

# CCRA

California Court Reporters Association

C C R A O N L I N E

# BOOT CAMP

CALIFORNIA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

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**Saturday, January 10, 2015  
Burbank, California**

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California Court Reporters Association

CCRA ONLINE

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the California Court Reporters Association is to advance the profession of verbatim shorthand reporting by promoting professional reporting excellence through education, research, and the use of state-of-the-art technology; establishing and maintaining professional standards of practice; and advocating before legislative and regulatory bodies on issues which impact the judicial system and others served by the court reporting profession of California.

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# P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

By Carlos Martinez, CSR, RPR, CMRS  
President, CCRA

December brings us to the end of our year, and for a lot of us the traditions of Christmas and then New Years after that. I wrote last month how Thanksgiving was my favorite holiday of the year. No muss. No fuss. Just food, family, and fun times, or the three F's, as it's so fondly referred to at my house, "Forced Family Fun." Thank you, Clark W. Griswold and the cast of *Christmas Vacation*.

The end of the year gives us a time to pause and reflect on the past 12 months. Were they good? Were they bad? Did I make a difference? Did I do anything positive this year? Did I help another? Or, even, did I hurt another? Whatever the answers to these questions end up being, it's never too late to still help out. It's not too late to put a positive end to your year.

I used to play softball a lot. Every year we would end the season by playing in a tournament in Reno, Nevada. The slogan of the tournament was "End the Year with a Bang." It's funny how something so trivial can creep into your subconscious and begin to play a role in your life. Each year I strive to end the year with a bang. Sometimes I'm successful. Sometimes I'm not. But to me it's more important to put forth the effort than it is to not.

So where am I going with this? Well, here it is. If you're a firm owner or a deposition reporter, I'm asking you for your help. CCRA has been contacted by students that are telling us that they need their sitting-out hours, what we called "practicum" when I was in school, but they're having difficulty finding firms and reporters that will allow them to sit in on the depositions. These hours that they need are mandated, and without achieving the required number, the students will not be able to sit for the state test.

If your firm is willing to help, or if you're willing to ask the firm that you're working for to allow a student to sit in with you, would you please contact CCRA at [info@cal-ccra.org](mailto:info@cal-ccra.org). Once we have your contact information, we can send it to the schools throughout the state and have the students begin contacting those firms that are available. I will be indebted to you, and I know that the students will be grateful beyond expression.

So there's my request for the end of the year. And in this season of giving, I'm pretty secure in the notion that the

professionals in our grand profession will rise to the occasion to help out. Like banding together to fight ER or video recording or some other half-baked idea to capture the record without a court reporter, I know that the people that practice our craft will come together to help out in this time of need for the students.

To finish out my last message of 2014, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge those that have made my first year as president so successful: The board of CCRA, the advisors that stick around to help out the board and myself, and our executive director and his crew. Without all of these pieces working together, even though it's not always smooth, we wouldn't be able to accomplish anything. It's been a very busy and very successful year for the court reporters of California. CCRA has completed many tasks. Now we're looking towards 2015, and it all starts with BOOT CAMP in Burbank on January 10th.

Be sure to attend, as this is an event that offers a lot of good information about transitioning to different parts of the profession. If you're somewhere between Sacramento and Bakersfield and you'd like a ride to BC, join us on CCRA's party bus. It promises to be a memorable event.

To close, I'm wishing you and your family, friends, life's partners, and those that are unattached a wonderful season of joy and happiness. I hope that you're able to find a way to end your year with a bang...just not too big of a bang.



*Happy  
New Year!!!*





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# BOOT CAMP SEMINAR SPOTLIGHT: INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS – HOW TO GET PAID WHAT YOU ARE WORTH

By Christy Cannariato, Ph.D., CSR, RPR, CRR, CCP

If you are just starting out in the profession, or are transitioning from being an employee to self-employed, you may need some guidance on negotiating rates and payment terms with the firms that send you your job assignments. Remember, these firms are your clients. Think like a firm owner.

## Did you know that....

Not all firms pay the same rates or have the same payment terms (e.g. how often or fast they pay)?

Reporters or CART providers working for the same firm may not be getting the same rates or payment terms?

You can try to negotiate a better rate or term? It's not always take it or leave it.

At BOOT CAMP in Burbank, California, on Saturday, January 10, 2015, I will be giving tips on how to be charmingly assertive to get the rates and payment terms you deserve without alienating yourself.

Here are some more topics I will be covering in this part of my seminar:

- What are excellent payment terms and what are the ones you might want to avoid.
- How to get started working with a depo or CART firm and what terms you should consider asking about or negotiating.
- How to decide for yourself if accepting undesirable working conditions, low rates or questionable payment terms is paying your dues as a newbie, strategic volume pricing, or whether you might be "hurting the industry."
- How you can effectively dispute an invoice or collect on an unpaid invoice but still get work from that firm.
- How to decide when you should negotiate with a firm and when you should walk away.

These tips are just a small fraction of the wealth of information you will get from all of the speakers at BOOT CAMP. Whether you are just starting out or need some help with the next phase of your steno career, a day with CCRA at BOOT CAMP is a wise investment in your future.



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## BOOT CAMP SEMINAR: PROFESSIONALISM AND EXPECTATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

By Jeri Kusar, CSR, RPR, CEO

With over 30 years in the industry as both a deposition reporter and an agency owner, I will share priceless experience as it relates to effective communication. Learn how to maximize your success by understanding the many aspects of professionalism that is expected of you from agencies and from attorneys

As a new reporter starting out in the profession, it can be overwhelming knowing that the deposition that you are reporting may have an interpreter or a legal videographer, multiple counsel, additional attendees, maybe a telephonic attendee, or someone attending by video conference. Learn what is expected of you and your responsibilities as it relates to each of these attendees and understand what their responsibilities are, while commanding respect and showing respect by meeting simple expectations and going the extra mile when necessary.



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# RELEASE STRESS AND GET IN “THE ZONE” BY BREATHING INTO YOUR HEART



By Ana Fatima Costa, CSR, RPR (Ret.)

