



CCRA
online

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CCRA 97th Annual Convention
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October 6-8, 2007



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CCRA Online Copy Deadlines

The deadline for ad and article copy for CCRA Online is the first of the month prior to the scheduled publication date. Articles, ad copy, changes of address, complaints of nondelivery and subscription requests should be directed to CCRA, 2400 22nd Street, Suite 110, Sacramento, CA 95818 or call 916/443-5090. Advertising inquiries also should be directed to the Association office. Photographs accompanying articles should be RGB color JPEG files with a resolution no less than 120 ppi.

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CCRA Online

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the California Court Reporters Association

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**Cover: Views of Downtown Los Angeles, CA, Site of
the CCRA 97th Annual Convention, October 6-8, 2007**

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.

The Guardian of the Record in the Digital Age - The Freelancer's Perspective

The primary job of any CSR in California – and presumably any reporter throughout the country – is to ensure the integrity of the record. We are “The Guardians of the Record.” It is we who have, throughout history, earned the respect of the litigant, the bar, and the bench as the keepers of the record. Throughout our profession's history and currently, it is the CSR who reports the proceeding, dictates/scopes and/or proofs and – finally – certifies the transcript as being true and accurate by placing our signature on the certificate page. Why is this practice changing? And should this practice be changing?

In this digital age of transcript production and with the current trend of networking jobs throughout the state and the entire country, most firm owners are requiring the freelance reporter to e-mail the transcript – usually in ASCII format - of the deposition to the firm for production. The signed certificate page by the CSR who reported the deposition is handled various ways by different firms and freelancers, including but not limited to: 1) the CSR mailing a signed certificate page under separate cover than the transcript to the firm; 2) PDF-ing the signed certificate page and e-mailing it to the firm; 3) presigning certificate pages and sending them to the firm for use on future transcripts; 4) the firm signing the certificate page for the CSR – assuming in this case that the freelancer has given permission to the firm to do such; 5) the freelancer digitally signing the transcript and e-mailing that digitally signed transcript to the firm for production of the transcript; 6) the CSR uploading the digital transcript to the firm's secure Web site for production.

In each of the practices of signing the reporter's certificate page listed above, does that practice ensure the integrity of the record? Would any of the above practices hold up in court if the transcript were challenged? Assuming the firm is producing the transcript, it is my own personal belief that the practice of digitally signing transcripts by the CSR who reported the deposition and the firm producing the transcript from that digitally- and electronically-signed transcript

file is the “Best Business Practice” for ensuring the integrity of the record. We are in the digital age in transcript preparation, production and product to the client. Let's think about what's the most professional way to ensure the integrity of the transcript – thereby continuing to be the true “Guardians of the Record.”



*Sandy Bunch
VanderPol
CSR, RMR, CRR*

Within this month's *CCRA Online*, there will be four articles focusing on this topic: One article from a court reporter, one from a CCRA board member, one from a medium-sized firm owner, and one from a national firm. I encourage each and every one of you, whether a freelancer, small, medium or large firm owner, to educate yourselves by reading each of these articles. You may agree with me – or you may not – that it's time to really consider if your current practice is at the level that your CSR license requires, that of certifying the official record of the proceeding.

The primary job of any CSR...is to ensure the integrity of the record.

Over the past two months and in this month's publication, we have been running an excellent article written by Candis Bradshaw. This article explains what electronic and digital signatures are and the process by which to effectuate your digital and electronic signatures onto the transcript. In future publications, we will be offering step-by-step instructions on how to digitally sign your transcript using various different programs.

I invite any comments you wish to make on this topic. You may e-mail your comments to our editor, Connie Parchman. Connie's e-mail address is parchman1@aol.com. Additionally, you may also send your comments to me at realtimecsr@calweb.com.



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By Sheri Turner, CSR, RPR, VP Freelance, Depo Advisory Chair

Signing the Certificate

Recently a question was asked to CCRA which resulted in clarification by the Court Reporters Board of California (hereinafter know as the CRB) and which prompted many of the articles in our magazine this month:

“Question: I recently heard that if a court reporter gives authorization for someone else to sign their reporter’s certificate that gets attached to the end of their transcript, this is approved by the CSR Board of California and would still make the transcript a legal certified document without forgery. Is this true? If so, can you have anyone sign for you, such as a court reporting agency who is handling your transcripts? Please advise.”

I have permission to quote from David Brown at the CRB, and his answer in part is as follows:

“The answer is no. The CRB has not approved the ability of a person other than the CSR to sign the certification for the CSR.” He went on to say that a firm owner had been cited by the board for attaching a pre-signed certificate page to the wrong transcript, for committing “fraud, dishonesty or corruption in violation of B.P. 8025(d) by preparation of a transcript by a person who was not present during the proceeding.”

The answer is no.

He also takes the position that **a similar course of action would be taken against a CSR licensee if a complaint were received and the activity verified for a person other than the CSR signing the certification page.**

Other articles in this magazine issue are also addressing the best business practices, and it is the position of the CCRA Board of Directors that regardless of what are **actual** practices by firms and individual reporters, the **best** practice is an original signed certificate by the reporter for the transcript and a digital signature on any electronic file transmitted to a firm for production or distribution to protect the integrity of the record and provide the best service to the client.

Usually it shouldn’t be a problem for the reporter to provide a signed certificate specific to that transcript with a job sheet and exhibits to the agency. If expediency is an issue with getting the transcript out, consider a faxed, signed certificate page or a printed and signed certificate scanned to a .pdf file and e-mailed to the firm.

The most important point to remember is that the CSR licensee is ultimately responsible for the transcript and the certification thereof, not the firm.

Unfortunately some firms completely reformat the reporter’s transcript after it has left the reporter’s possession. In one circumstance I know of, the firm actually added 20% more pages to the transcript, billing the attorney for the increased number of pages while paying the reporter for the number of pages turned in as originally formatted. Some firms are signing the certificate page for the reporter. Some firms are having the reporter pre-sign generic certificates to be attached to their future transcripts. None of these practices complies with the reporter’s statutory responsibility to report the proceedings and certify the transcript.

The short answer: Please take the responsibility to know and approve of how your transcript is produced and to personally certify the authenticity of it, because it’s YOUR license on the line. Aside from the legal ramifications, **your certification of the transcript has purpose and value. Do not allow that purpose and value to be undermined by allowing someone else to sign for you, contributing to the devaluing of our services and to the detriment of our entire industry.**

On a side note: I have an uncle who moved to the country of Estonia a few years ago. I recently saw him and had the opportunity to hear all about what life is like in such a small formerly Eastern Bloc country. I was very surprised to learn that Estonia as a country is very technologically advanced, having become so in the relatively few short years since separating from the former USSR. In citing examples of their technology, he mentioned to me that no one in Estonia knows what a paper check is. He said that ALL banking there is done electronically and verified by digital signatures. It’s looking as though we in the USA, and in the American legal system especially, are lagging behind in our use of already available and valuable technology. Let’s embrace this technology and use it to our benefit and to the benefit of our customers and consumers as well.



Nomination Committee's Slate of Officers and Board of Directors

For the California Court Reporters Association – Term 2007/2008

By Doreen Perkins, Chair, Nominating Committee

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, I am pleased to say what a privilege it was to have witnessed and been Chairperson of this committee. We all spent many hours intensely interviewing all candidates and reviewing their qualifications for the respective positions. I want to thank my committee members for their commitment to this huge undertaking and the care they took in coming to their decisions.

The following persons all exhibited excellent leadership skills, commitment and dedication to the profession and CCRA, and following are the results:

Officers:

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Vice President Officials – Jim Partridge
Secretary-Treasurer – Carolyn Dasher

Board of Directors:

District B – Kelly Roemer
District D – Natie Alvarado
District E – (At Large) Judy Gillespie
District F – (At Large) Lynden Glover

Respectfully Submitted,
Doreen Perkins, Chair, CCRA Nomination Committee

Members: Robin Casey
Allen Edelist
Ray Eggebraaten
Connie Parchman
Tom Pringle
Jan White



*Your CCRA Board
and Officers hard at work!*


Best “Gotta Have It” Brownie

By Gerie A. Bunch, CSR, RPR, CCRA SOS Committee Chair

Family recipe from Katie Barker of Layton Utah took honors in competition.
This recipe is especially for Lynda from the CCRA office.

