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ILLINOIS  
COURT  
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ASSOCIATION

## President's Message



I was reading an article in a magazine unrelated to the profession of Court Reporting that focused on how much we learn from other professionals in our respective fields for our day-to-day business. The well-respected profession I was reading about talked about the continuing education that is necessary for its profession and, very similar to ours, the many different topics that are addressed at conventions and seminars for their profession. The writer emphasized that most learning and knowledge comes from interaction with one's peers.

Our business has changed greatly in the past 27 years that I have been reporting. For those who have been around a long time like me, you'll remember the dictation machines and the typists that we employed, not to mention the stacks of paper notes. The big stacks of paper notes were the reminder that we needed to get to work and get the transcripts out. You couldn't ignore them or forward them on to a scopist to handle the situation.

Along with the many changes of the reporting practices, the business practices have changed tremendously. We all reminisce about the good ole days, and we all like to believe that in years past there was more honor between clients and reporters and more respect amongst the reporters themselves. Yes, there have been major improvements and significant steps forward, but unfortunately not in everything we do. That's the way it is and we will continue dealing with it.

Most of us have little face-to-face interaction with our peers these days. We are all busy, so when issues and questions

arise we are quick to text, email, or rely on social media for the answer. This is one of those changes that we have seen, and it's not always for the better. Have you ever sent an email to someone and the context is totally misconstrued and the words didn't come out the way you intended? This can be the beginning of frustration and confusion. Can a few lines of our thoughts really encompass the message and content of what we're trying to accomplish? Phone calls never seem to go on with just a few sentences, so why is it that we think we can explain an important event or a question in a few words? At a glance social media is quicker because you can jot your thoughts down, but when you have to restructure your questions and thoughts numerous times to have them make sense, the quickness soon flies right out the window. And then there are times when a complaint is made regarding a business acquaintance that later comes back to haunt the creator of the post and they have to backtrack and stumble. Instead of ironing out the situation face-to-face and coming to an understanding, the problem is now escalated.

As professionals there are still some "old" principles that we need to remember. Handling business issues needs to be done carefully. Have we forgotten how to deal directly with people when we are faced with a conflict? I am going to say no, we haven't forgotten, but it seems that sometimes we want to take what we think

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### PRESIDENT

Stephanie K. Rennegarbe  
618-424-7990; Addieville, IL  
skrenne@frontier.com

### PRESIDENT-ELECT

Vernita Allen-Williams  
847-377-3751; Lindenhurst, IL  
Vallen-Williams@lakecountyil.gov

### VICE PRESIDENT

Kathryn A. Thomas  
217-273-5789; Caseyville, IL  
stenoray1@gmail.com

### SECRETARY

Georgia B. Rollins  
217-259-7862; Bloomington, IL  
gb.rollins17@gmail.com

### TREASURER

Kathleen M. Grove  
630-462-0060; Wheaton, IL  
kathie@groveandassoc.com

### LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE

Sarah Paszkiewicz  
217-553-4242; Chatham, IL  
s.paszkiewicz@comcast.net

### REGION ONE REPRESENTATIVE

Bernice E. Radavich (Freelance)  
630-257-3040; Lemont, IL  
bercaptions@sbcglobal.net

### REGION ONE REPRESENTATIVE

Mary A. Trezzo (Official)  
630-444-3179; Elmhurst, IL  
matrezzo@aol.com

### REGION TWO REPRESENTATIVE

Debra M. Musielak (Freelance)  
618-539-5544; Freeburg, IL  
dmusielak@charter.net

### REGION TWO REPRESENTATIVE

Andrea M. James (Official)  
618-889-7185; West Frankfort, IL  
kroert@gmail.com

### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Nancy LaBella  
630-267-1237; Shorewood, IL  
labellaseppi@yahoo.com

### EDUCATION LIAISON

Nicole Napoli Cleary  
312-758-0075; Palos Heights, IL  
ncleary@comcast.net

For a listing of all **committees and current committee members**

[CLICK HERE](#)

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

## ILCRA MISSION STATEMENT

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

# 2015 ILCRA Annual Convention



## Notice of Annual Meeting

The Illinois Court Reporters Association Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 12, 2015, at the Hilton Springfield in Springfield, Illinois, during the ILCRA Annual Convention. During the annual meeting, awards will be presented and reports will be given. The time of the meeting will be announced in the next issue of Ad Infinitum, and the room where the Luncheon/Annual Meeting will be held will be posted at the convention.

