

# AD INFINITUM

Fall 2013

Illinois Court Reporters Association

## President's Message Stephanie Rennegarbe, ILCRA President



Greetings ILCRA Members:  
Let me first start off by telling you all how honored I am to be your ILCRA President and how privileged it is to have served under Nancy LaBella Seppi. I have got a hard act to follow. Nancy has worked tirelessly throughout her many years of service and has always done so with the highest amount of dignity and poise. Even at the most stressful times and under great amounts of pressure, she always presented herself as a leader under control. Thanks for all your hard work, Nancy La!

I would also like to thank outgoing Board member Bonni Shuttleworth for her hard work over the past many years. Bonni, too, has given so much of her time to ILCRA, and always did so with a positive outlook, showing nothing but the utmost care for the profession. I quickly learned why her students always enjoyed her so much.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention our greatest advocate, fan, and mentor, Nancy Davis. I had the opportunity to visit Nancy at her office a few times in Mt. Vernon. She was very organized and was always on top of the little things. I will miss Nancy not only because of her role as our Executive Director, but more importantly because of her friendly ways in dealing with so many of us. She always amazed me how she knew so many of the ILCRA members' names and could identify them in a second. I can easily forget someone's name the day after I meet them, Nancy remembered people all over the state. It's absolutely amazing! No doubt, she will be missed, but we are happy that she can enjoy her retirement.

When former board member Amy Quint called and asked me if I would be interested in serving on the board, I really had no idea what I was

getting myself into. I had always attended the seminars and could never imagine myself sitting at the dais during a convention. I have always encouraged my children to volunteer and step up to the plate, so I decided I'd give it a try and give back to a profession which has been so good to me. No doubt what you say to your kids always comes back to get you. And, so, here we are!

Our convention has come and gone, and I believe all those in attendance enjoyed themselves. Many thanks to our new management team, IAMC, and their staff – Dave, Melanie, Liz and Donna - for having everything in order. They're always working diligently on the forefront and behind the scenes to keep things working smoothly.

By this time anyone having a CSR license and who is a member of this organization is aware of the recent extension of Public Act 98-0445 signed by Governor Quinn on August 16, 2013, extending the Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporters Act through December 2023. Because of this extension, the CSRs of this state will continue to be protected and be held to high professional standards. The CSR Act was revised in many areas by members of the ILCRA board, the IDFP, and also with the assistance and knowledge of our lobbyist, Cap O'Keefe. This was no small task and took many hours, and we must all be grateful that we have this in place. Imagine not having any rules governing our profession. Without the CSR Act, the profession that so many of us love would be different as we know it. I think we can all agree that rules serve a purpose and are for the betterment of our profession. Without a doubt, this has been one of the biggest accomplishments ILCRA has done in recent years, and I'm happy to see it happen. This could not have

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# 2013-2015 ILCRA Officers

## 2013-2015 ILCRA OFFICERS

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## STANDING COMMITTEES:

### **Auditing Committee**

Lyn Grooms, Chair; Tana Hess, Barbara Glover

### **Award of Excellence Committee**

Nancy LaBella, Chair; Bonni Shuttleworth

### **Budget Committee**

Kathleen M. Grove, Chair; Vernita Allen-Williams, Nancy LaBella, Stephanie Rennegarbe, Dave Wenhold

### **Freelance Committee**

Kathleen M. Grove, Debra Musielak, Sarah Paszkiewicz, Catherine A. Rajcan

### **Legislative Committee**

Sarah Paszkiewicz, Chair; Vernita Allen-Williams, Cheryl Barone, Melanie Sonntag, Dee Doubet, Lisa Ciarrachi, Jill Stevens, Kathy Nielsen, Cindy Waibel

### **Membership Committee**

(To be activated when necessary)

### **Nominating Committee**

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### **Officials Committee**

Pat Houlf, Chair; Mary Trezzo, Georgia Rollins, Joan McQuinn, Melissa Clagg, Jenny Danley, Lisa Ciarrachi, Rita Corson, Barb Cash

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### **Bylaws Committee**

(To be activated when necessary) Deb Musielak, Chair; Dee Doubet, Jill Layton

### **CART Committee**

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### **DSA Committee**

Bonni Shuttleworth, Chair; Lyn Grooms, Mary Beth Rollins

### **Elections Committee**

(To be activated when necessary)

### **Ethics Committee**

Nancy LaBella, Chair; Debra Musielak, Vernita Allen-Williams

### **PR/Marketing Committee**

Vernita Allen-Williams, Chair; Tracy Grott, Kathleen M. Grove, Jill Layton, Georgia Rollins

### **Speed & Realtime Contest Committees**

Rita Corson, Chair; Theresa Hovick-Thomas, Teresa Ozuna, Judy Lehman

### **Student Mentorship Committee**

Joni Markel, Chair

### **Student Scholarship Committee**

Bernice Radavich, Chair; Melissa Clagg, Tana Hess, Lee Anne Marino

# President's Message

*Continued from page 1*

been possible without you, the ILCRA members, who believe in this organization and contribute and support it. Be sure to share this information with your coworkers who are nonmembers and remind them how fortunate we are to have this in place. Ask them to join ILCRA and get involved. Joining ILCRA is a small price to pay for the continued success we enjoy.

I look forward to meeting many of you whom I do not know. I have made and enjoyed so many friendships already, and I know there are a lot more to come. May you all have a safe and happy holiday season!

## 2013 ILCRA Annual Convention

If you missed this year's ILCRA convention, you missed a great opportunity to earn continuing education credits, network with colleagues, visit with our outstanding vendors and, of course, celebrate Nancy Davis' retirement. ILCRA's association management firm, Innovative AMC, put together a fun and educating weekend for all! Thanks to Dave Wenhold, Donna Betza, Liz Matson and Melanie Dixon for their expertise and hard work. We couldn't have done it without them! Read on in this issue of Ad Infinitum for some of the highlights of convention. The planning for next year is already underway, so watch this space for the date and location to be announced soon!



