

# AD INFINITUM

*President's Message*

## Different but Alike

Summer 2007



*President Amy Haught*

Isn't it strange how people can be so similar and yet so different, court reporters included? I have learned through the years that most court reporters play a musical instrument of some kind. That's probably why it was so natural for us to write shorthand, as we were already accustomed to the process of it flowing from the brain to the fingers. Even though we all write shorthand, we don't all write alike. And, thankfully, we don't all like the same area of the profession or part of the market would be saturated with reporters while the other areas were in desperate need of reporters. I'm glad everyone didn't want to be an official when I started in 1983

or I might not have a job.. Even though we desperately need more captioners, if all of the freelancers, officials and CARTers became captioners, then that market would be flooded. It's great that we don't all like the same thing!

When I was growing up and I would question why people are so different, my mom always said the world would be a boring place if everyone liked the same thing. I think this was a modified quote from an old Cary Grant movie, "The Bishop's Wife," that went like this: "We all come from our own little planets. That's why we're all different. That's what makes life interesting."

Court reporters are some of the most interesting people I know. I've said it before and I'll say it again: I've made friends in this profession and this association that will last a lifetime. My friends and I have some of the same interests, but at the same time we are very different. Some of these friends include past presidents of this association, and I am confident that, although we all had the same vision in leading this association, we went about it in different ways. That didn't make any of us less or more effective than the others; our methodology was just different. Maybe that's part of the reason why this association

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**Elections Committee:** To be activated when necessary

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McClarty, and Retha Meyerhoff

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Winter	January 15	December 15	Summer	July 15	June 15

# President's Message

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continues to be effective in working for you. A new perspective is good. This association is not stale or stagnant, but fluid, because it is not just the association of a few but of many, the membership as a whole.

It is so important that we all present court reporting in a positive light and work diligently towards recruitment of students and support of our existing court reporting schools. Each of you possess a talent or gift that would in some way enable you to give back to this profession. Use those gifts in whatever way is made available to you. Even if you think a specific area is not your forte, I encourage you to give it a try. You might surprise yourself. If public speaking isn't your bag but realtime is, maybe you could ask your friend to do the talking while you write realtime during a presentation at a local high school or grade school. And if you have a friend in the local media but you just can't picture yourself being interviewed for an article, ask him or her to write an article and provide the name and contact information for a colleague you know who has a way with words.

As an update from the last President's Message, for those of you who haven't heard, the Labor Agreement for the Official Court Reporters in Cook County was signed and is in place.

This is my last President's Message, as my term will expire on September 8 and our new

president will be installed. This experience has been both challenging and rewarding, and I thank you for having the confidence in me to allow me the opportunity to serve in this way. It has truly been a privilege. When I have concluded my term as president, I will continue working to promote this profession. I ask you all to continue to do the same. Our work in supporting and promoting this profession is what keeps it alive for all of us and those who will follow.

— Amy Haught

## IMPORTANT ILCRA DATES

**AUG. 9-12:** NCRA Annual Convention, Dallas.

**AUG. 18:** CSR Examination, Chicago and Southern Illinois area.

**SEPT. 7-8:** ILCRA Annual Convention, Tinley Park (Chicago suburb).

**NOV. 3:** RPR, RMR, RDR (written); CRR, CBC, CCP, CLVS (written); South Suburban College and another location to be announced in the Chicago area; and Sparks College, Shelbyville.

**DEC. 15:** CSR Examination (Chicago and Southern Illinois Area) Application filing deadline: October 5, 2007.

**APRIL 26, 2008:** CSR Examination, Chicago and Southern Illinois Area. Application filing deadline: February 27, 2008.

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# It's Convention Time!

by Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag, CSR, RDR, CRR, NCRA Director

I'd like to make a quick advertisement for attending the NCRA National Convention in Dallas August 9 through 12. If you've never been to a national convention, you'll come away inspired, reinvigorated, and generally refreshed — with a great tax deduction! You'll make friends for life, become involved in paths you hadn't realized you wanted to go down, get excited about our profession again, and have fun, fun, fun.

The single most important reason to go to Dallas, however, is the historic business meeting where Direct Member Voting will be discussed and, hopefully, instituted. You'll be part of history!

As you know, an amendment has been proposed to modify NCRA's current bylaws and allow members not in attendance at the annual business meeting to vote on contested elections and bylaws amendments online, through a secure site, within a 12-hour window of the close of the business meeting.

Traditionally, those attending the business meeting — and, therefore, voting — have had the benefit of hearing argument from the floor and seeing the faces of those in contested elections. Through the miracle of online streaming realtime reporting, the business meeting will be simultaneously posted on the NCRA Web site, as it has been for several years, and those not in attendance at the meeting can follow the words as they're being spoken and/or review the archived transcript afterwards. In the future, we hope to have it simultaneously Web cast so that you can even see the proceedings, but that's cost prohibitive at this point.

Unfortunately, even in years when we've had big attendance at conventions — like New York last year and Chicago in 2004 — relatively few voting members attend the business meeting. In New York more than 1,800 attended the convention and about 300 attended the business meeting, of which a smaller number were voting members. Less than one percent of our members are

*(Continued on page 5)*



**NCRA MIDYEAR CONVENTION IN VANCOUVER** Left photo: Executive Director Nancy Davis (left) and ILCRA member Pat Byers stand in front of the Fairmont Hotel in Vancouver. Right photo; left to right are: Teresa A. Kordick, NCRA Director; Bonni Shuttleworth, ILCRA Education Liaison; Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag, NCRA Director; Nancy Davis, ILCRA Executive Director; and Pat Byers, ILCRA member; enjoying the conference.

## It's Convention Time!

*(Continued from page 4)*

making decisions for NCRA's 17,000 eligible voting members. Here's our chance to change that and have our own say, in person or online.

You'll also get to approve the slate of new directors recommended by the Nominating Committee — our own Judy Lehman from Shelbyville, Adam Miller from Delaware, and Shirley Hall from Pennsylvania. There was an outstanding field of very qualified director candidates this year, and the selections were very challenging. We're proud of you, Judy!

There is a contested election for the office of Secretary/Treasurer between Tami Smith from Michigan and Doug Friend from Oregon. It's a great thing when too many people want to serve NCRA members, and I think contested elections bring a refreshing energy to conventions

This is the year to go to Dallas, go to the business meeting, and decide if you want to amend the bylaws to allow Direct Member Voting when

members can't physically be present — and be part of history!

Maybe you don't want to change and you have great faith and trust in your peers. Wonderful! Then go vote to leave things the way they are. Our individual choices are what make this association so great!

But if, in fact, you want to be able to "attend" the meeting when you have to stay home due to business, judicial, or family concerns and still want to have a say in the future of your association and profession, come and vote to change the bylaws to allow that to happen — again, with a 12-hour window through a secure Web site, online, one vote per eligible voting member.

So mark your calendars for August, come to the convention in Dallas, learn from fabulous speakers, get reinvigorated, be historical — and, yes, have fun, fun, fun! I look forward to seeing you there!

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# NCRA Newsflash

## REALTIME TRAINING BILL ADVANCES IN SENATE

In April, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee held a markup on S675, the Training for Realtime Writers Act. This bill would create a competitive grant system to train realtime writers and captioners. S675 passed out of the Committee on a voice vote.

## ER PROJECT SETS UP LETTER CAMPAIGN

As part of the ongoing support for court reporters facing ER related challenges, NCRA has set up an e-mail account to collect articles appearing in the media regarding electronic record. If you see an article that mentions electronic recording or court reporters (positive or negative), please e-mail NCRA at NCRAERTF@ncrahq.org . Please provide the date of the story, newspaper name, title of story, name of reporter (if applicable), your name and state/province, your e-mail address and phone number.

## SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE

The Small Business Health Plan (SBHP) Coalition, of which NCRA is an active member, has joined together to raise awareness on Capitol Hill of the many uninsured Americans and the need to address this situation. Democrats and Republicans agree that the issue of healthcare is of paramount importance, and many legislative solutions are being examined. The SBHP coalition urges Congress to heed the growing call of small business owners nationwide for increased access to quality, affordable healthcare for their employees and their employees' families.

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## Newly Certified Illinois Reporters

Congratulations to these reporters from Illinois who achieved the following certifications in May.

### REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL REPORTERS

Bernier, Jennifer, *Chicago*

Gardner, Kristi, *Lombard*

Williams, Aneesha, *Chicago*

Winn, Lori, *Washington, IL*

### CERTIFIED REALTIME REPORTERS

Otto, Kimberly, *Chicago*

### REGISTERED MERIT REPORTER

Koenig, Constance, *Plainfield*

### REGISTERED DIPLOMATE REPORTER

Nee, Marianne, *Chicago*

### CERTIFIED BROADCAST CAPTIONER

Johnson, Jennifer, *Washington*

.....  
*Information from the Executive Director*

## Update on the 'Piasaw Bird'

At the ILCRA annual convention last year in Decatur, we had a speaker who portrayed Captain William Clark. Someone from the audience asked him about a Piasaw bird petroglyph. He said he knew nothing about it. After the presentation, the questioner spoke to "Captain Clark" and he told her he had never heard of these bird petroglyphs, but he would see what he could find.

