

**FOR THE RECORD** is published by the Alabama Court Reporters Association on a regular basis four times a year.

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Deadline for articles and ads is **30 days** immediately preceding the above publication dates. Please submit articles, ads, etc. in **DIGITAL FORMAT** attached to an email to: Candace Reed, [courtreporter@princeinstitute.edu](mailto:courtreporter@princeinstitute.edu)

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**FOR THE RECORD**

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1 Commerce Street, Suite 302  
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Florence, AL 35631  
Office: 256-766-6546 · Home: 256-757-4774  
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**President's Message**



**Karen B. Reagan**

**Improving Our Image**

At the moment I am flying somewhere over the Carolinas headed back home after a terrific three-day stint in Washington D.C. Suzanne Frazier and I were very fortunate to attend NCRA's Annual State Leadership Conference. This is wonderful forum for all fifty states to come together to learn, share, network and encourage one another. There's so many key issues affecting the reporting and captioning professions across the country, and personally I feel secure knowing that NCRA is keeping their finger on the pulse of the heartbeat of America--literally! They are a huge safety net for each and every one of us, working hard to ensure that our future is bright. We learned so much during our time there. Let me share some of the more interesting things with you...

You will recall that in 2001 Engate, Inc., initiated legal action against a handful of reporting firms alleging that these firms had infringed on the company's patents involving interactive realtime. In making their claim, Engate sent demand letters to some reporting agencies demanding a per-page royalty every time interactive realtime was used. A handful of firms that received demand letters have settled, and two national reporting firms are presently engaged in litigation. It's important to note, however, that the Court has not yet

ruled on the validity of Engate's patent claims. As of September 1, 2003, LiveNote entered into an exclusive licensing agreement with Engate implementing a sub-licensing (or token) system whereby attorneys and other users receiving an interactive realtime feed will be charged a daily fee. Beginning January 2004, LiveNote users utilizing the current version will be blocked from receiving a realtime feed unless the \$35 token is paid.

As a footnote, Summation® has recently come out with ViewerRT™, a viewer-only realtime product that will allow for scrollable text feed in a non-interactive realtime environment that Summation believes does not encroach on Engate's claims of infringement. The climate in this situation is changing daily and could ultimately affect how we do business in Alabama, so it's vitally important that we stay abreast of what's occurring elsewhere. NCRA suggests that if anyone is contacted, that they seek advice from competent legal counsel who can advise you of what is in your best interests; that you notify your liability (E&O) insurance carrier; that you share any information with your state and national associations; and that you stay informed and stay involved.

You will be proud to know that the U.S. Senate has passed the Training for Realtime Writers Act (S. 480). This is a huge success for NCRA, ACRA, Prince Institute and Gadsden State. Our schools have worked incredibly hard this year employing grassroots lobbying efforts to hopefully obtain this necessary funding.

**Free Membership!**

Anyone who signs up 5 new members will receive a free membership for 1 year.

*What are you waiting on?  
Get out there and start recruiting!*

Kudos to both of these fine institutions! There's more work to be done, however. NCRA is now moving forward in the House with H.R. 970. What can you do to help? If Prince or Gadsden has not gotten in touch with you to personally write a letter on their behalf, please contact them and offer to do this. Your personal correspondence to your Representatives, adding to the collective voice from around Alabama, will help our schools achieve their goals. We urge you to please contact Prince and Gadsden to learn how you can help make a difference.

The budget crisis in the Courts is not just bad in Alabama; it's bad everywhere. Oregon laid off approximately 40 of their 50 official reporters. Colorado has laid off 15 of its 26 reporters in Denver County, while other counties have vacant positions that go unfilled. This year the California state associations resisted efforts to reduce the number of reporters in the face of a massive (\$38 billion) state shortfall, though Los Angeles County had to lay off approximately 40 pro tem reporters. Florida is exploring replacing its official court reporters with electronic recording because of its budget shortfalls. On the home front, our very own Jefferson County has cut their jury weeks from 45 to 29, which is going to be a major pinch in the pocketbooks of these officials that depend on transcript fees to pay their bills and feed their families. It's problematic everywhere, and our official reporters in Alabama are feeling the pain. We cannot stand by and let Alabama be another state statistic that's reported at one of these national forums. The best way for us to stick together and become advocates for our profession and our jobs is to become active by having a

voice. ACRA wants (and needs) to know what's happening in the courthouses around the state. How have you personally been affected by Alabama's own judicial budget shortfalls? Let us know. Speaking out and sharing what's happening with you individually is the best way to help us express your opinion to those that need to hear it. Contact your District Directors and share your personal experiences with them about the climate in your circuits. They want and need to hear from you.

Another very important way for Alabama's reporters to enhance our professionalism, create better job opportunities, and preserve our existing jobs is through mandatory CSR certification. A certification program increases a reporter's respect and recognition, enhances marketability, provides professional credibility, assures professional competence, and offers recognition of the reporter's expertise and knowledge. Along with certification comes continuing education. As litigation grows more complex and the judicial system becomes more sophisticated, continuing education proves even more critical to meet the changing demands of our profession. The demand for realtime writers is steadily increasing, and an increased number of realtime writers benefit all sectors of our profession. Continuing our education and enhancing our skill is critical when it comes to educating the consuming public on why they need us and need our realtime skills, so we cannot afford to be complacent.

As you know, Alabama has been pursuing mandatory CSR certification for the better part of 30 years, and ACRA is proud of its wonderfully structured Voluntary CSR Program headed by Tammy Hastings as CSR Chair. Your Board of Directors has

called a Special Business Meeting to be held at ACRA's Midwinter Conference in Prattville, Alabama, to propose and discuss a Voluntary CSR Amnesty Program. It's been 13 or more years since CSRs were grandfathered in under ACRA's Voluntary Certification Program. This Proposed CSR Amnesty Program would reopen the grandfathering period once again for noncertified members for a specified period of time. Certification is a win-win situation for all of us as we reshape our professional image in Alabama. Please accept this invitation to join us at this Special Business Meeting called by the Board of Directors on January 17th, 2004, at 11:45 a.m., during our luncheon at The Legends in Prattville. Let us hear your strong voice.

Who is the best promoter of our profession? You are...The Working Reporter. Our voices can become our best marketing tool. Possessing knowledge of what's happening in the judicial environment, we then become advocates for our profession, armed with current, reliable information to talk effectively about the value and importance of judicial reporting and captioning. We should define our own future, not allow others to define it for us. Working together is key. As we continue to advocate our position as professionals, our future success will be guaranteed.

That's a wrap for now in the catching-up department. By the way, remember that plane I said I was on at the beginning of this article? Well, I've been off of it for a long time now.....ACRA sends its warmest wishes to each and every one of you for the upcoming holiday season. We hope yours is bright and full of promise. See you in January...until then, Take care and God bless.

