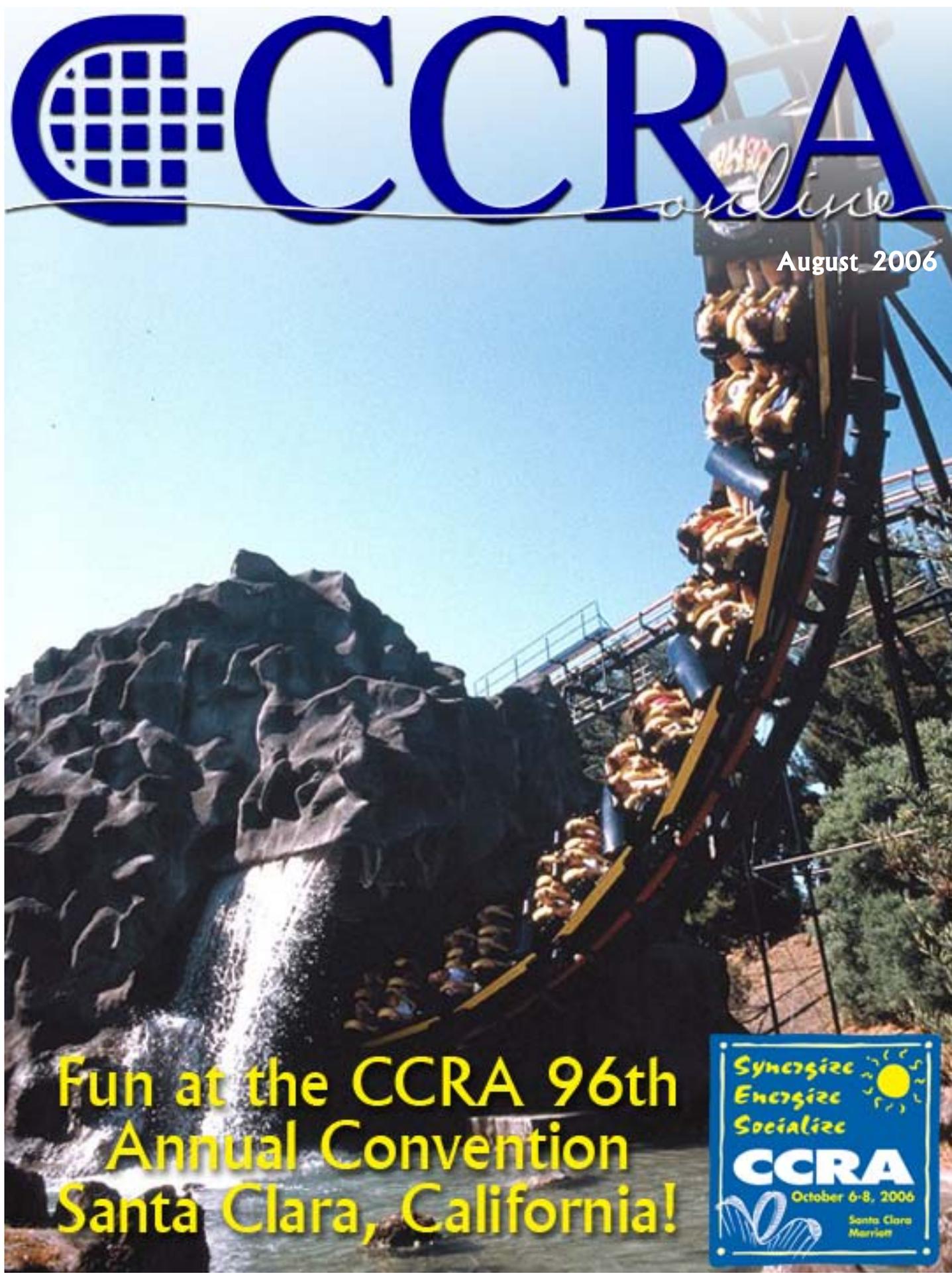


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CCRA Online

The Electronic Magazine
of the California Court
Reporters Association

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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 Page

What kind of court reporter are you? Hmm. Now, that is an interesting question indeed! I'm not talking about whether you are an Official or Freelance reporter. Nope. I'm talking about your reporting skills. Reporters are often categorized into one of four groups. Read on and find out where you fall!

STEADY WORKER	SUPERSTAR OR LEADER
LEARNER	DEADWOOD

Are you the kind of reporter that goes to work everyday, does your job, collects your paycheck and goes home? If yes, you are a **Steady Worker**. Your employer needs many of your type. You are the mainstay of the workforce. For many, this is your comfort level and represents the pinnacle of your professional career. Or, perhaps, you are the type of reporter that looks forward to going to work because of the challenges that you may face on a difficult job, and instead of shying away from it you will work until it's mastered. You always want to know more and are constantly look for tips and tricks to improve your writing efficiency. Perhaps you have sought your Realtime certification (CRR) or additional professional certifications, such as the RMR or RDR. You upgrade with new technology. If this sounds like you, then you are likely a **Super Star** and perhaps a **Leader** (or future leader). You may presently be more in the Steady Worker category, but have driving ambitions that will move you up a notch. If so, I call your type "diamonds in the rough." Rough diamonds don't yet have the "bling" of a wedding ring, however, given the right circumstance, given the right leadership and encouragement, and possessing your own passion for your profession, you are likely to be a future Superstar or Leader. As far as Deadwood, I don't think I need to elaborate much. Deadwood reporters don't produce quality transcripts. They represent a liability to our profession. Certainly the court reporting profession would end if it was filled with too many of this type.

What are the characteristics that a reporter should have to qualify them as a truly competent reporter? First and foremost is one's ability to produce an accurate and timely transcript. Other important factors encompass professionalism, experience, reputation in the field, having exceptional organi-

zational skills, and the drive necessary to stay on top of the reporting profession by attending continuing education seminars and constantly working to improve their skill level. Those who stay abreast of changes in the profession, continue to hone their writing skills, keep up with technological changes, are protecting not only their place in the reporting profession, but are also protecting the court reporting profession itself. It's important that reporters continue to provide the highest quality of service to everyone.