1 c. soft butter
2 c. sugar
1/3 c. dry cocoa
1 ½ c. flour
Stir in
4 eggs
2 tsp vanilla
¼ tsp. salt
1 ½ c. chopped nuts (optional)

Frosting:
1 ¾ c. powdered sugar
½ c. butter
1/3 c. cocoa
½ c. canned evaporated milk

Stir and pour into greased 1” baking sheet. Bake @ 350 for 20 minutes or until done. Then cover with 1 lb. mini marshmallows and bake 3 minutes more. Remove from oven, let cool and frost. Pure decadence. 

Signing the Certificate Page

By Connie Parchman, CSR, CRR, CCP, Official Court Reporter

As I watch my freelance colleagues struggle with this issue of signing certificate pages, it strikes me as odd that this is even an issue. I know, court work is different from freelance work. Generally, as officials we never lose "possession" of our transcripts for printing, formatting, billing, etc., by an agency. We keep control.

It was NEVER a question of "go ahead and sign for me."

However, the importance of signing a certificate page has never been lost on me. Very early in my career, Justice Harry Low of the First Appellate District made sure of that. It was about 1984. I was issued an OSC (Order to Show Cause). This is basically a hearing for the court to determine if you're competent to work as an official court reporter. I didn't know why this was being issued. I had filed the transcript, but I appeared before Justice Low as ordered. Once there, I was told

that I had not signed the certificate page on that transcript. This made the transcript useless and not "fileable," therefore, the transcript was late. Extremely late by the time the OSC hearing occurred. I was sanctioned \$250.

Justice Low retired, but that lesson has never left me. I will always sign my certificate pages and I would never allow anyone to sign for me. As a matter of fact, I personally drove 30 miles one time to meet a colleague who had forgotten to sign a cert page. She was off on a disability claim and wasn't able to make the trip. It was NEVER a question of "go ahead and sign for me."

I don't know what would happen if deposition testimony were questioned in a court of law. Would the reporter be subpoenaed? Probably. I know it's happened in the past. Would anyone compare the signature on the certificate page to other transcripts filed by the same reporter? I don't know. I doubt it. But, what would the answer be if you were on the stand and asked under oath, "Is this your signature?"



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Digital Signatures – Why Are They Important?

Editor's Note: This intro is a reprint from installments 1 and 2. The 3rd installment begins below. You can read the first two installments by going to cal-ccra.org and downloading the May and June issues of CCRA Online.

One of the top priorities of Governor Schwarzenegger and of the Department of Consumer Affairs is privacy issues as relates to the use of electronic documents. As a result of this priority of the governor and his administration, the California Court Reporters Board (CRB) will be addressing this topic as it relates to the protection of the consumer in the world of electronic transcripts. In fact, as part of the CRB's strategic plan under "Practice Standards," one of their goals is to "Meet with DCA representatives to discuss privacy issues associated with use of electronic files and identify options for ensuring consumer protection."

As our profession moves forward in this electronic/digital age, and with the current practice of e-mailing transcripts to counsel, we need to be prepared and educated on how best to protect the consumer when e-mailing transcripts.

Recently there was an excellent article on digital signatures published in the NCRA Journal. This article was written by Candis Bradshaw. NCRA and Candis have given CCRA permission to reprint this article. Please take the time to read and digest this article reprinted as a series. Here's Installment 3.

Signatures in the Digital Age - Installment 3 of 3

By Candis Bradshaw

Some Questions You Might Ask

How does the person who is receiving the document know that you signed the document? Just as with a paper certification, digital certification requires some level of trust. Unless you are sitting in front of the client, how does the client know that you were the one who signed the paper certification? There is no way, unless the client sees you sign the document and looks at some form of government-issued identification to verify your identity. There is also no way to ensure that the person who used a digital signature is indeed the person who purports to have signed the document. Again, the only way to definitively prove that you signed the document is to have a third party come into your home or office and witness the digital signing.

Although there is no definitive way to prove who "pressed the button" to use the digital signature, there are a few methods of ensuring the digital signature matches the purported signer. One method is through the signer sending his or her public key to the recipient, which ensures that the public key on the document matches the public key of the sender. However, there is no third party to verify the signature. Another method is for the signer to telephone the recipient and to inform the recipient that the digital signature is valid. However, this method works for paper signatures as well. Yet another method is uploading the public key to a public-key repository (such as www.keyserver.net), where the recipient can look up the sender's public key. However, the issue with the PGP standard is that the recipient may not find credence in the sender vouching for his or her own identity.

Signatures created using the PKI standard assist the end user in verifying that a particular public key belongs to someone. The recipient could look up the sender's certificate on the CA's Web site rather than having to rely on a public-key repository. Then the recipient could compare the certificate used to sign the document with the certificate on file for a particular signer with the CA. However, because most CAs do not use any form of identity verification, comparing the certificates does not definitively prove that the signer is indeed the signer. It merely proves that the certificate used to sign the document was issued by the CA.

As officers of the court, we must fulfill obligations. We cannot allow anyone to sign our transcripts for us. The same holds true for a digital signature: We must ensure that no one uses our private key to digitally sign documents. If that signing were to occur, it would constitute fraud or forgery. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that the private key be downloaded to your private computer and be protected with a passphrase. It is also vitally important to not share that passphrase with anyone. If the private key or passphrase is compromised, the signature needs to be revoked or permanently invalidated.

What does a digital signature not do? A digital signature does not prevent copying of the document. A digital signature essentially does two things: (1) allows verification that the document originated from the source from which it claims to have originated, and (2) informs the recipient whether or not the document has been modified since the signature was attached.

Continued on page 9

Doesn't encryption do the same thing as a digital signature? In short, no. Encryption and digitally signing a document are two different things.

Encryption protects the document from being opened, usually by a password or when two individuals exchange the public key portion of their digital certificates. However, once the document is decrypted, it can be modified. In contrast to encryption, a digital signature is like a wax seal. It ensures that the document's contents were not modified after the document was digitally signed.

How difficult is it to break or strip a digital signature? Unfortunately, it is not that difficult. In a test I did with Liz Beardow, a scopist from Fullerton, Calif., I sent a digitally signed PDF file to her. She simply opened the document in WordPerfect, resaved the file with a different name, and modified it. However, the modified file did not have my digital signature attached to it. Liz could not have digitally signed this modified document with my digital signature because Liz did not have access to my private key.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we educate our clients and the firms for which we work to make sure the digital signature is present. If the digital signature is absent for whatever reason, the clients or firms can assume that the document has been altered, and they should request a digitally signed copy directly from you.

Aren't digital signatures adding more complexity to an already complex world? Just as with anything else that's new and unfamiliar, this would appear to be the case. However, the hardest part to a digital signature is obtaining the initial certificate from a CA or creating the set of keys in PGP software. After that process, creating a digital signature is just about as difficult as signing your name to a piece of paper. Also, with the advent of e-filing, digital signatures will become more commonplace and more clients will be requesting this service.

What are the dangers if I don't use a digital signature on my transcripts? Your transcripts could be modified by some unscrupulous attorney or firm. The end user would have no way of knowing that the transcript was modified without verifying word for word the user's copy with the copy of the transcript on your computer, which is time-consuming and cumbersome.

How hard is it to create digital signatures? It is not difficult at all. First, you must obtain a digital certificate from RealLegal or one of the CAs listed earlier, or you must create a set of keys with a PGP software.

Then, you can use the digital certificate to sign documents using one of the following: PGP software (only if you create a set of keys with PGP software), PDF-creating software (such as Adobe Standard, Adobe Professional, or CutePDF), RealLegal's software (if you purchase a digital certificate from RealLegal), or your CAT software. Contact your CAT vendor directly to find out how to create a digitally signed file using your CAT software.