**Public Announcement**  
**The Alabama Court Reporters Association Board of Directors has announced a Special Business Meeting to be held at their Midwinter conference at The Legends in Prattville, Alabama, during their luncheon on Saturday, January 17, 2004, at 11:45 a.m. The stated purpose of the Special Business Meeting will be the proposal of a Voluntary CSR Amnesty Program. If passed, this program will reopen the CSR grandfathering provision for a limited time. All interested persons are invited to attend.**

Congratulations to Shelagh McClain of Bay Minette, AL, for passing the literary portion of the Alabama CSR Examination held on 10/25/03

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Friday, January 16, 2004 5:45 p.m**  
**The Legends at Capitol Hill**  
**Prattville, Alabama**  
 All ACRA members are invited to attend. If you are a committee chair and are unable to attend, please fax your report to Karen Reagan at 334.262.4437 or e-mail your report to karenreagan@charter.net prior to the close of business on Thursday, January 15, 2004. Prince and Gadsden are encouraged to appoint a student representative and inform the President of their attendance prior to the Board of Directors Meeting.



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**DATES TO REMEMBER, 2004**

**January 16 & 17, 2004**  
*ACRA Midwinter Conference*  
 The Legends at Capitol Hill, Prattville, AL

**January 16, 2004**  
*Meeting of the Board of Directors*  
 5:45 p.m., The Legends at Capitol Hill, (during luncheon)

**January 17, 2004**  
*Special Business Meeting*  
 11:45 a.m., The Legends at Capitol Hill

**February 1, 2004**  
*For the Record article submission deadline*

**April 3, 2004**  
*Alabama CSR Exam*  
 Gadsden, Mobile & Montgomery, AL



## Court Reporting Online: Links for Online Support

With the advent of the Internet, more and more people are connecting, hooking up, and networking than ever before. This is great news for those of us in the court reporting industry. We spend so much of our time isolated from others,

locked away in our offices working on transcripts, that it could be really easy to lose that sense of community that we all need and embrace as human beings. But there's no excuse for that to ever happen again. If you have a computer and a modem, you have an open door to an entire world of support right at your fingertips! There are lots of new and exciting websites born every day. Many of these sites can help break free from those feelings of isolation and provide you with support and information.

- Did you have a tough job assignment and you really want to vent about it?
- Do you have a technical question that you need help understanding?
- Are you working at 3 a.m. and need to find a spelling for a medical word ASAP?
- Just need to talk to someone else that understands?

Well, follow me and you'll get all the help you need!

### Top Sites for Court Reporters

1. [www.ncraonline.com](http://www.ncraonline.com) - The reporter forum is now free and open to any member. Meet and interact with fellow NCRA members around the world.
2. <http://forums.compuserve.com/vlforums/default.asp?SRV=CourtReporters&loc=us> CompuServe's web forum is the oldest Forum out there for reporters. It is also now a free site. It does require an AOL screenname. However, you can download AOL's Instant Messenger program and get a screen name for free. Use this name to log into Compuserve's Forum.
3. [www.alcra.com](http://www.alcra.com) - Yes, there's more to our site than meets the eye. You can view and post messages, look for jobs and equipment, and there's even a chat room. Thursday Nights at 7pm is our regularly scheduled time for Alabama Reporter Chat. Come on in and say hi! Just click on the "Interactive" Icon from the homepage. For a complete set or recommended reporter links, head to <http://www.alcra.org/reference/links.html>
4. [www.Depoman.com](http://www.Depoman.com) - Great site for links, forum, and advice
5. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/courtreporters2/> - Forum
6. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/court-reporters/> - Forum
7. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/broadcastcaptioners/> - Forum For Captioners and Cart Providers.

If you have a favorite site that you would like to share, contact us and let us know!

## JOIN A 2003-2004 COMMITTEE TODAY with the ALABAMA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

See what all the fuss is about! Join your fellow reporters in accomplishing rewarding tasks for your future! Place a check mark below, "x", or whatever, fax to Karen Reagan @ 334.262.4437, and enjoy your involvement.

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<b>MEMBERSHIP RETENTION</b>	Tammy Clark August	
<b>CERTIFICATION</b>	Tammy Hastings	
<b>WAYS AND MEANS</b>	Butch Hope and Steve Edmondson	
<b>2004 CONVENTIONS</b>	Suzanne Frazier	
<b>LONG-RANGE CONVENTION PLANNING</b>	Deanna Johnson	
<b>PUBLICATIONS</b>	Candace Reed	
<b>NOMINATIONS</b>	To Be Appointed	
<b>LEGISLATION</b>	Randall Murphree and Moe Moeglin	
<b>DSA</b>	Karen Reagan	
<b>PRO BONO</b>	Tiffany Beasley	
<b>CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS</b>	Debby Garrett	
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<b>AUDITING</b>	Patricia Hill	
<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS</b>	Deborah Murphy along with District Directors	
<b>WEBSITE</b>	Alan Peacock	
<b>STUDENT MENTORING</b>	Shannon Ball Karen Reagan	
<b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION</b>	Debby Garrett	

Yes, please contact me about the above committee(s):

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**“Realtime Corner”**  
*Submitted by Alan Peacock*

**TOPIC: WORD BUILDING: PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES**



Someone recently asked me what theory I used. I was really dumbfounded when I realized I didn't have a quick and easy answer. My answer was, "It's a work in progress." I am constantly editing my theory and I guess I always will be...

I started court-reporting school in 1985, and I was taught from Stenograph's first computer-compatible theory book. However, my theory instructor, Virgene Biggers, had enough far-sighted wisdom to realize that this edition of theory was still far from "computer compatible." So she tweaked the lessons in the book with her own additions, and I learned a sort of bastardized Stenograph theory. It really was an excellent theory for its day and it worked for the most part. But it still had a lot of room for improvement. So over time I picked up bits and pieces of other theories and inventions from other reporters that I liked. And now my writing style defies any sort of definition. So I am envious of those who can easily answer the question, "What theory do you use?" with a one-word answer.

In my original theory, I was not taught how to differentiate prefixes and suffixes. They were simply written the same way. The long "A" sound was written AEU, no matter where it fell in the word. I globalized it as a prefix. So I guess I had a 50/50 chance of getting it right, depending on the word. So when I decided to clean up my act and prepare to write realtime, I knew I had to do something to correct that problem. I definitely needed prefixes and suffixes to be written differently and I used suggestions I had learned from other reporters around the country via CompuServe's Court Reporter Forum. I recently had a conversation with a fellow reporter, Lou Ann Schell, CSR, RPR, CRR, about this very topic. She told me that she picked up some good advice from a realtime seminar conducted by Ed Varallo that she attended years ago. He suggested that you simply include an asterisk in all suffixes. That seemed like the perfect solution! Why? Well, you don't have to memorize a lot of prefixes. It's also easy to remember. Plus you don't have to drastically change the way you write. I loved that idea so much that I changed (yes, again) the way I write to incorporate that into my theory and it works beautifully.

