

The Deposition Reporter

DEPOSITION
REPORTERS ASSOCIATION
OF CALIFORNIA

SPRING 2014

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

KRISTI JOHNSON, CSR, CCRR, CLR,
DRA PRESIDENT

Eighteen years ago, a courageous and visionary group of freelance reporters banded together to create something entirely new, something entirely innovative: A trade association devoted solely to serving and advancing the unique professional needs of you and of me. They called the new association the Deposition Reporters Association of California, and I am deeply honored and humbled to be allowed the privilege to help steward this organization and their legacy as DRA's 17th President.

I am still amazed at what DRA has accomplished for us in these last 18 years. Not long after its founding, DRA Partnered with NCRA to create Citizens for Impartial Justice, a project that led to statutes and court rules preserving our impartiality in over 15 states, including California. We have written the regulations we live under, enacted statutes that help us collect from deadbeat attorneys, gone to court to protect our rights and profession, helped to preserve the Court Reporters Board from elimination – twice. We've publicly challenged a body-builder Governor on ER, mentored the next generation of us, saved a court reporting school from

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MY FIRST DRA CONVENTION

JESSICA WAACK,
CSR, RDR, CRR, CCRR

As a recent transplant from Wisconsin, I have to say I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of my first DRA convention.

As Wisconsin's past convention coordinator, I know how hard it is to not only think of topics attendees will be interested in, but then to find an engaging speaker to present the ideas.

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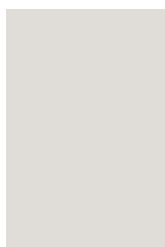
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DRA_TWEETS



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

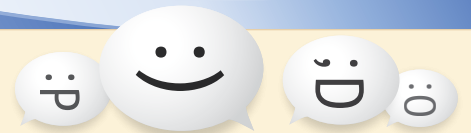
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closing, halted a county bar association from setting up a court reporting firm, stopped taxes from being levied on our certified copies, and so much more. And this being DRA, we did all these things – and had fun doing them.

Perhaps as important as these tangible accomplishments is the intangible one: that, for now nearly two decades, DRA has been our home – the one place and the only place we can all go where our professional needs are paramount, where everyone knows what we do and the pressures we work under, and where everyone is a colleague and, hopefully, a friend. I hope the founders of DRA who are here look around at what they started and are as proud of themselves as I and the incoming board are passionately grateful to them for what they did 18 years ago.

As for me, becoming President of DRA is a treasured moment. I knew I wanted to be a court reporter from a really early age. I had a neighbor who was a court reporter and she would always take these incredibly fabulous vacations. So I thought back then, “Hey! She never

SMILES FOR DRA



DRA was the first court reporting association to reach out to me personally as a student. They held their Bridging the GAP Seminar right on my school's campus where I was able to hear from working reporters about their daily challenges and rewards, as well as learn about what an organization like DRA offers its members. Up until then, DRA, NCRA, and CCRA were just confusing acronyms that were easy to jumble up together. But after seeing the people behind those three letters, I got a much better sense of how these associations play an important role in the industry and, more specifically, what tools they can provide a student like me.

It was thanks to that GAP seminar that I also learned about the DRA Annual Convention in Palm Springs and made the decision to go! That convention was one of the most thrilling events I've attended and I hope it was the first of many more to come.”

– Katherine Schilling

has to work but makes great money! I want to be whatever she is when I grow up.” (OK. I was young.) I started court reporting school the first time at age 20. At 20, my social calendar was full, so I went to school “when there was nothing better to do.” Needless to say, I was not the model student and dropped out in about six months.

Four years after I left school I was paralyzed.

The following year, my deposition was taken and there was that steno

machine again. Sitting in that room, I decided to do what I dreamed of doing as a girl, become one of you. This time, school was different. Nothing was going to get in my way. Three years almost to the day of starting school I was sitting in San Francisco taking the CSR exam and passed it the first time. And here I am.

I have had to overcome a lot in my life. Not as much as some people, but more than many. When something bad happens to you and you live and succeed anyway and in spite of it, many of the deepest doubts you had about yourself before the something bad happened...well, those doubts about yourself, they get burned away. And, if you are lucky, what remains is a new you, shorn of doubt, surer of foot – or wheel – and far more confident in your ability to meet new challenges than ever before.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't a bit nervous about being your President, but I would also be lying if I told you I was anything other than optimistic and confident that, working with a brilliant Board of talented and dedicated friends and colleagues, and with the support of all of you, this year we will all make sure this is the best year DRA has ever had.

Kristi Johnson • president@caldra.org

IT STARTS WITH US



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caldra.org/startswithus



MY FIRST DRA CONVENTION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Then, once you get all of your speakers and topics assembled, you have to try to make sure it is a cohesive set of information that will reach the membership.

I have never been to a state convention before that was so clearly geared to its membership. Not only are we a part of an association geared specifically to our skill set, but it further works for its membership in categories of firm owners, professionals and students. If a small association tried to do what DRA does, there would be 10 people in one session, 15 in another and perhaps 20 in another. You cannot afford nor market quality speakers if you are going to have such a small audience.

“Ask DRA” is a prime example of a session which is not only for the membership, but is in a way run by the membership. Having Toni Pulone and Yvonne Fenner available to answer all of our questions is a wonderful advantage to us professionally. Even after 17 years of reporting, I still learned things I never knew regarding cert pages. Goes to prove even us “veteran” reporters are never too old to learn!