*The wonderful leading ladies of the 2013 ILCRA Annual Convention –  
Glenda Davis, Bonni Shuttleworth, Nancy LaBella and Nancy Davis*

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OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS



# 2013 ILCRA Annual Convention



*Oh What a Night - Celebrating Nancy Davis!*



*Friday night's reception honoree, Nancy Davis, with Bonni Shuttleworth and party committee chair, Deb Kriegshauser*



*Dee Doubet presenting Nancy Davis with a gift from ILCRA's past presidents*



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CAPITOL BUILDING, 207 STATE HOUSE  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

**PAT QUINN**  
GOVERNOR

September 20, 2013

Illinois Court Reporters Association  
43150 Broadlands  
Center Plaza, Suite 152-269  
Ashburn, VA 20148

Greetings!

As Governor of the State of Illinois, I am pleased to welcome everyone gathered for the Illinois Court Reporters Association's (CRA) Annual Convention.

I want to commend the Illinois Court Reporters Association for your efforts to support the professional development of your members and to promote excellence and the highest ethical standards in the field. This event is an excellent opportunity to network and exchange ideas with other professionals in the field of court reporting. I am certain that the seminars, speakers, and other events planned for this conference will greatly benefit everyone in attendance, leaving you energized to further your careers and eager to take on new challenges.

I would also like to congratulate Nancy Davis, on her retirement after twenty-plus years as the Illinois Court Reports Association's Executive Director. The work that she has done throughout the years has undoubtedly created a lasting impact and the mark that she leaves behind will leave a foundation for the future of this organization. I wish Ms. Davis continued success in all of her future endeavors, and she has my respectful gratitude for over twenty years of service to the people of our state.

On behalf of the people of Illinois, I offer my best wishes for an enjoyable and productive event.

Sincerely,

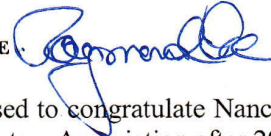
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Quinn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pat Quinn  
Governor



# STATE OF ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 563  
OFFERED BY REPRESENTATIVE RAYMOND POE



**WHEREAS**, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are pleased to congratulate Nancy C. Davis on the occasion of her retirement as Executive Director of the Illinois Court Reporters Association after 20 years; and

**WHEREAS**, Nancy Davis served as the Executive Director from 1993-2013; she was a co-founder of the original court reporters association in the State of Illinois, and has devoted her time to advancing and promoting the profession of Court Reporting; and

**WHEREAS**, Nancy Davis, as Executive Director, was responsible for providing accurate information and advice to members, students, court reporting instructors, and court reporting schools; she acted as mentor to numerous court reporting students and beginning court reporters; and

**WHEREAS**, Nancy Davis is a former President of the Illinois Shorthand Reporters Association; she was a United States District Court Official Court Reporter, the owner of a freelance firm in Louisiana, a court reporting and program director for Midstate College, a National Court Reporters Association Evaluator, a certified reporting instructor, and a Chief Examiner for the National Court Reporters Association certification testing; she has been a member of various National Court Reporters Association committees for many years and is an Illinois Court Reporters Association Distinguished Service Award Winner; and

**WHEREAS**, Nancy Davis has served with distinction, providing diligence, knowledge, and sharing her expertise with many others; through her dedication, she has been the primary participant in advancing the Illinois Court Reporters Association to where it is now, one of the premiere state court reporting associations in the country; and

**WHEREAS**, Nancy Davis planned the very first Illinois Court Reporters Association Convention; at this year's convention on September 20, 2013, she will be honored for her many years of service; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS**, that we congratulate Nancy C. Davis on the occasion of her retirement as Executive Director of the Illinois Court Reporters Association; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Nancy Davis as an expression of our esteem and respect.

# WOW! Thank you from Nancy C. Davis

What a night. My retirement celebration was a most memorable occasion. I am still going over it all in my head. I wanted to thank you all for the plants, flowers, letters, speakers, the presence of my family (all the way from Atlanta, Branson and Dallas), gift cards, jewelry, the beautiful cake (made by Deb Kriegshauser) and even cash. I will remember this night for the rest of my life. The video condensing 30 years into a few minutes was a masterpiece. Even my 14-year-old grandson paid attention to every word. I know that some of you traveled many miles to just be a part of this night and I appreciate the attendance of everyone. The theme of the night was Survivor (I'm a big fan) and survive I did – after all I had an immunity idol (thanks to Dee Doubet).

Thanks again for the wonderful memories. We will be seeing each other from time to time. AND REMEMBER TO RETAIN YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN ILCRA AND NCRA. My love to you all.



*ILCRA's lobbyist, Dwight O'Keefe, presenting Nancy Davis with House Resolution 563, sponsored by Rep. Raymond Poe*

## Illinois Court Reporters Association 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.





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# 2013 Realtime and Speed Contests

Rita Corson, Speed & Realtime Contest Committees Chair

My co-chair, Teri Gaudet, could not make it to the convention this year. I want to thank her for teaching me how to mark the material used in the contests and for all her other advice.

I also want to thank Donna Urlaub of Urlaub, Bowen & Associates for sponsoring the Realtime Contest. Thank you also to Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag of Chicago-area Realtime Reporters, Ltd. for sponsoring the Gary L. Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest.

Thank you to my right-hand woman, Theresa Hovick-Thomas. And a big thank you to my dictators, Judy Lehman and Bonni Shuttleworth, and for my graders and monitors! I couldn't have done this without you guys! Thank you to my daughter, Devin Dean, for making the certificates.

