



IL

CRA

FALL

2016



ILLINOIS COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

## President's Message



Greetings, ILCRA members. It's hard to believe this is the beginning of my second year as president. In case I have not mentioned it in previous issues of Ad Infinitum: it is my honor to serve as president of the Illinois Court Reporters Association. If you have questions, concerns or would like to volunteer on a committee, please let me know. You may contact me or any of the executive board members at the email addresses listed on our website [www.ilcra.org](http://www.ilcra.org).

"Those with the fullest and most fulfilling lives are those who are busy serving others." I remembered this quote during NCRA's 2016 Convention & Expo at the start of ILCRA's business meeting August 5, 2016. Why? Convention is a busy time even when ILCRA is not the host. For example, Rita Corson, who chairs our Realtime Contest Committee, and others graded tests till 3:00 a.m. Yikes. Thank you, grader volunteers. I'd also like to extend my heartfelt thank you to Lyn Grooms, Nancy LaBella, Amy Bateman, Donna Urlaub, Amy Quint, Teresa Ozuna, Colleen Eitermann, et al., for being committee volunteer rock stars.

For those of you in attendance at our business meeting bright and early Saturday – 8:00 a.m. – thank you for joining us. I regret the early start but was glad for the opportunity to address Illinois Supreme Court Rule 206(f) with members in attendance. Some of you have reached out with questions, comments, stories, concerns regarding whether ILCRA is aware of what's going on in IL and unlicensed CSRs holding themselves out as court reporters at depositions and producing transcripts. Yes, we are aware. Yes, our lobbyist is aware. Yes, we have submitted proposed language to stop individuals without an IL CSR license acting as court reporters to the Illinois Supreme Court Rules Committee. No, we have not been successful yet.

Our lobbyist, Daniel Hamilton, has asked that we gather specific examples of transcripts produced by unlicensed CSRs to attach with our next proposed changes to IL SC Rule 206(f) request. We need your help providing the examples. Stories will not suffice. We need proof of this practice negatively impacting litigants. Please contact any of the executive board members directly. We hope to hear from you .

In the meantime, relax into fall. I wish you and yours good health, prosperity, peace and joy.

~ Vernita Allen-Williams

## New Jersey Supreme Court Issues Rule To Protect Court Reporter's Audio File

By NCRA

The Certified Court Reporters Association – New Jersey (CCRA-NJ) announced that the New Jersey Supreme Court Rules Committee created a new court rule to protect the reporter's audio file.

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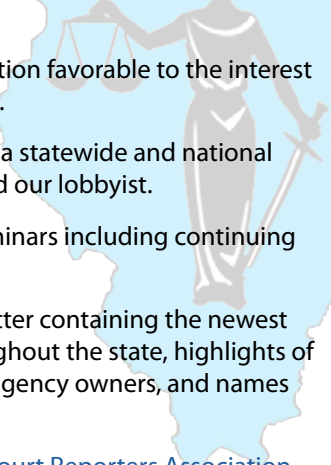
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For a listing of all **committees and current committee members**

[CLICK HERE](#)

## What ILCRA Does for Illinois Reporters

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

## ILCRA MISSION STATEMENT

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

# NCRA Convention & Expo 2016 Chicago - A Court Reporting Student's Perspective

By Katelyn Hamziuk

I am beginning my second year at MacCormac College, and I attended the annual NCRA convention for the first time this past summer. I was able to attend student seminars related to several different aspects of court reporting that were very educational but, more importantly, the NCRA convention gave me the motivation I needed to finish my final year at MacCormac College.

All of the court reporters I met discussed why they became a court reporter and what they have done since they finished school. I had the honor of meeting a court reporter who worked in Washington D.C. with President Obama, a court reporter who goes to Cuba to Guantanamo Bay, and court reporters who report internationally a majority of the time. I have realized that the sky truly is the limit when it comes to this admired career. I always thought I knew exactly what I wanted to do once I finished the court reporting program, but I have now realized that there are endless opportunities in my future.

The experience I had at the convention made it clear to me that the program I am striving to achieve, a program that is far from easy, is going to be worth it in the end. I am now more motivated than I have ever been after envisioning what I could achieve in my future.