## Stress and Perfectionism are joined at the hip.

Stress is inherent in the reporting profession, from the first few days of school: Learning the keyboard; feeling embarrassed when you read out loud in class and don't get it all (or any of it); trying to get 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 more words per minute. All the exams you fail. THE CSR. Then working — myriad personalities, demands, deadlines. Too-fast attorneys and witnesses. Interrupters. Mumbler. Accents. Realtime, where your less-than-perfect strokes can be seen by everyone. Aching shoulders and wrists. Not enough time. Oy!

Of course, it's not all bad, or we wouldn't keep doing it, right? There's the exhilaration of getting that next word. Figuring out what you wrote in a tough spot. Passing a qualifier. Creating a brief on the fly that works. The unbelievable stuff that people say. The brilliance of the attorneys. The DRAMA (and it's not yours!). In the midst of history being made. Knowing that you are providing a valuable and needed service.

So what do we usually do when we're stressed? Drink, eat, worry, argue, etc. But a few beers with friends at the end of the day can become an addiction or a crutch over time. Then we begin relying on \_\_\_\_\_ to get through all the stuff in our lives.

Much has been written about how stress can hurt us, but we can't change anything if we are not aware of it. As with any other aspect of our lives, awareness comes first.

Barbara Barnett, Ph.D., author of *Court Reporters and Stress; How to Find the Time to Live*, conducted a survey with the cooperation of the NCRA. Out of 1004 members randomly selected by computer, 328 responded — 237 freelancers, 85 officials, three hearing reporters, one full-time teacher and two agency owners. In response to whether they consider their work stressful, 300 said yes (no surprise), and 200 attributed the stress to “too much work and not enough time to do it all.”<sup>1</sup>

Awareness can come in the form of a traumatic wakeup call. For Ms. Barnett, the “ah-ha” came after she was hospitalized for a nervous breakdown. The epiphany? She was a perfectionist: working 50 hours a week, cleaning house, cooking meals, caring for her husband, seeing patients, and studying for her Ph.D. Trying to do everything perfectly. One day, her body broke down, and she realized she needed to make some changes.

How many times have you stressed about producing transcripts that are less than perfect? Attorneys talking too fast, interrupting the witness, talking over one another, etc., and many not listening when you speak up (or looking annoyed when you do) — all create an internal conflict. Knowing that it's your job to produce a verbatim transcript

but feeling out of control or helpless in your ability to achieve that goal results in stress.

The American Medical Association has noted that stress is the basic cause of more than 60% of all human illness and disease.

## How do we stop the cycle of stress that can make us feel overwhelmed or even sick?

There are many methods, including meditation. However, most people don't meditate because they can't sit still longer than five minutes without wanting to DO something!

For 26 years, meditation helped me focus. Yet, I had difficulty communicating in positive ways, consistently; I was judgmental, demanding, defensive and argumentative. In 2009, I heard about an experiential 40-hour course that included practicing a heart-centered tool that provides fast, effective stress relief and improves relationships. I eagerly signed up.

The presenter was Rita Marie Johnson, founder of **Rasur Foundation International**, an award-winning global nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching a social and emotional skillset that utilizes the wisdom of our hearts and empathy for each other to create a more connected world.<sup>2</sup>

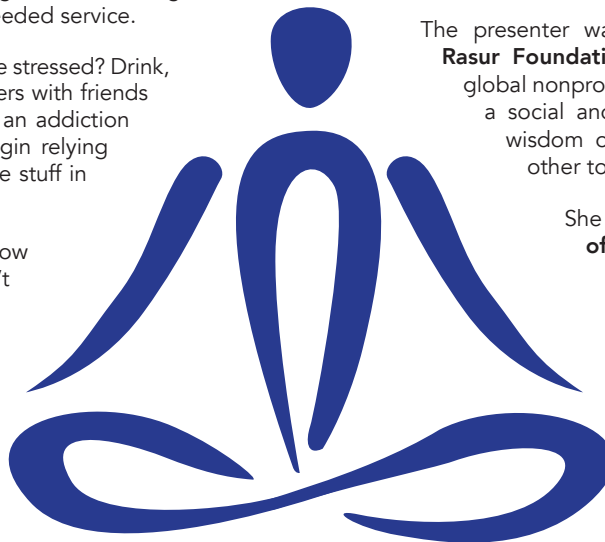
She taught us about the **Institute of HeartMath**, an internationally recognized nonprofit organization that, through its research in emotional physiology and stress management, developed heart-centered techniques through rigorous scientific studies (the “Math” part of its name) to bring our brains, bodies and nervous systems to a state of coherence.<sup>3</sup>

## What is coherence?

HeartMath discovered that by actively engaging the heart through a process they developed called Quick Coherence Technique, we can transform emotions that make us feel stressed fear, anxiety, anger, worry, etc. into feelings of peace and clarity about what action to take in any circumstance. When our hearts and brains work together, we achieve a peaceful state called coherence. (See the diagram below).

## Emotions impact our heart rhythms and our ability to think clearly.

Rita Marie also taught us about **Nonviolent Communication**, a global organization that believes we are compassionate by nature and share the same basic human feelings and needs, and that what we do and say are the ways we try to meet one or more of those needs. By practicing empathy, we can feel better about ourselves and others and learn how to communicate in positive ways, where everyone's needs are met.<sup>4</sup>



CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



## Release Stress and Get in “The Zone” CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

In 2002, she had an epiphany: **Empathy** is attained through a conscious connection to our feelings and needs, and Insight is accessed through heart-brain coherence. In a flash of insight, The Connection Practice and Heart-Brain Insight process were born.

### Wait a minute. What does this mean, and how does it work?

In other words, when our needs are not met, we get stressed and react with anger, frustration, withdrawal, eating, etc. any coping mechanism that we've used since childhood to keep us “safe.” These reactions are unconscious. Automatic.

When we consciously breathe into our hearts and give ourselves empathy *first*, our brain and heart waves are aligned. From that calm place, we are able to make better decisions, listen to others with compassion and get insights about how to create win-win results.

## EMPATHY + INSIGHT = CONNECTION

Applying the tools over the next two years changed my life. I let go of needing to be in control so much. All my relationships improved. Drama went away. Most importantly, I began to make peace with and accept who I am, both the positive and negative traits.

What I experienced was so powerful and impactful that in the fall of 2011, I signed up for the certification process to become a Certified Connection Practice Coach. A year later, I launched AFC Consulting Services, offering Heart-Brain Insights, coaching and mentoring to court reporting students, reporters, clients, family and friends.