Thank you, Bonni, for offering to come out of retirement to help me this first year of flying solo. You saved the day!

A little bit about me: I'm an official court reporter and have been since forever. And I get to retire in February next year. That will give me more time to spend with my 13 grandchildren. My youngest granddaughter, Marley, is 2 and she loves to clomp around in her momma's high heels. She's so cute doing that. Well, I have felt a little like Marley these days as I've been trying to fill these big shoes left by Bonni.

You all know Bonni Shuttleworth. Bonni has been our chairman of the Realtime and Speed Contests for as long as anybody can remember. I didn't realize how much work goes in to making those contests happen until I had to do it myself! With Nancy Davis' help, she and Bonni have done a spectacular job with the contests all these years!

Bonni told us last year that it would be her final year as the chairman of the Realtime and Speed Contests, and so last year I was her co-chairman. You might have seen me following her around last year, clomping around in those shoes that I was trying to fill.

Well, Bonni has done so much for ILCRA over the years. You name it, she's done it! She recently was our Education Liaison. Whenever you need a volunteer, Bonni has her hand up. If you have a question, Bonni is the one to ask. Thank you, Bonni, for all you have done for ILCRA.

Well, I got to thinking about what all Bonni has done, and I thought it was only appropriate that we name the Realtime trophy after her. So from now on, our Realtime traveling trophy will be called the Bonni Shuttleworth Realtime Trophy!

Well, my biggest thank you goes to the contestants who make these contests so much fun and exciting. These ladies practice, and their hard work shows. Just wait till you hear how accurately they write.

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# 2013 Realtime and Speed Contests

Rita Corson, Speed & Realtime Contest Committees Chair

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## Now on to the results of the Realtime Contest.

I had eight contestants who sat for the Realtime Contest, hoping to be the first person to take home the "Bonni Shuttleworth Realtime Trophy."

The Realtime Literary dictated at 180 words per minute, 900 words, 45 allowable errors. This was President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society" speech given at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor in 1964.

Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag .....	.96.09%
Paula Campbell .....	.96.26%
Donna Urlaub .....	.98.43%
Judy Walsh .....	.98.87%

The Realtime Contest two-voice dictated at 200 words per minute, 1000 words, 50 allowable errors. This was testimony at a criminal trial where the Defendant didn't give consent to enter his apartment.

Bernice Radavich .....	.97.11%
Jennifer Dunn .....	.97.70%
Tana Hess .....	.98.07 %
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag .....	.98.07%
Judy Walsh .....	.99.56%
Donna Urlaub .....	.99.78%

Now for the medals. I figured who won first, second and third place by averaging both of their scores.

Third place..... Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag .....	.97.08%
Second place..... Donna Urlaub.....	.99.11%
First Place.....Judy Walsh .....	.99.21%

*Continued on page 12*

## Market Your Service

YES! Please place my name prominently before my fellow ILCRA members to market my exceptional services while showing my support for my state association. Please display my business card in the next four issues of Ad Infinitum. Enclosed is my card and a check payable to ILCRA for \$100.

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# 2013 Realtime and Speed Contests

Rita Corson, Speed & Realtime Contest Committees Chair

Continued from page 11

## Now, for the Gary L. Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest:

I had six contestants who fiercely competed against each other for the right to take home the Sally Cochran Speed Contest trophy. And compete they did! They take this very seriously!

The Literary dictated at 220 words per minute, 1100 words, 55 allowable errors. This was a speech to Congress by Prime Minister Gordon Brown in 2009.

Bernice Radavich .....	96.27%
Jennifer Dunn .....	96.64%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag .....	98.00%
Donna Urlaub .....	98.45%

The Legal Opinion dictated at 230 words per minute, 1150 words, 58 allowable errors. This was an Illinois Supreme Court opinion regarding trial in absentia of a pro se defendant.

Donna Urlaub .....	98.17%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag .....	98.78%

The two-voice testimony dictated at 270 words per minute, 1350 words, 68 allowable errors. This was a will contest hearing where the witness was a psychiatrist who testified about the decedent's dementia during his later years of life.

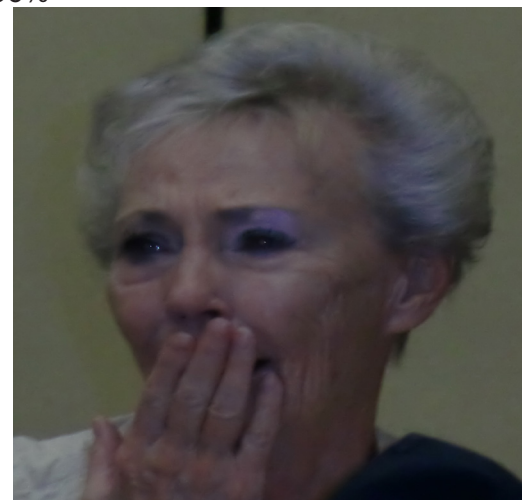
Bernice Radavich .....	95.63%
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag .....	97.04%
Donna Urlaub .....	99.04%

And the winners were:

Second Place.....	Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag .....	97.94%
First Place.....	Donna Urlaub .....	98.56%

I am so in awe of our eight contestants. They made me proud to be a part of this contest experience. If you have never attempted a speed contest, why don't you sign up next year. It's exhilarating!

