

AD INFINITUM

Summer 2013

Illinois Court Reporters Association

President's Message Nancy LaBella, ILCRA President

The 2013 ILCRA Annual Convention is right around the corner, September 20th and 21st, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, Illinois. If you have not attended an ILCRA convention in recent years, mark this on your calendar and join in the networking, education and fun that the convention is sure to provide. And if you have been attending ILCRA conventions for as many years as you can remember, this is another one not to miss!

Our schedule of seminars is sure to have something for everyone, not to mention the Friday night social event celebrating the retirement of our very own Nancy Davis!

We have listened to our members' requests and are proud to announce that we will have more CART and Captioning seminars offered at this year's convention. ILCRA's CART Committee, led by Chair LeAnn Hibler, is hard at work planning the 2013 sessions that promise to bring you more useful information – whether you already work in the CART/Captioning arena, are just getting started in these rewarding areas of our profession, or wish to learn more while considering a change in your court reporting field of choice.

Also on tap to inform and entertain is Ed Johnson, Official Court Reporter for the United States House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. Ed will be sharing his stories on Congressional reporting and discussing the challenges we all face as working reporters. And did I mention he's a stand-up comic?

Adam Finkel, Assistant Director of Government Relations for the National Court Reporters Association, will help prepare us for dealing with the ever-changing technological trends in the court reporting field.

The always fun and informative Steno Swap, insights from a member of the U.S. Marshals Service K-9 unit, an interactive session on body language and much more – just a few of the other seminars that will be on our convention agenda.

I encourage you to take this opportunity to attend ILCRA's Annual Convention, not only to show support for your state association but also to reap the benefits it offers – discounted member registration fees, continuing education units earned in one location – live, with your friends and colleagues right next to you, or the new friends you are sure to make – a variety of topics covered in two days, networking with your professional peers. You just never know who you might meet who will help you gain a renewed enthusiasm for our profession. We could all use some of that now and then, couldn't we? And, again, throw in a social event to beat all social events and a great weekend awaits us.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the ILCRA members, and our ILCRA executive board for making the past two years as I served as your president an enlightening and educating time. We as an association remain strong and viable to the court reporting profession as we continue to work to protect reporting, CART and captioning for our future. The ILCRA executive board does a tremendous job doing that; and I thank them for their time, energy and dedication. Our members and the executive board make me proud to be a court reporter in Illinois. We have some of the brightest minds out there. Share yours – get involved with your state association whenever you have the opportunity.

See you in Springfield in September!



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ILCRA Officers and Committee Members

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

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(To be activated when necessary)

Nominating Committee

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(To be activated when necessary)

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Rita Corson & Teri Gaudet, Co-Chairs; Bonni Shuttleworth, Theresa Hovick-Thomas, Terri Kisler

Student Mentorship Committee

Joni Markel, Chair

Student Scholarship Committee

Bernice Radavich, Chair; Melissa Clagg, Tana Hess, Shannon Niekamp

2013 ILCRA Annual Convention

September 19-21, 2013

Crowne Plaza Springfield, IL

Schedule and speakers subject to change without notice.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

Time	Description	CEUs
5:30pm-6:30pm	Realtime Contest	

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2013

9:00am-2:00pm	Gary L. Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest	
10:00am-6:00pm	Convention Registration Open	
10:00am-6:00pm	Exhibit Area Open	
11:00am-12:00pm	Lunch on your own	
12:00pm-1:30pm	SESSION #1 ~ Explosives Detection Canine - U.S. Marshal James Brigham Marshal Brigham is an expert in court security and explosives. He will discuss his time protecting court personnel and working with canine units.	1.5 hours
1:30pm-1:45pm	Break - Beverages in Exhibit Area	
1:45pm-3:15pm	SESSION #2 ~ The Future of Our Timeless Profession – Dominick M. Tursi and Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag, CSR,RDR,CRR,FAPR Learn some of the early findings from The Reporting Incubator – a unique think tank co-chaired by the presenters. Engage in a free exchange along the lines of a Town Hall Meeting. Come prepared for frank discussion about reporting today and what you think will make it viable for the next century. The Reporting Incubator is a part of The Gallery of Shorthand.	1.5 hours
3:15pm-3:30pm	Break – Beverages in Exhibit Area	
3:30pm-5:00pm	SESSION #3 ~ Remote CART (StreamText and 1CapApp) – Cindy Jenkins, CSR,RPR,CRR,CBC, CCP and Janet Hamm, CSR,RPR,CRR,CBC,CCP, CM,CART(TX) Attendees will see an actual demonstration of providing remote CART using StreamText and 1CapApp, including how to schedule a job, connect to the job, and communicate with the consumer.	1.5 hours

Visit www.ilcra.org to register!

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

2013 ILCRA Annual Convention

5:00pm–8:00pm

President's Reception with Special Tribute to Nancy Davis

This party has been in the making for over 25 years! This is our farewell bash for a very special person who has kept ILCRA successful for all those years. We will be celebrating Nancy Davis' retirement and sending her off with an amazing party. We will also have entertainment there to get your evening started.

Join your colleagues for a fantastic reception that will connect you with old friends and introduce you to new ones!
The first drink is on us, and light hors d'oeuvres will be served.

8:00pm

Dinner on your Own

Check member activity board at registration area to make new connections and for local restaurant options.

For Friday, 4.5 Illinois hours or .45 NCRA CEU.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2013

7:00am–12:00pm

Convention Registration Open

7:00am–5:00pm

Exhibit Area Open

7:00am–8:00am

Breakfast Buffet

Time to get energized for a great day of seminars. Prepare to be amazed and fuel up for a day of learning and networking.

8:00am–9:30am

SESSION #4 ~ Let Me Hear Your Body Talk – Dave Wenhold, CAE, PLC

1.5 hours

Learn what every body is saying to you and how to utilize those subtle signals to judge any situation. Whether it is in the elevator, the office, a courtroom, or a boardroom, the unconscious signals that a person's body sends out will allow you to better read them. This fun and interactive seminar will show you how to make an impact with others through nonverbal communication. Studies show that 93% of communication effectiveness is based upon nonverbal cues. So what is your body telling others?

9:30am–10:00am

Networking and Exhibit Break – Beverages in Exhibit Area

Refuel and reenergize with our exhibitors and learn about the latest changes in technology and products.

10:00am–11:00am

SESSION #5a ~ Steno Swap – Amy Quint, CSR,RMR,CRR and Donna Urlaub, CSR,RMR,CRR

1 hour

This interactive seminar will help you create brief forms for commonly used words or phrases. Increase your writing speed and accuracy by incorporating these new brief forms into your daily writing. Come prepared to share your favorite briefs and also find solutions to the nightmare words that are slowing you down.

