

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

Publication Schedule for 2004/2005
December 1, 2004
March 1, 2005
June 1, 2005
September 1, 2005

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: Suzanne B. Frazier, SFrazier1031@aol.com


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FOR THE RECORD

A Publication of the Alabama Court Reporters Association

Volume 21, No. 5 Winter 2004

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President's Point of View

by Suzanne B. Frazier, CSR, RPR
ACRA President



Suzanne Frazier

We are members of one community with common interests and common goals.

The Possibilities: What Does "ACRA" mean to YOU? I would like for you to take a moment and think about the second "A" that makes up our great name -- ACRA: That single letter, representing "Association," encompasses time, effort, sacrifice, involvement, communication, and the investments of all members – each Alabama court reporter joined together in this professional association. We are members of one community with common interests and common goals. We are members of one family, individuals who go about our work professionally, with pride and passion. Together we are an association. This is your ACRA.

Now is the time to build on that investment. Each of you must ask yourself: "What can I do to be a solution to problems within our working community? What personally can I do to add to the betterment of my Association?" Educate yourself on the workings of the Association. Take advantage of the opportunity to meet with and learn alongside your fellow members at the great Midwinter Conference Alan Peacock is planning for you in January. Be aware of what is going on within your Association by reading and responding to the correspondence you receive in the mail and via email from your ACRA Board.

Great things can be ahead for our profession, but those great things will only become a reality if each of us, individually, is willing to do our part to make those things happen. ACRA currently has 429 members. That is an increase in membership of 107 members this past year. Your Association is hard at work. As you take

the time to read this issue, you should be very proud of the variety of things taking place in your ACRA. With the addition of these new members, most of who are also certified members, many questions have come up regarding CSR status. Shannon Ball, CSR Chairperson, has addressed many of those questions in this issue. If you have other CSR questions, Shannon will be happy to address them for you. Her contact information can be found in the "CSR Questions & Answers" article.

The Legislative Committee is persistently working on the development, introduction, and passage of the Certified Court Reporter (CCR) Licensure Bill. Parian Holderfield's Legislative Committee article details the ongoing legislative efforts and accomplishments realized to this point. If you haven't done so already, take a moment to assist the efforts of this committee by completing and returning the Key Contact Survey you will find in this issue. Be willing to assist and take action when a member of the Legislative Committee contacts you and requests that you contact your Alabama senator and House representative in support of the CCR Licensure Bill.

The Scholarship Committee, historically having one annual function (that is, solicitation of applicants for and selection of the annual ACRA scholarship recipient), has taken their service to your Association to a new level. A potential two-fold national crisis faces the court reporting profession: lack of qualified reporters to fill the need for court reporters AND lower numbers of students entering court reporting educational programs. Following the suggestion of the National Court Reporting Association that the most important way to raise awareness of our court reporting profession and increase the number of students in court reporting schools is to get information out to the public, Joyce Sasser, Scholarship Chairperson, has coordinated a cooperative exhibitor participation at the Alabama Counseling Association Annual



Alabama Court Reporters Association Key Contact Survey

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Do you personally know or have a business relationship with any elected officials, judges, law firm partners, state or local bar association officers, business leaders, legal association officers (i.e., criminal defense lawyers associations, young lawyers associations, legal secretaries associations, paralegal associations, indigent defense legal associations, etc.), city or county elected officials, police chiefs, county sheriffs, news reporters, radio or television broadcasters, or CART or captioning community, AARP/senior citizen group leaders, school board members? Please list also the contact information of any other individuals or groups who are now or potentially could have an interest in the court reporting profession. Please write their names and titles on the lines provided below.

This information is very important to any legislative initiative. Politics is “who you know.” So whom do you know?

Title	Name	Organization	How you know them
1. _____			
2. _____			
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			
6. _____			
7. _____			

This information is a valuable tool to your ACRA.

This information will not be used without you being involved.

Alabama Court Reporters Association • c/o Suzanne Frazier, CSR, RPR – ACRA President
6314 Mountainview Circle • Gardendale, AL 35071

Telephone 205-631-2188 • Fax 205-853-7972 • sfrazier1031@aol.com

ACRA website: www.alcra.org

President’s Point of View

Continued from front page

Convention. ACRA and the two NCRA-accredited court reporting institutions within our state took part in that convention last month.

With the greater exposure the court reporting profession received at the Alabama Counseling Convention, more students should be enrolling in court reporting school. Those students need encouragement. Do you remember your days as a court reporting student? Are you happy to be a court reporting professional? Do you have Internet access? Do you live in the Montgomery or Gadsden area? After reading Ashley Young’s article on ACRA’s Student Mentoring program, I know you will want to contact her and volunteer to serve as a mentor to a student, to encourage them to hang in there, and assist them

in any way you can by sharing your personal experience.

I welcome the new members to ACRA. I hope our old and new members alike will get excited about the things that your Association is doing. The educational opportunities and services rendered come at a cost, both financially and in terms of physical participation. Prestigious speakers, interesting locales for conferences and conventions, comfortable accommodations, and other amenities come at a premium. Each one of the committees actively involved in the interest of our court reporting profession incur expenses. Your annual membership dues and conference/convention fees help to offset those expenses. Never forget that your ACRA is a non-profit organization, operating under the fiscal guidelines of NCRA and the federal government.

However, funding is only one impor-

tant issue in the effectiveness of your ACRA. An actively involved membership is of the utmost importance. A productive professional association has no place for member apathy. Idleness will accomplish nothing. If you find yourself in the doldrums as an ACRA member, ask yourself, “What kind of association would my Association be, if every member were just like me?” If you have any questions about anything to do with the operation of your ACRA, please get in touch with me. Do not let your knowledge of ACRA depend on “I heard” topics or any rumor mill product. My service as your ACRA president includes an open-door policy for each and every member. If you contact me and I don’t know the answer to your question, I will do my best to find an answer for you as soon as possible. Please take confidence in that, and remember – We may not have it all together, but together we have it all! -

“No passion so effectively robs the mind of its power of acting and reasoning as fear.”
– Edmund Burke

From The Desk of the President-Elect

Continued from page 5.