So for those of you who are training for realtime, this is the perfect "Step One." Identify your suffixes and prefixes separately. Once you have entered them into your dictionary, you can then learn to build practically any word in the English language so that it's readable. It may be misspelled, but at least it will be readable!

Here are some examples of this theory in action:  
 (Note: The ^ denotes suffix form)

MENT = meant  
 ME\*NT= ^ment (establishment)  
 AL= Al  
 A\*L = ^al (promotional)  
 TON = ton  
 TO\*N = ^ton (Lexington)  
 SON = son  
 SO\*N = ^son (Richardson)  
 PERN = person  
 PE\*RN = ^peson (salesperson)  
 WOM = woman  
 WO\*M = ^woman (sales, congresswoman)  
 MAN = man  
 MA\*N = ^man (salesman)

*Submitted by Tammy Clark August*  
 Blue Cross = BLAOUK  
 Blue Cross/Blue Shield = BLAOUKS  
 degenerative = D-FPLT, D-FPLT, D-FPLT  
 disk disease  
 401(k) = FOURK  
 workers' comp = WOK  
 workers' compensation = WOKS  
 , you know, = A\*UN (misprinted in the last issue)

Next FTR Issue: "Multiple Conflicts and Solutions"

**“Repetition, Again”**  
*by John Cordell*

**Since I'm now retiring I suppose it would be okay for me to share this with my friends and association without retribution, I hope.**

Every Thursday for years I've had to endure divorce court. I hated it, every single case. I know you all have been there.

I've many times threatened my lawyers with a "form" divorce where I simply changed the names, dates, children's names, lovers, and their income. They all liked the idea, by the way.

One particular Thursday I was really having a bad, bad day. One particular lawyer, a local, was asking questions over and over and over, as he always did. About four o'clock I erupted, a good word for my actions, and objected to his question that had been seared into my mind from all day's questioning, which had been answered many, many times. Remember, bad, bad day.

I simply said, where everyone was sure to hear, "Objection. Asked and answered."

The opposing attorney said nothing. The Judge said nothing, and the repetitive lawyer simply said, after a long silence,

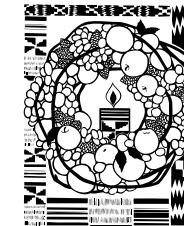
"Well, if it's been asked and answered, I'll move on to something else."

I just knew my judge was going to kill me, at his very kindest. I had actually spoken up when I was certainly not to.

I later gave my sincere, very sincere, apology to my judge. He simply said, "Hey, I thought it was a good objection. You notice that I didn't overrule."

To all of you newcomers, I wouldn't exactly suggest, or approve, that type of behavior. Hey, since I'm exiting the scene, why not be honest? My judge was so proud of that moment that he had me repeat it to many attorneys. It certainly kept down objections in my court. My judge was proud of me. That's what counts.

By the way, all jokes aside, I love you all and pray God's blessings upon you. I pray for your success, peace, and joy in your lives and your profession. I've enjoyed it, guys.



**Alabama Court Reporters Convention Minutes**  
*Cont. from pg. 14*

Johnson is in charge of. The motion was seconded by Dianna Battles. After no discussion the motion carried. Alan Peacock also stated that ACRA has been incurring a 3 percent charge when members register on line using Pay Pal. Alan suggested that the member incur this charge instead of ACRA.

Laura Nichols, District Director 1, suggested that we have a link to the web page where each director can mass email their people and there is a link where they can come to the website to a membership page and utilize pay pal.

Past President Shannon Ball made a motion to approve all reasonable and necessary expenses for Karen Reagan to attend the National Convention in Reno, Nevada next week. Motion was seconded by Laura Nichols. After no discussion the motion carried. There being no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

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## 2004 ACRA Midwinter Conference

**"MIDWINTER MULLIGAN ~ ANOTHER CHANCE TO IMPROVE YOUR COURT REPORTING SKILLS!! JANUARY 16 & 17, 2004 THE LEGENDS AT CAPITOL HILL PRATTVILLE, ALABAMA**

In the sport of golf, if you aren't pleased with the shot you have made, you can take a "mulligan" (*a shot taken if the first one is missed*). Your ACRA Education Committee has a winter Conference planned that is guaranteed to live up to its "Mulligan" name by giving you another shot at proving your court reporting skills AND the opportunity to earn 1.5 CEU's when you "tee up" and "play through" the Midwinter Conference "course."

Ever have a pain in the neck, a sore back, etc., from long hours spent at your steno machine or working at your computer? **Kristi Duncan** of the **Montgomery School of Body Work and Massage** will bring you to a better awareness of how to best use preventative maintenance on your primary court reporting tool – your body! Kristi will present a great hands-on seminar to educate you on the benefits of massage therapy, postural techniques, and preventative measures for maladies specific to our profession, i.e., tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and general muscular discomfort.

**Dr. Robert Brissie, Chief Coroner/Medical Examiner of Jefferson County**, will share his expertise in a seminar designed to stretch your vocabulary as well as illustrate the relationship drugs and

alcohol have to many of the crimes committed annually. Dr. Brissie will offer you an understanding of how an incident is documented chronologically and illustrate how information gathered at crime scenes is used to confirm or refute testimonial evidence given to investigating officers.

Do you ever take for granted the freedom and privileges you enjoy? **Eva Honolka Newman** will share her life story with you – from her roots in Trutnov, Czechoslovakia, being uprooted and forced to flee her homeland during World War II, her family's incarceration in Hungarian prisons, their escape to Austria, their sponsorship for a new beginning in America, to the story of the life she has lived here in the United States. Mrs. Newman is an inspiration and example of the benefits of having a positive mental attitude and personal endurance when difficulties come our way.

For an insider's view of the legal system, big-time sports collecting, contemporary black life, evangelism, and civil rights, tee up for the fantastic seminar presented by **Jock M. Smith, Esq.** Mr. Smith is the author of "Climbing Jacob's Ladder: A Trial Lawyer's Journey on Behalf of 'The Least of These,'" and is a national partner to Johnnie Cochran in the law firm of **Cochran, Cherry, Givens & Smith, P.C.** He will share his awe-inspiring journey from childhood without a father to prominence on a national scale.

Have you ever imagined taking a giant leap and landing on a whole new course? **Jenny Dunn, CSR, RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR**, will share with you just how to get a

running start. The former principal in the court reporting firm of Dunn, King and Associates in Montgomery, Alabama, Jenny is presently working as a captioner for VITAC and has successfully taken that leap. She will explain the "tools of the trade" you need to transition from judicial reporter to captioner.