*Bonni Shuttleworth's reaction as the Realtime trophy is renamed the Bonni Shuttleworth Realtime Trophy*





# 2013 Realtime and Speed Contests

Rita Corson, Speed & Realtime Contest Committees Chair

Continued from page 12



Realtime Contest Medal Winners: Donna Urlaub, 2nd place; Judy Walsh, 1st place; Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag, 3rd place



Gary L. Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest Winners: Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag, 2nd place; Donna Urlaub, 1st place



Donna Betza and Dave Wenhold at the Silent Auction table

# Distinguished Service Award Winner, Bonni Shuttleworth

## Speech by Nancy C. Davis

As my last official duty for ILCRA it is an honor to present the Distinguished Service Award for 2013. The purpose of this award is to encourage and recognize work amounting to distinguished service for the benefit of the reporting profession by individual members of ILCRA. That may include work as a member, committee member, officer of the Association, for Ad Infinitum, in state or local association affairs or public relations. I am happy to report that this year's recipient has served in all the above capacities and many more, as well as adding to the quality of the court reporting profession, improving the manner in which it is perceived by other professionals and the general public, and has helped reporters and students to focus on how they can better meet the demands of technology and the changing judicial system.

The recipient and I have been associated in one way or the other for the past 30 years. I first met her when she enrolled in Midstate College in Peoria as a student of court reporting. As the years progressed she became my partner in all things ILCRA. She began teaching at Midstate College and in my estimation has become one of the best teachers around. If you have had an opportunity to speak to any of her students, you will know how she continues to motivate them and help them into a very rewarding career.

It is our custom to keep the DSA recipient a secret as long as we can. We want the recipient's family to join in this celebration, so I am going to introduce the recipient and have her family join us now and then I will ask the recipient to remain seated while we will extol upon the accomplishments and reasons why she is being honored in this way.

I'm sure many of you have guessed by now that the recipient of the 2013 Distinguished Service Award is Bonni Shuttleworth. Would her family now join us?

PAUSE

Bonni supported me as an officer of ILCRA and finally during the past 20 years in my Executive Director position. Bonni took on the position of Education Liaison for ILCRA and has held that position for many, many years. Any of you instructors here can attest to the fact that she has been instrumental in maintaining a bridge between ILCRA and the colleges and instructors.

Bonni has given many educational seminars for court reporters and students for both ILCRA and NCRA, almost always on a volunteer basis.

Most notably Bonni was instrumental for the ILCRA speed and realtime contests being what they are today. She did all the research, checked with NCRA and other states that had speed contests and composed the rules. For 20 years she revised the rules as needed, constructed the tests, dictated the tests, supervised the grading of the tests, regraded tests as necessary and compiled the results. All of you \*speedsters\* will attest, I am sure, to her capabilities, organizational skills, and most of all to her kind heart.

I wanted to add some funny stories in here, but to tell you the truth, there have been so many, I couldn't pick out just a few. Bonni, Pat Byers and I have been traveling together to NCRA annual and mid-year conventions for 20 plus years. All I am going to say is someone should write a book.

No job was too menial to Bonni. She spent many days and hours putting together folders, making certificates and any other job that needed to be done.

She would be the first to tell you that her daughters, Denise and Heidi, her son, Buck, her husband, Frank, and that cute little princess, Lilly, have been the glue that keeps her together.

Bonni, my friend, my soul sister, this award is well deserved. I love you and Congratulations.

# Thank You From 2013 DSA Winner Bonni R. Shuttleworth

Thank you for the wonderful “send-off.” I am grateful and still a little in awe to think so many of you thought I was worthy of receiving the DSA. I still get tears when I think of it. Then, to top it off, to have the Realtime Contest named after me is beyond describing what I feel. I have enjoyed working with so many of you over the last 20 years, and I will miss all of you very much. I know your Board is hard working and will work very hard to the benefit of all court reporters in the state. By the way, everyone loves my watch and says it’s “me.” Thank you again.

## Amy and Donna’s Steno Swap

Thank you to Amy Quint and Donna Urlaub for presenting their informative and fun Steno Swap seminar at this year’s ILCRA Convention! They have kindly submitted the below briefs that were exchanged during that session. Enjoy!

### Phrasing Series

-FP	much	(PREFP pretty much, etc.)
-RB	sure	(PRERB pretty sure, etc.)
-RZ	recognize	(DOURZ do you recognize, etc.)
-RG	agree	(LURG will you agree, etc.)
-BD	said	(UBD you said, etc.)
-RT	contract	(SK-RT subcontract, J-RT general contract)
ERT	contractor	(SKERT subcontractor, JERT general contractor, KERT contractor)

### Phrases

LEM	let me	WERM	workmen’s comp
LEMT	let me tell	WERMGS	workmen’s compensation
FLAN	willful and wanton	R-N	registered nurse
BAOF	on behalf of	WARLD	within a reasonable degree of
OEG	on the ground	W-RMS	within a reasonable degree of
SWORK	social work		medical certainty
SWOERK	social worker	SPROEK/-G	insulting and provoking
TRAG(S)	answer(s) to interrogatory(ies)	NIF	any of
YUM or YAOUM	you know what I mean	PROUF	proud of
YUMS	you know what I’m saying	MOIL(S)	motion(s) in limine
YAOUN or UPBLG	you know	STRAT	strike that
WOERMGS or W-X	worker’s compensation	DOUM	do you mean
WOERM	worker’s comp		

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Rita Corson

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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 Infitum.
- 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 Infitum, 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 the phone number, 703-729-4861 and a website [www.ilcra.org](http://www.ilcra.org).
- Provides an association management company to assist members.



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I would like to receive a membership certificate by e-mail.

## C. MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Please check if you **DO NOT** grant permission to publish your contact information in the online Find A Reporter membership directory at [www.ILCRA.org](http://www.ILCRA.org).

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p: 703-729-4861  
f: 703-935-2266

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 and/or other ILCRA Publications.

# ILCRA Awards 2013 Student Scholarships

**Bernice Radavich**

I had one of the best jobs at the ILCRA Annual Business Meeting because I had the privilege of announcing the 2013 ILCRA Student Scholarship winners. I was able to honor those who will be the future of our profession. One of the requirements of the scholarships is that the students must have passed a 160 Q&A, so these students are in the home stretch, and we hope to encourage them to join our ranks in the near future.