## ILCRA Awards 2016 Student Scholarships

By Bernice Radavich

Student Scholarship Committee Chair

I had the privilege of announcing the 2016 ILCRA Student Scholarship winners at our business meeting held in Chicago in conjunction with the NCRA Annual Convention. We were able to honor those who will be the future of our profession and encourage them to persevere until they cross the finish line. Thank you to the Student Scholarship Committee members for all their hard work. The committee members this year were Melissa Clagg, Colleen Eitermann, and Mike Hensley.

The topic for this year's essay was "Describe what leadership means to you and why the qualities you define leadership by are important attributes of a court reporter." Then explain how you fit the definition.

The essays were very well written, and the committee had a difficult time choosing one essay over another. In the winning essay, the student described her perception of leadership as being "a combination of trust, honesty, confidence, inspiration, and a tremendous amount of focus."

On behalf of the Board and the Scholarship Selection Committee, I would like to personally thank each and every one of the students for applying for the scholarship this year. I would also like to thank all of the contributors to the Diane Dorwart Memorial Student Scholarship Fund and our student fund.

ILCRA awarded three scholarships in this competition.

In first place was Lisa McCullum from MacCormac College. Lisa received a \$1,000 scholarship and a complimentary one-day registration to the NCRA Annual Convention in Chicago. The prize included hotel accommodations for one night and a one-year associate membership in ILCRA. She will also become a member of the Student Scholarship Committee for next year.

In second place and receiving a \$500 scholarship was Mary C. Meyer from Prince Institute.

In third place and receiving a \$300 scholarship was Valerie A. Pavlik from MacCormac College.

Congratulations to the 2016 ILCRA Student Scholarship Award winners!

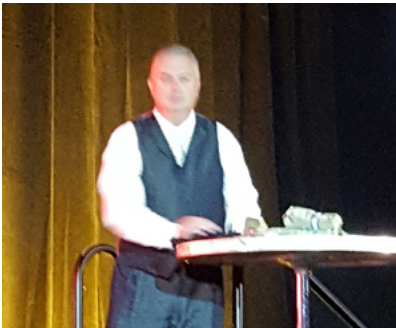
## Court Issues Rule

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Although New Jersey already had a rule in place that affirmed a transcript taken by a New Jersey Certified Court Reporter as the official record, the new rule goes further in protecting the court reporter's audio file as a "work product." This also means that litigants and their attorneys may not demand or request an audio file without obtaining a court order.

"By October 2013, I'd heard enough of reporter's stories to make the announcement that I was going to petition the NJ Supreme Court Civil Practice Committee to create a rule to protect the reporter's audio file as their work product, and not be available to litigants or their attorneys without a court order to show cause," Rick Paone, the state association's legislative chairman, said about how he decided to take up the issue. "The issue hit home several years ago when a litigant accused my reporter of leaving something out. His attorney told me the client was a troubled person and knew the supposed testimony had never occurred but asked that we furnish it to satisfy his client. I refused to have the reporter turn it over, and the litigant fired his attorney and filed charges against my reporter with the State Board for 'fraud and deception.' The matter was investigated and dismissed, but it became of paramount importance to get language in place to protect reporters from litigants and their counsel attempting to use their work product audio against them."

Paone also emphasized that it was a long process, but one well worth the time. In addition to spending months researching the issue, he worked with the attorney for CCRA-NJ to draft a petition to the Civil Practice Committee. It took a year until the rule received a recommendation from the committee, at which time it was sent to the New Jersey Supreme Court for public comment. The rule was put into effect September 1.



## ILCRA's Student Liaison's Perspective on Convention

*By Daniele Fauser*

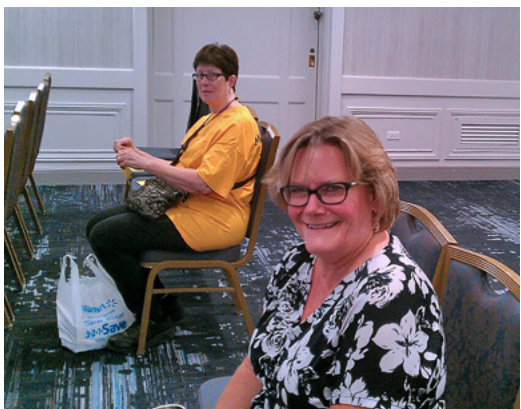
I was extremely pleased to have been asked to be the ILCRA's Executive Board's Student Liaison upon my arrival to the 2016 NCRA Convention in Chicago, Illinois. Needless to say, I proudly accepted! I was then asked to attend an ILCRA business meeting the next morning in order to observe and to hear more about the student liaison position.