"Arsenic and Old Lace"? Hardly! But the seminar presented by **Joseph D. Hubbard, District Attorney of the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Alabama**, will deal with arsenic as the poison of choice in a high-profile murder case in his circuit. Mr. Hubbard will share the inside scoop on the development and prosecution of the case against Marie Hilley, better known to some as "The Black Widow Murder Trial." Our own Parian Holderfield served as the official court reporter throughout the trial proceedings of this intriguing case.

Do technology and the information highway scare you just a little bit? Do you want to take the necessary steps to make sure you are centered on the "fairway" and not stuck in the rough watching everyone else play through? **Jerry Baxley of IT-LEX** will help you adopt the stance to best address the advancing technological revolution as you venture into or simply improve your technological skills. Mr. Baxley regularly assists professionals in the legal arena and is gearing up to help you understand how you, as a court reporting professional, can best address the changes and challenges as you face the new trends in technology that lie ahead.

## From The Editor

By Candace Reed, CSR, CCR

I want to take a moment and introduce myself to those of you who don't know me. I have been working with ACRA and *For the Record* going into my third publication now, and I am thoroughly enjoying every minute of it. It has truly been a lot of fun. I have been a member of ACRA for several years but have lived out of state for a few of those years and have been back in Alabama since 1997 working as a full-time freelance reporter. And now I am an instructor at Prince Institute. I graduated from Prince Institute in 1987 and have worked as a reporter and/or instructor since then. Whew! I've gone full circle.

Okay. Enough about me. Let's talk about *For the Record*. Over the months, I've received emails and phone calls with great ideas, and now I'd like to see what everyone thinks about some of them. The first is a "Memorable Moments" column, and thanks to Karen R., we started the column with this issue. So if you've got some memorable moments, send them to me, and I'll publish as many as I can each issue.

The second column is the "Realtime

Corner." Alan P. and Tammy A. have contributed a lot of great info for that column. If you've got good briefs and phrases, unusual words with their definitions, punctuation, anything you think might help other reporters and reporting students with their realtime, send those too.

And thirdly I'd like to have a section for our reporting students. I'd like to call their column the "Students Corner." We have a lot of students who are members of ACRA and they want to know what is going on out there in the reporting world. If any of the students have questions, they can submit them to me via email, and then I will send them out to the membership via email and await your answers. We can publish the questions and answers in *For the Record* under the "Students Corner." Of course, we will have to have deadlines and cutoffs just like we do with everything else.

All in all, I think we can make *For the Record* just that much better a publication with everyone's support.

For all submissions, please send in digital format as an attachment to an email to: Candace Reed, courtreporter@princeinstitute.edu.




# REMINDER

To all ACRA Members:

Please take a few minutes and update your contact information. You can do this via the website, [www.alcra.org](http://www.alcra.org), or by simply notifying us at [alcra@comcast.net](mailto:alcra@comcast.net)

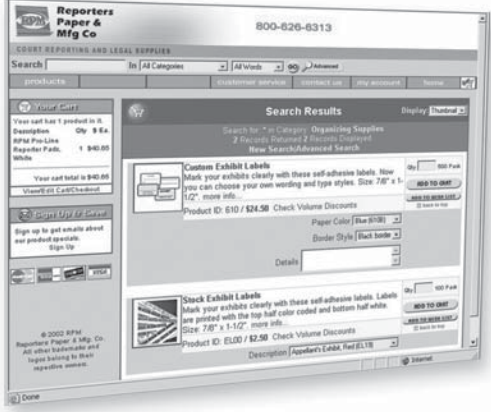
Occasionally we send out important information in mass emails to our Membership. We want to make sure that you are kept up to date on the latest news and information affecting ACRA and your membership. If we do not have your correct email in our database, then you may not get the information you need to know. So please keep your contact information up to date.



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**Aerobics For The Brain**

This is the reason why American English has been rated the most difficult language to learn:

- The bandage was wound around the wound.
- The farm was used to produce produce.
- The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
- He could lead if he would get the lead out.
- The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- Since there is no time like the present, he decided it was time to present the present.
- A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
- I did not object to the object.
- The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
- There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
- They were too close to the door to close it.

- The buck does funny things when the does are present.
- To help with the planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
- The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
- After a number of injections, my jaw got number.
- Upon seeing a tear in the picture, I shed a tear.
- I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.

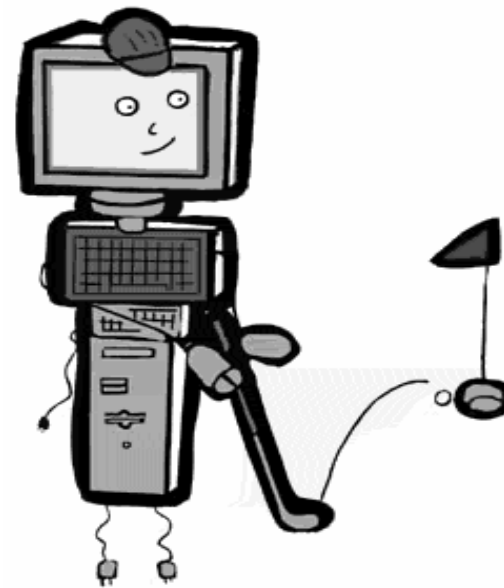
Yes, English can be bewildering. If we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig. In what language do people recite at a play, and play at a recital? How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, yet a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? Yes, in American English, your house can burn up as it burns down, you fill out a form by filling it in, and an alarm goes off by going on. That is why, when the stars are out they are visible; when the lights are out, they are invisible. And, when I wind up my watch, I start it, but when I wind up an essay, I end it.



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Cart fee: \$16.13 per person per cart

**Mail To:** Please return registration form and check made payable to ACRA to:  
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Credit Card payments are now being taken to pay for conference registrations and membership dues to ACRA. Go to the ACRA website at [www.alcra.org](http://www.alcra.org) and click on the “PayPal” icon and follow the instructions. MidWinter Registration Form is located on the Events/Conferences Page.

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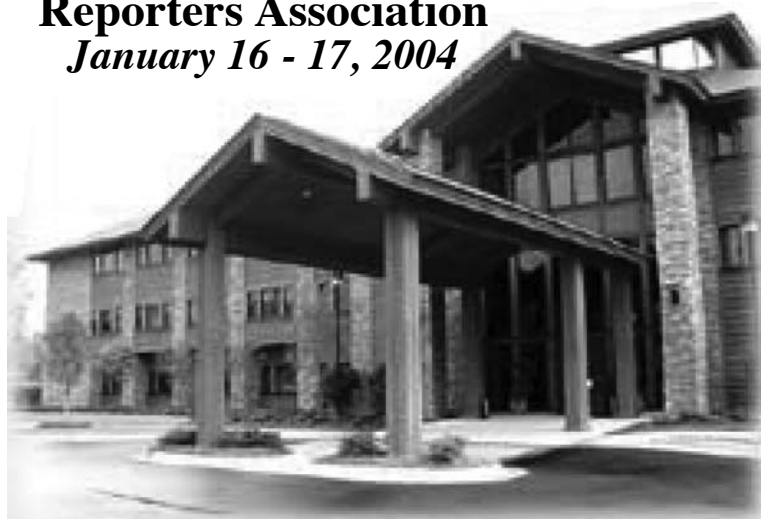
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**The Few, the Proud... the Mentors.**  
*Yes, we're looking for a few good men -- and women!*



We would like to hear from experienced Alabama court reporters, CART providers, and captioners who are willing to give something back to a profession that has given them so much.