First of all, I would like to thank the Student Scholarship Committee members for all their hard work. The Student Scholarship Committee Members were Melissa Clagg, Tana Hess, and Shannon Niekamp.

Once again, we chose the same topic that NCRA used for its essay competition, and the topic for this year's essay was: "Professionalism and Ethics: What do they mean to you, and how do they relate to court reporting education and the profession?"

This year, we had 11 entries from College of Court Reporting, John A. Logan College, MacCormac College, Midstate College, Prince Institute, and South Suburban College. It was very hard to choose one essay over another.

The committee eventually chose the winning essay that you see here. The student wrote about court reporters being keepers of the record and that hopefully their education will help them to create or augment their ethical standards to "respect" the words they keep.

On behalf of the ILCRA Board and the Student Scholarship Committee, I would like to personally thank each and every one of the students for applying for the scholarship this year.

In addition, I would also like to thank the Diane Dorwart Memorial Scholarship Fund contributors, who make these scholarships possible. Also, through the generosity of Illinois reporters, ILCRA was able to pay the registration fee for 11 students to attend the annual convention.

ILCRA awarded three scholarships in this competition.

In first place was Lee Anne Marino from South Suburban College. Lee Anne received a \$1,000 scholarship, a night in the hotel, round-trip mileage reimbursement, and a one-year associate membership in ILCRA. She will also become a member of the Student Scholarship Committee for next year.

Second place went to Jessica Murokh from MacCormac College, who won a \$500 scholarship.

In third place was Brittany Wilton, who attended John A. Logan College until August and is now studying at College of Court Reporting. Brittany is the recipient of a \$300 scholarship.

Congratulations to the 2013 ILCRA Student Scholarship award winners!



# Winning Student Scholarship Essay

Lee Anne Marino

## The Keepers of the Record

Tom Stoppard, British screenwriter and playwright, once wrote, “Words... They’re innocent, neutral, precise, standing for this, describing that, meaning the other, so if you look after them you can build bridges across incomprehension and chaos. But when they get their corners knocked off, they’re no good any more... I don’t think writers are sacred, but words are. They deserve respect.” Writers understand that words have power, and court reporters are writers that have the daunting task of controlling words. Court reporters are the keepers of the record. In that role, reporters must maintain the highest level of ethics and professionalism; for the words they write, transcribe, and produce embody the foundation of the American legal system. This understanding of their ethical and professional power and responsibility must be ingrained in them through their own beliefs and the instruction of their mentors in their educational programs.

Although one would hope most individuals have some sense of ethics and professionalism, all one must do to realize universal ethical behavior does not exist is turn on any “reality” television program. He or she will see individuals with no understanding of their roles in society, with no sense of how their actions affect others, and with no realization of what ethics and professionalism are. Most court reporting students’ lives are inundated with this sort of media; however, they must rise above this ethical wasteland. Through their educational programs, they will begin to see how important their roles are in the ethical foundation of the American court system. Producing an accurate record can be the difference between life and death, and reporters have that power. Hopefully, their education will enhance their internal ethics and help them to create/augment their ethical standards to “respect” the words they keep.

Mary Pearson, American author, wrote, “Words have longer lives than people.” If we, as court reporters, can understand the importance of creating an ethical and professional record, those words will live glorious lives.

## 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.

A monetary scholarship in Bob’s name was awarded at ILCRA’s Annual Convention this year in Springfield. The lucky winner was Brad Benjamin, a student at MacCormac College.

We were thrilled to have a record number of students present at the Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon -- the only prerequisite for a student to be eligible to win the scholarship! Bob loved working with students and mentoring them after their schooling and would have been proud to see so many students showing their commitment to their future profession!

Thank you, Donna, for your generous support of this scholarship and congratulations to Brad!

**Spread the word!**

**You can make a difference.**

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.



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*Students Katie Rice, Christa Yan, and Jessica Murokh enjoying Friday Night's Reception*

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# 2013 National Committee of State Associations Annual Meeting

## Debra M. Musielak

On Wednesday, August 7, 2013, Vernita Allen-Williams, ILCRA President-Elect, and I attended the Annual Meeting of the National Committee of State Associations (NCSA) in Nashville, Tennessee. The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m. and adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

As an affiliate association, ILCRA is governed by the policies and procedures promulgated by NCRA. This meeting is a forum for each state association to propose changes and improvements to those policies and procedures already in existence and to submit new ones through NCSA to the NCRA Board of Directors via the submission of Resolutions and Position Statements.

Resolutions are submitted, statements are made in favor and/or opposition, and a vote is taken at the annual NCSA meeting. If the resolution is adopted, it is then forwarded for consideration to the NCRA Board of Directors.

The following Resolutions were adopted at this year's meeting:

- A request that NCRA obtain a legal opinion on the new HIPAA regulations and how they affect our profession.
- That NCRA develop and implement a comprehensive pilot program to increase resources, direction and assistance specifically to battleground states that have already successfully passed third-party contracting (TPC) legislation based on NCRA's model and direction, and that are currently faced with the next uncharted territory and challenges of enforcement and defending legal attack for these same actions.
- That NCSA recommend to the Board of NCRA that it change its CEU requirements such that Ethics be a mandatory requirement to maintain registered membership. It was further recommended that Ethics cover principles embodied in both NCRA's Code of Professional Ethics and Ethics First.
- That NCRA CEU regulations allow that an extension of the current cutoff date from September 30th to October 30th be granted to members who attend NCRA or state association conventions only that are scheduled to take place within that time frame.