Here is how it works: The Karaoke party is also a fundraiser, so remember to bring your checkbooks! If you want someone to sing, you can pick the song, pay the fee, and watch your friend become an “Alabama Idol!” However, if you do not want to sing and someone has already paid to nominate you to sing, you can decline, but you must match the fee and pay a decline-to-sing fee! This will help ACRA raise money for our legislative fund and, at the same time, provide a chance for you to showcase your hidden talents! It promises to be a FUN, FUN night! So be there!

Saturday is a special day. Instead of having a variety of workshops, we will have a special guest for the entire day. Heidi Thomas, CCR, RMR, CRR, CBC, from Caption Masters, Atlanta,

Georgia, will be presenting a one-day “Realtime 101” seminar. This is a hands-on seminar. You are encouraged to bring your steno machine and your laptop. Ms. Thomas asked that I remind you to bring your laptop with the software that you use every day. Please do NOT load a new update the night before the conference. Be familiar with how to start a realtime file in your software. During this realtime workshop, you will make dictionary entries to help your writing become realtime-ready. Topics that will be addressed include prefixes, suffixes, word boundaries, setting up for yourself or for realtime hookups.

Again, as a reminder, **you have to attain 1.5 CEU credits every three years to retain your CSR status.** The ACRA Midwinter Conference is a great place to start! I hope to see everyone there! Until next time, Happy Holidays to you and yours!

Until next time, Happy Holidays to you and yours!

CAPTION IT

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Providing Equal Access for Individuals who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

Legislative Report

Continued from page 3.

imagine why anyone wouldn't want a certified court reporter working in a reporting firm or courtroom.

The Legislative Committee looks forward to the job ahead. We invite you all to help us in our efforts. You have an opportunity to make a real difference in the future of the court reporting profession. Whether you take advantage of this opportunity is up to you, but your ACRA Board cannot do it alone. If we are to be successful, we need your help. We hope to achieve a contagious level of enthusiasm among the membership. We must strive to garner all possible support. As a member of the

Association, it will be important for you to make a difference.

Long-lasting change always begins on the inside. If you believe you can make a difference, you will make a difference. Each and every person in this Association is important; each and every person in this Association is valuable; and each and every person in this Association can make a difference. The Alabama Certified Court Reporters Licensure Law will establish and maintain the standard of competency and professionalism necessary to serve the needs of the litigants of the State of Alabama and ensure the recognition we court reporting professionals have worked hard for and deserve. Please join us in our efforts to make certification a reality.

“ Whether you subscribe to an optimistic or pessimistic view of the world, the same events are happening to you over the same timespan...It's the response, not the events, that determine both our future and our satisfaction in the present with the future we expect. ”

— Wacker, Taylor and Means,
The Visionary's Handbook

CSR Questions & Answers

Continued from page 6

timely and met the educational requirement of 15 hours every three years, your cycle will begin again. If you are in Cycle C, you will begin a new cycle on September 1, 2005. For Cycle A, the magic year is September 1, 2006; Cycle B, September 1, 2007. **IF YOU ARE AN RPR, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOUR NCRA 3-YEAR CYCLE AND YOUR ACRA 3-YEAR CYCLE MAY BE DIFFERENT.**

Q: I have heard the terms 15 hours and 1.5 CEU's. What is the difference?

A: Ten hours of education equal 1 CEU. ACRA requires 15 hours of education or

1.5 CEU's. The CSR committee uses hours to keep up with your continuing education requirements. Letters are mailed out with the roster indicating your cycle and how many hours of continuing education you have accrued as of the date of the letter.

Q: Is having CSR status really that important anyway?

A: Your CSR designation indicates that you are a court reporter who is actively striving to better yourself and your profession. It shows that you continue to ensure that you are up to date on issues affecting the profession. Even though your clients and attorneys that enter the courtroom may not know exactly what makes a CSR, initials behind your name automatically imply that you have attained a level of suc-

cess. Cherish your CSR! You have worked hard and will continue to work hard for it! Give yourself a pat on the back...pay your dues on time...and come to a seminar for selfimprovement. You deserve it!

If you need additional assistance or have questions regarding the ACRA Certified Shorthand Reporter requirements, please contact:

Shannon R. Ball, CSR, RPR, RMR
CSR Chairperson
100 North Side Square
Huntsville, AL 35801
e-mail: bamaball@hiwaay.net
phone: 256-532-3436
fax: 256-575-0414

Legislative Report

by Parian T. Holderfield, CSR, RPR, RMR
ACRA Legislative Chair



Parian T. Holderfield

ACRA is striving to raise the level of competence and professionalism in our state in the field of court reporting.

The implementation of the Alabama Certified Court Reporters Licensure Law will ensure that court reporters have achieved a threshold skill level necessary to perform competently. Licensing or certification along with a requirement for continuing education will ensure that the State of Alabama will have competent, knowledgeable reporters serving the needs of justice.

Court reporters who are employed at the time of the implementation of the Alabama Certified Court Reporters Licensure Law will be certified under the grandfather provision of the same. ACRA is committed to establish and maintain a standard of competency and professionalism necessary to serve the needs of the litigants of the State of Alabama.

The ACRA Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Legislative Committee, is working tirelessly on a plan of action to implement the Alabama Certified Court Reporters Licensure Law. Alan Peacock, President-Elect, took on the monumental task of composing the necessary wording for this Bill to be submitted for legislation on behalf of ACRA. I can't begin to tell you what an extraordinary job Alan has done. The first draft was presented to the ACRA Board at the Board meeting on October 2, 2004. The Board members pored over the draft and submitted their collective wisdom. The Committee was able to procure the advice of some very kind people, several of whom would be considered experts on drafting legislation, and after several drafts, the Bill for certification in the State of Alabama has been perfected. We will be eternally grateful to all those who contributed their time and expertise to this effort. We hope to be able to share their names with you in the very near future.

You have received from the Directors of our Association Key Contact Forms generated to gather information regarding who among us are acquainted with elected officials, television affiliates, law enforcement, legislators, court personnel, etc.,

anyone that can help us in our efforts. These Key Contacts will assist the Legislative Committee in disseminating information to various persons across the state. The Committee expresses a heartfelt thank you to the members who have responded. If you have not, please take the time to fill your Key Contact form out and return it. For your convenience, a Key Contact Survey is included in this issue of the FTR. These Key Contacts will be vital in our efforts to publicize the importance of certification and garner support for our certification Bill. There will soon be a mass mailing of draft letters of support that will be helpful in making Legislative packets to distribute to our legislators that will demonstrate the amount of support we are able to secure for our certification Bill.