When I worked on the WI conventions, I had to assemble the menu for the entire event. First, you can't begin to believe how expensive the food is. Throw five boiled shrimp on a plate with a little sauce, and there goes \$15. Now, try to find amazing food within your budget, and be sure to accommodate meat/seafood, gluten-free, vegan and vegetarian diets. And coffee? Yeah, there goes another \$150 for a pot.



I was astounded at the quality of the food, the diversity of the options and the amounts that were available. And what about that cocktail party and the band? How much fun was the throw-back hair band DJ? He definitely kept the party flowing while I was busy shoveling pot stickers and salmon in my gullet.

The location of the convention was absolutely stunning. A destination place for people to attend a convention coupled with appropriate convertible convention space is a special feat in and of itself. The landscape of the resort made it a wonderful place to relax after the seminars. The waterfalls and ducks really helped one recharge for the next round of seminars.

And no convention is complete without a raffle. I spent a lot of time at the raffle table selling tickets, and we had so much fun! It is wonderful to see the excitement people have over electronics! The donations we received were amazing. I know I was one of them fighting over a new router.

DRA is fortunate to have a wonderful membership which is so supportive of our profession. I could really see the pride we take in court reporting and the love of our association during the convention. I met so many people who expressed their appreciation of what DRA does for them and how they really look forward to being a part of such a strong and respected association. I am truly proud to call myself a board member of DRA.



Thank You

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POP QUIZ

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The 2014-2015 year promises to be a great one for DRA, in no small part thanks to its committed board of directors, tirelessly working to fight for the profession. This year, we've had the good fortune to fill our board vacancies with four fabulous new reporters, all who look forward to bringing forth their unique perspective on the many issues facing deposition reporters today in California. We are pleased to introduce the four new faces of DRA!



JESSICA WAACK

CSR NO. 13102, RDR, CRR, CCRR
SECRETARY-TREASURER, SAN BRUNO, CA

WHY DID YOU WANT TO SERVE ON DRA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

We have a profession in which we never work with our peers, which is quite different than most professions out there. By being a part of DRA, I am able to meet everyone and share ideas. As a board member, I look forward to using the skills and knowledge I acquired from my experience on previous boards and years of reporting to help DRA members.

IF YOU COULD SPEND FIVE MINUTES WITH ANY PERSON, REAL OR FICTIONAL, DEAD OR ALIVE, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

My father's biological mother. My father was adopted. I don't look like anyone in my family, and I would love to talk to her and see if that is where my features and personality comes from.

WHERE IS THE MOST EXOTIC PLACE YOU HAVE EVER TAKEN A DEPOSITION?

I wouldn't call it exotic... but I had to do a town meeting in a small "chapel" in the woods. By the time I got there, the only "chair" available was an old broken metal folding chair. I was half squatting holding myself up while trying to take down 200 people fighting over a boat ramp. And since this was Northern Wisconsin in the woods with all the lights on, all of the mosquitos were indoors. I sat there typing watching my arms and legs get eaten by mosquitos. I had to take the next day off and cover myself in anti-itch creams because my legs and arms were so swollen.

WHAT'S YOUR COCKTAIL ORDER?

Cabernet

WHO DO YOU TURN TO WHEN YOU NEED INSPIRATION?

My sister. She wasn't afraid to keep making monumental changes in her life when she wasn't happy. She worked hard, and has one of the most fulfilling lives of anyone I know.



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POP QUIZ

YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

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DIANE FREEMAN

CSR NO. 5884, RPR
DISTRICT 1 DIRECTOR,
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

WHAT IS YOUR STARBUCKS ORDER?

Grande cappuccino, dry.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

So many – Breakfast at Tiffany’s is what I am thinking of right now.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO WHEN YOU’RE NOT WORKING?

Drink! (just kidding) Read. Play. Hike. Enjoy life.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PETS?

Yes. Stella, a 2-year-old Goldendoodle.

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

Concord, California

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT NOT RELATED TO COURT REPORTING?

Raising a wonderful daughter who now has three children.

WHERE IS THE MOST EXOTIC PLACE YOU HAVE EVER TAKEN A DEPOSITION?

Not really exotic, but I took depositions in London.



LISA MCMILLAN

CSR NO. 10383
DISTRICT 2 DIRECTOR,
SANTA CRUZ, CA

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The interesting stories I hear, and the variety of people I get to meet. It’s a crazy world.

WHERE IS THE MOST EXOTIC PLACE YOU HAVE EVER TAKEN A DEPOSITION?

I sat on a bathroom toilet seat in a mobile home for four hours once. Not so exotic, I guess!

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT NOT RELATED TO COURT REPORTING?

My two fabulous boys. They rock my world.

WHO IS YOUR CELEBRITY CRUSH?

Tom Petty, always and forever.

WHAT SONG ALWAYS GETS YOU PUMPED UP WHEN YOU NEED MOTIVATION?

Black Eyed Peas - Let’s Get It Started.

IF YOU COULD RELOCATE TO ANY PLACE IN THE WORLD, WHERE WOULD IT BE?

I wouldn’t. I love my home in Santa Cruz.

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POP QUIZ

YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE



JODI MONROE

CSR NO. 13010, RPR, CLR
DISTRICT 5 DIRECTOR, RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA,
CALIFORNIA

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

Any '80s movie

DO YOU HAVE ANY PETS?