The meeting came to a close with a spirited discussion encompassing several topics including what more NCRA can do for affiliate associations, how NCSA can be more valuable to affiliates, and utilizing listserv to keep up-to-date with national issues. The liveliest discussion by far focused on CEU tracking at state conventions in the wake of NCRA discontinuing the punch card system. Various states weighed in with their concerns and others shared their current tracking techniques.

The meeting was well attended by leaders of affiliate associations from around the country, and Vernita and I were honored as your board members to participate in the exchange of information this process provided.



# State Leadership Conference

Debra M. Musielak

On Wednesday, August 7, 2013, Vernita Allen-Williams, ILCRA President-Elect, and I attended State Leadership Conference at the NCRA Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. and concluded at 6:00 p.m. and within that time frame delivered a wealth of information to board members of state associations throughout our nation.

The first session was "The Color of Money: Your State Finances," which was led by Steve Zinone, NCRA Secretary-Treasurer, and Wendel Stewart, NCRA Senior Director, Finance and Administration. They explained the need for proper record keeping, budget development and strategic planning and gave tips on how to streamline the operating practices of our state associations.

Next up was Jim Cudahy, NCRA Executive Director and CEO with his "Vision for NCRA's Future." Mr. Cudahy laid out NCRA's vision as follows: One, we will remain steno-focused. At one time we were court reporters. Now we are also CART writers and captioners. NCRA's mission is to delve into what other unique opportunities exist that will allow us to expand our scope of services. Two, recognize that realtime is our differentiation factor. Hop on board the TRAIN, Taking Realtime Awareness and Innovation Nationwide. NCRA will continue to conduct TRAIN seminars and encourage reporters to set themselves apart from ER by doing realtime all the time. Three, build wide awareness. A recent survey indicated that one of our biggest challenges is lack of awareness of the profession. Four, schools and students. NCRA is aimed at tripling the number of students and doubling the graduation rate over the next five years. Five, steno as a driver of technology. This goes hand in hand with number three, educate the community as to our expanding capabilities.

Mr. Cudahy discussed the graying of our profession and the fact that because current student enrollment continues to be low, there is not adequate backfill. To combat that issue NCRA has some exciting projects in the works to attract new students. While currently in the early stages, keep your eyes on the JCR for information. This works directly hand in hand with number four, building interest in the various uses of our skillsets and tripling student enrollment. Mr. Cudahy also stressed our role in this vision.

Continued growth depends on our ability and willingness to participate in making this mission a success.

The "State of the States Report" was next on the agenda. Presented by Adam Finkel, NCRA Assistant Director, Government Relations, and Brandon Schall, NCRA Government Relations Specialist, this session focused on the results of the comprehensive State of the States Survey. Across the nation state associations are faced with many of the same challenges; maintaining membership numbers in a difficult economy, volunteerism, contributions to PAC funds, filling board positions, cost issues for convention speakers, newsletter quality, website content and maintenance, and legislative issues are just a few. Mr. Finkel assured us that he is available to all members, and he has stood true to his word many times when ILCRA board members have gone to him seeking advice and assistance. Adam is a true supporter and friend to those in the court reporting profession and continues to exhibit a desire and willingness to promote the reporting professions.

Following the State of the States report, all attendees broke out into small groups and shared information, ideas and solutions used to address the issues challenging our profession. This Membership Marketing and General Association Best Practices session was one of the highlights of the day. The round table discussion and networking opportunity with leaders from nearly every state provided assurance that members of ILCRA are not alone in our concerns. Your ILCRA board members will be discussing the implementation of many ideas shared during that session.

"Nuts and Bolts of Association Work" was addressed by Jim Cudahy and Jeffrey Altman of Whitford, Taylor & Preston, LLP. Based on feedback received over years of practical experience, they offered concrete guidance on efficiently and effectively operating state associations.

Rounding out the day was Dave Wenhold of Miller/Wenhold Capitol Strategies, joined by Adam Finkel, with their presentation "The Seven Practices of Highly

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# State Leadership Conference

Debra M. Musielak

*Continued from page 27*

Profitable Court Reporters.” This session focused on part three of “Three things everyone can count on! Death. Taxes. Change.” Did you know that in the 1903 census only 8% of American homes had telephones? What a difference a century makes! All of us are now connected by smartphone 24/7. While some think that’s a bad thing, others embrace the ability to stay connected to clients, troubleshoot instantly, and make their presence known through social and business media sites.

In that century what have become the biggest issues that face court reporting today? ER/DAR, transcript rates, gift-giving, contracting, tort reform, lack of new students, budget cuts, bad press and reporter apathy. We are now faced with an economic situation that forces the question “Accurate Records v. Adequate Record.” Yet all is not doom and gloom. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 14 percent growth in our profession by 2020 with new opportunities presented via CART and captioning markets as well as continued opportunities in the deposition field.

So what are those seven practices of highly profitable court reporters? 1) Know what you are selling. 2) Always be selling. 3) Make your digital presence work. 4) Be prepared and understand your business. 5) Focus on who matters: Your customers. 6) Broaden

your revenue streams. 7) Always be prepared to adapt.

Dave and Adam concluded their presentation by asking two very important questions applicable to our changing world: A) Are you working differently today than you were ten years ago? Five years ago? One year ago? B) Are you in a position to succeed if business became available immediately?

As an ILCRA board member I was privileged to attend the 2013 Leadership Conference as your representative. It was a day where speakers knowledgeable about our concerns and who show a tremendous willingness and desire to assist us in problem solving were open to questions. There were spirited discussions and each and every speaker was forthcoming with their answers and suggestions to assist us in our continued growth. I think there’s an extra space here. It was an interactive day which allowed reporters from all over our country to collaborate on our constantly changing profession. As the ILCRA board strives to tackle the challenges facing all of us who have chosen reporting as a career, we can do this only with your support through board and committee service and your continued membership in your state and national professional associations. We are grateful for your assistance, because only together can we accomplish our goals.



