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FOR THE RECORD

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1960 Old Government Street
Mobile, AL 36606
Office/Home: 251-476-6327
email: Peacock43@Comcast.net

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Criminal Justice Center – Room 406
Birmingham, AL 35203
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email: murph1@aol.com

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email: mary.hicks@earthlink.net

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email: stacy.littleton@alacourt.gov

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email: shereewcater@hotmail.com

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email: covcourt@andycable.com

From the Desk of the President

Alan Peacock, CSR, RPR, RMR, CRR, CBC
ACRA President



Alan Peacock

This is my first article in For The Record in my new role as president of your Association.

First of all, let me say thank you to each and every one of you for putting your trust in me. You

have my promise that I will do my very best to represent and lead ACRA as we move forward over the next year. We have a great Board this year, and I am honored and proud to serve with each of you.

The summer convention was a success. The location and gas prices may have prevented some of you from being able to be there. However, for those that did attend, we had a wonderful time. Thank you to everyone that attended!

The Distinguished Service Award (DSA) was given to Paul Smith, CSR, RPR, CSR (TX). Paul served as president of ACRA (or ASRA as it was known then) on three separate occasions, in 1976, 1977, and 1979. The ACRA Student Scholarship Award was given to Kelli K. Lowery, a student in the GSCC court reporting program. Jeanna Boggs, CSR, was recognized as the ACRA Legislative Assistant of the Year in appreciation for going above and beyond the call of duty and assisting the Board in its legislative efforts on behalf of our CCR bill. Kathryn Sharpe, CSR, was recognized as ACRA's Member of the Year in recognition of her submittal of the most letters of support for our legislative effort.

Randall Murphree, CSR, is ACRA's new president-elect and also our new convention chairperson. The midwinter conference is only six months away. If any of you have any suggestions or would like to volunteer to help with the midwinter conference, I'm sure Randall would appreciate hearing from you soon! I hope that

everyone will be able to attend either the midwinter conference in Prattville in January 2006 or the summer convention which will be held in Mobile in July. Randall will have a great lineup of speakers and events. Watch your mailboxes later this year for registration materials for the midwinter conference. Randall's article in the next issue of FTR will offer more information about the conference as well.

We have a lot of work to do over the next year. Unfortunately, the July special session of the legislature did not have enough time to allow consideration of our CCR bill. Our first order of business will be to reintroduce our certification bill during the 2006 regular legislative session. Our legislative committee will be co-chaired by Suzanne Frazier CSR, RPR, and Parian Holderfield, CSR, RPR, RMR, both of whom fought so hard during the last legislative session for passage of our bill. With Suzanne and Parian leading the charge, we are sure to get the full attention of the Senate and the House in 2006. I will be sending updates to the membership via email, so watch your inbox for details.

Another part of my agenda for this year involves working with the legislative committee and AOC to ensure that official reporters are fairly compensated. Official reporters have not had a pay raise in over ten years, so a pay increase is long overdue. The State of Alabama currently is conducting an eFiling pilot project which affects several select counties. If the pilot project is deemed a success, all official transcripts could be required to be filed electronically in pdf format. Under those circumstances, the transcripts will then become the property of the State and copies could be downloaded by any interested party, all under the control of the clerk of court. This very well could mean a substantial loss of income for official reporters. That is one reason why we are anticipating taking legislative action in the coming year to secure an increase in salary for official reporters.

ACRA is extremely lucky in that the
cont. on page 2

2005 Summer Convention One of the Best Ever

Randall Murphree, CSR
President-Elect, 2006 Convention Chair



Randall Murphree

Kudos for planning an outstanding 2005 Summer Convention in Gatlinburg go to the Convention Planning Committee chaired by Alan Peacock, CSR, RPR, RMR, CRR, CBC, and now ACRA's president. This summer's convention was one of the best!

The opening seminar on Thursday focused on a topic any working reporter can relate to, "Stress: Do You Have It Under Control!?" Jane Boucher -- author, speaker, and drug counselor, shared with us how we should handle stress, pointing out three most-needed practices for living longer, happier, and better equipped to deal with daily stress: laughter, exercise, and a proper diet.

That afternoon everyone boarded a bus for a trip down the mountain and a "taste" of local flavors -- a winery/wine-tasting and jelly-making tour. Smokey Mountain Farms Jelly House is where I purchased blackberry jam and preserves like my mother used to make. It was apparent that Smokey Mountain Wines had an economic boost when the tours and tasting finished there. ACRA members made quite a few purchases, the bags and boxes crowded onto the bus for the ride back up the mountain being evidence of acquisitions from the tours.

