

The Deposition Reporter

DEPOSITION
REPORTERS ASSOCIATION
OF CALIFORNIA

FALL 2016

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MONYEEN BLACK, CSR, RPR, CCRR
DRA PRESIDENT

"ALL I'M SAYING IS, KINDNESS DON'T HAVE NO BOUNDARIES."
- **KATHRYN STOCKETT, THE HELP**

Kindness from people who go out of their way to help you and want nothing in return; if only we could all experience that and live that way every day.

There has been so much heartache lately in the world that it's unsettling when you also see criticisms and harsh comments about your peers in our online professional communities. Social media can be a wonderful tool for reporters because we work in such an isolating field. But lately I see so much negativity on social media among court reporters, and it surely isn't an inviting place for the new reporters in the profession who arrive at reporter-related Internet sites simple to ask questions of their veteran colleagues.

Reporters are an independent breed, and we have myriad opinions, many strongly held. This is a strength. But there is a difference between strongly expressing an opinion about an issue and attacking the motives or integrity of a person who holds a contrary view, especially in the sort of public place of the Internet.

Call me old school, but I think manners still matter. Instead of attacking one another, why not simply appreciate our differences and respect each other and support those differences? Sure, debate the pros and cons vigorously, but don't tear each other down.



THE NATION'S LARGEST TRADE
ASSOCIATION DEDICATED TO
THE FREELANCE
DEPOSITION REPORTER

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 CALDRA

 CAL_DRA

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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We should be building each other up. We should be supporting each other. We need to stand united. It costs nothing to be kind, to say thank you, to acknowledge someone else's good intentions. It is also the right way to live.

And this doesn't just apply to social media. For example, sometimes it might be that we see something another reporter missed. Reaching out to the reporter can be done with generosity, through a kind email to let them know that you are reporting a case that they worked on and you found the spelling to a name that they misspelled. That is a nice gesture showing that you've got your colleague's back, and it unites us.

Next time you are at a court reporting event, go introduce yourself to somebody new. Maybe even one of your acquaintances from social media will be attending and you can meet in person.

Let's all try to thank a colleague, encourage a new reporter, toot your own horn, and be kind. We are all reporters. We are all in this together. We might as well hold hands, laugh, and smile along the way.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

Mikey McMorran

Mary Rascon

Jamie Jennings

Evelyn Mah

Kathleen O'Neill

Pamela Cotten

Noelle Ottoboni



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DRA DOES DISNEYLAND: MIND, BODY, STENO – ANOTHER HOME RUN FOR DRA!

CalDRA members from across the state came together on Saturday, September 24th at the magical Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, California, for a day of networking and commiseration at the annual fall event. Attendees were treated to an entire day of informative seminars, from Kyung Lee-Green’s ruminations on the art of negotiation, to Phil Liberatore’s expertise in the tax realm, to the importance of physical upkeep and nutrition, presented by two of our dynamic speakers, Lorie Eber and Terry Littlefield. The day was rounded out by two perennial favorites – “There Oughta Be A Law” and “AskDRA,” featuring our panel of in-house experts – Ed Howard, CalDRA Legislative advocate, Toni Pulone, Legislative Chair, and Monyeen Black, sitting CalDRA President.

With .7 CEUs up for grabs, a host of vendors displaying the latest and greatest in steno equipment and other sundries, and discounted park tickets available for all participants, the day proved to be an invaluable event, both personally and professionally. Thanks to all who attended!



BYLAWS RESTATEMENT VOTE PASSES

On Saturday, September 24, at our Fall seminar at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, California, Professional CalDRA members were given the opportunity to exercise their voting rights in regards to the potential amendment of our association bylaws. The restatement passed with overwhelming support from our membership. Thanks to all who voted. Your participation is appreciated!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Members can now electronically vote
- A President-Elect position has been added to the board
- Directors will now serve two-year terms

To view our amended bylaws, click here:

[VIEW BYLAWS](#)

New Members



- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Desiree Martinez | Jessica Rinaudo | Mikaele Takeda | Monica January |
| Danielle Furlow | Jennifer Messer | Hanna Kim | Stephanie Eastman |
| Sharon Bradley | Silvia Aceves | Jeff Cobb | Robert Sullivan |
| Shelli Eng | Abeer Musleh | Lori Palomares | Rachel Brown |
| AshleyBalderama | Phyllis Robinson | Adriana Robles | Vanessa Harskamp |
| Camarie Greenwald | Rosie Kazarovich | Barbara Prokop | Rebecca Delgadillo |
| Shabnam Lavian | Linda O'Lear | Michelle Bailey | Lou Ann Foley |
| Karen Marroquin | Gabrielle Anderson | Catherine Ebbert | Jennifer Jones |
| | Justin Ladhar | Teresa Maciel | Tara Tegeler |
| | Erika Espinoza | Angela White | Asia Mendez |
| | Hanna Sliz | Jennifer Schumacher | Vicky Canedy |
| | Yolanda Anselon | Andy Hsaio | Suzanne McKennon |
| | Marci Reynolds | Maria Moreno-Docker | Timothy Scott |

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DEMOCRACY AT WORK: NCRA'S CONTESTED ELECTION

Chicago – it's our kind of town! This summer, CalDRA President Monyeen Black, Past CalDRA President Kristi Johnson, and District 4 Director Cheryl Haab set out for the Midwest to attend the National Court Reporters Association's annual convention, held at the Hilton in downtown Chicago, Illinois.

This highly attended conference was held over four days, chock-full of informational seminars, professional networking events, a glamorous evening gala, and much more, and was an invaluable opportunity for CalDRA's leaders to represent the State of California on a national scale. Whether it was NCRA's annual business meeting or a powwow of the National Committee of State Association's countrywide membership, your DRA was in the trenches, bringing the concerns of California reporters to the powers that be from across the United States and the world.

While the event was laden with memorable experiences – the President's Party is a perennial favorite – the most talked-about event, without question, was NCRA's contested Board of Directors Election for the 2016-2017 year. Three contested elections for officer or board positions and a series of amendments to the Association's Constitution and Bylaws were presented at the meeting.

Voting closed at 11:30pm Central time, August 4, 2016. 1164 (9.5%) of 12195 electors voted in this ballot. The results were as follows:



President – Nativa P. Wood

President-Elect Nativa P. Wood, RDR, CMRS, FAPR (Mechanicsburg, PA.) automatically advanced to the office of 2016-17 President.

Vice President – Sue Terry

- Doreen Sutton, RPR (Scottsdale, Ariz.): 492 (44.8%)
- Sue Terry, RPR, CRR, FAPR (Springfield, Ohio): 606 (55.2%)

Secretary-Treasurer – Debra A. Dibble

- Debra A. Dibble, RDR, CRR, CRC (Salt Lake City, Utah): 747 (69.8%)
- Michele Melhorn York, RMR (Arlington, Va.): 323 (30.2%)

Director – Christine Phipps

- Christine Phipps, RPR (North Palm Beach, Fla.): 550 (52.6%)
- Huey Bang, RMR, CRR (Pass Christian, Miss.): 496 (47.4%)

Uncontested Elections

Also elected by acclamation at the Annual Business Meeting were:

- Christine J. Willette, RDR, CRR, CRC (Wausau, Wis.) as President-Elect
- Kristin M. Anderson, RPR (San Antonio, Texas) to a three-year term as director; and
- R. Max Curry, Jr., RPR, CRI (Franklin, Tenn.) to a three-year term as director.