Deb Musielak and Vernita Allen-Williams at NCRA Leadership Conference

# The View from the Stage at the Guinness Record Attempt

**Kathryn A. Thomas**

People kept coming in. Not just my husband (who had to come) and my mother-in-law and sister-in-law (who didn't have to come) and the other contestants' loved ones, but MORE! Every single seat was filled in the Gaylord Opryland Presidential Ballroom Salon B, and it was truly standing room only.

About an hour beforehand I and the other contestants set up in relative quiet. It was August 8, 2013, and we were preparing to attempt to break the Guinness World Record for stenographic speed, which currently stood at 360 words per minute of testimony material. This is the speed contest's speed contest, and this is what the event was like from my point of view.

I've blogged my way through a year and a half of training for this event at <http://www.stenoray.com>, where you can look at the entries tagged "The Impossible Goal" for more details about how I trained for it. I'll also post this article up there too, after it's published in Ad Infinitum.

Mark Kislingbury, Dee Boenau, Stan Sakai, Diane Kraynak, and myself got ourselves arranged and warmed up in relative quiet. I had half a heart attack when the audio/visual gentleman asked for a doohickey so I could listen to the audio directly, which I was not notified I needed to bring. But they found an extra doohickey, and my headphones were connected. I wasn't the only one who didn't bring a doohickey, either. We all successfully had audio coming through our respective headphones and at good volume.

I warmed up to a Magnum Steno video which I sped up to approximately 600 words per minute. No, I was not getting ANY of that dictation except for a word or two here or there, but it would indeed make 400 words a minute sound slow and darn near gettable.

Most of us were warming up and keeping to ourselves, but we had chances to greet each other and wish each other good skills. I don't feel ANY of us were there to "win" or to "beat" each other. We wanted to break the record, and we wanted at least one of us to break the record. No rivalry or hard feelings.

And then the people came in. The loved ones at first, and then more. And more. And more! A few people asked if they could take my picture. And then more! I was photographed more in that period of time than I was at my own wedding.

Almost time to start. Bruce Matthews from Ohio asked us all to sit in the front row so he could introduce us prizefighter style. Now that was pretty fun. I love the stage, so I enjoyed being a bit of a celebrity, if only for a moment. But when we all sat down, put on our headphones, and placed our fingers on our machines, the crowd and the pomp and the excitement faded into the background.

It's time to write.

The first one minute of 400 wpm was speedy. But it didn't feel as speedy as you may think. I'd just been listening to 600 wpm, mind you, and I'd been practicing ultra-high speed dictation for months.

The second 400 wpm take was a bit easier. My fingers were loosening up from the "Ready? Begin" freeze-up. Or am I the only one who freezes when those words are said?

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# The View from the Stage at the Guinness Record Attempt

Kathryn A. Thomas

*Continued from page 29*

The third take was at 390. A little bit better.

The fourth take was at 390, and I felt that had potential. Maybe. Just maybe. I hit a bookmark command from my steno machine so I can find that section and transcribe it if need be.

The next two were at 380, and one of them was ridiculous, from my fingers' points of view. My fingers and I gave up on that one.

The next take, 370, was not bad. Better than the 390. Actually, I think I'll do this one. Bookmark made.

The final take was a bust, but I was glad to have one, possibly two, contenders for transcription. We were allowed to transcribe two takes. I started on the 370.

It was much messier than I expected, but I combed out quite a bit.

Here's where I had great dissatisfaction with the event: We were allowed only ten minutes to transcribe. Ten minutes for one minute of dictation? Why, that should be a piece of cake! Remember, this is one minute of 370 words per minute, which is 370 words total. Let's do the math. A regular speed contest transcription time is 90 minutes of transcription per 5 minutes of dictation.  $90/5=18$ . We really should have had 18 minutes to transcribe. But we had ten, which is just over half the time needed. I don't know who came up with ten minutes or how, but this hurt us all. If you want more math, watch the 8/23/2013 Magnum Steno video of the day. Mark explains in detail why 10 minutes is far too short.

It is what it is. I worked on that take for every second of my time, except for a few moments when I put earplugs in and my unplugged noise-reducing headphones on, because Bruce Matthews was doing interviews with various reporters.

Since I felt better about that 370 take than the aforementioned 390 take, and I knew I didn't pass the 370 take since there were parts of it I hadn't even gotten to look at, I didn't transcribe the 390 take.

We each had our own grader, so that helped with getting results quickly. I don't remember feeling anxious or antsy before getting my results, because I knew I didn't get it, but I turned something in. I wanted to at least turn something in. And you know what? Everyone turned in something!

Nobody broke the record. Mark Kislingbury came pretty close, though. We were allowed 18 errors, and he had 22 errors. If we had the proper time, he would have certainly broken the record, because he worked on that thing every second he had like the rest of us.

As for my transcript, well, it had a lot of red pen markings on it. But you know what? There were a few sections that I got down. Yes, they were small sections, but they were there.

Training for this thing has made my job easier. Days where I feel blown away are fewer and farther between. High-speed practice improves accuracy. Remember what Mark told us at last year's ILCRA convention and go do it. Pull out the PowerPoint slides we received and go over them again. They work. And when your skills increase, your career and each individual job becomes easier and more fun.

*Continued on page 31*

# The View from the Stage at the Guinness Record Attempt

**Kathryn A. Thomas**

*Continued from page 30*

I practiced several times daily for a year and a half for this thing. I sped up dictation from the Magnum Steno Club to speeds ranging from 360 wpm (when I began this journey a year and a half ago) and culminating at 600 wpm. I would practice in short bursts throughout the day, and do one take before supper, and one take before bed. I set my cell phone alarm to go off right before bed to remind me to practice.

Would I do this again? In a heartbeat.