If you use PGP software to create a set of keys, the PGP Desktop software allows you to right-click on a document and to sign and encrypt the document.

RealLegal's services require the use of digital signatures purchased directly from RealLegal. After completing the requisite paperwork, it takes about five minutes to create and download your digital signature. Once your RealLegal digital signature is downloaded, it simply takes a couple of clicks to sign a document.

JCR Contributing Editor Candis Bradshaw is a freelance reporter in Hummelstown, Pa. She can be reached at candisbradshaw@gmail.com. Candis would like to thank the following people for their assistance: Fred Middlebrooks and Keith McCready of Stenograph, L.L.C.; Jeremy Thorne of Advantage Software; Jason Primuth of RealLegal; Keith Vincent; Mike Miller; Al Betz; Liz Beardow; and Judy Miller.

Further Reading

For further reading about digital signatures, please see:

- American Bar Association's Digital Signature Guidelines at www.abanet.org/scitech/ec/isc/dsgfree.html
- American Bar Association's Digital Signature Guidelines Tutorial at www.abanet.org/scitech/ec/isc/dsg-tutorial.html
- Keith Vincent's Visualizers on using PGP Desktop to create digital signatures at www.kvincent.com/html/texas.html
- Introduction to Digital Signatures, by David Youd at www.youdzone.com/signature.html
- Electronic Signature Legislation by Thomas J. Smedinghoff, Esq., and Ruth Hill Bro, Esq., at <http://library.findlaw.com/1999/Jan/1/241481.html>
- Understanding Electronic Signatures: A discussion of electronic signatures, the E-Sign Act, and the admissibility of electronic signatures into law by RealLegal at www.reallegal.com/downloads/pdf/ESigWhitePaper.pdf
- Texas Court Reporters Association at www.tcra-online.com. (You must be a member of the Texas association to access detailed information about digital signatures.)



On the Lighter, More Fun Side of Things...

By Sandy Bunch VanderPol, CSR, RMR, CRR, CCRA President

The day before our June 2nd board meeting, I invited the board and committees and CCRA volunteers to enjoy my front yard – the South Fork of the American River – whitewater rafting, Class 2 -3. This event was not in any way sponsored by CCRA, just a gift of mine to the many hardworking volunteers that make this profession what it is today.

We had a great time on the river. We were able to fill three rafts, lead by my professional river guide husband, John. The water level was perfect, around 2,000 cfs, cubic feet



every raft executed the rapid perfectly. Now I could relax a bit. Things happen fast in the gorge, so all the chit-chat had to stop, or at least slow down – we had to pay attention to our guide's commands.

Following Fowler's Rock rapid, we enter Upper Haystack, basically a wave train - a fun ride - followed by Airplane turn.

per second. The weather was perfect, around 90 degrees. After lunch at the put-in, our first few miles were class 2 rapids – giving everyone time to warm up and get used to turning right, left and going backwards – working as a team.



Then Lost Hat, a huge standing wave. Finally, the big one, Satan's Cesspool! Everyone had to be on their game here or we could flip – again perfect execution by all rafts. Working our way down the rest of the gorge and through the many rapids was a riot. The rapid called Bouncing Rock nabbed the first and only "swimmer" of the day, Teresa Fletcher. Within 20 seconds, Teresa was back in the raft and paddling for the next rapid.

It's a personal joy to share my whitewater hobby with my colleagues and wonderful friends. CCRA has offered me an unbelievable network of good friends – the camaraderie is unbelievable and will have a lasting effect on me.

Thank you all for joining me on the river!



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 95815 (916) 443-5090 or by e-mail at RealttimeCSR@calweb.com.

AB 32 (Fuller [R]) Career technical education: work certification training.
Status: 06/01/2007-Failed Deadline pursuant to Rule 61(a)(5). Last location was APPR. SUSPENSE FILE
Current Location: 06/01/2007-A 2 YEAR

Summary: Existing law requires school districts to adopt a course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, that includes, among other things, career technical education. This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to provide, within the public school system, work certification training options to pupils who are between the ages of 16 and 18 years, have passed the high school exit examination, and have the consent of their parents or guardians, with particular emphasis on job specific skilled labor and technical training. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.

AB 159 (Jones [D]) Courts: judgeships.
Status: 06/21/2007-From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to committee. Read second time, amended, and re-referred to Com. on JUD.
Current Location: 06/21/2007-S JUD.
Calendar Events: 06/26/07 Anticipated Hearing SEN JUD.

Summary: Existing law requires the Governor to submit to a designated agency of the State Bar of California the names of all potential appointees or nominees for a vacant judicial office for evaluation of their judicial qualifications. Existing law also requires the Governor, on or before March 1, 2007, and annually on or before each March 1 thereafter, to disclose aggregate statewide demographic data provided by all judicial applicants relative to ethnicity and gender. This bill would require the Governor to collect and release, on an aggregate statewide basis, demographic data provided by all judicial applicants relative to ethnicity, race, and gender and demographic data relative to ethnicity, race, and gender of all judicial appointments or nominations as provided by the judicial appointee or nominee. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.

AB 299 (Tran [R]) Maintenance of the codes.
Status: 06/11/2007-From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to committee. Read second time, amended, and re-referred to Com. on JUD.
Current Location: 06/11/2007-S JUD.
Calendar Events: 06/26/07 12 p.m. - Room 112 SEN JUDICIARY

Summary: 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.

AB 310 (Silva [R]) Maintenance of the codes.
Status: 06/11/2007-From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to committee. Read second time, amended, and re-referred to Com. on JUD.
Current Location: 06/11/2007-S JUD.

Summary: Existing law establishes the California Law Revision Commission. Existing law authorizes the commission to recommend changes in the law as it deems necessary to modify or eliminate antiquated and inequitable rules of law and bring the law into harmony with modern conditions. This bill would make technical and minor changes to various laws.

AB 500 (Lieu [D]) Civil actions: telephonic appearances.
Status:06/19/2007-From committee: Do pass, and re-refer to Com. on APPR. Re-referred. (Ayes 5. Noes 0.) .
Current Location: 06/19/2007-S APPR.
Calendar Events: 07/02/07 10 a.m. - John L. Burton Hearing Room (4203) SEN APPROPRIATIONS

Summary: Existing law permits attorneys to make appearances by telephone at trial setting conferences, except as specified. This bill would permit a party to appear by telephone in any conference or hearing at which witnesses are not expected to be called to testify. The bill would require the party choosing to appear by telephone to provide notice in either the moving or opposing papers or by oral or written notification at least 3 court days before the appearance. The bill would permit a court to provide teleconferencing appearances by entering into a contract with a private vendor, pursuant to which the vendor would be permitted to charge a party appearing by telephone a reasonable fee, and would also permit a court to require a particular call provider to be used for telephone appearances. The bill would require a court to publish notice providing the information necessary to appear by telephone at conferences and hearings. The bill would also specify the application of these provisions to probate proceedings.

Continued on page 12

AB 582 (Evans [D]) Court transcription fees.
Status: 06/21/2007-Referred to Com. on JUD.
Current Location: 06/21/2007-S JUD.

Summary: This bill is sponsored by SEIU with CCRA and COCRA actively working with SEIU. This bill would provide for an increase in the folio rates for transcripts prepared by the official court reporter and official reporter pro tempore. This bill would also create a statewide uniform transcript format.

AB 863 (Davis [D]) Los Angeles County Superior Court employees.
Status: 06/21/2007-From committee: Amend, do pass as amended, and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 3. Noes 2.) .
Current Location: 06/21/2007-S APPR.
Calendar Events: 06/28/07 7 SEN SECOND READING FILE

Summary: Existing law provides that each trial court may establish a salary range for each of its employee classifications, and considerations shall include, but are not limited to, local market conditions and other local compensation-related issues such as difficulty of recruitment or retention. This bill would require the Los Angeles County Superior Court to pay each employee in a bargaining unit represented by any specified employee organization an amount equivalent to the additional amount the employee would have received if the reclassification raise the employee received on October 1, 2005, had been retroactive to August 1, 2005.