Thereafter he spoke with Jim Denny, a historian for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Denny has a specialty in Missouri rivers and is an authority on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. He knew about the petroglyphs, originally around the Alton area, and that French explorers from Canada noted their existence. Alton is north of the Mississippi/Missouri River confluence, and he confirmed that Clark probably never saw them. Denny also said Clark made no mention of them in his journal.

# Why W4H?

By Kathy Cortopassi, RMR, CRR, CCP

First off, before I answer the *why*, I have to answer the *what*. What is W4H? It is the “Walk 4 Hearing,” a fundraising and fun-raising time when people in the Chicago and Northwest Indiana areas are going to get together on October 6th, 2007 at 10 a.m. Not just *any* people, special people — people who care about people who have hearing loss. Do you care about people with hearing loss?

Allow me to tell you a few stories — real ones that have happened to people I know. If you had no reason to care before, maybe I can persuade you to join me in caring about this wonderful group of people.

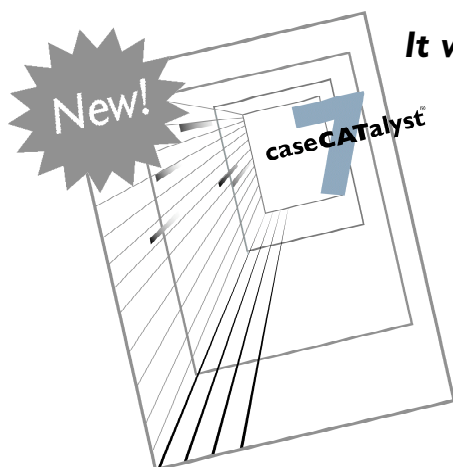
The first story is about a lady who is *the* reason why I made the jump from court reporting to CART/captioning. I was asked to provide CART for a play/musical. I got the script, prepped it, went to the job, did my job and started packing up. I had no idea who my client was in that huge auditorium. I found out, though, soon enough. A



woman in her 50s came up to me and asked me if I was the CART provider. (Wasn't it obvious? I was the only one with the steno machine and laptop!) I said yes. She dropped to her knees and hugged me around my waist. She rose up and thanked me for the best birthday present she had ever received. She told me how she and her daughter's “thing” was going to the theater every week. When she lost her hearing, that part of her life ended, too. She lost that common bond, that special time with her daughter. She hadn't been to the theater in 20 years...until this show. She understood finally what was being said. The songs were from the 70s, so she remembered how they sounded. She could sing along with the actors. She so thoroughly enjoyed herself — because of me. Without me, she'd be sitting at home while her family enjoyed the show.

Many live performance theaters in this country still do not provide CART or captioning, so “staying at home” is a common occurrence to

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- Save transcript views for cursor size, display font, color selections and more; you'll save time by simply selecting a view for realtime, editing, proofreading or CART.

## Why W4H?

(Continued from page 7)

people with hearing loss. Although I know one brave Chicagoan who gets the scripts when she arrives at the theater and attempts to read through it in the hour before the show and follow along in a dark theater with a pen light. Can you see her head bobbing up and down, looking at the action, the script, the action, the script.

Next, recently, a client/friend told me the judge gave custody of his daughter to his hearing wife because the judge said “you cannot hear her crying at night when you take your hearing aids out, so therefore you cannot be as good of a parent as your wife can.”

Discrimination still exists, folks. Inaccessibility still exists. Even in this post-ADA world. This is the *why*. This is why I volunteered to co-chair the Walk 4 Hearing in Chicago.

Do any of you know how much work is involved in this endeavor? (Yes, Houston, the aliens have landed and have abducted Kathy’s brain, that’s for sure.) I didn’t do this because I don’t have enough work. Did I tell you I have five kids? Did I tell you I have two businesses? (Creative Memories scrapbooking consultant.) I didn’t do this for my health — this is *stressful*! I did it because I feel like I can make a difference.

So why do I tell you all this? Because I need your help. I need a bunch of caring people to do some small things for me, things that won’t take a lot of time; but, still, things that will *make a difference*. Things that will help people with hearing loss. None of which will take more than two hours — and that’s only if you decide to come to the “Walk” and walk! So, here’s how I can use your help.

**1) Help me find sponsors.** Court reporting agencies (hint, hint) that provide CART/captioning services would be *great* sponsors because it



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Do you know a law firm that might sponsor us? A doctor or clinic associated with hearing (E.N.T., audiologists, cochlear implant doctors) that you know that would sponsor us? Can you ask your spouse, parents, friends, neighbors if their employers would sponsor us? Anyone you know affected by hearing loss?

**2) Form a team** and help raise support that way. A court reporting office can form a team and have all their reporters take part. Treat ‘em to lunch afterwards. Make a day of it. The Walk is right across the street from the Lincoln Park Zoo, folks! You could invite all your clients to join your team, too. It’s a great way to promote yourself to your clients in a positive light — doing something for others. Let me know you want to do a team so I can jump up and down on my bed until I break it and my teens can call the guys to take me away in the straightjacket! :)

**3) Go to the website and make an online donation** and get others in your email list to do so, too. Go to [www.walk4hearing.org](http://www.walk4hearing.org) and go to the Fall walks, choose Chicago — and I’ll give ya a penny to guess which team I formed! Obviously I’d like you to donate to my team. As a co-chair, I really should set a good example here, folks. Not only that, but I’m representing *you* — the profession of court reporting, CART and captioning. You want to be known as a profession that *cares*; as a person that *cares*. You want to make a difference in the lives of people with hearing loss, I know you do!

**More reasons why:** If we can create a large fund from thousands of dollars in donations, we can help people with hearing loss obtain captioning and CART for situations when people will not pay for it. Many live performance theaters won’t because they can’t afford it. So let’s take away that excuse and say, “Oh, yes, you can!”

We can bring more jobs to our profession. We

(Continued on page 9)



## Why W4H?

*(Continued from page 8)*

We can bring more jobs to our profession. We can help purchase ALDs (Assistive Listening Devices) and allow them to be used for meetings/conventions/seminars, etc. when the group sponsoring the event has no idea what ALDs are! *We can make a difference!*

We can also try to get the message to the next generation with future hearing loss: iPod users! Someone needs to reach these kids before they do permanent damage to their ears, to tell them to set the level no higher than the middle of their volume control. Someone needs to teach these kids with the message of how devastating hearing loss is so they will protect their hearing. This takes time and money, folks.

Come on, you know this is an important cause. Won't you help me? Won't you help people with hearing loss? Thanks in advance!

*Kathy is President of Voice to Print Captioning in Dyer, Indiana. She was a freelance court reporter for 10 years before jumping to CART and captioning 13 years ago. She can be reached at captions4u@sbcglobal.net.*

## The Reporting Yogi

*By Carolyn Dasher, CSR, RPR*

**E**very day is a new experience for us all, a different case, a new witness, another transcript due. But do we really appreciate all that is around us? Unless we go through some unexpected trouble, it's hard for us to really look around and be thankful for the good in our lives.

I know, we are so darn busy that it's hard to look around, let alone think of positive things sometimes. But, thankfully, my writer works. My computer doesn't just shut down by itself (I still get weird error messages...) My clerk had a happy face on this morning. Heck, I could even hear the side bar today without getting a headache! It's a good day!

The point is, good is all around us — in the birds that are singing, the train that comes on time, the witness that speaks clearly and concisely. It's the little things in life that touch our heart and make every day brighter. Look for those little things and be thankful.

*Reprinted from CCRA online*



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# ILCRA Presents 2007/2008 Slate of Officers

The Nominating Committee, consisting of Mary Beth Rollins, Chair, Pat Houlf and Kathy Smith, presents the following slate of officers for 2007/2008 Executive Board of ILCRA.

**PRESIDENT:**

**LeAnn Hibler**

**PRESIDENT ELECT:**

**Jill Layton**

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

**Nancy LaBella**

**TREASURER:**

**Lyn Grooms**

**SECRETARY:**

**Judy Mosier**

**REGION ONE REPS:**

**Seymour Wolfe**

**Joe Rickhoff**

**REGION TWO REPS:**

**Melissa Clagg**

**Stephanie Rennegarbe**

**LEGISLATIVE REP:**

**Dolores Doubet**

**IMMEDIATE**

**PAST PRESIDENT:**

**Amy Haught**

**EDUCATION LIAISON:**

**Bonni Shuttleworth**

**LEANN HIBLER**

LeAnn M. Hibler has been a freelance reporter in the Joliet area since 1987. She has since obtained her CRR and RMR. In 2000, LeAnn launched her own agency, LMH Certified Reporting, specializing in realtime deposition services for attorneys, and communication access realtime translation (C.A.R.T.) for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. She has had the privilege of working with Patricia Graves and her company, Caption First, by providing CART services to their many clients. LeAnn is a member of

the Illinois Court Reporters Association and the National Court Reporters Association. She has been married to Ken, Jr. for 12 years and is a lifelong resident of Joliet, Illinois. She loves spending time outdoors and volunteers at the local Humane Society. In fact, LeAnn considers herself the “neighborhood dog catcher and returner.”