Two Chihuahuas

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

So Cal (Azusa and Covina)

IF YOU COULD EAT ONLY ONE FOOD FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Pasta

WHAT SONG ALWAYS GETS YOU PUMPED UP WHEN YOU NEED MOTIVATION?

Anything Rock 'n' Roll

IF YOU WEREN'T A COURT REPORTER, WHAT KIND OF CAREER WOULD YOU WANT?

Rock star (even though I have no talent!)

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GUILTY PLEASURE?

Singing out loud in my car.

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."

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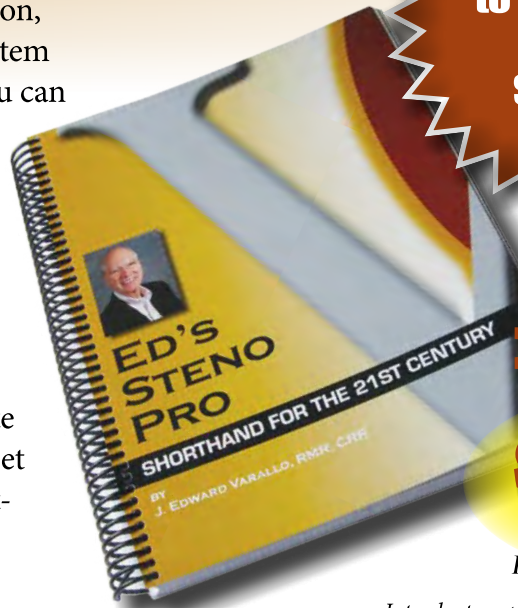
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AskDRA CODE BOOK

LISA McMILLAN, CSR

Two weeks ago I was working out the details of an upcoming medical malpractice wrongful death trial with one of our local defense attorneys. As we emailed one another with pertinent information, the last line of his email said, “Oh, by the way, I want to make sure that you do not offer the plaintiff’s attorney a copy of any transcript I order.” Well, I knew his request was inappropriate; however, I did not want to just send a reply stating, “I can’t do that.” I wanted to send him a professional response wherein I was able to cite a code section that made him aware that, as an officer of the court, I am knowledgeable of the rules of court and my codes.

Prior to downloading our AskDRA Code Book, which is available on our website to all our members, I would use various means to research finding such an answer. I would always start by scanning the Code of Civil Procedure beginning at Section 2025, and I would painstakingly work my way through the tiny print until I found my answer, IF I found my answer. Or I would inevitably Google it, get on a forum, or call a fellow reporter; or better yet, I would go to my file labeled “Miscellaneous Questions” and thumb through my collection of Post-its, torn pieces of paper, napkins, all with some verbiage about some code or some rule that someday I may need! I would do everything to hunt down an answer.

With the recent introduction of our new AskDRA Code Book, I can discard that messy file because the answers are all at my fingertips in a nice neat folder in my computer! And just because I still love real books, I took the liberty of printing a hard copy that I can use as well. And since I did it double-sided, two pages on one, it printed at one-quarter of the size.

In this particular situation, I was able to review the very thorough index looking under “Certified Copy.” I found what I felt was adequate; however, I continued to scan further thinking about the professional standards that I must uphold. So I looked under “Professional Standards,” and lo and behold, there was the answer in California Code of Regulations 2475(b)(5): “In addition...promptly notify, when reasonably able to do so, all known parties in attendance at a deposition or civil court proceeding and/or their attorneys of a request for preparation of all or any part of a transcript...”

This is just one example of the information at your fingertips. The cross-references in the index make it very user friendly. Whether you are a freelance reporter, a court official, a hearing reporter, or a firm owner, this book is for you. With all of the constant changes taking place in our profession, more than ever we need to be armed with intelligent answers to everyday dilemmas. This book was thoughtfully and carefully compiled by the legislative committee of DRA as a free reference to you as a DRA member to ensure that we conduct ourselves as the impartial legal professionals that we are. I urge you to please take the time to acquaint yourself with this valuable resource. Oh, and tell a friend!

AskDRA

“THE SEVEN-HOUR RULE”

ANTONIA PULONE, CSR

Changing things up a bit this time, I have questions from three DRA members, each on the subject of the relatively new seven-hour limit for depositions but each with a slightly different twist. You'll find the three questions below with my corresponding answers, and hopefully this will provide clarification for any questions you may have on this subject and the new Code of Civil Procedure (“CCP”) section that deals with this.

QUESTION #1

Dear Depo Diplomat: I received a call from a client who indicated he'd heard there is a new law to where he can only depose someone for eight hours. At the end of the eight hours, the deposition has to be terminated and they can never resume the questioning. He asked if this is true. Will you please answer that question for me?

DEAR MEMBER,

Your client is almost right on this. A bill was passed by the CA legislature in September of 2012 and went into effect on January 1, 2013, but it limited depo examination time to seven hours versus eight. As originally introduced, it was stricter than the final version, but during its course through the legislature, it was amended a number

of times at the insistence of the defense bar. It now includes several exceptions to the seven-hour rule, including simply the agreement or stipulation of all counsel to extend the examination time or abandon the time limit altogether. As with many laws regarding depo procedure, the court may also allow for exceptions to this rule and permit additional time to question the deponent, so it may

not necessarily be the case, as your client states, that the depo must be terminated after this time limit and can never be resumed. Also, you may point out to your client that the new law is referring to examination time, so breaks, recesses, interruptions and discussions off the record would not be included in the time adding up to these seven hours.

