

# CCRA *online*

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**CCRA Distinguished  
Service Award Winner  
- Bill Greenley**

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### CCRA Online Copy Deadlines

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### CCRA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the California Court Reporters Association is to advance the profession of verbatim shorthand reporting by promoting professional reporting excellence through education, research, and the use of state-of-the-art technology; establishing and maintaining professional standards of practice; and advocating before legislative and regulatory bodies on issues which impact the judicial system and others served by the court reporting profession of California.

# President's Message — The Importance of One

By Sheri Turner Gray, CSR 7350  
CCRA President



How important is **ONE** dollar?

**ONE** paycheck?

How critical is **ONE** word in a transcript?

**ONE** phone call back to a client?

How about **ONE** smile or kind word?

**ONE** networking opportunity gained or lost?

We all know there are times when just one of each of these things can be very important.

One assembly committee vote is what saved our official reporting jobs in the previous round of budget cuts. Now we are facing even more severe recommendations for further budget cuts. We just finished an election where several contests were too close and required recounts of the vote. How many “one votes” made the difference in the election?

One member makes a difference to CCRA. One reporter's voice lending their support is critical. One reporter talking up the issue with their reporter colleagues, the attorneys and judges they work with, and anyone else with a stake in the services and products we provide can be so very helpful. And when the time comes, one phone call, one e-mail, one letter to a critical legislator might be the one that makes or breaks our position.

So if you've ever thought that you are just one person and you don't count, think again. I have gotten so many e-mails in support of CCRA's efforts from people who have never gotten involved before but want to now. Thank you for your support and your help. We need each and every one to help us through this crisis. Together we will fight the good fight.

**YOU ARE THE ONE!**



# CCRA DSA Recipient

*By Toni O'Neil*

This year's recipient is the reporter we would like to be. The experience, knowledge, and expertise of this reporter is such that when she or he speaks on reporter-related topics, like the old E.F. Hutton commercial, everyone in the room stops what they're doing and listens. Over the past 40 years, his leadership in the local, state, and national arena has been so stellar and so admired that whenever anyone needs someone knowledgeable, thoughtful, and visionary regarding issues of reporting, his or her name is the first that is mentioned.

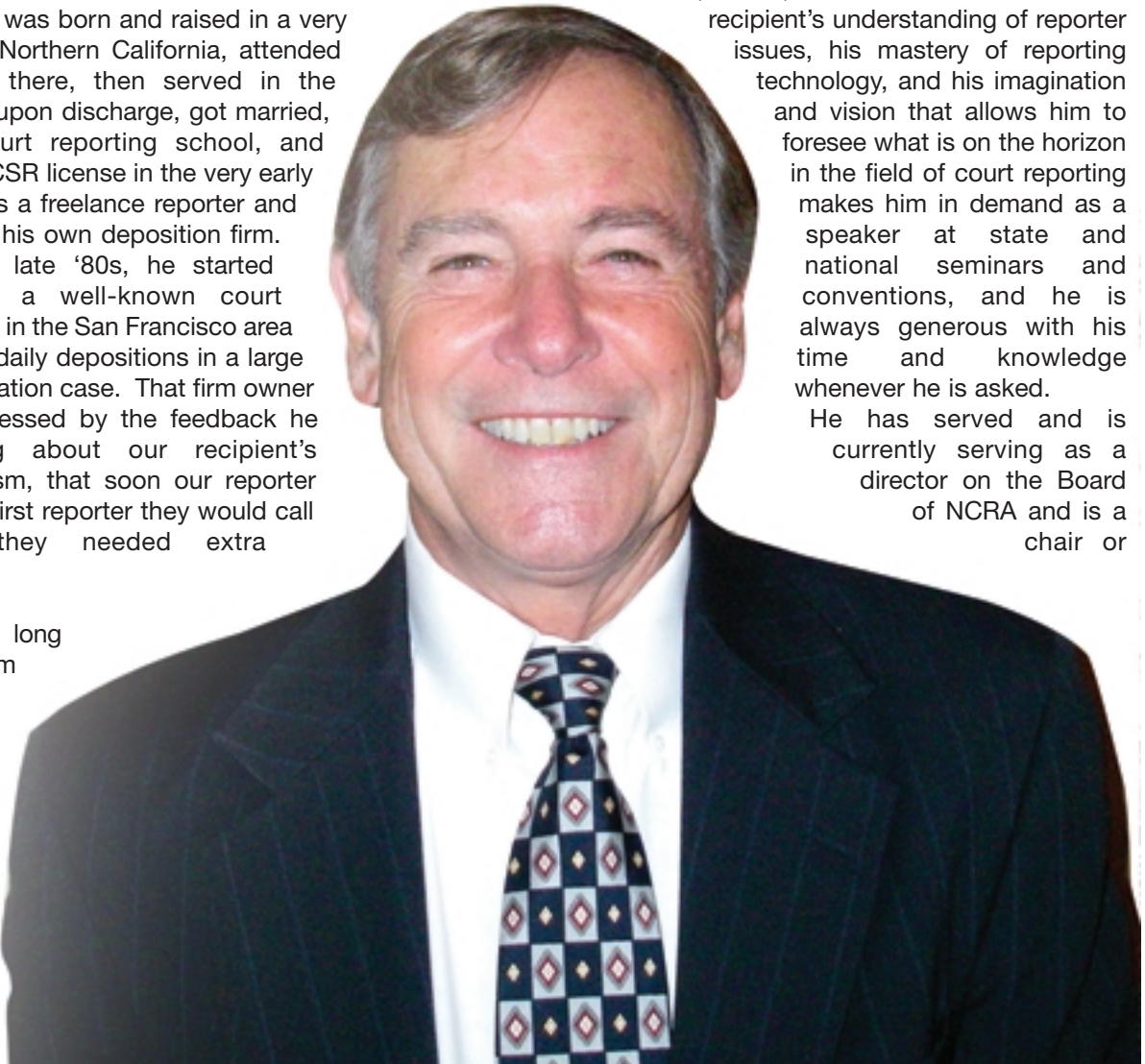
Our recipient was born and raised in a very large city in Northern California, attended city college there, then served in the military, and upon discharge, got married, attended court reporting school, and attained his CSR license in the very early '70s. He was a freelance reporter and then opened his own deposition firm. Then in the late '80s, he started helping out a well-known court reporting firm in the San Francisco area by reporting daily depositions in a large technical litigation case. That firm owner was so impressed by the feedback he was getting about our recipient's professionalism, that soon our reporter became the first reporter they would call whenever they needed extra coverage.