Doreen Perkins, CSR, RMR, CRR

How does one achieve the level of **Super Star**? For certain, it doesn't happen overnight. To be a **Super Star** you must make goals for yourself and commit yourself to becoming a life-long **Learner**. We all know the **Super Stars**. They are the "best of the best." We look up to them and wonder, wow, they're so knowledgeable, they're technologically savvy . . . I can guarantee you they weren't born that way. They didn't come out of court reporting school all knowing. **Super Stars** commit themselves to be the best that they can be. They have the drive to continually improve their skill level. They attend seminars and classes to keep abreast of the ever-changing technology in our profession. These are also the ones that see the value in belonging to their local and state associations. They understand the importance of networking with fellow reporters. It's amazing what you can learn when talking with fellow reporters. They take the necessary steps to stay on top of their profession. People who keep their minds open are able to learn, upgrade their technological tools, and continually refine their realtime skills.

Earning additional professional certifications also sets you apart from other reporters that are the **Steady Workers** that just stay where they're at, don't move forward or backward, they just hover in the neutral zone throughout their career. Is certification an accurate measure of a reporter's competence? I believe the answer is both "yes" and "no." Certification provides the consumer with an objective measurement of a reporter's skill level. Everyone takes the exact same test, under identical conditions, which enables one to be measured by the same standards. Once you pass these various certifications it gives a prospective employer, whether Freelance or Official, at least the minimum standards that you have met. The higher the certifications, the higher your minimum standards are. Certification, of course, is not the only way to measure one's competence. Just because one reporter has extra certifications, and another does not, doesn't necessar-

(Continued on Page 4)

ily mean that the reporter without the extra certifications is incapable of performing the job functions, performing them well, and with the same amount of expertise. Experience still weighs in heavily when evaluating a reporter's overall capabilities, regardless of certification level.

The type of reporter you are is defined in many ways, as I have discussed. You should be able to place yourself into one of the four categories just as easily as looking into the mirror in the morning. What do you see? Are you satisfied with where you are? If you have that urge to "Go Beyond," then it's time to make your move. Start your next day at work with a resolve to learn or do something new. And for heavens sake, take the easiest step forward and make sure that you're currently a member of CCRA, and then share this article with the Learners or Steady Workers in your office and maybe you'll be able to inspire them to become a member. 

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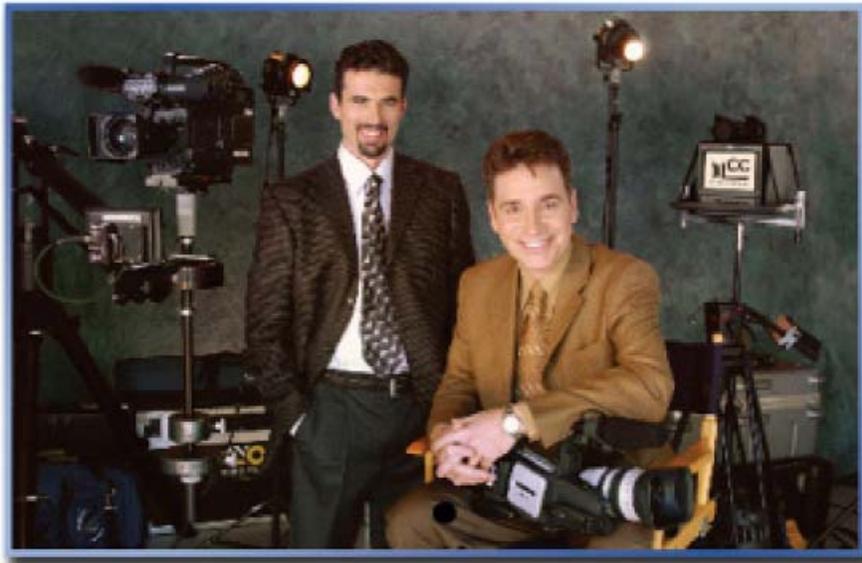
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CCRA has exciting news to tell you. We have truly moved into a paperless environment. We have merged Caligrams & Calegrams into one fantastic electronic magazine called *CCRA Online!* We are constantly telling everyone to embrace technology and change. It was time that we practice what we've been preaching. It is more important than ever that we have an email address for every member of CCRA so that we can send this fabulous online magazine to your mailbox. If you are one that still likes to read your magazine on paper, you will have the ability to print it and read at your leisure; or you can download it to your computer, which would give you the flexibility to access it whenever you wish. Hopefully you will be just as excited about this new format as we are. We encourage you to email us your suggestions for possible inclusion in our new magazine, *CCRA Online!* 

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Cal-E-Briefs

By Doreen Perkins, CSR, RMR, CRR, CCRA President

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 or 1100 Van Ness, Dept. 50, Fresno, CA 93724-0002. I compiled this list from various members who submitted their favorite briefs to me. See if you are able to add more!!

Change of Plea Briefs:

Change of Plea form	KHORM
Change of Plea	KHAIP
Constitutional right	KRIT
Constitutional rights	KRITS
County Jail	KAIL
District Attorney	DRAK
District Attorney's Office	DRAKS
Do you give up that right	DUP
Do you understand and give up that constitutional right	DOURGTS
Do you understand and give up that right	DOURGT
Do you understand that right	DOURT
Do you understand that you have that right	D-RT
Factual basis	FAB
Felon	FLON
Felony	FLEN
Felony conviction	F-K
Free and voluntary	FRAOEF
Freely and voluntarily	FRAOEFL
Give up that right	GURT
Guilt	GLT
Guilty	GILT
Jury trial	JURL
Knowingly, intelligently and voluntarily	NIF
Motion to dismiss	MODZ
No contest	NOEK
No initial state prison	NOIP
Nolo contendre	NOELT
Plea agreement	PLEMT
Plea bargain	PLEB
Plea of guilty	PLOG
Plea of no contest	PLEOK
Plea of nolo contendre	PLEOLT
Plea of not guilty	PLONG
Plead guilty	PLEG
Preliminary hearing	PLAERG
Prior felony conviction	PRAOEURBG
Probation	BRAIGS
Probation Department	BRAIPT
Probation Officer	BRAIFR

Probation violation	BRAIFGS
Public Defender	PUD
Public Defender's Office	PUDZ
Search and seizure	S-NZ
Search warrant	SW
Seek and maintain	SEM
Self-incrimination	SCRIM
Sentencing	SN-G
State of California	SCAFL
State your appearance	STURP
State your appearances, please	STURPS
Statutory	STAFF
Statutory and Constitutional	STAONS
Terms and conditions	TERK
Terms and conditions of the plea	TERKZ
Wait for a copy of your minute order	WAIM
Waive time	WAIFT
Withdraw your former plea	WUFP
Work furlough	WUFR
You are also ordered	AORDZ
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Now is the Time

By Mark Brickman, RPR

This is a difficult article to write, because at this moment, there is no real crisis, no imminent threat to our existence as a profession and no calamity that we're dealing with. But that is exactly why I'm writing this, because apathy will come back to bite us in the butt.

