

# CCRA

California Court Reporters Association

C C R A O N L I N E

## SPECIAL POST-CONVENTION ROUNDUP ISSUE!

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California Court Reporters Association

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## 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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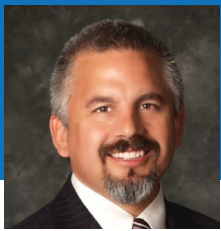
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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

It's October, and the baseball playoffs are in full swing. The Giants are still playing. It's good to be a Giants fan right now. It's good just to be a baseball fan right now because this is the best time of year to watch. It's always exciting, and the energy is high. Just like here with CCRA. Our 2014 convention just ended. Indian Wells was beautiful. The energy was high, and the time there was exciting.

The classes were amazing. We have received some great feedback about the instructors, the topics, and the information that was given to those in attendance. A lot of work went into making this convention successful, and I must commend Doreen Perkins and her committee for their hard work and dedication to CCRA. This was one of the best conventions that I've been able to attend.

So what makes me say that this was one of the best conventions that I've been able to attend? Several things, really. Let me refer back to the classes. They were incredible. We had some excellent speakers talking about what they know best, either CART, captioning, realtime, Eclipse, yoga. You name it, the convention seemed to have it.

Then there was the business meeting. It's funny, I really don't like meetings. Never have. But being on the board, it's my responsibility to attend several meetings throughout the year in a myriad of venues. So what made this business meeting exceptional for me? We changed the CCRA bylaws and were able to vote in CART reporters and broadcast captioners as members of CCRA. It's a huge first step towards protecting and strengthening these respective facets of the court reporting industry. What the participants of this part of the reporting industry do for those that they're providing their service is of such value, that it is a great honor to now be a part of expanding CCRA's professional umbrella to begin covering them also. The guest speaker, Honorable W. Kent Hamlin, delivered a tremendous message. He was engaging and resourceful. We swore in four new board members.

So we have a bylaws change, a guest speaker, and new board members. Doesn't everybody? Here is what did it for me. Lesia Mervin captioned the business meeting and made creative additions all the way through it. We were lucky to have such an accomplished reporter and captioner agree to caption the business meeting for us. Lesia has made two trips in the last year to the Asian continent to caption United Nations meetings. She was also this year's recipient of the Distinguished Service Award given by CCRA. Her credentials are above reproach. To have her add levity to what is usually a long, boring meeting for everybody involved allowed the attendees to remain engaged. What she was also able to show was the amazing ability of captioners and CART reporters to provide the deaf and hard of hearing communities with the ability to follow along in an event that they

may have otherwise been excluded. No, her additions are not part of the everyday life of a CART writer or captioner, and in a different setting, like when our keynote speaker was making his presentation, her captioning was accurate and terrific.

So now what? Well, now we move onward and upward. We have a lot planned to do as a board this year. We have a lot that we want to do now that we officially have the CART and captioners in as members. We have many things that we will be bringing forward for the freelancers, and a couple of items for the officials. We will be calling on you to help when the time comes. The board can present the agenda, but it will take the members to help get it passed.

Personally for me, I've been asked what I'd really like to accomplish this year. In a word, reunification. It's time to bring this profession together. Whether or not we'll be able to accomplish this, I'm not sure. But we are open to the discussion. There is nothing that the court reporting industry is benefitting by paying three lobbyists, three executive directors, and having three associations. It's time to reunite. Together we will stand. Divided we will fall.



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# CART CAPTIONER INCLUSION POST-CONVENTION

By: Saba McKinley, CSR, RPR, CART Captioner

My head is still spinning with excitement, joy, victory and curiosity after attending the CCRA's 104th annual convention. It was, in my humble opinion, the best CCRA convention I have ever attended.

The anticipation of what this convention meant to me personally, and for our profession, began as we made plans to have as many captioners attend as possible. Sandy Eisenberg, owner of Total Recall Captioning, joined forces with me in my role as the chair for the CART/Broadcast Captioning Task Force. We decided a CART reception would be a great way to share the news with as many captioners as possible about CCRA's plan to include captioning under its umbrella. The reception was well-attended and the plan was a success. All in all we had about 30 or so captioners in attendance at the convention; not bad. Recognizing each attendee as a CART/Broadcast Captioner Founding Member was a big incentive. Next year I'm sure we will double or triple those numbers.

It was decided that a seminar to educate and bring awareness to this fast-growing segment of the industry was warranted. "What is CART and is it for you?" was born. As it turns out, that seminar was a great idea, as it attracted a standing-room only crowd. As a bonus, we were entertained and informed by Jack Roberts, a Transformational Hypnotist, about how to get out of our own way when taking tests and having confidence.

Those who attended the seminar left wanting more. They asked questions about how to transition into the field. Sandy and I fielded those questions. I also informed them of the other seminars offered at the convention that would address some of the questions they had.

The CART panel discussion was the next seminar, and it was fascinating. We were honored to have Lynn Bright on the panel. She is a mother who fought all the way to the Supreme Court to have the reasonable accommodation of CART services provided to her daughter for her schooling. She was followed by an expert on sports captioning, Deanna Baker, and then the marvelous Lesia Mervin. The stories were fun and entertaining. A few people shared with me, after the discussion, that they thought it was a great panel.

The last class of the day, which I facilitated, was CART 101. It also went well. I covered a few ways to begin transitioning from a judicial writer to an everyday, any subject writer. A couple of my handouts were taken from the NCRA website, which covered the job analysis of a nonlegal CART captioner as well

as the CART Professional Practices Guidelines for the same. I also shared a handout with screen formatting settings for the CART environment. The Q & A was fabulous.

There were several attendees who wanted to know if I would be willing to train. Of course, the answer was a resounding, "Yes. That's why I'm here".

Deanna Baker, Regina DeMerville, Jenn Porto and Nick Wilkie also facilitated seminars on both CART and Broadcast captioning. I think it was a tremendous effort by all to increase awareness and education regarding this segment of the industry. I am forever grateful to each one of them for being a part of the team and bringing this information to the membership.

The convention was a blast for all. I spoke with many students, instructors, professionals and others about CART captioning. I am happy to hear so many people interested in learning about it and improving their skill-set so that they too can provide this wonderful service that helps so many.

There were times when I was walking around in a daze at the thought of how this all began. To actually see the passage of the amended bylaws to include captioners was thrilling and somewhat surreal. There were so many people who came up and thanked me for championing these efforts. One woman shared with me that she had been trying to accomplish this feat for the past 10 years. I met another woman who is disabled, deaf and blind, yet is a CART captioner and an agency owner! She lives in northern California and flew down to bear witness to this monumental event. There have been more than a couple dozen people, captioners, supporters, advocates, and others, who want to help the task force in whatever way they can. Needless to say, I am humbled by it all.

I am eternally grateful to the advisory council and board of directors of the California Court Reporters Association who worked quite diligently to bring the captioning segment under its umbrella.



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# CONVENTION: RACHEL'S REVIEW

By: Rachel Passarella

CCRA's convention on October 3rd through 5th this year was Convention No. 5 for this new reporter. My first two years were as a student, second two years as a new reporter, and this last year as a member of the Board of Directors. I remember as a student sitting at the business meeting and thinking, "I'll be up on that podium someday." Little did I know it would only be a few years away.

Some of you may have attended one of my two classes this year. My first seminar was on the topic of Social Media. I had such a fantastic group of reporters and instructors present in this seminar. I hadn't prepared much of a "lecture," since I felt that an open discussion among professionals would be more worthwhile. And boy, am I glad I had these attendees! We had very meaningful discussions about best practices when representing yourself online, what to do and not to do, the benefits and the down side to social media, and we explored basic privacy settings to protect ourselves and our reputations online.

My second seminar at this year's convention was a miniature version of my BOOT CAMP presentation on marketing yourself as a new or transitioning reporter. It was a great seminar for new reporters and students and will be the groundwork for my next seminar at this year's BOOT CAMP in January. I'm excited for the new avenues we have to explore and look forward to expanding my presentation for January's event. I hope to see you all there too!