Alan's expertise in planning the summer convention was again in evidence at Thursday evening's Opening Reception. It truly was second to none. The hors

From the Desk of the President

Continued from front page

Administrative Office of Courts and the Attorney General's office are willing to work with us on the eFiling project. ACRA's input was solicited in the planning stages of the project. Parian Holderfield is serving as chairperson of ACRA's eFiling Committee. Parian and the other committee members will be in regular communication with AOC and the AG's office as the project proceeds in an effort to assure that Alabama's reporters are satisfied with the outcome of this pilot project. ACRA will

d'oeuvres included fish, chicken fingers, shrimp, roast, ham, fruits, and vegetables -- just about anything you could want. The reception was a wonderful opportunity to visit with friends not seen on a regular basis and left little need for dinner reservations afterwards.

Friday at the convention began with a choice of enjoying either a continental breakfast or a voluntary prayer breakfast led by Pastor Buddy Kimmer, a local retired Methodist minister. Pastor Kimmer and his wife operate a wedding chapel in Gatlinburg, where he performs the marriage ceremonies. We learned that Las Vegas is the only other location in the United States having more weddings annually than Gatlinburg.

The first session of the day was a presentation/information session by Grady P. Gaston, of Gradkell Systems, Inc., of Huntsville, Alabama, addressing digital signatures and electronic document security. It was a highly technical session but very pertinent, as the State of Alabama is currently utilizing electronic filing in four counties. Securing our transcripts now, more than ever, becomes a current-event topic.

Diana Battles, CSR, RPR, made possible a couple of "Aha!" moments as we enjoyed a steno swap. Who'd-a-thunk-it! Actually there was not a brief or easy way to write that particular "word." However, many new, different, and easier ways to write on our machines were shared, with input from reporters around the state and even the nation, with Karen Yates, our NCRA representative, sharing a few of her own personal "gems."

ACRA's own Laura Nichols, CSR, RPR, CRR, and partner in the reporting firm of Tyler, Eaton, Morgan, Nichols &

keep you abreast of any changes and updates to the eFiling project.

I would also like to make every effort this year to keep our members updated and satisfied. I do not want to have even one member unhappy. I promise to provide you with all of the news and information that is relevant to you as a court reporter as soon as possible. I will also work to increase our membership and our member benefits so that you can actually see your dues in action.

As a reminder, our first Board meeting for this fiscal year will be held on October 8, 2005. You are invited to attend and participate.

Pritchett, shared with us the benefit of her real-time experience with much-needed information for real-time hookups. Laura distributed a first-class booklet listing everything you should need for on-the-job real-time reporting, being prepared for any unexpected circumstances, and what can be done in a crunch when your best-laid plans go awry and you are having a really "bad day."

Pat Higgins, CSR, RPR, and Debby Garrett, CSR, RPR, finished off Friday's sessions with an eye-opening seminar on CSR status and requirements. They reminded us that the honor and the privilege of holding Certified Shorthand Reporter certification also comes with responsibilities.

Alan Brock, CSR, RPR, CRR, RDR, a speed writer who works with Ed Varallo, FAPR, RMR, CRR, one of the leading speed champions of NCRA, was Saturday's featured seminarian. Alan, himself, came in second in this year's NCRA Annual Speed Contest in Phoenix, AZ. Alan has a way of holding your attention and making you want to write better and cleaner notes AND consider going for higher levels of certification. Alan shared different approaches for test-taking preparation, as well as writing cleaner notes at faster speeds.

As ACRA president-elect, I am now also the 2006 convention chairperson. Mark your calendar now so you won't forget the ACRA Midwinter Conference that will be held at The Legends at Prattville on January 20 and 21, 2006. The 2005 Midwinter Conference and Summer Convention were both valuable education meetings for us as court reporting professionals. We want the upcoming year's sessions to be equally as enjoyable. If you have any suggestions for the 2006 Midwinter

cont. on page 15

As you can see, we have a lot on our plate for the coming year -- certification, eFiling, membership drives, etc. I promise to keep Suzanne Frazier's legacy alive and continue to offer an open-door policy for each and every member; and, to borrow Suzanne's words, I also remind you that ACRA is YOUR association! We are here to help. If you have any questions or issues that come up over the next year, please contact me and I will do my personal best to find a solution.

Until next time....
Alan Peacock, ACRA President

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 change, 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. Click on "Roster" under the Quicklinks section to be taken to an alphabetical

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AEPL..... American Medical
THRABPT or Atlanta
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2005 Summer Convention One of the Best Ever

Continued from page 2

Conference and/or Summer Convention, please contact me at murph1@aol.com, any board member listed on the front page of this issue, or the webmaster at www.alcra.org. Volunteers to help in planning are always welcome as well!