The real truth is that the threat to our livelihoods as court reporters, like a dormant virus, is always looming in the background. It never goes away. Talk to any official reporter in this state and they'll tell you that their job is never really secure. They know the realities of ER intrusion and the non-supportive atmosphere that is created by many court administrators.

Oddly enough, as I look back to recent history, I can honestly credit CCRA at having played a huge role in lulling our profession into a false sense of security. Although not supported by a small minority of official reporters, the truth is that the compromise negotiated by CCRA with the Judicial Council has successfully left most reporters feeling that they once again are safe in their positions.

Don't be fooled into thinking that our careers are safe, that our positions are not vulnerable to other means of record-taking and that the enemies of reporters everywhere are not lying in wait for their opportunity to seize what they think is their fair share of the market. They have tried to make inroads into what we do for a living, and if they're not trying to do so today, wait a week or so and they'll try again.

Why am I saying all this? Because now is the time to support your state association, CCRA. While we're all working at our jobs, spending time with our families and friends and going on summer vacations, CCRA is hard at work protecting our jobs, our futures. And while they do this out of love and care for our chosen profession, it doesn't come cheap. They only can do it with your help.

Do you know how many hours and how many meetings it takes to create legislation that will protect our jobs or make our work product better? Do you know how many hours it takes to put together a seminar or convention that will educate and energize us all? Do you know that CCRA's many programs and the staff that supports those programs requires a strong membership to drive these programs and bring them to fruition?

Your state association needs you at this most critical time. Yes, when there is no crisis. Don't sit back and think you're safe, that there's nothing for CCRA to do for you, because CCRA doesn't go dormant when our livelihoods aren't being imminently threatened. They are consistently supporting us by putting forth existing programs and services, constantly creating new ways to assist you in your profession, and most importantly, keeping their finger on the pulse locally, state-wide and nationally to bring the latest information your way.

I invite you to visit CCRA's updated and newly redesigned website to acquaint or reacquaint yourself with everything that CCRA offers. There are so many ways to get involved. And the best way to start and to show your spirit of cooperation and ownership in your profession is to become a member, or if you've been complacent, to renew your membership. Now is the time!

I had the privilege of serving on the CCRA Board of Directors for two years, and I witnessed firsthand the amazing devotion and dedication that your board members give to you and our whole profession. Let's band together and let them (and our colleagues) know where our hearts and our loyalties lie.



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CCRA Legislative Update

For information concerning this report or the information contained herein, you may contact California Court Reporters Association, Attn. Sandy Bunch VanderPol, CSR #3032, at 2400 22nd Street, Suite 110, Sacramento, California 95818 (916) 443-5090 or by e-mail at realtimcsr@calweb.com.

AB 1293 Oropeza Transcript Reimbursement Fund.

Location: 06/21/2006-S APPR.06/21/2006-S APPR.

Status 06/21/2006-From committee: Do pass, and re-refer to Com. on APPR. with recommendation: To Consent Calendar. Re-referred. (Ayes 5. Noes 0.).

Calendar

Existing law establishes the Court Reporters Board of California and makes it responsible for issuing a certificate to practice shorthand reporting to qualified applicants. Under existing law, until July 1, 2011, funds generated by the initial certificate fee collected by the board, as specified, are used to provide shorthand reporting services for indigent persons, as defined, and deposited into the Transcript Reimbursement Fund for expenditure for that purpose. This bill would revise the definition of indigent person for these purposes and would make the program funding shorthand reporting services from the Transcript Reimbursement Fund inoperative on July 1, 2009, and would repeal it on January 1, 2010, unless a later-enacted statute changes those dates.

AB 1588 Negrete McLeod Professional licensing boards: review and repeals.

Location: 02/02/2006-S B., P. & E.D.02/02/2006-S B., P. & E.D.

Status 02/02/2006-Referred to Coms. on B., P. & E.D. and JUD.

Calendar

This bill would give the Joint Committee on Boards, Commissions, and Consumer Protection the burden of demonstrating, among other things, that its function of licensing and enforcing licensing standards is the least restrictive regulation consistent with the public health, safety, and welfare. The bill would apply to the Court Reporters Board, if passed.

AB 1797 Bermudez Trial courts: limited-term employees.

Location: 06/29/2006-S THIRD READING06/29/2006-S THIRD READING

Status 06/29/2006-Read second time. To third reading.

Calendar

Existing law defines the term "trial court employee" for purposes of the Trial Court Employment Protection and Governance Act. In defining this term, the act provides that any temporary employee shall not be employed in the trial court for a period exceeding 180 calendar days, except for court reporters under certain conditions. This bill would provide that a limited-term employee is a regular trial court employee if the assignment, position, or project of the limited-term employee is an integral part of the long-term, regular work of the trial court. The bill would state legislative intent to prohibit

the trial courts from classifying long-term employees that are performing the regular work of the trial courts as limited-term employees. This bill contains other related provisions.

AB 1995 Koretz Trial court employees: personnel files.

Location: 06/15/2006-S THIRD READING06/15/2006-S THIRD READING

Status 06/15/2006-Read second time. To third reading.

Calendar

Existing law requires each trial court to permit an employee to inspect his or her official personnel files that are used, or have been used, to determine that employee's qualifications for employment, promotion, additional compensation, or termination or other disciplinary action. This bill would make that requirement applicable to any personnel files.

AB 2863 Karnette Public employees: retirement.

Location: 06/27/2006-S P.E. & R.06/27/2006-S P.E. & R.

Status 06/27/2006-From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to committee. Read second time, amended, and re-referred to Com. on P.E. & R.