It didn't take long for that firm owner and our recipient to realize the benefits of their two firms merging, and soon they became the largest

deposition firm in Northern California. They sold the firm in 1997, and because of his skill and expertise in dealing with all aspects of managing a deposition firm, our recipient was asked to stay on by the new firm owners. He currently acts as a consultant to court reporting firms, including the firm that purchased his business.

Even though our recipient was busy managing a successful deposition agency, he still found time to share his knowledge with other reporters on the local, state, and national level. Our recipient's understanding of reporter issues, his mastery of reporting technology, and his imagination and vision that allows him to foresee what is on the horizon in the field of court reporting makes him in demand as a speaker at state and national seminars and conventions, and he is always generous with his time and knowledge whenever he is asked.

He has served and is currently serving as a director on the Board of NCRA and is a chair or



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# CCRA DSA Recipient

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member of various committees with NCRA. And I, as a member of the California Court Reporters Board, call on him over and over and over again to serve on various CRB committees. His willingness to share his knowledge, common sense, and expertise, I feel, has provided and does provide the foundation for various decisions the Board has made. In addition, the CRB is fortunate to be able to call on him to serve as an expert witness for its administrative law hearings.

The greatest pride and accomplishment for our recipient, though, is his family — his wife Willy, son Todd, and daughter Melissa, and his almost 3-year-old granddaughter Mina.

When I asked various persons for their thoughts about this year's recipient, one of the responses I received so expressed who this person is that I had to include it in this presentation. As Kathy DeLorenzo

wrote, "He is a humble and honest man, with the utmost integrity, who cares about people first, recognizing only those around him, but not himself. A man whose passion for his profession has made us all better at our jobs and whose personal contributions will be recognized long into our future."

**It is my great privilege and honor to present to you this year's California Court Reporters Association Distinguished Service Award recipient,**

**BILL GREENLEY**



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## Meet Michelle A. Castro, SEIU Lobbyist



Ms. Castro has been very instrumental in the ongoing battle against digital recording in California. This past year she stepped into the forefront and worked very closely with CCRA and CCRA's lobbyist, Jim Cassie, in the short-lived victory against digital recording.

Michelle Castro is currently a Senior Government Relations Advocate for the California State Council of Service Employees (SEIU) which represents over 700,000 working people in California. Ms. Castro has served in this capacity for the last 14 years, during which she has helped to establish SEIU as a leading advocacy, political and policy organization on matters affecting public employees, in every sector of government, including trial courts, cities, counties, special districts, K-12 education, the CSU system,

community colleges and the State of California. Prior to joining SEIU in 1994, Ms. Castro was a legislative advocate with the firm, Peter Birdsall and Associates, where she represented school districts and several statewide education associations.