The ILCRA Executive Board meeting will be held in the ILCRA President's Suite at the Hilton Springfield in Springfield, Illinois, during the ILCRA Annual Convention. The date and time of the meeting will be announced in the next issue of Ad Infinitum, and the room number will be posted at the convention.

## Student Scholarship Award

Court Reporting Students, You could win \$1,000, plus a complimentary one-day registration to the 2015 ILCRA Annual Convention in Springfield, Illinois, on Saturday, September 12, 2015. The prize also includes hotel accommodations for one night, a \$50 mileage stipend, and a one-year Associate Membership in the Illinois Court Reporters Association. The winner will become a member of the ILCRA Student Scholarship Committee for the following year. Second place (\$500) and Third place (\$300) prizes will also be awarded, and those winners will also receive a complimentary registration to the convention on September 12.

[CLICK HERE](#) or [VISIT ILCRA WEBSITE](#) for the application form.

**Applications are due by Friday, August 7, 2015**, and the winners will be announced at the Annual Convention.

## Distinguished Service Award

ILCRA Members, Nominations are now being accepted for the 2015 ILCRA Distinguished Service Award. [CLICK HERE](#) or [VISIT ILCRA WEBSITE](#) for the form. **Nominations are due by Friday, July 17, 2015**, and the winner will be announced at the Annual Convention.

## Award of Excellence

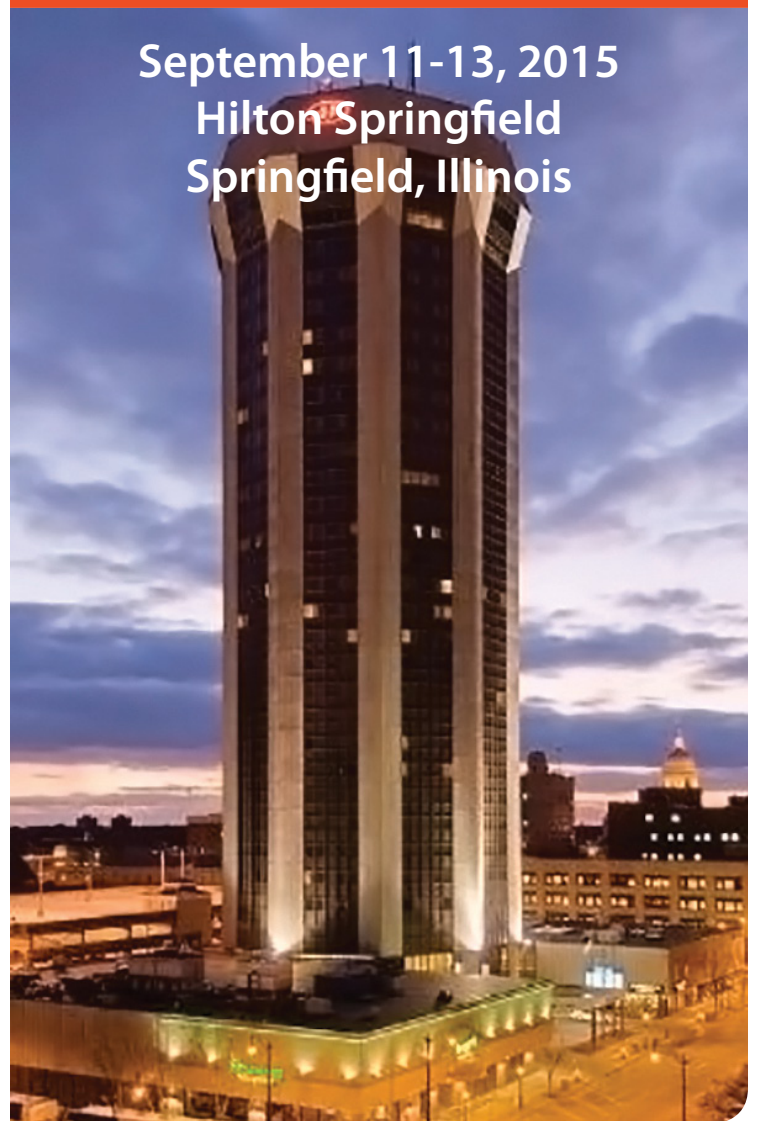
Court Reporting Students, Do you know an outstanding educator? Nominations are now being accepted for the 2015 ILCRA Award of Excellence. [CLICK HERE](#) or [VISIT ILCRA WEBSITE](#) for the nomination form. **Nominations are due by Friday, July 17, 2015**, and the winner will be announced at the Annual Convention.