Court Reporting is an exciting and challenging profession that provides a lifelong opportunity for learning and growth. With that philosophy in mind, ACRA has established its own Student Mentoring Program, designed to support Alabama court reporting students by offering them guidance, encouragement, and support.

If you are one of those special people who would like to help the next generation of reporters reach their goals, then we need to hear from you.

What is required: An open mind and a giving heart... And an email account! You should be available to your assigned student and answer e-mails promptly. If possible, meet with your student at an ACRA convention or conference. Take your student to lunch. Send words of congratulations and words of encouragement when they need it. In other words, be a friend! You should set a professional example for students at all times.

With your commitment and support, you will enable a promising student to flourish and to one day join the ranks of our association of professional working reporters! They are eagerly looking to us to help bridge that gap for them.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor for ACRA, please fill out the information below and fax to 334-262-4437. In advance, we thank you for your consideration.

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**ALABAMA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION**  
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**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**This application is for new membership ( ) or renewal ( )**

If this application is for renewal, please update only the information that has changed. If you are a new member, complete all lines that apply to you.

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Type of membership I am applying for: Certified ( ) General ( ) Associate ( ) Student ( )

1. If applying for Certified Membership, are you an: RDR ( ) RMR ( ) RPR ( ) CRR ( ) CLVS ( ) CSR ( )  
 If you are applying for Certified Membership for the first time, please attach a current copy of each certificate.

2. Have you ever been a member of ACRA? Yes ( ) No ( ) If yes, are you currently a member? Yes ( ) No ( )

3. Are you currently a member of NCRA? Yes ( ) No ( )

4. Are you currently a student? Yes ( ) No ( ) If yes, what school? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your method of shorthand? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Are you on computer? Yes ( ) No ( ) If yes, what CAT system? \_\_\_\_\_

If you are applying for Associate or Student membership, it is not necessary to complete the remainder of the form. Just sign the designated space, secure the endorsement of one member in good standing, and return application with payment.

7. Do you offer video services? Yes ( ) No ( ) 8. Do you have a conference room? Yes ( ) No ( )

9. Do you offer real-time services? Yes ( ) No ( ) 10. Are you a notary public? Yes ( ) No ( )

11. Are you: Freelance ( ) Official ( )

If Freelance, what firm? \_\_\_\_\_

If Official, what court? \_\_\_\_\_; are you available to freelance? Yes ( ) No ( )

12. Do you hold a degree? Yes ( ) No ( ) If yes, which degree? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Which reporting school did you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply for membership in the Alabama Court Reporters Association and enclose \$75 as my annual Certified, General, or Associate membership dues, or \$15 as my annual Student membership dues, if application is accepted. By signing this Application for Membership, I hereby agree to adhere to Alabama Court Reporters Association's Constitution and Bylaws and National Court Reporters Association's Code of Professional Ethics.

**Signature of Applicant** \_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to our Constitution and Bylaws, any person applying as a new member of this Association shall secure the endorsement of one Certified or General Member in good standing.

**Signature of Endorsing Member** \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to contribute to the Voluntary Legislative Fund. I enclose \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

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**Memorable Moments in the Life of a Wanna Be and Real Life Court Reporter**

*(Excerpted from K. Reagan's address at ACRA banquet, July 2003)*

**IF YOU WILL INDULGE ME FOR A FEW MOMENTS, I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE A COUPLE OF PERSONAL STORIES WITH YOU...**

The first occurred when I was in college. After high school, I enrolled in Troy State University as an accounting major. I floundered around dismally for a couple of years lacking excitement about my future as an accountant. My Mother (who many of you remember from her years at AOC and later as the Court Administrator in Jefferson County) had planted the court reporting seed early on. When I was a child, she allowed me to be her shadow at a number of then ASRA conventions around the state. The idea finally took hold somewhere around my second year of college. I wanted to be a Court Reporter! So I quit Troy State. A bit ambivalent about going home to fess up about dropping out of college, I took the plunge. Once there, I recall declaring to my Momma that I'd made a decision: I was going to be a court reporter! She looked at me intently and said, "Baby, are you sure? Because, you know, Court Reporters are kinda weird."

The next memorable moment happened to me early on in my reporting career, when I was still hungry enough to ask just two questions when a call came in: Where and When? I received the call, and the client said, "Meet me at the Clanton Exit at 8 a.m.". I did. Once there, I hopped into his car and quickly learned that we were headed to an automobile junkyard north of Birmingham. Looking down at my new pink suit, I silently wished it well.

Upon arrival at our destination, I looked around at the gloomy site and quickly digested what it meant and realized how my day was shaping up. There were torn-down, old automobiles everywhere in the yard. The owner's office was even more dispiriting. Have you ever seen those metal prefab buildings in people's backyards where they keep their lawnmowers and weed eaters? You have the picture. This was his office...no window and door wide open. Thankfully it was spring, so the absence of air conditioning wouldn't be a factor. Once inside, I quickly took note of the dismantled, oily automobile parts scattered all about. There was one chair in this

fine metal office, and the owner (our witness) was sitting in it, with no chance of offering it to anyone. He was almost state-ly as he sat behind his large desk, which conveniently happened to be a huge piece of plywood laid atop two sawhorses. You still have the picture? Not having an extended tripod, I explained to our host that I would need something to sit on, and he suggested that I "go over yonder and get one of them oil buckets and flip it upside down." Yeah, right, and I wanted to be a court reporter! Still thinking of my new pink suit, I got the oil bucket, now my new chair, and proceeded to unpack the rest of my equipment. Luckily I was in the midst of gentlemen...one of the lawyers gallantly laid his coat over the top of the bucket before I sat down, and we commenced to take a deposition. With the witness, who I've now nicknamed 'Bubba', raising his right hand, and two lawyers towering over me, I swore him in to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Now, this isn't so bad, I thought...that is, until the junkyard dog came sauntering in to sniff around at my feet. Now, mind you, I like dogs, as long as they don't have fleas. But this particular canine did have me wondering how long it'd been since his last visit to the vet. He did the circle thing that dogs like to do right before they plop down to rest a spell, which he did in expert dog fashion, right on my feet and tripod. I found it odd how no one seemed to notice our friendly mutt, or were they just being nice? At this juncture, I found my mind wandering off to a nice, quiet accounting job in a little cubicle office in some fancy high rise in the city...I'm sure you still have the picture. Several pages of Q's and A's into my daydream, 'Bubba Junior' out in the yard decided it was time to test the engine he had been working on, and the next thing any of us could hear was VROOM, VROOM, VROOM...at which time our witness leaned his head out the window and said, "Hey, hold it down out there. I got two lawyers and a...and a...and a 'THANG' in here." Only in Alabama!! I know you didn't quite count on having a 'Weird Thang' as your next incoming President, but.....