Calendar 08/07/06 1:30 p.m. - Room 2040 SEN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND RETIREMENT

Existing law provides for the compensation and benefits of court reporters in specified counties. This bill would provide that the compensation of regular official court reporters in Fresno County shall be determined by collective bargaining between the court reporters and the superior court. The bill would also define, for purposes of retirement, the compensation of a regular official court reporter in Fresno County, as specified.

SB 56 Dunn Trial courts: judgeships.

Location: 08/17/2005-A APPR. SUSPENSE FILE08/17/2005-A APPR. SUSPENSE FILE

Status 08/25/2005-Set, second hearing. Held in committee and under submission.

Calendar

Existing law specifies the number of judges of the superior court for each county. This bill would authorize an unspecified number of judges of the superior court to be appointed by the Governor in the 2005-06, 2006-07, and 2007-08 fiscal years, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the various county superior courts, allocated pursuant to a specified method administered by the Judicial Council. The bill would require the Judicial Council to adopt, and report to the Legislature annually upon, judicial administration standards and measures

that promote the fair and efficient administration of justice, as specified. The bill would also authorize an unspecified number of subordinate judicial officer positions in eligible superior courts, as determined by the Judicial Council, to be converted to judgeships, according to specified criteria and upon appropriation by the Legislature. The bill would define the term "subordinate judicial officer" for purposes of those provisions and would declare the Legislature's intent to restore an appropriate balance between subordinate judicial officers and judges in enacting those provisions.

SB 395

Escutia

California Court Facilities Bond Act of 2006.

Location: 07/05/2005-AAPPR.07/05/2005-AAPPR.

Status 07/05/2005-From committee: Do pass, but first be re-referred to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 6. Noes 3.) Re-referred to Com. on APPR.

Calendar

Existing law, the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, establishes the State Court Facilities Construction Fund and provides that money in that fund may be used to acquire, rehabilitate, construct, or finance court facilities, as defined, and to implement trial court projects, as specified. This bill would enact the California Court Facilities Bond Act of 2006 which would authorize, for display purposes only, the issuance, pursuant to the State General Obligation Bond Law, of an unspecified amount in bonds, the proceeds of which would be deposited in the 2006 California Court Facilities Bond Act Construction Fund for specified purposes relating to the acquisition and maintenance of court facilities, including payment of a county's share of building costs in a shared-use court facility. This bill contains other related provisions.

SB 1476 Figueroa

Professions and vocations.

Location: 06/28/2006-AAPPR.06/28/2006-AAPPR.

Status 06/28/2006-From committee: Do pass, but first be re-referred to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 8. Noes 0.) Re-referred to Com. on APPR.

Calendar 08/09/06 9 a.m. - Room 4202 ASM APPROPRIATIONS

This bill would extend the sunset review process for the Court Reporters Board by one year, making the Court Reporters Board inoperative on July 1, 2009, and would repeal it on January 1, 2010.

SB 1852 Committee on Judiciary

Maintenance of the codes.

Location: 06/28/2006-A CONSENT CALENDAR06/28/2006-A CONSENT CALENDAR

Status 06/28/2006-Read second time. To Consent Calendar.

Calendar

Existing law directs the Legislative Counsel to advise the Legislature from time to time as to legislation necessary to maintain the codes. This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes in various provisions of law to effectuate the recommendations made by the Legislative Counsel to the Legislature.

SCA 16 Runner

Judicial districts: superior court judges.

Location: 08/18/2005-S JUD.08/18/2005-S JUD.

Status 06/29/2006-Set for hearing August 8.

Calendar 08/08/06 1:30 p.m. - John L. Burton Hearing Room (4203) SEN JUDICIARY

This measure would provide that the superior court of any county with a population of more than 5,000,000 shall be divided into judicial districts established by three special masters appointed by the Supreme Court, and would prescribe specified population, geographical, and public hearing requirements for the establishment of those districts. The measure would provide for the assignment of incumbent superior court judges to judicial districts within the county in a one-time process conducted by the Judicial Council following the initial establishment of the districts, as specified. (2) The California Constitution provides that judges of superior courts shall be elected in their counties at general elections, except as specified. This measure would provide that judges of superior courts shall be elected in their counties or districts at general elections, except as specified. SCA 16 would divide the Los Angeles Superior Court into judicial districts. SCA 16 would create new levels of bureaucracy in the Los Angeles Superior Court, thus creating more administrative and management costs. The proposed constitutional amendment would create the potential for separate and distinct collective bargaining agreements and personnel policies, procedures or rules for each judicial district as opposed to one collective bargaining agreement and one set of policies, procedures or rules that uniformly affect all employees of the Los Angeles Superior Court. 

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CCRA

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online

Here I am!

By Anna-Marie Cole, CCRA Director

I have been a court reporter for 18 years, and I have not had one regret since making that decision. When I graduated from high school, I had no idea what type of career I would pursue. It would have been a financial struggle for my family to put me through a four-year college. I vividly remember the day my father told me, "Mija," (daughter in Spanish) "I don't care what type of career you want, I just want you to find some kind of work where you can take care of yourself financially, and not have to rely on anyone else to help you do so, not even a husband." In my heart, I thank my father every day for those words.

During these past 18 years, I have had many tough struggles in my life, and my career in court reporting has never let me down. It has always been there for me, whether it be full-time or part-time. One of my many struggles was the day I was diagnosed with breast cancer in April of 2004. It was Stage III infiltrating ductal carcinoma, Her/2 positive. I immediately began my journey with breast cancer by opting for a bilateral mastectomy, the strongest plan of chemotherapy and radiation. I put my career on hold for two years while I worked my hardest to get through one of the toughest challenges that my life had to offer. And thank goodness my employer, San Luis Obispo Superior Court, was kind enough to hold my job for me. They kept my office vacant for me. All of my coworkers constantly supported us with wonderful dinners, donations, and lots of shoulders to lean on. When I returned to work on May 15th of this year, it was as if I never left. My job was still there and the profession of court reporting is still going strong, which brings something else to mind.

The two years preceding my cancer diagnosis, I decided to take a very active role in CCRA. As I'm sure you all know, court reporters have had to face many battles with ER for decades, and I wanted to take that step to help protect our profession. I felt it was time for me to step up and give back to my career that has always been there for me. It took a lot of dedication and education on my part to learn what needed to be done and what I could do to help. I became the Action Team Leader for San Luis Obispo and I was proud to hold that title and to be an active participant for our profession. I loved it when people called me for answers and to know that I was helping. Then that day came when I had to call my CCRA family to tell them that I had to step down from my role of Action Team Leader due to my diagnosis, but not to worry, because as soon as I could, I'd pick up where I left off, and HERE I AM!!