This Key Contact information afforded us a trip to the State House through **Mary Hicks**, an official roving reporter in Tuscaloosa, who has a Key Contact there. The Legislative Committee was able to meet in October at the State House and make the acquaintance of various support personnel in both the Senate and House who will be vital to our success during the legislative session.

We have many members in this Association who have worked tirelessly on our behalf for many years. **Roy and Gayle Graham** are two of ACRA's most beloved members. Since Roy's retirement, we have not had the pleasure of seeing them at conferences. However, they are always aware of ACRA's efforts and always eager to do all they can to help. Thanks to their efforts, along with their son, **Scott**, they have procured their Alabama senator, **Senator Zeb Little**, to sponsor our Bill in the Senate. Roy and Gayle love the court reporting profession and have supported ACRA for many years. It is obvious they have passed their love for court reporting to both of their sons, Shawn and Scott. We are truly fortunate to have the Graham family continue their court reporting tradition. Their willingness to continue to work for ACRA is greatly appreciated. The Legislative Committee is in the process of seeking a member of the House of Representatives to sponsor our Bill. Hopefully, by the time you read this we will have a House sponsor.

Those are just two instances of how important Key Contacts are and the opportunities they can provide for success. The Key Contact information is intended to encourage you, the members, to be a part

of this history-making project that Suzanne Frazier has undertaken as her number one priority during her term as President of this Association. We will soon be prepared to initiate a concerted effort utilizing all members of ACRA to personally contact their individual senators and representatives to solicit their support during a designated time period. The Key Contact information will aid us in promoting the need for certification. We hope to have the cooperation of you all in this statewide effort.

I would like to personally thank everyone who participated in distributing the Alabama Judiciary Surveys around the state. **Diana Battles** and **Stacy Littleton** were instrumental in helping me call on volunteers and mailing the surveys to you. We were amazed by your eagerness to assist in this project and the timeliness with which the surveys were returned. Your hard work is greatly appreciated, and we are inspired by the enthusiasm and kind cooperation of all of you. I hope this kind of zeal continues until our goal is attained, the passage of the Alabama Certified Court Reporters Licensure Law.

The judges' response to the surveys was incredible. The Alabama Judiciary Survey would not have been a success without their cooperation. The Legislative Committee would like to thank all the judges for their participation. We are in the process of compiling the information and are very encouraged by the overwhelming response of support from the judges for certification. We plan to disclose the results of the survey at our Midwinter Conference.

As I have worked with this Board, I have been reminded of the quality and quantity of work that goes on behind the scenes on behalf of ACRA. There are many people who truly care about our profession and are willing to expend their time and energy on its behalf. ACRA's increased membership is our most effective tool. You, the members, are the ones who will shape our profession's future. With leadership comes opportunity. I can assure you we have a great leader. ACRA President Suzanne Frazier is definitely on a mission to succeed. We all must participate in conveying the importance of certification to others. We must focus on the fact that this is not a controversial issue. This Bill is strictly to ensure that a court reporter working in the State of Alabama possesses the knowledge and ability to perform at a minimum standards competency skill level. It is hard to

Continued on page 18



D A T E S T O R E M E M B E R

January 14-15, 2005: ACRA Midwinter Conference
The Legends at Capitol Hill, Prattville, Alabama

April 1-3, 2005: NCRA Midyear Conference
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

February 20-22, 2005: NCRA Firm Owners Executive Conference
Las Vegas, Nevada

April 2, 2005: CSR Exam Administered

March 18-20, 2005: CLVS Forum
San Diego, California

July 28-31, 2005: ACRA Summer Convention
Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg, Tennessee

Date: _____



ACRA

2005 MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

Another Chance to Improve Your Court Reporting Skills!

January 14 & 15, 2005
 The Legends at Capitol Hill
 Prattville, Alabama

NAME: _____

Name to appear on your name tag: _____

FIRM/COURT/SCHOOL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

REGISTRATION:	ACRA MEMBERS	(\$125.00)	_____
	NONMEMBERS	(\$145.00)	_____
	STUDENTS	(\$55.00)	_____
	*LATE FEE	(\$25.00)	_____
	(*Postmarked after 1/3/05)		
OPTIONAL ONE-DAY ONLY REGISTRATION	(\$85.00)		_____

Important: There will be no refunds issued after 1/3/05

Note: Registration includes all seminar events, vendor exposition, and the membership business luncheon in the Florida Room, Saturday, 1/15/05.

Hotel: The Legends at Capitol Hill. *Special Room Rates:* \$75 Single and/or Double. Reserve your room today by calling 1-888-250-3767. Identify yourself as being part of the "Alabama Court Reporters Midwinter Conference" in order to receive this rate.

Golf: Greens fees: \$37.63 (Senator/Legislature Course) or \$48.38 (Judge Course)
 Cart fee: \$16.13 per person per cart

Mail To: Please return registration form and check made payable to ACRA to:

Alan Peacock, Convention Chair, 1960 Old Government Street, Mobile, Alabama 36606



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 and click on the "PayPal" icon and follow the instructions. The Midwinter Registration Form is located on the Events/Conferences Page, or click on the Conventions Button under Quicklinks.



Name: _____

Mailing Address (where you would like to receive ACRA mailings)

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: (W) (____) _____ (H) (____) _____

E-Mail: _____ Fax: (____) _____

Type of membership I am applying for: Certified [] General [] Associate [] Student []

1. If applying for Certified Membership, are you an: RDR [] RMR [] RPR [] CRR [] CSR []
 CBC [] CCP [] CRI []

(If you are applying for Certified Membership, you must attach a current copy of each certificate.)

2. Have you ever been a member of ACRA? Yes [] No [] 3. Are you currently a member of NCRA? Yes [] No []

4. What is your method of shorthand? _____

5. Are you currently a student? Yes [] No [] If yes, what school? _____

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 and return application with payment.