CalDRA would like to thank NCRA for allowing its membership to engage in the democratic process through participation in this contested election, and for its hospitality to the attendees at its annual event. Thanks for the memories, and here's to a successful year for both our associations, through this year and beyond.



SAVE THE DATE

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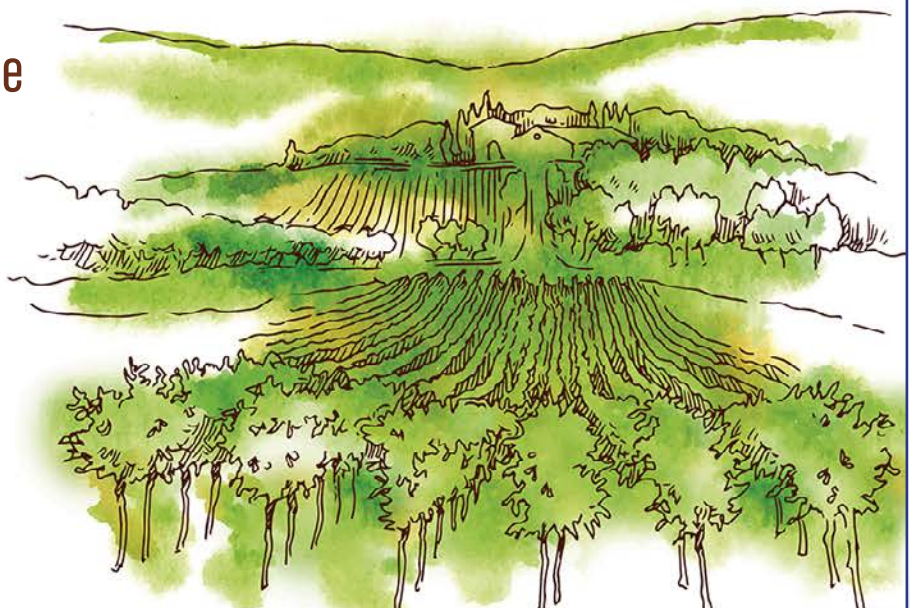
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Behind the Scenes

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE SPOUSES OF COURT REPORTING

Sometimes, as a court reporter, it feels like we are married to our jobs. But many of us are actually married to - or dating - real people (even though we forget about them sometimes)! CalDRA took a moment to sit down with the guys behind the scenes – the husbands and boyfriends of court reporting – to get their take on the profession from their metaphorical front-row seats to the action. Their answers are sometimes accurate, sometimes hilarious, but mostly really heartfelt and sweet. So here's a big THANK YOU to these fantastic support systems for our DRA members. Cheers to you, gentlemen, for your continued patience and understanding in this unpredictable profession!

NAME: Vincent Altadonna

NAME OF SPOUSE/SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Aimee Edwards-Altadonna



NUMBER OF YEARS TOGETHER:
Married 16, together 19

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?
Since Fall of 2015 (Correct answer: October of 2014)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?
CSR 13979 (Correct answer!)

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: She better get that transcript out STAT!

CSR: Certified Shorthand Reporter

Brief: A special stroke that is used to simplify multi-syllabic words

SoCal stip: That B.S. practice that devalues my wife's work product and makes her lose money! BOO-HISS!

DRA: Deposition Reporters Association

Realttime: Extra \$\$\$;0) – JK Realttime, as I understand it, is the future of the Court Reporting profession. It allows reporters to display, in real-time, what is being spoken to their clients via a number of different technologies.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

My favorite thing about my wife's CR career has been watching her grow into a seriously good reporter. I love how much she enjoys the work – highs and lows – and how much fulfillment this career brings to her.

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

The early morning commutes and long hours on the weekend are what I really don't like the most. I also hate when her tech fails her and there's little I can do to help her out.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

Do it! Court Reporters rock. They have weird schedules and talk in funny acronyms sometimes, but you'll get used to it. Oh! And they're wicked crazy about grammar. Make sure you punctuate well, use the Oxford comma, and know the difference between your and you're.

NAME: Bobby Chavez

NAME OF SPOUSE/SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Andrea Rinker



NUMBER OF YEARS TOGETHER: 6

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?
8? (Correct answer: 7 years 7 months)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?
CSR 13437 (Correct!)

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: That means I get to do what I want to do this weekend

CSR: Certified Shorthand Reporter

Brief: Why use two strokes when you can use one?

SoCal stip: An abomination, a plague upon this Earth

DRA: Deposition Reporters Association of California

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Realtime: Cha-ching! \$\$\$

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

My favorite thing is that she gets to make her own schedule.

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

My least favorite is when the lawyers tell her she'll be out of a depo by a certain time, but hours later she's still in that depo.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

Find some hobbies that you can do on your own. And your partner may have to cancel that weekend getaway or they may have to reschedule that fun group dinner, but take it easy on them. They didn't want to and they'll make it up to you.

NAME: Jo Jo Mesa

**NAME OF SPOUSE/
SIGNIFICANT OTHER:**
Elizabeth Mesa

NUMBER OF YEARS TOGETHER:
10

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?
2 (Correct answer: 2 years 9 months)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?
No clue (Correct answer: 13903)

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: You need to turn it in the next day, turn it in faster than normal

CSR: California Stenographer Reporter

Brief: I have no clue

SoCal stip: What?

DRA: Deposition Reporters Association

Realtime: Needs to be word for word and comes up on a screen so the judge can read it and lawyers can read it.



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

Makes good money and you are home

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

She has to drive everywhere. I take that back. How she gets paid, getting paid for something she did a month or more ago.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

Do it. She will need a lot of Starbucks.

NAME: Steve Schon

**NAME OF SPOUSE/
SIGNIFICANT OTHER:**
Holly Moose

**NUMBER OF YEARS
TOGETHER:** 18

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?
32 years (Correct answer: 31 years, 10 months)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?
MS RPTR (Correct answer: 6438)

Holly: I think it means what is my state license number.

Steve: Vague and ambiguous. No idea.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: Dinner on your own

CSR: Certified shorthand reporter

Brief: Cut this story short

SoCal stip: There goes the copy

DRA: Deposition Reporters Association

Realtime: Simultaneous display of an attorney's inability to frame an artful question

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

Her flexibility



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WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

The 24-hour home stenographer

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

Be prepared to have your spelling and pronunciation corrected. A lot. It seems like a great career with a lot of positives aspects. Go for it.

NAME: Kurt Johnson



NAME OF SPOUSE/ SIGNIFICANT OTHER:

Jodi Monroe

NUMBER OF YEARS TOGETHER:

17

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?