This process works whether you are about to take the CSR exam (for the first or eighth time); you're in the midst of a contentious deposition or trial; or you're having health / relationship / money challenges. *But don't take my word for it.*

In the fall of 2012, I sent an invitation to four CR schools, offering a series of mock depo internships at a local law school. One of the volunteers was Humphreys student Jaimie Hopp, who planned to take the November CSR for the second time. Before the first mock, I shared the Quick Coherence Technique with all of the CR students to help calm them down. A few days later, I decided to drive the 90 minutes to Sacramento to support Jaimie. About an hour before the CSR, I guided her through a Heart-Brain Insight.

*“The insight I received through the Heart-Brain Insight with Ana before the CSR was complete calmness, a total connection with my body, unlike any standard meditation. This was deeper to me, maybe because it focused on the heart itself. The peace I felt was so present, not only through the Heart-Brain Insight, but it lasted through my whole test.”*

- Jaimie Hopp, CSR 13751

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- Jaimie Hopp, CSR 13751

### Want to get a taste of how it feels?

It takes an experienced Certified Connection Practice Coach to

help guide you through the deeper Heart-Brain Insight process, but the tool below can get you in “**The Zone**” in just a few minutes:

## Quick Coherence Technique

Find a quiet place without any distractions. Close your eyes. Place a hand over your heart. Remember a time when you felt happy, grateful or contented. Then put that thought aside and follow these steps:

- **Heart Focus** – Focus your attention on the area in the center of your chest.
- **Heart Breathing** – Focusing on your heart, breathe deeply several times, feeling as if your breath is coming in and out of your heart area.
- **Heart Feeling** – As you maintain your heart focus and heart breathing, consciously bring that positive experience you thought of before into your heart, really *feeling* it, filling your heart up.

Open your eyes when ready. Write down any insight you experienced.

Don't do the above while driving, but consciously breathing in and out of your heart will calm you down, no matter where you are in the midst of an emotionally charged conversation in person or on the phone; in the car, after someone cuts you off or drives erratically; at any job, especially when you feel like throwing your machine at someone; in the middle of a busy office; in line at the store; or out in public. In short, anywhere.

Breathe into your heart — and get in the zone.

## RESOURCES

- Barbara Barnett, Ph.D., *Court Reporters & Stress: How to Find the Time to Live*
- Rasur Foundation International: [www.rasurinternational.org](http://www.rasurinternational.org). Rita Marie Johnson's book, *Completely Connected: Uniting Our Empathy and Insight for Extraordinary Results*, will be published in March 2015.
- The Institute of HeartMath: [www.heartmath.org](http://www.heartmath.org)
- The Center for Nonviolent Communication: [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)

ANA FATIMA COSTA is an author, motivational speaker and coach. She left her 35-year career in court reporting to launch her own firm, AFC Consulting Services, where she serves attorneys, law students and court reporters. She provides heart-centered coaching; internship opportunities for reporting students and new reporters; and mentoring for CR students on how to get through school and be successful and happy in their chosen field. If you're interested in experiencing the Connection Practice, get in touch with Ana at [afccoaching@gmail.com](mailto:afccoaching@gmail.com)

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# THE FIGHT FOR CART: AN INTERVIEW WITH ATTORNEY DAVID M. GREY

By Saba McKinley, Chair, CART/Broadcast Captioner Committee

*I submitted an article earlier this year, which referenced a high school student in the San Diego area who fought to receive CART captioning services. In this month's article, I will share with you my interview with the attorney who fought and successfully won CART services for the high school student for her senior year.*

*Allow me to introduce you to David M. Grey, Attorney at Law, who specializes in special education and disability law with an emphasis on helping children who are deaf or hard of hearing.*

SABA: David, thank you for taking the time to have a telephone interview with me. I truly appreciate your time.

DAVID: I'm happy to help.

SABA: You recently emailed me a joint document, labeled as an FAQ (frequently asked questions), issued November 2014, by the U.S. Dept. of Justice, Civil Rights Division, and the U.S. Dept. of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services. I asked if I could interview you regarding the document so that I could get a clear understanding of the weight of this document as it relates to CART captioning services.

Now, my question to you is: how would you summarize what we, as a committee within a state association, should decipher this FAQ document?

DAVID: By way of background, there are three laws that apply to public schools, and there is some conflict between what those laws require a public school to do in terms of providing effective communication. What happened was there was a case that was decided about a year and a half ago that basically said you have to follow all three of the laws. It used to be that schools would say, we followed one of the laws and that's good enough. And so after that case came down a year and a half ago, it made very, very clear that public schools had to follow all three laws, even though they're slightly different.

That is the background of how this justice department came out, because what the justice department did is they understood that among public schools in the country, there was a ton of confusion in terms of what their obligations were. And most public schools would rely on the one law, which I'll call the I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) law, or the special education law, and they would all say, well, we did this under that law. We don't have to do anything else.

Now, the justice department, in this 30-page, wordy, confusing document is explaining to all the public schools in the country that they have to follow all three of the laws. And then they explain a little bit more what that involves in detail for any given situation. So that's kind of the dry, humdrum, legal background.

Now do me a favor and ask me your question again.

SABA: How would you summarize what we, as a committee within a state association, should decipher this document?

DAVID: This document, for lack of a better word, legitimizes CART because it makes reference to CART in several places, and it specifically speaks of CART as being one of several effective accommodations for students with, you know, hearing impairment.

Why I think that's important, it kind of gives the stamp of approval of the United States government that public schools should be thinking about using CART when they have children that are deaf or hard of hearing that are struggling to hear what's said in the classroom.

And so that's – again, I like to phrase, that's kind of like the U.S. government's stamp of approval that CART is something that is one of the first lines of aid for these students. Up until now, you've never really had something from the government that said it so clearly.

SABA: What about Typewell and the other one?

DAVID: There's a whole bunch, Typewell, C-print, Dragon. There are a couple of other computer programs out there. And what I think is really important about this document is it doesn't mention those other alternatives. It talks about CART, but it doesn't talk about Typewell or those other forms of transcription, which quite candidly are really glorified notetaking services as opposed to an actual transcription. And so it requires public schools to emphasize CART over those other services. And that's not to say that those other services in any given situation are inappropriate or if a person asks for one of those other services that it would be perfectly appropriate to give that to them, but I think this really does highlight that the government is looking at CART as really the most appropriate form of transcription for somebody that's hearing impaired. In a situation of being in a public school, it would apply with equal force to public meetings, and I think that is a really important step that we've never really had in terms of getting access to hearing impaired folks.