AB 1211 (Price [D]) Depositions: costs.
Status: 05/31/2007-In Assembly. Concurrence in Senate amendments pending. May be considered on or after June 2 pursuant to Assembly Rule 77.
Current Location: 05/31/2007-A UNFINISHED BUSINESS
Calendar Events: 06/25/07 9 ASM UNFINISHED BUSINESS CONCURRENCE IN AMENDMENTS

Summary: This bill would provide that the obligation to timely pay the deposition officer or entity providing the services of the deposition officer for that transcription, and any other deposition products or services that are requested, shall be the responsibility of the requesting attorney or a party representing himself or herself, unless responsibility for the payment is otherwise provided by law or the deposition officer or entity is notified in writing that the party or another identified person will be responsible for payment. The bill would provide that these provisions do not prohibit or supersede an agreement between an attorney and a party allocating responsibility for the payment of deposition costs to the party .

SB 145 (Corbett [D]) Court facilities.
Status: 05/17/2007-To Com. on JUD.
Current Location: 05/17/2007-A JUD.
Calendar Events: 06/26/07 9 a.m. - Room 4202 ASM JUDICIARY

Summary: (1) Existing law requires the Judicial Council, in consultation with the superior court of each county and the county, to enter into agreements concerning the transfer of responsibility for court facilities from that county to the Judicial Council. Transfer of responsibility may occur not earlier than July 1, 2004, and not later than June 30, 2007. This bill would extend the deadline for the transfer of responsibility for court facilities to December 31, 2008. The bill would make related, conforming changes. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws.

SB 649 (Committee on Judiciary) Trial court restructuring.
Status: 06/20/2007-Read second time. To Consent Calendar.
Current Location: 06/20/2007-A CONSENT CALENDAR
Calendar Events: 06/25/07 38 ASM CONSENT CALENDAR

Summary: The California Constitution provides for the abolition of municipal courts and their unification within the superior courts, as specified. This bill would conform various statutory provisions of law to the abolition of municipal courts and their unification within the superior courts. The bill would also make related statutory changes with respect to the classification of limited civil cases, appeals in limited civil cases and misdemeanor and infraction cases, and arraignment by 2-way electronic audiovideo communication. This bill contains other related provisions.



Letter to the Editor

I was reading the article about digital signatures. I didn't see Acrobat mentioned anywhere. Acrobat permits self-signing or public keys, and is probably the most inexpensive and accessible way to digitally sign a transcript. Various other Acrobat security features can be used to prevent alteration of the transcript as well. AND since the government and the courts have moved to Acrobat, it would make sense for the reporting community to adopt the same product the lawyers and judges are using.

Bob Freeman
Director of Legal Services
Kusar Court Reporters & Legal Services, Inc.
Long Beach Video Conferencing Center
111 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 1200
Long Beach, California 90802
562.437.8485 800.282.3376

Dear Bob,

You're right. Please read on. Also, please note that CCRA does not endorse any product or service. Our purpose is to inform, not sell. In that vein, we did omit some critical information. Thank you for helping us keep our members informed.

Sincerely,
Connie Parchman, CSR, CRR, CCP
Editor, CCRA Online

Digital Signatures

By William S. Greenley, CSR 2159, RDR, Merrill Corporation, CCRA Depo Advisory Committee Member

On January 28, 2007, the Texas Court Reporters Certification Board (CRCB) approved public key-based digital signatures as an accepted method of electronic signature for court reporters to use on the first certification of a transcript. Effective April 28, 2006, Powers of Attorney and faxed signatures are not acceptable methods of signatures on the first certification of a transcript.

So as of April 28, 2006 court reporters in Texas are required to either sign the first certification of a transcript digitally or go to their agency's office and sign it originally.

At that time, Merrill's two Texas offices – Houston and Dallas – initiated the use of RealLegal's Reporter Edition software within E-Tran™ Manager to submit their transcripts digitally signed for printing and/or emailing to our clients. It's a relatively easy process to initiate and has worked very well. Some of our other offices are starting to use RealLegal's Reporter Edition.

It is the reporter's obligation and responsibility under the California Code of Civil Procedure to certify to the accuracy of the record...

Years and years ago, it was common practice for freelance reporters to physically deliver hard copies of their transcripts

plus exhibits and worksheets to their agency's office. The transcripts were normally printed by the reporter and would have a signed certificate page attached. We would photocopy the originally signed cert, attach to any copies if ordered by other parties, and retain the original for future filing with the Court and/or noticing attorney.

As we moved into the electronic age and reporters started to use the Internet to email their transcripts into the office, we ran into the problem of having the reporter's originally signed cert page on the back of the transcript.

My experience and knowledge of how that was handled was the agency would maintain a number of signed cert pages for use to attach to the printed transcript. The cert page would be numbered and dated but would never be signed by anyone but the reporter.

Reporters would necessarily trust that the agency would produce the exact file that was emailed to the agency. I think an issue has now arisen (and therefore one of the reasons for the new rule in Texas) that some agencies are/were reformatting the reporter's transcript. They would pay the reporter for what they submitted, reformat it to increase the page count and bill the client for more pages than were produced by the reporter.

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Hollywood in Reel Time

By Carolyn Dasher, CSR, RPR, Convention Chair

Come one, come all for the time of your life! This year the convention will be held in downtown Los Angeles at the beautiful LA Marriott. The hotel is spacious with a great conference area and newly decorated rooms. We've worked out a great room rate, so plan to stay and join in on all the fun!

We've got Mark Geragos speaking in his wonderfully charismatic way. We've got loads of interesting classes, including the controversial Audio-sync. Keep current with technology by learning the scoop on transcript repositories, digital signatures and Microsoft Vista.

We're planning a poolside reception Saturday night. Come hear ragtime music and relax with your friends and talk about...well, everything you can't say during work hours. Sunday night will be a dinner with great Hollywood entertainment! Start chatting with your friends and get a group together. It will be great fun!

And, remember, this year the conference will be held Saturday, October 6th through Monday, October 8th – You don't have to take off a day to attend! And we'll be done early on Monday so you can have some home time before work on Tuesday!



Digital Signatures - Continued from page 13

A digitally signed transcript cannot be edited or changed in any way. If it is, the end user will not be able to verify the integrity of the record through an independent validating agency.

It is the reporter's obligation and responsibility under the California Code of Civil Procedure to certify to the accuracy of the record, which, of course, is not true if the record has been reformatted. I don't believe the issue of reformatting is that widespread, but it is important to be aware of it.

Years and years ago, it was common practice for freelance reporters to physically deliver hard copies of their transcripts plus exhibits and worksheets to their agency's office.

So, what is a digital signature? A digital signature is an electronic signature that can be used to authenticate the identity of the sender of a message or the signer of a document and possibly to ensure that the original content of the message or document that has been sent is unchanged.

There are a number of applications that can be used to digitally sign a transcript – Adobe Acrobat, Verisign, RealLegal and others. I believe RealLegal's solution is probably the best for court reporters. It is an easy application to set up and use, economical and the E-Tran™ format is accepted in the market place.

The E-Tran™ digitally signed transcript is easily verified by the client through an independent registration service.

For more information on RealLegal's Electronic Signatures, go to: <http://www.reallegal.com/downloads/pdf/ESigWhitePaper.pdf>.

To find out more information on Adobe Acrobat's Digital Signatures, go to: http://help.adobe.com/en_US/Reader/8.0/help.html?content=WSE04886EE-1B81-4338-882A-C2044CF44437.html.