QUESTION #2

Dear Depo Diplomat: Just a question that didn't get asked in the recent DRA email blast. Since attorneys can stipulate to relieve us of the requirements under the code of the original transcript and signature, can attorneys also stipulate away the seven-hour limit? Or do they get to pick and choose what they want to stipulate to?

DEAR MEMBER,

Much like the dreaded SoCal stipulation, yes, if the attorneys choose to extend the deposition testimony beyond the new seven-hour limit and stipulate to that, they can do so. I might mention that the original version of

the bill that created this time limit – Assembly Bill 1875 by Assemblymember Gatto – didn't provide for attorneys to stipulate to an extension of the time allowed.

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AskDRA

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But the defense bar opposed the bill language and demanded certain amendments to soften the seven-hour maximum, and after much back and forth between plaintiff and defense bars, a number of exceptions were added to the bill.

As it was finally passed, the medical condition of the witness, a ruling by the court and a number of other considerations now allow for additional

examination time or ignoring the time limit, and among the exceptions included is the simple agreement – or stipulation – of all counsel that the time limits in this new law, CCP Section 2025.290, will not apply to a given depo or to the entire proceeding.

In any event, you as the depo officer have no responsibility to remind attorneys about the time limit or ask them to terminate the depo once they've reached it. It's entirely up

to them to be mindful of the time, though they may ask you to track the examination time by means of timestamping, for instance. But if they choose to go longer than the seven hours of testimony with no one objecting or calling for an end to the depo, I suppose you could consider that an unspoken stipulation or informal agreement of counsel to extend the time, and you are not required by this new law to do anything to ensure the time limit is observed.

QUESTION #3

Dear Depo Diplomat: I will soon be teaching a new group of students in Depo Procedures class, and I want to advise them of this new seven-hour code and answer all their questions. I also would imagine there will be a question re the new code section on the written portion of the next CSR test.

My question to you has to do with whether breaks and/or lunch recesses are factored into the seven hours. A reporter just today told me that attorneys in a depo she took last week did not want to take comfort breaks or even a lunch break in fear that they would exceed their seven hours. What??? Seven hours with no break? Crazy! But I'm not surprised that attorneys who do not really understand the Code would impose that sort of discomfort on the witness and the reporter.

DEAR MEMBER,

The wording in the new CCP section, 2025.290, says, "A deposition examination of the witness by all counsel, other than the witness' counsel of record, shall be limited to seven hours of total testimony."

So it should be clear to attorneys, once they familiarize themselves with this new language, that breaks and recesses taken during a deposition and other interruptions in the proceedings should not be counted in the seven hours of examination time but only the actual time used for questioning the witness.

A reporter's timestamping can be very helpful to attorneys so they can easily

determine how much time is actually spent on examination and how much is lost to these breaks.

Also the language includes several circumstances under which the seven-hour limit shall not apply, and one of those is where all the parties stipulate that it will not apply to a specific depo or proceeding, so the attorneys are not necessarily bound to this time limit and do have some control over when it will be observed.

It's probably safe to assume that the reporter you spoke with must have been at a deposition attended by attorneys who had not yet read the new law and didn't know precisely what the new Code section requires.

You can find this new CCP language in full and review all the exceptions to the seven-hour rule using this link: http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayexpandedbranch.xhtml. Or simpler yet, as a great free perk of DRA membership, you have the new AskDRA Code Book at your fingertips that you can download from our DRA site, and if you haven't done so already, be sure to go to the site asap and do that. Then you'll find this new code, CCP 2025.290, at page 178 of the Code Book and can review the language easily whenever you need to.

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BILL WATCH

ANTONIA PULONE, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

The California legislature is now in the second year of a two-year session. Some of the following bills were introduced last year but did not pass and are now two-year bills, and some have been recently introduced, but all will have to clear both houses and be signed by the Governor by September 30 in order to become law

They are all being carefully watched by your DRA lobbyist, Ed Howard, and your DRA Board of Directors. DRA carefully reviews and follows every bill introduced in Sacramento that could potentially have an impact on California CSRs, our profession or our livelihood.

A note of explanation, if you're not familiar with legislative terminology: The name in parentheses which follows the bill number is that of the author, the legislator who introduced and is carrying the bill. The status of each bill below is current as of April 16, 2014. To follow the progress of these or any bills, go to www.leginfo.legislature.ca.gov, and click on the "Bill Information" tab, then search for any bill by number, author or keyword. Click on the bill you're interested in, and you'll go to the information page for that bill. Once there you can choose "Track Bill," provide your email address and enter a password to create your account, and you can select various types of notification to receive regarding the progress of any given bill. You can then return to this site, click on "My Subscription" to review and print your list of tracked bills. Also, a "Guide for Accessing California Legislative Information" can be found at www.leginfo.ca.gov/guide.html, which contains a thorough glossary of legislative terms and a great deal of helpful material.



SENATE BILL 1313 (NIELSEN)

Sponsor: Unknown

Summary: Would repeal the provisions of the Trial Court Employment Protection and Governance Act that prescribe the compensation and conditions of employment of official reporters in 15 counties.

Status: Read on 2/24. Referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee; no hearing date set yet.