I had a couple favorite parts of this year's convention. One, it was my first year on the Board, and I was able to sit at the table in the front of the business meeting, something I had set my sights on as a 170 student. Second, my daddy...ahem, father, was there. Yes, I'm still Daddy's little girl, no matter how old I get. This is his fourth convention as a speaker for CCRA on the subject of Ergonomics. If you haven't been to his seminar before, be sure to keep an eye out for it at future conventions. Not only is it special to share these conventions with him, but he was able to see me achieve that small goal of being on that Board podium. Third, I had the privilege of sponsoring one of my best friends to come with me and experience the excitement of CCRA's convention. She is a 200 student at Sierra Valley College in Fresno. It was like a bestie vacation, but with the benefit of networking with amazing and fun professionals in our industry.

I hope those who attended are still reeling from the post-convention high, and I hope that those who were not able to attend this year will be able to join us next year in Newport Beach, and then the year after that in YOSEMITE! Thank you to Doreen Perkins for being my eternal mentor, the one who introduced me to court reporting and the person I look up to the most professionally, and thank you to Colleen and my dad, Jack, for joining me and supporting me through the weekend. I am thrilled to be a part of the movement and progression of CCRA for another two years as a Director. Looking forward to next year already!

## 2014 ANNUAL CONVENTION

By Amanda Scott

As I look back on this year's convention, the thing that sticks with me the most is not the cool new briefs I learned or the prizes I won (or didn't win), but the people. The enthusiasm I felt from everyone was so inspiring! If anyone is feeling burned out, let me tell you, attend a convention! Mentor a student! I was impressed to see as many students as were there. The future of court reporting looks very bright with this new crop of reporters soon joining the ranks. As I met past and current board members, they were all so welcoming to me and eager to help me as I join them to lead the CCRA.

I attended my first board meeting, and what an exciting time to be on the board this is! We will be working to negotiate a long overdue page rate increase for officials, working to release freelancers working in court from having to charge the statutory court rates, as well as many other interesting issues that face us at this time. There is so much to learn, and I am looking forward to understanding all these issues and helping guide the CCRA on how to meet these challenges, while selfishly I am also looking forward to the personal growth and knowledge I hope to gain from serving on the board.

I am so grateful for this opportunity to join the board. Thank you to my own mentor, Kim Thayer, for this confidence in me and nominating me. You always have my back! And thank you to the current and past board members for accepting me and welcoming me alongside you. This is sure to be an exciting year ahead!

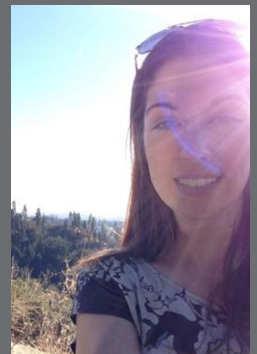
### Hi, I'm Amanda Scott.

I grew up in Hanford, and became interested in court reporting in high school, when I thought it would be so much fun to get paid to be nosy. And it is so much fun!

Before committing to court reporting school, I spent two years studying psychology and then I dove into court reporting. Now I've been a reporter for seven years as a freelancer in Fresno, and I love it. I work both in civil court and in depositions, so I get a lot of variety. I am currently testing for my RPR and hoping to earn a CRR after that, as well.

I have two dog children, Zoey and Pippa. In my free time I like to visit family, read, bake, and play with my dogs. I love football season and cheering on the Houston Texans, and I try to get away to Pismo Beach for a weekend when I can.

I am so honored and excited to serve on the board, and look forward to learning a lot, mentoring and working with students, and helping our profession move forward in a positive direction!







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# MY 2014 CCRA CONVENTION EXPERIENCE

By Steven Kosmata

I was asked by the committee chair for the 2014 CCRA convention to do two classes at the Miramonte Resort in Indian Wells, Eclipse software and Briefs. My Eclipse software class was first for me Saturday morning. Following a slightly rocky beginning between my computer and the audio/visual not wanting to cooperate, I was able to settle in to show the many rich features and finer points of V.6 that has been around for a couple of years. And the view I had from the front of the room is priceless. You could see the aha moments from different people, and that's what teaching is all about for me, seeing those puzzled faces turn to smiles of delight as they learn how to do something that was not making sense for them.

Next thing I know, I was only three-quarters through my presentation and my hour and a half was over. I felt as though I could have continued on for another hour and a half at least, but I had to wrap things up with my Eclipse class and prepare for my next class that followed in another room, Briefs.

After packing all of my equipment up and moving across the hall, I couldn't believe what I saw in my briefs class -- it was standing room only. It felt like the most popular show on Broadway with SRO, standing room only. They were standing in the hall trying to get into the room. We eventually negotiated with hotel people to remove the movable wall in the back and expanded the room by twice as much. Finally everyone had a place to sit, albeit 10 minutes late to start. There must have been over 100 people. I'd like to think they were all coming to see me -- what ego wouldn't want to think how important I feel -- but I knew deep down that wasn't true. You mention the word brief to a court reporter, and it's like a bee to sweet nectar. People were swarming everywhere until we finally got more seats. Once the class began and started my presentation, there was a hush across the room, as if I had some sage advice; but, really, I was showing how to write words and more words in one stroke. The attendees' eyes became wider and wider as I went from page to page of my presentation. Luckily for me, one of the creators

of a whole new theory of writing briefs, Chase Frazier and his mom, Tami, was in the audience as well. Chase helped me explain how and why these briefs worked. I kept emphasizing that this was a year-long project and to think of it as a 12-step program. I admitted that I was only on step 2 or 3. As that class drew to a close, I noticed that everyone was eager to get to their laptops and start practicing all of these briefs. I told everyone I am going to be back next year and want a report card as to how progress went. Both Chase and I were thrilled to help out our fellow reporters think outside the box with briefs.

My favorite part of any convention is, of course, the people. I enjoyed talking to people and saw folks I hadn't seen in a year or more and caught up on things and gossip. You can go to seminars, enjoy the spa, or a few laps in the pool, but it eventually comes down to friends you haven't seen and catching up.

As if that wasn't enough, I was also nominated for the position of CCRA Secretary/Treasurer and accepted during the convention luncheon on Saturday, which means I had my very first board meeting as the last event for me to attend on Sunday. My heart literally was pounding and my palms were a bit sweaty, nearly 24 hours after accepting my new position, as I now assumed the incredible role and responsibility as a board member representing the court reporters throughout the state of California. I sat up front with the other board members. It was an open meeting for anyone to present their topics of concern on whatever they had on their mind. I jotted all of the notes down on my laptop knowing we will take all of these ideas back to our first board meeting to see how we can draft legislation to protect our profession.

This year has many battles to fight with legislation, as well as concerns closer to home in our own backyards. As a member of the CCRA board, I am eager to do what I can to help protect what we have today so that the next generation of reporters behind me becomes as successful as they can to prolong this great heritage and legacy of court reporting.



## STEVEN "KOSMO" KOSMATA, CSR 7253

Steve, or Kosmo as he likes to be called, has always liked to work. Growing up in Lennox and being the eldest of three children of Mary and Hank, he has always had responsibilities. At an early age, he had a paper route for the South Bay Daily Breeze in South Los Angeles and graduated from Lennox High School with his senior class of approximately 125 students. Following High School, he enjoyed his life a couple of years and then settled into Bryan College of Court Reporting in Los Angeles.

While attending school full time, he kept up his busy pace while working full time as a secretary in the Performing Arts Center at the Crystal Cathedral, as well as singing baritone in their televised choir.

Following the passing of his CSR in 1986, he worked a couple of years in Los Angeles as a depo reporter, but eventually came south to San Diego and is presently working as a judicial reporter for the San Diego Superior Court.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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# BIO: JERI KUSAR

Hello. My name is Jeri Kusar. I entered the profession in 1976 as a freelance deposition reporter working for various firms, specializing in med mal, securities and maritime. I quickly had the opportunity to report multiple trials in both State Court and Federal Court. I felt so passionate about our profession and so proud to call myself a court reporter; a passion every court reporter feels. Each time I worked in court or took a deposition, I felt like I had just passed a new college course.

