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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2018



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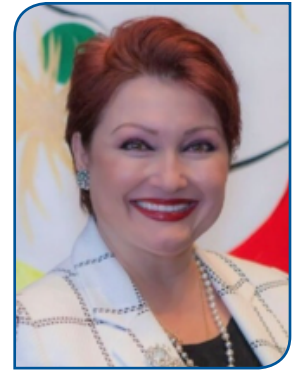
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By Sharon Velazco, RPR, FPR, CLR,
2018-2019 President



Forever Shine Bright Like a Diamond

Well, since the theme of this year's convention is diamonds, let me start by saying it's an honor and a privilege to be in the midst of such a treasure trove of accomplished individuals and to serve with such a priceless, dedicated board. I'm in awe of others who've stood where I am now standing and would like to recognize the past presidents who continue to work behind the scenes tirelessly for FCRA. You consistently demonstrate your passionate commitment to our vocation and inspire all of us.

I'm also inspired by everyone I see. Because of your attendance at the convention and your participation in FCRA, for which we're so grateful, I know I speak for the whole board when I say we were all so happy to be with you and to serve with you in our goal of advancing our profession. When it finally hit me at the convention last year that I was going to be the next president, I knew exactly what our theme would be: Diamonds. Not only because it's my favorite stone, but I thought it was appropriate to use the metaphor of diamonds to stress your importance as court reporters. You are invaluable. The stones in my tiara may not have value like real diamonds, but you do.

I love the adage, diamonds are forever. You can reshape them or reset them, but they're still diamonds. And looking out at all of you, I am dazzled by your collective brilliance. On the Mohs Hardness Scale, which is the standard by which all minerals and stones are measured, the diamond sets the bar for its ability to withstand pressure under duress. The most brilliant of diamonds are those that are formed under extreme pressure at the highest temperatures. All of you reading this shine so brightly because of what you've been through and who you are, court reporters. I know that each of you has experienced the intense heat of a fiery cross-examination or struggled with a witness or attorney who just cannot be heard because of the room's ambiance, interruptions by others, or the simple fact that the witness is soft-spoken. You go through those situations every day. You demonstrate your immeasurable worth because in the fire of your expedites and your dailies and the general difficulty in dealing with your constant pressures, you take the stress without cracking, and you get that transcript out!

Where the beauty and value of a diamond is largely based on the four C's of cut, clarity, carat, weight and color, the value of the court reporter can also be measured in four C's: Our character, our competence, our conviction, and the way we care for our profession.

Our character is the sum total of who we are and the qualities we bring to what we do. Every day the challenges we face help to shape us into brilliant gemstones and help to

carve the facets that make us shine so brightly. Some of us may be princess-cut or marquise while others are the more traditional solitaire. Our value is further enhanced by our willingness to evolve and be reshaped, and this reshaping is usually done through our experiences. There is nothing like walking into two-week trial about chemical dumping and being told right then and there, "Oh, by the way, we need this right away, and can you get it to us, like, right after lunch?" Somehow, though, through panic and perseverance, you get it done — mostly panic — and you've added yet another facet to your life as a court reporter.

The second C in determining our worth would be our competence. We demonstrate and maintain our competence by staying current with our equipment and software training, attending seminars and conventions such as this, and constantly working towards certifications. I've tried for my CRR, still don't have it, and I admire people like the contest winners because you all amaze me, and I want to be where you are. Probably next week. We should all pursue the elite skill of realtime reporting. Even if you're just real-timing for yourself, your editing time is reduced, your pages will get out faster — students — and your income is going to be increased — students. And being a realtime reporter shows a willingness to stay relevant in the legal community

But it's not just the legal community. We should bear in mind our worth to society as a whole. We've become even more valuable as other avenues have opened up for our capabilities. We are able to shine in settings like CART where our talents can influence lives and change destinies, whether it be captioning for large audiences, such as a stadium or a church, or on an individual level like in a classroom setting. Court reporters make the difference in elevating deaf and hard-of-hearing students to their chosen careers where otherwise they would be limited by their inability to participate in their mainstream learning environment. Our dedication to helping those students results in the graduation of more doctors, engineers, scientists, and other professionals. This is perhaps one of the most important, although song-less-sung accomplishments, knowing that you have made the world a better place for the wave of brilliant minds that now have the opportunity to make a difference in our world because of you, the court reporters.

Because we are competent, we can embrace technology and all it has to offer. Our own skillset of keeping the record has been augmented by the advances in technology, and it's important to appreciate that we will always be able to ensure

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By **Richard S. Scire, RPR,**
The Florida Reporter Editor, FCRA Vice President

Our New and Exciting Paths

Socrates said, “The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” I often like to start my messages with a quote to sum up what is going on in the current issue or with FCRA. There has been much change with the magazine since I became editor and made my twin brother, Michael Scire, my associate editor. There is even more change going on with FCRA.

By now you should have learned or figured out from the cover that *FCR Online* is now *The Florida Reporter*. In previous issues I acknowledged that it was time to retire the name for a fresh new one to reflect who we are in our modern day. That pivotal moment has finally arrived. We had many great entries for the new name. Some of you even had the same entries. We may use some of them for future columns. The members present for the convention voted on the top names. The winning entry came from Amy Yarbrough. The collaborative effort with all the entries and votes made renaming the magazine so much fun. So don't stop there! Keep taking part in the magazine and the association. After all, it belongs to each of us!

In this issue you will meet FCRA's new lobbyist. If you were at the convention, specifically the Town Hall, you got a chance to meet Corinne Mixon. Whether you were present or not, you have a chance to get to know more about her and Rutledge-Ecenia, our new lobbying firm. Corinne joined the board for

the post-convention board meeting. We are all very excited for what she and her team will bring to FCRA!

Also in this issue, meet your new Board of Directors! The Board's first meeting is on the Sunday immediately following the convention. They hit the ground running and are already hard at work!

While we are moving forward with new and positive directions, it is still important to honor and learn from our past. I hope you will enjoy the latest edition of “The Diamond Vault” series by Donna Kanabay. Speaking of taking the past and bringing it into the future, I am happy to share Sheri Smargon's announcement during the convention's annual business luncheon that the Realtime Challenge is being renamed as “The Thomas Hughes Memorial Steno Challenge.” Mr. Hughes served as president during the 2007-2008 year and started the realtime challenge. We also pay tribute to one of our legendary founders, Freida Sclafani Williams. FCRA made a donation to NCRF in her name and we have plans to honor her in the future as well. You can read more about Ms. Williams in this issue.

If we take the wisdom of our past and take the words of Socrates as advice, we most assuredly are headed for our greatest successes with the positive focus of our energy. If we each put in our own effort and energy, just think of what we can achieve and how we can thrive together.



Meet FCRA's New Lobbyist: Corinne Mixon, DPL

Corinne Mixon is a Designated Professional Lobbyist (DPL) with more than eleven years of experience representing clients' lobbying interests. Corinne represents a broad client base with a particular emphasis on association advocacy, health care and

education.

Corinne was in high school when she accepted her first job in politics working for State Senator, Charlie Clary. While earning her degree at the University of Alabama, Corinne accepted an internship in the Washington D.C. office of U.S. Senator Richard Shelby, now Chair of Senate Appropriations.

Corinne began her professional career as a Public Relations Account Coordinator at the Zimmerman Agency, the largest hospitality-centered communications firm in the nation. Corinne managed the public relations efforts for major hotels stretching from the Cayman Islands to New York City.

Corinne began lobbying in 2006. In 2014, she became principal shareholder of Mixon & Associates. In 2017, she made a strategic decision to merge the firm's book of business and

its lobbyists into Rutledge-Ecenia, P.A.

In addition to lobbying across multiple platforms including legislative, executive and state regulatory board, Corinne managed the state senate campaign of Sen. Dennis Baxley. Corinne has significant experience working in association management, having held roles as executive director and executive vice president of two large statewide associations and has provided communication services to multiple entities.

During her career, Corinne has delivered keynote addresses at dozens of commencements and conferences. In 2016, she became the youngest person to receive the “Lifetime Achievement Award,” from her client, the Florida Academy of Physician Assistants (PAs), an honor that is rarely bestowed upon a non-clinician, for her work to pass the bill allowing PAs to prescribe controlled substances.

Corinne recently sat on the fundraising board of the United Way of the Big Bend. She is a member of the Florida Association of Professional Lobbyists and the Florida Education Legislative Liaisons. She serves on the Advisory Board for the Florida State School of Physician Assistant Studies.

By Lori L. Bundy, RMR, CRR, FPR,
Immediate Past President



My Presidential Journey

It's hard to believe that a year has gone by since I stood before you and stepped into the role as president. I had big shoes to fill. Last year Christy sat here with her fan and I sat with my blanket. Who knew after a year being president that I would trade my blanket in for a fan! It may be the hot flashes kicking in.

I want to give you a brief recap of what has happened this past year in FCRA. After the convention last year, this Board has worked tirelessly on several ongoing issues in our profession, as well as some new ones that have come along the way. In August, I, along with Christy Bradshaw and Tracy Finan, went to Tallahassee to meet with OSCA (Office of State Court Administrators) and the Attorney General's Office to discuss the registry and the notary issue that reporters are facing. Each time we meet with OSCA it is a struggle to get them to see the importance of knowing who the reporters are in our state, but we won't stop in our efforts.

Since last August, we have followed up with OSCA and the AG's office many times, including another trip in February to Tallahassee for Court Reporting & Captioning Week where we also met with legislators.

As we all know, government moves slow, but after having tried for certification or the registry for so many years, the Board felt that maybe a new approach was needed. So, in February, Dave Wenholt introduced me to Corinne Mixon with Rutledge Ecenia. After many discussions and meetings with the Board, the Government Relations Committee, and Corinne, the Board voted to hire Rutledge Ecenia as our new lobbyist.

She is a quick learner, and is well-connected in Tallahassee. Her eagerness to jump in and help FCRA is refreshing, and we are all expecting great things in the years to come with

her fighting for us in Tallahassee and for our profession.

In November the Board met in Orlando for a Strategic Planning session. This was an intense day of looking at things that work and things that we can change to help our membership and profession. One of the many things that I took away from that session was to form a partnership with school guidance counselors and job fairs to introduce students to the reporting world. I know a lot of our members have done that in the past, and it is something that the board wants to support.

After that meeting, Cathy Carpenter and I attended a home school job fair in Orlando. The interesting thing about that was that we thought the kids would be blown away by the technology and realtime, and they were. BUT the mothers were FAR MORE interested because they were working themselves out of a job, in a sense, in sending their kids off to college. And they were looking at this profession for themselves. We felt like we got an added bonus...marketing to two groups at one event!

I want to step back for just one minute and thank a few FCRA supporters. Our Board meetings could not happen without the support of local firms and their VTC equipment. We have two meeting locations, one in the north and one in the south, and that's possible because of firms like Veritext, First Choice, and U.S. Legal. This past January our "southern" spot had a technical issue that I learned about while driving to the location. Instead of panicking, I thought, we're court reporters! Venues get changed all the time...we can roll with this. I called Von Ahn, and they immediately helped us out and gave us a meeting room and use of their VTC equipment. I want to thank Maggie Miller and everyone at Von Ahn for helping us when we needed it. And thank you to all of our sponsors, vendors, and

supporters. We couldn't do it without all of your help and support.

Every year has its challenges and triumphs, twists and turns, and this year was no different. With the changing of our lobbyist and the temperature in Tallahassee, it has slowed our efforts with the registry and certification. In brainstorming with what to do, we kept going back to the fact that we all do this for our great profession and YOU, FCRA's membership. Out of those discussions, the board went to Jennifer Gaul and the convention planning committee, and they have put together a Town Hall this year that asked the membership about what YOU want from FCRA. The feedback was astoundingly and enlightening!

I want to keep my remarks brief, but if you have any questions about what the Board is doing, reach out to me or any of the board members at any time. I want to thank the Board and all of the committees and the management company for supporting me this past year. It really does take a village, and I couldn't have done it without each of you. I have enjoyed my time as president, and I know we are in good hands with Sharon.