ASSEMBLY BILL 186 (MAIENSCHIN; PRINCIPAL COAUTHOR: HAGMAN, PLUS 10 COAUTHORS)

Sponsor: Author-sponsored

Summary: As amended, would require any board within the Department of Consumer Affairs to establish a temporary licensure process, under given conditions, for a person holding a current license in another jurisdiction who is married to, or in a domestic partnership with, an active-duty

member of the Armed Forces who is stationed in California.

Status: Passed the Assembly; now in the Senate. Referred to the Business, Professions & Economic Development Committee. Testimony taken on 07/01/13; further hearing to be set.

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BILL WATCH

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

ASSEMBLY BILL 365 (MULLIN)

Sponsor: Deposition Reporters Association of California

Summary: This bill adds a new section to the CCP that simply provides that official reporters and official reporters pro tempore shall be appointed as provided by Government Code Section 69942. In addition, the bill adds the clause “notwithstanding any other provision of law” to reinforce that the rule of CCP Section 273 applies in every circumstance--namely that only transcripts made by licensed official court reporters and official reporters pro tempore can be considered as prima facie evidence of that testimony and the proceedings.

In other words, CCP Section 273 establishes that transcripts made by official reporters are those that qualify as prima facie evidence of not just what occurred at a proceeding, but evidence of the testimony and proceeding itself, and all other transcripts are not entitled to be recognized with that evidentiary status. This Section is intended to limit the evidentiary status of the work product of officials in that statute to those transcripts that are done by licensees of the Court Reporters Board, namely “official court reporters” and “official reporters pro tempore.”

Status: Passed the Assembly; now in Senate; Referred to Senate Judiciary and Appropriations Committees

ASSEMBLY BILL 655 (QUIRK-SILVA)

Sponsor: California Court Reporters Association

Summary: Would allow, but not require, trial courts to establish the Reporters’ Salary Fund, as currently exists in L.A. County, from which the salaries and benefits of official reporters would be paid. The fund would be replenished

each month to ensure a balance is maintained to provide for reporters’ pay. No amount is currently specified as to the size of the fund, but it’s expected that an amount will be amended into the bill before being heard by the Appropriations Committee.

Status: Passed the Assembly; now in Senate. Passed in Senate Judiciary Committee. Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee; hearing cancelled at the request of author

ASSEMBLY BILL 788 (WAGNER)

Sponsor: Conference of California Bar Associations

Summary: Would amend Section 69954 of the Government Code to allow for copies of non-computer-readable court transcripts, once purchased from the reporter, to be reproduced for internal use or in response to a request for discovery, court order, rule, statute or subpoena, without paying a further fee to the reporter.

Status: Passed the Assembly; now in Senate. Referred to Senate Judiciary Committee.

Assemblymember Wagner has agreed not to pursue this bill.

ASSEMBLY BILL 2006 (WAGNER)

Sponsor: California Bar Examiners

Summary: Would allow for a video recording of a deposition or the deposition transcript to be used at a trial or hearing.

Status: Re-referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee

ASSEMBLY BILL 2332 (WIECKOWSKI)

Sponsor: SEIU and AFSCME

Summary: Would establish specified standards to be met if a trial court intends to enter into any new contract, renew or extend an existing contract, for any services currently or customarily performed by trial court employees or for court reporting services. This is essentially the same language as introduced last year as AB 566 by Wieckowski, which passed both houses but was vetoed by the Governor.

Status: Passed by Assembly Judiciary Committee; referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee.



Photo by Allie Caulfield on Flickr



A NEW MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE ON DRA

KAYLA LOTSTEIN, CSR NO. 13916



As a student, I had heard about the Deposition Reporters Association. It wasn't until I went to the CSR in July of 2013 that I was actually exposed to DRA. The day I checked into the hotel, I was exploring to familiarize myself with the layout of the hotel, going over my schedule for that night and the following day. As I was walking around getting acquainted, I saw several tables set up with information on them from different companies or organizations in the industry.

One of those tables was for DRA. I just kind of walked past, uninterested. The two women at the table, Cheryl Haab and Andrea Rinker, flagged me down. They told me how DRA works and fights for ME, a reporter-to-be. It turned out they were reporters themselves as well as board and committee members. They gave me the rundown of all the ways DRA can be beneficial to me. I was about to get my CSR, after all!

I walked away feeling like maybe DRA would be a good thing to join. I paid no more attention to the idea of DRA and refocused my attention on the task at hand – passing my test!

I took my test the next day. I walked out pretty confident I had failed -- but wait, maybe I DIDN'T let my nerves

get to me. Maybe I didn't quite drop as much as I thought I did. I packed up my things and hopped in my car and made what was probably the longest hour-long drive home of my life. I asked myself, Now what? Now what do I do for the next three months until the next CSR? After a good week (or three) of moping and being so deeply disappointed in myself, I remembered the DRA table.

I was determined to pass the next test. I hopped on the DRA website and joined because, as the ladies at the CSR told me, DRA had a mentor program. On the mentee application page was little box for me to type in what my interests are -- if I had any specifically.