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2. Log onto your account at [www.alcra.org](http://www.alcra.org) and edit your profile
3. Contact any Board member (see front of FTR) and let them know

Here is a list of email returns we are receiving. If one of these addresses belongs to you or someone you know, please let us know the new address:

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## *The Written Record, A Toastmaster's Perspective*

By Jan McElroy

Can you imagine driving through alternate routes due to flooding, for two and a half hours, to get to a deposition only to find out that it had been cancelled and no one remembered to call the court reporter? Well, this kind of thing happens all too often.

"Mr. Smith, hi, this is Jan McElroy. I'm in Andalusia for the deposition you scheduled, and I've been told it was cancelled," (all the while smiling so as not to seem agitated. Did you realize if you smile on the phone it comes through?) "I wanted to call you to make sure you're not heading this way before I come back to Mobile." "Oh, I'm so sorry, my secretary must have forgotten to notify you that it was cancelled. Send me a bill for your per diem." Well, you don't even want to get into how much a per diem is; but I can tell you, it isn't worth driving through floods to get somewhere you didn't need to be anyway. And the secretary thing, come on..... It went more like, "Hi John, this is Joe. I'm not going to be able to make that deposition in Andalusia." "Oh, that's fine, no problem." And the secretary never even knew it was cancelled.

When I tell people I'm a court reporter, they almost always say, oh, I've heard that's a stressful job. Well, what exactly is stress? I'm sure we all have different definitions of stress. It can be anything from I've locked my keys in the car, or my husband, Ed, is sitting there watching those "you know what" football games again when I need some help around here. Ed's stress level is rising because he's waited all year for football season to begin, and he can't enjoy it because his wife is nagging him about the things she needs help with.

I started in this business in 1989, and I've seen it evolve from smoking in conference rooms to cell phones ringing during depositions. I'm not really sure which is worse. Phones are constantly ringing now. It's gotten so bad I want to stand at the door when everyone enters with a basket requesting that cell phones be turned off and placed in the basket before we begin.

The whole process begins with swearing in the witness. You can tell how the deposition's going to proceed by looking at the witness' hand when he holds it up to be sworn in. If he holds his hand open (indicate) like this, it means that he's going to

be very open in answering. If he closes it (indicate) like this, it means it's going to be a long day because it indicates he's guarded and that lawyer's going to have to drag information out of him.

Almost always a lawyer starts out by giving the witness some instructions, such as don't say "uh-huh" or "un-uh," say yes or no, and that type thing. Well, I am here to tell you if uh-huh is a regular yes answer for them, it doesn't matter if you kick them, or constantly remind them, it's going to be uh-huh or un-uh. You think that stressed me out before Toastmasters? Well, it's three times more stressful now! I want to ring a bell when they do this. I'm sure that'd get their attention. Uh-huh (ring bell).

Another thing I've seen lawyers do is use big words, such as juxtaposition, to guys like Bubba, who has a 3rd grade education. Bubba goes huh, at which time I ring the bell and he then repeats with juxtaposition. I'm already having a tough time understanding Bubba. He has that Louisiana Cajun accent and can't enunciate anything! My client's walking behind me trying to look at my laptop, which I'm trying to hide, because I sure don't understand Bubba any more than he does. But my client's sitting there thinking, hey, I don't have to worry about a thing because the court reporter's getting all this down. Well, you can betcha that if he doesn't understand what Bubba's saying, I don't either! But I'm sure not going to ask Bubba to repeat what he said because he's going to repeat it just like he said it the first time, which nobody understood anyway. The only thing I can do is get Bubba's phone number and call him later to try to come to some understanding about what he said.

You want to talk about stress, try getting to a deposition late. My office got a last minute call from a lawyer whose secretary forgot to schedule a court reporter. I go running out the door to get there as fast as I can, and everyone's pissed off when I get there. I'm setting up my equipment, and no one even says hello. They just kind of sit there glaring at me impatiently through the whole procedure. The secretary was scared to tell her boss she forgot to schedule a reporter because she didn't want to get yelled at, so she lets me take the heat. She's standing by the door listening, saying a prayer that I keep my mouth shut, and the Lord hears her prayer. Am I going to tell her boss it was her fault? She has to work with him every day, and I only see him a

few times a year. I can say I have never been late for a deposition. But for some reason lawyers are always late. You know that story about men never ask for directions. Well, I believe it! They are always getting lost. I can't imagine showing up late and saying I couldn't find the place. They would think, what an idiot! I know these guys passed the bar, but it makes me wonder how tough can that bar exam be, how they even managed to get there on time to take the exam, much less find the place! Is this job stressful? It can be if it's not managed right. If I could completely run the show, I'd adopt some Toastmaster procedures that would go something like this: Of course I'm kind of the president for deposition purposes. It starts out with the sound of the gavel hitting the table to stop the chit-chat, an invocation, a short prayer asking that the Lord be with us, that he guide everyone in the question and answer process, with a prayer that his will be done throughout this "civil" litigation proceeding. Where did they get the idea to use the word "civil" before litigation? I have rarely seen people act civil during litigation! I would then ask that all cell phones be turned off, that they could use them during a break, but upon returning from the break we would go through the same procedure again. I would show everyone the bell and explain that the bell will be rung if anyone says uh-huh, un-uh, or interrupts the other speaker before he's finished answering or asking a question. Since that helps us when that bell rings with our uhs, you can imagine what it's going to do in the deposition setting! It may stress Bubba out, but it's sure going to lower my stress level and help me do a better job in ensuring an accurate record. Better yet, walk out with a few extra bucks and charge them a dollar for every ring! My sister recently had a deposition with the perfect witness. How do I know that? Because he was one of our fellow Toastmasters. If all witnesses were Toastmasters, this would be a blessing for me and the deposition world. Until then I'll wait patiently while people show up late, silently ring the bell, let those cell phones ring, and say a silent prayer before we begin our so-called "civil" litigation.



## Alabama CSR Information - Next Exam is April 3, 2004!



For those of you who do not hold an Alabama CSR, there's no time like the present to start preparing for it! You can apply to sit for the examination either via the website (see the Quicklinks on the Main Page) or by submitting your application found in this issue of "For The Record."