12 years (Correct answer: 11 years two months)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?

Unknown (Correct answer: 13010)

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: 3-day turnaround

CSR: Certified Shorthand Reporter

Brief: Short summary of the argument

SoCal stip: Unknown

DRA: Deposition Reporters Association

Realtime: Application that allows another party to view the reporters transcript in real time as it is written. A cable connects the reporter's machine to the other parties device.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

I enjoy that she has a lot of flexibility in her schedule. It would be a lot tougher if we both worked in a corporate office M-F.

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

I do not enjoy the late nights and weekends that she has to work on transcripts.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

I would advise them to have patience and empathy. Court reporting is a very challenging career that takes a very skilled person to do. Listen and learn what they do so you can share in their experiences too.

NAME: Arpan Desai



NAME OF SPOUSE/ SIGNIFICANT OTHER:

Lisa Marie Parker Desai

NUMBER OF YEARS TOGETHER:

Together for 12, married for 7

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?

Since 2009 (Correct answer: March 2009)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?

Printed on the license hanging on the wall in her office (Correct answer: 13441)

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: Rush job on providing transcript

CSR: Certified shorthand reporter - CA specific accreditation for transcriptionists

Brief: Almost like an acronym, used to "shortcut" writing a longer phrase.

SoCal stip: Trick SoCal attorneys use to avoid buying a copy :)

DRA: Deposition Reporters Association

Realtime: Technology that allows attorneys/judges to view the transcript in real time on their electronic devices.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

Flexible and lucrative

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

Inconsistent schedule

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

The schedule is the biggest thing to get used to. It's both a pro and a con as noted above. It's great that they can accommodate going on vacation for a week and not have to worry about the office. But while they're working there's no guarantees that they'll be done by 6 so you can go on that date tonight.

NAME: Keith Black

**NAME OF SPOUSE/
SIGNIFICANT OTHER:**
Monyeen Black



NUMBER OF YEARS TOGETHER:
14

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?

22 years (Correct answer: 22 years 3 months)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?

8675309 (Nice try! Haha. Correct answer: 10574)

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: Eating alone

CSR: Certified Shorthand Reporter

Brief: Pretty much every answer I get back, when Mo is producing a transcript.

SoCal stip: Reporter loses money. One attorney gets stuck with the bill. A JOKE!!!

DRA: Where my wife spends all her extra time.

Realtime: The last two years of our marriage, while getting her CCRR & RPR . Extra pay like overtime.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

The flexibility of schedule. How happy it makes her, still after 22 years. I could not imagine Mo doing anything else for a career and being as happy as she is.

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S CAREER?

It can be feast or famine with work.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

Get used to not being listened to. You will be heard, but that is it. They will look in your eyes and act like they are intently listening. Then, surprise, you will get asked at some point just what you talked about. I know this to be fact of the court reporter because my mother was one also. Get used to your grammar being corrected. I actually use that in my favor.

I will have Mo proof all of my important emails and such. Learn to be alone, even when in the same house. Because when they are working, you pretty much do not exist. (You will realize this when you try to ask a question while they are listening to audio on a transcript.) Get used to lots of work-related things all over the house. Bonus is you get to have a lot of tech things like iPads and such. I could go on, but will leave it at this

NAME: Steven Saber

**NAME OF SPOUSE/
SIGNIFICANT OTHER:**
Vicki Saber



NUMBER OF YEARS TOGETHER:
23

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PARTNER BEEN REPORTING?

32 years (correct answer: 33 years 9 months)

WHAT IS THEIR LICENSE NUMBER?

CSR 6212 (Correct!)

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING TERMS MEAN TO YOU AS THEY RELATE TO THE FIELD OF COURT REPORTING:

Expedite: Following a deposition the lawyer/attorney requests that the transcript is provided the following day

CSR: Certified Stenographic Reporter

Brief: A document for lawyers to define or explain the reason for a lawsuit OR phrases commonly used for reporters to share

SoCal stip: Not sure, but legal doc that is sent to define what depo is about

DRA: Deposition Reporters Association

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Realtime: Court reporting that is translated to another computer during deposition so other parties can see in “realtime” what reporters are transcribing

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER’S CAREER?

That it provides an integral part of the legal process that is fair, truthful and sometimes entertaining. Court reporters are paid well for the intensity that depositions require

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR PARTNER’S CAREER?

The attorneys can be harsh and disrespectful which can make the day stressful and frustrating for many reporters

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT DATING A COURT REPORTER?

Patience, support and understanding the balance of time and commitment to the profession.

WHAT’S NEW AT THE COURT REPORTERS BOARD OF CALIFORNIA?

“The mission of the Court Reporters Board is to protect the public health, safety and welfare by ensuring the integrity of judicial records through oversight of the court reporting profession. The CRB carries out this mission by testing, licensing and disciplining court reporters, and by recognizing the schools of court reporting that meet state curriculum standards.”

Minimum Transcript Format Standards

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10 TIPS FOR COURT REPORTING STUDENTS

- 1. PRACTICE EVERY DAY, EVEN IF IT'S FOR LESS THAN 30 MINUTES.** Every day that you stay off your machine, you lose speed.
- 2. PRACTICE THE THINGS YOU HATE THE MOST.** You probably hate them because you're not good at them! Just remember, numbers and proper names don't go away when you're a CR. Drilling hesitation words is a great exercise when you're burnt out from speed practice.
- 3. TRANSCRIBE EVERY TEST, NO MATTER HOW HORRIBLE.** Knowing you have to transcribe no matter what oftentimes makes you try harder during a test. Transcribing also helps you to spot frequent mistakes that you might not even know you've been making. Remember, in the working world, you won't get to pick and choose which depositions to transcribe.
- 4. START NETWORKING NOW!** Every chance you have to meet with working court reporters is a chance to make a valuable contact when you enter the working world. Attend conventions and seminars whenever you can.
- 5. READ BOOKS.** Sometimes it feels like you don't have much free time as a student, but every chance you have to improve your grasp on the English language should be viewed as an opportunity to improve your skill set.
- 6. GET A PROFESSIONAL-SOUNDING EMAIL ADDRESS,** preferably with your name in it. When you start emailing agencies and court reporters for interning opportunities, they may be less impressed with "cutesy" email addresses. Having a separate email address for CR-related activity is a great idea.
- 7. START LEARNING YOUR SOFTWARE NOW.** The more you know about the way your CAT software works, the faster your test transcription will be. Once you're a reporter, understanding your software may be the difference between meeting a deadline and turning a transcript in late.
- 8. LISTEN TO HIGHER-SPEED DICTATION.** You don't necessarily have to practice alongside it, but sometimes, just listening to high-speed takes (30 or more wpm above your goal speed) can trick your brain into believing that your goal speed is slow.
- 9. DON'T NEGLECT YOUR ACADEMICS!** Sometimes, the academics can seem like a weight that is bogging down your speed practice, but classes like legal terminology, medical terminology, and deposition/court procedures are designed to help prepare you for the CSR and the working world beyond. All those words in your terminology class that you think you'll never hear? Trust me, you'll hear them... and have to stroke them all out.
- 10. BRIEFING.** Briefing is a very personal thing, and each reporter has their own approach to how they shorten words, if at all. But the math doesn't lie – less strokes for more words equals higher speed. The trick is to brief smartly. Start with high frequency words and small word phrases. Briefing these alone will go a long way in improving your speed and accuracy.