I attended the meeting and was able to listen to the board members discuss the position and their reasoning for offering it. I agreed with them in that I feel it would be a great way to have a current

reporting student involved. It would not only be good for the board, but also for the student. As the student liaison, I will be able to attend future ILCRA board meetings, get to know the board members better, and learn more about ILCRA and all that they do.

Being active in your association is very important for several reasons, especially while being a student. You are able to meet some wonderful people to whom you can turn to for guidance while going through reporting school, participate in board events and projects, and to be an active part of your state's reporting family, just to name a few. I am very much looking forward to my role as ILCRA Student Liaison and am thankful to be a part of such a great community!





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# ILCRA Highlights Some of Our Amazing Writers

By Rita Corson

ILCRA Chairwoman Speed and Realtime Contest

The ILCRA Speed and Realtime Contests were held in conjunction with NCRA's contests this year. The contests were held August 3rd and 4th at the Chicago Hilton during the 2016 NCRA Convention and Expo. Illinois had a great showing in the NCRA contests!

In our Illinois Speed contest Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag won first place and came away with the Gary Sonntag Memorial Trophy. Melanie turned in a paper with 13 errors on the 220 Lit, 45 errors on the 230 Legal Opinion, and 33 errors on the 280 Q & A. Second place medal went to Donna Urlaub, and third place medal went to Jennifer Dunn.

Judith Walsh was our first place winner in the Illinois Realtime Contest, and she was awarded the Bonni Shuttleworth Realtime trophy with 12 errors in the 225 Q & A and 19 errors in the Literary. Second place medal went to Laura Kooy, and third place medal went to Donna Urlaub.

Congratulations to all who participated. I am so proud of each and every one of the contestants who sat for these tests. They did so well, even with the higher speeds dictated at the NCRA contest!

Below is a list of qualifiers and their percentages:

<b>Speed:</b>	<b>280 Q&amp;A</b>	<b>230 Legal Opinion</b>	<b>220 Literary</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag	97.643%	96.087%	98.818%	97.516%
Donna Urlaub	97.50	95.304	98.909	97.238
Jennifer Dunn	97.857	95.739	98.00	97.199
Lorie Kennedy	97.786		98.546	
Bernice Radavich	97.500		97.818	
Paula Campbell	95.786		96.727	
Kathryn Thomas			96.727	

<b>Realtime:</b>	<b>225 Q&amp;A</b>	<b>200 Literary</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Judith Walsh	98.93%	98.10%	98.52%
Laura Kooy	97.42	98.40	97.91
Donna Urlaub	97.60	96.50	97.05
Jennifer Dunn		96.70	
Bernice Radavich		96.20	
Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag	95.82		
Stephanie Battaglia	95.56		
Paula Campbell	95.29		
Carolyn Cox	95.20		

## Save the Dates

### ILCRA Marathon Seminar

March 4, 2017 | Doubletree Hotel in Oak Brook, IL

### ILCRA Annual Convention

September 14-16, 2017

Wyndham City Center in Springfield, IL



# My Steno Cinderella Story

By Sarah Maksim

When I was a student just starting to learn my theory, I was given a writer that I'm sure most of you have written on at some point or another. It was dark green with an old pull-out metal tray. The tripod was made out of steel, and the whole thing weighed a ton. Part of me thought this was just some hazing prank that I had to go through to get the nicer writers, but, no, this was what I and the rest of my classmates were stuck with. While I was progressing through my theory classes, I fell in love with court reporting and developed a love/hate relationship with my writer, which I nicknamed The Avocado. (For the sake of this story, I wish I would have nicknamed it the Pumpkin.)

While everyone was upgrading to the newest and best models, I was still inking my ribbon and reading from paper and dreaming of the day when I could write on those magical paperless models. I would tell my boyfriend how much I dreamed for the newest and greatest electric, paperless student writer and how sick I was of typing up my paper notes on a computer. I was so beyond the archaic methods of the past and yearned for the efficiency of the future.