I need to emphasize that I'm focusing mostly on public school children because historically that's the area that has been the most undeserved and the most difficult, generally speaking. If it's a public meeting and somebody requests CART, there's usually not a whole heck of a lot of problem getting it; whereas, in the public school setting, it traditionally could sometimes become a really big battle. And so that's why I'm kind of emphasizing public school students, but I don't mean to say or imply that this would not apply with equal force to somebody that wanted to go to, for example, a city council meeting or participate in some other public, government type activity.

SABA: CCRA will be sharing with the Court Reporters Board the need for certification regarding CART. Are there any specifics that you would like me to address in my presentation to the board?

DAVID: Yeah. These new guidelines specify that interpreters, or generally people that are providing some type of interpretation - and I think to some extent transcription falls within that - a person has to be qualified. What qualified means is competent

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*The Fight for CART*  
**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9**

and proficient to do the job.

I think in terms of certification of CART transcribers, I think it's really important, from both the professional's perspective and to the end user's perspective to know that if somebody is certified, they meet certain minimum qualifications and will be effective at getting the job done, because when it comes down to it at the end of the day, this entire service is so that somebody with a hearing impairment can get access to what is being said.

I've had some kids report to me that some of their CART transcribers have not always been effective.

Let me boil it down. The regulations and the guidelines say that you need to be qualified.

For CART transcribers, there's no standard in terms of what is qualified, and I think that's important and that's something that can be accomplished with the association to create some standards.

The law is really clear that it needs to be effective, and I'm extrapolating a little bit now. The person, just like an ASL interpreter, needs to be qualified. If they're not and the quality of the transcription suffers, then the person with the disability is not getting the effective communication that they need.

I want to highlight something. I'm not talking about a one-time thing, I'm not talking about the CART reporter has a bad day. In the ideal world, that shouldn't happen. Life is life. Sometimes things go wrong. Equipment can break. I'm not talking about isolated instances. I'm talking about where, over a course of weeks or months, that the person just stinks. That's not effective communication.

I see criticism of CART. I was reading somebody's marketing materials the other day, and it was one of these speech-to-text transcriptions where somebody - it wasn't Dragon. It was some other thing - and they were saying that CART could sometimes take as long as 10 seconds before the transcription reaches the screen. 10 seconds is insanely long. It's clear to me that people are sometimes pointing to the poor or unqualified CART reporters or CART transcribers as though that's the norm.

What I would be concerned with, and I think what your organization can do a tremendous amount of good by creating standards is, you don't let these lousy providers set standard. There are a lot of people that just don't have any experience with any of this. Contact the wrong person, get a demonstration and they look at it and say, "My God, that stinks. Why would I pay for that when I can get somebody to do Typewell for \$15 an hour?"

What I expect to see happen over the next couple of years is I expect to see for public schools a big increase in the number of kids that are getting CART. I would fully expect that some of these low-end providers are going to start getting hired more and more because I'm guessing they're probably a lot cheaper. People are going to look and say - mostly school administrators and students - they are going to be like, "Why are we paying for this? This stinks." They are going to look for alternatives.

You know, the truth is some of these alternatives - I know speech-to-text is big right now. Some of those, when compared to a substandard CART provider, might look really good. But if they're compared to a good, quality CART provider, it will become apparent that they are what they are.

**SABA:** If you were to summarize the Poway case, what would be your take-away, as far as awareness, for the public?

**DAVID:** It would almost be the same as what's in the guidelines.

What I would say is that case makes it clear that just because the school district has provided a kid with a valid I.E.P. is no excuse for short-changing them on their right to effective and equal communication. There are two separate laws, two separate requirements.

**SABA:** There are basically three mandates or guidelines for accommodations?

**DAVID:** There are three sets of laws. There is what's called the I.D.E.A., which are the I.E.P. laws. Those apply only to public schools, and they only require that the school provide the child with a basic form of education or that the child makes some educational progress. It doesn't require equal access.

The other two laws, on the other hand, are anti-discrimination laws, and those are called section 504. And then the third one is the Americans with Disabilities Act. For purposes of our discussions, section 504 and the A.D.A. are almost the same. I could ramble on for the next four hours about the technical differences between section 504 and the A.D.A., and you'll want to push your head into a brick wall after ten minutes. I don't think it would really benefit you in terms of your understanding of all of this. They're both anti-discrimination statutes. There are technical differences between the two, but for purposes of providing effective communication, there's no practical difference.

The differences between the anti-discrimination laws and the I.D.E.A. is the anti-discrimination laws require providing equality of opportunity, equality, equal access, whereas I.D.E.A. does not require providing equality of access. All it requires is providing that basic education that, as long as there is minimal progress, that the child's progressing, that's good enough. It doesn't have to be the best. It doesn't have to be equal.

**SABA:** Do they have I.D.E.A. at the college level?

**DAVID:** No, they don't. That's a really interesting question. They don't have I.D.E.A. at the college level. I.D.E.A. applies for children that are from 3 to 22. Basically, you think of conventional school years. I say 22 because there are some kids that are severely disabled and don't have the ability to graduate, so they have the luxury of staying within the public school system until they reach the age of 22.

What's interesting about your question is at the college and university level, they are both covered by section 504 and A.D.A. Not all colleges or universities are covered by section 504, for some very technical reasons; however, one, or both, of section 504 and the A.D.A, covers all colleges and universities.

What I find interesting is historically it was easy for kids to go to college and very, very few colleges, whether public or private, would fight the kid. They would just give them the captioning. And so that battle that I would see in the public schools to get CART didn't really exist on the college level. There are certain exceptions. There are a couple prominent exceptions, but it just was not something where there was a battle. It was just given to the people for the most part.

**SABA:** Thank you so much.

**DAVID:** I'm really glad I was able to help.

You know, you should always feel free to call me or to shoot me an email. Like I said, whatever I can do, I'm happy to do.



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# CAPTION IT FORWARD: THIS FIELD NEEDS YOU!