When I think about this profession and the many possibilities we have with our skills, I think about the great words of Timbuk 3, "Our future's so bright, you've gotta wear shades!"

Shine bright like a



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Sharon Velazco, 2018 - 2019 FCRA President, current USLS reporter, Miami office

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U.S. Legal Support Award Recipients



Sharon Velazco, RPR, FPR, CLR, FCRA President 2018 - 2019, Meritorious Service Award

Janet McKinney, RPR, CRR, FPR, Past President 2013 - 2014, Special Recognition Award, President's Award

Sandi Estevez, CSR (CA), FPR, Past President 2012 - 2013, President's Award

Robin Merker, RPR, FPR, Past President 2010 - 2011, EMDSA Recipient

Jennifer Gaul, CMRS, FPR, Past President 2008 - 2009, two-time recipient of President's Award and Meritorious Service Award, EMDSA Recipient

Rick Greenspan, FAPR, RMR, CRR, FPR, Past President 2003 - 2004, President's Award, EMDSA Recipient

2018 Annual Convention Seminar Highlights

The convention committee, chaired by Jennifer Gaul, did an amazing job with this year's convention. It was an informative three days that included fun and elegance. The weekend gave reporters the ability to earn 1.50 CEUs approved by NCRA.

The convention kicked off on Friday with the Florida Rules & Ethics Certification Seminar. The one-day seminar covered Florida's Rules of Court as they apply to court reporters in depth, as well as showed how the NCRA Advisory Opinions apply. This is always an informative class. The FCRA Florida Manual – over 600 pages of how-to information – served as the textbook and was taught by FCRA's Holly Kapacinskas, Cindy Bender, Paulita Kundid, and Matthew McKinney. This, once again, was highly organized starting with historical background of all transcript formats from the Federal Rules. Reporters were guided through the maze of Florida's Rules of Court and were shown how those rules apply to the roles and responsibilities at all types of proceedings and how to apply NCRA's advisory opinions to your daily reporter life. This is a great class for all reporters, but especially new reporters, as the instructors took you step by step through to completion of the transcript. They covered various kinds of depositions, sworn statements, arbitrations, examinations under oath, independent medical examinations, and court proceedings. They also showed why you put what information where, what is required, and what is prohibited. Reporters learned the Florida mandated transcript formats and how to apply them to transcripts. Records pickups and how the Federal HIPAA Act impacts your performance was also covered.

Software training was in full swing again this year. Training Program Manager Cindi Lynch with Stenograph returned. She showed a variety of new features to CATalysts's Version 19. The new features included enhancements for realtime, edit, and manage jobs. She also showed how to take full advantage of translate features and options to Case CATalyst helping to improve the quality of our translation results and how to use features and shortcuts that can significantly reduce editing time.

This year, Certified Eclipse Trainer Michael Starkman with Advantage Software was present to show the latest enhancements in Eclipse Version 9. The reporters in attendance had many wonderful things to say about Michael's presentation. It was a day packed with information.

From ProCAT, Ann Baldassari was on hand to show the new features for Version 17, such as setting up multiple workstations for litigation support and/or CART, setting up CasePad or Streamtext, enhanced number conversion, audio track, new columnar indexing, and printing condensed PDFs. There was a lot of information from all the software vendors and FCRA was lucky to have them in attendance.

Saturday's general session began with "Court Reporters, Scopists, and Proofreaders – Why We Need Each Other!"

If you're working all the time, not sleeping enough, ignoring the resolution to get more exercise, telling your family you have to work all weekend again and again, it's time to work smarter. Panelists Betsee Thompson, Scopist/Proofreader; Elli Harris, Scopist/Proofreader; and Michelle Baden, RPR, FPR, CSR (Illinois), as well as Moderator Rosa Naccarato led the discussion on how to develop a good relationship with a scopist and/or proofreader can lead to better work/life balance, higher productivity, higher revenue potential, and faster turnaround time to your clients. The interactive discussion for tips to finding a good scopist/proofreader, how to send files, what scopists need to do a good job for you, and what it takes to get some of your life back.

Tom O'Brien, Assistant University Librarian at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton was on hand for to show how to more effectively search the internet with Tips, Tricks, and Things to Know. The session focused on ways to facilitate everyday internet searching as well as introducing attendees to free electronic resources, courtesy of the Florida Electronic Library.

Glyn Poage, co-founder of Project Steno and former school owner, conducted the seminar "Rebuilding our Profession – Together." Glyn has spent years training students and developing reporters for successful careers in our time-honored profession. In this motivational and upbeat presentation, Glyn discussed the need for all of us to work together to bring young people into court reporting and captioning. She taught about the grassroots A to Z program and other efforts that are being implemented to attract the next generation of reporters. She also taught about Project Steno's exciting awareness campaign and tuition assistance/student monitoring program. Exciting things happening in the world of court reporting.

The informative FCRA Town Hall meeting was led by moderator Dave Wenhold, CAE, PLC. The open discussion was devoted to our membership's future. Panelists included past presidents Rosa Naccarato, Christie Bradshaw, and immediate past-president Lori Bundy, along with lobbyist Corrine Mixon. The topics of discussion ranged from certification, licensing, and registration to tackling other issues such as contracting. The discussion was extremely productive and provided a platform for the FCRA board of directors and FCRA members to come together and discuss what path the association should take.

Saturday afternoon's session brought "Tough Love with the Depoman," Mike Miller, to the convention. Mike gave a frank and in-your-face assessment of the current state of freelance reporting. Topics included best practices, proofing techniques, and utilizing your software to help minimize errors.

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2018 Annual Convention Seminar Highlights

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He educated, shocked, and amused. Mike is always a great speaker and we were so lucky to have him here.

Jennifer Bonfilio returned to discuss CART/Captioning: Career Options and Update. She introduced participants to an overview of the career of captioning, including how to obtain training, work schedules, employment opportunities, and the pros and cons of employee versus independent contractor status, salary potential, and more. She then gave an up close and personal demonstration of the hardware and software requirements to build your captioning studio, as well as associated costs. Ms. Bonfilio discussed various options and

alternatives when certain captioning hardware and software is not available. The sessions were back to back and could have easily lasted another hour with all the information that was provided.

Cindy Fleegle presented "Writing for Realtime," an in-depth look at your writing style, your theory, your dictionary, and how to make changes so you can become a Realtime Writer and achieve a clean translation of your steno, provide quick turnaround of your transcripts, provide roughs, and ultimately become a realtime provider. Cindy's tips made it well worth hanging around for the last session of the convention.

Kudos & Accolades!



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1. Dave Wenhold (of Kautter Wenhold Management Group) was presented with "The Big Daddy Award," a distinguished service award in the form of a beer stein. The stein read "You have raised the bar in service so we are raising a glass to you. Beers to you. FCRA 2018"

2. Congratulations to Rick Levy, who was honored with the Arlene P. Somers Award for Excellence in Education. Congratulations to Rosa Naccarato, who won the Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award

3. Congratulations to Richard Sciré, who honored with the Special Recognition Award along with a cheese plate. Lori Bundy and Richard traveled a lot for FCRA in the past year and it always involved the consumption of a cheese plate!

4. Congratulations to Cathy Carpenter, who was honored with the President's Award

5. Congratulations to Christy Bradshaw, who was awarded with the Meritorious Service Award

The 2018-2019 Board of Directors



PRESIDENT Sharon Velazco, RPR, FPR, CLR

Sharon has served as Director-at-Large, Secretary, Vice President, and Editor of *FCR Online*. She graduated from Ward Stone College of Court Reporting in 1994 and received her RPR in 2004. Sharon worked as a legal secretary prior to becoming a court reporter. She is on the Court Reporting School Advisory Board for Broward County. She currently works for US Legal Support in south Florida. Her interests include her family, reading, poetry, and creative writing.



PRESIDENT-ELECT Amy Marie Yarbrough, FPR.

Amy attended Steno-type Institute of Jacksonville and received a Basic Machine Short-hand Diploma in 2011. She is a graduate of the University of North Florida, where she majored in anthropology with minors in philosophy and public health. Spending much of her time providing CART in the classroom, she also immensely enjoys complex litigation and medical testimony.

Entering her fourth year of board service, Amy is constantly inspired by the hard-working, creative, and dynamic members of FCRA. She looks forward to another year focused on professional development, collaboration, and dedication to excellence.



VICE PRESIDENT Richard S. Scire, RPR (pronounced "shir-RAY")

Richard has been reporting for 20 years. He graduated from the Sarasota County Technical Institute in Sarasota, FL, in 1998. He has been an RPR since 1999. He began his career doing freelance and criminal court contract work for Metzger Reporting Services in Charlotte County from 1998-2001 and freelance work for Lucente & Associates in Sarasota from 2001-2003. His identical twin brother, Michael, also a court reporter, recruited Richard to be an official reporter in 2003, where they both continue to work as officials in Felony Court for the 12th Judicial Circuit, providing realtime for the judges and even CART when needed for the hearing impaired in all courtrooms.

Richard served three years on FCRA's Board of Directors, first as Central Director for two years and secretary

for one. He also serves on several committees. Richard has authored articles in the *Journal of Court Reporting* and *FCR Online Magazine*. He has been serving as the editor for *FCR Online Magazine* (newly renamed *The Florida Reporter*) for the past two years. He participates in the state and national associations as well as their conventions. He, along with his brother, have conducted several seminars for FCRA Conventions and most recently the Mississippi Court Reporters Association. In 2015, Richard shared the stage with his brother as keynote speakers during the NCRA Convention's Premier Session. They have also presented to their circuit's State Attorney's Office multiple times, educating them on how to make a record. Richard and Michael were featured on two Florida news programs for being twin court reporters and were also interviewed for *For The Record: A Court Reporting Documentary*, promoting the film in multiple film festivals as well as TV, radio, and podcast interviews. In 2013 they shared the title and page of "Messrs. August" in NCRA PAC's *Men of Court Reporting 2014 Calendar*. Richard also shares the title with his brother for their contributions as NCRF Angels for the past five years.

Richard and his twin reunited with the documentary filmmaker this year to launch *MartiniAndAMovie.com*, doing movie reviews and interviewing celebri-

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The 2018-2019 Board of Directors

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ties for film festivals. He enjoys being a man about the town. While he eats right and exercises, he always enjoys a good martini, up, dry, and never more than two olives.



SECRETARY Cathy Carpenter, FPR

Cathy graduated from the University at Buffalo in 2005 with a B.A. in History and from the Court Reporting program at Sheridan Technical College in 2015. She obtained her FPR while attending court reporting school. She moved to Florida from New York after graduating from UB and worked in home-

building, but now works for First Choice Reporting. She is a member of NCRA and CRA and enjoys going to the beach, fishing, and spending time with her family.



TREASURER Tracy Finan, RPR, FPR, CCR (Georgia)

Tracy attended Pensacola Junior College's Court Reporting Technology Program, completing her studies in 1993. She also graduated with an AA in Paralegal Studies from Okaloosa-Walton Community College and attended Auburn University on the beautiful

plains of Alabama from 1980-1983. She is a member of FCRA, NCRA, and GSRA. Tracy is a freelance court reporter and has spent the majority of her career working in the Northwest Florida area of Okaloosa and Walton Counties, but moved to Tallahassee full-time in 2012 and is currently proudly affiliated with Accurate Stenotype Reporters. Tracy additionally is a licensed certified court reporter in Georgia. Her interests and hobbies include spending time with her family, spoiling her Doberman and Calico kitty, college football, relaxing on the beautiful beaches of the Emerald Coast, wine, and travel. Tracy has served as the Northern Director for FCRA the past two years and looks forward to the opportunity to continue to serve on the board and advocate for the reporting professionals in our state.