2013 ILCRA Annual Convention

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

	SESSION #5b ~ CART Consumer Panel – Kathryn Thomas, CSR,RMR,RDR,CRR,CCP Attendees will hear from a CART consumer panel on when and why they use CART services.	
11:00am–12:00pm	SESSION #6a ~ D.I.R.T. (Drug Intervention Response Team) – Jack Campbell, Sangamon County Undersheriff Join this well-known state investigative team in learning about the latest drug terms and procedures in the war on drugs in Illinois. This is a can't-miss seminar that will help build your knowledge and dictionary of the latest substances that D.I.R.T. investigates.	1 hour
	SESSION #6b ~ Remote CART vs Onsite CART – LeAnn M. Hibler, CSR,RMR,CRR,CCP and Cindy Jenkins, CSR,RPR,CRR,CBC,CCP Discuss the differences between providing CART on site with your consumer and working in your office providing services through the Internet to the consumer.	
12:00pm–2:00pm	ILCRA BUSINESS MEETING and AWARDS LUNCHEON	
2:00pm–3:00pm	SESSION #7a ~ Change, The Final Frontier – Adam Finkel, NCRA's Asst. Director of Government Relations This seminar discusses the technological change that surrounds us each and every day. Overall trends are discussed as to where the court reporting industry has been and where it is going using examples from various industries and fields. You will leave this seminar prepared to conquer the future and advance the court reporting profession.	1 hour
	SESSION #7b ~ Stadium Captioning – Patti White, RMR,RDR,CRR,CBC,CCP During this presentation, Patti will talk about her transition from court reporting to captioning, as well as explain various methods for connecting to a scoreboard in order to provide stadium captions. She will discuss the preparation needed to work in this type of environment, both mentally and manually. Questions and answers will conclude the discussion.	
3:00pm–3:30pm	Networking and Exhibit Break – Beverages in Exhibit Area	
3:30pm–5:30pm	SESSION #8 ~ Congressional Reporting – Ed Johnson, Official Reporter, U.S. House of Representatives Ever wonder what it is like reporting the U.S. House of Representatives and being in the middle of the biggest stories on the Hill? Well, Ed has reported committee hearings and also on the floor, and he is prepared to share his stories with you about his exciting and oftentimes challenging job as a reporter for the House of Representatives.	2 hours
5:30pm–5:45pm	Wrap-up, evaluation, door prizes.	

For Saturday, 6.5 Illinois hours or .65 NCRA CEU.
Total for both days, 11.0 Illinois hours or 1.1 NCRA CEU.



2013 ILCRA Annual Convention

September 20-21

Crowne Plaza Hotel ▪ Springfield, IL

REGISTRATION

▶ 3 EASY WAYS TO REGISTER

1. **REGISTER ONLINE** at www.ilcra.org.
2. **FAX THIS FORM** including credit card information to 703-935-2266.
3. **MAIL THIS FORM** with your check or credit card information to:
ILCRA, 43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, Suite 152-269, Ashburn, VA 20148

Name: _____
 Nickname for Badge: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____ Email Address: _____
 ILCRA Membership ID#: _____ CSR #: _____

Not an ILCRA member? Join now and save!

If you wish to join ILCRA or renew your membership, please indicate below.

Registration: Please check what you plan to attend:

- Realtime Contest (Thursday)
- Gary Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest (Friday)
- President’s Reception in Honor of Nancy Davis (Friday)
- Saturday Luncheon

ILCRA membership: Join now and save!

- Professional Member—\$110
- Associate Member:
 - Retired/Student—\$40
 - Instructor/School Staff Member—\$50
 - Vendor/Other—\$60

Registration Fees

- \$60- Speed Contest
 - \$60 - Realtime Contest
 - \$100 - Both Contests
- Two Day Fees:**
- \$269 - ILCRA Member
 - \$369 - Non-Member
 - \$135 - Associate Member

One Day Fees:

- \$219 - ILCRA Member
- \$319 - Non-Member
- \$110 - Associate Member

I will attend:

___ Friday ___ Saturday

Payment Information

- Check enclosed *Please charge my credit card:* Visa Mastercard

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CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS
OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Illinois Court Reporters Association Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2013, at 12:00 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield, Illinois. During the annual meeting, awards will be presented, reports will be given, and officers will be installed. The room where the Luncheon/Annual Meeting will be held will be posted at the convention.

The ILCRA Executive Board meeting will be on Thursday, September 19, 2013, in the ILCRA President's suite at 7:00 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield, Illinois. The room number will be posted at the convention.

Law Merit Badge Day

Vernita Allen-Williams

On May 30, 2013, the Boy Scouts of America held a ceremony to honor and recognize numerous volunteers for their time and contributions to Law Merit Badge Day over the past several years. Those honored were:

- * Circuit Judge George Bridges - 15 years - keynote instructor
- * Associate Circuit Judge Brian Hughes - 15 years - mock trial provider
- * Ms. Diane Flory, Assistant Director, Judicial Operations - 15 years of program support
- * Ms. Peggy Miller, Program Manager - College of Lake County - 15 years of program support
- * Mr. Rick Riddle, Lake County Sheriff's Department - 16 years - jail orientation and tour
- * Mr. Joe Svoboda, Circuit Court Technologist & Merit Badge Counselor - 14 years
- * Ms. MaryKay Foy, Office of Lake County State's Attorney - 12 years of mock trial provider
- * Ms. Vernita Allen-Williams, Circuit Court - Court Reporter - 12 years of mock trial provider
- * Ms. Arminda Badgerow - Judicial Assistant - 10 years of program support
- * Ms. Carla Calderon - Judicial Assistant - 10 years of program support



Pictured left to right: Circuit Judge George Bridges, Associate Judge Brian Hughes, Lake County Court Administrator Diane Flory, Judicial Information Specialist Joe Svoboda, Official Court Reporter Vernita Allen-Williams, Judicial Assistant Arminda Badgerow, Judicial Assistant Carla Calderon, and Lake County Sheriff's Department Officer Rick Riddle.