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NEW MEMBERS

- Kristin Acredolo
- Donna Badger Cramin
- Adriana Bernal
- Maritza Castro
- Cindi Collins Erickson
- Tami C.
- Dany Daspit
- Christine Diep
- Tracy Dyrness
- Chase Frazier
- Marjory Fuentes
- Rachelle Gehrke-Ley
- Tifani Goetsch
- Linda Hagen
- Salem Jildeh
- Maggie Judson
- Laurence Lara
- Lynne Ledanois
- Eileen A. Lucio
- Chani Ludwig
- Marina Lyonesse
- Jeanette Medaloni
- Irene Nahamura
- Shannon Olivolo
- Chelsea Pritchard
- Irene Resler
- Sheryl Ribeiro
- Jasmine Richau
- Jennifer Sebring
- Tamara Shearer
- Ana Sheffer
- Cindy Tachell
- Martina Trujillo
- Julie Villafuerte



A NEW MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE

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That way I could be paired with someone who would better suit my needs and interests. I ended up getting paired with a woman who has been a reporter for over 30 years with a solid background in medical terminology! That was perfect, as I love medical. I started sitting out with her immediately on a variety of cases. The professional athletes had great senses of humor and some interesting stories. The asbestos cases had all kinds of characters. We encountered all kinds of people together. With my mentor, my excitement grew.

I got the letter from the Court Reporters Board in the mail. It was official. I had failed. I called my parents and my mentor. Deep down I knew I had failed the minute the dictation was over. Despite my self-inflicted false hope, I knew what to expect. My mentor told me I would pass next time; that I needed to go back to school to keep my

speed up and to sit out with her when I was able to. I started sitting out with her at least once per week, sometimes more. We would carpool to places, and she would give me pop quizzes about the cover pages and info about our depo each day. What does "WCAB" stand for? What is the plaintiff called in a workers' comp case?

I took the CSR again in November up in Sacramento and walked out knowing I had passed. I couldn't wait for my results to come. I went shopping (yes!) for my professional wardrobe.

I got an invitation from DRA to attend a New Year's party where I met many people. There were other reporters. A few of them even worked internationally (a big interest of mine). I recognized people off of Facebook pages that I had started to become more and more active in – reporter-related pages – and some people's names I recognized

when they would introduce themselves to me. There were also agency owners, software representatives, and board members. I had a chance to hear people's advice and ask them how they got to where they are now. The amount of support that came from people that night at DRA New Year's get-together is indescribable. There are meet-ups on a regular basis by members to teach one another new things. If it weren't for my being a member, I would not have ended up getting so involved as I am. My exposure to the industry and this amazing career that I am six weeks into was really sparked by my meeting those ladies at the DRA table nine months ago.

I was never interested in joining any of the reporter-run associations. If I had the choice to do it again, without any doubt in my mind, I absolutely would.

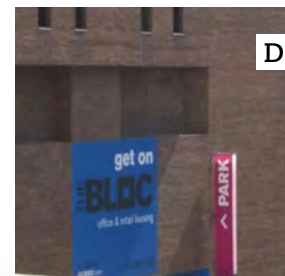
WHERE IN THE WORLD?

DRA IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE ITS FIRST-EVER PICTURE CONTEST IN THIS EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER.

This new segment will feature four pictures, all depicting areas of California cities that are frequented by deposition reporters. The contest rules are as follows:

1. Correctly identify the street address and/or intersection at which each picture was taken;
2. Be the first to submit your correct answers to district4@caldra.org;
3. If you are the first person to submit your answers correctly, you will receive a \$25 credit towards a future DRA event in 2014 or 2015.
4. Sorry, but DRA Board members are not eligible to participate in this contest.

Our featured city for this month's newsletter is Los Angeles. Good luck!





DID YOU KNOW ...
YOU CAN ATTEND THE NEXT DRA CONVENTION FOR FREE?
HOW?
GET 3 AND GO FREE!

It's easy! Sponsor three new professional members to DRA, and we'll pay your convention registration to either the 2014 or 2015 Annual Convention. Firm owner? You can go free, too! Just sponsor five new members. Or, sponsor three and pay the difference in firm owner registration.

How do you find reporters to join?

- Go through your Facebook friends. How many of your reporter friends are not members?
- Ever meet other reporters on the job? Ask them if they belong to DRA.
- Think of all the reporters you know. Do you know three who aren't DRA members?

3 = FREE



READ TO ME

KAREN HENSCHKE

Have you been wishing you could just sit back and have someone read an article to you while you are relaxing? Well, it's here, apps for your tablet, computer or phone that read any printed article you bookmark. It's called **Voice Dream**. The bookmarking app is called **Pocket**.

Imagine you just found an interesting article to read online but you have no time to read the complete article. You have the capability already on your iPhone to save that article by tapping Bookmark, then Reading List, and it saves the link in an easy-to-use spot on your phone. But imagine now that you could listen to an online article, a book, an e-mail or pdf file, yes, even a transcript, instead of reading that article. In the car. On a walk. Practicing on your machine. Doing housework.

These two apps make it all possible. Pocket is a bookmarking app that bookmarks any number of things – web sites, videos, articles, recipes, pdfs – anything you can find online. Then combine that with Voice Dream, and

Voice Dream reads the text aloud to you on your computer, tablet or phone. Download on one device, read it or listen to it on another device.

When you find an article or video or url content, simply save it to Pocket. If you want that article read to you, you access the Voice Dream app instead. Voice Dream searches for the articles loaded in Pocket or other bookmarking apps, saves the link either in original form or Smart Save to strip away extraneous content, then puts it in a list. You choose the article you want to read. It will then read to you while the text is scrolling. You can stop it, speed it up, slow it down, increase the text fonts and background. And it remembers where you left off last time.

Voice Dream is \$9.99, Pocket is free. I don't usually spend that much on an app, but Voice Dream is incredible. Yes, the voice is a little clipped at times, but it has many different options to make it work for you.