During her tenure with SEIU, Ms. Castro has been directly involved in the drafting and passage of legislation that has dramatically changed public sector labor relations and employment practices in California, including SB 2140, which created a new statewide employment structure for trial court employees, including a system of due process and merit employment; SB 739, which transferred the enforcement and administration of California's collective bargaining law governing local agency employers and employees from the Superior Court to the Public Employment Relations Board; and AB 2459, which created a public records act for the state's trial courts and the Administrative Office of the Courts.



# The Word However

By Margie Wakeman Wells, College of Court Reporting

The word *however* can have different functions within a sentence. Depending on the function, punctuation differs.

**RULE:** Use a semicolon or period in front and a comma after the word *however* when it is used as the first word in a sentence. The word *however* here is called a conjunctive adverb and shows a relationship between the two sentences.

We saw them earlier; however, they did not attend the function.  
She said she sent the email on Friday; however, I did not get it.  
Hank, Marty, and John helped. However, Mary, my sister, did not get well.

**RULE:** Use commas around the word *however* when it is in the middle of the sentence and a comma in front of it when it is at the end of the sentence. In this instance, the word *however* is a parenthetical.

I did not see him, however, until later in the week.  
My surgeon, however, did not inform me of the complications.  
She had several responsibilities in the company, however.

**RULE:** Use a comma in front of the word *however* when it is used to start a dependent clause that comes at the end of the sentence. Put commas around the clause if it is in the middle of the sentence.

I will stay, however long it might take.  
He kept an eye on her, however engrossed he was in his work.  
She decided to speak out, however painful it might be, about the tragedy.

This construction is idiomatic in English. When *however* begins this type of clause, in addition to being the introductory word for the clause, it is functioning as an adverb to modify the word that follows it. The clause is said to be “loosely attached” to the content of the sentence and therefore needs punctuation. This clause often comes at the end of the sentence.



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### Where For Art Thou ScanDisk?

**Q. I've learned so much from your weekly newsletters, Mr. M., but now I have a question about Windows XP. When I was using Windows 98, I ran ScanDisk and Disk Defragmenter, but I can't find them under XP. Can you help?**

A. Windows XP does not include the same ScanDisk function you came to know and love under Windows 98, but you're not out of luck. Under XP, click My Computer, then right-click the drive you want to Scan/Defrag (which will usually be the C: drive) and select Properties > Tools tab. (Note: In Windows Vista, click Start > Computer, right-click the C: drive, select Properties > Tools tab.)

In the Error Checking section, click the Check Now button. (Note: ScanDisk was renamed Error Checking in XP. Why? Because we were all comfortable with its old name, of course.)

A small window will appear with two options: To automatically fix file system errors, and to scan for and detect problems with the hard drive. I recommend that you select both. Click the Start button and ScanDisk will run. When it finishes, go back and click the Defragment Now button to defragment your hard drive.

Depending on the condition and size of your drive, it can take several hours to complete these tasks, so I'd suggest running them when you're finished working on your computer for the day, so you're not using your computer for any other purpose at the time. You want Windows to devote its full and undivided attention to the task at hand.

Note: Always run ScanDisk (Error Checking) before Disk Defragmenter, not in the reverse order. It's important to check for and fix drive errors before tidying up the data on your drive, which is Disk Defragmenter's primary function.

**Q. Can you tell me how I can view my e-mail in Outlook Express by date received? For some reason new e-mail is scattered throughout, and the only way I can view it is by isolating the last seven days. Thanks, Mr. M.**

A. In all Windows programs, what appears at the top of each column can be clicked to sort the contents of the column. Column headings in the Outlook Express Inbox include From, Subject, Received, among others, so click the word "Received" as it appears at the top of that column and your messages will be sorted by date. Click it again to sort in reverse order. Try it with the Received column, then the From column and Subject. By using the sorting capabilities of columns, you can speed up the process of finding just about anything, plus it's fun — in a geeky kind of way.

**Q. Is there an easy way to delete all the e-mail in my Sent folder at one time, without having to delete messages one at a time?**

A. Yes, there sure is, and this method works in all Windows programs for deleting multiple messages or files: Hold down the SHIFT key and click to select the first message, then scroll down to the last message and click that. This will highlight all messages in between. Note: If the messages you want to delete are not located next to each other, use the CTRL key instead of

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the SHIFT key, select just the messages you want to delete, then right-click and select Delete. Presto, delete!