7. Do you offer video services? Yes [] No [] 8. Are you CLVS certified? Yes [] No []

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

11. Are you: Freelance [] Official [] Captioner [] CART Provider [] Instructor []

If Freelance/Captioner/CART Provider/Instructor, what company or school? _____

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 _____

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 _____

Mail Application and fee to: Randall E. Murphree, CSR
 Membership Chair
 801 North Richard Arrington Boulevard
 Criminal Justice Center – Room 406
 Birmingham, AL 35203

Apply online: www.alcra.org

**'Twas the Internet Night Before Christmas,
A Festive Holiday Poem**
by Hugh Drumm & Vincent Ambrose

'Twas the Internet Night Before Christmas, when all through the Net,
There were hackers a surfing. Nerds? Yeah, you bet!
The emails were stacked by the modem with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

The newbies were nestled all snug by their screens,
While visions of Java danced in their dreams.
My wife on the sofa and me with a snack,
We just settled down at my rig – it's a Mac.

When out in the web there arose such a clatter,
I jumped to the site to see what was the matter.
To a new page my Mac flew like a flash,
Then made a slight gurgle and started to crash!!

I gasped at the thought and started to grouse,
Then turned my head sideways and clicked on my mouse.
When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
My Mac jumped to a page that wasn't quite clear.

When the image resolved, so bright and so quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick!
More rapid than mainframes, more graphics, they came.
Then Nick glanced toward my screen and called them by name.

"Now Compaq! Now Acer!" my speaker did reel.
"On Apple! On Gateway!" Santa started to squeal.
"Jump onto the circuits and into the chip!
Now speed it up! Speed it up! Make this thing hip!"

The screen gave a flicker. He was into my Ram!
Then into my room rose a full hologram!
He was dressed in all red, from his head to his shoes,
Which were black – and the white socks, he really should lose!

He pulled out some discs he had stored in his backpack.
Santa looked like a dude who was raring to hack!
His eyes, how they twinkled! His glasses, how techno!
This isn't the same Santa that I used to know!

With a wink of his eye and a nod of his head,
Santa soon let me know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, gave my Mac a quick poke,
And accessed my C drive with only a stroke.

He defragged my hard drive and added a "Dimm,"
Then threw in some cool games just on a whim.
He worked without noise. His fingers, they flew!
He distorted some pictures with Kai's Power Goo.

He updated Office, Excel, and Quicken,
Then added a screensaver with a red clucking chicken!
My eyes widened a bit, my mouth stood agape,
As he added the latest version of Netscape.

The drive gave a whirl, as if it were pleased!
St. Nick coyly smiled, the computer appeased.
Then placing his finger on the bridge of his nose,
Santa turned into nothing but ones and zeroes.

He flew back into my screen and through my uplink,
Back into the net with barely a blink.
But I heard his sweet voice as he flew from my sight,
"Happy surfing to all, and to all a good byte!"

**ACRA 2004 SUMMER CONVENTION,
STONE MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA**



(L-R) Linda Kay McSwain and Stacy Guest Long



(L-R) Marla Minter and Sheree Cater



(L-R) Terri Towe, Ashley Young, and Deanna Johnson



E. Duane Smith, RPR, CRR, CMRS, NCRA President



(L-R) Diana Battles and Mary Frances Giattina



(L-R) Sara Prince and Ann Schmidt



New Year's Resolution

by Susan Young

Outside my window a new year I see.
I can determine what kind of year it will be.
It can be busy and productive and funny,
Or boring and cold – but I'll make it sunny.
My own state of mind is a determining key,
For I am the person that I choose to be.
Taking my talents down from the shelf
And thinking more of others than I do of myself,
I can enjoy what I do and make it fun,
Rather than griping and unloading my angst on someone.
I can be patient with others who are less driven
And encourage them to use the talents they too have been given.
I'll have faith in myself, what I'll see, what I'll hear.
And I personally intend to make the best of this year.

**From The Desk of the
President-Elect**

by Alan Peacock, CSR, RPR, RMR, CRR, CBC
President-Elect and Convention Chair



Alan Peacock

This is a busy time of year for most reporters, both on a professional and personal level.

We are all working hard to meet our deadlines at work and also to make time to spend with our families and loved ones during the upcoming holiday season. I want to encourage each of you to take a few minutes during this hectic time to relax and unwind whenever you can, even if it is only for a few minutes.

Once the holiday rush is over, if you need to get away from it all for a couple of days, may I suggest that you visit The Legends Resort at Prattville for our Midwinter Conference? (Nice segue, huh?) Please mark your calendar for the following:

January 14-15, 2005 –
ACRA Midwinter Conference, The

Legends at Capitol Hill, Prattville, AL
July 28-31, 2005 –
ACRA Summer Convention, Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg, TN

I hope that we will have a record attendance at this conference. I give you my word that this Midwinter Conference will have something for everyone and it will be fun and it will be educational! I have heard some freelance reporters in the state say that they do not attend the Midwinter Conference on a regular basis because the Midwinter is for official reporters and the summer convention is for freelancers. I need to dispel that myth. Nothing could be further from the truth. ACRA has been listening to its members and, as a result, we are changing! This is just one example. The Midwinter and the Summer Conventions are planned to support ALL reporters in the state. We hope to have something for everyone, no matter what your interest or career path may be. So if you haven't considered attending a Midwinter Conference in the past, please consider it this year and in the future. **Your** ACRA Board is listening and we hear you!

The following is a quick rundown of the Midwinter Conference events:
On Friday, January 14, 2005, we will

host the following Seminars:

"How a Bill Becomes a Law" –
A very timely subject in light of ACRA's pending CSR legislation. Learn how an idea becomes a bill and then becomes a law and find out more about you can help make certification a reality.

"State Crime Lab" –
Learn about forensic terminology and what goes on behind the scenes in real-life criminal investigations that "C.S.I." doesn't show you!

"Perfecting Appellate Transcripts" –
Receive the latest updates on rules and changes from AOC officials. This information is for anyone that files a transcript in state court, freelance or official! Certificates and awards will be given out to officials at this time.

After a full day of seminars on Friday, it's time to let your hair down and have some fun; right? So get ready for the First Ever ACRA Karaoke Reception Party! The fun begins at 7:00 p.m. Meet and greet reporter friends, old and new! There will be a cash bar and light snacks available in our Karaoke lounge.

Continued on page 19

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Alabama CSR Information



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." 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 2, 2005**. The Skills Test will consist of three examinations: 180 Literary, 200 Jury Charge, and 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.

Plans are underway to issue a CSR certificate along with a CSR number and a wallet I.D. card once a member has become a Certified member. When you

receive these items, your CSR number should be printed on your certificate page.