Check Out Our BRIEFS

Nancy LaBella, ILCRA President

Before starting this list of briefs, I wrote “condominium” in five strokes. Yes, you read that correctly – five! How about “borrower” in three? Let’s not even talk about “actuarial.” While working on a trial, a colleague came up with “condominium” in one stroke. It took like I had been writing it that way for all of my 28 court reporting years. Another colleague and I worked on “borrower” recently – unfortunately well past the end of my trial – but it has now made its way into my personal dictionary (and a sticky note on my writer). Let’s all learn to write a little shorter so we can write a lot longer!

actuary	KHAER	foreclosure	TPOURBG
actuarial	KHAERL	gamble	TKPW-BL
audit	AUD	gambling	TKPW-BLG
auditor	AURD	invest	SREF
benefit	PWEF	investment	SREFPLT
borrow	PWOUR	investor	SREFR
borrower	PWROUR	negotiate	TPHEGT
casino	SKAEPB	negotiation	TPHEGS
check stub	KHUB	negotiator	TPHERGT
close	KHROES	policy	POEUL
closing	KHROEGS	program	PRAPL
condominium	KOEUPL	property report	PRORT
cover	KOFR	purchase agreement	PURPLT
coverage	KOFRPBLG	solvent	SOFLT
docket	TKOBGT	solvency	SOFLTS
document	TKOUPLT	square feet	SKWAEUFRT
enroll	TPHROL	trust	TRUFT
enrollment	TPHROPLT	trustee	TRAOEFT
estoppel	STOEPL	trust fund	TRUPBD
foreclose	TPOERBG	underwriter	URT

Illinois Court Reporters Association Mission Statement

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



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CAPTIONING THE DEDICATION OF THE GEORGE W. BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

Tess Stephenson

Captioning the dedication of the Bush Presidential Library was quite an experience. I felt emotions ranging from nervousness to pride.

I started out as a freelance reporter a year and a half prior to this event. I had subbed in court, and I was a CART writer for a total of two years. None of that compared to the writing of this special occasion. This is an event that not many reporters have the privilege of writing. I am truly honored I got to be a part of history.

Right before the dedication, I was writing “CNN Newsroom” because that was my schedule for the day. I had no idea that the dedication would be during my coverage of captioning CNN.

This was my first week on the air, and I was really focused on the Boston Marathon bombings and the other stories of the day because they dominated news for obvious reasons. The anchors of the day stated a few times when live coverage of the dedication would occur. I am surprised it didn’t dawn on me that it was during my slot. Perhaps it was because they stated it in Eastern Standard Time and I’m in the Central time zone, or maybe I was so focused on the present. Whatever the reason, when they went to Wolf Blitzer, the reporter on scene, I was very nervous because I realized what was about to happen.

When Condoleezza Rice introduced the foreign dignitaries who were present, my stomach dropped. These names were not in my dictionary. I was not able to prep for this event. I did what any captioner would do and made sure what I wrote was readable and clear. At each introduction of a new dignitary, I wrote president (or prime minister) and wife of insert foreign country here, and I would write the country. I realized I had to write four former presidents during my time captioning.

The switch to the next captioner occurred before George W. Bush spoke.

I finally started to relax as the presidents gave their speeches because of the funny anecdotes they told about Bush. Surprisingly, Jimmy Carter is a fast speaker. I smiled when George H. Bush stood up from his wheelchair after his statements. Clinton’s remarks made me laugh. Obama threw me for a loop when he started talking about Khrushchev. I just kept telling myself to relax, breathe, and do the best I can.

The last thing to caption before the next captioner took over was the choir singing, “God Bless America.” This was my first use of what is called prescripting. I have both the first and second verse in my script files. The first verse went off without a hitch. Imagine my dismay when they sang another verse, and it was not the second verse. I couldn’t hear it well enough to write it, and I did not want to guess on something so patriotic and significant. I panicked and sent the second verse in a split-second. Of course, afterwards, I realized I should have just sent out musical notes.

The first thing I felt right after it was over was that I had not done a good job. I called my trainer and emailed her in a fit of worry that there would be complaints because of the wrong lyrics or the missing names for the foreign dignitaries or anything that had translated phonetically that wasn’t in my dictionary that didn’t join together. I went and laid down. Then after I got up, I reviewed my file I realized it was not as bad as I thought. It was quite good. Not perfect, but pretty good considering. My trainer echoed my sentiments and told me to define any names that came up and to not let this experience scare me from captioning something “hard.” She said we often think we did better or worse than we did. [Continued on page 12](#)

CAPTIONING THE DEDICATION OF THE GEORGE W. BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

Continued from page 11

The last thing I felt was a great sense of appreciation that I got to write this event for millions of viewers. It was a wonderfully historic event, and I was proud of how I did. I definitely learned how to cope with more nerves than usual and with no prep. I had some growing pains, but they were worth it. I will never forget that I had the opportunity to caption this.

My family and friends were very supportive and proud of me afterwards. I plan on keeping a journal at the suggestion of another reporter of these events and sharing them with my children someday.

I wish I could have been at the dedication in person, but this was the next best thing. When I go visit the Bush Library, I will definitely view it through my unique experience.

**Editor's Note: Thank you to Tess Stephenson for allowing ILCRA to reprint the above article. Tess is a 2011 graduate of Court Reporting Institute of Dallas (CRID) who provides CART and Captioning services. She can be reached at tessstephenson@yahoo.com.*



Market Your Service

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

Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____

Mail to: ILCRA, 43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, Suite 152-269, Ashburn, VA 20148

In Memory of George Edmund “Eddie” Fosse

Kathy Nielsen

George Edmund “Eddie” Fosse, a World War II veteran and longtime resident of St. Charles, Illinois, died on Memorial Day, May 27, 2013, after a courageous battle with cancer.

George was an Official Court Reporter for the State of Illinois for almost a half century, including 40 years at the Kane County Courthouse in Geneva. He also served as President of the Illinois Court Reporters Association for two terms. Following his retirement in 1997, he became a bailiff at the courthouse until retiring a second time in 2010 at the age of 86!

He was born in Ottawa, Illinois, on Sept. 25, 1924. His childhood was spent in Ottawa and Wedron, and he graduated from Serena High School in 1942, where he excelled in basketball. Immediately following his graduation, he joined the United States Army at Fort Crowder, Missouri, and was assigned to the Army Signal Corps. He served in Okinawa and Korea until his discharge in 1945.

On November 18, 1950, he married the love of his life, Marilyn Jean (Joneson) Fosse, in Ottawa. They lived in Ottawa, Decatur, Moline and Rock Island before settling in St. Charles in 1957. During these years, they also started a family that grew to include sons, Kevin, Kenton and Kim, and daughter, Lisa.

Not much of a hobbyist, George’s greatest joy was spending time with his family, and he especially enjoyed watching his children and grandchildren participate in sports. He was an avid fan of the Cubs, Bulls, Illinois basketball and, to the chagrin of his sons, Notre Dame football. He was also a Disabled American Veteran and a member of the American Legion. But most notably, George was a selfless man who spent the majority of his life caring for others. He was a devoted husband, proud father and grandfather, and compassionate friend whose kindness, quick wit, sharp memory and generosity will be missed by all who knew him.

Editor’s Note: Thank you to Kathy Nielsen, Official Court Reporter, Kane County, for sharing George’s history with us. Kathy and her coworkers were saddened to learn that George was a World War II Veteran whose Oral History had never been captured. They would have been honored to take part in the Veterans History Project with George so his personal accounts could be archived for generations to come. They say America loses 1,000 World War II Veterans every day. Please consider volunteering your time for such an important project whenever you have the opportunity so all of our heroes have their stories preserved.