Update on AB 582 and AB 1211

By Sandy Bunch VanderPol, CSR, RMR, CRR, CCRA President, Interim Legislative Advisor

AB 582 (Evans), the bill introduced by SEIU and supported by both CCRA and COCRA, is in the Senate Judiciary Committee at this point. As you may recall, this bill would, among other things, give the official reporter a transcript rate increase. Additionally, this bill would mandate a statewide uniform transcript format. At this time the bill will be kept in Senate Judiciary until agreement is reached between the stakeholders. AB 582 will become a two-year bill on July 13, if there is no deal struck on the language, at which time SEIU could move forward on the bill during next year's legislative session.

There has been a great deal of lobbying work behind the scenes...

AB 1211 (Price), the freelance bill co-sponsored by CCRA and DRA, has proceeded through the legislature on the consent calendar – there being no opposition. This bill would amend the Code of Civil Procedure to make the attorney responsible for payment

of our products and services. There has been a great deal of lobbying work behind the scenes on this bill to keep it on the consent calendar. CCRA's lobbyist and DRA's lobbyist have had numerous meetings with various lawyers' groups to educate them about the bill, making minor amendments along the way to meet their concerns, culminating in a bill that should be out of the Assembly and to the Governor's desk within the month of July.

CCRA wishes to thank its many members who have taken the time to write letters to legislators encouraging their support of AB 582 and AB 1211. Recently a CCRA Alert went out to freelancers to write to the Governor urging his signature on AB 1211. It is not too late to write this letter, if you have not already done so. Since the alert went out, AB 1211 is still in the Assembly. We are waiting for it to be calendared for the final vote from the Assembly. This should take place within the next couple of weeks.



Another Benefit for CCRA Members

Pengad is now offering CCRA members preferential pricing! You will receive Pengad's lowest catalog price on most stock items you buy. For example, the published price for one case of regular steno pad paper is \$45.19. However, as a CCRA member you would automatically receive the "end column" case price of \$37.96, even if you buy only one case!

You may order online at
www.pengad.com,
E-Mail sales@pengad.com or
call 1-800-631-6989.



Happy 4th of July
from CCRA!

Integrity of the Record Via Electronic Signatures

By Kelly Roemer, CSR, RPR, CCRA Depo Advisory Committee Member

This electronic signature ensures the integrity of the record.

Our deposition reporting firm has been using E-Transcript by RealLegal for years. As of November 1, 2006, we have requested that our court reporters certify their E-Transcripts via Real Legal's electronic signature to protect the integrity of the record. Our office set up a Real Legal account that the reporters can sign in on. The charge is \$85 per month for the office to have an account. There is no charge to the individual reporter. The reporters convert their Page Image ASCIIs into an E-Transcript and then attach their electronic signatures. The reporters then forward that E-Tran file to our office, which we archive for future use. At the attorney's request, either we email them the certified E-Transcript or we'll put the certified E-Transcript on a CD for them. This allows the attorneys to either e-file their certified transcripts in court, or they have a certified transcript on a disk.



This electronic signature ensures the integrity of the record. Once you attach your signature, the transcript cannot be altered in any way.



The advertisement features two software interfaces side-by-side. On the left is 'TurboCAT' with a blue background and a cheetah logo. It includes buttons for 'Job Menu', 'Realtime', 'Utility Menu', '[F10] Exit', 'Dictionary Menu', 'Litigation Support', 'CAPticator Online', and '[F1] Help!'. On the right is 'SmartCAT' with a white background and a cheetah logo. It includes buttons for 'Job Menu', 'Realtime', 'Files in Work Directory', 'Help!', 'Dictionary', 'Import Notes', 'Style Sheet', and 'Quick Start Guide'. Below the interfaces is the text: 'Like the Wheel, Our Software Didn't Need to be Reinvented. (Come see SmartCAT for Windows w/Bonus features... but only if you want to use them)'. At the bottom, there are logos for Windows 95, Windows 2000, Cheetah International, Windows XP, and Windows Vista, along with the website 'www.cheetahinternational.com' and phone number '1.877.333.2287'.

It's the Little Things!

By Vickie Main, Stenograph's Development Product Manager

Have you ever noticed that it seems to be the little things that save you money or cost you time? A little change here or there can make a big difference. With that in mind, here are a couple of Case CATalyst® "little things" that save you money and time!

Static Time field:

It's okay if you haven't gotten into the entire Field frenzy (although they are huge timesavers), but if you include a time reference about something that occurred anywhere in the body of the transcript, you need to use the Static Time field! For example, perhaps you have a parenthetical for the end of the deposition or when the jury left the courtroom. The Static Time field puts the time in the transcript when the steno outline for the parenthetical was written. It automatically notes the time whether you are writing realtime or reading in a file from a steno machine that creates timestamps. What a great timesaver! An example for a dictionary definition would be:

EPBD/EDBD defined as

<Parenthetical>(Deposition concluded at [!Static Time - 12 Hour]).

At 3:35 p.m. you write the steno EPBD/EPBD and the transcript result is:

<Parenthetical>(Deposition concluded at 3:35 p.m.)

Creation Date field:

This field can go on your title page or anywhere (including a header or footer) where you need the date the job was taken. Again, this date is automatically filled in when you include the title page and is based on the date of the realtime file or date on the diskette if you read in a steno file. You can display the "date" in words such as June 6, 2007 or digits such as 06/06/2007. Why have to type the job date in every job when CATalyst can do it for you!

Zip and e-mail:

Need to send a file or files to a scopist or client and want a quick and easy way to do it? The Zip and e-mail features allows you to select files whether it be an ASCII or PDF to a client or transcript and job dictionaries to a scopist, CATalyst automatically packages them in a zip file (for fast and easy delivery) and opens your default e-mail package and attaches the zip file to the e-mail. Address the e-mail, type the message and Send. No more time spent trying to locate the file you want to send.

Printing to PDF:

CATalyst has integrated the ability to print to PDF and does not require you to download shareware or load additional software. You can print transcripts, steno note files, dictionaries, core lists and more. In the Print dialog box, simply select Stenograph PDF Printer instead of your regular printer. You will be prompted for the location to save the PDF file and then it's done. PDF is a generic file format that retains the original formatting and can be viewed using the free Adobe Reader software. Most computers already have Adobe Reader loaded since all user guides are distributed in PDF format.

Compress and e-mail:

Need to send a compressed version of the transcript to a client? How about Compress and e-mail. Select the file, select the configuration and CATalyst automatically compresses the transcript in PDF format, packages it in a zip file, opens your default e-mail package and attaches the zip file to the e-mail. Oh, and if you forgot whether you created a word index for the transcript, select that option and CATalyst will build the word index if there isn't one already in the transcript. It is intelligent, fast and efficient.

It is the little things that save use time and money and CATalyst comes standard with those amazing little things.



What's in a Signature Anyway?

By Leigh Ann Orozco, CSR, CCRA Technology Committee

Are you allowing deposition firms to sign your certificate pages for you? This is a practice that is happening throughout the state and one that is of concern to me. Be it time constraints, location to a firm you've subcontracted with or just for ease, CSRs are allowing deposition firms to sign their certificate pages or are allowing signed generic certificate pages to be attached to final transcripts.

What does my signature really signify?

I've been pondering this practice for a bit now and recently had an experience with a small firm owner that made me give this much more thought. This firm owner wanted my permission to sign my certificate pages and also wanted to do print production from my CAT files as we are both on the same computer-aided transcription software. I refused and it resulted in some not-so-pleasant interactions between the two of us and made me wonder if others saw anything inappropriate with this practice.

A majority of my work is for a local firm where I print the original transcript and deliver the same directly to their offices for copy order production. If I have an expedite that needs to be delivered pronto and it won't allow me to get to the office right away, I will approach the client about accepting electronic delivery and then use a digital signature on the e-mailed file to meet the delivery deadline. Having spent a majority of my 20 years of reporting as an official reporter and working half-time in a job share position before I left for the private sector, it sure was convenient to be able to deliver digitally signed

preliminary hearing transcripts to both the prosecution and defense bar and to not have to trek down to the courthouse to meet that 10-day statutory turnaround when it was my week off when I couldn't easily deliver paper copy to them. They got the benefit of a quicker turnaround and I got some time back in my day. I can tell you that I never once got a call about a missing transcript!