To retain your CSR status, each member must obtain 1.5 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 by providing documentation of those NCRA credits to Shannon Ball, ACRA CSR Chairperson.

Register today for the April 2, 2005, Alabama CSR examination! It's a great way to prepare for the 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!**

CSR Questions & Answers

by Shannon R. Ball, CSR, RPR, RMR
CSR Chairperson



Shannon R. Ball

Q: My name isn't listed as 2004-05 CSR! Why not?

A: Before you panic, review your check register and make sure you paid your dues this year. If you didn't, then panic.

Late payment of dues continues to be a problem. Your dues are due by June 30 each year. In an effort to encourage continued CSR participation, the CSR rules were changed at the 1996 summer conference to allow a 31-day grace period until the end of July before you lose your CSR status. If you have an additional question or feel your name was omitted in error, please contact the CSR chairperson.

Q: Okay. I've lost my CSR because I didn't pay my dues. How can I get it back? Just pay my dues; right? After all, I'm an RPR.

A: The Alabama CSR rules state that if you lose your CSR status because of non-payment of dues, you may regain the CSR status only by testing. So, yes, you may be an RPR, but you're no longer a CSR. You may regain your CSR by successful completion of the CSR test and proof of passage of the RPR Written Knowledge Test.

Q: My name isn't on the list, but I graduated from an accredited school. That automatically makes me a CSR; right?

A: Wrong. In order to become an Alabama CSR, you must either pass the NCRA RPR examination in total or pass the NCRA

Written Knowledge Test and the Alabama Court Reporters Association examination. Now that the regrandfathering period has expired, these are the only two ways one can become an Alabama CSR. You may have received a certificate from your school, but that is not a CSR certificate. It certifies that you have completed a course of study, not that you have become an Alabama CSR. ACRA requests that you refrain from using the CSR designation unless you have a valid CSR certificate.

Q: Where are these rules?

A: The CSR rules are printed each year in your membership roster along with the ACRA Constitution and Bylaws.

Q: I don't understand that rule. I ought to be able to just pay my dues, prove my RPR, and get my CSR back.

A: It may seem a bit harsh. Before you express your views too loudly, however, let me remind you of a few things: One, dues are due and payable at the same time every year. Secondly, our CSR program is voluntary and is monitored and maintained by volunteers. Tremendous time is involved. You are not the only one who has neglected to pay dues. When you multiply the problem by 20 or 30 people, the time involved in taking people off the roster, verifying that they are NOW in compliance, putting them back on the roster, issuing their CSR certificate, etc., is extremely burdensome. Rules are rules. ACRA regrets that you lost your CSR, but the CSR exam is offered twice a year, the first Saturday of April and October.

Q: I'm in Cycle C and I have 10 hours of continuing education. What does that mean?

A: Everyone in Cycle C must accrue 15 hours of continuing education or 1.5 CEU's by 9/1/05 to maintain their CSR status. You need to accrue five more hours of continuing education and turn them in for credit by that date. CSR's in Cycle B have until 9/1/07 to accrue 15 hours; Cycle A, 9/1/06. There are several CSR's in Cycle C who have not turned in any CSR credits. They are at risk of losing their CSR status on September 1, 2005.

Q: I'm in Cycle C. My time to accrue points expires in less than a year. What can I do?

A: The easiest way to accrue points is to attend an NCRA or ACRA conference. You may wish to attend the ACRA midwinter conference in January 2005. Even if you need all 15 hours, you should be able to accrue at least 10 at just the January conference. There are many ways to accrue CSR points. If you're an RPR, you may submit your current NCRA credit summary to the CSR chairperson for credit. NCRA maintains an approved reading list that they will accept for credit. You can also accrue points by providing a school presentation, serving on a committee, providing pro bono work, writing an article for the newsletter, or taking a student intern on a job. Remember that it is your responsibility to submit your request for credit to the CSR chairperson. If you plan to attend an NCRA event or a conference in another state, call the CSR chairperson before you go and get an ACRA punch card. Then you can simply mail that in for credit, along with the conference agenda.

Q: What happens at the end of each cycle?
A: As long as you have renewed your dues

ALABAMA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

JULY 24, 2004
12:33 p.m. CDT
Organizational Meeting
Evergreen Resort and Conference Center
Stone Mountain, Georgia

Board Members Present:
President Suzanne Frazier
President-Elect Alan Peacock
Vice-President Randall Murphree
Secretary Diana Battles
Treasurer Julia Isenhower
Immediate Past President Karen Reagan

Committee Chairs Present:
Parian Holderfield, Legislative
Deanna Johnson, Convention Planning

District Directors
1, Kathy Hicks
2, Angie Coleman
3, Andrea Martin
4, Kathryn Sharpe

- This organizational meeting was called to order by President Suzanne Frazier.
- Conflict of interest policies and anti-trust law obligations were presented to and signed by all board members present.
- President Frazier noted the rotation of District Directors for writing articles for "For The Record." The next deadline is August 1, 2004.
- District Directors will have information provided to them at the Fall board meeting regarding contact with the presiding judges.

- Parian Holderfield was recognized as chairman of the legislative committee. She has several people already signed up and willing to help. President Frazier will be meeting with Dave Wenhold and Shari Rendall from NCRA to discuss the certification issues the association is facing.
- The conference set-up at Evergreen Resort and Conference Center was discussed relative to the vendor location. It was related that there was not a lot of traffic into the vendor area. It was suggested to keep this in mind for

- future conferences.
- Deanna Johnson, convention planning chair, stated that everyone seemed to be happy with the site in Georgia, but others still wanted to return to Perdido. A suggestion was also made to look into full days versus half-days for seminars.
- There being no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m. CDT.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana L. Battles, CSR, RPR
Secretary, ACRA

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ACRA Legal Video Committee

by John F. Kilpatrick,
CLVS - Chairman

As chair of the newly formed Legal Video Committee of the ACRA, my first order of business is to bring awareness of the CLVS' role in the legal community. One thing that certainly sets the CLVS apart from others in our industry is the commitment we have to our Code of Professional Ethics. It is a road map of sorts that defines, in specific terms, how we will conduct ourselves and our businesses. I have asked that it be printed here in its entirety.