In Sympathy

ILCRA extends its sympathies to Debbie Kreigshauser, Federal Official Court Reporter, St. Louis, MO, on the passing of her father.

Our condolences to Teri Hopwood (retired) on the death of her husband, Randy.

Nominating Committee Report

Jill Layton, Nominating Committee Chair

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of officers for the 2013-2015 Executive Board of ILCRA:

President: Stephanie Rennegarbe

President-Elect: Vernita Allen-Williams

Vice President: Kathryn Thomas

Secretary: Georgia Rollins

Treasurer: Kathleen Grove

Legislative Representative: Sarah Paszkiewicz

Region 1 Representative (Freelance): Bernice Radavich

Region 2 Representative (Freelance): Deb Musielak

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 at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Business meeting which will be held September 20, 2013, in Springfield, Illinois. Such nomination and supporting material shall be sent to 43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, Suite 152-269, Ashburn, VA 20148 or contact@ILCRA.com, and shall be posted in the registration area of the annual meeting site prior to the annual meeting.

Thank you to Nominating Committee members Lyn Grooms, Dee Doubet, Joe Rickhoff, and Christina Basis-Prinzi.

President Stephanie Rennegarbe

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

NCRA Boot Camp on behalf of ILCRA.

Stephanie obtained a bachelor of science degree through 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, Shaine and Shawn. She spends her spare time watching her daughters participate in sporting events and trying to get as much travel time as possible.

President-Elect Vernita Allen-Williams

Vernita has been an Official Court Reporter in the 19th Judicial Circuit since September, 1997. Prior to that, she was an Official Court Reporter in Cook County since September, 1996, and a freelance reporter since May, 1986. Vernita received her education through Madison Business College and Triton College. She holds the following licenses: CSR, RPR and RMR. The professional organizations to which Vernita belongs are the Illinois Court Reporters Association and the National Court Reporters Association. Vernita has been very active with ILCRA serving on the following committees: Past Secretary, Circuit Rep for Lake County, Region One Rep, Member of the Illinois Supreme Court's Court Reporter Committee, Member of the Form Book Committee, PR/Marketing Committee Chair. Vernita has attended many career days at local high schools and is a VHP volunteer committee member. Her hobbies include singing, training for her second Chicago Marathon, Hustle Up The Hancock participant, and action movies. Vernita says her passion is being a good mother to her son.

Vice President Kathryn A. Thomas

Kathryn A. Thomas, RDR, CCP, CSR, Caseyville, Illinois, started working as a freelance reporter in 1998 and has since transitioned into full-time CART. In addition to serving ILCRA as Region 2 Representative, she has also served on several ILCRA and NCRA committees. She has presented social media and CART seminars to ILCRA and NCRA members and recently taught at the Illinois Emergency Management Association's annual conference about using CART and captioning to make emergency information accessible. She is currently training to break the Guinness world record for stenographic speed, which will take place this August at the NCRA annual convention. She is a proud gamer geek, sci-fi nerd, Trekker, Ravenclaw, and Whovian. Follow her blog at <http://www.stenoray.com>.

Secretary Georgia Rollins

Georgia's education began in 2002 and resulted in her touring almost every downstate court reporting school there was back then. She graduated from Sparks Business College, earning her Scapist Diploma in 2007 and her Class A Restricted License. Before she finished the Judicial Reporting program there, she was hired on in the 11th Circuit, assigned to McLean County. In December of 2010, she earned her CSR and continued to work towards her RPR. She worked for the 11th Circuit in McLean County until just two weeks shy of her five-year anniversary, when she moved closer to home. She's continued her Officialship in the 4th Circuit, assigned primarily to Shelby County. Over the last decade, she's enjoyed attending seminars and conventions, participating in career days, community

[Continued on page 15](#)

open houses, sitting in on mock trials, and even giving demonstrations to the public who happen to stop by to see what the court system is all about. Georgia hopes to make a difference every time she steps out of her comfort zone to talk with a stranger about what she does, because people cannot be court reporters if they don't know the profession exists. Public relations and professional awareness are near and dear to her heart, and a passion she hopes to continue to pursue with more determination as she gains more experience.

Treasurer Kathleen M. Grove

Kathleen Grove, CSR, RPR, CRR, CLVS has been a reporter for 34 years in the Chicagoland area. Kathie has been both a freelance and official reporter and is currently the President of Grove & Associates Reporting and Video Services located in Wheaton, Illinois. Kathie is a member of ILCRA, NCRA, and STAR and has served as the 2011-2013 ILCRA Treasurer. In her free time she dreams about sleep but loves spending time with her two grown children and three puppies. Her creative outlet – aside from putting together a 400-page Chinese expert on biofuels – is sewing. She loves to hike, bike, kayak and canoe and often finds herself up a creek without a paddle.

Legislative Representative Sarah Paszkiewicz

Sarah has been reporting since 1996 as a freelancer. She holds the following certifications: Illinois CSR, Missouri CCR, NCRA RDR and CRI. Sarah graduated from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. She currently serves on the Freelance Committee for ILCRA. Sarah lives in Chatham, Illinois, with her

husband, Derek, two sons, Peyton and Nicholas, and daughter, Alexis.

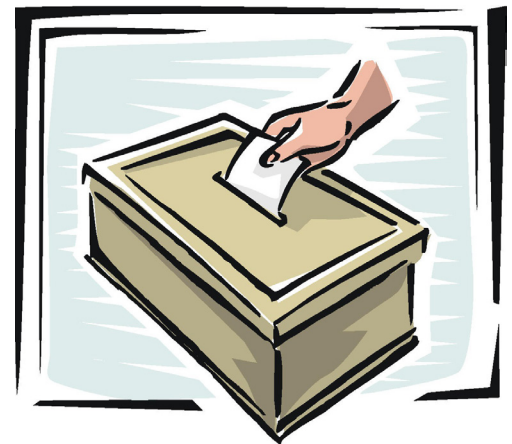
Region 1 Representative (Freelance) Bernice Radavich

Bernice Radavich began as a freelance court reporter at Wolfe, Rosenberg & Associates over 30 years ago and is currently working primarily as a CART provider in the Chicago area. She currently serves on the ILCRA Board of Directors as the Region 1 Freelance Representative and has been the ILCRA Student Scholarship Committee Chairman since 2006. She has acted as a Chief Examiner for the National Court Reporters Association CRR/CCP/CBC exams. She was appointed to the Illinois CSR Board in January of 2010. She holds the NCRA certifications of Registered Diplomate Reporter, Registered Merit Reporter, Registered Professional Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, Certified Broadcast Captioner, Certified CART Provider, and Certified Program Evaluator. She is the 2007 Illinois Court Reporters Association Realtime Contest Champion and a qualifier in NCRA and Illinois Speed Contests and the NCRA Realtime Contest. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Western Illinois University in 2011. In her spare time, Bernice enjoys traveling and keeping up with her husband, John, and two children, Tim and Becky.

