. Resolutions are submitted by NCRA affiliate associations and then voted on at the Annual Meeting. If a Resolution is "adopted" by the NCSA delegates present, it is then forwarded to the NCRA Board of Directors for consideration. Several Resolutions were proposed at this year's meeting.

Resolutions, in summary, that were adopted by the NCSA members include:

- A recommendation that the NCRA Board of Directors implement training on how to legislate against and/or combat third-party contracting;
- That all candidates for NCRA board positions, including those vetted by the nomination committee as

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well as those running by petition, are required to answer the questionnaire created by the nominating committee;

- That NCRA certified state schools must attend at least three high school career days. The rationale for this Resolution was to allow more high school students to be aware of the great profession of court reporting;
- A proposal that upon being elected to the NCRA board, each elected member must sign a pledge to protect the profession. This pledge shall specifically state that if during their term of service, or within two years of completing that term, the member accepts a position (paid or voluntary) with any ER or DAR company that provides equipment or service in any judicial setting, that person must voluntarily relinquish his/her NCRA membership;
- That NCRA should not supply “a completion of skills” to any digital audio court recorders.

Beyond voting on Resolutions, the NCSA meeting also includes the exchange of information on matters of current relevance to NCRA, the state affiliates and the profession. Topics discussed at this year’s meeting included third-party contracting, the Ethics First program and NCRA’s TRAIN (Taking Realtime Awareness and Innovation Nationwide) initiative.

There were 33 affiliate associations represented at the NCSA Annual Meeting, and your ILCRA board members are proud to be a part of one of NCRA’s most vital and active committees.

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Issue	Pub. Date	Deadline
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March 23, 2013

Marathon Seminar, Marriott Hotel, Oak Brook

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