Preamble

The mandatory Code of Professional Ethics for Certified Legal Video Services (CLVS) defines the ethical relationship the public, the bench, and the bar have a right to expect from a CLVS Member. The Code sets out the conduct of the CLVS Member when dealing with the user of video services and acquaints the user, as well as the Member, with guidelines established for professional behavior. By complying with the CLVS Code of Professional Ethics, CLVS Members maintain their profession at the highest level.

A CLVS Member must also adhere to the voluntary Principles for Professional Practice when providing legal video services as well as all local, state and federal rules and statutes.

CLVS Code of Professional Ethics

A CLVS Member Shall:

1. Render services to all parties in a competent manner. A CLVS shall maintain the integrity of the legal video profession.
2. Perform all tasks in a professional manner, observing all laws, rules and orders of the court relating to the proceedings.
3. Refrain from performing any service under terms or conditions that will compromise, in any way, his or her impartiality or the exercise of good judgment. A CLVS shall not adversely affect the fair and impartial portrayal of the proceeding.
4. Refrain from doing anything that affects the impartiality of the CLVS.
5. Absent the consent of the parties concerned or a court order, a CLVS shall not reveal confidential information entrusted in or provided to such CLVS by any of the parties.

6. Be truthful and accurate when making public statements or when advertising the CLVS' qualifications or the services provided.

7. Determine fees independently, except when established by statute or court order, entering into no unlawful agreements with others on the fees to any user.

Refrain from giving, directly or indirectly, any gift, incentive, reward or anything of value to attorneys, clients, witnesses, insurance companies or any other person or entities associated with the litigation, or to the representatives or agents of any of the foregoing, except for (1) items that do not exceed \$100 in the aggregate per recipient each year, or, (2) pro bono services as defined by the NCRA Guidelines for Professional Practice or by applicable state and local laws, rules and regulations.

More information can be found on the NCRA website at:

<http://clvs.ncraonline.org>

Captain John F. Kilpatrick Deployed to Active Duty

November 11, 2004

Dear Friends,
I find it ironic, yet fitting, to write this message on Veterans Day.

As many of you know, I am a former Marine, a Gulf War veteran, and currently serve as a Medical Service Corps Officer in the Army Reserve. For the last several years, I have been blessed with several short tours of active duty that did not require me to leave the country. On Sunday, November 14th, that will change. I have been mobilized for 18 months active duty. After a short stay at Ft. Lewis - Washington, I will deploy to Eastern Europe in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

To those who rely on Legal Imaging: Rest assured my partner, Skip Warren, and I have made all the necessary preparations for my departure. Every effort has been made to ensure on-going work continues.

New business will be accepted and appreciated. In years past when called to active duty, I have been forced to shut down and literally start over when I returned. With the current world situation as it is, I searched for a business partner capable of continuing the business operation in my absence. Skip Warren has proven himself to be the ideal man for the task. He is an excellent videographer and incredible manager who has doubled our business in the Birmingham office in the last few months. I am confident he will continue the great work we have begun together, and I will return to a company in full stride. We have assembled a team of legal videographers and trial consultant unmatched by any firm in Alabama. I would appreciate your continued support of our company as we strive to provide the best legal video, forensic photography, and litigation support services in the Southeast.

In Birmingham contact:
Skip Warren
Office: (205) 314-3430
Fax: (205) 314-3431
Cell: (205) 567-3300

email: skip.warren@legal-imaging.net

In Mobile contact:
Vikkie Shipp, Certified Trial Director Trainer
Office: (251) 433-2242
Fax: (251) 433-2245
Cell: (205) 605-8140
email: vikkie.shipp@legal-imaging.net

Thank you for your business. Please continue to pray for all of our soldiers who put themselves in harm's way in order to defend your freedom and for their families who anxiously await their safe return.

Sincerely,
John F. Kilpatrick
Captain, Medical Service Corps
United States Army

(Please keep John and his family in your prayers until he has returned safely home.)



Alabama CSR Examination Application

CSR Examination Date: April 2, 2005

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Locations: Gadsden, Montgomery, Mobile

Name: _____

I currently hold the following NCRA certifications:

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

ACRA Member (circle): 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 all that apply):

180 Literary 200 Jury Charge 225 Testimony

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, President-Elect
1960 Old Government Street
Mobile, AL 36606

You can also apply online at www.alca.org.
Click on CSR Testing Information under "Quicklinks"

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Membership Announcement

by Randall Murphree, CSR, ACRA Vice-President



Randall Murphree

You should have received your Annual Membership Roster for the year 2004-2005. I apologize for the delay in your receiving this year's roster; however, I hope you will take the time to look through it

and use it. Production of this year's roster was a monumental task. I owe my thanks and gratitude to the following people who have made this happen. Karen Reagan has taken over the job of updating the database. She has done an excellent job of updating and purging the list on a daily basis. Shannon Ball, CSR Chairman, updated the listing of CSR's. She has been flooded with new members and old members seeking to obtain their CSR certification under the recent CSR Regrandfather-

ing Clause. Alan Peacock produced the beautiful CSR certificates at a reduced cost to you. Julia Isenhower assisted immensely by checking my emails and telephone calls many times to see if a member had paid their dues. I want to thank Debbie Garrett and Kathy Hicks for agreeing to assist the Membership Committee. And lastly, thanks to Angie Coxe for compiling all the information and producing the 2004-2005 ACRA Annual Membership Roster.

PLEASE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS TO ACRA:

Sharon Anderson
Beth Appleton
Casey Atchison
Lisa Bailey
Cornelia Baker
Jennifer Barber
April Bendinger
Daphne Boykin
Bonnie Blevins
Stephen Bradley
Judy Bresnan
Cheryl Brown
Michelle Callahan
Rita Carr
Julia Carter
Tanya Carter
Gil Claborn
Kathy Colburn
Gwen Cooper
Terry Crutchfield
Lyn Daugherty
Cathy DeBardeleben
Meschelle Deen
Devanne Dill
Lauren Dorgan
Kimberly Duckett
Chrissy Dunn
Brenda Eakens
Casey Eiland
Jane Elliott
Nathalie S. Faggard
Cynthia Fast
Kimberly Faucette
Michelle Foster
Mary Ann Friedlander
Rigeana Gentry
Kelly George
Merit C. Gilley
Scott Graham
Cindy Gregg
Sallie NeSmith Gunter
Shelia Hanson
Jennifer Head
Emily Helms
Rhonda V. Herndon
Karen Hinch
Nancy Holland
Kimberly Ingram
Ashley Brooke Isbell
Rachael Lynn Isbell
Michael Jarvis
Karen Kelley
Jennifer Lawley
Jennifer Lee
Melissa Lee
Nancy T. Lemmono