A few years went by, and I found myself plodding away in my first speed building class. I came home from a productive day at school to find an envelope on my bed. I didn't order anything so, as you can imagine, I was surprised to see my name written on the package. Dan, my boyfriend, told me to open it. Inside, I found the student version of the CAT software I wanted

*continued on page 8*

LEO J **WORTH** BUSINESS EQUIPMENT

## Steven Worth

4154 W. Barry Ave  
Chicago, IL 60641  
(773) 777-1474  
WorthStenoService.com  
Worth4154@msn.com

## Cinderella Story

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inside! I squealed with excitement, but in my head I was thinking, "He is a computer programmer. Didn't he know that I use a manual writer?" Still, he was being so sweet! I was so thankful and overjoyed. I promised him that I would start learning all the bells and whistles right away so when I was able to afford an electronic writer, I could start using it with ease. He looked at me with confusion, as though he didn't even think about my writer, then acted confused and upset that he made such a rookie mistake.

I've got to tell you that when I'm well into my golden years, I think I will be able to remember those next few minutes with perfect clarity. He then went into the closet and pulled out a much larger box. My eyes widened, my heart was racing, and I had to sit on our bed due to shock. He let go of the package, and it plopped in front of me on the bed. He then handed me a pair of scissors. "Open it," he told me.

As I examined and opened the box, I started seeing familiar logos on the package and leaflets promoting the company's newest professional writer at the time. I just thought they were advertising their newest and best to the lowly indigent student, but then I was able to see it. I was receiving the full-blown professional writer! I screamed as loud as a teenager in a boy

band stadium! As a tech nerd, I secretly had my heart set on this particular model when I graduated school, but now I was holding it in my hands — bright, shiny, and new! I felt like I was given the keys to a Formula One car and was told to go racing.

To top it all off, Dan then explained that he called my school to know which theory I was using so that he was able to pick the correct key pad setup for my writer. After I got everything working the way I wanted it to, I was passing tests and flying through the next few speed levels faster than I ever thought I could!

I never thought in a million years that I would have a fairy-tale moment like this. I got to experience the joy of seeing my pumpkin (in this case, The Avocado) turn into a sleek, brilliant steno chariot, all thanks to my fairy boyfriend!

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that seven years later, I have graduated court reporting school, passed my tests, got my California state license, and celebrated my second wedding anniversary with Dan. I feel comfortable saying that he and I are both living happily ever after!

*Sarah Maksim (Stenoariety) of Santa Clara, Calif., is a freelance reporter and participating member of NCRA.*

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# Carol Bartkowicz 1948-2016

## A Tribute to an Illinois Legend



Carole Bartkowicz was a friend of mine. Much more importantly, she was a friend of ILCRA or ISRA, as it was known in the early days, or the Chicago Exchange Reporters Association before that. She and her longtime business partner Diane Dorwart were instrumental in forming and promoting an association to include freelancers, officials, CART providers a cohesive family for all. They worked with Sally Cochran, Jim Hartnett, Brenda Launius, and others to lay our framework and expand their vision.

Carole, 68, lost her year-long battle with cancer on July 18. ILCRA lost a stalwart supporter, and our profession lost a leading light.

Carole and Diane formed DianeCarole Reporting in Chicago and were a force to be reckoned with on many levels, constantly pushing our state association forward. She helped write the original bylaws for ILCRA, and ILCRA's Code of Ethics is based on her and Diane's work at the national level on COPE, NCRA's Committee on Professional Ethics.

After graduating from MacCormac College, Carole was involved in reporting for more than four decades which not everyone can say! She served countless years on the Illinois CSR board, including several as chair, and created and dictated many of our tests. Before starting DiCar, she reported with McCorkle and joined Pohlman Reporting in 2009, where she finished her illustrious career. Carole was always professional and could disagree

without being disagreeable. She would do anything for anyone and had great opinions on many subjects. She knew a lot of different things, was unoffensive, unobtrusive, smart as a whip, and as charming as could be.

Carole earned ILCRA's Distinguished Service Award in 1998, which was my first exposure to her. What an amazing person she was! Everyone who knew her loved her. She was a soft person, a gentle person, a great mentor, and a constant trainer in many areas. She always had an opinion and never hesitated to share her thoughts, experience, or ideas, usually with a smile and her easy laugh. She welcomed strangers, made friends easily, and always had a story or anecdote at the ready.