Region 2 Representative (Freelance) Deb Musielak

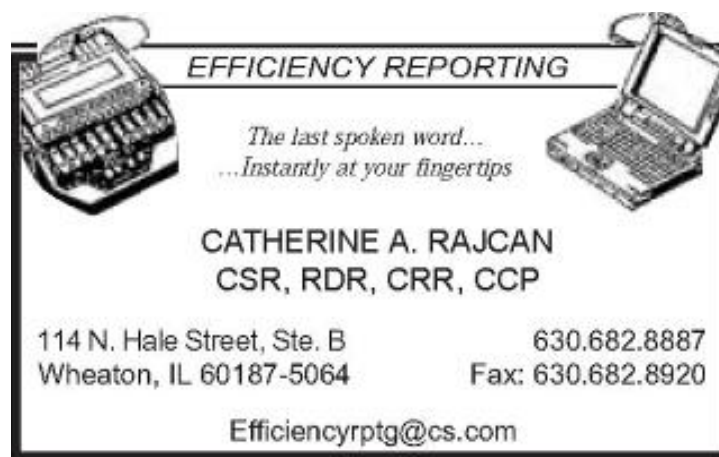
Deb has been reporting for 37 years. She dedicated the first 15 years of her career as an official reporter, the next nine working for a freelance agency in St. Louis, and the last 13 as owner/operator of Musielak Reporting Services. She has achieved the certifications of Illinois CSR, RMR, RDR, CRR, and Missouri

CCR. She has also attained a Bachelor's Degree in Administrative Sciences. Over the course of the last ten years she has expanded her services to include CART. She continues to enjoy developing the necessary skills for this very fulfilling niche of our profession. Deb has been on the ILCRA board since 2009, serving for two years as Region 2 Representative and two years as Secretary. When not working, Deb enjoys spending time with her husband biking, hiking, and visiting their out-of-town son and daughter-in-law.



What ILCRA Does for Illinois Reporters

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



Member Benefits

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 **2013 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

PDF-it: 20% off PDF-it service

Pengad: 10% off all full price products from July 2013 - June 2014

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

TopCat Steno: 15% off supplies, repairs and writer cleanings



Renew today by completing and returning the [Membership Application on page 18!](#)



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ILLINOIS COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION 2013-2014 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

A. CONTACT INFORMATION

Please thoroughly complete the information below. This is the information ILCRA will use when contacting you.

Name: _____ Male/Female _____ Date: _____

Referred By: _____

Workplace (Name of firm, company, courthouse, etc.): _____

Mailing Address: _____ Address for Find A Reporter (if different): _____ Primary Phone: (____) _____

_____ Alternate Phone: (____) _____

_____ Website: _____

*E-mail: _____ If previous ILCRA member, under what name? _____

* A valid e-mail address must be supplied in order to receive communications from ILCRA.

B. MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (Check one.)

ILCRA estimates that 20% of your dues are allocable to lobbying and are, therefore, non-deductible.

Professional Member - \$110 Please indicate your primary professional occupation:
Primary Reporter: Official Freelancer Captioner CART Provider
Primary Shorthand: Machine Pen

Associate Member Please indicate the category of associate member to which you belong:
 Instructor/School Staff Member - \$50 Vendor/Other - \$60 _____ (Occupation)
 Retired/Student - \$40

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

C. MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Please check if you **DO NOT** grant permission to publish your contact information in the online Find A Reporter membership directory at www.ILCRA.org.

D. CREDENTIALS (Check all that apply.)

RPR RMR RDR CLVS CMRS CRR CRI CPE FAPR CBC CCP
 CSR State(s) _____ Other _____

E. PAYMENT INFORMATION (The dues year is July 1 through June 30. Check, credit card information or payroll deduction card must accompany application. If you are an Illinois State Official and wish to take advantage of the payroll deduction option, contact ILCRA and we will send you a payroll deduction card.)

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

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Name on Card: _____ Signature of Cardholder: _____

Please return this form to:

ILCRA
43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, Suite 152-269
Ashburn, VA 20148

contact@ilcra.org
p: 703-729-4861
f: 703-935-2266

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

An Interview with Nancy Davis

Patti Wecke

"I have made so many friends and business associates through the years." - Nancy C. Davis, as interviewed by her daughter, Federal Official Court Reporter, Patti Dunn Wecke.



PATTI: Mom, on the eve of your retirement as Executive Director of ILCRA, I decided it might be fun to interview you for Ad Infinitum. So to get us started, take us back, way back, and tell us how you got involved in the legal field, and eventually court reporting.

NANCY: I was in my 20's with two very small children, I was a single parent, and was working as a legal secretary for a lawyer in Carbondale. We had court reporters come to the office for depositions and I remembered that my shorthand teacher in high school had pointed me in that direction. She even got me several Gregg Shorthand books especially for court reporting students. At that time there was no licensing requirement in Illinois. I talked it over with the lawyer I was working for and he thought it was an excellent idea. So, I started studying on my own and in a year or so started taking depositions for my lawyer. So, it was mostly learning on the job.

I took machine shorthand classes at SIU-Edwardsville when it became apparent that computers were the way to go. By this time my children were in high school and I was working as a reporter for Federal Court in East St. Louis, IL. When my kids were both in college, I moved to Louisiana and continued freelance reporting, and ultimately bought a firm in Shreveport, LA, where I employed 21 reporters.

PDW: Then you became a court reporting instructor; how did that happen?

NCD: I subsequently returned to Illinois from Louisiana and happened to see an ad in a Peoria paper that Midstate College was looking for a part-time court reporting instructor. I applied for the job and started working there part time. About a year later the director of the Court Reporting Department resigned and I became the full-time teacher/Director of Court Reporting.

PDW: Somewhere along the line you got involved with ILCRA -excuse me, it was ISRA at the time; tell us about that.

NCD: I began attending Illinois and National seminars and became involved in ILCRA, and eventually was accepted as a board member. I was eligible for that position because I retained my CSR license and was a professional member of ILCRA. Glenn Sonntag was then President of the association. At that time no one was using email as a way of communicating. We had face-to-face meetings about every six weeks at Brenda Launius' office. It was during this time

[Continued on page 20](#)

An Interview with Nancy Davis

Continued from page 19

that Glenn instigated the discussion of hiring a full-time Executive Director, but there were no funds available to do it at that time.

PDW: What went through your mind the day I called you and told you that I wanted to move to Peoria and go to court reporting school?

NCD: You had never shown an interest in this before and had your Bachelor's Degree in another field. I was stunned, but knew you had the determination to see it through. So, we moved in together AGAIN, and you went to school at Midstate. You finished school and now work in Federal Court in St. Louis. Your brother started court reporting school right after high school and found it was not his cup of tea. He now works in a different field in Dallas.