## ILCRA Call for Nominations

Nominating Committee Chair Nancy LaBella is now accepting nominations for the following ILCRA offices for the 2015-2017 two-year term: President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Legislative Representative, Region One Representative (Freelance) and Region Two Representative (Freelance). **Nominations are due by May 30, 2015.** [CLICK HERE](#) or [VISIT ILCRA WEBSITE](#) for the nomination form.

## ILCRA Annual Convention

September 11-13, 2015  
Hilton Springfield  
Springfield, Illinois





## President's Message

Continued from front page

is the quicker road and throw some words down. Social media has its purpose and we are well aware of the benefits. In fact, ILCRA has used Blasts to reach out to members regarding the recent budget situation encountered with the state officials. It was appropriate and the most efficient way to reach out to our members, and we were lucky to have the tools to do it. We have professionals in place to write these things, and we do our best to get the facts straight before we send it. Putting incorrect information could have caused serious problems.

Before you send an email or write a post, take a step back and ask yourself how your words will be construed and if it really conveys what you want to say. Would you be willing to stand up before a group of your peers and say what you have written? If the answer is yes, then your next step is to hit the "Send" button. Avoiding mistakes saves time in the long run. If you want respect you have to earn it, and a careful choice of words will go a long way.

—Stephanie Rennegarbe

# ILCRA's Marathon Seminar

Over 100 Illinois reporters convened at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Oak Brook for a full day of learning and networking - and 10.0 CEUs! Seven speakers - NCRA President Sarah Nageotte, ILCRA President Stephanie Rennegarbe, ILCRA Vice President Kathryn Thomas, ILCRA Treasurer Kathie Grove, members Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag and Donna Urlaub, Professional Life Coach Shawn Preuss and The Honorable Mark Levitt from the 19th Judicial Circuit in Lake County – presented sessions on a variety of topics useful to officials and freelancers alike. Judge Levitt is shown here during his presentation.



## In Sympathy

ILCRA extends its sympathies to retired Official Court Reporter Rita Corson, past ILCRA Board member, Macomb, IL, on the loss of her father, Delbert L. Ruth, who passed away in April. Rita's stepfather, Robert Wayne Hutton, passed away in May and ILCRA sends condolences to her on this loss as well.

# 2015 NCRA State Leadership Conference

ILCRA is YOU. ILCRA exists because of YOU. ILCRA needs YOU. We need your participation. We need your ideas. We need your activity. We need your participation. We need your service. Now if you're anything like me, it took you a while to step up to help pull the ILCRA cart, because you might have thought you weren't leadership material or knew enough to do so. Again, that is if you're like me.

But you realize one day that ILCRA exists because of its members, and ILCRA is effective only because of its members' service. So you volunteer. And NCRA has a conference specifically for training you and others interested in helping out in state leadership.

So you attend NCRA's State Leadership Conference that took place on April 12-13 this year at the Curtis Hotel in Denver, Colorado. You notice that it's quite the quirky hotel, with kitchy memorabilia in the lobby, an elevator that plays "Don't Worry, Be Happy" as it opens onto the ground floor -- every. time. -- and room decor such as pictured here. You wonder if you'll have nightmares about Creepy Ice Cream Girl, but as long as a hotel has in-room coffee and WiFi, life is good.