MY YEAR AS AN EMPLOYEE REPORTER



SARAH MAKSIM, CSR
Court Reporting Student

Sarah Maksim has been a working court reporter since October of 2015, but right out the gates of Golden State Court Reporting School, she found herself a unique position in the field. Unlike the vast majority of first-year reporters who enter the working world as freelancers, Sarah became a W2 deposition reporter with many of the tax benefits of a company employee. Here, she shares how being an employee reporter has shaped her experience, as well as the advantages and potential disadvantages of this rare arrangement:

Being an employee reporter wasn't an advertised position at the firm I worked for, so I actually reached out and pitched the idea to them first. I knew it would be beneficial for both sides—I would get job security and in-depth training with one firm; they would get a committed and loyal reporter. Luckily for me, the firm owner for said that they had tried it once in the past with good results, so I decided to start my career in the same fashion.

My job works very much the same way as that of an independent contractor, with the sole exception being that all my work comes from one firm, whether it's for them specifically or from any firms with which they contract work

I'm sure all of you are wondering, "How is this lady getting paid?"

My pay was discussed at length with my firm owner during the contract negotiation phase, and, without going into too much detail, we agreed that I would get paid a salary plus a page rate. The page rate was set at a slightly reduced rate compared to a regular 1099 reporter's page rate. However, after doing the math to figure out if this amount was comparable to a freelancer, I determined that after all the taxes are taken out, I was making MORE as an employee than I would if I had started out as a freelancer.

What originally attracted me to being a contract reporter fresh out of school was the comfort of only having to worry about one worksheet, one layout, one format for most jobs I

take. I also wanted to eliminate the extra stress that being a 1099 reporter brings, such as making my own rules, rates, and dealing with production on my own.

Taxes were another main reason for why I became an employee at the start. I felt that keeping track of all my expenses in addition to learning the nuances of our profession was just too much to learn in one year for me. I wanted to focus on the most important part of court reporting: perfecting my knowledge of my software to create the best quality transcripts quickly. For me, having my taxes taken out of my paycheck every two weeks really helped me out.

The best part of the arrangement was that I didn't have to put in any effort to find jobs, because I was given first choice of whatever came in. Even when I was fresh out of school, I was put on jobs at a higher frequency than a new freelancer might find herself. This meant I had more time to focus on providing top quality transcripts and making lasting connections with attorneys.

In addition, I felt that it was a wonderful opportunity to grow a long-standing relationship with the firm. As an employee, I was on call for all the best quality jobs that they had with their best clients, which in turn, meant more moola for me!

The pros and cons for working as an employee are difficult to pin down. While it isn't something I would necessarily recommend to a seasoned reporter, I believe an arrangement like this is extremely beneficial for any reporter who just passed the exam and is looking for steady work. As an employee, the firm is able to help you along and guide you in a way that they may not be able to do for independent contractors due to liability reasons. Thanks to this guidance, I feel that I've learned more about the profession and how to bring in clients at a faster rate than if I were freelancing.

Another big perk is the fact that I get priority on the job scheduling. I was able to pick and choose what jobs I wanted at the start and lay out my schedule however I felt most comfortable. With the exception of the occasional last-minute emergency job that came up, I never felt pressured to take on more work than I was comfortable with.

I also feel that working as an employee really helped me gain a great relationship with my firm. Everyone at the office

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MY YEAR AS AN EMPLOYEE REPORTER

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knows me and the quality of my work product, which can come in handy when they need a reporter ASAP.

Now comes the dark side of this situation. Other than the killer commute I had to do for a while, the only thing I think is better as a freelancer is the pay after your first year of reporting. Once I got the hang of reporting—making transcripts, handling the work load, dealing with reporter snafus, et cetera—I felt that I could handle all the other aspects of the reporting world (like filing taxes), and I could be making more money on my own.

After I started gaining more experience, I started to notice all the benefits of being an IC (Independent Contractor) tax-wise that I wasn't able to take advantage of as an employee. I researched different programs to manage my income and expenses and found a great setup to make balancing the budget fun and paperless! Now I see all the advantages of being a freelancer and all the freedom it offers.

At the start of my career, I wanted to make sure that I knew what I was doing as a reporter first, and once I had that part down, everything else would be easier to handle. Now that I have a year under my belt, I feel comfortable taking on the rest of what a freelancer has to juggle in addition to taking depositions and providing transcripts.

I wish all reporting firms had the option of being an employee available for new reporters in some form or another. This relationship that I have with my firm has helped both the firm and myself in so many ways. With only one firm to commit to, I was able to take on more work; thus, make the firm more money. It was easier to bring in new clients to the firm and maintain client loyalty. Most importantly, I had a close, reliable network of people I could go to if I ever had any problem or burning anxiety about a transcript I was working on.

Considering all the short- and long-term benefits that come with the it, I feel that if all court reporters started out as employees, our profession would have the capacity to blossom more than we thought possible.

APPRENTICESHIP TIPS

Apprenticeships—also known as simply “sitting in”—are a key part of a CR student's education. The California Court Reporters Board requires exam applicants from a California recognized court reporting school to complete, as part of their prescribed course of study, 60 hours of apprenticeship training. This means on-site attendance at a legal proceeding—deposition or trial—in the company of a licensed court reporter. Most schools will further require students to submit transcript excerpts as part of their apprenticeships to test their knowledge of transcript production and proper punctuation. While apprenticeships are a critical component

of court reporting school, more often than not, students find themselves at a loss as to where to even begin. Finding an available court reporter to sit in with, scheduling your time, and preparing appropriately can seem like a lot to tackle, but hopefully the list of tips below can get you started off on the right foot.

1. FINDING REPORTERS

- Many schools will have names of court reporters in your area (some even alumni) saved in a database as a resource. Referencing these databases can be a quick and easy way to find someone local and who potentially has a tie to your school. At the very least, you'll have something in common to talk about!

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APPRENTICESHIP TIPS

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- For those of you without lists of reporters readily available, Facebook is always a great place to find reporters. Start by finding your state associations' Facebook groups. They serve as a hub for reporters in the area, and if you post there as a student in search of an apprenticeship opportunity, you can reach a high number of reporters quickly and easily. Just make sure that your post is succinct and clear to help keep out any of the guesswork.
- Rest assured that most court reporters are delighted to have a student sit in with them! Don't write yourself off as a burden. As long as you are well-behaved and polite, you'll be a welcome party to the proceedings.