PDW: Then the day came that you became the Executive Director of ILCRA.

NCD: Yes. I taught at Midstate College for almost ten years, and then relocated to Southern Illinois. It was at this time that I took the Executive Director position, which at the time the board felt would only be a part-time position. Little did we know!

PDW: That enabled you to office from your home while at the same time providing care for ILCRA's mom (your mom and my grandma) Audrey. She loved ILCRA and ILCRA loved her!

NCD: Yes, we were a team!

PDW: What will you be doing now that you have retired? Inquiring minds want to know!

NCD: So far, I have been very busy! I have moved to St. Louis to be near you. It has been quite a challenge to downsize from a four-bedroom house to a small one-bedroom apartment, but little by little I am settling in. I took a trip to Dallas for my grandson's graduation from nursing school, and a trip to Nashville, TN, for our family reunion. Once I get all settled in, I plan to get more involved in some of the things going on in the retirement community where I am currently residing. I would love to hear from my ILCRA friends. My contact info: 3601 Lemay Ferry Road, #A-203, St. Louis, MO 63125. My home phone is 314-200-8177. I will miss the profession that I love so much, but I'm sure I will stay involved in whatever way I can.

PDW: And I should also say that you have helped me out a couple of times with my volunteer work at PetSmart taking care of the cats available for adoption, and have offered to fill in whenever my co-volunteer cannot make our shift. I appreciate that!

NCD: That was fun, and we go out to dinner afterwards!

PDW: Gotta do that! So, Mom, would you like to leave the membership with some final words of wisdom?

NCD: I was Executive Director for ILCRA for 20 years and have made so many friends and business associates through the years that it's hard to believe sometimes! I am proud of the service I provided to ILCRA and will miss everyone very much. But you will still see me around on occasion! Also, I cannot stress enough the importance of belonging to your professional association. Members have no idea how hard the board works on their behalf. I would urge all court reporters to maintain their membership in ILCRA and NCRA. I will continue my membership in both associations just to show my support.

PDW: Thanks so much for all of your hard work through the years. You will be missed! Thanks for instilling in me the love of court reporting and my professional associations. I love you, Mom!

NCD: I love you, too!

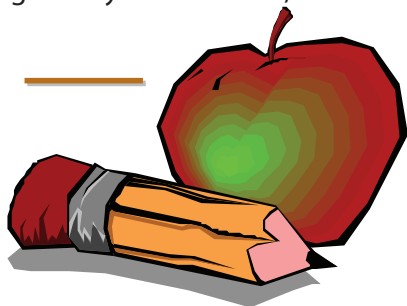
Three Cheers for ILCRA VHP Volunteers!!!

Vernita Allen-Williams

On Saturday, May 18, 2013, ILCRA members Lori Eider, Mary Trezzo, Deborah Cohen-Rojas, and Debbie Schultz graciously agreed to join me in recording the oral histories of nine veterans in Waukegan, IL, at Christ Episcopal Church from 8:30a.m. to 12:30p.m. for their first Veterans History Project Day. LaVera Davis arranged for volunteer interviewers, refreshments, commemorative pins from the Library of Congress for each veteran, and made sure all of the paperwork for each veteran was completed ahead of time. LaVera was awesome. She even gave each volunteer a token of appreciation. All we had to do was what we do best -- take it down and produce a transcript.

What an honor to hear first-hand accounts from the mouths of our United States veterans. The history and their vivid memories shared during the oral histories are amazing. The research necessary to produce a transcript is an opportunity to pause and really understand the words "Thank you for your service." It never gets old. A veteran -- no matter which branch they served in or war -- appreciates hearing the words.

I can't say thank you enough to the ILCRA member volunteers who made the day a success. If you haven't had the opportunity to take down a veteran's oral history, please contact ILCRA or Beth Kilker at NCRA. There are videos waiting to be transcribed by a willing volunteer. If you are a member of NCRA, you may earn up to 1.0 PDUs -- professional development units -- per three-year cycle. NCRA will give you .25 PDUs for each history you transcribe. Volunteers, we need you. Join me and hundreds of court reporters throughout the U.S. transcribing oral histories given by our veterans, and thank you in advance for your spirit of volunteerism.



Do You Know an Outstanding Educator?

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

The guidelines are:

1. The nominee must be or have been on the faculty of a court reporter training program.
2. Nominations must be received by Friday, August 16, 2013

3. Although not required, it is helpful in the selection process if the nominee is an associate member of ILCRA. All applications submitted in previous years will be considered for the 2013 award.
4. Nominations may be submitted by students, fellow faculty, administrators, or ILCRA members to:

ILCRA Award of Excellence

43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, Suite 152-269, Ashburn, VA 20148

Nomination for ILCRA Award of Excellence

Name of Nominee: _____

Address: _____

School: _____

Brief description of reasons why you feel this person should receive this award:

Your name: _____ Phone: () _____ Email: _____



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



Students, you could win \$1,000, plus a complimentary one-day registration to the 2013 ILCRA Annual Convention in Springfield, Illinois, on September 20-21, 2013. The prize also includes hotel accommodations for one night, round-trip mileage reimbursement, and a one-year Associate Membership in the Illinois Court Reporters Association. The winner will become a member of the ILCRA Student Scholarship Committee for the following year. Second place (\$500) and Third place (\$300) prizes will also be awarded.

To enter the contest, complete the application below and compose a one-page, typewritten, double-spaced essay on the topic of: “Professionalism and Ethics: What do they mean to you, and how do they relate to court reporting education and the profession?”

Entries must be received by Friday, August 16, 2013. Submit to ilcrascholarship@gmail.com. Visit www.ILCRA.org for additional details.

REPORTERS: Please help an outstanding student by contributing generously to ILCRA’s Diane Dorwart Education Fund. Demonstrate your encouragement to the reporters of tomorrow. Donations in any amount are greatly appreciated. Make your check payable to ILCRA and mail to 43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, Suite 152-269, Ashburn, VA 20148, or donate online by clicking the “Donate” button on the home page of ILCRA’s website at www.ILCRA.org.

2013 ILCRA STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Entries must be received by Friday, August 16, 2013.

Your essay, the application, and instructor’s certification must be submitted together.

Student Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Instructor’s Certification: I hereby certify that the above-named student meets **all** of the following qualifications:

- *has completed at least one year of attendance at this court reporting school;*
- *has successfully transcribed five minutes of testimony at 160 words per minute; and*
- *is presently attending an Illinois court reporting school OR is an Illinois resident attending an out-of-state court reporting school.*

Instructor Name: _____ Title: _____

Name of court reporting school: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date: _____ Instructor’s Signature: _____

Distinguished Service Award

ILCRA Distinguished Service Award

It is our pleasure once again to seek nominations for the ILCRA Distinguished Service Award. The purpose of this award is to encourage and recognize work amounting to distinguished service for the benefit of the reporting profession by individual members of ILCRA. That may include work as a member, committee member, officer of the Association, for Ad Infinitum, in state or local association affairs, or public relations. We are seeking someone who has added to the quality of our profession, improved the manner in which it is perceived by other professionals or the general public, or who has helped our fellow reporters to focus on how they can better meet the demands of technology and the changing judicial system. Take time now to nominate that special person who deserves recognition.