**JILL LAYTON**

Jill graduated from Sparks College in Shelbyville in April of 1981 and started as an Official Court Reporter in Danville, Vermilion County, Fifth Judicial Circuit in early 1982. She moved to Robinson, Crawford County, Second Judicial Circuit in January of 1984 to follow her soon-to-be husband. When he was transferred back, she followed and has been job sharing in the Fifth Judicial Circuit or freelancing in the Coles/Cumberland County area since September of 1986. She is currently an Official Court Reporter in the Fifth Judicial Circuit and serves as resident reporter in Cumberland County. Jill currently serves as chairperson of the ILCRA Student/Mentor Committee. She lives in Toledo with her husband of 23 years, and her 16-year-old daughter. Her 19-year-old son is currently serving in the military. She is a very active member of the Strasburg American Legion Auxiliary, and Toledo Town & Country Women’s Club — and very active with her children and their sporting and school activities.

**NANCY LABELLA**

Nancy has been an Illinois CSR since 1985, working her first year as a freelance reporter and then as a state Official

Court Reporter in Cook County. She was assigned to the Criminal Division for ten years. Nancy worked as a freelance reporter and currently is employed as a Federal Official Court Reporter. She is an RMR, CRR and a Federal Certified Realtime Reporter. Nancy has held several positions on the boards of the Illinois Official Court Reporters Association and the Cook County Court Reporters Association, including co-legislative chairperson, treasurer and vice-president. She currently serves as Secretary on the ILCRA Executive Board.

**LYN M. GROOMS**

Lyn is a captioner/CART reporter across the state of Illinois. She is currently ILCRA’s treasurer and chairperson of the CART Committee. She has more than 35 years of reporting experience, serving as a State Official Reporter, Federal Official Reporter and freelance reporter. Lyn is married and lives in the Springfield, Illinois area.

**JUDY MOSIER**

Judy graduated from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale in 1980. Judy freelanced in the southern Illinois area until 1985 when she moved to the Chicago area. She continued freelancing there and has owned her firm for 20 years. Judy is a single Mom of a 19-year-old daughter who is in college at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. This will be Judy’s first year on the ILCRA Executive Board and she looks forward to meeting the members of ILCRA and serving on the board.

*(Continued on page 11)*

## ILCRA Presents 2007/2008 Slate of Officers

*(Continued from page 10)*

### **SEYMOUR WOLFE:**

Seymour is an Illinois CSR, RPR, RMR and FAPR. He was an agency owner in Chicago for many years, and has worked in all phases of court reporting, including being an official reporter, freelance reporter and hearing reporter for the U.S. Air Force. He has served on many advisory boards for court reporting schools and has been very active in promoting computer technology. Seymour also served on the NCRA Ethics Committee.

### **JOE RICKHOFF**

Joe Rickhoff has been a reporter in the Chicago area since 1993. He has since obtained his CRR and RMR. Joe worked as a freelance reporter from 1993 to 2001. In 2001, Joe became an Official Reporter in

the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in Chicago. Joe has been married for 16 years to Susan and resides in the Southwest suburbs of Chicago.

### **MELISSA CLAGG**

Melissa graduated from Sparks College in Shelbyville in 1984 and started freelancing in the Mattoon area and then eventually moved to Champaign-Urbana, where she continued her freelance work. In 1987, she accepted a temporary official position in Urbana, Champaign County Courthouse, 6th Judicial Circuit, which turned into a full-time position in 1988. She remains there today. Melissa holds the following designations in Illinois: CSR, RDR, CRR and CBC. She

resides in Savoy and loves to spend her time outdoors landscaping during the summer and interior decorating and scrapbooking during the winter. Melissa also enjoys traveling.

### **STEPHANIE RENNEGARBE**

Stephanie has been reporting since 1988 as a freelancer — doing arbitrations, trials, depositions, inquests, grand jury proceedings, and conventions. She holds the following designations: Illinois CSR, RDR, CRR, and CBC; and Missouri CCR. She serves as a member of the Advisory Board for the Judicial Reporting and Captioning Technology Program at John A. Logan College in Carterville, Illinois. She obtained a bachelor of science degree through

*(Continued on page 12)*

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### Disorder in the Court

- ☺ Q. This myasthenia gravis -- does it affect your memory at all?  
A. Yes.  
Q. And in what ways does it affect your memory?  
A. I forget.  
Q. You forget. Can you give us an example of something that you've forgotten?
- ☺ Q. What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?  
A. Gucci sweats and Reeboks.
- ☺ Q. You say the stairs went down to the basement?  
A. Yes.  
Q. And these stairs, did they go up also?
- ☺ Q. How old is your son -- the one living with you.  
A. Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.  
Q. How long has he lived with you?  
A: Forty-five years.
- ☺ Q. And where was the location of the accident?  
A. Approximately milepost 499.  
Q. And where is milepost 499?  
A. Probably between milepost 498 and 500.
- ☺ Q. Sir, what is your IQ?  
A. Well, I can see pretty well, I think.
- ☺ Q. Are you qualified to give a urine sample?
- ☺ Q. Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?
- ☺ Q. Were you present when your picture was taken?
- ☺ Q. Was it you or your younger brother who was killed in the war?
- ☺ Q. You were there until the time you left, is that true?

## ILCRA Presents 2007/2008 Slate of Officers

*(Continued from page 11)*

the University of Alabama in conjunction with the NCRA program; graduating in 1996. Stephanie lives in Addieville, Illinois with her husband, Greg, and her two daughters, Shaina and Shawn. She spends her spare time watching her daughters participate in sporting events and trying to get as much travel time as possible.

### **DOLORES (DEE) DOUBET**

Dee is a retired Official Court Reporter, after having spent 34 years working in all six counties of the Ninth Circuit. She has now opened her own freelancing firm, D's Deposition Services, working out of Hanna City in Peoria County, and provides court reporting services for depositions, public hearings and meetings, workers' comp. cases, arbitrations, and also fills in on a regular basis in Federal Court in Peoria. She is a long-time member of both the National Court Reporters Association and the Illinois Court Reporters Association. She has been married to Dennis for four years and is a "Mom" to her two Shih Tzus, Bruno and Domino, who were adopted from the Fuzzy Paws Shih Tzu Rescue two years ago. She has been on the Board of Directors of her local YMCA for over 20 years and is a deacon and member of the bell choir at her church. In her spare time she loves to scuba dive all over the world, take photographs, ride her motorcycle and play at golf.

### **AMY HAUGHT**

Amy has served on the ILCRA Board since 2001 and

has served as President since 2005. She is a CSR, RMR and CRR and has been a presenter for realtime seminars. Amy currently serves as a member of the Advisory Board for the Judicial Reporting and Captioning Technology Program at John A. Logan College in Carterville, Illinois. She also coordinated and is a member of the Formbook Committee of Official Court Reporters which is currently working to compile a formbook of guidelines for uniformity in transcript preparation for Official Court Reporters in the State of Illinois. Amy and her husband, Joe, and their dogs, Gracie and George, reside in West Frankfort. In her spare time she enjoys assisting her husband in breeding, raising and racing standardbred racehorses.

*Any eligible professional member not slated by the Nominating Committee who desires to run for election must file a letter of intention to challenge the slated nominee with the Executive Director, Nancy C. Davis, 41 SW Crescent Drive, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864, at least thirty (30) days prior to the annual business meeting (no later than August 5, 2007). In the event of such a challenge, a special election will be held at the ILCRA Annual Convention, September 7-8, 2007, in Tinley Park, Illinois. Such nomination and supporting material shall be posted in the registration area of the annual meeting site prior to the annual meeting.*



**Where:** Hyatt Regency Woodfield, 1800 East Golf Road, Schaumburg, IL

**When:** October 3-5, 2008

Stay tuned for additional information.

**ILLINOIS COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION**  
**ANNUAL CONFERENCE & CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINARS**  
**PROJECT PROFESSIONALISM**  
**SEPTEMBER 7-8, 2007**

HOLIDAY INN SELECT CONVENTION CENTER, TINLEY PARK

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6**

5:30 p.m. **REALTIME CONTEST**

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7**

9:00-5:00 Convention Registration

9:00-2:00 **GARY L. SONNTAG MEMORIAL SPEED CONTEST**

10:00-6:00 Visit Exhibit Displays

11:00-12:00 Box Lunch

12:00-1:30 **SESSION 1: CAT USER TRAINING**

**BREAKOUTS** (CaseCATalyst, ProCAT, Cheetah, StenoCAT and Eclipse) These sessions will be taught by trainers from the individual software companies. Attendees will learn editing techniques as well as other CAT software information. Reporters will share expertise and tricks of the trade.

12:30-3:00 **SESSION 2: TOUR OF ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY** Argonne National Laboratory is one of the U.S. Department of Energy's largest research centers. It was at this laboratory where the first controlled nuclear chain reaction was discovered.