I am now proud to be a part of CCRA's Board of Directors. I am the Director of District C, which covers Central California. I am also a two-year cancer survivor. I had some minor setbacks with my writing, but it's now all coming back strong. I

am in remission and I have so many of you out there to thank for it. The emails that I received that helped keep my head up high and continued to give me the strength to get through my battle. Many of you contributed to the Anna-Marie Cole Cancer fund that helped me and my family with the inundation of medical bills. And the most important thing of all is I am still able to do my job; the career that has been so loyal to me with the help of many hard-working people through the past decades that have successfully fought off ER and any other obstacles that have come into our paths.

In closing, I would welcome any and all of you to sit back and evaluate what your life has been like in court reporting. Realize how lucky you are to have that gift to be a court reporter and the financial rewards that this career can bring you for all your hard work. When you have that extra time, log on to our website. Maybe you have some time to give back to our profession, like me. I'm glad I did, and I'm certain you, too, will be glad. 

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Realtime Troubleshooting Scenarios

By Sandy Bunch VanderPol, RMR, CRR, CSR, CCRA Vice President, President-Elect, Freelance

We all run into on-the-job realtime troubleshooting scenarios that occasionally are perplexing and seem to be unsolvable, at least on the spot in the deposition or court setting. This article will explore simply one such scenario that I have run across while providing interactive realtime to counsel.

Each month I plan to share a new and different troubleshooting scenario with you. I know there are many different troubleshooting scenarios that each of you has run across in your work, and I would appreciate learning about any of those experiences that you have come across and that you wish to share with other realtime reporters. Please e-mail those experiences to me at realtimecsr@calweb.com for future publication in CCRA Online. Thank you in advance for taking the time to share with your colleagues.

I have been asked by NCRA's Technology Committee to present a Realtime Troubleshooting seminar in New York this year featuring "Real-Life what if" scenarios. To the right is one such real-life troubleshooting realtime scenario I will be discussing at the NCRA convention. 

Real-life what ifs...

- **Realtime feed from reporter's computer to client computer is not working?**
 - Check your com port setting in your CAT software by going to Device Manager embedded in Control Panel.
 - Change your cable sending to client's computer.
 - If using Digital Sharing Device (DSD), change the appropriate cable to the DSD and then from DSD to client.

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Q. Every now and then a pop-up window appears and asks me if I would like to remove unused icons on my Desktop. Is there some way to prevent that window from popping up? I want the icons on my Desktop and if I want to remove them, I'll do it myself.

A. That little pop-up Window is called the Desktop Cleanup Wizard and it only appears in Windows XP. By default, it tries to remove unused Desktop items every 60 days. If you would rather not be asked about tidying up your Desktop, you can disable this feature by right-clicking an empty area of the Desktop, then clicking Properties > Desktop tab > Customize Desktop > General tab, and uncheck the box that says “Run Desktop Cleanup Wizard every 60 days.” Click OK > OK to exit.

Q. I'm visually impaired and struggle to see my keyboard. Are you aware of any products that can help me?

A. The good folks at Visikey (<http://www.visikey.net>) make enhanced-visibility keyboards that are excellent. The keyboard lettering is rated at 20/3000 as contrasted with regular keyboards that are rated at 20/70. They offer both wired and wireless keyboards.

Web Eyes (<http://www.ionwebeyes.com>) is an easy-on-the-eyes program that works with Internet Explorer and allows you to increase on-screen font size up to 144pt. Once installed, it becomes part of your Internet Explorer toolbar so it's always conveniently at hand. The program is only 1.3MB (megabytes) in size and works with all versions of Windows. You can try it for free for 15 days, and it's \$24.95 to purchase.

Q. When I started my computer this morning, I noticed that the fan was making a loud whirring sound. My neighbor told me to get a can of compressed air and blow it into the fan. Before I had a chance to do that, the noise went away. Should I still blow air into it or leave well enough alone?

A. Most desktop computers have a minimum of two fans, one for the power supply and one for the processor. Like your car's fan, the job of a computer fan is to keep your system from overheating.

Your neighbor's suggestion, though well-intentioned, is not well advised. Blowing dirt and debris into the computer is the wrong thing to do. Not only can a high-powered blast of compressed air damage the fan mechanism, but you'll also be redistributing the dust inside your computer. Instead of hauling out the old Hoover, use a computer vacuum (<http://tinyurl.com/o5s87>), available at most computer stores, to gently remove dust from fan intake screens or other areas.

By Richard A. Sherman



I would recommend having your noisy fan replaced. The amount of damage that can occur if your fan stops working could far exceed the minimal expense of replacing the fan itself.

Q. Can you explain how to set a password for Windows XP? When I leave my computer, I'd like to be sure that nobody else can access it. Thanks, Mr. Modem.

A. To set a password for Windows XP, click Start > Control Panel or Start > Settings > Control Panel > User Accounts > Change an Account. Click to select your account, then in the next window click “Create a Password.” Type in the password you want to use. You can also enter a hint for your password, if you wish. When you're done, click “Create Password” to accept the password.

Q. I received a message in which the sender appears to have used a font that is in his own handwriting. I'd like to be able to do that, too, but I have no idea how to go about it. Can you help, Mr. M.?

A. One of the easiest ways to accomplish this is with Fontifier (<http://www.fontifier.com>). Go to the Web site, print out a template in which you'll handwrite all the letters of the alphabet, numerals and some punctuation marks. Then scan the template (if you don't have a scanner, an outfit such as Kinko's or Alphagraphics can scan it for you) and upload the scanned file to Fontifier. You can preview your font for free, and if you like what you see, purchase it for nine dollars. You would then install the new font for use with other programs. Hint: Installing fonts is as simple as going to your Control Panel, double clicking the Fonts icon, then dragging your new font file into the Fonts window.

My handwriting is not something that I would want to inflict on others, but while trying out this service, I discovered that you can also draw graphics on the template sheet, so if you want to insert your own smiley faces, your initials, or other drawings in documents, you can do that, too.