Amy Walls Lenoir
Tina Lewis
Gail Lowery
Michael Lowery
Carrie Maddox
Bridget McClain
Gina McDonald
Susan McLane
Ann McMichael
Rhonda Meadows
Allison Miller
Anne Miller
Cindy Mincey
Bridgette Mitchell
Margaret Montague
Dionne M. Motley
Kristie D. Muir
Mark Muir
Paula Murrell
Jackie Parham
Michelle Parvin
Courtney Peters
Haley Phillips
Yvonne Pope
DeAnn Porter
Krista Price
Rheannon Roberts
Carrie Robinson
Maya Xiong Rose
Ann Rushing
Jacob L. Rushing
April Sargent
Elaine Scott
Paige Scott
Lynn Scroggins
Leita J. Seaborn
Tara M. Seay
Cindy Segars
Deborah Moses Sharman
Lori Sizemore
Angelina Smith
Paige Solley
Michelle Spence
Heather Spier
Jenny Steapleton
Dana Stewart
Tamie J. Story
Jennie Talbot
Gwendolyn Timbie
Melinda Thornbury
Jessica Throneberry
Mary Clair Whitten
Shanell Williams
Shannon Williams
Dennise Wolstenholme



2004-2005 Roster Corrections:

ACRA extends its apologies to the following ACRA members:

Korky De McGuire, CSR, Official Court Reporter in Franklin County, and Dixie C. Boutwell, Official Court Reporter in Elba, Alabama, were listed in the Annual Membership Roster as General Members. De and Dixie should correctly be listed as Certified Members.

Kathy Wallace, CSR, Freelance Court Reporter, was left out of the Annual Membership Roster. Kathy's address is 212 LaBonne Drive, Saraland, Alabama, 36571. Her phone numbers are: (home) 251-679-1143, (work) 251-479-8200.

Please note that on the 2nd page of the Roster under "Alabama Court Reporters Association 2004-2005 Executive Board," President Suzanne Frazier's email is listed incorrectly. It should be corrected to read: SFrazier1031@aol.com.

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The Gadsden State Realtime Reporting Program Turns 30



The Gadsden State Community College Realtime Reporting Program turns 30 this year.

First known as Court Reporting, this program began in 1974, thanks to Marie Whitaker. After reading about available funds to start court reporting programs, Ms. Whitaker thought the idea sounded interesting. Gadsden State Community College, at that time known as Gadsden State Junior College, applied for and received funding. With much hard work from the first director, Robert C. Miller, along with Ms. Whitaker, the first class started fall semester 1974. When the program began, only 20 new students were accepted each fall. Additionally, state-of-the-art equipment was used: IBM Selectric typewriters and manual machines. Wow!

During the past 30 years, much has changed. Mr. Miller moved to California in 1981 to accept a position as law professor. Deanna K. Johnson was hired in 1982. She worked diligently to ensure that the program continued to meet current NCRA standards and has been a major cornerstone in helping ACRA become what it is today. Ms. Johnson retired in the spring of 2004.

Each fall, 30 to 35 new students start the program. Today, the equipment utilized includes computers, SRT 400s, and paperless writers that line the walls of each classroom. The original two classrooms have now grown to four. Of those classrooms, two are computer labs; one, a moot

courtroom; and the other, a captioning lab composed of laptop stations and six fully equipped captioning studios.

What had been called "court reporting" was renamed "realtime reporting" last year when different areas of specialization developed. Realtime reporting comprises judicial reporting, CART, and captioning. Currently, the Realtime Reporting Program at GSCC includes judicial and captioning programs. GSCC received federal funds in the amount of \$425,000 a few years ago to help start its captioning program.

Over these past 30 years, many students have come and gone. A few who were near and dear to us have passed from this life: Cam Menzies, Steve Walker, and Danny Tyler. To those we dedicate this article, because they were the epitome of what this profession is all about. There is no adequate way to express the thanks that Mr. and Mrs. Nickolas Menzies deserve. During the past 20 years, they have touched many students' lives by the generous scholarships given in memory of their daughter Cam.

Also, this article would be incomplete without mentioning the first graduate of the program, Gloria Inman, official court reporter in Etowah County. Gloria helps us with our internship program, and she is always willing to lend a helping hand in any way possible.

We have created so many memories and have been touched by so many special students here at GSCC over the years that mentioning them all would be impossible. It has been an exciting 30 years, and the next 30 are sure to be just as eventful and exciting. Congratulations, Gadsden State Community College Realtime Reporting and Happy 30th Birthday!!

Counseling Convention

by Joyce Sasser, CSR,
Scholarship Committee Chairperson



Joyce Sasser

ACRA, Gadsden State Community College, and Prince Institute of Professional Studies participated jointly as exhibitors at the 2004 Alabama Counseling Association Annual Conference.

This venture was undertaken in an effort to boost awareness of the court reporting profession and increase enrollment in court reporting schools. The 2004 Alabama Counselors Association Conference took place November 17-19, 2004, at the Von Braun Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

The annual conference for counselors, involved in school, college, technical school, hospital, church, agency, and private settings in Alabama, featured nationally recognized keynote speakers, content sessions presented by professionals from all counselor work settings, committee meetings, and social events. Approximately 1200 ACA members attended the conference.

ACRA presented a continuous-feed video along with brochures highlighting the court reporting profession. Leigh Corfman represented GSCC and demonstrated writing on the stenotype machine. Patricia Hill represented PIPS and had displays and brochures. And both school representatives were available to provide answers to any and all inquiries regarding careers in court reporting as well as broadcast captioning and realtime reporting.

UPDATE! Important Member Notice!

We have improved our ACRA online database. The new database is very user friendly and more convenient and easier to use than ever before. If you have any changes to make to your contact information (name, address, telephone number, email address, etc.), you can now update your online profile, and the changes will take effect in our database immediately. Please keep these instructions for future reference.