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REGISTER FOR THE 2014 NCRA CONVENTION & EXPO IN SAN FRANCISCO AND SAVE \$50

National Court Reporters Association is offering members of the DRA the chance to save \$50 off the registration fee for its 2014 Convention & Expo being held July 31-Aug. 3 at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square Hotel.

If you've never experienced a NCRA convention, now is the time. If you have, you know you've got to attend again. Don't miss this annual event which draws the largest gathering of professionals and students from the court reporting, capturing, CART, freelance, legal videographers, vendors and experts in the field. Enjoy an array of networking opportunities, earn CEUs, catch up with old friends and make new acquaintances. Test your fingers at one of the

JOIN THE LARGEST GATHERING OF THE BEST COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD JULY 31-AUG. 3

speed contests held each year, or view first-hand the latest in products and services that will be showcased on the expo floor the vendors themselves.

DRA members interested in taking advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime offer to save on registration fees can register online at www.NCRA.org/Convention. Just use the promotional code DRA. Hotel and program information are also available at this site.

VISIT NCRA.ORG/CONVENTION



SELF-DOUBT: A LUXURY OUR PROFESSION CAN'T AFFORD

CHERYL HAAB, CSR, RPR, CLR

Like most professions, court reporting is a world unto itself. We are a tight-knit community of freelancers, officials, captioners, and the like, all bound together by the common language of shorthand. And like any other profession, this community lauds a handful of individuals who consistently perform at the top of their game. They are the people that inspire us, encourage us, and continue to set the standard for all achievements stenographic.

I am not one of those people.

So understandably, when I found myself face-to-face with a handful of these paragons at November's NCRA board meeting, I couldn't help but reflect upon my presence there that day. I am a fairly ordinary reporter with a fairly ordinary set of skills, and my credentials struck me as woefully inadequate when faced with the collective genius of the body before me. Still, I sat down amongst the board with my head held high, acting as though I had rightfully earned my place at the table.

After the requisite niceties were exchanged and formalities dispensed with, the meeting commenced. I was instantly struck by the rhythmic discourse amongst the many participants. Ideas and opinions flew back and forth seamlessly; conclusions and determinations were reached with natural precision. Lulled into the comfortable ebb and flow of a well-run think tank, I was caught unawares when all eyes unexpectedly landed on me.

"How did you fall into court reporting, Cheryl?"

In my capacity as a representative of DRA, the Deposition Reporters Association of California, I had arrived at the meeting that morning prepared to rattle off a verifiable laundry list of topics – California legislative updates, the ins and outs of our current membership promotion, the upcoming annual convention – but the opportunity to share a story about myself was a scenario I had not envisioned. However, the moment of truth was upon me, so I offered them a small slice of what I affectionately refer to as my steno journey.

The story is probably like many others you've heard: Suburban Canadian girl, hoping to escape the ravages of the snow, treks cross-country to sunny California the summer of her 18th birthday. Girl meets boy; girl makes a series of bad choices; girl ends up a divorced single mom a few short years later. Throw in a string of frustrating, menial jobs coupled with a desire for a more promising future, and voilà! A court reporting student is born.



Being a single mom with no immediate family nearby, babysitters were a scarce commodity. The fact that my son had to be dropped off at and picked up from school each day meant that traditional schooling was not an option. After toying with the idea of night school, I finally settled on a fairly new concept at the time: online classes. The prospect was daunting. Time and self-discipline were in short supply at my household, but I knew I would have to rack up copious amounts of each if I wanted to see this venture through to the other side. The ensuing years would be difficult at best, but compared to a lifetime of financial hardship and job dissatisfaction, the choice was very clear. I grabbed the opportunity by the reins and dove headfirst into a routine of sleepless nights, interminable homework, and tired fingers.

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SELF-DOUBT

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After three long and arduous years of juggling online court reporting school, a full-time job, and the demands of a young child, I found myself reading the most beautiful letter I have ever laid eyes on: written confirmation that I had passed all three legs of the California CSR. However, the celebration was short-lived. It was now time to plunge into the demands of the working world to pay off the mountain of student loan debt that had accumulated during my tenure in school. Luckily, the work-from-home ethic that I had adopted during my online student career provided a natural segue into the late nights spent editing transcripts in front of my computer, and I found myself settling very comfortably into my newfound role as a deposition reporter.

My first year reporting resulted in a handful of noteworthy events, the most significant being the opportunity to serve on the Deposition Reporters Association's board of directors. DRA, for those who are unfamiliar, is the nation's largest trade association dedicated exclusively to the freelance reporter. As freelancers make up a large contingent of the reporting population here in California, this organization proved invaluable in my networking efforts as a high-speed student and

a new reporter. It was especially important for me to involve myself with a California-based institution, in addition to NCRA, to keep myself abreast of the ever-changing rules and regulations to which California reporters hold themselves accountable. My passion for the work of this association, as well as the desire to continually promote ethical reporting practices, made board service a foregone conclusion. And not only did my position on the board allow me to interface with some of the best and brightest deposition reporters that California has to offer, but it was the very reason that I was lucky enough to be sitting at NCRA's table that day, breaking bread with some of my court reporting heroes.