2. SCHEDULING

- Time taken away from school to fulfill apprenticeship hours won't be looked unfavorably upon by your teachers. You may not like the idea of sacrificing a testing opportunity for it, but sitting in on an actual job with an actual reporter will often teach you much more about the profession than you could in the classroom. See it as another part of your education, and don't be too hesitant about scheduling sit-ins on school days. The fact of the matter is, most legal proceedings are conducted during normal work hours.
- Be prepared for cancellations. They happen more times than you may think, but don't be discouraged by it. Recognize it as a normal part of the job and walk away with another lesson learned: Things can change at the drop of a hat, and court reporters have to stay flexible! There's no better time to learn this than as a student.
- The parties in a deposition or the judge in a courtroom don't like unexpected guests at their proceedings. Try to arrange a sit-in a few days in advance so that court reporter (or agency) can clear it with whoever is necessary first. Likewise, schedule your time so that you can stay for the entire duration of the proceeding—yes, even if it goes longer than anticipated. If you must leave early, wait until the parties have taken a break so that you create as little disturbance as possible.

3. PREPARATION

- Depending on how much the court reporter can share, you may be able to get a caption or some other information related to the upcoming case. Get familiar

with how to "read" a job sheet or caption to learn how to glean important information from it. If you have a case number, pop it into the county's court case search website and start filling your job dictionary with proper names and relevant terminology. It's great practice for future case preparation, and it will make your transcript excerpt that much easier to produce.

- Know how to get to the job, and plan to arrive early! It's a cardinal sin for a court reporter to be late to a job, so you should hold yourself to the same standard. You may be traveling to new places in your area, so plan your route to compensate for unforeseen delays. Google Street View is your best friend, as it will help you recognize your destination in advance.
- Come with questions. The experience of a sit-in can be overwhelming at times. There will be many new things to observe and grapple with, so either have questions prepared before you arrive, or jot them down discreetly during a lull in the proceeding. A generous court reporter will take some time afterwards to chat with you over coffee, where you can then go over your impressions from the sit-in. Come with something to discuss. You'll make the most of your experience if you are ready to process it while it's still fresh in your mind.

4. BEHAVIOR

- **BE THE COURT REPORTER.** You may be only an observing student, but conduct yourself as if you were the reporter of record. This goes for business-appropriate attire—a pretty blouse over jeans won't cut it!—as well as business etiquette.
- Introduce yourself to the reporter as well as to all parties present. State clearly that you are a student court reporter and that you are thankful for the opportunity to be there. Everyone had to agree to allow you to attend, including the deponent, so lay on the gratitude! Even if you're shy, at least this level of communication will put everyone at ease because they'll know exactly who you are and what you're there for.
- Aside from the initial introductions, however, your role will be to observe quietly and unobtrusively for the

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APPRENTICESHIP TIPS

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remainder of the proceeding. The court reporter still has a job to do, so refrain from speaking, shuffling through your equipment, or—heaven forbid!—checking your phone. Keep your poker face on, no matter how many questions might be buzzing through your head. The people in the room are still watching, so be mindful that your thoughts don't come across on your face.

5. POST-APPRENTICESHIP

- After the proceeding is finished, thank the parties again for their time. Instead of dashing off, volunteer to help the court reporter organize the room or carry exhibits to his/her car. Sometimes the best bits of information can pop up during a stroll to the parking lot.
- Let the court reporter know how much you appreciated the opportunity to learn from them, and send a thank-you letter to the agency/court staff for arranging it. The people behind the scenes of any deposition agency or courthouse already have enough to juggle with for a typical proceeding, so be sure to recognize the extra efforts they put in to allow you to be there.
- Congratulations! You also just made a reporter contact! Ask the reporter if he or she would be willing to answer any more follow-up questions you may have. Don't aim to inundate people's inboxes with your questions, but tactfully drop an email on occasion to catch up with them and bring up a topic that you'd like their advice on. Sitting out with a reporter is often the first step to developing a long-term relationship.



SCENES FROM DRA'S ANNUAL STUDENT PICNIC

MAY 14, 2016 • CERRITOS REGIONAL PARK



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BILL WATCH

ANTONIA PULONE, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Our California legislature recently completed the second year of a two-year session, and all bills introduced during this session had to be passed by both houses, the Assembly and the Senate, and be delivered to the Governor's desk by the August 31 deadline. Governor Brown then had until September 30th to sign or veto each bill, or he had the option to take no action and let a bill become law without his signature.

Of these bills that your DRA Legislative Committee had been carefully following this session, five successfully completed the journey through the legislative process and have been signed into law by the Governor, and five have died along the way. Those that have been approved and signed will go into effect January 1 of next year



AB 1709 (GALLAGHER)

Summary: This bill replaced the term "hearing impaired" with "hard of hearing," or a close variation, in numerous provisions of law. As amended in its final form, the bill has no direct bearing on reporters, but we've watched this bill in the event that it might include some requirement for CART providers, and that never developed.

Support/Opposition: None on file.

Status: Passed by both houses; signed by the Governor on July 25 and chaptered (which means a chapter number has been assigned by the Secretary of State).

AB 1834 (WAGNER)

Summary: Would have allowed for the use of ER in family-law cases if no official reporter were available. When the bill was heard by the Assembly Judiciary Committee, DRA, COCRA, CCRA and the unions representing official reporters all voiced our opposition. The Committee Chair, Mark Stone, urged that the bill be amended to require reporters be provided by the courts in all family law proceedings instead of ER. Author Wagner would not accept that amendment, and the bill failed to pass the committee and, therefore, the bill did not move forward.

Support: Conference of CA Bar Associations (Sponsor), Association of Certified Family Law Specialists, Bar Association of San Francisco, and three others.

Opposition: DRA, CCRA, COCRA, SEIU, AFSCME, and numerous county official reporter associations, local unions.

Status: Dead. The bill was never brought before the Assembly Judiciary Committee again to be heard or passed and so never progressed.

AB 2192 (SALAS) (PRINCIPAL COAUTHOR, SENATOR HILL)

Summary: As it was amended, the bill extends the life of the Court Reporters Board within the Department of Consumer Affairs from the current sunset date of January 1, 2017, to January 1, 2020, and includes an extension of the Transcript Reimbursement Fund to January 1, 2020, and revises some of the provisions regarding the Fund. It also raises the limit allowed for the CSR renewal fee from \$125 to \$250.

Support/Opposition: The Court Reporters Board, DRA, CCRA and numerous organizations and individuals in support. No opposition on file.

Status: Passed by both houses; signed by the Governor on September 24 and chaptered.

AB 2217 (HADLEY)

Summary: Raises the maximum fees allowed to be charged by notaries for given services, which also applies to deposition reporters. It amends Government Code 8211(c), raising the fees that may be charged for services rendered in connection with the taking of depositions from \$20 to \$30; the fee for administering the oath from \$5 to \$7; and the fee for the certificates on the deposition original and copies from \$5 to \$7. CSRs are entitled to charge these fees per CCP 2093(b) (1), in conjunction with a CSR's authority to administer oaths and affirmations and perform the duties of a deposition officer.