ISRA/ILCRA DSA RECIPIENTS

Traci Butz (1993)
Sally Cochran (1994)
Diane Dorwart (1995)
Mae Glassbrenner (1996)
Brenda K. Carlen (1997)
Carole A. Bartkowicz (1998)
Patricia S. Byers (1999)
Nancy J. Hopp (2000)
Deb Kriegshauser (2001)
Nancy Davis (2002)
Jerry Wedeking (2003)
Judith A. Lehman (2004)
Gary L. Sonntag (2005)
Dolores (Dee) Doubet (2006)
Seymour L. Wolfe (2007)
Jacqueline M. Timmons (2008)
R. Kent Evans (2009)
Patricia White (2010)
Mary Beth Rollins (2011)
Lyn Grooms (2012)

Nomination for ILCRA Distinguished Service Award

Name of Nominee: _____

Address: _____

Nominated by:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please include a biographical sketch of the person nominated along with your reasons for said nomination. Send the nomination form along with supporting material to:

Lyn Grooms
431 South Tower Road, Dawson, IL 62520
Nominations must be received by Friday, August 16, 2013

Spread the word!

You can make a difference.

Encourage someone you know to explore court reporting, captioning, and CART as a career.

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Midstate College*

411 W. Northmoor Road, Peoria, IL 61614
309.692.4092 www.midstate.edu

Prince Institute, Great Lakes*

1300 E. Woodfield Road, Schaumburg, IL 60173
847.592.6600 www.princeinstitute.edu

South Suburban College*

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Court Reporting School Summit

Amy B. Quint, CSR Board Chairperson

After our last CSR Board meeting, I sat down and digested some very disturbing numbers from our CSR exams. The pass rates continue to be poor, both for the skills and written knowledge tests, and the number of test candidates dropped approximately 40% from 2011 to 2012. I felt the best way to address the situation was to attempt to gather representatives from all of the schools with a group of court reporters and our Court Reporting Services Coordinator to brainstorm and hopefully bring forth ideas to recruit more students and also increase the pass rate for the exam.

When I asked Pat Houlf if she could help me with contact information for school representatives, she sprang into action and quickly created an email list for me. Pat & ILCRA were immediately on board with my idea, as was Tammy Bumgarner of Court Reporting Services. The response from the schools was also very positive. With that, the first Court Reporting Schools Summit for Illinois was born.

Our summit was conducted on May 31 at Prince Institute in Schaumburg. Attendees were: Jay Vittickal and Jeff Moody of College of Court Reporting; Peg Sokalski of MacCormac College; Teresa Ozuna and Lonna Nauman of Midstate College; Dave Wynne, Debbie Field and Keith Werosh of Prince Institute; Patti Ziegler and Kate Saunders of St. Louis Community College; LaTherese Cooke of South Suburban College; Tammy Bumgarner, Coordinator, Court Reporting Services; Vernita Allen-Williams, Pat Houlf and Bonni Shuttleworth of the ILCRA Board; and myself and Melissa Clagg of the CSR Board.

It was wonderful to see all of these schools come together for the common good of the profession. What a great group of people! We reviewed several statistics from the CSR and RPR exams. There was positive feedback and fruitful discussion. Some great ideas were brought forth and plans of action hopefully will now be set into motion. We now have an email group so we can continue to discuss issues and move forward with problem solving.....and we might even meet again in the fall.....if my back can withstand another 5 ½ hour car ride.

And now for my public service announcement. I cannot emphasize enough how very important it is for each of us in this profession to recruit new students and to encourage those presently in school. This is our profession, and as professional persons we should have a desire to ensure that court reporting has a future. The simple fact of the matter is, whether we have official court reporters or digital recording in our Illinois courts in the years to come rests in OUR hands. If there are not certified court reporters to fill vacancies in the court system as they arise, the only alternative will be digital recording. Surely none of us want that. The best testimonial for this profession comes from someone living it on a daily basis. Tell a neighbor, a relative, a friend, or an employee in your building about this profession. Shout it from the rooftops. Do a career day at your local high school, and if you are within a 100-mile radius of a court reporting program, head out to the college to encourage the students. The time for action is now.

July 8, 2013 – Prince Institute—Great Lakes online and on-campus court reporting and CART/captioning programs have earned National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) certification. The certification recognizes Prince’s commitment to excellence in the educational programs that prepare tomorrow’s captioners and court reporters for the profession; this NCRA-certified designation is effective for five years.

For an institution to be NCRA-certified, it must consistently adhere to the established standards and requirements developed by NCRA’s Council on Approved Student Education (CASE) and be accredited by a body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Prince Institute complies with Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) rigorous criteria and maintains accreditation status by being committed to continuous quality enhancement.

As an NCRA-certified institution, Prince Institute—Great Lakes satisfies the following eligibility requirements:

- All educational programs are licensed or certified at the post-secondary or collegiate level by the state of Illinois.
- The institution is eligible for participation in Title IV federal financial aid.
- The school is organized primarily to educate students for realtime reporting careers.

“We’re excited that our newest campus has been awarded such a prestigious distinction,” expressed Keith Werosh, Director of Campus Operations, Prince Institute. “Our faculty, staff, and advisory board members are each to be congratulated on this great accomplishment. Students entering the court reporting and captioning professions will feel confident knowing that they’ve graduated from a NCRA-certified program.”

For more information about court reporting training and certification, visit the NCRA.



Prince Institute.

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This powerful presentation will help you write cleaner, reduce your editing time and get you prepared to take the CRR. This webcast has 24 hours of content worth 2.4 CEUs. It will change your life!

Choosing a Court Reporter—The Advanced Course

Lisa Migliore Black

Editor's Note: *Although this article was written from the perspective of the Kentucky Court Reporters Association, change any reference of "Kentucky" to "Illinois" and you will see that we all face the same issues. Arm yourselves with the information here and use it to educate your clients, judges, colleagues, the public and others in promoting and defending our profession.*

Stenographic court reporters are the most technologically advanced individuals in courtrooms and deposition suites across the country. While the sales pitch offered by digital recording and transcription companies tout their method as the "evolution" of court reporting, litigators and litigants should not be misled by unsubstantiated and overstated promises on price, quality and reliability. The fact is, electronic and digital audio recording can produce an adequate record, but these recording systems do not uniformly produce an accurate record. Transcripts from recordings can be riddled with inaudible statements, speakers can be incorrectly identified, recordings are easily lost or misplaced, and oftentimes, the equipment fails or the operators forget to turn it on, leading to entire proceedings not being recorded.