She volunteered countless hours in the reporting arena as well as at her church and in her horse-show circles, especially the Mid-American Horse Show Association, where she also served many years in leadership. She'd never decline a request and she also wouldn't take no for an answer when she wanted your assistance.

Carole became a Fellow of NCRA's Academy of Professional Reporters in 2014, and it was especially fitting that Nancy Davis, ILCRA's longtime executive director, became a Fellow in that same class a great year for Illinois!

I find it ironic that Diane passed away on July 13, 2005, and Carole on July 18, just a few days and 11 years apart. They were truly joined at the hip. If you saw one, you saw the other, and their personalities and skills complemented and enhanced every project they undertook. They were good business partners and worked tirelessly



writing articles, presenting seminars, and providing one-on-one advice, usually centered on ethics and helping reporters "do the right thing." Their work for ILCRA and unwavering support was a labor of love.

Carole was married for 46 years to Ron Bartkowicz also a big milestone that many don't achieve. Ron has said that she was the best campaign manager he had when running for the bench; many suggested that he just stay home and let Carole take care of his campaigns. That clearly worked out well!

Ron sent me a beautiful history of their time together, part of which I want to share here. These are Ron's words which touched me and I pass on to you: "I ask you to take 5 or 10 seconds and remember an event with Carole. Remember her smile and radiant eyes. Store this memory in your memory bank and bring it back whenever her name is mentioned. This is how I believe she wants to be remembered."

So, Carole, I trust you and Diane are drinking champagne up in heaven, and I know that you are both continuing to watch over court reporters because that's just the way you always were. Rest in peace, my friends. A life well lived is a beautiful legacy. I thank you for sharing yours with ILCRA and the reporting profession.



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- Positive Work Environment With Familial Atmosphere -

# ILCRA's New Legislative Representative's Message to Members

By Isaiah Roberts

Hello members! It is with much excitement that I write this article to you as your new legislative representative on this year's executive board. I am truly humbled to serve in this position and look forward to learning from and working with the other board members. I am so fortunate to be surrounded by an incredibly knowledgeable and experienced group of individuals! I plan to diligently serve the reporters here in Illinois, as well as further the work that ILCRA has done representing reporters in the state legislature.

One of the main reasons I look forward to serving in this position stems from my interests leading up to becoming a reporter. Growing up, my mother was a freelance reporter while also homeschooling myself and my siblings. It is because of these two things that I attribute to facilitating my love for the law. We were often studying parts of the constitution or learning about the legal system here in the United States.

When I got older and was in college working toward my bachelor's degree in sales, I decided that after graduation I wanted to go to law school. Due to this, I spent much of my college years taking multiple undergraduate legal/political classes, as well as getting involved in mock trial as well as law club. Having been involved in the college of business, I was the president of the Economic Student Association and found myself being drawn to the legal issues of both the economic and accounting fields.

During my senior year, I decided to make the switch from attending law school to court reporting school. I did so after seeing firsthand the crucial role court reporters play in the legal system, such as seeing the need of accurate depositions on my mock trial team or the crucial role of properly preserving case law through my legal classes. Making the decision to forego law school and instead pursue court reporting has been a decision I have never regretted, and on the contrary, has been one of the best decisions of my life.

In my second year of reporting school, I was fortunate to attend NCRA's Legislative Boot Camp, a weekend-long full of seminars held in Washington D.C. Instantly I realized that these seminars, which were based around lobbying and advocating for court reporters, brought together my love for law and politics, as well as my love for advocating, communicating, and 'hands on' characteristics of my marketing degree. The weekend full of seminars, role-plays, and firsthand knowledge from Dave Wenhold, left me prepared for Capitol Hill Day, where myself and Georgia Rollins (ILCRA's Vice-President) went and met with representatives of our senators, as well as our congressman himself.

Now, as a working reporter, I am honored to serve in this position. I hope that with my past experiences, skills, and a love for our profession, as well as advocating, I will leave the reporters in Illinois both proud of the ILCRA board, but also well represented in Springfield!

In conclusion, I can't thank you enough for entrusting me to serve you in this capacity. I hope that I will make you proud. If there is anything I can ever do to help assist you, please do not hesitate to contact me at [isaiah.roberts@mcleancountyil.gov](mailto:isaiah.roberts@mcleancountyil.gov).

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