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.

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PRAEFDappraised
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AEBS or SPWEUSasbestos
AEBZ or SPWOES asbestosis
SKERD or asked and answered

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 Drinkard, Membership Chair.

Alan Peacock -- peacock43@comcast.net
Karen Drinkard - karenreagan@charter.net
Default Help -- help@alcra.org

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please review your contact information to ensure that we have the 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 *The Record* and up-to-date membership information, please make sure that we have the most current information available.

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TOERPattorney
TOEUP..... attorney-client privilege
PWRORD back on the record
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PWHRUBG..... bad luck
KWROEP..... beyond the scope
PWHRAD Bin Laden
PWHREUBGbiologic
PWHROL..... biological
PWHAPH.....Birmingham
KAEPT..... capital
KAEPGS capitalization
KAOPT or capitol
KAPT/TOL
K-PT..... carpal tunnel



Karen Yates, RPR, CRR, CCP, NCRA Representative

Impressions of ACRA by Karen Yates, RPR, CRR, CCP NCRA Director

I know I told everyone I saw as I departed, but let me say again how much I enjoyed my time with ACRA. It was a wonderful blend of education and fun. What impressed me the most is the warmth and respect you have for one another. That makes for the most successful board activities, and sadly it's rare.

ALABAMA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION JOIN A 2005-2006 COMMITTEE TODAY

Ask not what your ACRA can do for you! Ask yourself what YOU can do for ACRA and your court reporting profession! Join your fellow reporters in accomplishing rewarding tasks for your future as a court reporter. Indicated below which committee or committees you would love to assist with and send your form to Alan Peacock: 1960 Old Government Street, Mobile, AL 36606. You will be amazed at the satisfaction you can and will receive from sharing your time and talents in furtherance of the purposes of the Alabama Court Reporters Association.

COMMITTEE	CHAIRPERSON	EMAIL ADDRESS	INTERESTED
MEMBERSHIP	Diana Battles	dlbattles@hotmail.com	
MEMBERSHIP RETENTION	Karen Drinkard	karenreagan@charter.net	
CERTIFICATION	Shannon Ball	bamaball@centurytel.net	
PUBLICATIONS	Suzanne Frazier	Sfrazier1031@aol.com	
WAYS AND MEANS	Sheree Cater	Shereewcater@hotmail.com	
2006 CONVENTIONS	Randall Murphree	Murph1@aol.com	
CONVENTION PLANNING	Deanna Johnson Randall Murphree	deannarpr@comcast.net Murph1@aol.com	
NOMINATIONS	TBA by President-Elect	Murph1@aol.com	
LEGISLATION	Suzanne Frazier Parian Holderfield	Sfrazier1031@aol.com ParianRMR@aol.com	
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD	Alan Peacock	Peacock43@comcast.net	
PRO BONO	Sheree Cater	Shereewcater@hotmail.com	
CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS	Debby Garrett	debbyjrpr@aol.com	
SCHOLARSHIP	Sherry Mack	sherrymack@charter.net	
AUDITING	Pat Higgins	pat@dunking.com	
PUBLIC RELATIONS	Margaret Turner	MCATurner@comcast.net	
WEBSITE	Alan Peacock	Peacock43@comcast.net	
STUDENT MENTORING	Jennifer Kissic	Jennifer.kissic@alacourt.gov	
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	Debby Garrett	debbyjrpr@aol.com	
LONG TERM GOALS	Suzanne Frazier Karen Drinkard Shannon Ball Alan Peacock Celeste Riddle Mitzi T. Smith	Sfrazier1031@aol.com karenreagan@charter.net bamaball@centurytel.net Peacock43@comcast.net owenriddle@alltel.net mitzismith@bellsouth.net	
CLVS (On hold status)	John F. Kilpatrick, CLVS	John.Kilpatrick@legal-imaging.net	
CART/Realtime Committee	Tasha Scott	tasha@scottrealtime.com	
eFiling Committee	Parian Holderfield	ParianRMR@aol.com	

If you are interested in serving on any ACRA committees, feel free to contact the chairperson via email or you can check with committee you are interested in, then sign the form and turn in to any ACRA Board member.