I've always believed in going the extra mile for friends and clients alike and soon after becoming a reporter, I had been blessed with an abundance of clients, so much so that at the encouragement of many, I went into business for myself. In 1983 I opened Kusar Court Reporters & Legal Services Inc. and began a new journey of entrepreneurship. What an adventure I had embarked upon. The road was full of ups and downs, but the passion for our profession continued to grow. Being a court reporter was the most rewarding journey of all.

I was born and raised in San Pedro, California, to first generation Croatian parents. My life path was mostly set by cultural tradition – stay out of trouble, be a “good girl,” graduate high school, get married and have children. Fueled by a desire for independence, I sought a new direction in my early 20's. I turned to my mother for advice, to which I learned she had always dreamed of being a court reporter, and I became inspired by my mother's dream and soon fulfilled her desires. I have met so many wonderful people along the road who were always eager to lend a helping hand and they inspired me to give back, from donating to a great cause or helping the local soccer team or mentoring young reporters through their first years in the field.

Through the years, the profession changed like a time machine and four decades brought new technologies beyond our imagination. Each new obstacle has been an opportunity to learn something new. Taking a risk was an adventure in and of itself. In 2004 I launched LBVCC – Long Beach Video Conferencing

Center - giving the company not only a California wide and national presence but now a global presence as well. Sending reporters to the other side of the globe with counsel without ever leaving the city became commonplace.

During this time I raised two wonderful children. Since receiving their degrees, both of them have come into the business. While I was always working at building a better future for everyone I could help, I had to put most of my travels on hold. In the last few years I have taken time out for myself to enjoy the world. Having an adventurous spirit flows over into other areas of my life – and the great outdoors has so much to offer - from white water rafting down the Sacramento River, to zip lining and sand surfing in Peru, dude ranches and glaciers in Montana. One of the most amazing things I have ever done was climb Machu Picchu and feel like I was at the top of the world. When I am not working, I spend my time cooking, gardening, and enjoying family and friends in beautiful Long Beach, California.



## STEVEN “KOSMO” KOSMATA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Steve has always enjoyed playing tennis and decided one day to enjoy the best seat -- on the tennis court and become a professional tennis umpire. Kosmo pursued that dream and was fortunate enough to be nominated five of his six years as an umpire to referee at the largest professional tournament in the United States, the US Open in New York City. He has also attended three of the four major tennis tournaments around the world as a spectator.

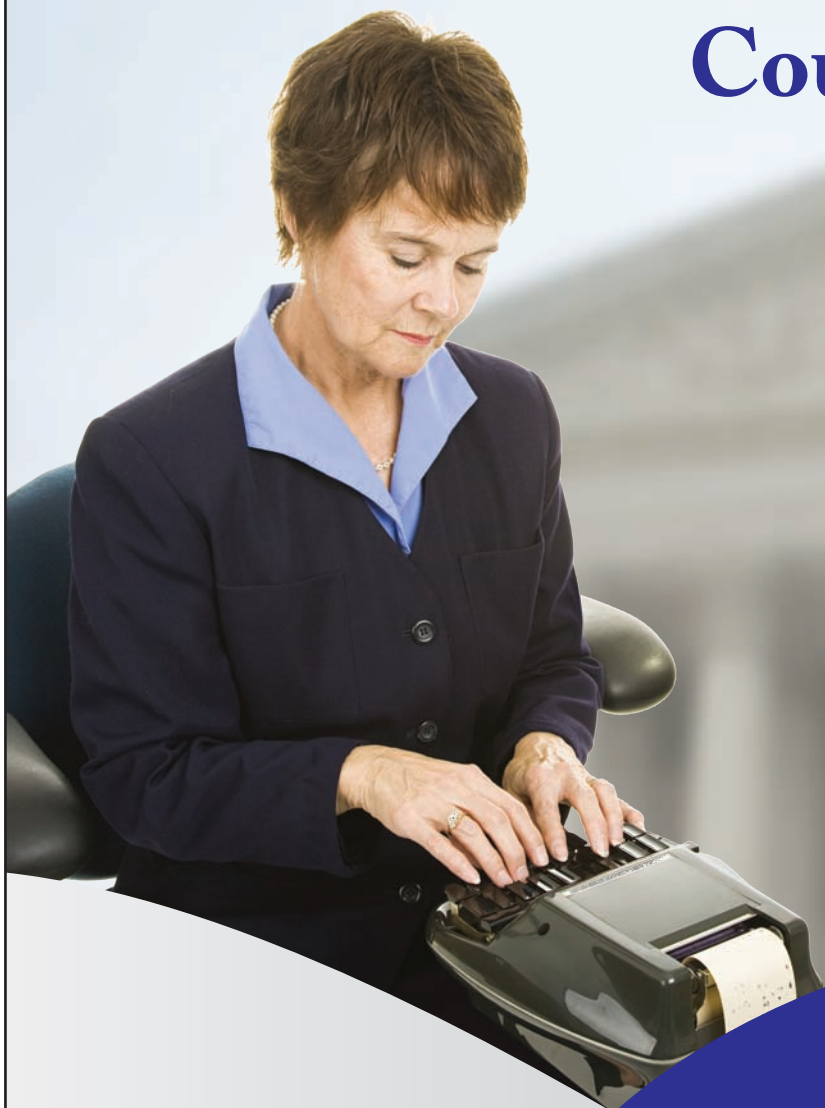
Following his years as an umpire, he became president of his local reporters association for four consecutive years. One of his major accomplishments was producing seminars for not only

our local reporters, but for reporters all over the area. He has been lucky to have great support around him, and all seminars have been sold out to sitting room only within days of being announced.

Outside of court reporting, Steve enjoys gardening and has a couple of green thumbs to prove it. In his apartment on the 14th floor of a high-rise, he has a small garden growing tomatoes, eggplant, and bell peppers. Another interest is traveling to see the world and realizing we all have more in common than not.

Of Course, Kosmo couldn't do all of these varied activities without his loving and supportive partner Javier, who he has been by his side for the past five years.

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## Q&A WITH THE PRESIDENT

By Brooke Ryan

**We learned that last year a completely new Board was installed. How were you able to accomplish so many projects with a brand new Board?**

I had very good leaders to rely upon with Christy Cannariato, Brooke Ryan, and Gerie Bunch. They made my job much easier. We also were able to assign past presidents as mentors to each new board member to help them along in the process of becoming a successful CCRA board member. This group put in a lot of hours and days away from their families. They were very committed.

**For all of the Board's accomplishments last year, what are you most proud of?**

There are two equally important accomplishments for CCRA: First, incorporating CART/Captioners into the fold of CCRA has been an amazing feat. It took a great deal of work to change the bylaws and to get the word out that CCRA was making this move. It was well received, and we believe that it will be tremendously helpful to the CART/Captioning field. This field is exploding, and CCRA has willingly stepped forward to be the association that represents CART/Captioners.

In addition, last year we realized a significant increase in student participation with CCRA. We have had so many students ask to help the board and put in time working with CCRA this year. We have had students help us write our blasts. We have a student named Karly Greenshields that completely revamped our career day program and also has been instrumental in getting us into career days in several places throughout California. We have been to nearly every school in the state and have been to the last three state tests supporting them. We have held several mock CSRs. I remember what it was like to be in school and how difficult it was. The fact that we were able to assign nearly 80 new students to mentors to help them through the difficult times this year really makes me feel like we're moving in the

right direction. Students are the life's blood of this profession. Watching them pass the state CSR test and do committee work in the association has been a lot of fun.

**What skill and/or qualification did you rely on most this past year?**

Tenacity. As you mentioned above, we had an entirely new board of directors. Educating them and pushing forward was a slow process at times, but they really came together and stepped up. We wanted to get the inclusion of CART/Captioners into the bylaws, and it took a lot of work to keep it on track. The board could see the reasoning for doing this and really embraced it and worked to make it happen. We also wanted to be as supportive as possible for the students, and the board was more than willing to jump in and show their support.