Q. When I'm typing in Microsoft Word and I press Enter to go down another line, like if I'm trying to make a list of items, it automatically capitalizes the first word of every new line. That drives me crazy. I then have to go back and delete the capitalized letter and retype it in lower case. Is there some way to stop this?

A. There sure is. The feature that's driving you crazy is called “Auto Correct” and it can easily be turned on or off by clicking Tools > Auto Correct > AutoCorrect tab, then remove the check mark to the left of the item, “Capitalize first letter of sentences,” followed by OK. That's all there is to it.



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Which Do I Choose, Courts or Depositions?

Working for the Courts (Part 1 of a 2-part series)

By Carlos A Martinez, CSR, RPR, CCRA Director

Court reporting students are told quite a bit that working for the court system is much harder than working in the deposition field and thus they garner a great deal of apprehension about working in the court systems. I've done both, and I encourage students who are close to getting their license to not ignore the opportunity to work in court. Do some research on becoming an official court reporter.

Reporting students are often told, "There are too many lawyers walking in and out of the courtroom and not identifying themselves when they speak. The calendars are huge. The hours are long. And the pay is not what you would get as a freelancer." Well, let me tell you my thoughts on these statements:

- 1) Yes, there are a lot of attorneys coming in and out of the courtroom, but nearly every judge you work for will make the attorneys aware that they have a new reporter and that the attorneys need to identify themselves for the record. The clerks are also a great source for information. Make friends with them. They can make your life easy or hard.
- 2) Yes, the calendars are big at times, but there are just as many times when the calendars are not small and you have time to work on transcripts.

- 3) You may spend eight hours in the courtroom, but it's guaranteed that you will not be on the record for eight hours. There's lots of down time during the court day.
- 4) Your pay will include a salary, health and retirement benefits, most likely 13 paid holidays a year, 40 hours of vacation time a year, and also sick time. And on top of that, you will also be paid for transcripts.

There are many aspects of the law in the court system. There are family law courts, juvenile courts, felony courts, and misdemeanor courts. There is also the civil side of the court system with its array of cases that range from fender benders to asbestos law. If you had lived in Florida during the Bush-Gore election, you could have worked on a case that will be written about in our history books for generations to come.

So before you decide that the courts are too difficult of an assignment, talk with reporters that have been with the courts for some time. Ask them questions. Sit in. Spend as much time in the same courtroom as possible. Learn the process and procedures, and be sure that you enable yourself to make the most informed decision that's possible before you decide whether or not to work in the courts.

(In our next edition of CCRA On-Line, I will write about my experience as a deposition reporter.) 

CCRA's 96th Annual Convention



October 6-8, 2006
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Save the date for CCRA's 96th Annual Convention!

This year's program **Synergize – Energize – Socialize** will be educational, motivating and entertaining!

As always, the CCRA Annual Convention will be filled with informative and educational workshops and seminars, fun events and opportunities for you to meet and network with fellow court reporters.

Watch your mail for registration information!

NCSC Identifies Top Priorities for State Courts

(Reprinted with our thanks to NCRA)

The National Center for State Courts recently conducted a survey of several national judicial organizations to identify the biggest priorities for state courts. The priorities ranged from security threats and information technology to networking and multiculturalism. Below are the top 13 identified priorities facing the U.S. state court systems:

- The age of information, telecommunications, and networking technology
- Tight budgets for state governments and courts
- Courts face security threats and natural disasters
- Judicial independence - challenges for courts
- Improving access to justice
- Emerging revolution in legal service provision
- Court as a business organization
- Increased demand for justice system performance accountability
- Increasingly divergent expectations for the courts' role in society
- Changing nature of families

- Courts in a multicultural society
- Increasing complexity of civil litigation
- Making the court elder-ready

The American Judges Association (AJA) ranked the age of information, telecommunications, and networking technology as its first priority. It subsequently rated judicial independence, tight budgets, and increasingly divergent expectations for the courts' role in society as its other top concerns. The Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) also placed information and technology as its top priority followed by security threats, court as a business organization, and tight budgets. The National Association for Court Management (NACM) ranked its first concern also as information and technology, followed by tight budgets, security threats, and court as a business organization.

If you would like to learn more about NCSC, please visit their Web site at <http://www.ncsconline.org/>. 

Visit <http://www.cal-ccra.org> to “Ask A Reporter!”



Ask A Reporter

By Lesia J. Mervin, CSR, RMR, CRR, CCRA Secretary/Treasurer

CCRA has recently launched an excellent program on our Web site. It's called Ask A Reporter, where you may pose a question and then a member of our board responds to the question within 48 hours. This has been an excellent source of outreach for our membership and the reporting community. The response has been overwhelmingly positive.

A compilation of the most frequently asked questions will be posted under a FAQ section of the CCRA Web site. The questions are across a wide spectrum of topics. One of the most frequently asked questions has been from prospective students inquiring about online programs in California and the qualifications to take the California CSR. Online programs are on the rise, including several programs from California

schools, and many students are embracing this technology. It's fantastic to see more students becoming interested in court reporting.

Other topics from both freelancers and officials include, statute questions, out-of-state reporters asking questions about California procedures, transcript formats, and student questions.

The next time you need a question answered, let us know and the board would be glad to help you. 

How May I Help You?

By Sheri L. Turner, CSR, CCRA Board of Directors, Depo Advisory Committee Chair

Hopefully that question is more than a trite phrase to us when it comes to being court reporters. We all appreciate good relations with other people, whether it's the friendly salesclerk or an attorney or judge who actually pays us a genuine compliment. Customer service should be an important part of our court reporting responsibilities and can be an excellent way to increase our earning potential. We have many opportunities to provide good customer service to attorneys, judges, firm owners, and other reporters. I am speaking from the perspective of a freelance reporter and firm owner, but the same principles apply to any aspect of reporting work.