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT Lori Bundy, RMR, CRR, FPR

Lori started attending Brown College of Court Reporting in January of 1993. After graduating in 1995, she worked in the Atlanta area before moving to Naples, Florida, in 1998. Since then she has earned the Registered

Merit Reporter certificate and also the Certified Realtime Reporter designation. In 2014, Lori took an official position with the U.S. District Court in the Middle District of Florida. Lori is a member of NCRA, FCRA, and USCRA and has served for the past five years on the FCRA board. Lori enjoys cruising and spending time with her family.



CENTRAL DIRECTOR Laura J. Landerman, RMR, CRR, FPR

Laura attended Webster/Winter Park Vo-Tech Court Reporting Program – 1984-1986. Her work history includes: Libby Lester Reporting, Orlando, FL 1985-1988; Bull & Associates, Atlanta, GA 1988-1989; Central Florida Reporters, Orlando, FL 1989-2015

and First Choice Reporting & Video, Orlando, FL 2015-present. She has been a dance instructor for Carolyn's School of Dance in Orlando, Florida. She has been a member of FCRA since 1986, and NCRA since 1985. Her favorite non-work hobby is traveling!



NORTHERN DIRECTOR Tiffany Treffeisen, RPR, FPR

Tiffany is a 1995 graduate of South Sumter High School. She began court reporting school at Erwin Technical Center, in Tampa, Florida, in 1996 where she obtained a certificate of court reporting in 1998 and started working at Joy Hayes & Associates in the

Fifth Judicial Circuit. There she worked in the capacity as both an official and freelance reporter for 20 years. This past December, she completed the Learn to Caption-Caption Masters course and looks forward to seeing what her professional future holds. She is currently working as a freelance reporter. Tiffany has held the designation of RPR since 1999, and FPR since 2006. She is a member of both NCRA and FCRA. This past year she has served on the Government Relations Committee of FCRA. Tiffany is the wife to Jeremiah and the mother of two children, Dakota and Drake. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends, reading, crafting, and working alongside her husband and son in their family's small cattle operation.

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The 2018-2019 Board of Directors

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SOUTHERN DIRECTOR Jessica Donnelly, FPR

Jessica attended Key College, and received her Court Reporting Certificate from Sheridan Technical College. Her work history includes Freelance Reporter at Taylor Jonovic, Freelance Reporter Florida Realtime/ Realtime transcription.com, Stenograph Certified

Training Agent – Cast CATalyst Trainer, and Court Reporting Instructor Sheridan Technical College. Jessica is a member of FCRA and NCRA.

several articles to NCRA's *Journal of Court Reporting*. Since 2008, Michael has served on several committees for FCRA. He has been an NCRF Angel for the last six years. Michael was a guest speaker at NCRA's keynote premier session in 2015. He, along with his brother, conducted several seminars for FCRA, as well as other state associations throughout the country. Michael and Richard appeared in *For The Record, A Court Reporting Documentary*, promoting the film in multiple festivals and media outlets. In 2013 they shared the title and page of "Messrs. August" in NCRA PAC's *Men of Court Reporting 2014 Calendar*. Michael frequently shares his passion for court reporting by speaking and educating the legal community.



DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE Michael Sciré, RPR, CMRS

Michael has been reporting for 19 years. He graduated from the Sarasota County Technical Institute in Sarasota, FL, in 1999. He began his career as a freelance court reporter for Metzger Reporting Services in Charlotte County from 1999- 2002. He became an Official Court Reporter for the 12th Judicial Circuit in 2002 and was promoted to department supervisor in 2008 and continues to work there currently, providing realtime for the judges. He completed his RPR certification in 2005. In 2006, he and his twin brother, Richard, were recipients of SCTI's Wall of Fame, an award recognizing distinguished alumni. Michael received his CMRS certification in 2010. In addition to reporting, Michael serves as associate editor to *FCR Online* and has contributed



DIRECTOR-at-LARGE Sheri Smargon, RDR, CRR, CRC, FPR.

Shari has been a broadcast captioner since graduating from court reporting school in 1992. She has provided realtime captioning for events such as the Olympics, the Stanley Cup Finals, and the Golden Globe Awards. Currently, Sheri does a bit of everything, providing realtime CART, captioning, and deposition work in the greater Tampa Bay area. She also holds a master's degree in Psychology. She is currently on several committees for NCRA and is in her second year of committee service for FCRA. In her spare time, Sheri loves to bake and she is a lover of all things "The Muppet Show"/"Sesame Street" related.

2018 Annual Convention Realtime Champions



Congratulations to the Realtime Challenge Champions Laura Landerman, May Fisher, Pamela Hardy, Jennifer Bonfilio, Emily Anderson, and Lori Bundy.

Special thank you to Overall Winner Laura Landerman for providing realtime during the annual business luncheon!

During the announcement of the winners, it was also announced that next year the realtime challenge contest will be renamed to honor the memory of 2007-2008 Past President Thomas Hughes. Mr. Hughes implemented the realtime challenge contest in 2007 and served in various positions on the board. Mr. Hughes may not be with us any longer but his memory and influence will certainly live on forever. The testing challenge will now be known as The Thomas Hughes Memorial Steno Challenge.



Convention Photo Gallery



Everyone loves a red carpet...



Even famous attorney F. Lee Bailey came to the convention this year partying with the court reporters.

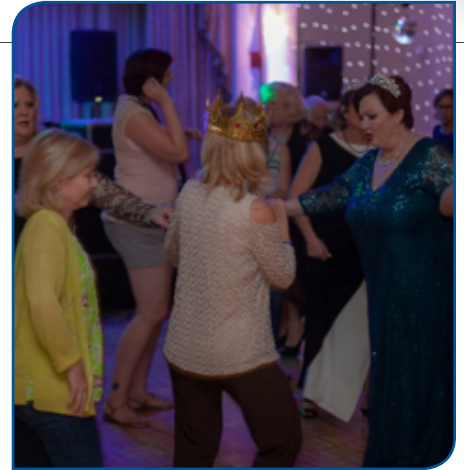


A snooty board? No! They're just practicing for the photo booth.



Who said court reporters are shy?

Convention Photo Gallery



Dancing, dancing, and more dancing!

The Treasure Trove

This year's fundraising event saw many go home with beautiful pieces of art, jewelry, and more! Richard and Michael Scire emceed and kept the drawings moving along all while entertaining the crowd. Amy Yarbrough kept everything organized before and during the drawings as only she can! Past President Christy Bradshaw was an overwhelming and generous winner! Instead of going home with all of her wins, she graciously gifted most of them to other members. Thank you, Christy for your service and generosity!



Convention Photo Gallery



The Business Luncheon

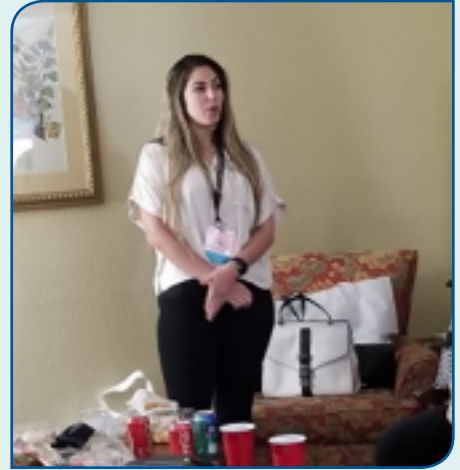


The Exhibit Hall

Convention Photo Gallery

The Student Luncheon

Each year a student luncheon is hosted in the hospitality suite (a/k/a the president's suite). This year Cathy Carpenter had so much more in store for the court reporting students that included a scavenger hunt!



In Memoriam: Freida Sclafani Williams



*Freida believed that being involved in the community she loved gave her strength, "You never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice." (BM)
She will be missed.*

Freida Sclafani Williams died June 3, 2018 after a long fight with cancer. Born August 10, 1944, in Deland, Florida, the only child of Rosie and John Sclafani, Freida was full of ambition. As a young girl, Freida was a talented dancer, with the skill and dedication to make this her profession. Instead, she went on to forge one of the most successful court reporting careers in Florida. Court reporting piqued her interest at an early age. When she was nine years old, she placed the carbon between sheets of paper to help her mother type transcripts for the court reporting firm then named Rosie Sclafani and Associates.

After attending the University of South Florida, she became the judicial assistant to former Circuit Judge A. H. Lane. In 1962, Freida enrolled in the Stenotype Institute of Jacksonville and joined her mother's firm as a court reporter in 1971. In 1979, Freida was appointed a state official court reporter and served in that position until 1995. During this time, she also oversaw the daily operations of the Lakeland office. In 1980, the name of the firm was changed to Sclafani Williams Court Reporters, Inc.

Five years later, Freida became president of the company to continue her mother's legacy once Rosie fell ill. Under Freida's keen management, the business was the first in the area to integrate new technologies, such as video conferencing, and digital reporting, and by the end of her career, she had opened six office locations.

Among her many recognitions and achievements, Freida served as FCRA President, 1999-2000, and was awarded with the prestigious Florida Court Reporting Association's Distinguished Service Award in 2002. She was the recipient of the National Association of Women's Business Owners "Woman of Distinction Award" and Sclafani Williams Court Reporters, Inc., was listed in the Tampa Bay Business Journals' Top 75

women owned businesses in the state of Florida in 2003 and 2004. Also serving as the Vice President of the Florida Official Court Reporter Association (FOCRA) an organization committed to court reporting education. Freida was also a 13-year Angel donor of the National Court Reporters Foundation, having donated more than \$14,000 in honor of her late mother, Rosie Sclafani.

More often than not, Freida wore black, red, and white with a sparkling swan pin, symbolizing her love of Lakeland. She will be remembered for her commitment to serving both the court reporting and Polk County communities while helping others achieve their dreams. Throughout her 36-year career, she mentored and encouraged countless court reporting interns, teaching them business strategies and best practices. In addition, she was heavily involved in the Society for Technological Advancement of Reporting, eventually becoming president in 2007, and was part of the Florida Court Reporter Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the National Court Reporters Association, the National Association Women Business Owners, the Lakeland Chamber of Commerce, and the National Network Reporting Company.

In Polk County, she helped fundraise for the restoration of the historic Polk Theater, supported the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), and provided pro bono video conferencing services to the Polk Museum of Art.

Freida believed that being involved in the community she loved gave her strength, "You never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice." (BM) She will be missed.

In honor of Freida's passion and service, FCRA has made a donation to NCRF's "Thoughtful Tributes: In Memory of Freida Williams."



By Paula Laws

Remembering Freida

I know that a lot of you don't know me. I'm Paula Laws. I'm from Miami, past president of FCRA. Recently this association, this profession, lost a very, very dear friend to the profession, Freida Sclafani Williams. And while I know a lot of you didn't know her and a lot of you think she didn't like you, it really doesn't matter because the bottom line is Freida loved this profession.

She was a founding member of FCRA. She was at the very first meeting this association ever had, along with her mother. She was an unbelievable financial contributor to this association. This association wouldn't be where it is right now if it hadn't been for the Sclafanis and the Williamses because they never went anywhere without their platinum gold card, so whenever there was a fundraiser, Freida was there. She was the first one with her card up saying, you know, let me have it. And she loved competition. She would — I can't tell you how many bottles of champagne I've bought and pictures I've bought because we bid against each other on something.

She was my sister. She was my friend. I've known her since I was 20 years old. She and her mother gave me my very first job when I came right out of school, and then, as years went on, we went to every convention and meeting together. So she's very dear to my heart.

She was an Emily Mann Distinguished Award recipient

from this association. She had a wicked sense of humor. She loved to laugh. She loved jokes. She was an incredible businesswoman and just will be truly missed.

When I say she had a sense of humor, I'm going to leave you this thought. This is something she sent to me one day a number of years ago. And I never deleted any of her e-mails because there was always something crazy in one of them, but this one was great.