Support/Opposition: Supported by three national notary associations and more than 1100 individuals; no opposition on file.

Status: Passed by both houses; signed by the Governor on August 17 and chaptered.

AB 2629 (HERNANDEZ)

Summary: A bill to amend the Government Code to raise the rates for court transcripts prepared by official reporters and reporters pro tempore employed by the courts. The per-folio rate would be increased as follows: As of January 1, 2017, through December 2018, the fee for the original would be increased from the current \$.85 to \$.93; the fee for the copy purchased by the court or party purchasing the original would be increased from the current \$.15 to \$.16; the fee to any other party would be increased from the current \$.20 to \$.21. From January 1, 2019, through December 2020, the above fees respectively would be \$1.03 for the original, \$.18 for the copy to the court or same party purchasing the original, and \$.23 for the copy to any other party. On or after January 1, 2021, these fees would be increased respectively to \$1.13, \$.20 and \$.26.

On or before January 1, 2021, the Judicial Council would report to the legislature their recommendations regarding transcript fees and would work in collaboration with key stakeholder groups.

Support: CCRA (sponsor), SEIU, and several local associations of official reporters.

Opposition: The Judicial Council

Status: Vetoed. Passed by both houses, with amendments. To the Governor on September 2; vetoed by the Governor on September 24.

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BILL WATCH

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AB 2859 (LOW)

Summary: The bill authorizes the boards, bureaus or commissions within the Department of Consumer Affairs to establish a retired category of license for licensees no longer actively engaged in the practice of their profession. It also prohibits the holder of a retired license from engaging in any licensed activity, unless criteria for a retired licensee to practice is specified. It authorizes a board to investigate any complaint received regarding a person holding a retired license.

Support: CA Board of Accountancy, Contractors State License Board

Opposition: None on file.

Status: Passed by both houses. Signed by the Governor on September 22 and chaptered.

ACR 131 (PATTERSON & MULTIPLE COAUTHORS)

Summary: This bill would simply “encourage,” as it said, the Department of Consumer Affairs and all of its board and bureaus – so would apply to the CRB – to create policies that would guarantee that licensees pay a fair amount for licensure, both for the initial license and for ongoing license fees.

Support/Opposition: None on file.

Status: Dead. Passed by the Assembly; in Senate Appropriations Committee, referred to suspense file, held under submission. Never passed by the committee, so did not progress.

SB 270 (MENDOZA)

Summary: After being significantly amended as requested by DRA, the bill simply authorized the CRB to seek injunctive relief, issue citations, fines or other penalties against any corporation, person or entity, whether CA-based or out-of-state, that offered or provided the services of a CSR, for violations of the laws governing the practice of shorthand reporting. Due to opposition by organizations within the insurance industry, it was amended to state what activities the bill would not prohibit or regulate, namely the setting of negotiated transcript fees.

Support: CCRA (sponsor), DRA, Orange County Superior Official Court Reporters, and six individuals.

Opposition: Esquire Deposition Services, Magna Legal Services, US Legal Support, Veritext Corporation, the American Insurance Association and others.

Status: Dead. Passed by the Senate; to be voted on by the Assembly when the latest amendment was added, requiring that the bill return to the Assembly Business & Professions Committee before the floor vote. It was set to be heard on August 24th by that committee but was pulled at the request of the author, so was not heard or passed by the committee and so did not progress.

SB 1007 (WIECKOWSKI)

Summary: Provides that a party to an arbitration has the right to have a CSR transcribe any deposition, proceeding or hearing as the official record. The party requesting the reporter will incur the expense of the CSR, except as specified. Also, it requires the court to vacate an arbitration award if it finds that an arbitrator had refused a party’s request to have a CSR transcribe any deposition, proceeding or hearing.

Support/Opposition: Supported by the CRB, DRA, CCRA, the Conference of CA Bar Associations (sponsor). No opposition on file.

Status: Passed by both houses; signed by the Governor on September 25 and chaptered.

SB 1155 (MORRELL)

Summary: It would require every board within the Department of Consumer Affairs to grant a fee waiver for the application and issuance of the initial license to any honorably discharged veteran.

Support: American GI Forum, CA Dental Association, Goodwill Southern CA, and various veteran associations

Opposition: None on file.

Status: Dead. Passed by the Senate; was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee under submission and did not progress.

AskDRA

TONI PULONE, CSR 3926

DEAR DEPO DIPLOMAT:

I have an issue that I would like your guidance on, please.

This is regarding a civil case. We took a doctor's depo for the plaintiff. Before the deposition, we collected a deposit. The balance owed now on the transcript is approximately \$400. Their trial is next week. Counsel has refused COD delivery of the transcript and will not return my phone calls or emails.

Currently we are holding the original deposition (with the original exhibits – doctor's files, notes, etc.) and we are holding plaintiff's certified copy. Can we legally hold them until payment is made?

Thank you for your time.

DEAR DRA MEMBER:

This is a rather touchy subject, but in my opinion the Code of Civil Procedure ("CCP") does allow us to demand full payment before releasing a transcript copy to an attorney. I think that the language in CCP 2025.510 (b) and (c), which refers to the noticing attorney bearing the cost of the transcription and any other parties obtaining copies at their expense, intends that each party will pay the deposition officer for the services ordered.

For your reference, here is the language found in those two subsections:

2025.510.

(b) The party noticing the deposition shall bear the cost of the transcription, unless the court, on motion and for good cause shown, orders that the cost be borne or shared by another party.

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (b) of Section 2025.320, any other party or the deponent, at the expense of that party or deponent, may obtain a copy of the transcript.

To back this up, CCP 2025.510 (h) (1)-(2) also clarifies the responsibility of each party to timely pay for the depo officer's services, and this was language added to the CCP by a bill that DRA authored and cosponsored with CCRA. It was written to protect us from non-paying attorneys who might try to pass off financial responsibility to their clients. It says:

(h) (1) The requesting attorney or party appearing in propria persona shall timely pay the deposition officer or the entity providing the services of the deposition officer for the transcription or copy of the transcription

described in subdivision (b) or (c), and any other deposition product or service that is requested either orally or in writing.

(2) This subdivision shall apply unless responsibility for the payment is otherwise provided by law or unless the deposition officer or entity is notified in writing at the time the services or products are requested that the party or another identified person will be responsible for payment.

The other aspect of this situation, however, is the review of the original that the deponent is entitled to and the delivery of the original to the noticing party for submission at trial, and those two steps in the depo officer's required duties still have to be met. However, since you're located in Southern California, perhaps the attorneys at this depo stipulated away your duties under the Code, which would mean, presumably, that you wouldn't be required per the Code to notify the witness of his opportunity to review, correct and sign the original, which would ordinarily be maintained in your office for the statutory period of time. And if they did enter the "usual stipulations," you probably also were relieved of your duty to seal the original after the deponent's review and send it in a sealed condition to the noticing attorney, this man who has failed to pay you the balance of your invoice. If all of this was stipulated away, then you shouldn't be expected to meet these standard requirements of the deposition officer for this transcript.