## Mr. Modem's DME (Don't Miss 'Em) Sites of the Month

### It's Your Turn

If you like online games, you won't want to miss this site. Here you'll find chess, backgammon, Jumble (a word game), checkers, and more than 60 other games. All moves are retained on the site's server, so if one game doesn't give you a headache, you can play five or 10 games at once, which will surely make your head explode. You can play solo, compete with others, or play games with friends, each making moves whenever it's convenient. A fast and simple site registration is required. You can play for free or upgrade to an optional paid membership. [www.itsyourturn.com](http://www.itsyourturn.com)

### The Complete Review

This is a well-organized, easy-to-search repository of more than 2100 book reviews. It includes editors' picks and bestseller lists by year. Also covered are new releases, foreign books and links to related sites. <http://tinyurl.com/dr6dh>

### Photography Initiative

The Smithsonian Photography Initiative provides access to approximately 13 million images housed within the 700 collections that comprise the museum's enormous photography archive. When you arrive on the site, be sure to "Enter the Frame," where you can search for images from 19 different Smithsonian museums using predefined keywords or your own, create photo sequences, and even 'tag' your favorite photos for future viewing. <http://photography.si.edu>

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# User Groups and State Associations: Why You Should Join

*By Heywood Waga*

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It has been said that associations are the lifeblood of all industries, professions, and governments. And so true it is. Just think, 70 percent of all national associations have headquarters in and around our nation's capital — and for good reason: Regulatory agencies rule on the conduct of our associations and the missions they carry.

At one time, there was a parallel court reporter association called the Associated Stenotypists of America. ASA was a clubby group of incredible business leaders. No challenge was too great for them to conquer. Actually, as I recall, their speed contest's multisyllabic difficulty dwarfed that of NCRA's. Ultimately, ASA merged with NCRA.

With the advent of CAT technology, user groups were formed. The concept was to learn, teach, and meet to keep the vendor honest. I always believed that CAT vendors were inherently honest and priced fairly. After all, CAT was revolutionizing the way we reporters produced our product, and we all had to become accustomed to a new modality of paying for our production. On a personal note, I had great difficulty not working with my notereaders for many years. Notereaders were the backbone of court reporting for many of us.

My intent for writing this article is to highlight user groups, organizations, associations, and (in my case) a society. The genesis of CAT software, on a grand scale,

commenced with Baron Data Systems, which formed Baron Users Group, or BUG. Years later, through acquisitions, Stenograph absorbed Xscribe and Baron Data Systems. And so there was a SMUG group. Sounds confusing? You bet, Red Rider! There was an amalgamation of all such users into a new group about five years ago, which ultimately led to the removal of insects and UGs from our user group exposure when STAR, or the Society for the Technological Advancement of Reporting, was formed.

STAR currently embodies users with any software, not just Stenograph. I hope that every user group member felt as strongly about their group as I do about STAR. Let me explain. STAR concentrates on "networking, technology, and brainstorming." You should see the driving debates on what is better for the industry.

Do you remember your first year on a CAT system — any CAT system? If you were there at the inception of CAT, as I was, you lived through the nightmares of head crashes and of not knowing what to do when turning out a daily all alone in the office at 11 p.m. Frankly, I called on our consummate salesperson, John Correggio, and abused my friendship for his advice. As a salesman, he knew more about the product than some of the trainers at that time.

At STAR, competitors teach each other how to compete, and we all derive the same education. At



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# User Groups and State Associations: Why You Should Join

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STAR, members network business ideas and have open strategy sessions. At STAR, the individual freelance reporter or official court reporter is as welcomed and respected as a large agency owner. STAR members enjoy all aspects of reporting, from a technology and business approach.

One member stood up at the last meeting and said that he has received more than \$100,000 per year in additional business from being a member and paying only \$105 per year in dues. That member was me! Many other members echoed similar sentiments.

Oh, there's one other thing, maybe two. Members of STAR are from all over — from Bangor to Los Angeles, from New York City to New City. And, most importantly, we at STAR are a family. We care for each other, laugh together, and even cry together when we have bad news to share. We congratulate each other and make sure to address issues head-on.

Now, let's not forget our state associations as well. For less than one medium-sized transcript, you can support an organization that has its finger on the pulse for you and represents your professional interests. Come on; don't be cheap and allow others to pay for your free ride. Do what it takes.

I hope your group is as much tech educated, fun, and family for you as STAR is for me. And, if you're one of us, why not become one of us at STAR? Selfishly said, the more members we have, the more I can learn from you. Do I sound motivated? I feel as passionately about my profession and my association life now as I did when I first entered this profession at age 18.