I guess what concerns me most about this practice is that as a licensed CSR I feel strongly that it is my duty to insure the integrity of any transcript that I produce, be it electronically or on paper. Adding a digital signature is one method of protecting the integrity of your final work product. If the document has been altered, it will invalidate the signature and the end user will be aware of that. It's not about trusting the firm you're subcontracting with to do the right thing. Mistakes can, and will, happen inadvertently. If some other person has signed for you or attached your generic certificate page to a deposition, how do you know that it was attached to your final transcript, and how can you attest to the accuracy of that document without painstakingly going through it line for line to insure that it has not been modified?

As the guardian of the record, make sure you are using the best practices.

So, ask yourself, "What does my signature really signify?" Are you using best practices by allowing others to sign for you? As the guardian of the record, make sure you are using the best practices.



Punctuation Points: Apostrophe S or S Apostrophe?

By Margie Wakeman-Wells

Question: Is there a rule about using the possessive form with words ending in "S" or "Z"? How about plural possessives?

Answer: I believe that, to make a word singular possessive, the simplest rule is to add 's to the singular word -- with no exceptions:

Mr. Wells's car.
Mr. Jones's house.
The witness's answer.

This way, you do not have to make any distinctions for pronunciation or spelling or anything else.

For plural possessives, use the s', such as:

one year's worth of...
two years' worth of...



Direct Member Voting As Proposed By NCRA (Part 2)

The NCRA is proposing a bylaw amendment to allow for its members, not in attendance at the annual business meeting, to vote on issues affecting the profession. NCRA has formulated some frequently asked questions for your consideration below.

CCRA has a duty to educate you, our members, on Direct Member Voting, as well as any other topics that our national association is pursuing. At this point CCRA has not taken an official position on Direct Member Voting. CCRA is anxious to hear your thoughts as regards this topic. Please email Sandy Bunch VanderPol, CCRA president, at realtimccsr@calweb.com with your comments.

As this article is long and contains much information, we will run it in two parts. Please go to cal-ccra.org to download the June issue of CCRA Online for Part 1.

SHOULDN'T ALL ELIGIBLE VOTING MEMBERS HAVE ACCESS, NOT JUST THOSE WHO CAN VOTE ONLINE? CAN'T WE USE MAIL BALLOTS AS WELL?

Using mail ballots would require a considerable additional expense and would defeat one of the primary purposes of the proposed approach: ensuring the results could be announced within 24 hours of the Member Business Meeting. Clearly there would need to be a concerted effort to notify all eligible voting members of each Member Business Meeting to ensure they could vote via the Internet at the appropriate time if they so choose. Also, don't forget: Right now, only a few hundred people are voting each year at the business meeting. Online voting would expand that to at least 12,000 more eligible voting members.

HOW DO WE PREVENT PEOPLE OR STATES FROM STACKING VOTES?

It's a valid concern. But keep in mind,

- Any member is free to campaign or lobby any issue or candidate. The point of direct member voting is to allow each member an actual say in how the Association is run. Otherwise, those who lobby and show up at the business meeting are the only ones who get a say.
- With any type of lobbying efforts comes an increased awareness of Association goings-on by all members. That's a good thing.
- NCRA will continue to provide clear and detailed information about any vote that is to take place at the Member Business Meeting so that all members are well informed

WHAT ABOUT THE INFLUENCE OF A GREATER NUMBER OF THE NON-ATTENDING POPULATION AND THEIR ABILITY TO SWING A VOTE? WHAT MEASURES WOULD PREVENT THIS?

Providing members a democratic process that does not require in-person voting does indeed increase the likelihood that more people will participate in the voting process. It is true that a large percentage of the voting population does

not attend the Member Business Meeting. Therefore, it is possible that if this group is provided the opportunity to vote, they may provide the deciding votes on the issues presented. Expanding the voting process allows more voting members the opportunity to be heard whether or not they can attend the annual business meeting.

DOES THE BOARD HAVE A POSITION ON THIS ISSUE?

Yes, it does. The Board strongly supports Direct Member Voting, believing that every eligible voting member should have a chance to vote. Therefore, the Board will be putting forward proposed Bylaws language to allow for Direct Member Voting to be considered by the membership at the 2007 Member Business Meeting in Dallas.

HOW DO YOU ENSURE ONLINE VOTERS WOULD BE MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS?

To ensure members voting online have the information to make an informed decision, NCRA would:

- Post to the secure Web site the original proposed amendment and rationale and the candidates several months prior to the Member Business Meeting;
- Post to the secure Web site within two hours after the close of the business meeting any changes made to the amendment during the Member Business Meeting so online voters can clearly identify changes in language and/or the final two candidates for office; and
- Post to the secure Web site within two hours of the close of the meeting a rough draft transcript of the Member Business Meeting so that members can review any discussion or debate that occurred on-site.

Keep in mind that in a January 2007 member survey almost 94 percent of the respondents believed this approach would allow online voters to make fully informed decisions.

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WHAT TYPE OF VOTING TECHNOLOGY WOULD BE USED?

The proposed recommended method of voting would be electronic online voting. This method would provide the greatest access to all members.

HOW DOES ONLINE VOTING WORK?

Members would visit a specified online site that would provide all of the background information regarding the issue to be voted on. They would be required to log in using a unique log-in and identifying PIN number in order to participate. Once the member has logged in, they would simply vote on each issue by clicking their desired vote on that particular item. Once they have voted on the items, they would receive a message confirming that their vote(s) had been cast.

HOW DOES SECURITY FOR ONLINE VOTING WORK?

Each member would be provided with a unique log-in and PIN number via e-mail or through the mail. Once this PIN number has been used it would be invalid, preventing anyone from voting more than once.

HOW WOULD A QUORUM BE DETERMINED WHEN THE DIRECT VOTING PROCESS IS INSTITUTED? WOULD THE QUORUM BE BASED OFF OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE PRESENT AT THE MEETING AND THE TOTAL NUMBER WHO HAVE BEEN ISSUED A PIN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VOTING PROCESS?

Quorum is a metric for establishing whether enough people are present in order for a meeting to take place. Quorum would be determined as it is now set out in the Bylaws: by the total number of members present at the Member Business Meeting. If there was not quorum at the Business Meeting, debate could not proceed. If debate cannot occur, the association could not move on to voting on the proposed amendment or candidates.

HOW WILL MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT PRESENT OFFER THEIR INPUT OR COMMENTS?

Members who are not able to attend the business meeting can share their views with the entire membership by posting on the NCRA Online Forum in the days leading up to the membership voting process. Members will ultimately be able to express their feelings on the topic by participating in the voting process. Something they are not currently able to do if they cannot attend the business meeting in person.

SHOULDN'T YOU HAVE TO BE AT THE MEETING TO VOTE? IF YOU'RE NOT THERE, YOU'RE NOT REALLY COMMITTED TO THE ASSOCIATION OR EDUCATED ABOUT THE ISSUES.

I think it'd be fair to say that many members committed to NCRA and educated on the issues, whether for financial, business, health or personal reasons, aren't always in a

position to attend the Member Business Meeting. I also think it'd be fair to say that some of the members who attend the Member Business Meeting aren't educated on the issues. Why not make it easier for members to participate? That's what associations are all about: participation.

WHAT DOES ROBERT'S RULES SAY ABOUT DIRECT MEMBER VOTING?

According to Robert's Rules, if an association wants to conduct its voting via mail or some other means, it simply needs to be stated in the bylaws, with a recommendation that procedures for carrying out the vote be included as well. Keep in mind, the American Society of Association Executives reports that 75 percent of individual membership associations allow mail ballots; 14 percent allow some form of online voting. Many of these associations, as we do, use Robert's Rules to run their business meetings.

WHAT DOES NCSA HAVE TO SAY ABOUT DIRECT MEMBER VOTING?