**What has been the most surprising reward?**

Getting to know the people that I'm working with. The board members put in an incredible amount of time and energy to continue to make CCRA the premier association in California.

**Were there any disappointments? If so, what?**

There were setbacks with the board, but I'm not sure that I would call them disappointments. I would actually say that the thing that affected me most and gave me pause during the year was when the state CSR test results would come out. You get to know the students, and you really want them to do well and succeed. Receiving messages from them telling you they didn't pass is always difficult. But they are a tenacious bunch. They don't quit.

**In CCRA's 103-year history, you are only the 10th person to be voted in as president two years in a row. We also learned that you're the first Hispanic president in CCRA's storied history. What were your first thoughts? And what qualities do**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

# EXHIBIT PRINTING EXPECTATIONS

By Jason Primuth

More and more law firms are passing off the printing of exhibits to their court reporting firms, especially in cases which include a large volume of electronic documents.

To make sure that we understand client expectations – and make sure we meet them – it is critical that we approach these projects with a high degree of detail. Going into each project, we can ask some key questions about their expectations for how their exhibits will be handled.

Below is a form filled in with sample data. While each client is different, this is a helpful start for the fact gathering. Once you have this information, you can communicate it easily with the company handling the printing, delivery and subsequent production.

The same form can be helpful for raising awareness of your new services, such as document linking, online hosting, video synchronization, etc. Even if clients don't want a service on a particular case, they can keep it in mind for upcoming matters.

Exhibit Printing Form (Sample)

<b>Case name:</b>	XYZ vs ABC
<b>Deliver to:</b>	John Smith, Law Offices of John Smith, 123 Main Street, Anywhere, CA 94321
<b>Copies:</b>	3 copies
<b>Deliver by:</b>	1/1/14 – End of day
<b>Color:</b>	Documents: B&W. Photographs and color documents: Color
<b>Size:</b>	8 ½ x 11" pages
<b>Sides:</b>	Print in double-sided mode. Different documents shouldn't be on the same sheet of paper.
<b>Binding:</b>	Three-hole punch the pages, and put them in a three-ring binder.
<b>Tabs:</b>	Put tabbed dividers between each document under the appropriate tab number (e.g. Exhibit 1 should be behind tab 1, Exhibit 2 behind tab 2, etc.).
<b>Cover:</b>	On the cover of the binder, please list the name of the case.
<b>Marking:</b>	Mark all documents in advance based on the numbers in their file name.
<b>Admittance:</b>	Enter these exhibits in advance (as opposed to just when they're used).
<b>Future exhibits:</b>	Add subsequent exhibits to this binder in the same fashion.
<b>Post-deposition handling:</b>	After the deposition is complete, deliver the binder to the next deposition in the case. Append new exhibits to the end of each binder.
<b>Linking:</b>	Link these exhibits into the final transcript in a PDF file.

## PRESIDENT QUESTIONS ANSWERED CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

### you believe you possess that allow for such an honor?

Wow. I was very humbled and honored by such an opportunity. When I looked back at the list of past presidents, I was surprised. It's pretty cool.

As for being the first Hispanic president, I am fortunate to be in the right place at the right time. Being a competitor, I realize the honor of being first at anything. I know that there were many others that were more qualified than I am to be the first. It's a privilege to be able to serve CCRA as president.

I think that we have accomplished a great deal this year. The list that I read at the convention of things that we have done was very long, and yet it's not even complete. There were many things that were left off. We have a good platform this year also and will be moving forward to make some more changes in the industry to help strengthen the profession. So I think having a vision and a plan helped also.

### What do you plan to accomplish in your second term?

I'm not sure that we have enough room here. What I would like

to accomplish this year would be to level the playing field for freelancers by trying to reign in contracting and/or gift giving, pushing to end the So-Cal stip which takes away copies from freelancers and puts freelancers in jeopardy by stipulating away their duties; securing a transcript rate increase; expanding the use of e-filing for the officials; strengthening CART/Captioning rules and regulations which will expand the opportunities for the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities to utilize these important services more widely. I'd also like to see a reunification of the associations. I think that's a good start.

### How do you plan to achieve it?

Delegation. I have a good board and strong committees. We have a fantastic new lobbyist who is committed to CCRA and also committed to working hard. Our executive director's staff will be busy, but they are well qualified and hard workers. They will help us to get this done. Some of the items on the list will take longer than this year, but we'll get the ball rolling.

### Board work can be notoriously difficult. Where might we find you after your second term?

On a beach without electronics drinking a very cold beer.



# JUST ANOTHER FLY-BY-THE-SEAT-OF-MY-PANTS MORNING

By: Jenn Porto

*Hello. My name is Jenn Porto. I've been a CART Captioner for approximately seven years. I am sharing the fly-by-the-seat-of-my-pants moments that I encounter on the job. This share doesn't make me an expert and does not mean that I'll always make the right decisions. I may say/do something that makes you wince. I'm okay with that. Every day is different in the world of CART. It is so important to be flexible and be a problem solver on the fly. There is usually no one there to consult with, and there is no rule book for being a CART Captioner. Because we work "alone" on the job, we rarely get to share these moments. With that said, I am not always going to be grammatically correct according to Morson's English Guide. This is an account of my day and my thoughts as they come to mind. I have just started blogging, so I only have a couple written. I plan to write as often as I can. I also hope to be a positive representation of the CART world and hopefully give you a little chuckle in the process.*

## August 13, 2014

I left my house at 8 am for a 10 am job with only 27 miles to drive. You do the math. I should have arrived with enough time to grab a coffee in the gorgeous lobby at the Los Angeles City Hall. Welcome to the evil beast we call the "Los Angeles freeways." It's a good thing I left so early! Full of anxiety, I exited the freeway at 9:25. Every thought I had was followed by, "I should be setting up my equipment by now!"

I had the address to the parking structure programmed in my navigation. "Finally, there's my parking structure!!!" Oh, shoot, a line! There's a gigantic sign that reads: Government Vehicles Only. "Well, this could be a problem." Rechecking the agency's instructions, I confirm that I'm at the correct structure. I see a metered spot on the street open. "Great! Go get it. Well, that never happens in LA." Get that spot! Shoot, I can't make an illegal U-turn – not that I would. I'm surrounded by government buildings and every police car in the city is lurking about. Quickly pulling out of the line, merging three lanes over to the turn lane, squeezing behind a postal truck, turn, turn, legal U-turn. Swoosh, into my parking spot. I jumped out and rush to the meter and, "Curses! The meter is broken!" This explains why the spot was open. I can't risk a parking ticket. I get back in my car and back to the darn structure and darn line. Third in line.

9:35-ish, pulling up to the parking attendant, "Hi. Jennifer Porto. Here for the City Planning meeting."

With a heavy accent, the parking attendant responds, "City Plant."

"Ummmm, yup." I have no idea what City Plant is, but I'm late. Don't know. Don't care. "Thank you."

Off I go down the rabbit hole to the basement of the structure. Park. I pull out my Stenograph bag containing all of my equipment, bag with extra monitor, and Tory Burch grown-up

high heels. Away I go hustling through the garage to find the elevator. I've gotten lost every time I've parked in this labyrinth of cars. I was relieved to see a businessman making the same mad dash I was. "Follow him."

9:45, 15 minutes to go until the meeting is to start. Up the elevator. Press the third-floor button with authority as if to urge this toaster on pulleys to move faster. "It's so hot in this elevator!! Where is my rubber band? Screw my bouncy curls. Focus, Jennifer."

Doors open. I'm out. Turn left, right, hustling through the bridge connecting the buildings. "Crap, I don't have time for a metal detector." Slap my bags down on the table and wait patiently for the guard to look up from his phone. Now, one would think since I'm in the building, things would start to get easy – WRONG!