It says, "This is a fairytale that should have been read to us when we were little. Once upon a time in a land far away, a beautiful, independent, self-assured princess happened upon a frog. And as she sat contemplating ecological issues on the shores of an unpolluted pond in a meadow near her castle, the frog hopped into the princess' lap and said, 'Elegant lady, I was once a handsome prince until the evil witch cast a spell upon me. One kiss from you, however, and I will turn back into the dapper young prince that I am. And then, my sweet, we can marry and set up housekeeping in your castle with my mother where you can prepare my meals, clean my clothes, bear my children, and forever feel grateful and happy doing so.' That night, as the princess dined so sumptuously on lightly sautéed frog legs seasoned in a white cream wine sauce and onion, she chuckled and thought to herself 'I don't think so.'"

That was Freida.

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By Donna Kanabay, RMR, CRR, FPR

The Diamond Vault: Part III, 1981-1986



The first FSRA Convention — The Cherry Plaza, Orlando, FL.

As you'll see, the first half of our Third Decade was a period of tremendous turmoil and upheaval. But first, some of the mundane as we wend our way into total insanity!

The July-August 1981 magazine had an interesting article about the pros and cons of photocopying your transcript copies instead of your transcriber using carbon paper. (Keep in mind that the majority of reporters still were not on a computer system, and dictated for a transcriber or used a notereader.) In an era where every one of us has a machine at home and/or in the office that not only copies and prints, but scans and faxes, and will probably act as a Star-Trek-era transporter sometime in the future, it's just another little jolt to realize that in the early '80s, there was concern about the cost of a copier being simply another added monthly expense with no return on the investment. The author did a thorough and compelling analysis of the expense advantages of copying your original instead of using carbons.

I vividly remember when our office succumbed to the march of technology and got our first fax machine. I called the client who'd been begging us for a year to get one, and proudly told her I was about to fax her a test page. Before doing so, I very conscientiously made sure I made a copy of



the document I was about to send off into the ether ... (think about it for a moment, it'll hit you eventually.)

Our Annual convention in Sarasota celebrated our 20th anniversary, and Rosie Sclafani took the reins from Joe Troiano.

Rosie, and her daughter Freida, were among the original charter members in 1961. Freida was not even a reporter yet! On the personal note, like me, she grew up in a "court reporting family," and, like me, followed a parent's footsteps and had the best training and mentoring a young reporter could ask for.

Freida also went on to be a leader in FCRA, becoming president for the 1999-2000 term.

Rosie died in 2000; Freida died just this year, 2018. We created a memorial video tribute to Freida that can be viewed here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/11cr3d678s3mox7/2018%20Freida%20Sclafani%20Williams%20Memorial.mp4?dl=0>

Have you ever heard the saying, "If you're not at the table, you're probably on the menu"? Countless times over our history, even to the present day, we periodically make enough noise to remind Tallahassee that we're out here, and once we've raised enough of a ruckus, we're invited to the table – for a while, at least. And so, before Joe Troiano passed the gavel at the business meeting, he reported, "*President Troiano is extremely pleased that FSRA has been invited to participate in more meetings and provide more input than ever before, indicating that we are being recognized as a strong association. This has come about as a result of the great effort to increase membership, the acquisition of many new members, thus allowing our voice to be heard.*"

And so it goes. We get invited to the table, and things look promising, and then it just kind of fades away, even to this day. But the comment makes the point that it's so important for us to be strong in numbers so that we not only get invited to the table, but that they *listen* to us. That theme has run through our entire history, that there's strength in numbers, and why membership is so important to the association so that we can be a force to be listened to. And we've seen it happen a few times. We were consulted a few years ago regarding changes to Rule 9.200, The Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. And they listened, incorporating our input.

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The Diamond Vault: Part III

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Wrapping up our 20th Anniversary convention news, Frank Sarli received the Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award, and Rosie was installed as president by her own judge, The Honorable George C. Carr.

At the November board meeting, we see the roots of yet another tradition, when Paula Laws moved that board members introduce speakers at seminars. The motion passed.

President Sclafani proposed an interesting idea: That members of FSRA who hold the NCRA RPR tag the designation with the initials -FLA to indicate a member in good standing. The matter was tabled.

Today, we are seeing a nationwide concern about a shortage of reporters. As always, nothing is new: In the October-November 1981 issue of our magazine, President Sclafani's President's Message mentioned that recent changes to the rules regarding discovery created an increase in a need for reporters, creating a shortage almost overnight.

Rosie also mentions that as of then, FSRA has produced not one, but two NSRA presidents: Taylor Reese and Doris Mauldin. (The then-editor of our magazine, Paula Laws, would also go on to be a president of National.)

There was some voting controversy regarding Chapter 29, and a phone board meeting was held on November 15th to try to rectify the problem. Further controversy ensued when member Mike Musetta was not brought into the conference timely because of confusion about his phone number. At the phone meeting, a special board meeting was set for November 21, to be held at the Tampa Airport hotel, to then be followed by a general membership meeting.

And at *those* meetings, things got contentious, with Jack Besoner and Mike Musetta stating they believed the meeting was called illegally and that they were present under protest.

At that meeting, there were arguments about correct Parliamentary procedure, improper voting, inadequate notice of the meetings, and other controversies.

President Rosie was having a tough year. The infighting continued into the January 9, 1982 special board meeting. A professional Parliamentarian was brought in, as Emily Mann, our Parliamentarian, was unavailable. Motions and accusations flew back and forth, and the end result was that Jack Besoner was removed from his position as President Elect and member of the board. One of the bases for the action seems to be that Jack was sending out unauthorized correspondence under the FSRA letterhead.

As a result of this action, Vice President Arlene Sommers was elevated to the position of President Elect. Nominations and election to fill the Vice President seat took place, with Paula Laws and Bill Hague nominated, and Paula was elected.

There was then the question of filling the now-empty board seat that was vacated by Paula's election, and Mike Musetta nominated Jack Besoner. In the end, it was decided that the seat would stay vacant until the next general election.



1981-82 President, Rosie Sclafani and Judge Carr at the Installation Banquet.

Then, more controversy at the February 27, 1982 board meeting. "President interrupted discussion to call attention to the fact that the board meeting was being tape recorded by Mike Musetta; also, to the fact that board meetings are open to FSRA members only and that it had come to her attention there was a nonmember present. President requested the recorder be turned off; request declined. Parliamentarian advised board on procedures and discussion was had. President again requested the recorder be turned off; declined. Parliamentarian again advised the board, and following further discussion and the request of President, the recorder was turned off and the nonmember present left the board room." (The nonmember was Jack Besoner's attorney.)

Also at this board meeting, something refreshingly normal: Bill Wagner, Chairman of the Rules Committee of the Florida Bar, gave a presentation on the Rules of Civil Procedure – Court Document Disposal.

In the January-February 1982 magazine, Paula Laws, in her column, stated, "Controversy will not hurt the association, but only make it grow."

And now, the annual business meeting at the annual convention, the events of this bizarre year are brought to what at the time seemed to be a satisfying close:

"... negotiations had been under way ... between interested factions ... preserve the association ... agreement reached as follows:

"That Arlene Sommers, if elected, will proceed into the presidency for the ensuing year; that Jack Besoner, if elected, will remain in the office of President-Elect; that the rest of the slate of nominees will be presented for election by the Nominating Committee; that Jack Besoner will **unconditionally**

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drop all lawsuits against FSRA, its individual officers and members of the board, with prejudice."

I have found absolutely nothing in minutes or magazine about Jack having filed lawsuits.

Further in the minutes, *"Members present were unclear as to the events which had taken place. Jack Besoner took the podium and offered an explanation and further explained that it had all been done in the spirit of harmony and unity for the association."*

It got crazier. Paula Laws was the Nominating Committee's choice for President Elect. Paula withdrew her name and nominated Jack Besoner. There were then a variety of floor races for the various board positions, with the general membership still expressing bewilderment at what was going on. (No kidding! Since there's not a thing in the magazines about any of this, the membership knew nothing.)

Further insanity ensued with a tie between Paula Laws and Mike Musetta for a director seat, with a run-off election, which then was challenged by Mike as illegal, and he demanded a *third* vote, with IDs to be presented by each member as they voted. The third vote also resulted in a tie, and a fourth was taken. But the hotel advised the meeting that the ballroom needed to be vacated (it was well after 5:00 p.m. by this time,) and the fourth ballot was taken in the hallway.

That evening at the banquet, the fourth ballot was counted, with Paula being announced the winner, and Mike formally moved that the Annual Business Meeting be adjourned.

Yes. Really. This annual meeting perhaps should go on record as the longest business meeting ever.

Oh, but wait. Hell Year isn't quite over yet, even though it was: At the February 1983 board meeting, controversy and disagreement of what FSRA was to contribute to Jack Besoner's legal fees erupts, and here we go again. And nobody remembered the exact discussion about what was agreed to about a cap on the amount, so they discussed asking NSRA's Frank Nelson and Dick Peppey *their* recollections. Offers are made, offers are declined. In the end, the recollection of most that the agreement had been half of his fees, said fees not to exceed \$4,000 (so \$2,000 as FCRA's contribution) was settled on. Then the question was how to reflect that in the budget, or where will the funds come from? In the end, motion was made and passed to call for a voluntary assessment of current and past presidents and board members.

1982 did have some blessed normalcy:

In March we presented two 1-day regional seminars simultaneously, one in Jacksonville and one in Ft. Lauderdale. Both were deemed successes and the concept was christened as "a new tradition." And indeed, for several years following, the tradition continued with 1-day regional seminars in various cities around the state.

Our Midyear convention was in Tampa. The theme was "In Pursuit of Excellence."

The May-June 1982 magazine has a fascinating article about Philander Deming, "The Father of Courtroom Stenography." Until after the Civil War, there was no record of testimony in trials. In 1866, Mr. Deming was covering a trial when he was involved in a discussion about the difficulty of remembering what was said in trials, and he said he could do a verbatim record of testimony with his version of shorthand. He rose to the challenge of the unbelievers, proving it was possible, and became a court reporter in Albany, as well as teaching his method to others. Eventually he went to law school and became a lawyer.

The magazine's Spotlight featured William Hague, who became our president for the 1987-1988 term.

The magazine featured a reprint from the L. A. Times about reporter Jere With, using Xscribe equipment, providing CART for a deaf defendant in a murder trial. It was believed to be the first time CAT has been used for this purpose.

In June, FCRA hosted a booth at the Florida Bar convention, with demonstrations of CAT, and it was a busy booth with lots of attorneys and judges stopping by.

Founding member Morgan Morey was remembered in the July-August 1982 magazine. In addition to being an Official in Pinellas County – a pen writer, one of the last, if not the last, in our area – he was a Buddhist priest. (I attended his funeral and it was an amazing experience.)

Arlene Sommers becomes our president for 1982-83, and she's having a relatively peaceful term, whew. More 1-day seminars were given and well attended; FSRA gave a presentation at the Miami School of Law; Arlene was serving on the NSRA Public Relations Committee.

The May-June 1983 magazine had an interesting article by John Harkness, Executive Director of the Florida Bar:

"It is not Orwellian to think that today's lawyer may soon be able to flip on his own CRT unit and request the visual display of the day's messages, the automatic telecommunicator device is instructed to contact the party for voice communication or electronic message transfer. This same unit will confirm appointments as appropriate, take notes for the secretary or other lawyers in the office and enumerate the entire day's tickler for visual display.

"It is not farfetched to think of the future office as being 'paperless.' All information on paper will be stored electronically in a storage medium, whether generated internally or received by a communications link. When information is needed, it will be displayed visually on a video tube.

"During the transition period of the traditional paper communication link to the paperless office of the future, communications that are received in paper form will be converted by an optical character to magnetic medium."

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The Diamond Vault: Part III

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He can't be serious ...

FCRA members, a couple students, and some teachers participated in the Dade County career fair, presented to 10,000 ninth graders. More than 140 trades had booths to educate students on potential career paths.

At the suggestion of Past President Rosie Sclafani, a "mini-board" consisting of reporting students was created, the purpose being to get students involved and invited to make suggestions to improve the association.