By Regina DeMerville, CSR

As I take a step back and reflect on an amazing year, one thing really stands out to me: This field has a tremendous shortage of broadcast captioners! I try to recruit captioners whenever I see an opportunity. I have averaged around 30-35 hours of work per week this year, give or take. But I could probably work 60-70 hours per week, if I could physically do it. I turn down so much work on a daily basis. It's crazy how much work is out there!

On December 6th, the CART/Captioning committee, and a few other individuals, met up for a luncheon. The President of CCRA also attended to show his support of this amazing profession. We laughed and joked, met new friends, but most importantly, spoke about the importance of getting good quality captioners out in this field! This field doesn't need warm bodies in a chair. This field needs captioners who can caption 250 words a minute at 99% accuracy. This field needs captioners willing to work nights, weekends, and holidays. This field needs more captioners to participate in CART and broadcast events, such as becoming a member of CCRA and supporting our profession! CART and broadcast captioning are not given enough credit, and we, as captioners and a CART/broadcast community, need to change that!

You might think to yourself that working nights, weekends and holidays aren't worth the sacrifice or that the pay isn't enough. Or you might think that your writing will never be "that good." Speaking for myself, I thought the same thing. But every weekend worked, every holiday I've had to rearrange time with my family, every fast speaking anchor that's kept me on the edge of my seat has been worth every minute and every penny I have earned. This will be my highest grossing year to date as a court reporter. I get to work from home, in my yoga pants, "getting paid to watch TV," as some would say. My 19-year-old son and my husband come in my office to say goodbye to me every morning before they leave for work. I don't think either of them fully understand the importance of my career, but they see the rewards this career has given our family. They see how dedicated I am to my career, my clients...my companies. They see how tired I am at the end of the day "typing" for 6-8 hours. Believe it or not, writing for that long each day really does a number on your body.

This field is more than writing on my machine and getting a paycheck in the mail. It's about the quality I'm putting out to my clients. It's about the appreciation the clients have for my work. It's about the bond I make with the deaf community. It's about the passion I have to get up and go to work each day. How many people can wake up and say they love what they do? I can! So this holiday season, take a step back and reflect on what 2014 has done for you. I guarantee you have come so far in your court reporting goals since January. And 2015 will be your year for bigger and better things! This field NEEDS you! So please consider CART or broadcast captioning as a future career! It is worth it, I promise!



Thank you to everyone who has read my articles every month in 2014! I appreciate you! Please contact me any time if you'd like to hear more about CART or broadcast! I'd love to chat with you! Email: [rdemerville@hotmail.com](mailto:rdemerville@hotmail.com).

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

<http://www.cal-ccra.org/ccra-boot-camp-2015>



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# STUDENT KATHERINE SCHILLING MAKES CNBC NEWS

By Gerie Bunch

## How were you selected to be interviewed by CNBC?

It all started earlier this fall when I received an email from NCRA's Christina Lewellen with the unexpected subject line of "Appearance on Today Show?" Their marketing/PR team was just starting to put together the CNBC story as part of their Take Note publicity campaign about getting the word out about court reporting as a profession, and they were looking for a student to provide his/her perspective.

Sara Wood and Jacki Schmidt, both staff members of NCRA, apparently recommended that Christina contact me after I'd made some good impressions on them at DRA and NCRA conventions and emails. (If that doesn't say something about the power of networking, then I don't know what does!)

Originally, CNBC wanted to interview a student who was right out of high school for the story, but I like to think that I was able to provide the appealing perspective of someone who'd already gone down the "traditional" path of getting a four-year degree and was still pursuing court reporting as a more fulfilling and lucrative career. Ultimately, two students were interviewed—myself and Gabriella Woodson—to provide our unique backgrounds to the story.

## What was the interview with CNBC like?

This whole experience was a great crash course in how Hollywood works. The month after that initial email was a study in patience as there were a lot of cooks in the kitchen who were sorting out their end of the deal before we finally set up the interview date. Jane Wells, the news journalist from CNBC, is juggling several stories at any one time; so there was always the risk that a bigger (and supposedly "better") story would come up and replace the slot for Take Note. To be honest, I was eager for the whole thing to be over with just so that I could stop devoting so much mental energy to it! Fortunately, everything came together like it was supposed to; and Jane, along with two associates, flew up to the West Valley Campus to hold the interviews.

Jane was so great at making us feel at ease that all of my pent-up nervousness just vanished as soon as we started talking. I think it helped that there were two interests we shared: her son was also a Japanese language major and she's a fan of *Sons of Anarchy*. Maybe she's a skilled actress, too, but I felt like she was genuinely interested in the subject and what we had to say.

The interview with Jane, Gabriella, and myself lasted 15 minutes in total, but the end product only includes a few key sound bites. That's media for you! All in all, I'm really happy with how the story was presented, and my favorite part hands down is when Jane tests Siri on providing an accurate record and it fails miserably.

## What got you interested in court reporting? Was it really *Sons of Anarchy*?

Okay. The original story of how I found out about court reporting is a little lengthier than what I said in the interview. I first learned about it when attending a book fair in Los Angeles back in 2007 where a court reporter was captioning a presentation. Of

course, I asked all the usual questions at the most inopportune time as she was captioning. I politely took her business card, thought it was an interesting career, and then promptly forgot all about it until five years later when I watched that fateful captioned episode of *Sons of Anarchy*. After just a few weeks of researching the career, I knew it was the job for me; so I promptly quit my job and started school.

On an interesting note, I was recently reunited with that same captioner from Los Angeles at this year's CCRA Annual Convention. It was a real feeling of having come full circle, and I owe her a lot for first introducing me by happenstance to what will soon be my career.

## So you said your plan is to earn over \$65,000 in the first year of being a reporter. Can you explain how you are going to do that?

\$65,000 is the figure that has been given as the average income for court reporters in the Bay Area; so I'm not being too overly ambitious with having it as a goal. However, I know that making that amount of money takes flexibility, hard work, and top-notch networking. Beginner reporters cannot be choosers; so I'm mentally prepared to drive the distances and take the jobs that others may not want. In addition, I'll be working hard on my realtime to cut down on editing time, sitting out with as many different reporting firms and court houses to get my name out there, and making the most use of proofreaders to guarantee a clean and timely product.

