



## Student Newsletter – February 2012

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### **Reporter and Student Events**

#### **Board of Directors Meeting**

The Board of Directors pre-convention meeting will be in Monterey on February 24, 2012. Do you have anything you'd like us to discuss? Your district rep is your voice. Send them an e-mail with your questions or concerns. All DRA members are welcome and encouraged to attend the Board meetings.

#### **DRA's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention**

**Date:** February 24 - 26, 2012

**Location:** Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa  
400 Cannery Row, Monterey, CA

**More Info:** <http://www.caldra.org/2012-convention.asp>

### **English is a Crazy Language**

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes, but the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes. One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese, yet the plural of moose should never be meese. You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice, yet the plural of house is houses, not hices.

If the plural of man is always called men, why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen? If I speak of my foot and show you my feet, and I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet? If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth, why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one may be that, and there would be those, yet hat in the plural would never be hose, and the plural of cat is cats, not cose. We speak of a brother and also of brethren, but though we say mother, we never say methren. Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him, but imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England.

We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig. And why is it that writers write, but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

Sometimes I think all the folks who grew up speaking English should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital?

We ship by truck but send cargo by ship. We have noses that run and feet that smell. We park in a driveway and drive in a parkway. And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out, and in which an alarm goes off by going on.

And in closing.....

If Father is Pop, how come Mother's not Mop???

## **A note of encouragement/motivation to students:**

First off, let me say that you're in for a treat as you go through school. You're going to experience just about every emotion that is imaginable as you progress through school. One of the most important emotions that you should never focus on is resentment for how others around you are doing, nor should you have the emotion of feeling better than others around you if you pass them up. The thing is, these are very common sometimes in the school as you're progressing because it is, after all, a very competitive thing you are doing, so to speak. You want to be the best in class, right? That's a great thing to want to be the best. But, in that regard, remember those around you. While you may be the best right now, you might find yourself following from the back of the pack later. So, the point here is to be respectful of your friends, encourage each other and definitely celebrate when someone passes a test, and definitely make sure that they celebrate your passing. Don't be a wallflower in the corner and get all upset if you're not passing and others are and then don't celebrate with them. Get into the game and all enjoy the success of all. And when someone doesn't pass, encourage them to do better next time and they will do the same for you. You're all in this together and the more good spirits and good vibes you each share and the more positive you are, the better off you will be.

Don't go into the classes and start all of the gossiping that is so very easy and fun to do. Don't be diss'ing something that someone is wearing by thinking, "Oh, Heck No she did NOT wear that to school today." Nope, let that stuff go. Worry about what you are all there to do and that is to work on that steno machine and practice and transcribe and learn. If you need a break, then go outside for 10 minutes and chat and have fun and then hit it again. If you're so inclined, start up a student association in your school and have meetings every now and then and discuss problems. Invite the teachers to join in too when they can. Making your atmosphere around you as positive as you can will carry you a long way in your schooling. Keeping a very negative attitude and the like will only fester and grow into a very unhappy place and you'll all feed on it and it will do nobody any good and will serve to destroy you.

You are going to have so much fun learning a new theory, learning how to write things, learning how to write fast. It's just awesome! I wish each of you the best of luck as you take this journey and know one thing: YOU CAN DO THIS!

We are all here for you and we have all been where you are. So, come to us, ask questions and take all of the advice and answers you get, evaluate them and see what works for you. Again, YOU CAN DO THIS! (tipping hat)

Breck Record, a/k/a Stenoptimus Prime, CSR, RMR, CCR :)

**You can join Breck's inspirational and motivational Facebook page, Encouraging Court Reporting Students, at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ECRSgroup/>**

**Do you have a student article that you would like to submit? If so, please e-mail it to: [studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org](mailto:studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org)**



## **Court Reporter Jargon**

As with most industries, the court reporting industry has a language all its own. In fact, it even has its own shorthand and input device. One look at any court reporter's shorthand and you'll wonder what it all means. Even the steno machine with its cryptic key combinations looks exotic and mysterious. As you search for a court reporting agency, you'll also likely encounter unfamiliar terms, jargon, and acronyms. What does it all mean? Here's a glimpse.

- ASCII – Pronounced "asskee," this acronym is a computer term standing for American Standard Code for Information Exchange. What does ASCII have to do with the legal profession? Realtime court reporters often save their transcripts in an ASCII text format, making it easier for lawyers to load the transcript onto their computers.
- Caption Page – The caption page is the transcript's front page.
- Litigation support – While numerous items, resources, and tools fall under the broad category of litigation support, a number of service providers specialize in providing comprehensive litigation support services to law firms. Common litigation support services include: court reporting, legal video, document repository, and reprographics.
- O & 1 – This notation means that the client has ordered the original (O) plus one (1) copy of the transcript. Similarly, O & 2 means that the client has ordered an original and 2 copies of the transcript and so on.
- Realtime – Though the term is most often spelled "real time" or hyphenated as "real-time," the court reporting industry uses "realtime" to describe a specific type of court reporting service. With realtime court reporting, the court reporter uses a steno machine attached to a computer equipped with special software. This system can connect to monitors, other computers, or even the Internet to deliver real time feeds of the reporter's transcribed testimony as the testimony occurs. The software translates the stenographer's shorthand into ASCII text, making it possible for lawyers to see, annotate, copy and paste, and otherwise work with the testimony as it occurs.
- Recording and playback – These two terms are related. In digital reporting, the audio portion of the transcript is referred to as the recording or "the record." When an attorney or investigator needs to revisit a portion of the testimony, they'll ask for a "playback."
- Rough transcript – If you've ever typed text in a hurry, you know that proofreading and editing the initial draft is a must. Considering that court reporters enter text at well over 200 words per minute, typos and minor mistakes are inevitable. The first draft of a transcript is known as the rough transcript, or rough ASCII. Rough transcripts are not yet certified by the court reporter as being accurate and complete.
- Setting – The term setting typically refers to scheduling a court reporting event.
- Tag file – A court reporter can enter time-stamped notes during the transcription for a variety of purposes such as aiding in identifying speakers or spelling proper nouns correctly. These notes are stored in an area called the tag file.