The July-August magazine had an article about cameras in the courtroom and continuing concerns about if, or how, it affects the participants and possible outcome of the case. With hindsight, in today's world of Court TV, it continues to be so interesting to see these articles from the era of infancy of using the technology.

At the October 20, 1983 board meeting, President Sommers brought up issues regarding elections, election procedures, and campaign guidelines. An Election Committee was formed, and campaign guidelines were voted on. The board also voted to buy subscriptions to the NSRA's JCR to be sent each month to the Office of the State Court Administrator, the President and Executive Director of the Florida Bar, and the Chairman of the Senate Committee Judiciary-Criminal.

October 1983, the annual convention in Miami, the craziness and upset of the year before wasn't quite over yet, as there were contested elections for many seats on the board. Paul Feldman challenged Paula Laws for President Elect; Carolyn Fowler challenged Bill Hague for Vice President; Michael Musetta challenged Art Vos for Treasurer; Karen Jones challenged Ann Horne for Central Director; Virginia Hyland challenged Shela Ellis for Director at Large; and Richard Lee challenged Marie Splane for Director at Large.

Results: President Elect: Paul Feldman. Vice President: Bill Hague. Treasurer was a tie between Art Vos and Mike Musetta. Central Director: Ann Horne. Director at Large: Marie Splane. Director at Large: Virginia Hyland. Art Vos won the revote for Treasurer.

In between and around all of this, many, many amendments to the Bylaws were voted on.

And the controversial Jack Besoner became president for the 1983-84 term. (Jack died in 1998.) Carol Casseaux received the EMDSA.

At the post-convention board meeting on October 23, it was – whew -- business as usual! There was discussion of another Miami-Dade career fair and agreement that FSRA will participate again; Shorthand Notes Editor Paula Laws had asked several times to be relieved of her position and Barbara McDonald agreed to step up to the plate and be trained in the coming year by Paula, to take over in another year, and President Besoner would like to appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee to explore the formation of a PAC. The matter was referred to the Legislative Committee.

The most interesting article in the January-February 1984 magazine is recap of a 1935 case wherein the court stated that any qualified reporter could report civil court matters, not just "officials." (There is reference to Jerry Jordan recounting an experience in the Panhandle on this issue but I can't find anything on it.) The case is Cleary Brothers vs Phelps, cited at 24 So.2d 54. It involved a civil trial where one of the attorneys had his secretary come in and take down the record, instead of hiring a court reporter, and she wasn't able to produce a transcript for the appeal.

Our Midyear/Spring convention in the Orlando/Disney area was a huge success, with one seminar, on plastic and reconstructive surgery, requiring overflow arrangements for over 200 reporters and 100 students and teachers! Oh, what we would give for those kinds of numbers nowadays, especially the students and teachers!

The May-June magazine featured President Besoner recapping several issues that attorneys had written to him about, including a reporter refusing to transcribe an appeal that he'd made a deposit on because the agency owed her money, and another in which an agency did not inform him of a transcript order by the other side, and indeed told him it hadn't been ordered when he inquired, and then opposing counsel showed up in court with the transcript. As a result, President Besoner intends to bring up formation of an Ethics Committee at the next board meeting. (The roots of yet another of our long-held practices.)

As a side note, all through this era there were many articles about the emergence of video and electronic recording in the courtroom, both state and federal; surveys and pilot projects, and they're so numerous that I'm simply not bothering to mention them anymore. The same goes for articles about the continued growth of CAT, as well as tips and tricks for using computers.

In June, the newly formed Ethics Committee met in Tampa to discuss questions that had come before the committee and to work on drawing up guidelines and standards. On the committee were Jackie Victor, Virginia Hyland, and Mary Taaffe. Also in June, Arlene Sommers, Bill Hague, Linda Wolfe, Paula Laws, Ginny Hyland did a skit presentation at the University of Florida School of Law.

In the July-August magazine, President Besoner's column was devoted to financial information, and new shots are fired across the bow of the board, starting a new round of controversy and strain:

"The necessity of frugality with purpose was never so evident as when I came into office as your president in October of 1983. During the past four years our association has been on a course of self-destruction because of policies of indulging overspending. There has been a shocking loss of funds since 1980 to the tune of \$14,765."

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He went on to recap each of the tumultuous years:

"In 1980, FSRA lost \$1,279. In 1981, during Joe Troiano's administration, \$310. The board, in order to offset these losses, decided there should be an increase in dues. Despite a staggering 66 2/3% increase in dues, during the administration of President Sclafani in 1982 there was a deplorable loss of \$10,628. In 1983, President Sommers, realizing these financial losses were taking their toll, made attempts to put an end to these continuing losses, but was saddled with having to pay attorneys' fees because of ill-advised board action during the prior year, resulting in a loss of \$2,548 last year."

Ouch! He's referring to his lawsuit resulting from whatever happened during that horrific year.

He went on to say that he had attempted to introduce a motion at a board meeting requiring an audit of the books, but the board voted it down. However, the motion was made and passed at the general membership meeting.

"I am pleased to state that this year I have brought the deficit spending to a screeching halt, albeit having offended a few board officers and directors at the same time." The topic of that sentence is the repeated attempts by board members to have their expenses for board meetings reimbursed, when our "policy" has been that board members are responsible for their own expenses. (It is not specified whether that is an informal policy or firmly entrenched in Policy & Procedures.)

OUCH.

Arlene Sommers responded in the next issue of the magazine in a letter to the editor countering many of President Besoner's charges (pun not intended.) Among her points, membership has doubled in the previous 4 years. Regarding the dues increase, President Sommers had suggested an increase from \$30 to \$45, and Jack Besoner himself had suggested \$50 instead. She addressed the issue of reimbursing board members for their expenses, pointing out that they give up time and income to serve. Most pointedly, *"The lawsuit, which was so costly to us, was brought by Jack (Besoner) against your association. Without the necessity of that expense, we would have made \$7,000 last year."*

I'd about give a limb for a copy of that lawsuit, by the way. References to the lawsuit have been vague in both minutes and magazines. In fact, it appears to me that until the settlement discussion and vote at the general membership meeting, I can't find any indication that the general membership was even aware that the association had been sued.

I find that troubling, frankly. And I'm hoping to track down more information about it from people who were there at the time as well as some documents that Headquarters may have that I was unaware of before. So I may do a supplement/follow-up article when I learn more.

In Other News, this same issue of the magazine had an article about the new trend of insurance companies asking

for bids for their reporting work. The first mention I've seen of the birth of "third-party contracting."

Our very own H. Allen Benowitz was named a Fellow to NSRA's Academy of Professional Reporters at the NSRA convention in August.

So has the fuss and turmoil settled down yet? Hardly.

Nominating Committee's Slate for the 1984-85 term: President Elect, Paula Laws; Vice President, William Hague; Secretary, Sydney Neil Silva; Treasurer, Michael Musetta; Southern Director, Rus Weathers; Northern Director, Jerry Jordan; Central Director, Virginia Hyland; Director at Large, Mary Taaffe; Director at Large, H. Allen Benowitz.

But no. Another contested election coming up. Including that current president Jack Besoner throws his hat into the ring for another round as president elect. Yes, really.

Now, it's not unheard of for a president to serve more than one term. It happened in The First Decade, I assume due to the infancy of the association. Art Clum was our founding/interim president. Clifford Gaffney, our first elected president, served 1961-62, and then again 1962-63. Taylor Reese served 1963-64 and 1964-65. Art Clum then served 1965-66 and 1966-67. But that's the last (and so far the only,) time that has happened.

President Jack challenged Paula Laws for president elect, and Pamela Vos challenged Mike Musetta for Treasurer.

And now we come to the preconvention board meeting on October 11. First, expense reimbursement for board members. The result was that the parliamentarian and editor would be reimbursed. New editorial policies for the magazine was tabled till the post-convention meeting. The new Ethics Committee presented guidelines and procedures to be voted on, also tabled.

On to the business meeting!

The meeting lasted 4 and a half hours, and as stated in the article recapping it, *"ran the gamut of emotions as association leaders struggled to conduct the business according to accepted parliamentary procedure."* There were issues about amendments to the Bylaws, when such amendments would become effective – the answer to that question affecting whether the two challengers were valid challengers if the amendments took place immediately, as one of the many motions that was made would entail, if the motion passed. The solution was that even though the amendments did not allow it, write-in ballots would be permitted *for this meeting*. It wasn't until an hour after the 2:30 adjournment that the ballots were counted and the results posted at the registration desk:

Pam Vos beat the Nominating Committee's choice of Michael Musetta for Treasurer, but Paula Laws (the committee's choice,) won President Elect.

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The Diamond Vault: Part III

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President Elect Paula was finally relieved of her long and excellent editor service, with Barbara McDonald taking over the magazine.

Outgoing President Jack couldn't resist one last shot, though, in his President's address: *"As my term in office concludes, I am pleased to state that our total assets are again up to safe levels and that this year the losses attributable to the two prior administrations have been nearly recaptured."*

It's almost anticlimactic to mention that Past President Joe Troiano was the 1984 recipient of the EMDSA.

Onward, with President Paul Feldman for the 1984-85 term. Whew, only two more years to go for the first half of the third decade!

From the Those Were the Days file: An article in the Jan-Feb 1985 magazine, "Is There A Word Processor In Your Future," an article targeted to reporters who type their own work: *"Some models will even check your spelling, number your pages automatically, find a specific page, duplicate material in one place of your transcript to another (very useful when you wish to include material you've read back.)"*

In the May-June, 1985 magazine, there was an announcement that our longtime management firm was abruptly cancelling our contract, necessitated by the resignation of two of the company's key people. FSRA would proceed to send out RFPs to management companies, with a decision to be made at the June 14 board meeting. (Kautter did submit a proposal and was interviewed, but Peggy McCollum's agency in Tallahassee was selected.)

In the July-August, 1985 magazine, Editor Barbara McDonald reported that Hawaii had passed legislation making it illegal for court reporters to contract directly with insurance companies, and that New Mexico was looking at a proposed Rule of Court along the same lines.

Also in this issue was an amazing old-time New Mexico sentencing: *"... in a few short weeks it will be spring..."* and the judge waxes eloquently about the beauty of spring. *"... and all nature will be glad but you. You won't be here to enjoy it because I commend the sheriff ... to lead you out to some remote spot ... and let you hang until you are dead."*

Florida continued to shine on the national stage as our Frank Sarli received the NSRA Distinguished Service Award. And this is the first time a Floridian received the national DSA!

Judy Everman wrote a letter to the editor that a prohibition on contracting with insurance companies must be part of our proposed CSR rule, based on ethical considerations.

The October, 1985 preconvention board meeting heralded yet another key piece of the "why do we do what we do" history. President Feldman expressed disappointment at the "lack of cooperation" from some of the committees that year, and it was at that meeting that it was decided that, going forward, the vice president would be the committee

coordinator, requiring quarterly reports from all committees, and an end-of-year report from all committees, which reports were to be published in the magazine.

Another tradition was formed at this meeting: Plaques to be presented to outgoing board members.

At the convention business meeting, much of it was taken up by discussion, motions, seconds, votes in favor or against, various iterations of our proposed CSR submission. And refreshingly, the slate presented by the Nominating Committee was accepted and voted on without challenge or dissent. Michael Musetta received the EMDSA. And Paula Laws received the gavel for the 1985-1986 term.

From President Paula's first president's address, *"Today and from this day forward, we have the opportunity for a whole new beginning. We have peace and harmony and a bright new future."* From your mouth, Madam President!

We also had our first President's Award, given to Emanuel "Manny" Grodsky. And we had our first fundraising auction, raising \$2,800. (That's pretty darned good for the era of the mid'80s!)

At the postconvention board meeting, as her first act as president, Paula proposed changes to how the Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award recipient is chosen, asking that it be placed under the auspices of the Nominating Committee, with the board to then vote on their recommendation.