I've also taken to heart the importance of being your own PR and standing out from the crowd. That's why I'm planning on being the *Motorcycling Court Reporter*. Not only will my bike help to reach those tricky traffic-ridden jobs across the Bay, but it'll also make me unforgettable to attorneys when they see the motorcycle motif on my business card.

## Are you worried that the projection of available jobs will dry up?

Honestly, I'm not worried about it. I'm a member of a Bay Area job posting group, and judging by the amount of posts begging people to take jobs, it's clear that there are more jobs out there than reporters to take them.

Just earlier this month, I sat out with a court reporter in the Santa Cruz Superior Court, and she slipped their HR's business card in my hand while telling me how many of her colleagues will be retiring and will need replacements in the next few years.

## What's something that you wish had been included in the final interview videos?

At the end of the interview, I said how I hoped that people would see this video and consider court reporting as a viable option. I think it came out something cheesy like, "Please come over and join us!" I just wanted to get across my sincerity in wanting to tell others about this industry and how great it can be for them. It's the kind of thing I wish I'd heard about when I was younger, and so I hope that some people see or read the story and it sparks some inspiration in them.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



# CCRA'S NEW STUDENT ACTION TEAM

By Gerie Bunch, SOS Chair

Over the years, many students have inquired, "Why didn't I know about that?" We saw a real need to get information out to all the students about programs such as mentoring and scholarships and events such as BOOT CAMP and the Mock CSR. We realized that the students are the best at spreading the news.

So now with at least one or two students from each school being on our Student Action Team, we can, through them, ensure that everyone knows what CCRA has available to students.

Also we are empowering students to make a difference in their own futures by sharing information about our legislative efforts and asking for their help in letter-writing campaigns when necessary or even attending legislative committee hearings.

The Action Team still needs members from Cypress, Taft, Bryan and Sage-SD. So if you know of any students from these schools who would be interested in being part of the Action Team, please contact me at [gerie.bunch@cal-ccra.org](mailto:gerie.bunch@cal-ccra.org).

Thank you to the following volunteer A-Team members:

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Downey Adult School:   | <b>Andy Rodriguez, Melissa Murray</b>                           |
| Argonaut:              | <b>Karly Greenshields, Jason Stacey, Lisa Mann, Olga Amador</b> |
| Tri Community College: | <b>Stacy Molina, Sue Martinez</b>                               |
| West Valley College:   | <b>Katherine Schilling, Shaunise Day</b>                        |
| College of Marin:      | <b>James Littau, Tricia Holmes</b>                              |
| Humphreys:             | <b>Ann Breitler</b>   |
| Golden State College:  | <b>Melissa Dominguez, Sarah Maksim</b>                          |
| Sage College – MV:     | <b>Michele Throckmorton</b> (online student)                    |
| South Coast College:   | <b>Jessie Frey, Laurie Settle</b>                               |
| Sierra Valley College: | <b>Colleen Contreras, Rene Rogers</b>                           |

## *Student Katherine Schilling Makes CNBC News* **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15**

Last I checked with our program's department chair, there's already been an influx of inquiries about the program; so hopefully I'll be seeing a lot of new faces come the spring semester!

### **What sort of investigation did you do into the school you chose to attend?**

Location, location, location! Lucky for me, West Valley College is just less than 10 miles from my home. When I'd first looked around for a school, Golden Gate Court Reporting School up in Dublin was at the top of my list. I even had my first orientation and glimpse into CR school thanks to the generous co-founder Sandy. Her enthusiasm alone solidified my interest in the career.

Ultimately, however, I had to go with the closer option, and because of that choice, I can now bicycle there daily!

### **How long have you been in school?**

Come January of 2015, it'll be two solid years in school; and if everything goes well, I aim to take the CSR exam next summer.

### **Those interested in watching the actual videos and article that aired on Monday, November 24, please check out the following links:**

<http://tinyurl.com/l54ulnu>

<http://tinyurl.com/l7fdzry> (story starts at 23:30)

<http://tinyurl.com/mac7akl>





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## **“How Can I Cheat at Solitaire?” (Really?)**

**Q: I’ve heard there is a way to cheat when playing Solitaire. I hate to ask, but can you shed any light on this?**

A: I don’t know why as many people ask about this as they do, particularly since Solitaire (Programs > Games) is a game you play against yourself, but Mr. Modem is here to answer questions, not to judge. Well, okay, I judge, too, but I keep my opinions to myself. Well, okay, maybe I don’t keep my opinions to myself, but I only share them with my cats. Here’s how to extricate yourself from Solitaire when you need a card, but it’s just not coming your way:

If you find yourself in that virtual pickle, hold down the SHIFT + CTRL + ALT keys and click the “draw” stack of cards. This forces the game to flip the remaining cards individually, as opposed to the traditional three at a time. Do this as many times as it takes to reach the card you need. You’ll amaze and astound your friends and family how proficient you are at Solitaire. (Either that, or they will know instantly that you’re cheating.)

**Q: When I purchased my computer two years ago, I also purchased an extended warranty for one year. It is time to either renew the extended warranty or let it lapse. Is it wise to renew the extended warranty for another year? Thanks, Mr. M.**

A: Statistically, extended warranties aren’t worth the dollars spent on them. Countless Consumer Reports studies reveal that while extended warranties are very profitable for the companies offering them, the return to consumers is minimal. I never purchase them myself, but some people feel more comfortable having them, so ultimately it’s a matter of how much value YOU place on the peace of mind (if any) you receive from having such a warranty.

Historically, the number of claims presented under extended warranties are far fewer than the dollars collected, so paying for repairs as needed, is statistically more cost effective in the long run.

**Q: A friend recommended checking for updated drivers by using a free Web-based service. I quickly discovered**

**that checking is free, but it costs \$29.95 to download any drivers needed. I’m not having any problems with my PC, so do I need to spend this money?**

A: My often-expressed philosophy can best be summed up by the adage, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” As long as everything is working fine, you are not going to make it run finer by doing anything to your computer, so I would leave well enough alone.

If a printer, for example, stopped working at some point, I would go to my printer manufacturer’s Web site, locate the area where I can check for updated drivers and download them for free. There is nothing inherently wrong with a site such as Driver Agent ([driveragent.com](http://driveragent.com)), which is one of the more popular driver-checking sites, but it is rarely necessary to pay for updated drivers. My recommendation: Save your money.