9:50, 10 minutes to go. I found the correct room and tried to slip unnoticed through the door with my hands full of Stenograph luggage – not happening. Bang, bonk, bang. "Sorry." Another meeting is in session and the room is full. I sit in the back and scan the room for my client. He's not here.

10:00, go time. The client is still not here, so I wait. I had set up my equipment in the back of the room taking up three empty seats. There was a pole blocking my view of the board members. I'm stuck. I will have to memorize the sound of their voices quickly, since I won't be able to see their faces. My setup includes a Mira, Dell laptop that sits on a laptop stand, and an extra monitor set up next to me for the client to view. Everything is plugged in. "Boo-ya, I'm ready to start!" The power plug is right behind my chair, so no need to Duct tape wires to the carpet. With a second to breathe, I casually walked to the side of the room to gather the board member's names. I usually get prep before meetings, but the agency made several attempts and was unable to obtain an agenda.

10:15, still no client. I continue to wait. I'm double stroking the board member's names to make my speaker ID's. SKWREUPL/SKRWEUPL = JIM:. The door opens slightly and I can see my client. "Hmmm, why is he not coming in?" It turns out that he had requested a sign language interpreter to voice for him, and for the third time an interpreter did not show up. As I've done with this client in the past, I offered to voice for him. He types what he wants to say and I verbalize his text. It's usually not a problem – usually.

10:20, the planning administrator now tells me with a pleading look in his eye, "I know you're set up in this room, but we're moving to room 1060. Is that okay?"

I smile and nod, "You got it. Let me gather my stuff." With a double step, I gracefully bust through the door. I break down

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# BOOT CAMP

CALIFORNIA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

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## CCRA BOOT CAMP 2015

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2015, IN BURBANK, CALIFORNIA / 8 AM - 5:30 PM

CCRA proudly announces BOOT CAMP, a fun, new educational opportunity. BOOT CAMP has been specifically designed for the transitioning reporter. Whether from student to professional, official to freelancer, judicial reporter to CART provider, this interactive event offers everything you need to ensure success and confidence in your new endeavor.

BOOT CAMP is an all-day event filled with guest speakers and seminars on procedures, decorum, and tips for reporting depositions, court proceedings, and CART assignments.

Visit <http://www.cal-ccra.org/ccra-boot-camp-2015> for additional details.





# ASK MR. MODEM

[www.MrModem.com](http://www.MrModem.com)

## "Help! My Hard Drive is Full!"

**Q. What happens when an external hard drive runs out of space? Does that mean I have to spend money to buy a new one?**

A. When you start to run out of space on your external drive, one possibility is to purchase another, larger drive. A better option is to take a look at your saved files and see if you can thin the herd. Try to make a point of periodically reviewing your files and deleting items you don't really and truly need to save.

Old files are a lot like old clothes in a closet: If you haven't worn something in a year or two (or used a file), chances are you aren't going to need it again, so you might want to think about deleting it.

**Q. Help! I need some easy steps to restore my iPhone 4S to the operating system I had before I updated it to the current iOS 7. I don't like the new operating system.**

A. Unfortunately, you cannot go back to the previous operating system. It's all part of Apple's grand plan to ensure that all users of its devices share the same experience. While every Android device is just a little different -- which creates its own set of challenges -- Apple mandates conformity in their devices, which has its advantages and disadvantages, as well.

iOS 7 is simply a bit different than what you were accustomed to previously, but like anything, the more you use it, the more familiar it will become. Since you can't go back, you might as well enjoy the journey forward.

The next time there is a major iOS update, you might want to hold off and not install it for awhile. Mrs. Modem isn't using iOS 7 because she didn't want to bother with a new operating system, so she never updated it. That's an option we always have with our current devices.

You will find lots of helpful information on the Apple Web site, including the iOS 7 User Guide at <http://tinyurl.com/MrM-iOS7>. There are also many video tutorials on YouTube, so just search for "iOS 7."

**Q. I recently purchased a Kindle Fire HDX, but I still have a perfectly good first-generation Kindle Fire that I don't need**

**anymore. How can I give it to somebody and not have it still registered to me or my Amazon account?**

A. With most tablets, all you need to do is perform a factory reset and all of your personal information will be erased. Kindles, because they are tied to your Amazon account, require a two-step process to make sure your personal information is erased and to get the tablet ready for the next user.

The first thing to do is deregister your Kindle so that it is no longer tied to your account. This prevents anyone from purchasing items and having them charged to your Amazon account. Eek! To deregister your Kindle using the device itself, tap the Quick Settings icon, then More > Choose My Account. Select the device you want to deregister and tap Deregister.

You can also deregister by going to Amazon.com, selecting Your Account and choosing Manage Your Kindle > Manage Your Devices. You will see all the devices registered to your account. Choose the appropriate one and tap or click Deregister.

Once the Kindle is no longer connected to your Amazon account you can clear all of your personal information and data off the device in one swell foop. To do this, tap the Quick Settings icon > More > Device. Tap Reset to Factory Defaults. The device will restart and all your information will be gone with the wind: Your books, your apps, your music, your video... poof! Gone.

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

**Attack of the Cute** – What's not to like about cute and cuddly animals? "Hello, little pit bull; that's a good pit bull. My, what powerful jaws you have." To navigate the site, scroll down through the cuteness and click the Next button. [attackofthecute.com](http://attackofthecute.com)

**Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee** – Jerry Seinfeld chats with fellow comedians over a cup of coffee. Hilarious! Each video is approximately 15 to 20 minutes in length and as it is with most comedy today, there is occasional profanity and adult-oriented material. Interviewees include Michael Richards, Carl Reiner, Mel Brooks, Alec Baldwin, Ricky Gervais, Larry David, David Letterman, Don Rickles, Chris Rock and others. If you like Seinfeld, don't miss these episodes. Some are truly laugh-outloud funny. [comediansincarsgettingcoffee.com](http://comediansincarsgettingcoffee.com)

**Perspective** – This is a thought-provoking visual with narrative. When viewing a photograph of the Earth from such a great distance, the implications may not be immediately clear. Listen as the late astronomer/physicist Carl Sagan explains that we are but a tiny, insignificant speck in the cosmos. Beautifully executed...and humbling. [tinyurl.com/MrM-Perspective](http://tinyurl.com/MrM-Perspective)

**Use Promo Code MODEM when entering your six-month subscription to Mr. Modem's award-winning weekly computer-help newsletter and receive one month for free! Visit [www.MrModem.com](http://www.MrModem.com).**

# CAPTION IT FORWARD

By Regina DeMerville, CSR

## STUDENTS WANT TO KNOW (PART 2)!

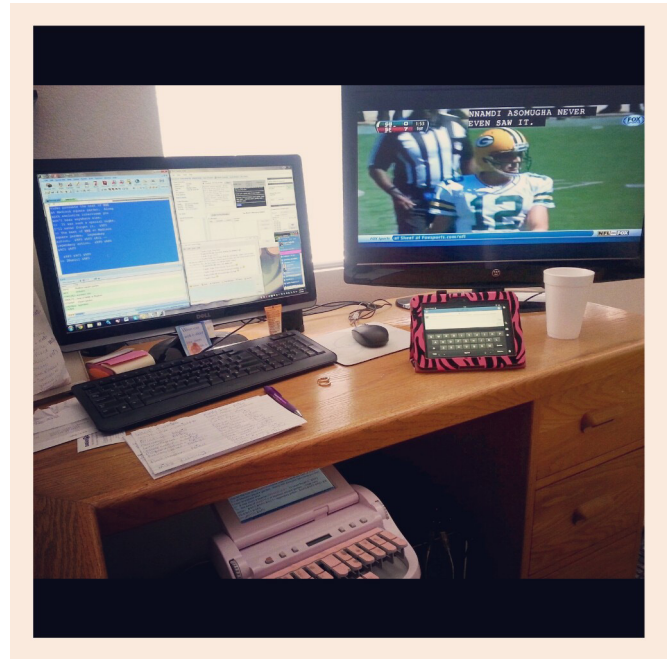
For those waiting for Part 2 of July's "Students want to know" article, here it is! This month is the start of a very important season. FOOTBALL SEASON! Okay, so maybe it's not a season for everyone, but football ties in to a couple of Dwayne's questions and a couple of my answers. So for all you sports fans, this one's for you! And for those who aren't sports fans, I'm sure you'll find something valuable to take away from this article! (Smile)