I should have asked: Did the defense attorney order a copy, or was that potential order also wiped out by the SoCal stip? If the stipulation was that the defense attorney would get the original and the plaintiff would get the copy, then

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no one has anything so far, I assume. If you haven't heard anything from the defense attorney, looking for the transcript, then it could be that they've settled the case already and the original won't be needed in court, and so for that reason the plaintiff might hope that he can avoid paying you the balance of what he owes for the original. If the case hasn't settled, then maybe the trial has been postponed, and neither side is in any hurry to get the transcript. Otherwise, I'd expect the defense to be looking for the doctor's testimony by now.

If you are contacted by either attorney, demanding that you provide the O&1, I'd suggest that you say you're pleased to hear from one of them, because you've been concerned about getting the transcripts to them, given their approaching trial, and all you need is a check or credit-card payment for the balance of your invoice, and you'll get the O&1 delivered immediately. I think that's perfectly fair, reasonable and a professional response, and I do believe that the CCP language above clearly states that each attorney is required to pay, and timely, for your services, and that could include that payment be made in full before any transcript is delivered. I would hope that a judge would see this the same way.

REPORTING IN EUROPE: MY FIRST THREE MONTHS

BY RICH ALOSSI, RPR, CCRR, CSR



Back in March, following a two-year process, my husband Jacob and I sold or gave away nearly everything we owned and headed to Amsterdam, the

Netherlands, to start our new lives abroad in the city of bikes, cheese and canals. Since that time, I've worked here in Amsterdam several times, as well as Paris, Madrid, Frankfurt, Berlin, Stockholm and The Hague, even branching out to providing CART services for deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers for the first time.

As much as I enjoy cycling to depositions with my equipment in backpacks and strapped to my bike's rear rack, I'd be lying if I said adjusting to life here has been completely stress-free. Here are a few of the things I've learned.

I no longer take a strong professional and personal network for granted. Even with Facebook, email, text messages and Skype, the psychological impact of a nine-hour time difference does affect my ability to stay in touch

with family and friends back home. As my life here becomes more and more established, it will be important to make time to reconnect with friends, colleagues and loved ones. And who knows, maybe there's a Euro DRA on the horizon!

I look for familiarity where I can get it. The life of a traveling stenographer can get lonely if I let it; so I'm constantly looking for continuity in my life. Everything from making sure to bring along familiar soaps and hair products when I travel instead of using the little bottles provided by the



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REPORTING IN EUROPE: MY FIRST THREE MONTHS

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hotel, to having Jacob tag along with me for longer jobs when he can, keeps my head in the game. I'm still on the hunt for decent Mexican food, though.

Exhibits are the bane of my existence. For example, the metric system generally makes everything easier, except that the most common paper size, A4, isn't the size used by the U.S. court system. That means my certificates and some exhibits are printed in A4 size, while the exhibits marked by the attorneys are U.S. letter size. Additionally, European Union shipping regulations add considerable delay on exhibits sent back to the States for production. But there's really nothing that can be done about that since the legal industry has yet to move to a paperless system.

I've really learned to appreciate a sunny, cloudless day. The weather in Amsterdam isn't known for being the best -- it's commonly said here that summer is the best day of the year -- but I'm less put off by a little rain now, and there's something nice about ducking into a warm canal-side cafe for a coffee while waiting out a summer storm. It's in those little moments that I reflect on the choices I've made in life and how I wouldn't trade this experience for anything.

Finally, the most important observation I've made over the past few months in a professional sense is that realtime is an absolute must. Interpreters with various accents, witnesses with differing levels of English fluency, and in-house counsel from various international backgrounds all add up to a well-used realtime feed. Realtime readiness is no longer the future; it's here, right now, and it had better be good!

RICH ALOSSI, RPR, CCRR, CSR, IS CALDRA'S IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT AND OWNER OF RICH ALOSSI REALTIME REPORTING



A WORD FROM DIANE FREEMAN, 2016 SPRING SEMINAR CHAIR

First of all, thanks to all who helped make this day a success. I feel so grateful to be surrounded by such generous, smart court reporters. Only the best reporters attend and donate time and money to our wonderful association.

It was so much fun, being able to choose whatever subjects and presenters I wanted to hear from. The committee, Aimee Edwards-Altadonna, Melinda Nelson, and Carol Nygaard, gave their expertise and support to bounce ideas off. Then came second-guessing and doubting. There is the continual fear of, maybe no one will sign up because it will sound boring. Counting the registrations every week is a real nail-biter/teeth-grinder. Luckily, we ended up with a sizeable attendance of loyal DRA members. After all the hard work, the payoff was well worth it, and for that reason, I highly suggest you volunteer for a future event.

Friday night we had happy hour in the Lobby Bar, which turned into dinner. Sharing stories and catching up with colleagues is reason in itself to attend.

The CRR exam was first up. Amazing Ms. Holly Moose was in charge with help from her dedicated team. Congratulations to Jenny Griffin from Boulder Creek, CRR Number 199!

Seminar number one was a panel of freelance reporters and firm owners, Holly Moose, Carol Nygaard, Vicki Saber, and Kelly Shainline, discussing communication between firm owners and reporters. We learned expectations from both sides, to value our services, and be professional. These pros shared and gave us great tools we can put to use every day.



Next up was the CSR Board Best Practices skit. Stars were born: Judy De Alba, Yvonne Fenner, Joan Grier, Melinda Nelson, and Antonia Pulone. They showed us how reporters and attorneys should not act in a deposition. The reviews are out – Big Hit! Watch for encore performances.

After a lovely lunch, we had “DRA Talks,” fashioned after the ever-popular TED talks. Monyeen Black, DRA’s Madam President and keeper of our Facebook page, shared real stories and left us all with a new appreciation of the power of social media. Bottom line: To be successful, you must be a professional at all times. Then we had John Squires, reporter extraordinaire, sharing his truly amazing reporting experiences. I think he will be taking to the road. Be on the lookout for more.

Onward, we walked the Red Carpet with sophisticated Ms. Erika Sjoquist. She shared her experience reporting the Oscars over the years and fun stories of the nicest and not-so-nice actors and actresses she has met.

One huge trait all reporters possess – some of us had to learn - is being flexible and calm under pressure. Three days before “The Saturday,” the nutritionist we had scheduled had to cancel due to a family emergency. So what did we do? Call Ed Howard, of course, DRA’s legislative advocate and attorney.

Ed not only agreed to step in, but regaled us with personal stories re “The Art of Persuasion: How to get what you want.” This was a great ending to an awesome day, and nobody missed a beat. This last-minute addition proved to be a valuable add-on to the lineup.

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A WORD FROM DIANE FREEMAN, 2016 SPRING SEMINAR CHAIR

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Plus, we had an amazing raffle: Wine and gift cards donated by our generous members. Thanks to Cherie Lubash for her organizing and being the raffle leader!

Vendors: Thanks to Damsel in Defense, ProCat, Advantage, and Stenograph.