**Q: How does one detect if a keylogger is installed?**

A: A keylogger is a program or device that surreptitiously (Mr. M’s big word of the day) records (logs) every keystroke entered on a keyboard. Parents, employers, suspicious spouses and private investigators are the primary users of keyloggers, but criminals also use them in order to steal password and other personal information.

Now that we know what a keylogger is, unless it is a physical device that is attached to the keyboard -- which would be easy to spot -- there isn’t any definitive way to detect a keylogger. Keylogging software is designed NOT to be detectable, which is precisely why it is installed in the first place.

## **Mr. Modem’s DME (Don’t Miss ‘Em) Sites of the Month**

**EarthCam** – The Internet’s largest webcam site featuring live, streaming video from hundreds of cities throughout the world. [www.earthcam.com](http://www.earthcam.com)

**FEMA Disaster Center** – Learn about various types of disasters ranging from chemical emergencies to earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, wildfires and more. Each disaster provides a list of potential hazards as well as items you can do before, during and after disaster strikes. (Trust me, you will never sleep again.) [www.fema.gov/hazard/types.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/hazard/types.shtm)

**PhotoBucket** – Similar to ShutterFly ([shutterfly.com](http://shutterfly.com)) and Picasa (<http://picasa.google.com>), but with a bit more flexibility for storing and editing photos online. At this free site, you can share photos, create albums, organize your pictures, search, create a slide show and even combine photos. [www.photobucket.com](http://www.photobucket.com)

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# MY DAY IN CART – ONLY SEVEN WORDS?

By Michelle Newman Wolf

I was given the opportunity to provide services for a doctoral candidate yesterday. Yet another new but wonderful experience! Fortunately, it was at a school site I had been to before. Unfortunately, it was a part of the university I had never been to. I looked over the campus map, saw the building, and thought, "That's not too bad." We were asked to arrive a half hour to set up, as we needed to provide a laptop for the panel so they could ensure their questions were correctly translating to the candidate. Not a problem.

My goal: Arrive an hour early to ensure I'm there in more than enough time to find parking and the building. Reality: Remote job runs ten minutes over, and I've got to get gas in my car. I'm still going to be there 45 minutes early. I arrive on campus, and the information kiosk is four deep with cars. I need to check to see if they have a pass waiting for me. No luck. So ten minutes of wasted time, but at least he told me the best place to park and pay for an all-day pass.

Now 35 minutes to start time, I park in one of those pay-by-space spots that the attendant told me about. I go to the permit stand, and I can't read the screen. I'm just pushing in various numbers, and finally I can see the options: 15 minutes, 30 minutes, and one hour. What? Well, it's got to work, and I'll just have to trek down and pay again later. But I've used nearly ten minutes trying to buy this pass that will only last a mere hour.

Meanwhile, I get a text from my teammate saying she's just arrived and has to find parking. I've got the extra laptop, so I've got to book it to get everything set up. In case you didn't know, campus maps can be very deceiving as far as distance goes, especially while carrying extra equipment. I ask someone for the quickest way to get to the building. "Oh, through that path, down that other path, cross the road, and it's somewhere up there," she replies in a very sweet voice. I look back down at the map. I head in the direction she pointed.

Ten minutes later I'm in front of the building, with three different wings, of course. I take a gamble and head into one. Not the right numbers. At this point I feel kind of like Goldilocks trying to find the perfect building. Third wing it is. I take the elevator up to the third floor, and as I get off the elevator a woman comes up to me, "Are you the Captionist?" Yay, I've found the right place.

Five minutes to spare, I feverishly start setting everything up and texting my teammate. She's looking for the room, but I'm no help, as I barely found it myself. I have to set up all the computers with the temporary wi-fi passwords. The proctor helps me with my extra laptop as I'm setting up my machine and laptop. No need to stress, you've just got six of the smartest people on earth sitting in a room waiting on you to set up.

In walks my teammate. She gets the Streamtext event started for me while I get my software going. Thank goodness for great coworkers!

Now for the actual job. We were provided with a word list for this. Seven words, none of which I had even seen before. Oh, boy! There are five people on the panel, all of which are PhD professors at various colleges and the leaders in their field. And our client with his two master's degrees in evolutionary biology is presenting his doctorate work to the panel, and he has three hours to answer all of their questions, which my teammate and I are to take down while they scrutinize our screens to ensure we're getting the correct information to the candidate.

Amazingly, the actual taking down of the questions was the "easy" part. Every word translated correctly, except *lo si*, which I now know is *loci*. I stayed in the room while the panel deliberated and the candidate went outside. When they brought him back in and announced he was approved, and congratulations went around the room, I was in awe. He was so grateful, and I felt that I should have been the one thanking him, because it was such an amazing process to watch.

As I was packing up, the panelists came over and thanked me for my time. They were commenting how impressed they were with our skill. Imagine that! I didn't even know half of what was coming out of their mouths, but by some miracle, I was able to make it look like I was an expert.

I'm by no means an expert, and I am by no means perfect. I think the panel gave credence to the fact that they knew every word had to be understood perfectly by the candidate, and probably spoke slower for our benefit. Either way, I am so proud to be doing the work I am doing. I intentionally take the "tougher" jobs because I like to push myself, but also because I kind of don't like doing 101 classes over and over again.

I encourage people to step out of their comfort zone. Whether it's taking that first step to transition from court/depos to CART, to get into CART fresh out of school, or even to push yourself further as a CART/Captionist in general.

Michelle Newman Wolf is a CART Provider/Realtime captionist in Southern California. She has been providing CART for over four years.

She can be reached at [MsMichelleNewman@gmail.com](mailto:MsMichelleNewman@gmail.com).



# SAN DIEGO SUPERIOR COURT'S DREAM COURTHOUSE

By Sue L. Holthaus, RMR, CRR, CSR No. 6959

In the fall of 2016, San Diego Superior Court will open its doors to a new 22-story courthouse with 71 courtrooms at a cost of half a billion dollars. This will house not only the criminal courts, but family and probate. The civil courthouse known as the Hall of Justice will be connected via skywalk.

This has been an exciting process so far. The view out of my office window is of the construction and the amazing coordination which brings each phase to its completion.