### **Dwayne: As a broadcast captioner, do you get a choice in what programming you get to caption? What are your favorite and least favorite shows to caption?**

Regina: In my experience, captioners don't really get a choice of what to caption. Every agency's system is different. Some agencies ask you what you prefer to caption and "try" to schedule you for what you like. Others tell you what they have available and you choose from there. When you are an employee, you have less choice of what you want. It's more like they "tell" you what you will caption. As an independent contractor, it is a good idea to have your name in with a few different agencies. That way if one agency offers you something you don't like and another agency offers you something you do like, you obviously have a choice. So it just depends on the situation. My personal favorite is...anything but SPORTS! Usually, sports is faster and there are a million names that are never as easy as John Smith! One time I did a sports talk show that was so fast! My agency at the time had the ability to calculate what the average words per minute were for shows. I had them calculate for that show. It was 250! Yikes! And on another sports show I did, I hit 330 wpm. My fingers were on fire!

### **D: What happens when you have an untranslate or even a "bad" word go out on air?**

R: Captioners have about a 1-3 second delay (each captioner sets this differently) before our captions are sent out to the encoder. This is why I think it's important to watch your screen, so you can catch your mistakes instantly. Some companies also require captioners to have on the phonetic translation feature. This prevents steno from popping up on the screen. As for "bad" words, this is an absolute no-no! The agency I started with when I first became a captioner made us take out the bad words from our dictionary. That way, if we accidentally stroke a bad word, it would come out as a null or space. There are some exceptions to this. For example, a broadcast agency might have a client who wants bad words captioned. This happened to me when I captioned a Jay Z concert. The "F" word was very popular (haha)! Usually, on television, most bad words are bleeped out. If they are bleeped, we would write [BLEEP]. If they are not, we would write what they said. In a CART setting, we usually always write bad words. This all depends on the client and the agency, as every situation is different.



### **D: What do captioners do on commercials? Do you ever get a restroom break?**

R: Captioners LOVE commercials, especially when a show is fast! It gives us a moment to catch our breath, pick our jaw up from the floor, and crawl back into our seats from being floored by how fast the anchors are speaking. We do lots of things on commercials. Go to the bathroom, look up words we don't know, check Facebook. (This one happens more often than the others! Shhh...) But then there are some shows that don't have commercials, for example, pre-recorded shows. These are the shows my bladder dislike! I need a bathroom in my office! Other than commercials, we don't get a designated restroom break. As we don't really know how long the commercials are, we have to guesstimate. So when a commercial comes on, I run through the house to the restroom, and run back as fast as I can! A better option that another captioner suggested is getting wireless headphones. This way, we can listen to the commercials and gauge when the show is coming back on. I still need to get me a pair of those!

### **D: Are captioners paid more if they have certifications?**

R: What perfect timing of this question! Just today, I signed on with another broadcast agency. I was looking over their rate sheet and noticed they have pay tiers based on what certifications you have. I was shocked, as this is the first broadcast agency I've seen do this. In my previous experience, my employers were looking for quality over certifications. And as I learned, that is not always the case. This agency is looking for certs before quality. Interesting. As I already have my CSR and have recently signed up for the CCP, this has given me more motivation to pass this test! Until this point, I have always placed the CCP/CBC exams on the backburner. I've

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



never had a need for them. Seeing the pay difference between a CSR and CCP/CBC has given me MUCH incentive to get that cert! So don't be like me and think, "Out of sight, out of mind." The money is there and the certs are important!

**D: Television is 24/7. Is it mandatory as a broadcast captioner to work nights and weekends?**

R: When I first started as a broadcast captioner, I started part-time nights and every weekend. This was a drastic change for me as I was coming from the CART world where I was used to being home a majority of the nights, as well as off on the weekends (with rare exception). It shocked me. But I knew there were pros and cons. Yes, I was working nights and weekends, but I also did not have to drive 50-60 miles one way to work. I ended up going full-time days five months into my broadcast career. I was given the day shift along with every other weekend off. I worked that schedule for about 2.5 years. Then I went from an employee to an independent contractor. I was offered a night shift again (boooo), but I was paid a higher rate (SCORE!), so it was worth it to me. My schedule recently changed, and I now work mostly day shift and I get most weekends off (with rare exception). Again, every company is different and every captioner's situation is different. But you have to give a little to get a little. Whatever you do, as I've said before, do NOT limit yourself. Put hard work in, and eventually you'll have a better outcome.

As the summer wraps up, I want you all to think about this new "season." You have a new opportunity to start fresh and pass that test that has been holding you back all summer! Throw yourself that football (your speed test) and run it into the end zone for a touchdown (a pass)!

Happy new season!

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## STENO DEPRESSION

We all are faced with every-day challenges through this journey called "life." We can't avoid them. Most of us have kids throwing temper tantrums at home while we are trying to practice. We have spouses crying out for our attention when we have our face planted in theory books. We have bill collectors threatening to shut off our power while we struggle to put food on the table. No matter what situation you are in, you are definitely not alone. I used to be a person who would stress about every little thing. I still do sometimes. But I have learned to not "sweat the small stuff." I have learned that I cannot control every situation (even though I and probably most of you think we can). I have learned that life is going to throw me baseballs. I have been hit a few times. But instead of standing in the cage getting hit, I grabbed a baseball bat and started swinging!

We all know that court reporting school is difficult. Drop-out rates are through the roof. Failed tests come with the territory. And the phrase "steno depression," a phrase I coined recently, is becoming more and more a reality. We all go through it, the point in schooling where you have those depressing thoughts that you will never get out of school or even reach your next speed level. The evil thoughts of, "Why did I sign up for this?



I will never be a court reporter." Although I don't feel you can avoid these thoughts in court reporting school, I do feel you can change the way you handle them.

I, too, was in your shoes at one point. I had the same depressing thoughts. I have been kicked down in court reporting school more times than I can count! I wanted to give up. I cried tears of hurt and anger many times. But guess what? I didn't give up! I didn't let negative people or negative situations deter me from this AMAZING career! Don't you love to hear amazing transformation stories, a story about an overweight person who is now at a healthy weight, a millionaire who was homeless and hungry on the streets of Los Angeles? And now you get to hear about a court reporting student who went from depressed in school to absolute pure joy and happiness in her career.

I don't like to compare myself to anyone else, but what I have accomplished over the last few years has been beyond any of my expectations. I am proud of how far I have come. This is not to brag about my accomplishments; this is to encourage you not to give up! This is to show you that you CAN and WILL make it in this career! This is to show you that no matter how many times you fall, dust your hands off, fix your hair, throw some lipstick on (or some cologne, for the guys!) and start walking on that steno path again! You are bigger and better than any obstacle that gets thrown in your path! Remember that anyone or anything that tries to pull you down...they are beneath you for a reason! RISE ABOVE!

It is my birthday month (yes, I celebrate all month!), and this is my time to celebrate ME! And I want you all to do the same! For my birthday, instead of gifts, (which I know you all were intending to buy me a gift; right??) I want you to go out and celebrate YOU! Take a step back from that steno depression and do something for YOU, something that you've wanted to do for a while. Go to a spa. Take a walk on the beach with your spouse. Whatever it is, DO IT FOR YOU!!!! You deserve it and so much more!

Do not give up! Your time will come that you'll be sharing your transformation story soon! Be proud of how far you've come! You are going to be an amazing court reporter!! Remember that!

## FLY-BY-THE-SEAT-OF-MY-PANTS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

my setup, clink, bonk, stuff everything in my bag, click, clink. Mira and tripod, laptop lid shut, laptop stand and tripod, pen and pad are placed in my bag – let's be real, thrown in my bag. The monitor is in a separate bag. I'm out!