Heywood "Woody" Waga, RMR, CRR, a past NCRA president, is from Florham Park, N.J. Call Tina Kauter at 407-774-7880 for membership information to STAR.



## Vocabulary

### **metamorphosis - meta·mor·pho·sis**

Function: *n*

change of physical form, structure, or substance esp. by supernatural means

### **mitosis - mi·to·sis**

Function: *n*

a process that takes place in the nucleus of a dividing cell

### **nanotechnology - nano·tech·nol·o·gy**

Function: *n*

the art of manipulating materials on an atomic or molecular scale esp. to build microscopic devices (as robots)

### **nihilism - ni·hil·ism**

Function: *n*

a viewpoint that traditional values and beliefs are unfounded and that existence is senseless and useless

### **nomenclature - no·men·cla·ture**

Function: *n*

name, designation

### **Nonsectarian - non·sec·tar·i·an**

Function: *adj*

not affiliated with or restricted to a particular religious group

### **obsequious - ob·se·qui·ous**

Function: *adj*

marked by or exhibiting a fawning attentiveness

### **oligarchy - ol·i·gar·chy**

Function: *n*

government by the few

### **omnipotent - 'om·nip·o·tent**

Function: *adj*

Almighty; having virtually unlimited authority or influence

### **orthography - or·thog·ra·phy**

Function: *n*

the art of writing words with the proper letters according to standard usage

### **oxidize - ox·i·dize**

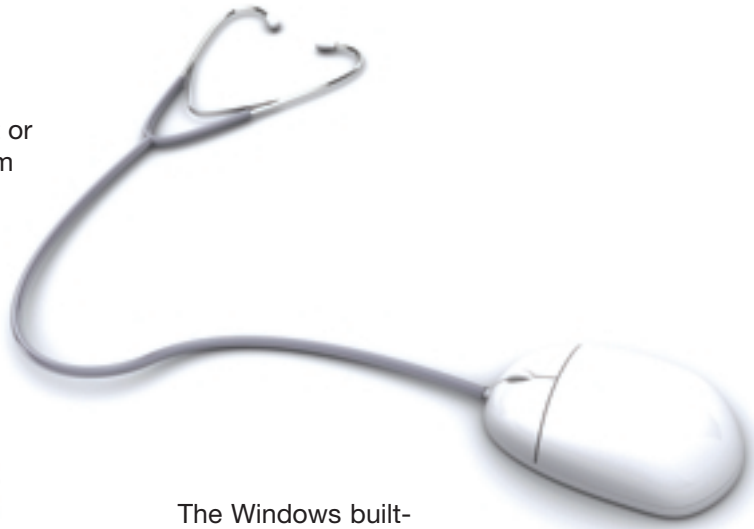
Function: *vb*

to combine with oxygen

# Curing the Slowdown Blues

By Candis Bradshaw, RPR

Does your computer take an eternity to boot or shut down? Do you have frequent system freezes or slowdowns during the course of the day? You may be suffering from the computer slowdown blues. The “slowdown blues” can be caused by many things, but here is what you can do to help cure those slowdown blues.



The Windows built-in defragmenter is a stripped-down version of a commercial defragmenting software, Diskeeper ([www.diskeeper.com](http://www.diskeeper.com)), but the Windows defragmenter is more than adequate for the majority of users. Automate defragmenting by using the Windows Task Scheduler to automatically run the defragmenter. (Search your help files for how to set up Windows Task Scheduler.)

Although defragging a hard drive is good, you can overdefragment your hard drive. Frequent defragmenting can cause excess wear and tear on a hard drive and could shorten the hard drive's life. Most experts recommend to not defragment your hard drive more than once a week.

## Defrag the hard drive

Defragmenting the hard drive is akin to cleaning and organizing your house. If you don't clean up your house, over time, your house will become cluttered and disorganized. This is what happens when a computer's hard drive is fragmented. To make your computer run better, defragment your hard drive at least once a month.

Windows comes with a built-in defragmenter. To access it in Windows XP, go to Start | All Programs | Accessories | System Tools | Disk Defragmenter. Windows Vista also has a built-in defragmenter. This website supposedly offers a better, faster way to defragment a computer running Vista: <http://vistarewired.com/2007/02/15/defragment>.

## Check your startup items

Look to the left of the clock on the system tray and see how many icons appear. These are some of the programs that start every time Windows boots, and these programs can create unnecessary system drains. Why do you need to have QuickTime, Adobe Reader, and RealPlayer start with Windows? You don't.