With our Clients:

"Marketing a service business is not the same as marketing a product. Products are tangible; you can see them, touch them, maybe even taste them before you buy. Services are intangible. You can't see them until they are demonstrated. They can't be touched or tasted. Because a service is intangible, until it is performed for you, you have no idea how it will turn out, whether you like it, or whether it will work for your problem, situation, or opportunity." (*Get Clients Now*, by C.J. Hayden) If a potential client gets to know you, learns to like you, and believes that he/she can trust you, you probably will have a client. How valuable to me as a firm owner is a reporter who can do things to build this kind of customer service out on a deposition? Invaluable. Will I do everything in my power to give that reporter more work? You betcha! The July-August 2006 issue of JCR contains some excellent articles about reporters building business relationships and providing customer service, including the following suggestions from the mouth of Attorney Wayne Cohen: 1) Establish a rapport with attorneys; 2) Embrace an attitude of service; 3) Be in a good mood at the job; and 4) Have a good attitude about your work.

With a Firm Owner:

I have witnessed situations recently of reporters going above and beyond the call of duty to help out in times of crisis – a firm owner with a personal tragedy who gets extra help taking care of things at the office and making sure jobs are covered; a brand-new reporter taking her first doctor deposition, which turned out to be an expedite, and handling the transcript production herself because the firm owner had to be out of town. I'm sure we see these situations frequently, and the reporters who go out of their way to help are, I'm sure, more valued and making more money than the overflow reporter I call who "doesn't do medical anymore" and won't cover a last-minute job that called in. Which kind of reporter are you? I am definitely a firm believer in the adage "what goes around comes around," even if the results may not be immediately discernible.

To Fellow Reporters:

We all know that being a reporter is often a thankless job, and even the best, fastest, most accurate and conscientious reporter feels underappreciated and unloved at times! So when you have the opportunity, go out of your way to recognize and acknowledge your fellow reporters for the fine job that they do. Every reporter who handles his/her assignment in a professional and courteous manner is benefiting the reporting profession as a whole. What kind of customer service can a tape recorder provide? Not much. Conversely, every reporter who is inept or unprofessional can make a black mark on our entire profession. An attorney-client approached me recently asking my opinion about the propriety of an invoice he received for a transcript copy. After discussing the invoice, he confided that the thing that bothered him the most is paying any amount of money for that transcript because it was an absolutely horrible transcript, including typos, gibberish, and untranslates in the FINAL, certified transcript! It saddens me to see a situation like that ever happen in our profession.

So take the time to pat yourself on the back and to acknowledge the good work of the outstanding reporters around you. We are all in this profession together, and thankfully we have CCRA watching out for and protecting our profession. I love my job and plan to be reporting for a very long time, and I hope you do too. You will have an opportunity in the near future to recognize hard-working reporters in our profession through a fun "jailhouse" fundraiser that CCRA will be doing in conjunction with our annual convention. So watch your e-mail and convention information for the chance to honor the excellent reporters around you. Remember, great reporters are **WANTED** everywhere! 🌐



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Breathe

By Carolyn Dasher, CCRA Director

As Court Reporters working in the legal field, we are constantly bombarded with the issues of others. Whether it be listening to a murder case or writing madly while ten civil lawyers argue their motions, we are absorbing the energy around us. Try as we might to let our day go once we leave the office, oftentimes our evenings are spent transcribing the words we wish we'd never heard. Never fear! There are ways to release the toxic information and have a relaxing, peaceful evening with your families (or dogs, the family I go home to).

Breathe!! Be mindful of your breath. Are you breathing shallowly? Are you tensing up your shoulders and holding your breath? I do both when I'm writing madly! Be conscious of how you're breathing while you're working. We concentrate on breathing during exercise. Why not be mindful of it at other times?

On your breaks, even if it's just a short bathroom break, try to close your eyes and roll your shoulders back a few times. Breathe deeply. Open up your heart center. Be alone in your moment and be only a part of your world, not the world in which you work.

This October at the convention, I'll be giving a yoga seminar that will touch the issues important to us, using techniques that I use to help me deal with the stress of work and allow me to happily enjoy my life! See you there! 🌐

Teaching Opportunity

Cypress College Court Reporting
needs a teacher for the fall semester
starting after Labor Day.

Minimum requirements: AA or BA degree,
plus experience in court reporting.

**Please call Carolee Freer at 714-808-4574
for more information.**

Attention Students and Schools

By Geri Bunch, CCRA Public Relations/Support Our Students Chair

CCRA is giving another opportunity at the student scholarship award. The application and requirements have been revamped. Now, there will be only one essay required instead of two; however additionally, it will need to be approved by the English teacher of your school.

Another change is that we are opening up the speed range and awarding one \$500 scholarship to the 160-180 speed level and one \$500 to the 180-200 speed level. Students need to be in good standing academically with their schools and be a member of CCRA.

The cut-off date for applications to be received is September 15, 2006. The scholarships will be awarded during the CCRA convention business meeting in October.

To apply, please go to this link: <http://www.cal-ccra.org> and click on the "For Students" tab. You will find the Student Scholarship Application. So get out your pencils and put your writing skills to work for you.

Good luck, Gerie 🌐

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Ruling just in on Engate patent claims

December 7, 2005 - On December 5, 2005, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois ruled that 11 additional Engate patent claims were invalid, providing another important victory for Esquire Deposition Services and Atkinson-Baker.

In May 2005 a bench trial was held on the remainder of the defendants' invalidity counterclaim against Engate. The Court's ruling rested heavily on the testimony and evidence presented by NCRA President Marilyn Marquardt-Sanchez, court reporters Richard Dagdigian and Richard Stirewalt, District Court Judge Roger Strand, Stenograph representatives John Wenclawski and Fred Middlebrooks, and programmer Brent Sandstrom. Another important factor proved to be the many examples of prior art NCRA provided to the defendants.

"This is an extremely important victory not only for the defendants, but also for the reporting profession," said NCRA Executive Director and CEO Mark J. Golden, CAE. "We're gratified that the Court has invalidated these claims. But we still have more to do. NCRA will be working with counsel to identify what else needs to be done to protect the interests of our members."

The primary subject addressed at trial was defendants' contention that certain claims of the Engate patents were anticipated by products and processes that were in public use or were disclosed in printed publications prior to the filing of Engate's patent applications on March 24, 1993. In this latest ruling, District Court Judge Matthew Kennelly declared invalid patents relating to searching the realtime transcript and displaying a portion of the text, phonetic translation, and video- and audio-text synchronization. In the initial ruling, the Court invalidated Engate's key patent claims that attempted to cover a realtime feed that allows a lawyer to read, highlight, annotate, navigate, list issues, view transcripts remotely, and perform other critical functions.