NCSA has discussed this issue in the past, and will likely do so in the months ahead. In fact, NCSA offered a resolution in Phoenix in 2005 in which 21 state associations supported the concept of direct member voting. As we move forward with this issue, we'll obviously work closely with NCSA to address any questions they might have.

YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO BRING IN VOICE WRITERS AGAIN. IT'S JUST ANOTHER BOARD PLOT.

With respect to voicewriting, the members – you – have spoken, resoundingly so, in fact. The requirements for passing a Bylaws amendment remain as they have been for more than 100 years: a two-thirds vote for passage of a proposed amendment. This proposal would simply give more voting members a chance to vote on any future Bylaws amendments, whatever the issues that arise in the future.

WHAT OTHER ASSOCIATIONS ARE USING ONLINE VOTING?

- Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (the Emmys)
- American Actuarial Association
- American Gastroenterological Association
- American Psychological Society
- The Florida Bar
- Society for Neuroscience
- World Health Organization

There are many more examples. But it's important to remember that NCRA is unique in how it conducts its business when compared to other associations. For example, based on American Society of Association Executive statistics:

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Direct Member Voting - Continued from page 20

- 60 percent of associations similar in size and type to NCRA allow members to vote in elections;
- Only 40 percent allow members to amend the Bylaws;
- Even fewer let members vote on dues.

So finding another association that is doing what the committee is proposing is probably not going to happen, as NCRA is much more open and inclusive in its approach to governance than most other associations. Please also note that direct member voting is not particularly radical, unusual or untried. It's simply that NCRA's established system or approach to elections and amendments is extremely rare and unusual.



Your Future Is In Your Hands

By Mark Brickman

Mentoring is a funny thing...so easy, and yet most of us don't do it. Why is that? I think I know the answer! We don't think we have much to offer, but we're so wrong. We all have within us the knowledge of how we got here, what our little secrets were, ways to move ahead in school (don't we wish we knew it when we were there?), and what it's like to work in our jobs every day.

Over the past few years, I have had the privilege of mentoring several reporting students. It sounds so mysterious and daunting to anyone who hasn't done it, but the reality is that it's magical and truly inspiring. These students represent our future, and just a few words of encouragement or a little bit of guidance go a long way toward bolstering their confidence and their knowledge. After all, they get to hear all about you!

Remember how you were in school? I sure do. I can remember every time we had an actual working reporter come to visit the school, and even if they didn't speak directly to me, they left an indelible impression on me that stays with me to this day. And when a speaker would come to speak to the students? That was an event!

Mentoring is just like that. Except now you're the speaker, you're the one imparting a little wisdom, you're the one with the ability to reach out and lend a little hand to someone who, like a sponge, will absorb every word you say. And you're needed more than ever. There are students all over our state who are in desperate need for someone like you. A couple of minutes a week will mean so much to someone that truly needs you.

CCRA can set you up with a deserving student in their mentoring program. I have found speaking with students who are in court reporting school to be one of the most rewarding activities that I can do as a professional. So why not give it a try? See what it feels like to give back to your profession and remember what it was like to be in school. The gift you give to an eager reporting student is actually a gift to yourself.

Click here to find out more: <http://www.cal-ccra.org/mentoring.htm>



Court Reporters Board Town Hall Meetings – Summary

By Sandy Bunch VanderPol, CSR, RMR, CRR, CCRA President

On June 8, on behalf of CCRA, I attended the CRB's "Confidentiality and Privacy" Town Hall meeting, followed by their "Use of Electronic Recording, Audiosync," Town Hall meeting. First off, it was a day well spent, a very educational day, especially as relates to the privacy issues we reporters need to consider when e-mailing our transcripts. The CRB is sponsoring the same topics in a Town Hall meeting in Los Angeles on Friday, July 13. I would urge any of you who can make the time to attend this meeting. You will not be disappointed.

The CRB's current strategic plan, under Practice Standards, specifies the following: "Meet with DCA (Department of Consumer Affairs) representatives, to discuss privacy issues associated with use of electronic files and identify options for ensuring consumer protections." This Town Hall meeting on privacy issues is a result of the above strategic plan element. In this month's CCRA Online, I would like to share with you the relevant information from this meeting, saving the "Audiosync" meeting details for August.

A little bit of background I personally found interesting. Governor Schwarzenegger has made it a personal priority of his to protect the privacy of all consumers in any regards. In 2001, the first in the nation Office of Privacy Protection was established by the California Legislature. Since 2001, at least 34 other states have used California's Office of Privacy Protection as a model for their states.

Joanne McNabb, Chief of the California Office of Privacy Protection (COPP), made a presentation to those in attendance at the CRB June 8 town hall meeting with a slant to our profession, court and deposition reporting. Among the many topics discussed were how to protect against identity theft, the California privacy laws in the Civil Code that apply to personal information, social security number confidentiality, destruction of customer records and security breach notification, encryption of all e-mails, and much more.

Of most importance to me as a business owner and a reporter who uses e-mail for delivery of transcripts that do contain private personal information is the strong recommendation by the COPP that all e-mails should be encrypted, ESPECIALLY transcripts that have private and confidential information in them. An e-mail is compared to sending a post card in the mail – it's not secure as there are many opportunities for others to read the e-mail.

Additionally, did you know that it's against the law to mail a document with a social security number on it to an individual, with a few exceptions? Did you know that there is civil law

that requires implementing and maintaining reasonable security procedures and practices to protect personal information? The definition of "personal information" for this law is first name or initial and the last name, along with one of the following – when either name or other data element is NOT ENCRYPTED or REDACTED: SSN, driver's license number or CA ID card number, financial account number with any required password or PIN and medical information.

Specific to best business practices in the conduct of our business, creating the certified transcript, I took away the following points and feel they are important enough that each of them should be passed on to you:

1. Protect Personal Information in Workstations
 - √ "Clean-desk policy." Don't leave documents or disks out when away from workstation.
 - √ Lock up documents and disks overnight and on weekends.
 - √ Lock PC when away from workstation – CTRL + ALT + DELETE before you leave your seat if using Windows Professional. Windows Logo button + "L" key for Windows XP.
2. Is Your Computer Secure?
 - √ If your computer isn't properly protected, hackers and identity thieves can steal data from it.
3. Protect Your Computer
 - √ Turn on an Internet firewall.
 - √ Keep your operating system up to date.
 - √ Install and maintain antivirus software.
 - √ Install and maintain antispyware software.
4. Protect Personal Information on Portables
 - √ Encrypt personal information on laptops, thumb drives, other portable devices.
5. Protect Personal Information in Motion
 - √ Don't send personal information by e-mail, unless security procedures are used.
 - √ Use encryption.
6. Protect Personal Information in Transit
 - √ Don't leave personal information in voice mail message.

Continued on page 23

- √ Mail securely. Don't leave incoming or outgoing mail in unlocked or unattended receptacles.
- 7. Protect personal Information in Transit
 - √ Don't send personal information by fax, unless security procedures are used.
 - √ Confirm accuracy of number before keying in.
 - √ Arrange for and confirm prompt pickup.

Recommended privacy resources may be found at the California Office of Privacy Protection's web site: www.privacy.ca.gov. The recommended practices page is "A California Business Privacy Handbook – Laws and best practices for small- to medium-sized businesses." Additionally, you will find information on SSN confidentiality and notice of security breach. Security Resources may be found at www.onguardonline.gov, which include tips from federal government and technology industry and how to protect your computer from viruses, hackers and spies.

In closing, when e-mailing your transcript to counsel, the court, scopist, firm owner, the COPP strongly suggests we all consider encryption. Encrypting your e-mail will keep all but the most dedicated hackers from intercepting and reading your private communications and the transcripts you send. Using a personal e-mail certificate like the one freely available from Thawte, you can digitally sign your e-mail so that recipients can verify that it is really from you, as well as encrypt your messages so that only the intended recipients can view it. Comodo is another company offering free digital certificates for personal use. You can obtain your free certificate by filling out a very short and simple registration form.