To view what programs start with Windows, go to Start | Run (or press the Windows Key, which is between the control and alt keys on the bottom left of your keyboard, and R at the same time). Once you see the run dialog box, type "msconfig." Click on the startup tab.

You will see a whole list of things with names that you

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# Curing the Slowdown Blues

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don't recognize. To see what you can uncheck, look at the location of the item. If the item points to something unessential, such as anything from Adobe, QuickTime, or RealPlayer, remove the checkmark. If you are not sure whether it is safe to remove the checkmark, go to [www.sysinfo.org](http://www.sysinfo.org) and type the name of the item in the "startup" section on the webpage or visit [www.bleepingcomputer.com/startups](http://www.bleepingcomputer.com/startups) to view a comprehensive list. A few items you must keep checkmarked are your antivirus and firewall software, automatic backup software, and Windows files. After unchecking what you want to remove, msconfig will prompt you to restart the system for the changes to take effect.

If, after startup, your system does not work properly, go back to msconfig and put a checkmark back in one of the items you unchecked and restart. Repeat this process until your system works properly. If you even take a few items off the startup list, your computer can speed up quite dramatically.

## Clean out your crap

Computer slowdowns also can be caused by oodles of temporary files mucking up your system. These need to be cleaned out every couple of weeks. Use either the Windows Disk Cleanup tool (Start | All Programs | Accessories | System Tools | Disk Cleanup) or use a freeware product like Ccleaner ([www.ccleaner.com](http://www.ccleaner.com)). Ccleaner does an excellent job of removing all sorts of files which you do not need....and the best part is Ccleaner is free!

Also, ensure at least 10% of your hard drive space is free. A portion of the hard drive is used for virtual memory, and that virtual memory cannot function if the hard drive is close to capacity or full.

## Degunk your registry

Every time you add or remove a program from your computer, the registry (which is the file which stores your computer settings) becomes gunked up, split up, and can cause quite a slowdown. However, if you incorrectly clean your registry, you will end up reinstalling Windows, so manually cleaning the registry is not something that is suggested.

Two reliable registry cleaners are jv16 Power Tools ([www.macecraft.com](http://www.macecraft.com)) and CCleaner. In CCleaner, click on the "Issues" button to access the built-in registry cleaner. Both of these programs allow you to back up your registry, which is something experts suggest you do before making any changes to the registry. If something goes wrong, restore the registry to the backed up copy. After you clean the registry, it is important to restart your computer.

## Upgrade your memory

Maybe your computing needs have changed (you're running more programs at once, for example), so it's maybe time to put more RAM into your computer. Upgrading RAM is very easy to do and not terribly expensive. If you do not feel comfortable upgrading the RAM yourself, call your local "geek" or computer store for help.

## Chase those viruses and spyware programs away!

Last, but definitely not least, run your antivirus program and antispayware program. If both of those come up clean, double-check your antivirus/antispayware program with a free web-based program, such as:

- Trend Micro House Call (<http://housecall.trendmicro.com/>)
  - Kaspersky SOS ([http://usa.kaspersky.com/products\\_services/free-virus-scanner.php](http://usa.kaspersky.com/products_services/free-virus-scanner.php))
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  - AVG Antispayware free online scan (<http://www.ewido.net/en/onlinescan/>)
  - Previs CSI (<http://www.previs.com>)
- Or download a free antispayware program, such as:
- A-squared (<http://www.emsisoft.com/en/>)
  - Spybot Search and Destroy (<http://www.spybot.info/en/index.html>)

Following the above steps will help cure the computer blues and make your computer run like new. You won't regret taking the time out to do this today!



Looking for a quick brief for those hard-to-write words or common phrases? If you have a word or phrase that you would like a brief form for, let me know, and I will publish your requested brief in the next CCRA Online. If you have briefs that you would like to share with our members, please send them to Doreen Perkins, [CortReptr1@aol.com](mailto:CortReptr1@aol.com), or 1100 Van Ness, Dept. 50, Fresno, CA 93724-0002

I recently received an inquiry from a reporter taking an NCRA test, and she said that the word “**leadership**” threw her off. She did not have a brief form for it and wished she had. Below is a list of words containing the suffix “**ship.**”

### BRIEFS TO SHARE:

Acquaintanceship  
Apprenticeship  
Attorney-client relationship  
Authorship  
Bipartisanship  
Casual relationship  
Censorship  
Chairmanship  
Championship  
Citizenship  
Companionship  
Conservatorship  
Dealership  
Distributorship  
Fellowship  
Friendship  
Hardship  
Home ownership  
Internship  
Leadership  
Membership  
Ownership  
Partnership  
Proprietorship  
Receivership  
Relationship  
Salesmanship  
Scholarship  
Sexual relationship  
Sole proprietorship  
Sponsorship  
Survivorship  
Township  
Trusteeship  
Workmanship