Alan Peacock & Kathryn Sharpe,
ACRA Member of the Year



Alan Peacock Emceeding the Convention



Alan Peacock & Jeanna Boggs,
Legislative Helper of the Year



ACRA Past Presidents: (L-R) Suzanne Frazier, Karen Drinkard, Sheilagh Dunkley, Pat Higgins, Mary Frances Giattina, Debby Garrett, Deanna Johnson, Sherry Barlow, Paul Smith



2005-2006 ACRA Board: (L-R) Julia Isenhower, Kathy Hicks, Suzanne Frazier, Alan Peacock, Kathryn Sharpe, Randall Murphree, Sheree Carter, Diana Battles, Mary Hicks



Alan Peacock, incoming president, receiving recognition of service plaque



Deanna Johnson & Diana Battles, Smoky Mtn. Winery



Ashley Dickey, Convention Photographer

**Paul D. Smith, CSR (AL, TX), RPR
2005 - 2006 DSA Recipient**



Alabama Court Reporters Association's DSA Recipient was all smiles as he accepted his award recently at our summer convention in Gatlinburg, with his proud wife, Beverly Campbell Smith, looking on. Paul Smith's career epitomizes dedication to service, and ACRA has been the recipient many, many times of his benevolent and giving spirit. Some of his family members shared a script with us that was written

by Paul Smith himself five years ago. It conclusively tells a wonderful tale of our DSA recipient's charitable career in court reporting and his love of family and of music. We loved reading it so much, we thought we would share it with you too. Enjoy reading about this beautiful soul named Paul D. Smith.

"After graduating high school in 1951, I attended Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas. I met my wife, Beverly Campbell, in Ft. Worth, during one of the years I would have been in college, but had taken the year off to work there. Lloyd Jones and I were sharing an apartment in Ft. Worth during 1954. I returned to college in Abilene. 'Bev' and I were married in Ft. Worth, October 26, 1956. I graduated from Abilene Christian in 1958, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education, receiving a lifetime multi-level teaching certificate. At the completion of my college undergrad work at Abilene, Beverly and I came to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to enable me to further my education at the University of Alabama. Before completing my Master's Degree, we found that we were expecting our second child in less than two years, so it became necessary for me to leave college. Beverly had served as secretary to the vice-president of the University of Alabama, but obviously could not continue to do so with two infants.

"We moved to Dallas, Texas, in March 1960, where our second daughter was born in August. I accepted a position at Campbell-Taggart Associated Bakeries, Inc., in Dallas as purchasing agent. During that year, I had begun singing with a small group under the direction of Dr. Lloyd Pfautch at SMU, known as the Dallas Civic Chorale. Shortly after that, Dallas Civic Opera, under the leadership of Lawrence Kelley, began to attract some internationally known opera singers and asked Dr. Pfautch to help secure singers for the chorus for Dallas Civic Opera Chorus, which performed at The State Fair Music Hall there. The opera director came directly from Teatro a'la Scala, Italy, and brought with him several maestri directly from Italy. I auditioned for the chorus there, and was totally surprised to have been accepted to sing with them. I did this as a second job for some four or five years, but in order to do so it became necessary that I join the union known as AGMA: American Guild of Musical Artists.

"This was not an expected bonus when we moved to Dallas, but it turned out to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I was on stage and sang with opera performances alongside Placido Domingo when he made his American debut there in Dallas; Joan Southerland who sang several roles with us; Gianni Raimondi; Patrice Munsel; and others, not to mention the great thrill it was to have as our set designer Franco Zeffirelli, who left Dallas to go with Old Vic in London where he became Elizabeth Taylor's & Richard Burton's preferred designer. Each time I would see 'A Zeffirelli Production' on marquees, it was a thrill to know that I

had worked with him there in Dallas. It was one of the outstanding times in my experiences.

"When our daughters became old enough to begin school, I went back to school to learn court reporting. Beverly once again worked to help support us; and I would attend school, then work as a proofreader for the Abilene Reporter News from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. each day for the morning paper there in Abilene. In 1967 we moved to Wichita Falls, Texas, where I accepted my first court-reporting assignment and where we lived for a bit over one year.

"I was then invited back to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where I had been in the University of Alabama earlier, but this time it was to serve as the official court reporter for a judge. I accepted the position, and have lived in Tuscaloosa since 1968. I was very active in my state and national court reporting associations, having served in Alabama three times as president-elect, and three times as president of the Alabama Court Reporters Association, in addition to being on almost every committee in our state.

"Likewise, I chaired and/or served on many national committees and task forces for the National Court Reporters Association, Washington, D.C., culminating in 1981 when I was inducted as a Fellow into the Academy of Professional Reporters during our national convention in San Francisco. Although I served on other committees, etc., after that time, none has been any more special than that experience. This summer (July 21, 2000) in San Diego, CA, my older daughter, Elise Smith Evans, will be (or by the time this is published will have been) inducted as a Fellow, making it especially meaningful because we will have been the first father-daughter to have been Fellows simultaneously.