1:30-1:45 **Break** (Beverages in Exhibit Area)

1:45-3:15 **SESSION 3: CAT USER TRAINING** continued

3:15-3:30 **Break** (Beverages in Exhibit Area)

3:30-5:00 **SESSION 4: PROFESSIONAL BREAKOUTS** (Freelance/Agency Owners, State and Federal Officials, CART/Captioners, Students, Teachers, Scopists) These sessions will be moderated by ILCRA Board Members and will be open discussions about the issues important to each group.

6:00-6:30 **BUSINESS MEETING** for voting on Bylaws amendments only.

6:30-7:00 **MEET AND GREET STUDENTS**, Cash Bar and Snacks

7:00-8:00 **DINNER** (Cash Bar)

8:00-10:00 **DJ, DANCING, NETWORKING**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8**

8:00-Noon Convention Registration

8:00-5:00 Visit Exhibit Displays

7:30-8:30 **BREAKFAST**

8:30-10:00 **SESSION 5: PROJECT PROFESSIONALISM** (Jim Mathis) With ever-increasing competition in the marketplace, it is more important than ever to project a professional image. This seminar will train in positive, right attitudes that make the difference in the workplace and in life and will teach individuals how to confront from a win-win perspective and avoid the most common mistakes made in conflict.

10:00-10:15 **Break** (Beverages in Exhibit Area)

10:15-11:45 **CONCURRENT: SESSIONS:**

**SESSION 6: WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD COMPUTERS?** (Scott Rhine) What exactly are viruses, worms, keyloggers, rootkits and phishing attacks? What can they do to me? How can I defend myself against them? All of these questions and more will be answered in an "everything you ever wanted to know about computer security and more" session.

**SESSION 7: WHEN HEARING AIDS ARE NOT ENOUGH — INTRO TO IMPLANTABLE DEVICES** (Kathy Allen) This seminar will explain the mechanics of cochlear implant and how it assists a person with a hearing loss. You will also learn why a recipient of a cochlear implant may use the services of a CART provider

11:45-Noon Visit Exhibit Displays

Noon-2:00 **BUSINESS MEETING & AWARDS LUNCHEON**

2:00-2:15 **Break** (Visit Exhibit Displays)

2:15-3:45 **CONCURRENT SESSIONS:**

**SESSION 8: LIVING IN THREE-QUARTER TIME** (Jim Mathis) What if you could reduce your wasted time by just five minutes every hour? Productivity would jump 8.3 percent. This presentation explores time management in the areas of personal performance and competence that you will be able to apply immediately.

**SESSION 9: HOW TO BE AN EDUCATED CONSUMER IN THE DIGITAL WORLD** (Scott Rhine) In this seminar you will learn how to buy a new computer (pricing, choosing specs, etc.), how to optimize and upgrade your existing computer hardware and operating system and what to know to stay up to date in the constantly changing world of technology.

3:45-4:00 **Break** (Visit Exhibit Displays)

4:00-5:30 **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

**SESSION 10: HOW TO HANDLE STRESS AND PREVENT CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME FOR COURT REPORTERS** (Dr. Jeffrey Smith) In his usual entertaining fashion, Dr. Smith will show you how the most common condition for court reporters, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, can be prevented, how to move yourself toward wellness and happiness and away from stress and sickness. What is the most appropriate lifestyle for you?

**SESSION 11-REALTIME TEST PREP/PEP SESSION** (Amy Haught and Bonni Shuttleworth) This session will include advanced realtime writing techniques, practice dictation, and a mock Certified Realtime Reporter Exam.

5:30-5:45 **WRAP-UP** Evaluations, Door Prizes

# CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CSR# 084-00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nickname for badge: \_\_\_\_\_ ILCRA Member:: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Please check one:

- Freelance Reporter
- Agency Owner
- Student
- State Official
- Federal Official
- Teacher
- Scopist
- Captioner

Please check if you plan to attend the following:

- Session 1: CAT Training Session
- Session 2: Tour of Argonne National Laboratory
- Session 3: CAT Training Session (continued)
- Session 4: Professional Breakouts
- Session 5: CAT Training Session (continued)
- Meet and Greet Students
- Dinner and DJ Entertainment
- Buffet Breakfast

## All inclusive registration (Prior to August 8, 2007 )

- ILCRA Member (\$225)
- Non-Member (\$325)
- ILCRA Dues (\$95)\*
- Speed Contest (\$60)
- Realtime Contest (\$60) *or*
- Both Contests (\$100)
- Assoc. Member/Guest (\$95)
- Guest's

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## REGISTRATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 8, 2007

Late/On-site registration *additional* \$75

\$50 cancellation fee after September 1, 2007

\*Join ILCRA now and attend convention at member rate.

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED/CHARGED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

PLEASE MAIL YOUR CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO:  
ILCRA

41 SW Crescent Drive, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Phone: 1-800-656-2467 FAX: 618/242-2143,

Register online at [www.ILCRA.org](http://www.ILCRA.org) (Dues and Fees) or

Visa  MasterCard Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Card# \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If you will be attending the CAT Training Sessions, please indicate which session you will attend:

- CaseCATalyst \_\_\_\_\_
- ProCAT \_\_\_\_\_
- Eclipse \_\_\_\_\_
- Cheetah \_\_\_\_\_
- StenoCAT \_\_\_\_\_

CONCURRENT SEMINARS: Please check one for each set of seminars.

- Session 6: Computers *or*
- Session 7: Cochlear Implants
- Session 8: Living in 3/4 Time *or*
- Session 9: Digital World
- Session 10: Carpal Tunnel *or*
- Session 11: Realtime Test Prep/Pep

## One-day registration (Prior to August 8, 2007 )

I will attend:  Friday  Saturday

- ILCRA Member (\$175)
- Non-Member (\$275)
- ILCRA Dues (\$95)\*
- Speed Contest (\$60)
- Realtime Contest (\$60) *or*
- Both Contests (\$100)
- Assoc. Member/Guest (\$55)
- Family member for tours (\$10)
- Guest's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## ABOUT THE HOTEL:

**T**he Holiday Inn Select Convention Center, Tinley Park is a full service hotel with 202 deluxe guest rooms including 10 luxurious whirlpool suites. In room amenities include free wireless internet access, refrigerators, coffee makers, individual climate control, speaker phones with modem and voice mail, irons and ironing boards and hair dryers. The indoor recreational facility is equipped with a heated pool, sauna, whirlpool, fitness center and game room. Front desk: 1-708-444-1100.

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# A Court Reporter's Top Ten List of Why I Like My Job

by Brenda Byassee, CSR, Official Court Reporter

[Note: After the court reporters in our circuit were having a discussion about some of the things that we find annoying about our jobs, my friend Brenda decided to put a more positive spin on things. Make special note of #6 — Amy Haught.)

10. We get benefits.
9. I love the adoptions.
8. Occasionally there are some really interesting things that come through here.
7. Although I do get a little weary at times of traveling, basically I like not having to work at one courthouse and getting in on the “courthouse politics” of bickering, etc.
6. On occasion, I can get my speeding tickets dismissed.
5. I have met many, many people with whom I have become friends. I like every single one of the reporters in my circuit, honestly. I love you, man.
4. The pay is good.
3. I get to stay clean all day at my work.
2. I am made to realize how truly blessed I am every day that I see some of those poor, abused victims and messed up defendants.

## AND THE #1 REASON WHY I LIKE MY

**JOB IS:** We get free pizza when we're waiting on the jury to come back in...at least at Carmi.

# AMY'S BRIEFS

by Amy B. Haught, CSR, RMR, CRR  
ILCRA President

## MORE MEDICAL BRIEFS:

arterial embolism .....	BLAIFM
artery .....	AERT
atrial fibrillation .....	FAIBLGS
blood clot.....	BLAO
blood flow .....	BLOEFL
capillary refill .....	KRIFL
cardio<prefix> .....	KAORD
cardiology .....	KAORLG
cardiologist .....	KAORLGS
Dilantin .....	DAO*ILT
discoloration .....	SDORLGS
discolored .....	SDORLD
dosage .....	DOEJS
drug reaction.....	DRAOEKS
embolism .....	BLIFM
embolus .....	BLUS
emboli .....	BLAOI
extravasate .....	STRAFT
extravasation .....	STRAFSG
extremity .....	STREMT
fibrillation .....	FIBLGS
Heplock .....	PLO*K
left foot .....	L-FT
left leg .....	L-LG
patient .....	P-RBT
right foot .....	R-FT
right leg .....	R-LG
saline lock .....	SLO*K
syndrome .....	SDROEM
thrombus .....	THROMS
within normal limits ....	WIMTS

## WE WANT YOUR BUSINESS CARD!

SURE! I'd be happy to place my name prominently before my fellow ILCRA members and drum up a little business while showing 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 made payable to ILCRA for \$100.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph:( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Nancy C. Davis, Executive Director, ILCRA, 41 SW Crescent Drive, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864.

## Part One

# My Latest Japanese Adventure

by Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag, CSR, RDR, CRR, NCRA Director

Why go to Japan, you ask? I've asked myself that many times. Let's go with "client service." I started working on a case in Chicago in March with some attorneys from Washington, D.C. It involved a Japanese company being sued for undercutting prices of U.S. competitors — quite dry and boring but really nice attorneys and easy, repetitive terminology and one realtime hookup.