Just as we started to relax and hope for continued smooth sailing, a small controversy arose regarding Editor Barbara McDonald, and that Marie Splane wished to take over as editor. There was some discussion about tension and miscommunication between Barbara and our new management company, and in the end it was decided that Barbara would remain editor, with Marie as associate editor, with the question to be monitored and taken up again at a later time, if necessary.

In the January-February, 1986 issue of our magazine, President Laws announced that Immediate Past President Paul Feldman has resigned from the board and all committees. Paul's letter is printed in the magazine and it appears that some change that President Paula made for the 1986 convention that Paul had already made arrangements for was the core issue.

The minutes of the January 18, 1986 board meeting made vague reference to "discussion of the Editor situation." The board then went in to executive session, the subject of which is unknown through the documents. But whatever the upshot of the "discussion of the Editor situation," there was a letter to the editor from, again, Paul Feldman that stated, *"I feel an explanation is due to the membership regarding Barbara McDonald's sudden expulsion as editor of Shorthand Notes. There seems to be removals from positions of service to FSRA*

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by a certain faction without an explanation to the general membership. I think the membership is entitled to know what goes on within its representative organization and deserves an explanation." "Editor's Note: These matters cannot be addressed by the editor."

Marie Splane then became editor of our magazine.

The subject of the composition of the EMDSA Committee came up again, with the decision being that it will be composed of the president elect, Emily Mann, the last two recipients, and one person appointed by the board.

Bernie Sommers (Arlene Sommers' husband,) will be presented with a plaque of appreciation for his service and contributions to FSRA.

February 16, 1986, there was a dinner in Orlando honoring Frank Sarli.

In the March-April magazine, President Paula reported on having attended meetings in Tallahassee and the Judicial Council in Orlando, having been invited by the chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court. She also met with the chair of the Florida Bar's Rules Committee on Appellate Procedure and the president of the Florida Pro Bono Coordinator's Association.

I will end here, as is my habit, since our Articles of Incorporation were signed in April of 1961, and the first half of this third decade recap ends as we enter April of 1986.

What does our future/past hold for the Third Decade Part 2? I can't wait to find out. Because I haven't researched that far yet, so I'm as much in the dark as you are! Hopefully it's roses and warm fuzzies, after the tumult of this five years!

Spotlight's On . . .



Emily Mann

Every profession should be so fortunate and would do well to have one Emily Mann contributing to its enhancement . . . Every organization should be so fortunate as to have one Emily Mann in its midst . . . Every individual on earth should be so fortunate as to have at least one friend like Emily Mann . . . We, professional reporters, members of the Florida Shorthand Reporters Association and individuals, are indeed fortunate because we do have Emily Mann!

Emily enhances everything with which she becomes involved. Her vast array of talents and experiences have made her a Rock of Gibraltar to the Florida Shorthand Reporters Association, the National Shorthand Reporters Association, Reporters, Teachers and Students alike.

Emily received a degree from the University of Montevallo in Alabama and following graduation held quite an assortment of jobs. She has taught on the Community College level, been a Latin instructor, private secretary to one of Florida's Governors. She has served the reporting world in a variety of ways . . . she started out as a general reporter (first as a Gregg Writer and then as a self taught stenotypist), later became an official and has donated to FSRA several useful and informative books. She is now retired but has not slowed down in the least. She devotes her time to tutoring aspiring reporters, writing her books and planning ways to impart her knowledge upon others in the field.

Emily is a well known lecturer in the field of English and she participates in many seminars and workshops for the NSRA, as well as for many of the state associations.

Emily Mann, while modest about her unselfish gifts and contributions to the profession, has been bestowed the coveted designation of "Fellow" by the National Shorthand Reporters Association. Florida, also, wanted to honor Emily and created the Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award to be bestowed upon those individuals with integrity, high ideals and who have excelled in and made significant contributions to the reporting profession.

Emily Mann has actively and unselfishly served the reporting profession for forty years. During which time she somehow managed to find time to raise three sons and one daughter and maintain a happy marriage.

The Florida Shorthand Reporters Association owes the credit for much of its strength to the support and contributions it has received from Emily Mann. All who know Emily have had their lives enriched and enhanced from her wisdom, her kindness, her fine example and her love.

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Philander Deming's Role

*Hardly Anyone's Heard of Him,
but He's the Father of
Courtroom Stenography*

By Jim Haviland
Special to The National Law Journal

Court Stenography may be something we take for granted today, but that wasn't always the case.

Until just after the Civil War, testimony wasn't recorded in trials. This led to considerable wrangling over the different recollections of what had been said by witnesses in court.

Putting an end to this impractical method was a man by the name of Philander Deming. If you haven't heard of him, don't feel illiterate. Hardly anyone else has heard about Mr. Deming, either.

In the mid-19th Century, Phil Deming was working as a newspaper reporter in Albany, N.Y. He had attended the University of Vermont, but a lack of funds prevented him from graduating.

Instead, he went into newspaper work.

In Albany, Mr. Deming covered the legislative beat in the state Assembly, where he attracted the attention of Henry Raymond. Mr. Raymond, a graduate of the University of Vermont who later would gain fame as a founder of the New York Times, was on the scene during legislative sessions and was acknowledged as a clever, generally efficient journalist who could turn out a miraculous amount of legible copy. Mr. Deming soon became his protege.

While working as a reporter in the New York state capital in 1866, Mr. Deming's career took an unexpected turn. He was covering a court trial one day in the state Supreme Court when he became involved in a discussion over the problem of trying to recall what different witnesses had said. Mr. Deming claimed he could resolve such dilemmas by recording the testimony verbatim.

The incredulous judge, prosecutor and defense attorney didn't believe him. They challenged the news reporter to prove his contention.

Mr. Deming did just that by utilizing "phonology." This new science — known today more prosaically as shorthand — was something he had learned years earlier while growing up in the Adirondacks. It had helped in interviewing people for his news stories.

Now this phonology served Mr. Deming even better in proving beyond a doubt that he could reliably record court testimony. The judge and the attorneys quickly saw the advantage of such a procedure. A new career was born. The news reporter was so good at using phonology, that he changed careers and became an official Supreme Court stenographer that year in Albany. He was the first professional court stenographer in the United States and earned the distinction of being the father of court stenography.

Mr. Deming's success in court stenography wasn't what he had planned for his life while growing up. Instead, he had aspired to enter the literary field.

Born in Carlisle in New York's Schoharie County on Feb. 6, 1829, Mr. Deming was the son of a Presbyterian clergyman who moved from parish to parish. The family maintained a home for a number of years in the Adirondacks, with the youthful Deming forming a lifelong love for that wilderness region.

Here in a log cabin by a sawmill, Mr. Deming read the writings of James Russell Lowell, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and dreamed of a career as a writer. He pursued Virgil and Herodotus in his father's study and began his formal education at the Oneida Institute in Whitesboro, N.Y. One of the few integrated educational institutions anywhere at the time, it was run by Beriah Green, a fiery abolitionist.

Mr. Deming's success enabled him to earn enough money to go back to the University of Vermont to earn his degree and win Phi Beta Kappa recognition.

While serving as a court stenographer in Albany, his interest in law prompted him to enroll in Albany Law School. After graduating here, Mr. Deming joined the bar.

But he gained far more renown as a court stenographer than a lawyer. He worked tirelessly to train others for this profession, and in 1879 wrote an authoritative training manual for court stenographers that was widely used for years.

Mr. Deming continued as a stenographic reporter in Albany until 1882, and served as president of the New York State Law Stenographers' Association from 1878 to 1879.

While working as a court stenographer, Mr. Deming still nourished his dream of becoming a writer. He submitted essay after essay to the Atlantic magazine, but they were regularly rejected.

He was in his 40s before discovering his true writing bent. Serving as an inspiration was an Albany-born writer, Bret Harte, who became successful with local color stories. This prompted Mr. Deming to try realistic fiction based on actual events in the Adirondacks.

The Atlantic finally accepted his story "Lost" in 1873, and succeeding stories, including "John's Trial" and "Lida Ann," subsequently were printed by this same magazine. Many were collected in a book "Adirondack Stories," published in 1880.

Some of Mr. Deming's story themes included loneliness in isolation, but he also wrote of child abuse, drug addiction and mob rule, which he heard about first-hand as a court stenographer. He won lavish praise for his writing but wasn't widely read, and today he remains largely unknown as an American writer.

After retiring from the courts, Mr. Deming, who never married, spent his summers in the Adirondacks and his winters in Albany. He died Feb. 9, 1915, in Albany at the age of 86 and today remains largely unrecognized for being the father of court stenography.

Mr. Haviland is a professor at Ulster Community College in Stone Ridge, N.Y.



"In Memoriam"

On March 14, 1982, a tremendous loss was suffered to the reporting profession and the Hollywood Community. Robert N.

Clark died at the young age of 54. Not only was Mr. Clark a talented and professional court reporter, but he was also an author, composer and producer of musicals. Among his credits is the popular musical production "Affirmative Action". Additionally, several of Mr. Clark's songs have been performed at the Sunrise Musical Theatre.

Mr. Clark, a veteran of the Korean Conflict, was a member of both the National and Florida Shorthand Reporters Associations. He was founder of the Florida Association of City Clerks as well as the founder of the Sunrise Arts Theatre.

Robert Clark will be missed by all, for his professionalism and his many contributions to society, the community and to the arts. He is survived by his wife, Betty Jane.

HOW TO FIGURE IF CAT'S FOR YOU

Following is a simple formula developed by Jill Berman Wilson, Director of Research and Technology for NSRA, that will give you a *very rough* guideline for determining if CAT makes financial sense for you. Bear in mind that this formula is a general yardstick and does not take into account the various (and probably changing) tax advantages of such a purchase.

The formula is based on a five-year time span because most purchases of this nature are amortized over five years. Here's how it works:

1. Take the cost of the CAT system, including financing. _____
 2. Add the cost of a maintenance contract for five years. + _____
 3. Add \$1,500 for five years of insurance, electricity, and miscellaneous costs. + \$1,500.00
 - The total of Steps 1, 2, and 3 gives you the total cost of the system for five years. _____
 4. Divide that number by five to determine the cost per year. _____
 5. Divide the number you got in Step 4 by the number of pages of transcript you produce in a year. This will give you a preliminary cost per page. _____
 6. Add 7.5 cents (\$.075) to cover the cost of paper, ribbons, photocopying, etc. + \$ 0.075
- TOTAL COST PER PAGE _____

How does it look? What you now have is a rough per-page cost to produce transcript on CAT. This figure does not include the cost of a scoper, since a scoper is optional. And, as mentioned, it does not include tax benefits, which may be substantial.

The numbers will vary, of course, with the cost of different CAT systems. By playing with the formula, you can get a good idea of a price range for CAT that makes sense for you. If this exercise makes CAT look promising, you

can talk with a tax expert about how such an investment will affect your tax situation.

Of course, dollars and cents don't tell the whole story. If money were the only criterion, few of us would have dishwashers, air conditioners, food processors, or any of the other conveniences of modern life that save time and trouble if not money. Fortunately for court reporters, CAT often can save money as well. This formula will give you an estimate of what it can mean to you financially.

The Good Ole Days? NEW MEXICO SENTENCING

Following is a verbatim transcript of a sentence imposed upon a defendant convicted of a foul murder in the Federal District Court of the Territory of New Mexico, many years ago, by a United States Judge, sitting at Taos, in an adobe stable used as a temporary courtroom.

"JOSE MANUEL MIGUEL XAVIER GONZALES, in a few short weeks it will be spring. The snows of winter will flee away, the ice will vanish and the air will become soft and balmy. In short, JOSE MANUEL MIGUEL XAVIER GONZALES, the annual miracle of the year's awakening will come to pass—but you won't be here.

"The rivulet will run its purring course to the sea, the timid desert flowers will put forth their tender shoots, the glorious valleys of the imperial domain will blossom as the rose—still you won't be here to see.