## What about technology?

The details of the courtroom technology are not available; however, according to the Court's press release, there are some exciting prospects to showcase the digital advancements for this project. Monitors will be located at security screening stations. Instructions will be displayed for the general public, jurors, and attorneys. Twelve monitors will be placed in the main lobby for building directory and courtroom information. Electronic queuing displays will help run the business office more efficiently for the public.

A wireless network will be available throughout the courthouse for use by attorneys, as well as the public (and hopefully court reporters). All trial courtrooms will have HD projectors and roll-down screens. AV connections will be at each attorney table. Between each two courtrooms on every floor will be an in-custody box and audio system in place for attorney/client conferences. Each courtroom will have a media box, so no more cables running all over the courtrooms.

San Diego has been moving slowly but surely toward an all paperless system. This is a long process, but the Court has been very much a proponent of paperless. The goal is to have few, if any, paper files in probate and a reduction for family court. Reporters now are offering paperless prelims to the

DA and PD's office with the hope in the very, very near future that we will be filing paperless originals with the Court. Less storage space for preliminary hearing transcripts will help in the scramble for more efficient use of space.

From a court reporter's perspective, there are a lot of questions, but hopefully in the next year, we can work together with IT to answer the following:

- With the design of the new courtrooms, acoustics are paramount. Is the design sufficient so that all voices can be heard adequately during trial, and specifically voir dire? Will there be sound barriers in place between courtrooms to buffer audio noise? Can the reporter have auxiliary access to the sound system to adjust amplification during court sessions?
- Will internet/intranet streaming be available for court reporters to provide to bench officers and counsel? This could eliminate the need for all cables and making connections more efficient.
- Will IT be willing to look into applications for real-time streaming such as Bridge Mobile or CaseViewNet? What can be done to mitigate interference with wireless functionality in the courtroom?
- What safeguards will be put in place to assure that the data stream going to the Court will be secure and not accessed by unauthorized parties?

In the next 22 months or so, we will begin the move to San Diego Superior Court's dream courthouse. I couldn't be more excited for all the potential technology proposed and yet to be seen. IT will have its hands full with our technology committee peppering it with questions and requests and in the end hopefully coming together creating a technological example of cooperation, coordination and innovation.



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## TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE'S

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# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Hernandez Strategy Group

Yesterday's special election in State Senate District 35, Los Angeles County, marked the closure of a tumultuous 2014 campaign season for the California Legislature. Overall, 34 new members will join 86 of their colleagues in the State Capitol to embark on the 2015-2016 legislative cycle.

Despite a number of surprise defeats, democrats maintain a strong majority in both houses - the 80 member Assembly (with 53 democrats and 27 republicans) and the 40 member Senate (with 26 democrats and 14 republicans). In the Assembly, three democratic incumbents were ousted by republican challengers and District 39 was won by democrat Patty Lopez - a political neophyte who spent less than \$10,000 to defeat the San Fernando incumbent, Raul Bocanegra. Unfortunately, two of these losses were handed to last year's authors of CCRA sponsored-legislation, Steve Fox and Sharon Quirk-Silva. Both were defeated handily by their republican opponents.

In addition to this significant turnover, the 34 newly elected officials fall within a new term limit schedule which makes them eligible to serve for up to 12 years in the State Capitol. Those years can be served under any combination of State Senate and Assembly. This change means that roughly half of the legislature, those elected in 2012 and 2014, has 2 years or less Capitol experience.

Earlier this month, the Assembly released its list of committee chairs - naming Assemblymember Mark Stone as Chair of the Assembly Judiciary Committee and Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez (D-Los Angeles) as Chair of the Assembly Appropriations Committee. The full membership of Assembly committees has not yet been released.

Assemblymember Stone is a democrat from District 29, which includes portions of Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and Monterey

Counties. Prior to his service in the Assembly, he served on his local Board of Supervisors and worked as an attorney in the tech industry. Stone voted 'aye' on last year's CCRA Sponsored legislation, AB 655 (Quirk-Silva), and 'aye' on last year's CCRA Supported legislation on court contracting, AB 566 (Wieckowski).

Speaker Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) also announced the Assembly Floor Leadership Team for the 2015-2016 session, they include: Assemblymember Eggman (D-Stockton), Democratic Caucus Chair; Assemblymember Chris Holden (D-Pasadena), Majority Floor Leader; Assemblymember Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Garden), Assistant Majority Floor Leader; Assemblymember Kevin Mullin (D-South San Francisco), Speaker pro Tempore; Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco), Assistant Speaker pro Tempore; Assemblymember Miguel Santiago (D-Los Angeles), Majority Whip; Assemblymember Evan Low (D-Campbell), Assistant Majority Whip; Assemblymember Jim Cooper (D-Sacramento), Assistant Majority Whip.

The State Senate has yet to release committee chairs, or membership.

The significant shakeup of the State Legislature presents some challenges and benefits for the 2015-2016 legislative year. It will require CCRA to increase its efforts to educate representatives about the court reporting profession and its related issues. Members can become more familiar with CCRA issues both through legislative advocacy and district outreach. With new members who have little or no prior experience with CCRA, this is an opportunity to introduce them to the court reporting profession and to shape the dialogue around CCRA issues. Building long-term relationships with new legislators, who will likely serve up to 12 years in office, will be an underlying strategy for the 2015-2016 legislative session.

## CHARDONNAY BAKED FISH

By: David Perlmutter, MD from his book, *Grain Brain*. Comments & adaptation by Gerie Bunch

### Ingredients

- ½ c. butter
- 1 c. Chardonnay
- 2 - 3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 3 Tbsp. capers, drained & rinsed
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh dill
- 4 salmon fillets or white fish of your choice (skin on)

### Directions

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Melt the butter gently in a saucepan over medium heat, then stir in the Chardonnay (I used ½ c sherry and ½ c. sauvignon blanc), mustard, capers, and lemon juice. Heat about 5 minutes to burn off the alcohol. Add the dill (if you don't have fresh, you can use about ½ tsp. dried). Place the fish in a baking pan, skin-side down. Pour the sauce over the fish and bake for 20 minutes or until the fish is flaky. Serve immediately with your favorite green vegetable. Serves 4.

I saved the sauce, cooked it down a little bit to make it thicker; refrigerated it, and used it for the next fish dish. Delightful! And the house didn't smell like fish.