Obtaining CSR status is your responsibility. The only way to obtain an Alabama CSR designation at this time is through testing. You must complete the RPR Written Knowledge Test offered by NCRA and also the Alabama CSR Skills Test to become licensed.

For your convenience, the test will be offered in three locations throughout the state: Gadsden, Montgomery, and Mobile. The testing date is April 3, 2004.

The Skills Test will consist of three examinations: 180 Literary, 200 Jury Charge, 225 Q&A. All candidates must pass with an accuracy rate of 95%.

The Skills portion of the examination may be passed in legs. Candidates may retake any portion of the skills examination as many times as necessary, provided they maintain their current membership.

Once a member has become a Certified member, a CSR certificate will be issued along with a CSR number and a wallet I.D card. Your CSR number should be printed on your Certificate page.

To retain your CSR status, each member must obtain 3.0 CEU credits over a three-year period. Members who also hold certification through NCRA (RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR) can simply use their NCRA credits to apply for their CSR CEU credits.

So register today for the April 3, 2004 Alabama CSR examination! It's a great way to prepare for your RPR examination in May. You have plenty of time to prepare, so pull out those speed tapes, dust off the keys, and get ready!

**GOOD LUCK TO ALL CSR TESTING CANDIDATES!**

### **District 2 News**

*by Diana Battles  
Director, District 2*

There is good and bad news in the ACRA's District 2.

First, the good news. The newest addition to the court reporters in Calhoun County, Stacy Turner Littleton has given birth to her first child, Jacy Layne Littleton. Jacy (pronounced like Stacy) was born on October 13, 2003, and weighed in at 7 pounds 7 ounces. She was 20 inches long. Jacy's proud dad is Wes Littleton. He works for Alabama Power Company.

Stacy is a native of Heflin, Alabama. She graduated from Cleburne County High School in 1997. After graduating from Gadsden State Community College in 2000, Stacy worked for a time as a freelance reporter. Stacy and Wes were married October 29, 2001. In October of 2002, she was hired by Circuit Judge Sam Monk as an official reporter.

During the first part of 2003, Stacy and Wes started building a new home in Heflin. At about that same time, she learned of her "expectant condition." If you look back at the dates of importance in her life, you'll see that October is an extremely busy month for the Littleton family. Stacy has also been a real go-getter in terms of meet-

ing her goals in life – schooling, employment, marriage, home, and baby – all in about five years.

Since Stacy has joined the courthouse crowd, she has tried two capital murder cases and numerous run-of-the-mill criminal and civil cases. To say that she has more energy than most folks is an understatement. However, in the midst of it you never see her without her positive attitude and a great big smile. Stacy's been a welcome addition to our already great group of reporters. Good luck to you, Stacy, and your family!

And now, page 2, the bad news. It's probably the same info as you've already received from whatever District you're in. The State is in dire straits and many of our friends and relatives are losing their positions. It's an extremely difficult time for us all, even if we're one of the fortunate ones. Our "normal" daily routine is about to be turned on its end. If anyone has any innovative ideas for saving money, time, etc., either for the State as a whole or individual reporters specifically, please let me know. I'll be more than glad to talk to you about them and pass them along to the "powers that be." The cuts we're facing are not only going to affect officials, but freelancers as well. If you don't have trials, either jury or non-jury, you don't have work.

Court reporters have been known to pull together and pitch in whenever they've been asked. Consider this my request to you: Let's do all we can as court reporters in Alabama to help not only ourselves, but our judicial system as well.

I look forward to hearing from you with any questions, comments or complaints, and hope to see you at our mid-winter conference.



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**Alabama Court Reporters Association  
Planning Meeting  
The Grand Hotel,  
Point Clear, Alabama  
July 26, 2003**

**Present:**

Karen Reagan, President  
Suzanne Frazier, President-Elect  
Sheila Ford, Vice President  
Randall Murphree, Secretary  
Alan Peacock, Treasurer  
Laura Nichols, District 1 Director  
Dianna Battles, District 2 Director  
Julia Isenhower, District 4 Director  
Shannon Ball, Past President

**Not Present:**

William "Moe" Moeglin, District 3 Director

**Also Present:**

Mary Frances Giattina

President Reagan called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m. A quorum of the board was present. President Reagan stated that we had a good convention and that she had made the following appointments to committees: Membership, Sheila Ford; Membership Retention, Tammy Clark August; Certification, Tammy Hastings; Ways and Means, Butch Hope and Steve Edmondson; Long Range Planning, Deanna Johnson; Nominations, Suzanne Frazier; Legislation, Randall Murphree, Moe Moeglin, David Miller; DSA, Karen and Mary Frances Giatinna; Pro Bono, Tiffany Blevens Beasley; Constitution and Bi-laws, Debbie Garrett; Scholarship, Dianna Battles; Auditing, Patricia Hill; Public Relations, Deborah Murphy; Website Committee, Alan Peacock; Historical Preservation Committee, Debbie Garrett.

**Convention Planning**

President-Elect Suzanne Frazier stated that two of our vendors had committed to coming back to our next convention. She suggested that we have a speed contest in order to get some new interest and participation in our organization.

Mary Frances Giattina stated that the US Federal Courts have given a 10 percent raise to anyone certified to write realtime. This has created a large interest in getting people to the seminars in order to take the test.

President Reagan stated that Tiffany Beasley is interested in starting a program similar to the Veterans History Project, but would concentrate on a Civil Rights

Project for Alabama and try to get it approved for credits. President-Elect Frazier stated that when you send off for your packet with the Veterans History Project, that you can also conduct interviews on a local level and the paperwork can be kept on a local level. President Reagan stated that we have several career days around the state and suggested that we participate in other conferences such as the ABA Convention like we do with the Judge's Convention. The Legal Assistant Association had a booth at the ABA Conference for the past two years. ABA booths are about \$695 for a three-day period. Karen stated we might get a discount since we are a non-profit organization.

President-Elect Frazier suggested that our District Directors run a blurb in our major newspapers informing them what we do at our convention and possibly include a photograph. Suzanne stated that we needed more exposure in the press.

Laura Nichols, District 1 Director, suggested that we include the Veterans History Project and pro bono work in as well.

President Reagan stated she would provide our District Directors with the comments from the evaluation forms.

Alan Peacock asked everyone to stay and have their snapshot made for the website before they leave today.

President Reagan announced that we needed only five more mentors for all of our students.

Vice-President Ford and Secretary Randall Murphree agreed to be mentors.

Alan Peacock, treasurer, asked if he needed to keep the documents from past years or whether he should give them to the Historical Preservation Committee.