From ASCII and O & 1 to scoping, setting, and tag files, court reporters use a lot of unusual terms to describe their work and make their jobs easier.

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## **Grant for Court Reporting Department Hopes To Attract Students**

Due to a high demand for court reporters, the Cerritos College Court Reporting Department was given a \$95,000 grant to motivate students to become court reporters.

Approximately 200 of the 20,000 students that attend Cerritos are majoring in court reporting.

Court Reporting professor Vykii Morgan is aware of the shortage of students in this department and feels many would consider majoring in court reporting if they were aware of the benefits.

"It's a tough program but [it's] very rewarding," Morgan said.

According to Morgan an AA degree is not necessary to become a court reporter, although earning one is how Cerritos College defines one of the ways a student may graduate.

Similar to the bar exam, a court reporter needs to pass the State Certified Shorthand Reporters Examination.

Less than 50 percent pass the exam the first time, however one may take the SRE as many times as desired. The SRE is offered three times a year. Students who do not pass may go to work as non-certified reporters.

Non-certified reporters or "hearing reporters" cannot work in the court or take depositions but have many other options for work such as: working for the state, taking down hearings and taking down arbitration.

"There are a lot of opportunities for students of all levels in the program," court reporting professor Mary Balmages said.

Those who are successful in passing the SRE and work in the Judicial Arena are able to type 200 words per minute and those working for the Federal Government and National Court Reporters Association are able to type 225 words per minute.

Court reporting is one of the many jobs that can be achieved with the skills that the department teaches.

The department also teaches skills for captioners in broadcast, CART reporters, scopists, proofreaders, and rapid text entry jobs that work for police departments and insurance companies.



## **Current Legislative Update** ***CR Board's Lawsuit against U.S. Legal***

As DRA has advised you in previous enotes and newsletter articles, responding in significant part to a complaint lodged by DRA with the Court Reporters Board, and based on the legal theories DRA laid out in that complaint, the CR Board sued U.S. Legal for violation of its gift-giving rules. The trial was scheduled for January 17, 2012 but was continued due to unavailability of a court room. The new date for the continued trial is March 5th.

DRA's lawyer, Ed Howard, filed a lengthy friend-of-the-court (amicus) brief. Click the links below to read DRA's amicus brief, as well as the briefs filed by the Attorney General and U.S. Legal. Stay tuned for further developments.

**DRA's Amicus brief:** <http://bit.ly/DRABriefUSLegal>

**CR Board/Attorney General's brief:** <http://bit.ly/CACRBBriefUSLegal>

**U.S. Legal's brief:** <http://bit.ly/USLegalTrialBrief>

### **Don't Forget about DRA's mentor program**

DRA is committed to ensuring that the shorthand reporting profession remains a viable and integral part of the legal system. To this end, we have designed a Mentor Program that will meld the enthusiasm of new reporters and students with the maturity of the more seasoned reporter. New reporters and students will be matched up with experienced reporters in the state of California in order to provide them with relevant guidance, support and encouragement during the beginning stages of their new careers.

Do you need some extra help, personal attention, or have questions regarding reporting? If so, then sign up for our mentoring program and receive guidance or help from a professional working court reporter.

Working reporters understand what difficulties you face as students and new reporters. We are willing to volunteer our time to get to know you, praise you for your achievements and lend encouragement for those tough times when you take the CSR, attend your first deposition, or are making the switch from being an official to freelance reporter.

If you are a current student at the 140-level speed and above or any reporter that wishes to be mentored, and you are interested in participating, please go [read more](#), or fill out the Mentee Application form, [http://www.caldra.org/mentee\\_application.asp](http://www.caldra.org/mentee_application.asp). If you have further questions, we can be reached at 925.905.2611 or email the Mentor Program coordinator at: [jcain@meritreporting.com](mailto:jcain@meritreporting.com). Once we receive your application, we will endeavor to make the best match possible for both mentor and mentee.

### **DRA's Mission Statement:**

DRA represents Certified Shorthand Reporters who report depositions and out-of-court proceedings in the State of California, as well as captioners and CART providers. DRA strives to preserve and enhance the stenographic reporting profession, ensure its integrity, and maintain its high standards and impartiality wherever stenographic services are required. DRA is committed to ensuring that the stenographic reporting profession remains a viable and integral part of the legal system.

#### **Did You Know??**

- DRA has an annual scholarship for students?
- A DRA Student Membership is **ONLY** \$30 annually?
- DRA has eight district reps to serve you, covering every county in California?
  - DRA's Mentor Program is FREE?

Is there an issue you would like to know about? Have a question or a story to share?

Write to [studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org](mailto:studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org)