"From every tree-top some wild-woods songster will carol his mating song, butterflies will sport in the sunshine, the busy bee will hum happily

as it pursues its accustomed vocation, the gentle breeze will tease the tassels of the wild grasses, and all nature—JOSE MANUEL MIGUEL XAVIER GONZALES—will be glad but you. You won't be here to enjoy it because I command the sheriff, or some other officer of this county, to lead out to some remote spot, swing you by the neck from a nodding bough of some sturdy oak, and let you hang until you are dead.

"And then, JOSE MANUEL MIGUEL XAVIER GONZALES, I command that such officer, or officers retire quickly

from your dangling corpse, that the vultures may descend from the heavens upon your filthy body, until nothing shall remain but the bare, bleached bones of a cold-blooded, copper-colored, blood-thirsty, throat-cutting, chile-eating, sheep-herding, murdering son of a bitch."

(Read by Mr. Judge Wood, Inspector in Charge, U.S. Post Office Department, Los Angeles, California, at the Spring Meeting of Regional Committee, Protective Section, A.A.E., held at Los Angeles, May 19, 1949.)

—Submitted by Gilbert F. Halasz

Shorthand Notes: COPY DEADLINE DATES

Sept./Oct. Issue Aug. 5, 1985 Jan./Feb. Issue Dec. 5, 1985
Nov./Dec. Issue Oct. 5, 1985 March/Apr. Issue Feb. 5, 1985

Please forward all timely editorial materials to the Editor, Barbara McDonald, 347-B N. Ridgewood Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL 32014. Articles of interest can be submitted to the FSRA Office, P.O. Box 10523, Tallahassee, FL 32302.



By Patricia Falls, CCR, CRI, StenoTrain.com, Director of Reporting Training and Education

Student Corner: Your Path to Future Stardom

I was excited and honored to be asked to write in the student column. When I asked Richard how long the article should be, he said, half a page, one page, it doesn't matter. The reality is, I love what I do so much and I am fulfilled by the accomplishments of so many I have had the privilege to teach and mentor, that I could probably fill up an entire book with the messages I could share with those of you on this journey. But I won't. I'll keep it short and sweet and to the point.

I am a member of many Facebook groups and student forums and I read comments and postings and so often want to scream out loud, why does it matter what anyone else is doing or saying or feeling about a particular topic? Don't get me wrong, some of the posts and encouragement and words of wisdom and advice are priceless! Don't stop belonging to the encouraging groups, asking questions, and reading positive comments when you need something.

But Steno is a language, and learning to write it is a skill. Every single one of us is different, right? We are all unique and special in our own way. A skill is learned, developed, and then mastered. And the only way you can master anything in life is from repetition and practice.

I was recently at the FCRA convention and had an opportunity to sit in on the student-meet-the-vendor's session, and the privilege to be invited to the student luncheon, and the speakers in both were amazing. Funny stories, horror stories, great money-job stories, how long it took them to get out of school stories, and I thought about how the student is probably sitting there the whole time, attending the fabulous information-filled seminars they put on, listening to motivating stories, but wanting to say out loud - how can I get faster? I want to be where you are right now. I don't want to wait any longer. How can I pass tests and get there? Right? The answer, my friends, and yes here it comes, practice, practice, practice and then a little more practice after that. No one can do it for you. We can all give you all the tools you need to do it, but it's up to you to put the time and practice on that machine and I promise you'll get there, just do it one speed at a time. We hear you and you don't even have to say a word.

Theory students need repetition and practice reading and understanding the language of Steno. Nothing anyone can do but repeat, that if you practice what is being taught in the lesson, each lesson will build upon the next, so you'll get it if you keep your hands on the keyboard every chance you can get.

One thing I think all speed building students should do, is assessments. What is an assessment you ask? It's a five-minute writing at your target speed. Edit and proofread and print, then go back in and listen again and mark your own paper. Assess your own writing techniques, see what you

might be doing wrong and learn from your mistakes. If you're dropping words, work on speed, if you're writing wrong and messy words and missing little words, work on accuracy. When you can pass an assessment at 95% accuracy, then you're ready for a real test. A test is only a five-minute assessment of how you perform under pressure. It's a mind game. Be competitive and win at this game.

Developing the skillset required to do our job takes dedication and determination to achieve it. You're on the right track to success. Keep up the practice hours, be sure to make your practice time effective, and soon enough we'll be seeing you at the conventions and in the Facebook groups, giving back to those just starting out on the theory journey!

You have a large community of reporters always willing to help or listen. Our job is a bit isolating, and if you're learning online, that's isolating, so get involved if you're not already, stay involved if you are, and read and stay connected with what goes on in the court reporting industry.

60 to 80 - probably the hardest. It's a shock to the system going from repetition every day to brand new words and sounds at a dictated speed. Wow. But you'll get beyond that, and then the ups and downs start. Many of them. You pass a speed, you're only king or queen for a day. It's never fast enough until 225, and that's fast.

If you learn to trust those who have struggled through the process and accept that this is how it's going to be until you're done, you have won more than half the battle. It's a mind game and you need to win. Let it go. When you're frustrated and hate court reporting, hate the machine, want to throw it and break it, that's a good sign. It means you're on the verge of getting faster. It's frustrating to have someone speak to you at a pace you can't keep up with. I know. Been there. But, the good news is, when all this frustration is setting in, it's making room for maybe a few more words to sneak in. So even if you don't have time to write on your machine, listen to fast dictation and talkers and just try to hear all the words. Once you can hear them, and analyze the sounds and syllables quicker, the easier it will be to continue to train your fingers to hit the right keys.

You're going to get there. You're doing great. You're doing the very best you can and remember most of all, don't ever stop reaching for the stars! You're our future stars, and we need you.

By Christine Phipps, RPR, FPR, LCR (TN/ NJ)

Christine's Corner: Tech Essentials for Disaster Preparedness and Evacuation



Were you prepared for last year's emergencies? As Hurricanes Harvey and Irma are now behind us for the most part, California begins to rebuild from their wildfires, the innumerable other conditions that swirled around in the tropics threatening yet another crises, many of us discovered how ready – or not – we were to deal with these impending crises.

A disaster tech kit that you can prepare in advance will help you be prepared in the event catastrophe strikes — be that rioting, terrorist threat, breakdown somewhere, or natural disaster. Your mission in preparing your tech kit is to ensure that your basic needs are met if you're forced to evacuate your home or leave a dwelling or abandon a vehicle. The kit should include nutrition, water, medical supplies, and some way to communicate with loved ones and stay up to date on crisis alerts. Of course, your smartphone is the number one piece of technology to help with the latter, but the following apps and gadgets are also essential for a bug-out bag should you ever need to cut and run.



Motorola Consumer Radios MT352R

Should phone networks get overloaded with cities full of people trying to reach each other, a long-range walkie-talkie set could help you connect with your loved ones. The Motorola MT352R walkie-talkies can work over a 2-mile range in an urban setting through buildings, 6 miles over water, and up to 35 miles if nothing is in the way. \$74.99 at Amazon



Kaito KA550 emergency radio

If phones, internet and electricity are all down, you'll be glad you have this hand-crank multifunction AM/FM and shortwave radio to get updates on breaking situations and access to the Emergency Alert System. It doubles as

a portable lamp with a 5-LED reading light, a flashlight and an SOS beacon mode. It can be charged by NiMH rechargeable battery pack, 3 AA batteries (not included), hand-crank generator, solar panel, or AC/DC wall adapter/charger (not included), should you have access to power; the radio also has a USB port to charge other mobile devices when you're on the move. \$49.99 from Amazon



Gerber Bear Grylls Fire Starter

"Society is three square meals away from complete anarchy" [suggest researchers](#) — but with the Gerber Bear Grylls Fire Starter, you can hold off hunger-fueled rioting by rubbing together a ferrocerium rod and metal

striker to make a nice big meat- (or portobello)-grilling fire. It comes with a waterproof storage compartment for tinder, as well as an emergency whistle and a pocket survival booklet with instructions on attracting rescuers' attention. \$13.30 from Amazon



GRAYL Ultralight Water Purifier and Bottle

If 'they' have gotten to the water supply — or [if you live in Flint, Michigan](#) — filtering your H2O will be crucial for survival until order is restored. Fill up the GRAYL with water from any fresh or tap water source, then push the purifier like a French press to remove 99.9999% of viruses and bacteria, and filter out particulates, chemicals and heavy metals. Bonus: It's also handy for travelers who

want to avoid the eco-impact of buying bottled water. \$59.50 from [Amazon](#)



ThermaCell Heated Insoles

In addition to the head, the feet are one of the greatest areas of heat loss in the body. Should a freak heavy rain or snow-storm come your way, these rechargeable heated insoles will keep your toes toasty, saving your energy for figuring out an escape plan.

From \$60.21 at [Amazon](#)



Luci EMRG solar-powered light

You can't overestimate the fundamental human need for light. In disaster scenarios, reliable, solar-powered and portable lighting like the Luci EMRG can reduce stress simply by providing illumination for your community to come together. The EMRG has long-lasting, solar-powered LEDs that can be used in

four intensity settings, including flashing SOS alert. It's also inflatable and collapsible, so you can pack several into your bug-out bag. \$14.95 from [Amazon](#)

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By Michael A. Scire, RPR, CMRS
The Florida Reporter Associate Editor,
FCRA Director-at-Large

Twinspiration: The Return of the Quagmire

It was at last year's FCRA Convention when Richard and I did the seminar on *Solving the Mystery of the Quagmire of Voir Dire*. Little did we know we would be asked to do it again. It was during NCRA's Convention in Las Vegas last year while Richard was representing FCRA during the NCSA meeting (National Committee for State Associations) when court reporters from the Mississippi Court Reporters Association asked if he and I would attend their convention to do a seminar. Knowing it fell during the Sarasota Film Festival, and still working as official court reporters, we weren't quite sure how we were going to pull that off, but we were determined to do it.

We recently embarked on a new adventure of sorts with the Sarasota Film Festival. We reunited with filmmaker Marc Greenberg, filmmaker for *For The Record: A Court Reporting Documentary*, to launch MartiniAndaMovie.com. Our obligation with the festival would last ten days, consuming two full weekends and while we tend to our day jobs as official court reporters. With the MCRA Convention encompassing several days in the midst of that, all we had to do was figure out how to get there for the hour and a half speaking time and then return to our regularly scheduled activities. The timing was tricky. There were several movies we had to attend and several interviews we had to conduct with filmmakers, including actors, directors, and producers.

The timeslot we were given was Thursday afternoon at 3:00. Our flight boarded at Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport at 5:45 a.m. Luckily it's a small airport and close to home. The evening before we had two red carpet events to interview the cast and crew from two films we had reviewed for our new site. The after party for one of the films ran later than we thought, so we got home later than anticipated. Okay. We were really just having too much fun. I was rolling out of bed just after 5:00 a.m. and hadn't even packed yet. But what was there to pack really? We were only going to be gone for one day. Between 5:00 and 5:45, we each managed to shower, shave, throw on our favorite suits, pack an overnight bag, drive to the airport, check in, go through security, and board the plane. As I write this, I'm still not quite sure how that all happened in less than an hour but we've always worked better under pressure. We're court reporters!

We arrived at the convention hotel around 10:00 where we shared a shuttle with a judge, who was also speaking but for a judges' convention that was simultaneous in the same hotel. We weren't speaking until 3:00 so we had plenty of time to check into the hotel, check in with the convention chair and MCRA president, set up our equipment and do microphone sound checks, grab lunch, take a nap, and be refreshed and ready to go by 3:00.

We spoke until 4:30 to rave reviews. Mississippians are so nice! As we learned from the judge in our shuttle ride, the MCRA convention occurs simultaneously as the court administrators' convention and the judges' convention.

There was quite a nice mix of people. A joint reception followed from 5:00 to 7:00.

The hotel had a great steakhouse and wine bar at the top with astounding water views. Richard and I found ourselves in a near-empty bar drinking martinis and eating delicious food. It would be the only quiet time we would have in our crazy week. We were able to recap the convention and prepare for tomorrow's set of films and interviews.