This conference is specifically to train leaders. To train YOU. To equip you with knowledge, contacts, resources, and encouragement to bring back home to your state. The presenters give



you knowledge from negotiating hotel arrangements for your state convention, to guidance on dealing with journalists, to tax and legal considerations, to how to work a room. And there are so many resources that NCRA has! Failing to use them, you may ponder, must be like not calling your CAT software tech support when you need help. There are lots of goodies under the Resource Center tab at [www.ncra.org](http://www.ncra.org).

You discover that the seminars are just part of your education. Here you meet state leaders from across the nation and make new friends, as well as reinforce friendships you've previously built. You meet the NCRA leadership. You discover that some of the problems and challenges your state has faced were solved in

another state. Or another state is facing a challenge your state has conquered. And you get filled with so many ideas! You fill up several megabytes in your tablet with notes, as well as an entire hotel memo tablet. Perhaps on the plane ride home you'll transcribe your chicken-scratch handwriting into legible computer notes.

And as you update loved ones about your recent trip to Denver and assure them that you did not partake of Mother Nature's finest (as they are wont to do whenever you mention "Colorado" these days), it sinks in that this isn't for your own development. This is for the development of ILCRA.

Because ILCRA needs your participation, your ideas, your activity, your service. ILCRA needs YOU.



# Join ILCRA

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

**AD INFINITUM** - our quarterly e-newsletter

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

**BRIEFS, BRIEFS, and MORE BRIEFS**

**COMPLIMENTARY ADVERTISING** in ILCRA's *Find a Reporter* locator

Exclusive use of the **ILCRA MEMBER LOGO** to highlight your professionalism

**MEMBER-ONLY** access to the Website with the latest legislative news

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

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

**Pengad:** 10% off all full price products from July 2015 - June 2016

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

**RepAgencyWorks:** 25% discount off the set up fee

**Reporting Solutions:** 20% off PDF-it service

**JOIN or RENEW ONLINE** or click here for **MAIL IN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**



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# NCRA Testing at MacCormac College

Thank you to all the volunteers and candidates who made NCRA skills testing possible in Chicago on May 2nd.

A special shout-out goes to Chief Examiners Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag and Bonni Shuttleworth, MacCormac College Court Reporting Director Peg Sokalski-Dorchack, and test proctors Mary Ann Casale, Bernice Radavich, Deborah Cohen-Rojas, and Vernita Allen-Williams. Thanks to MacCormac College for hosting the exams, and thanks to all the candidates. The 2014 ILCRA Student Scholarship winners were well represented in the candidate pool. We deeply appreciate your commitment and dedication to our profession. A great job, one and all!

## 2015 National Court Reporting & Captioning Week

*Kathryn Thomas taking part in a panel presentation at St. Louis Community College-Meramec*



Photos from Vernita Allen-Williams' visit to MacCormac College on February 15



MacCormac Instructor Margaret Sokalski

# ILCRA Membership Campaign

Current ILCRA memberships expire June 30th and so the 2015-2016 membership campaign has begun!

Check your email for messages reminding you about the many benefits of membership including great member-only discounts!

[Click here for the membership form](#) or [click here to renew online](#).

# Veterans History Project Update

*By Jill Layton, ILCRA VHP Chair*

What an honor it was to be invited to take part in Secretary of State's "Preserving Their Memories" Veterans' History Project ceremony at the Illinois State Library on October 17th, 2014. Secretary of State Jesse White, a Veteran himself, brought greetings and paid tribute to those Veterans in attendance as well as all the US Veterans. Department of Illinois Disabled American Veterans Assistant Adjutant Eric Huckaby encouraged Veterans to take part in the rewarding VHP projects throughout the State of Illinois. As Chairman of ILCRA's VHP Committee, I thanked all the Veterans, Secretary White included, for their service. I encouraged the Veterans to host a Veterans' History Project at their Legion Posts, VFW Posts, churches, nursing homes, community centers, etc. "It is our honor to use our talents as court reporters to help capture and preserve every Veterans' story. The price? You already paid the price many years ago. It is already paid in full." (Retired) US Colonel Robert Patrick, Director of the Veterans' History Project for the Library of Congress in DC, was present and invited all court reporters to visit the Library of Congress if they are ever in DC. It was very exciting when he said Illinois is one of the leading states when it comes to the Veterans' History Project. Congratulations, Illinois!!!