"I loved every minute of my work: it has been a lifetime of continuing education as I took testimony from all sorts of experts - doctors, chemists, etc. -- the most interesting and intriguing work I could imagine ever doing. Both daughters have become court reporters, and my only son is an attorney. I have come to know court reporters who have reported some of the most famous cases in America, and also after World War II in Nuremberg, Germany. One delightful lady, Vivien Spitz, who lives in Arvada, Colorado, had to wait for a year to go to Germany to take down the Nazi War Crimes trials (medical portions), in 1947. Today she is 76, but then she waited a year to become 21 years old so she could go to Nuremberg. After returning from Germany, she became a reporter of debate on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, where she served under 6 presidents, and ultimately served as the Chief Reporter, Reporters of Debate, United States House of Representatives, until her retirement to Colorado a few years ago.

"This is what I have been up to for the last (37) years of the (55), and it has been so wonderful! My wife and I are both retired -- she from the University of Alabama, and I from court reporting--but we have a lot of miles to go and things to see before we are through. As Vivien Spitz prefaces each of her speeches about Nuremberg with a quote from Gorges Santiano, "Those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it." I want to see even more and do other things, too." -- Paul D. Smith

CONGRATULATIONS!!

New RPR's:

Mandy Williams Bryant, CSR, RPR – Birmingham, AL
Deborah A. Payton, CSR, RPR – Mobile, AL
Michelle Graham Spence, CSR, RPR – Odenville, AL

New RDR:

Andrea E. Martin, CSR, RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, CBC
– Dothan, AL

New CBC:

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~ C S R I N F O R M A T I O N ~

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY 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 at www.alcra.org) or by submitting your application found printed below.

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 gain certification.

For your convenience, the test will be offered in three locations throughout the state: Gadsden, Montgomery, and Mobile. The testing date is October 1, 2005.

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 transcript 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) may use their NCRA credits to apply toward their CSR CEU credits.

Register today for the October 1, 2005, Alabama CSR examination! It is a great way to prepare for the RPR examination in November. 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!



Alabama CSR Examination Application

CSR Examination Date: April 2, 2005
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 all that apply):

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

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

ACRA 2005 Scholarship is Awarded

*by Joyce A. Sasser, CSR
 ACRA Scholarship Committee Chairperson*

Once each year ACRA awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving court reporting student who is selected by the Scholarship Committee, made up of three reporters. The winner for 2005 is Kelli K. Lowery, a student in the Real-Time Department of Gadsden State Community College. The following are excerpts from her essay application:

"There are numerous reasons that could cause a person to become a court reporter. My reasons are probably different from those of an 18-year-old girl right out of high school. I am a 28-year-old wife and mother. I feel that this is my last chance to change the direction of my life and to better my family's financial situation. The thought of doing something that I truly live and breathe, while making a handsome living, makes court reporting the perfect profession for me. It also allows me to show everyone that I can break the family cycle.

"I have been a scopist now for four years. My life revolves around rush jobs, appeals, and ASCII's. If there is one thing I am good at, it is working well under pressure and rearranging my schedule.

"I have watched my parents struggle all my childhood with money. I just thought that that was how people lived and it was normal. I later realized that it was not how everyone lived. After being married for almost ten years and living paycheck to paycheck, I realized that I was doing the same thing. I do not want my daughter to grow up thinking that is the only way to live. I want to better our family's financial situation so that she will remember how important her education is and what a priority it should be. My only hope is that realizing the importance of education does not take her as long as it took me.

"In my family, I will be the first person to graduate from college. Even though most people would say that is not something to be proud of, I take immense pride in the fact that I will be the one to break the cycle. Growing up without anyone around who has been to college makes a child feel that there is really no chance of breaking the cycle and going, so why try? I want to show my daughter that college and education are not just for certain people. These are privileges that anyone can take advantage of. They may be hard for some and easier for others, but it is offered to everyone alike."

As the ACRA Scholarship winner,

Kelli was presented a certificate by ProCat for a student version of their Winner software. In addition to the \$1,000 scholarship, Kelli also received a room for one night at the Park Vista Resort and registration to the Summer Convention.

ACRA is proud to have Kelli K. Lowery of Gadsden State Community College as our 2005 scholarship recipient. At the convention banquet and officer installation where Kelli was recognized as the scholarship recipient, Kelli made the statement to outgoing ACRA president Suzanne Frazier that she (Kelli) planned to be "up there" one day being installed as an officer of ACRA. We wish Kelli the best and are looking forward to the contributions she will make to our court reporting profession.