The Reporting Yogi

By Carolyn Dasher, CSR, RPR

Every day is a new experience for us all, a different case, a new witness, another transcript due. But do we really appreciate all that is around us? Unless we go through some unexpected trouble, it's hard to us to really look around and be thankful for the good in our lives.

I know, we are so darn busy that it's hard to look around, let alone think of positive things sometimes. But, thankfully, my writer works. My computer doesn't just shut down by itself (I still get weird error messages...) My clerk had a happy face on this morning. Heck, I could even hear the side bar today without getting a headache! It's a good day!

The point is good is all around us – in the birds that are singing, the train that comes on time, the witness that speaks clearly and concisely. It's the little things in life that touch our heart and make every day brighter. Look for those little things and be thankful.



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Employment Opportunities

Freelance Reporters

May 1: Court Reporters Group Health Insurance. Payment for 0+1 and ALL copies within 5 days. Must be willing to do administrative hearings. Star Reporting Service, Inc., 703 Market Street, Suite 1009, San Francisco, California 94103. (415) 348-0050 ebruhi1@yahoo.com

April 4: Mark Gilliam Enterprises: Part time stenographer needed on call or full time if experience includes bookkeeping. Financial planning and business management office in Fair Oaks, CA. Phone: 916-961-2200 Email: JLouise@mgent.com

Reporters needed in Bakersfield/Kern County for very busy freelance firm. Looking for experienced reporters with 2+ years experience. Realtime experience a plus. Full-time work with employee benefits. Limited travel. Fax resume to 661-393-0851. Contact Jean Keleher or Ted Kent at 800-635-6044.

San Francisco Bay Area: Independent Contractors: Last minute cancellation? "All day" job that went 10 minutes? Give us a call! We won't ask for a lifetime commitment. CSR owned and operated for over 45 years. San Francisco Bay Area. Harry A. Cannon, CSR, Inc. (415) 931-7444 cannonhac@msn.com www.harryacannon.com

Official Reporters

May 24: Official Court Reporter: Fresno County Superior Court \$57,434 - \$69,810. Starting Salary \$57,434. This position will work under general supervision, report verbatim testimony presented at trials and other court hearings, utilizing the realtime program and transcribing and providing typed transcripts pursuant to standards promulgated by statutes, rules, regulations or policies. Filing period: 5/21/07 - continuous until the needs of the court are met. For complete details on minimum qualifications, job duties and benefits, visit the Fresno County Courthouse, 1100 Van Ness Ave., Room 401, Fresno, CA 93724 or www.fresnosuperiorcourt.org. Submit required application materials as indicated on job flyer. Postmark dates and faxed copies are not accepted. Resumes not accepted in lieu of completed application. Inquiries can be directed to Lizz Moreno, Court Personnel at (559) 88-3919.

March 28: Superior Court of California, County of Nevada is seeking an experienced court reporter. Requires license. Applications will be accepted on a continuous basis until filled. Please visit our web site at www.nevadacountycourts.com or call (530) 470-2728 for more information and application materials.

March 16: Fresno Superior Court is seeking qualified individuals to fill six (6) vacancies and to establish an eligibility list of qualified candidates. Please visit www.fresnosuperiorcourt.org to obtain job flyer with complete details, application and supplemental form. Applications accepted on a continuous basis until the needs of the Court are met. Performance examination planned for Saturday, March 24, 2007. Inquiries can be directed to Lizz Moreno, at (559) 448-3919 or elmoreno@fresno.courts.ca.gov.

March 16: Court Reporter: Superior Court of CA, County of Tuolumne. Up to \$4832.01 per month, plus 5% for Realtime. Visit www.tuolumne.courts.ca.gov for more information and an application.

February 12: Superior Court of California, County of Madera, Certified Shorthand Reporters sought for full-time positions or per diem work. Salary (\$4206-\$5113 depending on qualifications) + benefits + real-time bonus. For information/application visit our web site at www.madera.courts.ca.gov, or call 559-661-5197, or visit 321 W. Yosemite Ave., Ste. 300, Madera, CA 93637. Continuous filing until filled.

Superior Court of California, County of Santa Cruz, Certified Court Reporters sought for either employee status (\$5784 per month + excellent benefits) or per diem status (\$300 per day). For complete job bulletin and court application please visit www.santa-cruzcourt.org or call 831-454-3370.

Certified Court Reporter. Mendocino County Superior Court Full Time, Benefited Position \$4283.00 - \$5740.00/MO For Information and Application call 707-463-6815, 707-467-6437 or Download from www.mendocino.courts.ca.gov Continuous Filing

Instructors Needed

February 20: Bryan College, founded in 1940, is looking for qualified Instructors (f/t, p/t, AM/PM) for its L.A. and Sacramento campuses. CSR or Case Cat or StenEd exp. preferred, NOT REQUIRED. Excellent comp package! Pass along your knowledge AND get paid for it! Send resumes to hr@bryancollege.edu.

Reporters Needed to Teach Reporting! Tired of the same-old, same-old? Want to give back some of your knowledge to the next generation? GOLDEN STATE COLLEGE OF COURT REPORTING is hiring steno teachers for day or night; flexible hours. CSR preferred; not mandatory. Know someone who quit school, let license lapse, retired, injury...? DUBLIN in Bay Area ~ (925) 829-0115 ~ Sandy. THE GREATEST JOB YOU'LL EVER HAVE!

Miscellaneous Jobs

April 16: National Litigation Support Services company is seeking 3 sales reps (Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Bernardino) The ideal candidate will have relationships with law firms within the territories and knowledge of the internal workings of a firm. PRIOR SALES EXPERIENCE NOT REQUIRED! Base salary \$45K plus/ yr 1 income with commission \$80K plus. Submit resumes immediately to Dmadock@annrogantampa.com. Rapid hires for the proper candidate.

Seeking Employment

Scopist Available: I am a retired Court Reporter of over 30 years, now enjoying doing scoping for other busy reporters. I work with ProCAT Winner XP. I have extensive experience in both court and deposition work. All exchanges can be done on the computer. Please contact Betsy at Betsy@jackswebs.com

Continued on page 26

Miscellaneous

Equipment For Sale

March 5: GEMINI PIPER - Six months new. Paperless, wireless. Writer, tripod, PDA, Stenosync software, cables, instruction manuals. Six months left on warranty. Contact: Shirley, shirleyko10000@yahoo.com

April 16: MICRO TRENDS INC. Authorized Sales & Service Center for Toshiba - Sony - Hewlett Packard Portable Computers. Our Technicians have been helping Court Reporters since 1988. Backup-Restore-Install Steno CAT - Case Catalyst - Eclipse guaranteed satisfaction. 104 E Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91106 Phone: 626-432-5990. Online at www.micro-trends.com

Training and Instruction

Captioner Training: California Captioning Services offers both onsite and offsite live interactive teletraining and tutoring in the Seven Steps to Broadcast Captioning. For training dates and enrollment information, visit our website at CaliforniaCaptioningServices.com, or give us a call at 949-888-4763.

Equipment Wanted

Machines Needed: After a recent survey that showed new student enrollment up by 40%, many new students are in need of equipment and supplies. Remember what it was like to be a starving student? I sure do. Both public and private schools are asking for your help. They need used steno machines, manual or electric. Also they are asking for donations of scraps of paper, or even a whole box if you are feeling generous, and manuals that you no longer need. Here's how you can help: Go through that back corner of the closet, attic or garage and see what you can find. Or contact someone you know who has retired or no longer pursuing a career in court reporting; see if they'd like to donate their machine. Then contact a local school to make your donation. If you don't know of a school near you or you can't find a home for your precious hand-me-downs, contact me at gerie@psln.com, and I'll find one for you.

Proofreaders

Hire an experienced proofreader with a paralegal certificate and medical background for your straight proofreading needs. Visit web site (<http://WeNeverSleep.biz>) or call (760) 409-7547 in Palm Springs, CA (night or day). Due to spam, e-mail addy is only available from web site.



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