During the course of the several-week on-and-off depositions, I noticed that they had previously traveled to Osaka, Japan, and laughed when I saw the title page. I had been to Osaka in 1996 in the same Consulate, in the same conference room, with, I think, the same security guards, and I was not interested at all in going back.

When the current attorneys mentioned they needed to go to Osaka again for depositions in this case, I quickly hooked them up with a friend of mine who started a firm there, American Realtime Court Reporters in Japan, Jodi Harmon.

After several weeks of trying to arrange witness, attorney, and conference room schedules, Jodi's schedule, however, didn't fit with theirs. Because I had, amazingly, two weeks free on my calendar, the next thing I knew, I was making travel plans to return to Japan. Keep in mind that I went with a bad attitude, as I'm not terribly fond of international travel to begin with, I like working in Chicago, I had already been to Japan to see the sights, and I was feeling quite sorry for

myself — oh, yeah, client service. Let's go with that one!

When I had been in Japan in '96, it was for the entire month of July. This was only five days of depositions over a 10-day travel period, and I would have a weekend within which to sightsee or explore. The attorneys paid all my expenses, and I charged the same rates as I would have here, nothing like the portal-to-portal rates that many expert witnesses charge — but maybe I should consider that! Although Jodi couldn't do the depositions, she was incredibly helpful in helping us arrange for my work visa, hotel room, and her "How Melanie Can Survive Osaka Guide" came in very handy.

When I had traveled previously, I was working as a subcontractor for a different firm than my own, and they had made all the arrangements. I learned a lot! First, I had to fill out a visa form. Because of the short time frame, I hand-carried it to downtown Chicago for processing. My passport, freshly updated for NCRA's Midyear Conference in Vancouver, was ready to go, but I had to surrender it with my visa application — I hoped they didn't lose it! — and it arrived safely back in the FedEx package with the approved visa about a week later.

In '96 we had stayed at the Imperial Hotel, which was several miles from the Consulate. This time I was able to stay at

[\(Continued on page 19\)](#)



## My Latest Japanese Adventure

*(Continued from page 18)*

the Hilton, within walking distance. Under Japanese law, all depositions in American cases have to be taken “on American soil,” which means in one of two conference rooms in the Consulate in Osaka or the one conference room at the Embassy in Tokyo. Being able to schedule these rooms is quite a feat in itself, and Jodi’s expertise again helped the law firm make the arrangements and the final schedule for the depositions.

Interestingly, while we were there, we were in the small conference room — 10 people in an 8x10 room with videographer and realtime equipment; yes, small — because the bigger room, where I had been in ’96, has been perpetually reserved by a New York law firm who does a lot of work in Osaka. When they don’t need the room, they cancel it, and that sometimes allows other law firms, like with our case, to be able to slide in for a few days of depositions on other matters.

Jodi gave me great advice for avoiding jet lag. I hadn’t had any problems in ’96 — of course, I had been so busy before I left that I didn’t go to bed at all the night before. Her recipe? After my layover in San Francisco, as we started the overseas flight, I took a sleeping pill with my meal and slept most of the way. It’s a 14-hour time difference between Chicago and Osaka. I left home at 5:00 Monday morning and arrived in Osaka Tuesday afternoon at 3:30, after 4- and 11-hour flights. Jodi said to sleep at my usual time Tuesday night,



taking a second sleeping pill, and I’d wake up to perfect acclimation the next day — and it worked!

Interestingly, some things never change, and, being the deadline-oriented person that I am, I also was so busy packing and preparing that I didn’t sleep the night before I left for Japan again. I’m seeing a trend here! I used the same technique coming home, and I think she’s really on to something.

I must admit that when I finally got down to the last 10 days before I left, I did start to get excited about going. Kathy Nielsen helped guide me in buying my first digital camera, my “feel-good” present for going. I hope you like the photos. Even without client service, that would have been a good reason for the trip!

In ’96 I traveled with another court reporter, two videogra-

phers, and an interpreter, as well as the two attorneys and legal assistants who had hired us. This year I was by myself and was told to show up at the Consulate at the appointed time. Upon arriving at Kansai International Airport in Osaka, after filling out a customs form on the plane, I only had to wait in a couple of lines to be processed into the country and have my passport stamped. Per Jodi’s instructions, I exchanged my American money into yen at the airport and found the bus to the New Hankyu Hotel — while only needing one bilingual person’s help.

It was an hour’s ride into Osaka, and some things did look familiar. The city looks much like Los Angeles or New York, I think, a lot of tall buildings, concrete, and nothing that looks like I would have considered

*(Continued on page 20)*

## My Latest Japanese Adventure

*(Continued from page 19)*

“Japan-ish.” Kyoto, however, is a half-hour train ride away and is a mecca of shrines and temples and gardens and looks like I had expected. In '96 we had a day trip with a group of 12 people, and I remembered Kyoto fondly.

Because I had a weekend free for sightseeing, I wanted to visit it again. In '96 I was amazed that there was so little English on the signs, et cetera, and that was still the case — but now there were Starbucks in town! They weren't on every corner but they were plentiful; I knew I would survive. Fortunately for me, they're not as popular there, so the waiting lines for coffee were short every morning on my walk to the

Consulate. Once I got to the New Hankyu Hotel, I had to get my big suitcase, my machine case, and my carry-on and find a taxi stand, which then took me a few blocks to the Hilton.

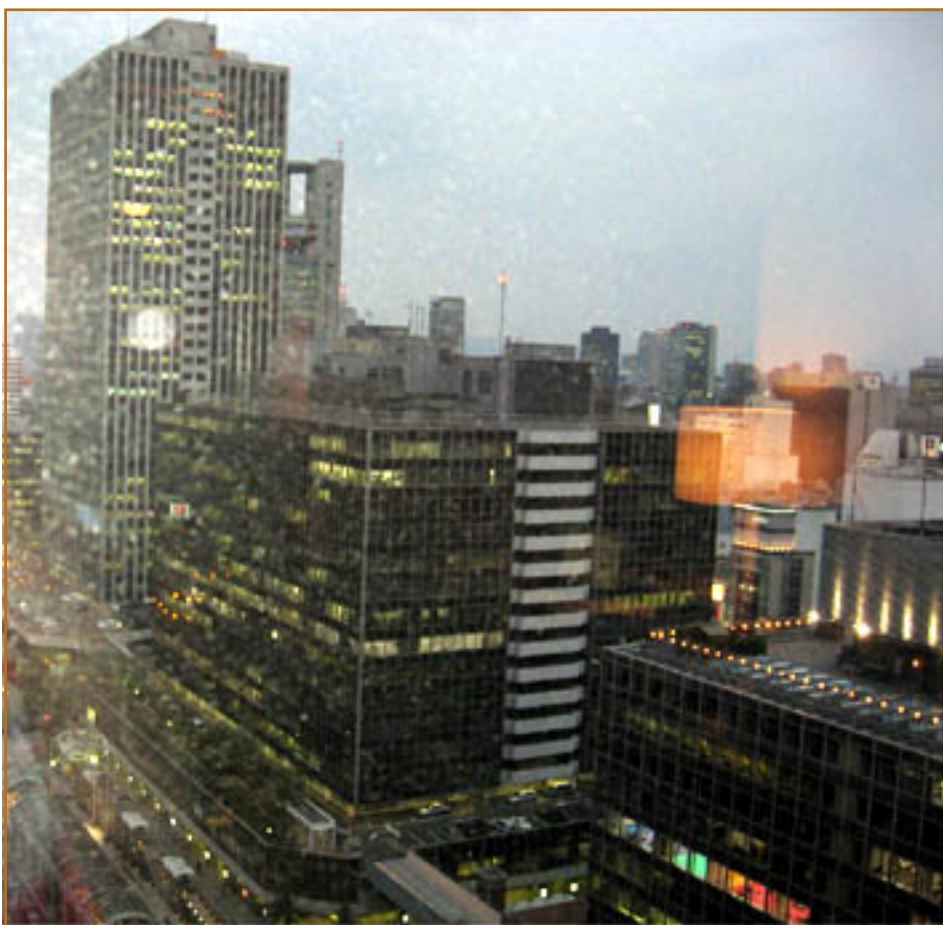
Thankfully, most of the hotel staff spoke enough English that I could get what I needed; the cabbie, however, did not. During the prior week's depositions in Chicago with the Japanese interpreters, I had learned “konnichi-wa” for good afternoon, “ohayo gozaimasu” for good morning, and “arigato” for thank you. The depositions were to start on Thursday, so I had all day Wednesday to get my bearings. I walked to the Consulate — by way of Starbucks — which was about six blocks

away. I didn't think the guards would let me in because I wasn't “authorized” until the next day, but they did and I went to the (familiar from '96) fourth floor.

Every morning I put my equipment through the metal detector and surrendered my driver's license in exchange for a visitor's badge, but they really treated us well, moving us to the front of the lines, et cetera, if there were Japanese people waiting for passports or had other business there.

