

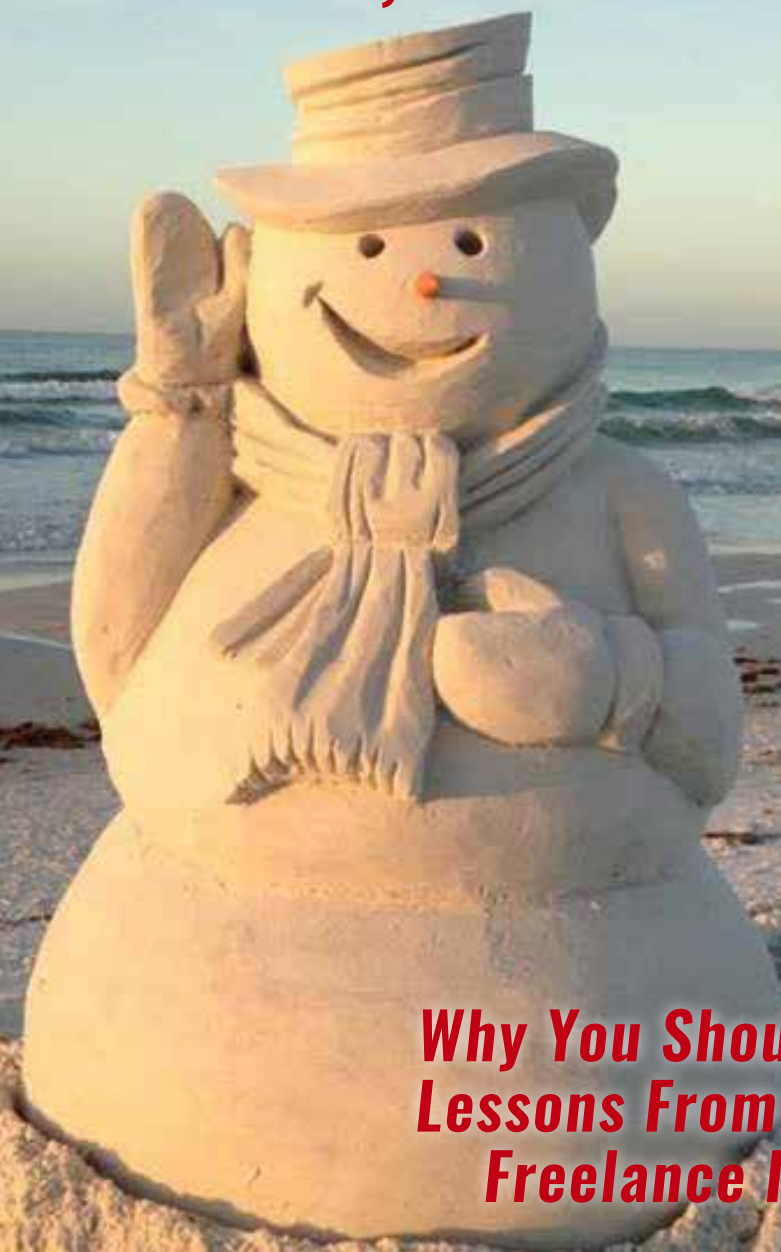
Florida Court Reporters
FCRA
Association

FCRonline

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER/JANUARY/FEBRUARY/MARCH 2017

***Happy Holidays and 2017!
From, FCRA***



***Why You Should Join FCRA
Lessons From a Life Coach
Freelance Isn't Free Act
In Memoriam
Get Ready for Capitol Hill***

IMPORTANT NEWS

Advertising Special

Contract to advertise in 8 issues (2 years) of this magazine and get a special 15% discount on top of our low rates! Call FCRA Headquarters today at 407-774-7880.

Needful People

Need a job? Need a reporter, agency, owners? Contact Placement Chairman Sandi Nargiz at 850-878-2221 or fax: 850-878-2254 or snargiz@comcast.net.



WANTED!

Your stories to share with other reporters. Submit an article and receive .15 CEU points if published in *FCR Online*. Email your story to scribe3159@aol.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

FCRA 2017 Annual Convention

June 23-25, 2017
Hilton West Palm Beach
West Palm Beach, Florida

Address Changes

ADDRESS CHANGED? PHONE NUMBER CHANGED?

Fax your changes to Headquarters at 407-774-6440 as soon as possible!

ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK?



If so, join the FCRA Group by looking up Florida Court Reporters Association...all the latest updates right at your fingertips!

Order Your Florida Manual

Stay up to date on Florida Rules and Procedures. Call 407-774-7880 to order your electronic version of the Florida Manual or visit www.fcraonline.org to order.

Just \$75.00 for members!

DON'T MISS E-FLASHES!

Be sure your email address is current. Call FCRA Headquarters and give them your email address today (407-774-7880) or email your changes to bking@kmgnet.com.

Stenograph Special

Get last-line pricing with Stenograph supplies, as a member of FCRA receives a rebate.

Upcoming Florida Professional Reporter (FPR) Test Date

FEBRUARY 25, 2017
FLORIDA COASTAL SCHOOL OF LAW
JACKSONVILLE, FL

WEBSITE SPONSORS WANTED



Contact Christy Bradshaw at christyb@fcreporting.com

ARE YOU MOVING? CHANGING A PHONE NUMBER? CHANGING A FAX NUMBER? OR GETTING AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

If so, let FCRA Headquarters know right away. Simply fax 407-774-6440 today to make any necessary changes to the information we have on file for you!