Room 1060 is on the opposite side of the floor. Finding the room, I set up my equipment for the second time. I sit next to my client and prepare to start. Nope, he doesn't like my font. He is not verbal, so he writes me a note: Separate font. Crap, I don't know what he means. I'm already double spaced. I motion to him with my fingers: Bigger? Smaller? He nods on bigger. Okay. I use CaseCatalyst software. I have about 30+ different templates of different sizes and fonts to switch to. I switched to Arial 26. I wrote: Test test test test. Nope. He says something that I don't understand. I changed my template randomly to find one he liked. Verdana 15? Nope. This happens at least five more times. While I'm hopscotching through templates, the planning administrator is sitting with his face in his palm looking from me to his paperwork, to me, to his paperwork, and now to me! Finally, the client says something that I understand, "The original." Back to Arial 20.

10:26, and we're off! My fingers were shaky from the anxiety of the morning. I kept mixing up the speakers every time they spoke. "Which one is he? Ben? No, Jim? No, Ben? NO! It's Jim! Get it together, Jennifer!" I couldn't remember my brief for applicant or advisement. My pink blouse is now stuck to my back. I am sure I had the just-woken-up look with makeup under my eyes and a droopy ponytail, but I was focused, "Write every word perfectly. No misstrokes." The client was glued to my screen.

The planning administrator finally opened the forum for public comment. My client was reading every word I wrote. "Does anyone wish to make public comments?" After a long pause

while he was reading, he shoots his hand up. Now the dance as we attempt to take turns with my laptop. He would be furiously pecking away with one finger to write his comments and the board members would start talking. I could not write what they were saying, because the client was still typing his response. If I had, the realtime would have switched to the bottom of the screen and the client's words would have been lost. I made a mental note of their words, and I raised my hand to gesture a "pause." I waited for my client to finish typing his response. Then I wrote what the board said. Then voiced what my client typed out to the board members. It was confusing. Thankfully, my client kept reiterating the same thing: He wanted a postponement due to not having a sign language interpreter.

One last thought, this was the third time a sign language interpreter did not show up and did not give notice. This is now three times a public hearing for this matter has been set up a month out. The representatives from a HUGE well-known company have come prepared with experts and strategy. The planning administrator has conducted and postponed a planning hearing. A CART Captioner has been arranged. And the client has shown up to debate this matter. I have to wonder why a sign language interpreter keeps failing to show up. This baffles my mind. Let this be a lesson to us as a professional service provider. Yes, unforeseen things happen, but we have to arrange for a sub. Our clients are depending on us. This is not a job where you can be lackadaisical and have the luxury to call out sick without arranging a sub.

Oh, one more lesson, leave your house more than two hours early if you are driving on the beastly Los Angeles freeways, ha!

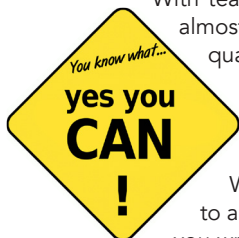
10:46, we adjourned.

If you would like to follow my blogs, they can be found at <http://jennporto.wordpress.com/>

## SAY Y-E-S TO ROUGH DRAFTS

Tip by Sandy VanderPol, CSR, FAPR, RMR, CRR, RSA, Credentialed, [realtimcsr@calweb.com](mailto:realtimcsr@calweb.com)

With teamwork and technology, your rough drafts can be almost perfect – even if you don't consider yourself a qualified realtime writer!



When you get the call to report a very difficult deposition or trial with an immediate rough draft request, you know what? **Yes, you can!** With available technology that allows your scopist to access and edit your transcript simultaneously while you write, the quality and turnaround time of your rough draft can meet or exceed the expectation of your client.

As a Case CATalyst reporter, my CAT software allows two options to provide daily copy transcripts or immediate rough drafts using a scopist. One option is to output "work units" every 15 to 20 minutes to a Dropbox folder shared with your scopist. These work units may contain both the text and the synched

audio file. Access to the Dropbox by my scopist is seamless and accomplished in the background. The reporter's focus is on what the client needs from you, to output your best realtime to the on-site end users.



The second option, which can be used when a same-day daily copy transcript is requested (and can be used for rough drafts also), is to use LogMeIn or Join Me. These two software products both work in a similar manner, allowing your scopist to remotely edit your transcript by having full control of your CAT computer. With your scopist simultaneously editing your transcript as you write, you don't have to worry about correcting any mistranslates a few lines back, inserting punctuation, capitalizing, or researching unfamiliar terminology. Your focus, once again, is outputting your best realtime to your on-site end users. As an additional bonus, if you are outputting realtime on site via a wireless network, the edits your scopist makes will "refresh" to the end-users' computers.

Be a champion of immediate rough drafts. Step up and take the prize – meeting the challenge and showcasing your skills and knowledge of technology!

**Note: Check with your CAT vendor for their tested solutions.**



# ABOUT HERNÁNDEZ STRATEGY GROUP

Hernández Strategy Group (HSG) is a full-service lobbying and consulting firm located in Sacramento that specializes in advocacy for non-profit organizations and associations. HSG was founded in 2003 by Ignacio Hernandez, who serves as the lead lobbyist, and has lobbied on more than 900 bills. In addition to Ignacio, there are three full-time staff: Dennis Garcia, Morgan Carvajal and Nicole Arnaiz. Both Dennis and Morgan are registered as lobbyists with the Secretary of State's office.

Prior to founding HSG, Ignacio worked in almost every position within a legislative office: district staff, committee consultant, Chief of Staff in both the Assembly and State Senate, and consultant to the State Senate Democratic Caucus. He has drafted more than 150 new laws, covering a variety of policy areas, and has testified before almost every fiscal and policy committee.

In addition to his legislative experience, Ignacio practiced law at the trial court level. He primarily represented workers in employment discrimination and wage cases, as well as, criminal defense cases in 6 different counties. Among his many accomplishments was pursuing litigation against a major condominium developer in Sacramento after more than 25 housekeepers and groundskeepers went without pay.

Morgan Carvajal has been a part of the HSG team since March of 2013 and works primarily on consumer and court related



policy issues. Having previously worked in the State Capitol for Senator Fran Pavley, Morgan came to HSG with legislative and communications experience. She has played an important role in HSG's success in stopping a number of legislative efforts and finding legislative solutions for consumer and senior related issues.

We have become a well-known and well-respected lobbying firm in the State Capitol with legislators and their staff regularly contacting us to assist with proposed and pending legislation. HSG's team has extensive contacts within the Legislature and Governor's office which allows us to effectively operate within the State Capitol.

HSG's office is conveniently located 4 blocks from the State Capitol at 555 Capitol Mall, Suite 610.

## GLUTEN-FREE ZUCCHINI MUFFINS

Adapted from the Wheat Belly Cookbook by William Davis At the request of Carolyn Dasher

### Ingredients

- 1 c. almond flour
- ½ c. coconut flour
- ¾ c. chopped walnuts
- ½ c ground flaxseed
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 ½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tbsp. organic coconut sugar
- 1 tsp. ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp. ground cloves
- ½ tsp. sea salt
- 1 c. shredded zucchini
- 1 tbsp. ground dried lemon peel
- ½ c. raisins (optional)
- 2 eggs, separated
- ½ c. sour cream
- ¼ c. melted butter
- ½ c. applesauce
- ¼ tsp. cream of tartar

### Directions

- Preheat oven at 350. Grease muffin pan or use paper liners.
- In a large bowl, stir together the first 14 ingredients.
- In medium bowl whisk together the next 4 ingredients (egg yolks only).
- In a large bowl, with an electric mixer on high, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff peaks form. Gently fold the beaten whites into the egg yolk mixture until combined. Fold egg mixture into the flour mixture until well combined.
- Divide mixture among the 12 muffin cups and bake for 40 minutes.
- Cool in pan for 5 minutes, then remove and cool completely on a rack. Delicious with butter or cream cheese.