Court Reporter Rita Corson, Court Reporter Julia Jewell, and I, with the video assistance of Cheryl Walker, captured the story of three Veterans. If you would like to take part in this rewarding ceremony this fall, please let me know.

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White has been a partner with the Library of



*Court Reporter Rita Corson, Secretary of State Jesse White, Court Reporter Julia Jewell, Court Reporter Jill Layton.*

Congress in the Veterans' History Project since November, 2003, and officially launched the Illinois Veterans' History Project in November, 2005. The Illinois Veterans' History Project began with the collection of written information about Illinois Veterans through the use of the Illinois Patriot Information Form. In September, 2007, the Secretary of State's office entered the next phase of the project, collecting oral (audio and video) histories of Illinois Veterans. These histories are now available through the Illinois Digital Archives. Cheryl Walker, Illinois Veterans' History Project Coordinator, Illinois State Library, may accompany you to the interviews and videotape them! She can also serve as the interviewer.

ILCRA is pleased to inform you we have worked hand in hand with Irene

Cahill of NCRF and Cheryl Walker of the Illinois State Library to update the Veterans' History Project information on the ILCRA website. It gives you the background information and step-by-step instructions. Following the instructions, there is a link to all the documents you will need.

A Veterans History Project is very easy to do, whether it is done with several Veterans and court reporters or just one-on-one. Using your unique talent as a court reporter and helping to preserve these stories will be one of the most rewarding experiences of your career.

If you have any questions regarding the Veterans' History Project, please do not hesitate to contact me, Jill Layton, ILCRA VHP Chair, at [Jill.LaytonCSR@gmail.com](mailto:Jill.LaytonCSR@gmail.com) or 217-849-3871 (work).





# Lake County's Third Annual VHP

Vernita Allen-Williams,  
Vietnam Veteran Vincent Martorano,  
Lake County Assistant Public Defender Greg Ticsay



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# Court Reporters Lauded for Project Preserving Veterans' Stories

By Don O'Brian

Staff Writer; reprinted from wig.com

**QUINCY** — The way June Otte sees it, she and her fellow court reporters in the Eighth Judicial Circuit had already received their reward.

"It was an honor to be a part of it," Otte said of her involvement with the Veterans History Project. "It was an honor just to listen to their stories."

Last year, court reporters from throughout the circuit, which includes eight counties, gathered at the Adams County Courthouse on four occasions to participate in the project, which was sponsored by the Library of Congress.

The project "collects, preserves and makes accessible personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war," according to the Library of Congress.

Court reporters spent anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour transcribing veterans' stories. Those transcriptions were shared with the Library of Congress and the Illinois State Library.

On Friday, the court reporters were honored with the Adams County Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award, an annual honor given to an individual or group that has exhibited outstanding community service. Judge Scott Walden, presiding judge in Adams County, said the group was more than deserving.

"What they did cast the legal system in a good light," Walden said during a Law Day luncheon at the Kroc Center.

Court reporter Linda Snyder, who helped organize the project, said 68 veterans were interviewed and close to 1,000 pictures were scanned as part of the project.

"It was an honor just to be part of the Veterans History Project," Snyder said. "We never expected this."

The group of court reporters honored included Snyder, Otte, Kent Evans, Shannon Niekamp, Lori Peters, Jeannie O'Neill, Nicole Kopec, Jane Borrowman, Linda Watt, Rachel Boylen, Cindy Waibel, Rita Corson and Kathy Genenbacher. The Eighth Judicial Circuit includes courts in Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Mason, Menard, Pike and Schuyler counties.

Also honored at the luncheon was the firm of Schmiedeskamp, Roberston, Neu and Mitchell. The firm was named the recipient of the John Evans Award, which is presented by Quincy University's Pre-Law and Political Science Department. Assistant State's Attorney Josh Jones, who serves as the coach for QU's mock trial team, said the firm was instrumental in helping with funding this past season.