Today's stenographic reporters are digital in every aspect, capturing the instant voice-to-text record on several redundant hard drives and in a secure cloud server, along with a backup audio record. Digital reporting, or more accurately, digital recording, is merely transcription after the fact, and audio recording is hardly new or high-tech. When a transcript is needed, a single stenographic court reporter can immediately provide, with more efficiency, what it takes four or five digital transcriptionists to produce using a standard QWERTY keyboard.

The Unreliability of Recordings

Attorneys practicing in Jefferson County courts in 2010 painfully remember when the digital audio recording equipment caused hundreds of hearings to be lost because the system failed to record any sound. The failures in Jefferson County that spanned at least a three-month period are not isolated occurrences. Headlines across the nation speak to the countless failures and shortcomings of these systems. While jurisdictions in New Mexico, New Jersey, Texas, among others, are returning to stenographic reporting in their courtrooms due to failures in their expensive audio recording systems, experienced litigators should be wary of the pitfalls associated with this emerging alternative entering their deposition suites.

Experience Matters: Hire a Certified Court Reporter

Now that the practice of digital recording is making its way into deposition suites, attorneys and litigants should be forewarned that the only requirement for digital recorders working in the freelance market is a short few hours of training and filling out an application to obtain a notary public designation. No formalized education is required, and thus, digital recording personnel may have little to no experience in producing a written transcript. Knowledge, experience, reliability, technology and ethics distinguish stenographic reporters because of the extensive training needed to learn and master their craft. Stenographic reporters are required to attend a two- to four-year academic program that specializes in all aspects of capturing live proceedings and memorializing them accurately in writing with an additional focus on proper procedure and professional ethics. Additional on-the-job training and real world experience is provided to reporters after graduation.

Voluntary attainment of certification through organizations like the Kentucky Court Reporters Association (KyCRA) and the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) give further assurances to consumers that they have hired a qualified court reporter. Certified court reporters are also required to attend continuing education to update their knowledge and keep up with ever-changing technology. The designations of RPR, CRR, RMR and RDR have varying requirements that test a reporter's speed (at 225 wpm up to 260 wpm), accuracy and knowledge base through rigorous academic and performance testing.

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A Court Reporter Controls the Proceedings

Court reporters interrupt for a reason: to ensure an accurate, usable record.

Q. Is it true that stenographic reporters cannot record—

A. No. The truth is—

Q.—multiple speakers—

A.—that when more than one—

Q: —simultaneously?

A. —person is talking at the same time, it makes for a terrible record, no matter who prepares it. If the example above is lost in translation, a practical bit of advice for creating a record is that, if the highly-skilled stenographic reporter is having difficulty preserving the record, attorneys, paralegals, the judge and the jury will have difficulty absorbing it.

Did the witness say Kotex or cold checks? Thecal sac or fecal sac? Your bank fraud or medical malpractice case in the hands of an inexperienced digital reporter can be devastating. A thecal sac is a membrane surrounding the nerves in the spine. A fecal sac is literally a sack of...well, check out the definition of fecal.

Instant Access to the Written Record—Digital in Every Aspect

Realtime technology is the equivalent to closed captioning in the legal environment. The proceedings can be streamed to your laptop, iPad, mobile device, iPhone, or sent to off-site locations through the World Wide Web—allowing for experts, legal support staff and co-counsel to participate remotely. Stenographic writers or reporters, and voice writers (steno mask reporters) are capable of providing this service; digital recorders/transcriptionists cannot. This is considered the gold standard of court reporting. Immediate rough drafts and daily copy transcripts can also be provided by your stenographic reporter.

While the premium services of realtime and immediate rough drafts often come at a higher price, the same quality and skill go into a transcript provided on an unexpedited basis at market competitive prices. Consumers do not pay a higher fee if not utilizing a realtime feed, yet the same reporter with this impressive skill set will be assigned to cover your other cases, short or long in duration, wherever needed. The KyCRA and NCRA provide court reporter directories online, allowing consumers to find a reporter in any venue in Kentucky or throughout the world.

Your cases matter to you and, most importantly, they matter to your clients. Depositions and trials are not dress rehearsals, and digital recording comes with many risks. Witnesses may be unavailable for trial, deceased, or testimony may be changed if the original testimony is unavailable due to poor quality of recordings or recording failures. Stenographic reporters assure that the record is verifiable as it happens, not after the fact.

You get what you pay for. There is a saying that perfectly parallels this issue: "Cheap, fast, or good. Pick two." Accuracy, efficiency and quality are the most important things to consider when deciding to use a stenographic court reporter or an audio recording device for your deposition work—not the empty promise of the savings of a few cents per page. Stenographic court reporters provide an accurate and timely record, and ensure that the integrity assured by the legal system is maintained. On the other hand, by utilizing poorly trained individuals who rely on nothing more than audio devices, it is not a matter of if, but of when there will be a problem with the transcript.

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TechCon: What is it all about?

Shannon M. Frey

TechCon brings the brightest and most knowledgeable to the remote and curious freelance reporter. There is so much information bombarding us every day, much of which is technical in nature. For the freelance court reporter who is on his or her own most of the time, the choices and decisions can be daunting. There are options coming at you from state and national court reporting associations, the internet, and from fellow reporters. I have been freelance court reporting since 1980, always proud of this profession and striving to be the best I can. The first time I saw the TechCon conference advertised, I vowed to attend as soon as I could arrange it, and Arizona turned out to be the perfect choice.

Wow, what a great experience! From the charming, informative and fascinating stories of Sue Terry and Judy Werlinger regarding their adventures in realtime, to the nuts and bolts technology brainbusters of Daniel Bistany, it was everything I had hoped for and more. It helped solidify my choices on some of the gadgets and programs I use, but, more importantly, helped me zero in on what routers, hotspots, websites, apps, to mention a few, were the best out there for my particular applications. For those of us who are writing realtime, the technology is changing all the time and can be hard to keep up with. This conference was invaluable with having all of these experts in one place. They were extremely helpful with any questions we had and also with informative recommendations.

I would recommend this conference to all reporters, and want to thank the presenters and vendors for the pride and confidence they have in this profession and for sharing their knowledge and wisdom with not only each other, but with us remote reporters who are many times on our own.

Sometimes when we as reporters are assessing how to obtain our CEU points, it is very tempting to take advantage of the many cheap online options. I would encourage all my colleagues to take into consideration the priceless nature of networking with fellow reporters; not just in the traditional sense of developing clients, but creating friendships and troubleshooting issues that plague us from time to time. What I am always struck by when attending these in-person conferences is the generosity of my profession and willingness to always lend a helping hand.

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and Midstate College, Peoria

December 14

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