KWAIP  
PRAEP  
TOERL  
THAORP  
BARP  
KAUFLGS  
SHORP  
CHARP  
CHAOP  
SHOIP  
SKAOP  
SKEFRP or SKERP  
DLERP  
DR-PT or DRIRP  
FLEP  
FRIP or FROIP  
H-RP or HOIRP  
HOERP  
SPW-P or SPWERP  
LERP or LOIRP  
MEP  
OERP or OIP  
PIP or POIRP  
PRORP  
SAOEFRP  
RAEP  
SMIP  
SKLARP  
SWREP  
SPRIP or SPROIP  
SPOIP  
SWAOIFRP  
TWIP  
TROIP  
WRA\*P



# An Update on Voice Writing

By William Weber

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Stenographic reporters have attempted to distinguish what we like to call voice writers from a stenomasker, although I'm not so sure everyone that uses this technology employs the same distinctions. What I really want to focus on is not the early stenomask technology where an operator basically dictates what they hear into a recording device for later transcribing, but software that literally takes the voice of the operator and runs it through a computerized voice recognition software that provides a realtime feed. The software does exist and is not new. Of course, it is hotly debated about its ability to provide a useable realtime display, at least among stenographic reporters. But in talking to users of this technology, they guarantee me that it works and works well.

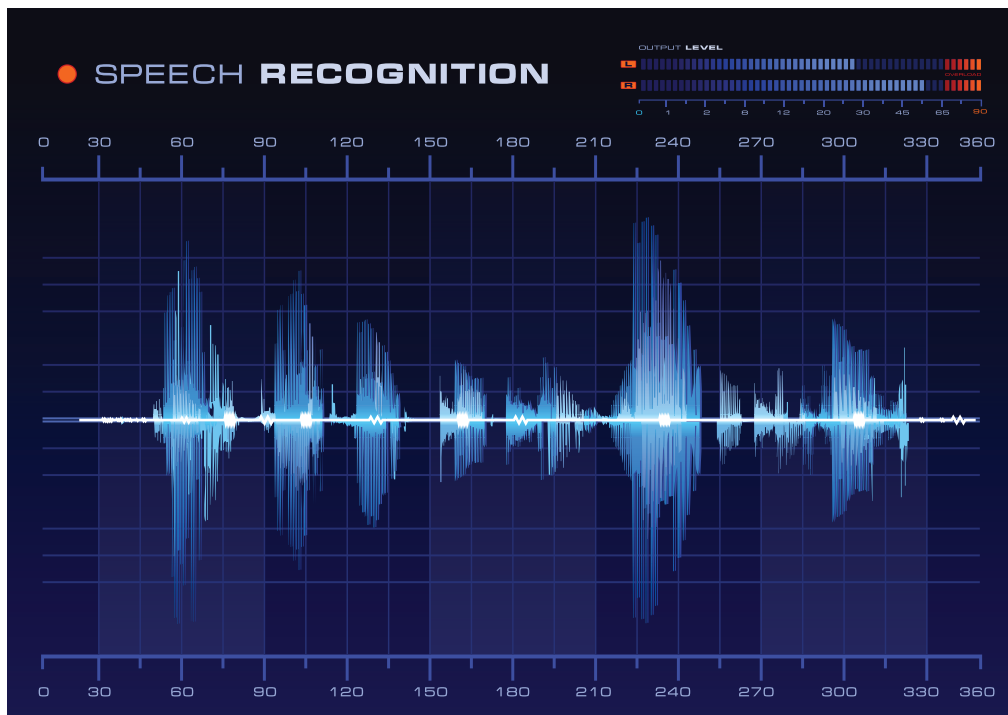
What I see happening in the voicewriter marketplace is a developing of first the software, then hardware with the speed to make the software work. That has already happened. I have personally sat down and tinkered with the technology and was astounded with its capabilities. It really does work. The new computers have processors that can make it all work. I'm not here to debate how good it is. I'm a firm believer in letting the

market decide what works and what doesn't work.

If one looks at the development of stenographic realtime and voice realtime, there are striking similarities. The only real difference is the developmental timetable. Voice has the benefit of our early strides.

The next thing that had to happen was the creation of a good, reliable theory to teach voice to text reporting to students of voice writing. I took time to interview Dave Rogala. You can do a little of your own research simply by visiting [www.erogala.com/vwp](http://www.erogala.com/vwp) and read some of Rogala's writing. From Rogala I learned that Betty Keys has developed just such a theory. You can also do more personal research by going to [www.voicewritingmethod.com](http://www.voicewritingmethod.com).