We are fortunate and thrilled that Vicki Squires (yes, the wife of John) is back as our magical event planner. Can't wait to see what she comes up with in Napa in February. Thank you, Vicki.

Lastly, I have to say that DRA has the best, most supportive members any association could hope for. I really wonder about the CSRs out there who never join or attend seminars. How do they keep informed? And do they know how much fun they're missing? Oh well, enough said. We'll save that for a future article.



SMILES FOR DRA'S SPRING SEMINAR

"I enjoyed the seminar this year. The hands-on comment with our CSR board member showing how to act in certain situations was one of the better sessions I've been to in a long time. It is much, much needed and I think should become a staple of our seminars. It was valuable to new as well as seasoned reporters. I got a kick out of watching the "skit" that our fellow reporters put on.





Listening to John Squires, he is a gem! I enjoyed hearing "war stories" about his life as a reporter. It shows how our job can actually be fun.

Getting to see/meet new reporters and seasoned reporters as we walked through the seminar was great. It's always great to network on a local level. We actually should do it more often."

-Lucy Carrillo-Grubbs

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POP QUIZ!

CalDRA had the fortune to sit down with two of its loyal Southern California reporters, Mary Pierce, and Virginia Groeneveld, to find out a little more about what makes them tick. Thanks, ladies, for your membership and loyalty over the years. DRA loves its members!



MARY E. PIERCE

CSR

Huntington Beach and Ventura, CA

How long have you been reporting?

34 years

How did you first get involved with DRA?

Sue Herington told me it was the BEST organization. She was correct.

Where did you grow up?

Huntington Beach, CA

Do you have any pets?

Two mischievous bunnies – Cosmo and Snowball

Who is your celebrity crush?

I have two: Sidney Poitier and Helen Mirren

What do you like to do when you're not reporting?

Cook, garden, surf and watch too much news.

What is the most exotic place you have ever taken a deposition?

I don't know about "exotic," but I was briefly detained at the Frankfurt airport when my steno case locked and I could not open it for a security check.

What is your secret talent?

A dry sense of humor.

What advice would you give to a struggling court reporting student?

Identify why you are struggling and seek out answers or help with the cause. Work harder while you push through the challenge. It will serve you well later when you get that assignment that will test your skill, endurance and commitment.

Who do you turn to when you're in need of inspiration?

My amazing partner.

What is your favorite thing about your job?

Loyal and appreciative clients.

What is your favorite brief that always saves the day?

Medical center – PHERPBT

What do you do to unwind after a difficult deposition?

Drink. Hey, I'm Irish.

How has your career changed for the better since you first started reporting?

The changes in technology have been tremendous. You should have seen Andrea Rinker's face when she learned some of us "old" reporters had to actually drive an expedite to the office for production back in the pre-Internet days.

Do you still practice on your machine?

When I'm incorporating new briefs, I practice them until they stick.

Do you have any plans to continue obtaining advanced certifications?

Perhaps a realtime certification.

What is the best reporting-related technology investment you have made thus far?

My ProCAT Impression.

If you couldn't be a court reporter anymore, what career would you choose?

I would help people establish and maintain backyard organic gardens.

If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Heirloom tomatoes.

What is your favorite guilty pleasure?

Mom's cheesecake

Why is DRA membership important to you?

Two reasons:

1. Getting to network with knowledgeable and conscientious reporters
2. Toni Pulone (who totally rocks)

POP QUIZ



VIRGINIA O. GROENEVELD

CSR 7331
Oxnard, California

How long have you been reporting?

I have been reporting depositions since 1986, so I am coming up on my 30th anniversary, and I love it. I passed the machine portion in May 1986, and thought I had to wait until the fall for the English/Professional Practice, but the CRB added an unprecedented test in August because the State of California was in dire need of court reporters -- and I passed!! It was the year of "feasting." The late '80s were so good to me, I have to say!

What do you like to do when you're not reporting?

My therapy is stamping and crafting. I am a Stampin' Up! Demonstrator, and I have a stamp club that meets once a month. My girlfriends & I have so much fun laughing, sharing, and, of course, stamping. My fav is to make cards. My group makes birthday cards, sympathy cards, thinking of you cards, Christmas cards -- if there's a holiday, we will make it! It feels good to do something that is not stressful and can help my mind wander in artistic wonder!

What's your cocktail order?

I have many -- but not at once! My fav, as of late, is a Lemon Drop Martini. Next would be Vodka Cranberry with a twist of lime. White wine is always good. Wine tasting is another guilty pleasure I enjoy doing, and I have joined wine clubs, and I do admit, I've had a glass or two of wine after a hard depo.

What is your favorite brief that always saves the day?

When I was in college, I really didn't use a lot of briefs. I just had the regular ones, so I surprised myself last year and started using briefs for 2013 - TWEURT; 2014 - TWOURPB; 2015 - TWOEFT; 2016 - TWUBGS. I wrote it out on an index card, take it to my jobs, and place it right next to my worksheet. I was so proud of myself! I was using them! It worked! Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks? Not I!

How do you balance your family and free time with the demands of reporting?

It is difficult -- I'm not going to lie! (I was not going to answer this question, but thought it better to challenge myself.) When I first started, it was just my husband and myself -- life was kind of simple. Then enter our growing family of two kids -- that's where the challenge came in. I did my own scoping, so I got up early and went to bed late, spending most days

with my family. Family is a priority to me. I believe if you understand and know your priorities, it falls into place.

We unfortunately don't have a 9:00 to 5:00 job, so "flexible" has to be your middle name. The fortunate side of court reporting is I got to take jobs according to my kids' school schedule, so I rarely missed a field trip, awards, after-school activities, and sports. The one thing that my family is used to -- I didn't say they liked it -- EXPEDITE two days before leaving on vacation, and you haven't packed! Too many times to count; right?

Why is DRA membership important to you?

I find court reporting can be like an unmarried person. I work by myself, I drive by myself to work, there's never anybody at the water cooler to chat with, and I sit in my office by myself. With that said, one of the benefits I look forward to are the workshops, seminars and conventions that I have attended. This is where I can meet other CSRs, make new friends, meet up with colleagues and NETWORK. I recently volunteered at LAX for the CSR exam, and met other CSRs where we reminisced about taking the CSR (I still cringe to this day about that exam). We were there to cheer on the students, encourage them, because as we all know -- been there, done that.

This organization is top shelf! They are always keeping CSRs up to date on legislation in a timely manner, and being visible and speaking up for our livelihood. I also want to mention their mentor program. I wish I had a mentor when I started in that big world, and that's why I like to mentor students, to teach them all the things I didn't know to do or expect.

Thank you, DRA! You are Top Shelf!

CALDRA IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE ITS PROPOSED SLATE OF NOMINEES FOR ITS 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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CalDRA would like to thank the Nominating Committee for its hard work in assembling the proposed slate for 2017. More information on each of the nominees and the member voting process will be made available in the coming weeks.

HERE’S TO ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR AT CALDRA!

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