**Kelli K. Lowery, 2005 Scholarship Recipient, and
 Joyce Sasser, Scholarship Committee Chair**

ACRA Board Meeting

The ACRA Board of Directors will hold its
 Fall 2005 quarterly meeting

Saturday, October 8 at 10:00 a.m.

at the offices of
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Passing It On

by Deborah A. Payton, CSR, RPR

A Story of Hope and Encouragement When Diagnosed With Breast Cancer

One night my husband and I were in bed watching the Grammy Awards. Watching Melissa Etheridge come out on stage to perform a Janice Joplin song, I said to myself, "How courageous for doing that right after breast cancer." She was absolutely beautiful, she had a glow about herself, and she was the third person that week I had heard of who had been diagnosed with breast cancer. I reached down to examine myself and felt a hard lump on the left side of my breast. I couldn't believe what I had felt. My heart sank. I asked my husband to feel it, and he said, "Oh, you've got to get that checked."

I went to my regular doctor, and he sent me for a mammogram the next day. The doctor told me the mammogram wasn't picking the lump up because my tissue was too firm due to my age (38 years old); but they felt the lump and said it would be best to have a biopsy done. The biopsy was done. In the meantime, my mom, sisters, and friends were telling me not to worry about it, and it's probably just fibrocystic. At this point I was not worried about it.

Since breast cancer did not run in my family, I too was thinking it was fibrocystic.

On May 4, 2005, I had a deposition in Bay Minette, Alabama. On my way back from the deposition, I stopped at the hospital to see what my results were on the biopsy. As I am waiting in the lobby, the nurse came out and grabbed my hand and started rubbing it. I knew something was wrong at that point. I started to cry. I just couldn't believe it. It felt like I was dreaming.

I was taken into the medical office to speak with the doctor. The doctor told me it was invasive carcinoma, Stage I. My whole body just went limp. I just could not believe what I was hearing. My thoughts were: How could this happen to me, with no breast cancer running in my family? I don't smoke, I exercise every day, and I am not overweight. It just did not make any sense to me. The doctor told me 85% of women that are diagnosed with breast cancer have no family history of breast cancer and that just by being a woman, you are at risk. How uneducated I was!

I was scheduled to take the RPR exam on May 7. I just didn't feel like I was up to it, what with having had the biopsy and being diagnosed with cancer. If it wasn't for my husband, Virgil, and my dad, Leon Burke, insisting to me that I take the test, I

would have been a no-show. I decided to go on to the RPR exam.

I saw a surgeon that following Monday. I underwent surgery that Wednesday, May 11, 2005. The surgeon's findings: a 1.8 cm lump with clean margins, no lymph node involvement, Estrogen/Progesterone positive, Her2 negative. My surgeon told me I did a good job of catching this (the lump/my cancer). The surgeon did a wonderful job, and I am really happy with the results of my surgery.

I am currently undergoing 8 weeks of chemotherapy and 6 weeks of radiation. My recurrence rate will be about 4% when I am finished with all of my treatments. At this point (July 5, 2005), I am halfway through with my chemo treatments. I thank God this was caught in the early stages.

I urge all women to take the time to get their mammograms yearly and to do a self-exam every month. I beg you, please do not put it off!

I thank ACRA for asking me to write this article and allowing me to share my experience and pass breast cancer awareness on.

By the way, I passed my RPR. Thanks Virgil and Dad!



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We Need You!

by Jennifer Kissic, CSR
Student Mentor Committee Chair



Jennifer Kissic

I am excited and honored to have been given the opportunity to be the Student Mentor Committee chairperson for 2005-2006. I look at this as being a great opening for becoming more involved with our Association. I would like to thank Alan Peacock for appointing me to serve in this way.

I would also like to take this occasion to encourage both students and working re-

porters to become involved with the student mentorship program. Students and working reporters alike have very busy schedules. However, this is a great way to pass along some words of encouragement and sound advice to aspiring reporters.

I'm sure we can all think back and remember what it was like in school -- how we became discouraged or aggravated with ourselves and even wanted to throw our machine out the window at times. I also know that we can all remember how our family members and friends just did not understand what we were going through as a court reporting student. The truth is that no one understands except someone who has person-

ally been there. We all know that.

With that in mind, now think of how much it would have helped had you had someone to talk to about any concerns or worries you had while in school. Good! Now you have got it! Please call me (205-252-9152) email me (Jennifer.kissic@alacourt.gov), or complete the form printed below to sign up to serve as a student mentor. You never know; you might even learn something new from the student you will mentor! And by the way, if you are a student wishing to have a mentor, please contact me as well. I am looking forward to hearing from you. Thanks!