The final piece of the puzzle for voice reporting to establish common use in the marketplace will be schools teaching the technology and theory. Stenographic reporters already know just how important it is to have good schools teaching reporters how to be reporters. Just a few short years ago there were no formal schools



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## An Update on Voice Writing

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teaching voice. It was taught in the military and then stenomask reporters would teach and train other stenomask reporters.

However, more and more schools are beginning to introduce voice as a part of their reporting program. And why, you might ask, would they do that instead of continuing to train stenographic reporting? It is a disturbing and simple answer. It takes much less time to train a person to talk 225 than it does to train a person to write 225. This one fact scares the bejabbers out of us. Stenographic reporters have always prided themselves in the fact that they survived the training and left a bloody trail doing it. Rogala tells me that voice reporters, in fact, do learn the theory and can voice write at 225 in as little as three months. It is common for voice writing students pass speed tests comparable to the RPR in a very short period of time.

What I like and respect about Rogala is his brutal honesty. He also tells me something else. He does not believe that this is all a good thing so far. It is great that the students of voice fly through the training with success at such a rapid pace. However, while students are learning the skill quickly, they are doing just what we know a lot of folks in the stenographic world have done in the past when they got their speeds quickly. They leave school and jump into reporting before they have learned how to be a reporter. We know all too well reporting is probably 50 percent skill on the machine and 50 percent everything else before you can really call yourself a reporter.

When I graduated from reporting school — yes, I stayed the full two years and got my speeds — I quickly found out that I was not only not ready to be a reporter, I stunk the joint out. I didn't really know the first thing about being a good reporter. I surely didn't know how to get transcripts out and the ones I did get out, well, I wouldn't want to go back and read them today.

This is exactly what is happening to reporting students that leave school after a few months of voice training. They go to work and many of them can't get the work out. They are getting hired because they can pass the speed tests, but they don't know how to work and they haven't built up their knowledge base. After all, what we all know is that it takes more than the skills to be a great

reporter. That is just the beginning.

One thing I have always personally thought is that voice would be great for captioning. First off, you wouldn't need the mask, which may actually hinder really great translation because of distortion. At least that is what I thought. However, why would we think you can just throw a brand-new graduate into one of the hardest disciplines? After all, our first captioners were some of our greatest writers, not the beginners. It is rare that a student can get into captioning quickly.

Maybe you are seeing a pattern here. It appears to me that voice reporters — at least good voice reporters — would do well to learn what we already know. You need good skills taught in good schools. You can't just jump into the market and think you are going to be a great reporter or a quality captioner in a couple of weeks.

So, just how well is it working? Well, we can ask ourselves that question. We will get a biased opinion. We can ask stenomask reporters, and we may have another biased opinion. Maybe we ought to look at the marketplace. Have voice writers taken over all the caption jobs? Not from what I have seen. In talking with some of our caption leaders, they just aren't there yet. NCRA's Immediate Past President Kathy DiLorenzo, who worked at VITAC for many years, made the statement above. Most captioners have been some of the greatest reporters. It is foolish to think just any voice writer can step right into a captioning position.

I am sure that as quality schools begin to teach voice that we are going to see more and more of this technology used at its highest possible levels working side-by-side with stenographic reporters. Though the National Voice Writers Association in its testing demand that the writer's voice not be audible during testing, I also have been told by lawyers that have used the technology that they can hear the voice during proceedings. I have no scientific way of saying how true or pervasive this is, but it is out there.

William E. Weber, RDR, CRR, is a member of the technology evaluation committee for the Pennsylvania Court Reporters Association. He can be reached at [weberreporting@comcast.net](mailto:weberreporting@comcast.net).





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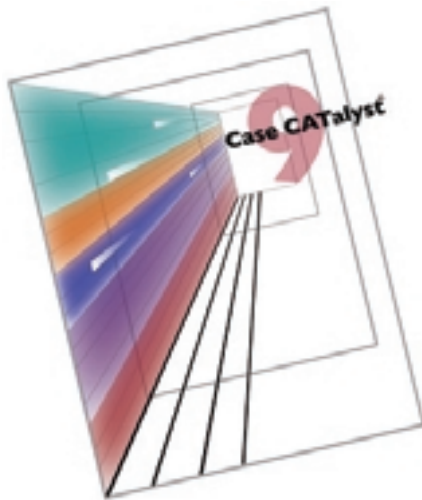
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