To view or update your individual profile:

1. Log on to the ACRA home page by going to www.alcra.org.
2. Under the Quicklinks section, click on "Roster" to be taken to an alphabetical listing of members.
3. Select the letter of your last name.
4. Find your name and review your contact information.
5. To edit or change your contact information, click on your name and you will be taken to a new page.
6. Enter your password. The default password for all members is your last name. The password is case sensitive. So if your last name is Smith, you must type Capital

"S" then lower case "m-i-t-h."

7. YOU MUST CHANGE YOUR PASSWORD to protect your privacy. Please log on to the website and change your password as soon as possible.

To change the password, enter your *default* password (your last name) in the text box that says "Change Password." You will then be taken to a new page where you can enter your new password. Please make a note of the new password. (Note: You can only change your contact information. If you wish to change any other information, such as professional designations, i.e., CSR, RPR, RMR, you must contact either Alan Peacock, Webmaster, or Karen Reagan, Membership Retention Chair.)

Please review your contact information to ensure that ACRA has your correct information. The information in this database will be used for all mailing labels and emails that we send out. To ensure that you receive your copies of "For The Record," make sure that we have the most up-to-date information available.

Webmaster:

Alan Peacock – peacock43@comcast.net

Database Chairperson:

Karen Reagan - karenreagan@charter.net

Website assistance:

Default Help – help@alcra.org

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Choose to Lead

While it is revealing to consider what constitutes a leader, your search for understanding for some kind of leadership formula is apt to end in frustration. It is like studying Michelangelo or Shakespeare: You can imitate, emulate, and simulate, but there is simply no connect-the-dots formula to Michelangelo's David or Shakespeare's Hamlet. I suppose, when all is said and done, it really comes down to this:

People are leaders because they choose to lead.



BIRMINGHAM, AL

David Miller
Yvonne Pope
Tim Lovelady
Terry Crutchfield
Melinda Thornbury
Paige Scott
Mike Jarvis
Krista Price
Cheryl Brown
Debbie Townsend
Stephanie Burton
Melanie Petix
Sherry Tudor
Jodi DuBose
Tara Seay
Pamela Groover
Susan Alston McLane
Bridget McClain
Diana Williams
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Jessica Bell

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MONTGOMERY, AL

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Melissa Lee
Wendy Timbie
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Happy Holidays

By Angie Coleman, CSR, RPR, District 2 Director



I thought I might take this time to introduce myself to my fellow court reporters. Some of you already know me because I've been reporting for 17 years.

Angie Coleman And for those of you who do not know me, just think of me as that little short black court reporter that you see at conferences who is always smiling.

I want to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about myself and to also give court reporting its praises.

When I was in high school, I took a class called Business Administration. As part of the curriculum, we took a field trip to the courthouse. I remember seeing a court reporter -- the first time I had ever seen one before. I was just in awe! I knew from that moment on I wanted to be a court reporter. A few months later they had career day at my school. A student from Gadsden State Community College was

there talking about court reporting. And I must admit when she told me she would start off making \$25,000 a year, that sealed the deal. Sign me up! I know \$25,000 doesn't sound like much now, but when you come from a family of five kids and your dad and mom didn't make \$25,000 combined, believe me, it was a lot. Let me put it this way: We didn't get indoor plumbing until I was nine! I applied for grants and student loans, and with the help of my parents giving me what little extra cash they could afford, off to school I went. To cut a long story short, I graduated cum laude.

Now it is time to get a job. Finding a job was harder than I thought. Picture this: a short, skinny girl, who was very, very shy, trying to get a job where your personality plays a major role. You can imagine why it was difficult to get a job. When the opportunity came that a judge in Mobile was looking for a "black" court reporter, I was too naive to be offended. I just knew I had to get a job quick. So I interviewed and got the job. Surprise! I constantly had to prove I could do the job; therefore, I had a tough row to hoe. Don't get me wrong,

Even though it was hard, I will always be grateful I was given that opportunity to grow and mature.

Twelve years go by, and I hear about a new judgeship opening up in Anniston near my hometown. My prayers were answered. I interviewed and got the job. So I just want to leave you with these thoughts: It doesn't matter how old you are, your race, or your status in life. If you want something bad enough, pray over it, go for it, and things will work out! And if it looks like you just can't take it anymore, just hold on a little while longer. Things will get better!

P.S. By the time you read this article, hopefully I'll still have a job. My judge is running for re-election. That's the best thing about being a court reporter: No matter what happens, you can take your skills anywhere in the world. See you at the conference in January!

(Note: Angie's current judge was not re-elected; however, the newly elected judge, John Thomason, has wisely decided to retain Angie as his official court reporter in January. Congratulations, Angie!)

Student Mentoring

by Ashley Young, CSR, RPR, Student Mentoring Chairperson



Ashley Young

Mentoring actually is a means of giving a student the guidance and encouragement they need to be successful and to maintain their motivation towards our wonderful profession.

I started out as a working reporter not long ago. I remember how I always used to wonder how I was going to handle all the responsibilities of court reporting and how I wished so badly that I could just grab any court reporting passerby and bombard

them with tons of questions about what to expect in the real world. I felt that I had received wonderful court reporting training, but didn't feel that I would really know what to do if faced with a difficult situation while working.

Luckily, I found just the thing I needed: a mentor. It was wonderful! I could ask her any question. Nothing was too big or too small. Finally I could interact with someone who was that "question answerer" I had dreamed of. The important thing was that she wanted to help me, she wanted me to ask questions, she wanted to answer my questions the best she knew how, and she wanted me to be the best court reporter I could be. It was so exciting because I truly felt like she was actually helping me learn through our question-and-answer emails. It

was not only rewarding for me to have someone to be excited with when I passed a timing or a test, but it was rewarding for my mentor as well.

Now I am no longer a student, but I am a mentor myself. I have an understanding of just how rewarding the Mentor Program can be, having experienced both sides first-hand. Mentoring actually is a means of giving a student the guidance and encouragement they need to be successful and to maintain their motivation towards our wonderful profession. Students love the advice, and mentors love giving it. I know without a doubt that had I not participated in the mentor program myself as a student, I truly would have missed out on some very valuable information.



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 emails 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 requested and return to Ashley Young, Student Mentor Chairperson. In advance, we thank you for your consideration.

ACRA.....Committed to Service!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: (Work) (____) _____

(Home) (____) _____

(Fax) (____) _____

E-Mail: _____

Please send completed form to:
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