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 return to the registration desk. In advance, we thank you for your consideration.

ACRA.....Committed to Service!

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: (Work) (_____) _____ (Home) (_____) _____

(Fax) (_____) _____ E-Mail: _____

Please send completed form to:

Jennifer Kissic, CSR
Student Mentor Committee Chairperson
343 Blue Bird Land • Alpine, AL 35014
205-252-9152 • Jennifer.kissic@alacourt.gov

ACRA's Member Serving on Active Duty

by Captain John F. Kilpatrick



Captain John F. Kilpatrick

I am now in the ninth month of my deployment and more anxious than ever to complete my Army work in Kosovo and return to my life as a civilian. There is much waiting for me at home, most importantly, my wonderful wife, Laurie, and my two boys, Owen and Henry. I have missed them terribly! I am so grateful for our family and friends who have provided constant support for my family during my deployment.

Also waiting for me is my business, Legal Imaging, LLC. Who would have ever thought I could leave my business for a year and it would continue to grow? I am so grateful for my partner, Skip Warren, and all of our clients who have supported us during this difficult time. What a wonderful blessing!

And, of course, waiting for me is ACRA's Legal Video Committee. As most of you know, the committee was put on hold pending my return from active duty. I have, however, been trying to keep up. I have been following the Alabama Certified Court Reporters

Licensure Bill, and I'm hopeful of its passage. This bill is a vital step in ensuring that court reporters are trained, can perform competently, and will be accountable for the record.

As a Certified Legal Video Specialist (CLVS), I believe we legal videographers have the same requirements. Today legal video is an intricate part of the record. We owe Alabama's legal community a minimum standard of performance.

I encourage you to hire and refer legal videographers who are trained and certified. I, for my part, will continue to educate Alabama's legal community on the importance of our certification. It is through this education that we will continue to increase the value of our certification, thus improving our status as professionals in Alabama's legal community.

Thanks to all who have sent prayers and notes of encouragement. Please continue to pray for all our troops deployed throughout the world and for our families, who have the toughest jobs at home. Take care and God bless.

John F. Kilpatrick, CLVS
Legal Imaging, LLC
www.legal-imaging.net

'MEN OF COURT REPORTING' 2006 CALENDAR

If you haven't heard from your friends and co-workers about the "Men of Court Reporting," 2006 calendar created by NCRA's Political Action Committee (PAC), then you are truly missing out. The calendar is full of fascinating facts about the court reporting profession, and features important NCRA and state affiliate association dates.

NCRA's ability to raise money for PAC will allow them to make a big impact on Capitol Hill and will help to promote and protect the court reporting and captioning professions. If you are interested in more information about the calendar, please contact Laura Dennis, NCRA Government Relations Specialist, at 703-556-6272 or ldennis@ncrahq.org.

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

MOBILE, AL

Deborah Payton
Sue Ann Casey

MONTEGOMERY, AL

Melissa Lee
Wendy Timbie
Selah Dryer

NORTH ALABAMA

Suzanne Prince

WEST ALABAMA

Margo Nettles Bryan

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Greetings from Tuscaloosa and District One!

Mary F. Hicks, CSR, RPR
Director, District One



Mary F. Hicks

Let me start by saying thanks to all of you for allowing me to serve as District 1 Director! Just a little background in case you are interested: I grew up in Gadsden, where I attended court reporting school at Gadsden State. After graduation I worked with Bain & Associates in Birmingham and moved to Tuscaloosa in the fall of 1996, where I started working as a Special Roving Court Reporter for Tuscaloosa County. My husband, Ted, is an official court reporter in Fayette, Lamar, and Pickens Counties. I have two sons — Ford, 13, and Thomas, 3 1/2.

For those who do not know, I was sworn in as a district director at the Friday night banquet of the ACRA Summer Convention in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. And what a great conference it was! Our president, Alan Peacock, did a great job planning the programs, the food -- everything. Alan, thanks so much for all your hard work!

Many thanks to Immediate Past President Suzanne Frazier, who has worked so hard and taught me so much this past year. Thanks also to Parian Holderfield, who I have been working with on the Legislative Committee and who has also done a great deal of work for ACRA. I am really looking forward to working with such a great group of people!