# BASICS TO WORKING IN COURT

By Abby Waller

We all have our first day working in court walking around with a big question mark over our head and feeling somewhat alone in the process. That is where I tried to focus my seminar on a Reporter's Basic Guide to Working in Court.

After the seminar, there were some really great questions and feedback. Some of these had to do with obtaining documents with names to make realtime more helpful, which court staff to build a rapport with, and even putting together an appeal transcript. These are such important questions to ask, and that's why my strongest suggestion is to network. It is what builds us as unstoppable reporters, making us more motivated and encouraged to produce a good product.

I work in a small county where pro tems are frequently used. We have three open positions, but since the budget crisis, they have been frozen. We often have new pro tems coming into the office asking how to bill for a transcript, how to put a large trial appeal together, or even about the ominous process of jury selection and how to handle it. These questions are usually followed with, "I'm sorry to ask so many questions." Don't apologize! We are so thankful and happy to help. Oftentimes it makes our job easier in the end. If one reporter's work looks bad because they were afraid to ask for help, it often reflects on the lot of us, and it is better and easier to have one another's

back. Time is saved when you ask questions, and this is truly an instance where "no question is a stupid question."

Networking can begin at the job and go as far as coming to a CCRA convention. I always say if I can leave the convention meeting even three reporters and exchanging contact information, I've made my career that much stronger. The community of court reporters is so beneficial to have because we all want to help each other. There is a common goal to keep our profession thriving, whether we are a new, transitioning, or long-time reporter. Getting to know even these three other reporters might help me down the road, if it's keeping in touch to know what's going on in their county with negotiations, finding out about new job opportunities, or just building my support system.

If there is only one convention you can attend each year, California Court Reporters Association's convention in October is the one. You can always count on meeting reporters from all across the state that are facing similar issues in their county or region. Whether it's discussing the refresher English class over appetizers or meeting our CCRA president at the reception after party over drinks, there are so many opportunities to network and get to know like-minded reporters who share in your goal to become the best reporter you can be.

## SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

By Katherine Schilling

**How do you respond when someone says, "Aren't you going to be replaced by a computer?"**

When I hear the question, "Aren't you going to be replaced by a computer?" I can actually sympathize with the person. After all, I had that very same question when I attended orientation at my school. Little did I know that that question has been asked with regard to the court reporting industry for well over 50 years. It was thanks to the insight of instructors and working reporters that I came to understand that the answer continues to be a resounding "No" and for two main reasons: the shortcomings of technology and the importance of the human element.

Recording software is programmed to do one thing and one thing only -- record whatever its microphones pick up. It is incapable of telling the difference between an answering attorney and the rumble of a low-flying jet engine outside. It cannot tell when a foreign slang word has been dropped randomly mid-sentence. And most importantly, it has no incentive to ensure that the record has been accurately and faithfully preserved. Its objective is so limited and rigid that

an innocently misplaced paper that muffles the microphone, a well-timed cough as a key witness gives testimony, or even something as simple as failing to turn on the recording device can damage the record beyond repair. With a computer at the helm, the human element responsible for providing an accurate record is missing.

Life and law are far too complex to be left to something that operates in 0s and 1s; that lacks the ability to make judgment calls in response to the scenarios listed above. By contrast, the court reporter is duty-bound by a stringent code of ethics and professionalism to perform her job to the best of her abilities in the interest of all involved. She knows when to step in to ensure that the record is preserved accurately and is held accountable if something goes awry. When one's job, financial future, or even life hangs in the balance of a court proceeding, one may think twice before leaving such a momentous occasion in the hands of an uncaring, unintelligent automaton. Only a living, breathing person can provide the care and wisdom that the record requires.

So I don't lose my temper or roll my eyes when someone asks this question, because I understand that they simply haven't considered all the factors at play. Being impressed by Siri's response to your search query is a far cry from entrusting your future to a machine that lacks the care or discretion to consider the variables taking place in our very organic and human society.

# THE BUSINESS MEETING AND THE BOARD

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By Karen Kronquest

This year's annual business meeting marked the end of my first year as a CCRA board member. CCRA was proud to adopt new bylaw language to add to its class of members CART providers, broadcast captioners and federal court reporters. We can truly say that we represent all aspects of court reporting, not just one field. The bylaws were also amended to reflect one Vice President, a President-Elect and change the Secretary/Treasurer office from a one-year to a two-year term. The board said goodbye to two members, Christy Cannariato and Jorge Dominguez, but welcomed four new: Connie Parchman, Steve Kosmata, Jeri Kusar and Amanda Scott.

One of the things that made this business meeting entertaining was the captioning done by Lesia Mervin. Lesia took the rare opportunity to have a bit of fun and shared anecdotes and humorous thoughts while reporting the speakers. If the laughter in the room was any indication, I think the audience enjoyed it, too. I'm sure Lesia was a bit surprised while listening to the introduction of this year's Distinguished Service Award recipient to learn it was herself!

This year's keynote speaker was the Honorable Judge William Kent Hamlin of the Fresno Superior Court. Judge Hamlin appreciates court reporters, and I found his comments and thoughts both sobering and inspiring. He spoke about the importance of the reporter/judge relationship, professionalism,

some reasons why court reporters are under attack in the justice system and ways to protect and promote ourselves. I'd like to thank Judge Hamlin for his words and support.

I am very proud to be a part of CCRA and the Board of Directors. This past year I have had the opportunity to work with and get to know better some of the best reporters in the field. It has been exciting and rewarding to help shape the future of the association. There's nothing like sitting at a table with others in your profession, each with different suggestions and ideas about things ranging from proposing legislation to planning conventions, supporting students, dealing with negative issues and lots of public relations. When I first joined the board I knew very little about freelance reporting and the different issues affecting it. The same is true for the CART and captioning fields.

There were times when I felt like there was a lot to do in addition to work and a family. There were other times when I didn't feel as busy. Sometimes I disagreed with others' opinions. It's all part of the process, though, and I found that even if I didn't agree with someone, their different outlook and ideas had merit. They usually came up with something I hadn't even considered. I have learned by observing others, too. I don't consider myself a very good speaker and can become tongue-tied in social situations, so watching how the pros handle things has built my confidence and comfort level. I like knowing what's going on, profession-wise, and being on the board facilitates that. Now if only I didn't have to write articles...

## SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

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By Tami Lynch

When someone says to me, "Aren't you going to be replaced by a computer?" I ask them in return, "What makes you think a computer can do the job of a court reporter better than the live person can?" I then proceed to explain the various reasons why a live reporter will always be more beneficial than a computerized system in the court reporting profession.

There is a continuing debate between those who believe that it is less costly and more efficient to have court proceedings electronically recorded and transcribed and those who believe that having a stenographic reporter present to take down the testimony is most effective. Proponents of electronic or computerized recordings state that a stenographic reporter may mishear, misunderstand, or err in taking down the words. However, even an attended electronic recording or audiovisual system may crash, despite backups. For example, in 2010, a county judge in Kentucky had to rehear a murder case when the court's digital system malfunctioned.

A purely electronic recording system with no direct human involvement may be cost effective but is particularly prone to

complete failures, risking the loss of any record at all. It is also prone to record garbled or unintelligible words or sentences. The Second District Court of Appeals in Ohio said of a case out of Dayton, "Their video quality is not good; these are not highdefinition recordings. Much of what is said is inaudible or badly distorted." In addition, if two people speak at once or a speaker is difficult to understand, a reporter who is present can request to stop the proceedings and ask for clarification, thereby providing a record that's more accurate than an unattended computerized recording.

Studies have also shown that electronic systems don't save money as advertised. There are thousands of dollars in upfront costs for machinery, staff costs for judicial assistants to monitor the equipment, and maintenance expenses. And if the court needs a written copy after an electronically recorded proceeding, it's a timeconsuming task to transcribe from an audiovisual record.

After I have explained these few points to whomever inquired about my future career as a court reporter and why a computerized system cannot replace a live person, their outlook on the court reporting profession becomes much more admirable, and they encourage me to pursue my career.



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