One of the most frustrating things for me was not knowing the language — and, of course, with my attitude, I had not a lot of desire to learn. Some restaurants had pictures of food on their menus or displayed food in the windows; otherwise, I just guessed. My first “souvenir” was an umbrella during a downpour, and I still don't know the Japanese word for that; I obviously expected more from the store clerks. In '96 we had an interpreter with us most of the time, which made a big difference. This year I didn't, but the Hilton had good room service, which I used extensively, and I found pretty good Mexican food and margaritas across the street.

I knew from being there in '96 that the electrical situation at the Consulate was wired for American power, but I took extra power cords for every piece of equipment and triple sets of realtime cables, just in case more hookups were needed. I had an extra laptop for the interpreter that could double for me if I had a meltdown with



*(Continued on page 21)*

## My Latest Japanese Adventure

*(Continued from page 20)*

my regular one. Yes, my equipment bag was pretty darned heavy trying to get it into the airplane overhead bins! I had checked my tripod and some of the cables but kept enough with me in my carry-on that I could write for a day or two, barring any crisis, in case my checked luggage didn't show up — but it did. Things were looking up!

In '96, I hadn't worked on the case before arriving in Japan; this year I had. I knew the attorneys, a lot of the names involved, had brief forms prepared, and was moderately used to the sing-song sound of the interpreters working. Our main interpreter in Japan, however, was from New Zealand, and he was very easy to understand. All the depts in the case used what I term "check interpreters," meaning someone who understands the language hired by the other side to make sure the lead interpreter was interpreting correctly. When we got to cross-

examination of the witnesses, the check interpreter took over lead interpreting duties, and her heavy Japanese accent was a bit challenging to pick up right away. It was easier the second day than the first. We did one witness on Thursday and Friday — and they later brought him to Chicago to finish up — and then another witness on Monday to finish his deposition that we had started in Chicago in March, then the last witness finished on Tuesday, which left our last Wednesday free before my flight home Thursday afternoon.

Because the depts were interpreted and because the Consulate only allowed us to work from 9:00 to 5:00 — meaning we had to be out the door before 5:00 — and insisted that we take lunch from 12:30 to 1:30, my biggest day was only about 130 pages. Not terribly taxing, obviously!

A great innovation since '96, in addition to Starbucks, was

that I had Internet access and e-mail. American cell phones, however, do not work in Japan, as they have "their own technology." I did learn to live without my phone amazingly well, and since I got home I've left it behind on several occasions — I think it's Freudian, perhaps.

In '96 I felt terribly isolated, so before this trip, I asked everyone to e-mail me early and often. Fortunately, a lot of friends did, and it helped me keep my sanity. As I'm an early riser, my favorite time was e-mailing early in the morning, which was the end of the day here, and getting almost-immediate responses. It was a bit disconcerting for our staff, however, to see my deposition information in our recordkeeping system when they arrived for the day.

I had anticipated that television would be in Japanese — and I was right — so I had taken some DVDs with my pre-recorded TV shows that I hadn't had time to watch yet. Room service and "Grey's Anatomy;" it doesn't get much better than that, does it? (Remember, I was there to have a bad attitude and serve our clients.)

The radio, however, had a great '80s station in English, so I didn't need the CDs I brought. Fortunately, my attitude did improve as I went along, and I suddenly realized that I wouldn't mind coming to Japan again.

In my next installment, I'll tell you about my trip to Kyoto, my new friends, and the excitement of getting back to American soil. *Sayonara* until then!

航空会社 Airline	便名 Flight	カウンタ備考 Counter Remarks
全日空	NH 6401 B	共同運航便
ユナイテッド航空	UA 886 D	共同運航便
USエアウェイズ	US 6642 D	共同運航便
全日空	NH 177 B	共同運航便
アジアナ航空	OZ 9113 B	共同運航便
全日空	NH 153 B	共同運航便
中国国際航空	CA 6666 B	共同運航便
アジアナ航空	OZ 119 C	共同運航便

Richard J. "Dick" Molitor 1914-2007

## Court Reporter During Speck Trial

From *The Chicago Tribune Metro*, May 4, 2007

By Joan Giangrasso Kates

In 1967, Richard J. "Dick" Molitor was chosen from a pool of court reporters to transcribe the infamous 12-day trial of Richard F. Speck in Chicago.

Speck, then a 24-year-old high school dropout and drifter, was convicted of killing eight student nurses in the Southeast Side townhouse they shared.

Mr. Molitor, a longtime Glen Ellyn resident and father of seven, was selected for his experience and speed as a stenographer, but also for his ability to stay focused, despite distraction in the courtroom, family members said.

"He sat about 10 feet away from Speck, and that alone would have creeped me out," said his daughter Peggie McMillan. "But he handled it remarkably well and made the daily transition of recording one of Chicago's more horrific crimes to going home to a house full of kids and his role as a family man."

What made matters worse, family members said, was that during the trial, one of Mr.

Molitor's other daughters was also studying to become a nurse.

"That part of the trial really hit home for him," his daughter said.

Mr. Molitor, 92, a former court reporter for the Circuit Court of Cook County, died of respiratory failure, Sunday, April 29, in his Glen Ellyn home. His wife of 66 years, Elvira, 90, died four days later, on Thursday, May 3, of complications from Alzheimer's disease, her family said.

Family members said the Speck trial was just one example of Mr. Molitor's competence and composure in the courtroom. In another trial, a defendant jumped over a table and picked up his steno machine and threw it at his head, they said.

"He had a bad bump but got through it with humor," his daughter said. "The next day his co-workers gave him a funny caricature drawing and a hard hat to wear in the courtroom."

Born and raised on Chicago's West Side, Mr. Molitor was a 1932 graduate of Fenwick

High School in Oak Park.

Mr. Molitor began his career as a court reporter in the early 1940s working out of the Criminal Courts Building on the city's Southwest Side. He retired in 1979.

A gifted stenographer, he was asked to participate in the Nuremberg War Crime Trials, but declined because he didn't feel comfortable leaving his wife alone with their four small children, family members said.

"Dick was an interesting man with many talents, but he was first and foremost a family man," said longtime friend and neighbor Martha Wiltsie.

A Glen Ellyn resident since 1953, Mr. Molitor was part of a regular foursome at The Village Links golf course in Glen Ellyn, where he hit a hole-in-one on May 2, 1981.

In addition to his daughter, Mr. Molitor is survived by three sons, Jerry, Richard and David; three more daughters, Barbara Grice, Patricia and Betsy Duckrop; a sister, Mary; and 21 grandchildren.

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# Meet Your ILCRA Board

## Installment No. 2

**H**ere's your chance to learn a little bit more about your fellow reporters on the ILCRA Executive Board. This edition features questions and answers for: Region Two Representatives Melissa Clagg and Stephanie Renegarbe, Region One Representatives Kathy Nielsen and Seymour Wolfe

### WHAT IS YOUR HOMETOWN?

**Melissa:** DuQuoin, IL

**Stephanie:** Addieville, IL

**Kathy:** Spring Valley, IL

**Seymour:** Chicago, IL

### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A COURT REPORTER?

**Melissa:** Since 1984

**Stephanie:** 19 years

**Kathy:** 37 years.

**Seymour:** Since 1952

### IN WHICH AREA OF COURT REPORTING ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING?

**Melissa:** Official

**Stephanie:** Currently working in the freelance world and also filling in with CARTing for a student.

**Kathy:** Official

**Seymour:** Quality control for a freelance firm

### WHAT'S THE FUNNIEST THING THAT HAS EVER HAPPENED TO YOU ON THE JOB?

**Melissa:** I can't think of anything that's happened to me personally on the job, or else I've conveniently forgotten it, but I've encountered a couple real funny moments. One was an arraignment of a guy who had killed too many of his brain cells with drugs who claimed he had connections with the CIA. The funny part was the judge played into it, and the dialogue between the two made it very difficult to keep a straight face.

Another funny moment was during a mental hearing where we were determining the fitness of a man in his late 20's. He was a nice looking guy, but it seemed that "nobody was home." It wasn't one of those sad cases where you feel sorry for the person. It was evident he was a happy-go-lucky guy who seemed to enjoy life. The judge hearing the case was a woman, and

at one point, the guy asked her what song she wanted him to sing. When she didn't make a request, he chose "Yankee Doodle Dandy." We were all trying so hard not to laugh that we couldn't stop him and he continued to sing another song.

**Stephanie:** I'm not really sure on that, but the stupidest thing was when I ran over my case in my driveway on my way to a job. I didn't laugh then, of course.

**Kathy:** I honestly can't think of anything! Chalk it up to old age, I guess.

**Seymour:** I've had two very funny experiences that happened to me while I was reporting two different depositions in two different offices during my career. I have an identical twin brother. His profession was that of a pharmacist, and he had a drugstore in a northwestern suburb of Chicago. I appeared at a deposition, and the witness was a detective, and during his testimony, he kept looking at me and smiling. Couldn't figure this guy out, why was he smiling and constantly looking at me and not the interrogating attorney. It was short deposition, about 45 minutes, and when I left the conference room, I found this guy following me, and we both stopped at the elevator and he said, "Jack, do you do this stuff with that machine during the day and then work in your drug store at night?" Needless to say, my twin brother's name is Jack!