As I recounted my personal anecdote to each of the attendees, I reflected on my story as if I was hearing it for the first time. It became more and more clear to me that, despite my insecurities, I had truly earned my right to sit amongst equals. An acknowledgment of how hard I had worked and how far I have come was especially poignant when shared with other reporters who appreciated the tribulations of the journey. My story was met with warmth, praise, and true appreciation

for the dedication I had displayed for this unique craft that forged our common bond. Every board member went out of their way that day to make me feel welcome, and I left that evening having made a handful of great new friends and colleagues.

I walked away from the meeting that day free from my lamentations of inadequacy. Instead, I was charged with a better understanding of this fantastic institution and a renewed faith in myself and the future of our profession. Knowing the vast challenges that we court reporters face in this technological age, it is more urgent than ever that we pursue relevancy and education in partnership with our state and national associations. However, if I had but one pearl of wisdom to share with you from my experience at November's meeting, it would be this: NCRA is not successful because its leaders are vastly superior to the average reporter. NCRA is successful because the individuals who run it continue to reflect the competency, values, and determination that are at the heart of every working reporter across our great country. I am proud to say that I am one of those reporters.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Nancy Varallo and the entire team at NCRA for their warmth and hospitality this past November. I have every confidence that 2014 has great things in store for the reporting profession with NCRA at the helm. See you in San Francisco!

This article was published in NCRA's February 2014 edition of the Journal of Court Reporting. Special thanks to NCRA for allowing its republication here.

COLLEGE OF MARIN, located in beautiful Marin County, California, where dedicated parks, beaches and open space abound, invites applications for its Court Reporting Instructor Part-time Temporary Pool.

Instructors appointed to the pool may be used to fill part-time, temporary and/or substitute openings in the Court Reporting program. Requirements: Any Bachelor's degree plus two years' experience or any Associate's degree plus six years' experience. For a full pool posting and to apply, please visit <http://jobs.marin.edu>. College of Marin takes pride in its faculty, staff, and commitment to respond to community needs by offering student-centered programs and services in a supportive, innovative, learning environment.

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CALLING ALL REPORTERS AND STUDENTS!

Do you have an adventuresome spirit? Do you like to travel? Would you enjoy the camaraderie of fellow reporters? If you answered yes to any of these, I have just the opportunity for you.

You can earn CEUs, establish global contacts, create national and international networks, and take a once-in-a-lifetime vacation at the same time!

I'm working with People to People Ambassador Programs—the leader in educational travel for students and professionals—on a trip custom-designed for court reporters to Australia and New Zealand from September 11-20 this year. The deadline to register is June 11th, which is fast-approaching. This will be my sixth trip with People to People, and I can tell you that it's worth every penny.

With 50 years of experience, People to People Ambassador Programs takes delegations into places no ordinary tour group can go. They group travelers with common interests, and they have created this delegation JUST FOR COURT REPORTERS and their guests.

Check out www.peopletopeople.com/NCRA. Not only will you have a great vacation, but the trip will expand global awareness, foster bilateral exchange with professional counterparts, increase international understanding of the profession through face-to-face discussions, and create networking opportunities with fellow delegation members.

I am personally working closely with them to develop the educational content, and that will be rewarded with CEUs from NCRA (exact amount will be determined at conclusion of trip). There will be an exciting itinerary for non-reporter guests, so bring a friend, spouse, or family member.

COURT REPORTERS
DELEGATION TO AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND
with Marilyn Marquardt Sanchez, RMR, CRR

September 11-20, 2014

Take your career out of the office...
and into the *world!*

Go ahead. Check out www.peopletopeople.com/NCRA. Nothing to lose, everything to gain!

Earn CEUs! - Participate in bilateral, face-to-face exchanges with our professional counterparts while earning continuing education credits through NCRA; exact amount will be determined at conclusion of trip.

Global networking - Connect with fellow traveling reporters and make new international contacts

Extraordinary access to authentic culture - Experience vibrant local culture and visit famous landmarks

Excitement AND education - CEUs for visiting Australia AND New Zealand? It's a dream come true!

And MORE!

Don't wait! September seems far away, but it takes time to plan for a trip like this. Look into it NOW, and register SOON, and bring a friend! Just go to www.peopletopeople.com/NCRA. It's that easy!

TRAVEL THE WORLD. HAVE FUN. MEET GREAT PEOPLE. GET CEUs. WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

 People to People Citizen Ambassador Programs provides extraordinary access to people and places, giving insight far beyond what general tourists can hope to gain. This is an unparalleled opportunity to create a global network and get an insider's perspective of Australia and New Zealand. Marilyn Sanchez, Past NCRA President and current NCRF Chair, is leading this court reporters' delegation and has been instrumental in developing the educational content.

 NCRF - the foundation for court reporting philanthropy

*This program is sponsored solely by People to People Citizen Ambassador Programs (www.peopletopeople.com/citizens) and is not an NCRA event.

Sure, it's a long trip, but it will be one for the books. And in addition to CEUs, great memories, productive discussions and networking, it may be a business expense on your taxes. Check with your advisor. Don't hesitate to contact me directly at merilyn@msanchez.net, or contact People to People at Citizens@Peopletopeople.com, or by phone at (877) 787-2000. Come on. Let's get out of the workplace and into the world!

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WITH US"
SPRING SEMINAR**

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MAY 31, 2014
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**DRA BOARD
OF DIRECTORS
MEETING**

SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2014
EMBASSY SUITES
LAX NORTH
10:00 AM

**CCRR
EXAMINATION**

SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2014
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LIVE DICTATION