President Reagan stated that documents are historically handed down from office to office or person to person. We need to set up some guidelines. The Historical Preservation Committee would keep documents, articles of incorporation, etc. Karen stated she would talk to Debbie and see what her limitations would be on keeping these documents. Laura Nichols, District 1 Director, suggested that we put our press releases on the website and scan it and bulk email it to the districts. President Reagan suggested that in order to increase membership we need to improve our Public Relations amongst our reporters. Karen stated we had many members that are members of NCRA that are not members of ACRA. She encouraged all of us to work toward getting these people as mem-

bers. Karen stated that she had sent our mailings out to all NCRA members that were not members of ACRA.

The Board applauded President Reagan for doing such a good job in planning the convention.

President Reagan stated that Deanna Johnson, Long Range Convention Planning Chairperson, has contracted on behalf of the association for the upcoming convention in 2004 and 2005. She stated that Deanna had reserved 100 rooms per night. The contract states you must rent 80 percent of that. We have fallen short this year. Karen stated that she was negotiating in order to get a reduction in the number of rooms that we must have in order to save the association any penalties that we may incur. I am going to propose that if we agree to book here again in 2006, that they waive the fee. Deanna did tell me if the hotel is booked then we will be fine. Well, the hotel has been booked this weekend. Several of our people have tried to get a room and didn't get a room. The penalty would be eighteen or twenty thousand dollars. We had 115 rooms blocked, we were supposed to have 240 which is 80 percent of 300 for three days.

It was suggested that we let the hotel know that we were not happy with the way one of our guest speakers were treated. Karen stated she had already done this and that the party concerned was assigned a bodyguard and there was no charge for the room.

It was suggested that maybe we have a fall convention rather than a summer convention in the future.

President Reagan stated that Dr. Rich Hobson stated that AOC wished to participate in the October mid-winter conference with financial support at the Legends.

It was stated that the mid-winter conference would be at The Legends for the next three years.

Alan Peacock, treasurer, stated that we have had 1,800 visitors to our website since he took over. Alan asked whether or not he should transfer moneys received from members that are earmarked for legislative to be transferred to Deanna Johnson into that account or should the money be kept in the general fund. After some discussion,

Laura Nichols, District 1 Director, made a motion that the legislative funds in our general treasury checking account be transferred to this special legislative checking account that currently Deanna



# Alabama CSR Examination Application

**CSR Examination Date:** April 3, 2004

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Locations:** Gadsden, Montgomery, Mobile

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

ACRA Member (circle one):    Yes    No

**Testing History:**

The Alabama CSR skills examination may be passed in legs, as long as the CSR candidate retains their current membership status. Proof of passing the NCRA Written Knowledge Test is required before a candidate can be awarded CSR status.

I have previously taken and passed the RPR Written Knowledge Examination:    Yes    No

I have previously taken and passed the following legs of the Alabama CSR (circle one):  
180 Literary            200 Jury Charge            225 Testimony

I currently hold the following NCRA certifications: \_\_\_\_\_

**Select your Testing Site:**

Please select your desired testing site (circle one):    Gadsden    Montgomery    Mobile

**Registration and Payment**

Please print and return this completed form along with your testing fee to the address below.  
Note: All testing candidates must register prior to the examination day. There will be no on-site registration.

Fees:    ACRA Members: \$65    Nonmembers: \$90

Please send your testing fees to the following address.

Alan Peacock  
ACRA Treasurer  
218 S. Dearborn Street  
Mobile, AL 36602

## NCRA Online News Flash

### SPECIAL ISSUE:

#### Senate Passes Reporter Training Bill

The U.S. Senate late Wednesday passed the Training for Realtime Writers Act of 2003. The legislation would establish grants to schools totaling \$60 million over three years to train realtime writers to meet the captioning and CART requirements established by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The measure was passed by the Senate as part of an anti-spam bill. The original legislation, S. 480, had been introduced in January by Senators Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Charles Grassley (R-Iowa). Thirty-nine additional senators had signed on as cosponsors.

"Although we have only a few years to go until the deadline set by the Telecom Act, our nation is facing a serious shortage of captioners," Harkin said. "This legislation is essential to ensure that we meet this important goal." For the full text of Harkin's announcement, go to the Harkin Senate site.

The House version of the bill, H.R. 970, was introduced by Rep. Ron Kind (D-Wis.) and has 106 cosponsors.

"This is wonderful news for the millions of deaf and hard-of-hearing people who rely on captioning and CART," said Mark J. Golden, CAE, NCRA Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer. "It is a major step in helping the reporting and captioning professions meet the mandates set forth by the Federal Communications Commission and the Telecommunications Act. Senators Harkin and Grassley have provided great leadership in steering this legislation through the Senate. We now need to focus attention on the House version of the bill."

To learn how you can help with this effort, contact NCRA Director of Government Relations Dave Wenhold at [dwenhold@ncrahq.org](mailto:dwenhold@ncrahq.org) or visit the Federal Initiative page on the NCRA Web site.



## Alabama Reporters Participate in Convention Reporting

On October 7-10, 2003, the Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness (SERID) 2004 Convention was held at the Adams Mark Hotel in Mobile, Alabama. Over 400 participants attended the convention. Organizers for the convention requested open captioning and CART services be provided for each seminar. There were seven workshops held simultaneously each day, and each session included realtime translation. For several Alabama reporters,

this was their first time to do convention CART or captioning.

An LCD projector was connected to each reporter's laptop, and the realtime was projected onto a screen in the front of each room for the benefit of the deaf and hard-of-hearing attendees. This was an exciting event and it was a great opportunity for Alabama's reporters to shine. It takes a tremendous amount of skill, and courage, for each reporter to display their realtime on the screens before a viewing audience, and each reporter did an exceptional job.

Congratulations on a job well done!



The Serid Cart/Captioning Team

### Kelly Gibson

Student 2002-2003  
Class President  
Gadsden State Community College

I had the pleasure of attending the Annual ACRA Summer Conference in beautiful Point Clear, Alabama, in July of this year as the 2003 ACRA Scholarship recipient. Not only was I absolutely thrilled to be the recipient of such a wonderful award and so generously allowed to enjoy fabulous amenities of the Grand Marriot Hotel but was able to attend very educational, as well as encouraging, seminars presented by the ACRA.

As a captioning student, I was thrilled to be able to listen as Debra Bollman described her fascinating career in captioning for Katie Couric and Matt Lauer on

NBC's Today Show in her seminar entitled, "Finding New Cheese." What an exciting career! I left Dolly Banks' presentation of "Balancing Stress in Stressful Times," wishing that everyone I know could have attended. What an inspiration she is to us all.

The fall has presented Gadsden State with an abundant number of new students, as well as a fabulous new location. The Realtime (formerly Court) Reporting Program was able to move to a new location on the campus, and, believe it or not, we are already outgrowing this space as well. Leah Elkins, formerly the technician, is the new instructor in the Captioning Department. We are so pleased to have her, as there is so much to learn and so little time.

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