This one is even better: I live in downtown Chicago, and my brother lives in Northbrook, Illinois. My brother swims every morning at a health club in Northbrook before going to work in his drugstore. I appeared at a deposition at the firm of Jenner & Block. I entered this rather huge conference room, and at the end of the conference room table sat the witness and his attorney. As I was setting up my equipment, the witness said to me in a rather loud voice, "What the hell are you doing here?" I explained that I was the court reporter and that I would be reporting his deposition, and sat down, waiting for the Jenner & Block attorney to appear in the conference room. The witness all of a sudden stood

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## Meet Your ILCRA Board

*(Continued from page 23)*

up and said, “You know, I’m really pissed, Jack, we swim together every morning at the club and you’re acting as if you don’t even know me.” Needless to say, I attempted to explain his confusion away, but he just wouldn’t believe me. Inasmuch as I’ve had this happen before, confusion between my twin brother and myself, I always carry a photo of the two of us, which I tendered to the witness. His response was most apologetic.

### IN WHAT YEAR DID YOU BECOME A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF ILCRA?

**Melissa:** 2006

**Stephanie:** 2005

**Kathy:** 2005

**Seymour:** Approximately 1995

### WHICH MOVIE DO YOU WATCH OVER AND OVER?

**Melissa:** A few, but the ones that stand out are “You’ve Got Mail,” “Love Actually,” and “Shall We Dance.”

**Stephanie:** “Parent Trap” (the one with Lindsay Lohan), probably because I have two girls and they will try anything. But, I also love “The Patriot” with Mel Gibson.

**Kathy:** I haven’t really watched any movie over and over again, but I enjoy watching the “Seinfeld” reruns.

**Seymour:** I don’t recall ever watching any movie over and over again.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TV SHOW?

**Melissa:** “Grey’s Anatomy”

**Stephanie:** “Criminal Minds” and “Cold Case”

**Kathy:** “ER”

**Seymour:** “Everybody Loves Raymond”

### WHAT DO YOU DO TO UNWIND?

**Melissa:** Spend time outdoors and/or have a margarita!

**Stephanie:** Watch TV or go to a movie.

*(Continued on page 25)*

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## Meet Your ILCRA Board

*(Continued from page 24)*

**Kathy:** I like to unwind with either a margarita or a glass of wine. Of course, a little chocolate helps, too.

**Seymour:** A nice dry Kettle One martini. And if it's been an extremely hectic day, the second martini will do the trick!

### **WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BIGGEST ISSUE FACING THE COURT REPORTING PROFESSION TODAY?**

**Melissa:** Awareness. Getting the word out that court reporting still exists despite the many rumors over the years.

**Stephanie:** The biggest issue facing us is the shortage of reporters and getting past the nay-sayers of how we have a dying profession. We need to promote the profession and show people that it's very much in demand. What we do is not easy and we need to be proud of it. I personally think it's been rewarding in many ways and feel fortunate

that I was able to do something where I get to meet all kinds of people. It's like getting an education every day.

**Kathy:** I feel that the biggest issue facing court reporting is the use of ER and the inferior records that are produced from it.

**Seymour:** The lack of good local court reporting schools and qualified court reporting teachers, and, ergo, as a result thereof, we are confronted with a lack of graduate court reporters.

### **STOP BY FOR A 'VISIT'**

Visit the ILCRA forum at [www.ilcra.org](http://www.ilcra.org) and read any of the threaded messages, reply to any of the threaded messages with your own message and/or start a new thread with a message of your own!

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by Richard A. Sherman

**Q. My wife and I are on the road with our RV most of the year. With gasoline prices skyrocketing, is there some Web site where I can find the lowest prices as we travel around the country? Keep up the good work with your newsletter, Mr. M.**

A. Yes, indeed, there are several excellent sites for that purpose, though I imagine filling up an RV these days has to be an eye-opener. Talk about gas pains! At the American Automobile Association [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com), type in your ZIP code and press Go > Automotive > Gas Prices > Fuel Price Finder. Here you can check gas prices at more than 85,000 stations. Additional gas-price monitoring sites include: Fuel Me Up [www.fuelmeup.com](http://www.fuelmeup.com), Gas Buddy [www.gasbuddy.com](http://www.gasbuddy.com), and Gas Price Watch [www.gasprice-watch.com/new](http://www.gasprice-watch.com/new).

**Q. Is there anything that prevents me from sharing my Comcast cable Internet connection with my neighbors by using a wireless router?**

A: Absolutely. It's called the Acceptable Use Policy, which is part of Comcast's Terms of Service Agreement that you entered into as a subscriber of their service. Specifically, Section IX under Prohibited Uses and Activities [www.comcast.net/terms/use.jsp](http://www.comcast.net/terms/use.jsp) states that you may not "resell the Service or otherwise make

available to anyone outside the premises the ability to use the Service (i.e. Wi-Fi or other methods of networking), in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, or on a bundled or unbundled basis." So the short answer is, "Fughetaboutit."

**Q. Can I display more than one time zone in the time display of my computer?**

A. Displaying multiple time zones can come in handy if you do business or communicate with people in other cities. Microsoft's free Time Zone (<http://tinyurl.com/d2tr9>) for Windows XP displays time in up to five cities within a small tray-like icon that remains visible while you work on your PC. As an alternative, try the ZoneTick World Time Zone Clock ([www.zonetick.com](http://www.zonetick.com)) for \$25, which replaces the Windows system time display with a list of time zones from which you can select the ones to be displayed. Very cool.

**Q. I'm using Outlook Express and I can't figure out how to make the letters bigger for all email that I'm sending. When I'm composing a new message, I click the font size drop-down arrow and check size 18, but it keeps going back to size 12. Any help would be appreciated.**

A. When you're in the new message window, any changes

you make will only apply to that specific message, so you're not establishing any default settings in that manner. To make the font-size change permanent, click Tools > Options > Compose > Font Settings and select the font style, size, etc. you want to use, then click Apply > OK to establish the default font which will be used in all subsequent messages.

**Q. Last week I signed up for cable Internet service. They asked for my Social Security number to establish my account. I reluctantly provided it, but now I'm wondering if I had to provide that information?**

A. There are tax, medical and other situations when a Social Security number must be provided, but far too many businesses today attempt to use the SSN as a universal identification number. It never was intended to serve that purpose.

There is no law that prevents a business from requesting your Social Security number, though there are few restrictions regarding what it can do with it, so your concern is justified. The Catch-22, of course, is even though you are not required to disclose your SSN, a business does not have to provide service if you refuse to share that information.

*(Continued on page 27)*

# Ask Mr. Modem

*(Continued from page 26)*

Most businesses ask for a Social Security number as a matter of routine and in the case of cable service, they generally want you to provide the last four digits of your Social Security number "for identification purposes" when you call for service or support.

When establishing a new account (other than tax- or medical-related), if my Social Security number is requested, rather than raise a ruckus, I politely explain that due to my concern about identity theft, I'm willing to provide the last four digits. I've never run into a situation where that wasn't acceptable.

I then provide the same four-digit number I've been using for

years for this purpose. It's actually the last four digits of a telephone number I had eons ago that has nothing to do with my Social Security number.

Once I provide the four digits, the business is happy and I'm happy. Since I always use the same four digits, if I need to call for service and I'm asked for the last four digits of my Social Security number, I'm delighted to provide them with the same self-assigned ID numbers. It works like a charm.

**Q. When I use my word processing software, I can't insert a letter (character) into a word or a sentence without canceling the letter next to it. If I hit the space bar, instead of moving the**

**text ahead of it, it deletes the text, letter by letter. It was working fine last week, so I must have done something to cause this problem. Do you have any suggestions?**

A. It sounds like you may have inadvertently toggled the INSert key off. With the INSert key off, anything you type will overwrite other letters. With the INSert key on, anything you type will insert itself at the location of your cursor, and unceremoniously shove existing letters to the right.

To toggle it on, press the INS key on your keyboard. Each time you press the key it will turn the INSert feature on

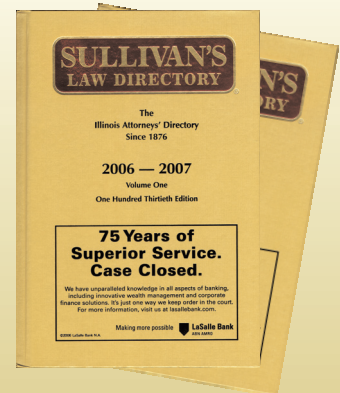
*(Continued on page 28)*

## Hurry - Time is Running Out

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# Ask Mr. Modem

*(Continued from page 27)*

or off. When it's on, you should see the small letters INS (for insert) or OVR (for overwrite) in the lower portion of your screen or on one of the displayed toolbars, depending on the program in use at the time.

**Q . How can I check the amount of memory I have on my computer? At one time I saw a blue and pink diagram of how much used and free space I had, but I can't remember how to get to that. Thanks, Mr. M. I love your newsletter.**

A. Hard drive space (what you observed in blue and pink), and memory (or RAM, which is short for Random Access Memory) are two different things, though they are frequently confused. Think of your hard drive as long-term storage. Your hard drive is where all your data files and software programs reside. It doesn't matter if your computer is on or off, that data remains on your hard drive.