The convention seminars were not only extremely helpful and informative, but also were very interesting! Thanks to Laura Nichols for speaking to us about Realtime. She did a great job! Also thanks to Diana Battles for doing the Steno Swap. We definitely need to do that again! Alan Brock was fantastic! We were very fortunate to have him as a speaker as well. If you ever get the opportunity to attend a program where he is speaking, definitely go! We all need motivation at times in our lives. Rest assured you will find it at an ACRA conference or convention! For those who were unable to attend our convention last week, let me encourage you to attend the Midwinter Conference in Prattville in January 2006.

I really enjoyed getting to meet some of you for the first time at the convention and also enjoyed the opportunity to spend

time with those I do not get to see very often. There are always entertaining stories to be shared -- oh, and the horror stories too! Isn't it wonderful to get together and talk about these experiences with people who understand?

An important portion in our program during the banquet was the letter written by 2004 Distinguished Service Award recipient Kathy Haynes, which was read by Karen Drinkard. Thanks so much to Kathy for taking the time to keep in touch with us and to Karen for sharing it with us. Kathy, you are an inspiration!

Everyone who attended the Friday night banquet in Gatlinburg received a yellow LIVESTRONG bracelet promoting cancer awareness, which was very special because all of our lives have been touched by cancer in some way. Please continue to pray for Penny Adams, CSR, RPR, CRR, as she is undergoing treatments for cancer. Penny, you are very close to our hearts!

2005-2006 is really going to be a great year! There will be a lot of things happening, i.e., the CCR bill and the pilot program for electronic filing. Please let us hear from you. Get involved in ACRA, because it is YOUR Association!

Greetings from District Two!

by Stacy Littleton, CSR
Director, District Two



Stacy Littleton

Hello to all ACRA members and friends. Thank you all so much for electing me as the District 2 Director for the 2005-2006 year. This is my first time to serve as a district director; however, I worked last year on the Legislative Committee. I am really excited about becoming more involved in our Association.

I have been a member of ACRA for three years. My experiences have been nothing but wonderful. Court reporters are special people, as we all know. There's nothing better than having a group of court reporters to support us, listen to all of our hilarious stories from depositions and court, and just understand what the heck we're talking about in general!

My name is Stacy Littleton. For those of you who attended the 2005 Midwinter Conference karaoke event, I am also known as "Mustang Stacy." I live in Heflin, Alabama, and am married to Wes Littleton. We have a two-year-old daughter named

Jacy Layne. I am the official court reporter for the Honorable Judge Samuel H. Monk, II, State of Alabama, 7th Judicial Circuit. I have been a court reporter for five years, starting out freelancing and moving on to becoming an official. I guess you could say I am a cheerleader for this profession, as I have motivated many students and adults to become court reporters. What can I say? I LOVE MY JOB!!

That's enough about me. I want to let you all know about some changes that have taken place in District 2 recently. I guess you could say a unique triangle has unfolded -- a veritable fruit-basket turnover:

1. Parian Holderfield, CSR, RPR, RMR, my predecessor, was the Official Court Reporter for the Honorable R. Joel Laird, Jr., for the 7th Judicial Circuit in Anniston, Alabama. She is now the official reporter for the Honorable Karen K. Hall in Huntsville, Alabama, Madison County.
2. In return, Celeste Riddle, CSR, RPR, RMR, has taken Parian's place with Judge Laird. Celeste has moved from Scottsboro to Moody, Alabama.

Celeste's previous officialship was in Jackson County.

3. Lastly in the triangle is Shannon Ball, CSR, RPR, RMR, who was the reporter for the Honorable Karen K. Hall in Madison County. Shannon has taken Celeste's previous job in Jackson County.

Can I make things a little more confusing? I am so proud for each of these three reporters. These three ladies' involvement in ACRA was their initial contact with each other and the beginning of a lengthy friendship that has now worked to each of their benefit.

I will close by saying I am just so thrilled about leading District 2 in the following year. Hold on, everyone. This is going to be a great year ahead!

"Friends are the family we choose for ourselves"

-Edna Buchanan (writer)

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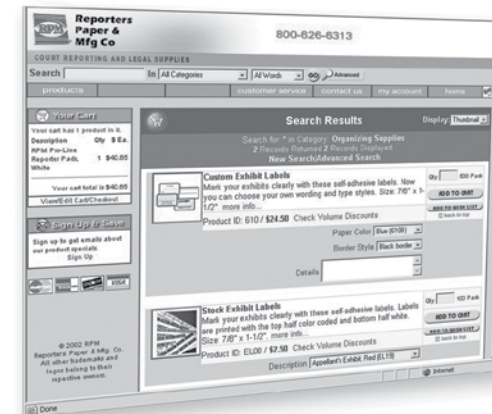
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