The luncheon capped off a full morning of Law Day activities. Several members of the judicial system and law enforcement gave presentations at St. Francis School. Judge William Mays and Assistant State's Attorney Jennifer Cifaldi were among those who presented. The Adams County Sheriff's Department, Quincy Police Department and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation Department were also represented.

Retired Fourth District Appellate Court Justice Robert W. Cook delivered the keynote address. Cook served as an Adams County Circuit Court judge from 1983 to 1991. His talk centered on the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta.

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# It All Started with One Very Strong Mother!

By Kathie Grove

Recently, myself and two reporters with our office, Kristin Barnes and Barbara Johnston, had the honor and, truly, the pleasure of reporting a very unique Veteran's History Project through the Illinois State Library and facilitated by Cheryl Walker, who tirelessly works in our state to record as many Veteran's History Projects as she can.

What made this experience so unique is that we reported the histories of five – yes, I said five! – brothers that served this country at various times in our history and with various branches of the service. I had the pleasure of meeting them all, reporting one, and sitting in on two others. Both Barb and Kristin could not believe what a great experience it was!

The Baltazar family's roots started in Mexico City, and the family settled on the south side of Chicago. Dad was a musician and often traveled, and Mom was the mainstay of the family of nine. Mom taught them all, not just the girls, how to sew, cook, and grow into quality adults who value their country and, above all, their family. She never let them forget how lucky they were to be in this country compared to where she came from. There was never any question but that they would do her proud and serve THEIR country. It was such a gift to meet these gentlemen. One of them continues to sew to this day!



As the brothers were different age groups, they served in different times in our country's history and all had unique experiences. I took the history of the youngest, who served in Vietnam. Of all the boys, he was the most affected, not only by his time in Vietnam, but by the reaction he received upon coming home. We have all heard about it, but until you actually see someone's face twisted in pain over the thought of that time, it doesn't quite hit home. The effects of this time of service are still with him. All he wants is for his entire family, not just himself, to be recognized for their unique service to

this country. Apart from the family that was the basis of the movie "Saving Private Ryan," they know of no other families that had five brothers serve. They have tried to contact the Governor and the President to be recognized, but haven't received a response.

So, aside from encouraging all of you to look for the opportunity to do a Veteran's History Project, if there is one among us who has any "inside track" into someone that could get these gentlemen recognized, feel free to e-mail me at [kathie@groveandassoc.com](mailto:kathie@groveandassoc.com)!



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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Illinois-Court-Reporters-Association/147418091950835>



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# Wisconsin Badgers Men's Basketball Team's Love for Captioners

In case you missed it, the Wisconsin Badger's Men's Basketball team had several entertaining interactions with the captioners working at the NCAA tournament. Click on the links below to see a sampling of the articles about it.

**March 21, 2015 article**

[http://espn.go.com/blog/collegEBasketBallNation/post/\\_/id/105479/nigel-hayes-and-his-wisconsin-teammates-are-fascinated-by-the-ncaa-stenographer](http://espn.go.com/blog/collegEBasketballNation/post/_/id/105479/nigel-hayes-and-his-wisconsin-teammates-are-fascinated-by-the-ncaa-stenographer)

**April 3, 2015 article**

<http://bleacherreport.com/articles/2419423-wisconsin-nigel-hayes-ramps-up-stenographer-battle-before-final-four>

**April 3, 2015 article**

<http://fansided.com/2015/04/03/wisconsin-court-stenographers-wish-badgers-luck-final-four/>

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**Editor:** Innovative AMC, 43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, 152-269, Ashburn, VA 20148.  
Ph: 703-729-4861, Email: [Imatson@innovativeamc.com](mailto:Imatson@innovativeamc.com).

#### Advertising information:

Illinois Court Reporters Association,  
43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, 152-269  
Ashburn, VA 20148  
Ph: 703-729-4861  
Fax: 703-935-2266  
Email: [contact@ilcra.org](mailto:contact@ilcra.org)

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## **ILCRA 2015 DATES**

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