– Kathryn A. Thomas, RDR, CCP, is Vice President of ILCRA and a CART provider in the St. Louis area and downstate Illinois. Her blog is at <http://www.stenoray.com>.



*The Guinness record attempt contestants at NCRA*

*Kathryn Thomas in position at the Guinness record attempt at NCRA*



# Veterans History Project in the News

## Lake County to take veterans' oral histories for project

**Reprinted from the September 24, 2013 Issue of the Chicago Tribune,  
this article was written by Patrick Svitek**

A veteran who signed up for Lake County's Veterans History Project died before he could share his story, only emphasizing the importance of the effort, said Judge John Scully.

"It shows how fleeting this all is," said Scully, who is helping coordinate the county's second run of the event.

War veterans are invited on Nov. 11 to the Waukegan courthouse to share their oral histories with court reporters, who will transcribe and send them to the Library of Congress.

With more than 40,000 veterans in Lake County — but fewer nearly every day — the effort aims to capture personal history from military conflicts that are now generations removed from the present, said Vernita Allen-Williams, vice president of the Illinois Court Reporters Association.

Fourteen veterans offered hundreds of pages of oral history to court reporters last year. Their experiences ranged from the lighter side of being in the military — lifelong friendships and down-time entertainment — to what Scully called the "bad things," including coming "in contact with the most feared Nazis."

This year, the project's coordinators in Lake County are hoping for 20 or more veterans to participate. The "big difference" over last year's event is that the interviews will all start at the same time on Veterans Day, Allen-Williams said.

Although the effort welcomes war survivors from all backgrounds, organizers say they always hope World War II veterans turn out. More than 600 World War II veterans die every day, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, which predicts there will be no living veterans from World War II by 2036.

"Time is of the essence, especially with the World War II veterans," Allen-Williams said. "They are the priority."

Highland Park resident Fred Ruben was drafted for World War II a few months after his 18th birthday in 1944. His 69-page interview, which was transcribed by Allen-Williams, recalls everything from his first firefight to his first meal after being discharged — a "corned beef sandwich with a big pickle" at Purity Delicatessen in Chicago.

Ruben urged other veterans to participate in the project as a way of preserving personal history, not just the broad narratives of military victories and defeats.

"If they have the information, more people are going to remember what the veterans went through," he said. "It's just that individual stories are more impressive."

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# Veterans History Project in the News

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Scully agreed the project highlights valuable memories that may not make it into the average textbook.

"Everyone knows about the generals and major battles," he said.

Congress passed the legislation behind the Veterans History Project in 2000, and Allen-Williams heard about it through the National Court Reporters Association. She said she is not aware of other counties in the Chicago area hosting Veterans History Project events, but has reached out to Cook, DuPage and Kane counties to find more court reporters to help out in Lake County.

Anyone interested in participating in or volunteering for the project should contact Carol Cord in the court's administration office by Tuesday. She can be reached at 847-377-3771.

## **Vets invited to share stories of 'sacrifice and bravery'**

**Reprinted from the October 15, 2013 Issue of the Lake County News-Sun,  
this article was written by Jim Newton**

Colleen Eitermann's late father Duncan Finn said little about his battle experiences in World War II, and it has stuck with her.

"I always thought that I wish I knew a little more," she said.

Eitermann, a court reporter in Lake County Circuit Court, is one of several members of the Lake County legal community volunteering to preserve local veterans' memories and stories for posterity.

The local volunteers will work with the Library of Congress on its Veterans History Project this Veterans Day morning, Monday, Nov. 11, when war veterans are invited to come to the Lake County Courthouse in Waukegan to have their oral histories recorded by court reporters.

The typed transcripts will be archived at the Library of Congress.

Lake County started participating in the program last year, and officials plan to make the local program an annual event.

"I love it. I wanted to jump right in," said Eitermann, who was one of the first volunteers last year and looks forward to this year's event. "It's personal to me. My father fought in World War II and never talked much about it. The more

of these stories we can get, the better it is for history."

The project collects first-hand accounts of veterans from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War and the current Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts.

Also welcome are personal items such as photographs, diaries and letters from the veterans.

Participating volunteers include employees of the Circuit Court, the State's Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office and the Lake County Bar Association, who conduct the oral interviews of the war veterans and the civilians who supported the war effort. Chief Judge Fred Foreman is seeking volunteers from each group to assist in the effort.

Foreman, an Air Force veteran whose father was awarded the Purple Heart after being wounded in World War II, noted that Northern Illinois is home to hundreds of thousands of war veterans and civilians who helped them, and that as time goes on, more and more war vets pass away and the details of their experiences and those of their comrades are lost.

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# Veterans History Project in the News

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"War veterans are often hesitant to talk about their own experiences because of a sense of humility, but they are often the last witnesses to the sacrifice and bravery of others who did not survive the war or have since passed," he said. "The events they witnessed firsthand and their memories of their comrades in arms need to be preserved."

Court reporter Vernita Allen-Williams, along with Eitermann, will be coordinating the court reporters' support of this important project.

"The official court reporters covering Lake County's second Veterans History Project event are again very excited to be a part of this effort," Allen-Williams said.

Local judges who are veterans, including John Phillips, Michael Betar, Michael Fusz and John Scully, will be contacting veteran organizations and individual veterans in Northern Illinois to seek their help in contacting other war veterans and civilians who aided in the war efforts. They will also be recruiting Lake County lawyers, assistant state's attorneys and assistant public defenders to interview the war veterans and civilians.

Foreman said he is looking forward to the county's second year of participating in the program, and it's first year of holding it on Veterans Day.

"It's a real inspirational morning," he said.



Court reporters Colleen Eitermann and Vernita Allen-Williams, ILCRA's President Elect, participate in Lake County's efforts to preserve the stories of local veterans.



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