In all, the Court declared 21 of the 26 patent claims under consideration invalid. However, the Court upheld five of Engate's patent claims, which appear to be focused on messaging with portions of the transcript attached and automatic issue coding by the computer (issue coding by the attorney was previously declared invalid).

NCRA is currently reviewing the decision with counsel in order to identify the ramifications of the ruling and any necessary next steps. As it has done in the past, NCRA will keep all of its members as informed as possible about the ramifications of the Engate litigation so that individual member reporters can make informed and independent decisions about

what actions are in their own and their firm's best interests. NCRA will also continue to help facilitate the defense of those member reporters who have decided to join the Joint Defense Group.

As you may recall, Engate sued Esquire Deposition Services and Atkinson-Baker Inc. for infringement of several U.S. patents issued to Engate covering certain functions that can be used by court reporters and attorneys to enhance the utility of realtime transcription. Esquire and Atkinson-Baker counterclaimed for a declaratory judgment of invalidity of certain patent claims. In a series of rulings, the Court found in favor of the defendants on Engate's claims of infringement.

Initially, the Court was not planning on ruling on the issue of invalidity. However, an amicus curiae brief submitted by NCRA in support of the defendants helped to convince the court to examine the validity of the patent claims. The Court thereafter partially granted the defendants' motion for summary judgment on their invalidity counterclaim, finding invalid 10 claims on July 30, 2004.

Engate Appeals Court Ruling

Engate has appealed the U.S. District Court's decision invalidating many of Engate's patent claims relating to the provision of realtime, as well as the original court rulings on direct and indirect infringement. The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois ruled on December 5 that 11 additional Engate patent claims were invalid, bringing to 21 the total number of patent claims held to be invalid.

Engate filed its initial appeal brief in February. We expect the appeals court to review the matter in early spring. NCRA will submit an amicus curiae brief in support of the defendants, Esquire Deposition Services and Atkinson-Baker, and the Court's initial ruling. NCRA will provide as much additional assistance as possible to help the defendants prepare their response to the appeal.

NCRA patent counsel has revised the expert legal opinion originally drafted for members of the Joint Defense Group to reflect the Court's latest ruling. Patent counsel still believes that participants in the Joint Defense Group can rely on the opinion to protect against claims of willful infringement.

As it has done, NCRA will keep members informed about the ramifications of the Engate litigation so that individual member reporters can make informed and independent decisions about what actions are in their own and their firm's best interests. NCRA also continues to help facilitate the defense of member reporters who have decided to join the Joint Defense Group.

Engate Update, Continued

Engate Ruling Not Expected Until 2007

May 17, 2006 - Esquire Deposition Services and Atkinson-Baker, with NCRA's assistance, have filed their responses to Engate's appeal of the U.S. District Court's decision invalidating many of Engate's patent claims relating to the provision of realtime, as well as the original court rulings on direct and indirect infringement.

The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois ruled on December 5 that 11 additional Engate patent claims were invalid, bringing to 21 the total number of patent claims held

to be invalid. We expect the appeals court to review the matter and offer a ruling sometime in 2007.

As it has done, NCRA will keep members informed about the ramifications of the Engate litigation so that individual member reporters can make informed and independent decisions about what actions are in their own and their firm's best interests. NCRA also continues to help facilitate the defense of member reporters who have decided to join the Joint Defense Group. 

Mensa Invitational

"The Washington Post's Mensa Invitational once again asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition."

Here are the 2005 winners:

1. Intaxication: Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.
2. Reintarnation: Coming back to life as a hillbilly
3. Bozone (n.): The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.
4. Foreploy: Any misrepresentation about yourself for the purpose of getting laid.
5. Cashtration (n.): The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.
6. Giraffiti: Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.
7. Sarchasm: The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.
8. Inoculatte: To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

9. Hipatitis: Terminal coolness.

10. Osteopornosis: A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit.)

11. Karmageddon: It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it's like, a serious bummer.

12. Decafalon (n.): The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.

13. Glibido: All talk and no action.

14. Dopeler effect: The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

15. Arachnoleptic fit (n.): The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web.

16. Beelzebug (n.): Satan in the form of a mosquito that gets into your bedroom at three in the morning and cannot be cast out.

17. Caterpallor (n.): The color you turn after finding half a worm in the fruit you're eating.

18. And the pick of the literature: Ignoranus: A person who's both stupid and an a-hole. 

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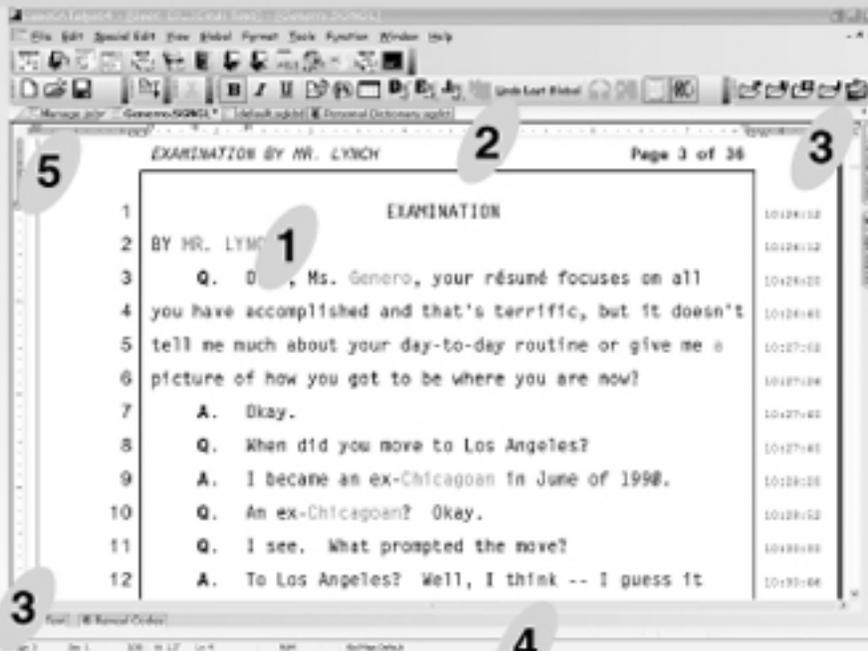
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