The next day we did it all over again. We got up early for a 6:00 a.m. flight. With the layover, we made it back to Sarasota by 11:00 where we found ourselves jumping right into the festival by noon. It was a whirlwind 24 hours. I wish we could have stayed longer, at least to say hello to Ed and Nancy Varallo, who were also speaking. We were like ships passing in the night. One thing we were never going to pass on, however, was the opportunity to speak to fellow court reporters. Figuring out how to do it was the difficult part, but much like other lessons I've learned in this profession, persistence and determination will make it happen.

Since the NCRA Convention last year when Richard was asked if we could conduct a seminar, he was asked again when he represented FCRA during NCRA's Legislative Boot Camp in Washington D.C. this past winter. If all goes well, we just might be making trips to Colorado and Hawaii to help others solve the mindboggling mystery of the quagmire of voir dire.



Richard is on the right. Michael is on the left.



Christine's Corner: Tech Essentials for Disaster Preparedness and Evacuation

Continued from page 30



VividLed rechargeable headlamp

If you have to brave a flooded cellar when the power's out, this rechargeable headlamp keeps both your hands free for fussing with the fuse box. There are five

light modes, including strobe for getting attention, and red light, which helps you see your surroundings while keeping your eyes adjusted to the dark — handy to avoid feeling temporarily blinded when you look away from the lighted area. \$12.97 (on sale from \$29.99) from [Amazon](#)



you'll be good for at least 72 hours. We like the Anker PowerCore, which [can fast-charge an iPhone 7](#) or Galaxy S8 around three times from its 10000mAh battery. Or if you need a more power, try the three-USB RavPower Portable Charger, whose 22000mAh, which can hold about a week's worth of power (or charge an iPhone eight times). [Anker PowerCore](#) \$25.99 (currently on sale from \$49.99) from Amazon



[RavPower Portable Charger](#) \$39.99 (currently on sale from \$109.99) from Amazon



ThruNite TN4A LED Flashlight

A flashlight is an essential for any emergency kit, so pick a long-lasting LED one like the ThruNite TN4A, which has a lifespan of over 20 years. You can use it in one of five brightness settings, going up to a hyper-bright 1150 lumens with

a range of up to 450 meters, or put it in strobe mode to attract attention. It's also waterproof to 1.5 meters and impact resistant to 2 meters. \$49.95 from [Amazon](#)



Birksun solar backpacks

Get maximum use out of your bug-out bag itself by using a solar-powered, charge-packing backpack. Bags in the Birksun range can not only store all the above survival

essentials, but also charge up your gadgets so you can access critical updates and communicate with others. Every two minutes of sunlight provide enough energy to charge your phone battery another 1%. The waterproof, scratch-resistant solar panel can juice up your tech for up to 20 years, with a 3000mAh battery that stores around one full charge for a newish smartphone. When you get back to civilization and power sockets, you can also charge the bag from the mains. From \$109 at [Birksun](#) or from \$99 on [Amazon](#)



Gold Armour Camping Lanterns

BRIGHTEST LED LANTERN FOR ITS SIZE: Latest technology Chip-On-Board LED technology illuminates more area with more light than the commonly found 30 LED lanterns camping lanterns. Its light is also warmer in color than the competition's 30 LED lanterns, eliminating that cold, harsh feel. The

warm light also leaves your sleep rhythm intact, helping you to avoid the insomnia that other brands might cause. (EMITS 300 LUMENS!) **DEPENDABLE BUILD** - Each of our premium LED lanterns Camping Lanterns are hand-built with military-grade, water-resistant plastic - making them extra durable wherever you may be. The lantern is built for both the indoors & outdoors. **ADVANCED COLLAPSIBLE DESIGN** - Superior design and construction allows our lantern to be SUPER lightweight and compact. Our lantern is EASILY collapsible with a simple push. \$35.99 on Amazon



For your smartphone First Aid app by American Red Cross

This app has step-by-step advice for everyday first aid for issues from asthma attacks to strains and sprains, as well as instructions on handling

out-of-the-ordinary scenarios such as hazardous chemicals. It's integrated with 911, so you can call emergency services directly from the app. It also has safety tips for dealing with extreme weather, from severe cold to hurricanes and tornadoes, and addresses of the nearest hospitals. And in case of a power cut or evacuation off-grid, all this content is available offline. Free, [Android](#), [iOS](#)

Portable battery pack

Murphy's law dictates that when you need your smartphone most, its battery will be nearly empty. Sidestep this by keeping a charged-up portable battery pack in your bug-out bag, and

Christine's Corner: Tech Essentials for Disaster Preparedness and Evacuation

Continued from page 32



Life360 Family Location app

In the event of a disaster, it can be a vast relief just to know where your family members are. Get your loved ones to download this app and you'll be able to view their location on a map — either whenever they make it available, or continuously if they so allow. You can add emergency contacts to alert others on behalf of anyone in your family group, or press a panic button in the app to alert each member of a group that

you're in trouble. Other handy features include the ability to save "Places" so you can be notified when one of your group arrives at home, school or another designated location. The paid-for Plus service lets you save unlimited places, while the Driver Protect add-on can detect a car accident, then call for an ambulance and raise the alarm within the app.

Free, [Android](#), [iOS](#); from \$2.99/month for Plus; \$4.99/month for Driver Protect



Dropbox truly is the easiest way to back up your entire life, from court reporting note and wav files to pictures of generations of family members. This was probably the number one thing I heard during these disasters, massive scanning going on and putting pictures into Ziplocs. Endeavor to get all those pictures scanned, perhaps the court reporting firm you work with would work out a financial arrangement to have their

production department perform the scanning for you. Make sure you have your most important documents that you keep in a safe like birth certificates, estate planning documents, and insurance policies scanned to a folder stored on Dropbox also. Be sure to download the app to your phone so that you can easily access the documents as well.

As we begin hurricane season, take advance precautions while there are no threats to protect your loved ones and the irreplaceable photos and documents.



bSafe

An app designed for [personal safety](#) can be well-suited for emergency use. bSafe lets out an audible alarm that can

aid in rescue attempts, and will also broadcast video of your surroundings, along with your GPS location. Outside of emergency situations, the Follow Me Timer can automatically send an SOS message to your chosen contacts if you don't check in before a preset time — handy for staying safe if traveling alone. To receive this info, however, friends and family also need to download the app.

FCR Online Deadline Dates

(WINTER) DEC/JAN/FEB/MAR

Article Submission — November 5
On-Line Publication — December 12

(SUMMER) APR/MAY/JUNE/JULY

Article Submission — March 5
On-Line Publication — April 12

(FALL) AUG/SEPT/OCT/NOV

Article Submission — July 5
On-Line Publication — August 12



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Florida Court Reporters Association

*Name (Please print) _____ NCRA # _____ NVRA # _____

*Company _____ Owner Co-owner Manager

*Mailing Address _____ Website: _____

*City/State/Zip _____

*Telephone: Home (____) _____ Office (____) _____ FAX (____) _____

CHECK ONE: OK to publish home phone number in directory. DO NOT publish home phone number.

*Email address _____ Secondary Email Address _____

*METHOD OF REPORTING: Stenographic Voicewriter Gregg Pittman Other _____

*TYPE OF REPORTER: Freelance Official Deputy Official Federal Teacher Student Other _____

*DESIG: CSR (List State(s) other than FL) _____ FAPR FPR RPR RDR CMRS RMR CLVS CRI CRR CPE

*Asterisk indicates required information.

I make application for Membership as a: (CHECK ONE)

PARTICIPATING MEMBER\$300.00
Open to anyone engaged in active practice of official or general court reporting by either stenographic or voicewriter method. (Please indicate method above.) **PAYMENT PLAN AVAILABLE**
 *Pre-Authorized Payment Plan Attached (Participating Members Only)

STUDENT MEMBER\$35.00
Open to any student of shorthand reporting who is endorsed by a court reporting training program instructor or director.

RETIRED MEMBER\$45.00
Open to any participating member in good standing who has retired from the active practice of shorthand reporting.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER \$90.00
This category is open to the following (please check one):
 Teachers of shorthand reporting
 Individuals officially connected with a school or college conducting shorthand reporting course - **School Name & Location** _____
 Non-member individuals retired from active shorthand reporting
 Non-reporters professionally associated with or employed by a member of FCRA whose application is endorsed by a participating member in good standing (**please print sponsoring member's name below where requested**)
 Anyone qualifying for Participating membership, but residing outside of Florida - State of Residence _____

VENDOR MEMBER\$500.00
Open to any firm or corporation engaged in selling products or services to FCRA members.

PRO BONO: Are you interested in donating time to the Pro Bono Program?
 Yes No

FLORIDA MANUAL: The guide to court reporting in Florida — sample forms, guidelines, and rules of court. Cost for members: \$75.00. Subscription to updates: \$25.00.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY: Searchable geographical and alphabetical members' listing in Member's Only section of our website.

The dues year is November 1 through October 31. Annual dues must accompany application. Those joining in August, September, or October of a given year will be paid through October 31 of the following year. Dues payments are deductible by members as an ordinary and necessary business expense. In accordance with Section 6033(e) (2)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, members of the FCRA are hereby notified that an estimated 10% of your FCRA dues will be allocated to lobbying and political activities, and therefore is not deductible as a business expense.

For Administrative Use Only

Date Rec'd _____ Ref # _____ Amount _____
Date Approved _____ Computer _____

I hereby make application for membership in the Florida Court Reporters Association and pledge myself, if accepted, to abide by the requirements of the Bylaws and Code of Professional Responsibility of the Association as they are now and as they may be amended in the future.

I understand that all applications are subject to review and approval by FCRA. All applicants must be sponsored by an FCRA member in good standing per FCRA bylaws.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Name of Sponsoring Member (Please print or type)

How did you hear about FCRA? Code: _____ Other: _____

PAYMENT ENCLOSED FOR:

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Check # _____ MasterCard VISA AmEx

Account # _____

Exp. Date: _____

CVV: _____

Amount to charge: \$ _____

Authorized Signature _____

Billing Address: Same as above

Address: _____

City/St/Zip: _____

***Participating Members selecting the pre-authorized payment plan option will need to sign and complete the payment section of the pre-authorized payment plan form.**



Pre-Authorized Payment Plan Form

Participating Membership Only

Please complete and return payment plan form and membership application to:

FCRA Headquarters
222 S. Westmonte Dr, Suite 101
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
Fax: 407-774-6440

The FCRA payment plan is available only through submission of this form and is not available online.

INSTALLMENTS: Plan is payable by credit card only. Check payments will not be accepted.
All payments will be automatically processed as outlined below.

First Payment	Processed upon receipt of this form	\$100.00
Second Payment	Processed 30 days after first payment	\$110.00
Third/Final Payment	Processed 60 days after first payment	\$110.00

Member Name: _____

Member Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Terms of the Agreement: I hereby authorize FCRA to process the fees for my participating membership in three credit card transactions. All transactions will be processed to the credit card provided on this form. The first payment in the amount of \$100.00 will be processed upon receipt. The second installment in the amount of \$110.00 will be automatically processed 30 days following the first payment. The third and final installment in the amount of \$110.00 will be automatically processed 60 days following the first payment. Check payments will not be accepted under this agreement. I understand there will be NO REFUNDS for any installment (partial payment) processed under this agreement. I also understand that FCRA membership will not be considered active until all three plan payments have been processed successfully. The full amount paid under this plan for my FCRA Participating membership dues will be \$320.00 which includes a \$20 administrative fee for processing multiple payments.

Please enroll me in the payment plan. I have included credit card information for all three installments below. I fully understand and agree to the Terms of the Agreement as stated above.

Signature

Payment Method:

Master Card Visa American Express

Submit by Email

Billing Address: *(If different from above)*

Print Form

Account #: _____ Exp Date: _____

Cardholder's Name / Signature