RAM, on the other hand, is short-term memory. When you're using a program, it emerges from its long-term storage on the hard drive and moves into short-term memory for speed of access. When your computer is turned off, nothing in memory is retained. That's why it's a good idea, even if you leave your computer on all the time, to periodically restart it, to purge your system's memory.

To check your main hard drive's space, double-click My Computer, right-click your C: drive, and select Properties. On the pie chart, you'll see free space in pink and used space in blue.

To check how much memory is installed on your computer, go to your Control Panel and double-click the System icon. RAM appears under the Computer Section of the System Properties screen.

**Q . I have a digital camera and was curious how I can create a super-wide or panoramic photo? Is there some way to do that?**

A. By definition, a panoramic photo captures a view that is wider than what the camera is capable of taking. For example, if you're at a scenic overlook and want to take a 180-degree photo of the vast expanse below, one snapshot isn't going to be able to take it all in.

Taking multiple photos and taping them together is one way to create a panoramic photo, though the whirring sound you may hear in the background will be Ansel Adams spinning in his grave. "The Master" would not approve of the Scotch-tape approach to panoramic photography.

Through the miracle of software, however, comes AutoStitch <http://tinyurl.com/5xa4o>, heralded as "a new dimension in automatic image stitching." AutoStitch allows you to select multiple photos and stitch them together to create one big, beautiful panoramic image. Take a look at the spectacular example on the AutoStitch Web site. The photo of a mountain range is composed of 57 individual photos stitched together. Be sure to check out the Panorama Gallery (<http://tinyurl.com/dmmay>) while you're there. AutoStitch is free if not used for commercial purposes. Commercial versions are also available.

**Q. How can I create special characters, such as accent marks that appear over French and Spanish letters?**

A. Special keystroke combinations will provide those (and many other) special characters. For example, using the numeric keypad located to the far right of many keyboards, pressing ALT + 0234 will create the  $\sqrt{\text{TM}}$  symbol. (Just to clarify that process, hold down the ALT key, then press 0-2-3-4 in sequence, then release the keys.)

For additional information, read my Special Characters article at <http://tinyurl.com/33g6qc>. The Accents, Symbols & Foreign Scripts Web site at <http://tinyurl.com/2tqzxn> explains how to create accent marks and special characters in hundreds of languages, from Afrikaans to Yiddish. Sorry, no Zulu.

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## Mr. Modem's DME (Don't Miss 'Em) Sites

**ISERENTIY** Bring a little peace and tranquility to your world with this soothing site. Iserenity has 31 different sound and image environments that will help you relax. Of course, if your computer is on the fritz and the soothing environments won't play, you're talking a whole new level of stress. Bonus Tip: Try out the different sounds with your speaker volume set to a low level. I tried the "Fan Fair" environment, but my speakers were too loud and I jumped about four feet in the air when the %\*#@ "soothing" environment began blaring.  
[www.iserenity.com](http://www.iserenity.com)

**NOSTALGIA CENTRAL** Sit back, relax, and enjoy a scroll down memory lane through the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. Categories include news, pop culture, music, television, movies, and a day-by-day chronology of noteworthy events. For example, in May 1967, 40 years ago this month, Australian Aborigines received the right to vote. It seems like only yesterday, doesn't it?  
[www.nostalgiacentral.com](http://www.nostalgiacentral.com)

**PLANARITY FLASH GAME**  
Warning: This is addicting. Place your cursor on the dots and drag the lines around (the dots are at the end of the lines) so that none of the lines overlap. I made it all the way to Level 2, and almost made

it to Level 3 before I lost consciousness from all the excitement. Have fun, and don't say I didn't warn you about its addicting nature.  
[www.planarity.net](http://www.planarity.net)

**ABBREVIATION Z** An A to Z dictionary of acronyms and abbreviations separated into the following categories: Computing, Internet, Academic & Science, Miscellaneous, Medical, Business, Governmental, Community, Regional, and International.  
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**POOKMAIL** This is a free, disposable email address service that enables you to create an address to use for a temporary purpose. For example, you might create [radioshack@pookmail.com](mailto:radioshack@pookmail.com) if you're making an online purchase at Radio Shack, but don't want to wind up on their email list. After 24 hours, poof, the address is vaporized,

which begs the question: Why didn't they call it PoofMail?  
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**INTERNET SLANG** Translator  
As the Internet continues to evolve, so does its native language. This site translates Internet acronyms and terms commonly used in email, chat rooms, and text messaging, into readable text. This is especially useful for parents whose children are now talking in virtual tongues while communicating online. For example, The Translator can take an incomprehensible sentence such as, "lol. i'm afk, bbiab d00d," and translate it into a much easier to understand, but equally unintelligent, "Laughing out loud. I'm away from keyboard. Be back in a bit, Dude. (If this isn't a sign that civilization is coming to an end, I don't know what is.)"  
[www.noslang.com](http://www.noslang.com)

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The system works with ReporterBase software and consists of two plug-ins: One for RB8, which tracks and awards points; and one for RB Web 8, which gives clients access to their points online. Each plug-in costs \$5,000 per server.

See [www.omti.com](http://www.omti.com) for more details.

## STENOGRAPH RELEASES PERFORMANCE EVALUATOR

Stenograph has released Performance eValuator, patent-pending Web application software for near instantaneous steno/voice writing analysis and evaluation, as well as dynamic, personalized, prescriptive practice creation. The software is designed for students and professionals who wish to improve their translation accuracy on both realtime and non-realtime writing. Users may select from several popular Stenograph-distributed libraries of digital practice content, including Phoenix Theory, Speed-building, Performance Accelerators, and the BCS and CART libraries. Performance eValuator is compatible with most CAT systems, and schools, state

associations, and firms may license the Performance eValuator Web application software for use with their own proprietary materials.

The Performance eValuator system was first installed at the Denver Academy of Court Reporting (DACR) in April 2007, where it was made available to 130 students. Since its introduction, teachers have reported phenomenal student enthusiasm and a dramatic upsurge in both attendance and the amount students are practicing.

## STENOGRAPH SUBSIDIARY, SPECHE COMMUNICATIONS, SOLD TO COURTROOM CONNECT

Stenograph, LLC announced the sale of their subsidiary, Speche Communications, to Courtroom Connect, a technology solution provider in the legal industry.

Courtroom Connect is assuming and honoring all existing licenses and customer contracts as part of the acquisition. Contact names, numbers, and e-mail addresses for employees of Speche Communications will remain the same. For information on Speche Communications, call 1-800-823-6879 or visit [www.speche.com](http://www.speche.com). For information on Courtroom Connect, visit [www.courtroomconnect.com](http://www.courtroomconnect.com).

## ILCRA WELCOMES 17 NEW MEMBERS

### NEW PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS:

**Stephanie Battaglia**, *Hinsdale*

**Kelli Clutts**, *Anna*

**Deborah E. Clarkson**, *Elgin*

**Tammy Sue Cobb**, *Charleston*

**Maria E. Golden**, *LaGrange Park*

**Kathryn N. Harrison**, *Edwardsville*

**Rebecca L. Lucas**, *Smithton*

**Julia Miranda**, *Chicago*

**Phillip M. Ray**, *Marion*

**Konni L. Stapf**, *Hampton*

**Deborah J. Williams**, *Granite City*

**Stacy A. Wilson**, *Mt. Vernon*

**Lynn Winkeler**, *Breese*

### NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

**Devin R. Davis**, *Student*

**Angela O'Hara**, *Student*

**Kimberly A. Potucek**, *Student*

**Jacqueline E. Weems**, *Student*

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# This Crazy Language...

**L**et's face it — English is a crazy language. There is no egg in egg-plant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple.

English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France.

Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, gro-

cers don't groce and hammers don't ham?

If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth, beeth? One goose, 2 geese. So one moose, two meese? One index, two indices?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught?

If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

Sometimes it seems all English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane.



In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which, an alarm goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race, which, of course, is not a race at all. That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible.

## EMPLOYEES WITH BENEFITS

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Serious inquiries only. RPR or higher. Must be on CaseCatalyst.

All responses strictly confidential.

# WHAT ILCRA DOES FOR ILLINOIS REPORTERS

- Works to maintain your right to be certified.
- Administers the RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, CBC, CCP, and CLVS 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 two-day conference and one-day seminars including continuing education and the latest in reporting technology.
- Co-hosts and pays for NCRA continuing education units for the three Court Reporting Services Seminars. ILCRA also provides personnel in connection with those continuing education credits.
- 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.
- Provides on the ILCRA website, a membership directory which includes the CSR Act, Court Reporters' Act, Rules and Regulations of the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation, Transcript Act, and ILCRA Bylaws, as well as member information.
- Awards a Student Scholarship, a Distinguished Service Award, an Award of Excellence for an Outstanding Educator and conducts speed contests each year.
- 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 a court reporters network through our ListServe program which allows ILCRA to immediately be in touch with members via e-mail.
- Serves the membership with an 800 phone number, 1-800-656-2467 and a website [www.ilcra.org](http://www.ilcra.org).
- Provides a full-time staff person, our Executive Director, to assist members.