**FCRA
BULLETIN
BOARD**

FCRA OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President

Christy Aulls Bradshaw, RPR, FPR
 201 N Magnolia Ave • Ocala, FL 34475
 christyb@fcreporting.com • W: 352-401-0080 • FAX: 352-620-8819

President Elect

Lori L. Bundy, RMR, FPR, CRR
 561 31st St, SW • Naples FL 34117
 loribundy@yahoo.com • W: 239-825-2086

Vice President

Sharon Velazco, RPR, CLR, FPR
 6470 Main Street • Miami Lakes, FL 33014
 scribe3159@aol.com • W: 786-371-7438

Treasurer

Cathy M. Morrow, FPR
 550 Robles Ln • Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
 infospecialists@gmail.com • W: 904-358-2090

Secretary

Michelle Smith, RMR, RPR, FPR, LCR, CCR
 2101 Northside Dr, Ste 203 • Panama City, FL 32405
 michelle.smith.cr@gmail.com
 W: 850-769-7178 • FAX: 850-763-5010

Northern Director

Tracy Finan, RPR, FPR
 PO Box 37265 • Tallahassee, FL 32315
 reportertrace@gmail.com

Central Director

Richard Scire, RPR
 2002 Ringling Blvd, #404 • Sarasota, FL 34236
 rscire@jud12.ficourts.org • W: 941-861-7858 • FAX: 941-861-7924

Southern Director

Cathy Carpenter, FPR
 8521 75th Ave • Seminole, FL 33777
 cathyrcarpenter@gmail.com • C: 239-292-0896

Directors at Large

Peggy Casper, RPR, FPR
 10455 Creston Glen Cr E • Jacksonville, FL 32256
 peggycasper.riley@gmail.com

Amy Marie Yarbrough, FPR

1015 Atlantic Blvd • Atlantic Beach, FL 32233
 madamcourtreporterjax@comcast.net

Immediate Past President

Rosa Naccarato, FPR
 44 West Flagler St • Miami, FL 33130
 rosie0057@att.net • W: 305-545-8434 • FAX: 305-325-8991

Editor

Richard Scire, RPR
 2002 Ringling Blvd, #404 • Sarasota, FL 34236
 rscire@jud12.ficourts.org • W: 941-861-7858 • FAX: 941-861-7924

Executive Director

Lynn Hupp
 222 S. Westmonte Drive, Ste. 101
 Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
 lhupp@kmgnet.com • W: 407-774-7880 • FAX: 407-774-6440

Statements of fact, opinion, and all advertisements are made on the responsibility of the author or advertiser, alone, and do not imply an opinion or endorsement on the part of anyone connected with FCRA. Materials may not be reproduced without written permission. Address all correspondence concerning content of the magazine to the editor. All correspondence regarding membership and advertising should be sent to FCRA Headquarters, 222 S. Westmonte Dr, #101, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714. Phone: 407-774-7880, Fax: 407-774-6440; www.fcraonline.org.

DEPARTMENTS

Bulletin Board.....	2
President's Message	4
Editor's Message	5

ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

Freelance Isn't Free Act Passed	6
FCRA is Storming the Hill	7
FCRA Reporters Go to National.....	8
Local Court Reporter Elected to NCRA Leadership	9
In Memoriam	10 - 11
OIG and BOIG and DOIG and FOIG and and and	12
Student Corner.....	13
Florida Death Penalty Unconstitutional	13
From a New Board Member's Perspective	14
Lessons from a Life Coach	15
Twinspiration: "Partners in Crime"	18
Twinspiration: "There'll Be Parties for Hosting and Cocktails for Toasting"	19

FCRA WELCOMES

Welcome New Members.....	21
Membership Pre-Authorized Payment Plan Form	21
Membership Application	22

FCR Online Deadline Dates

(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

(WINTER) DEC/JAN/FEB/MAR
 Article Submission — November 5
 On-Line Publication — December 12

By Christy Aulls Bradshaw
2016-2017 President



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Ask Not What Your Country Can Do For You... Ask What You Can Do For Your Country." JFK

We have all heard the saying, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." This analogy can be applied to more than our government. It can also be applied to our industry.

Court reporting, as we all know, is not the same industry it was 15, 10, even 5 years ago. We don't get jobs the same way we used to. We don't bill jobs the way we used to. We don't produce jobs the way we used to. It's a whole different world and a lot of it is out of our control.

As I was brainstorming and trying to come up with a topic for my article, the above phrase popped in my head. I kept remembering one sentence that our immediate past president, Rosa Naccarato, said repeatedly during her presidency: Don't ask what your association is doing for you; ask what you can do for your association! That sentence has stuck with me for over a year now.

The majority of you who are reading this article are members of FCRA for one of a few reasons: You love your career. You love your state's association. You love to see your friends/members whenever possible. Unfortunately, we have many court reporters in our state who are not members of FCRA and don't know what we do and what we stand for. Our mission statement says it best: The Florida Court Reporters Association (FCRA), a non-profit corporation, exists to advance and perfect the science and art of shorthand verbatim reporting in all its facets, phases, and aspects; and also to foster and maintain the honor and integrity of the court reporting profession while actively serving the public and judicial system of the State of Florida.

We have multiple committees in FCRA who influence our association greatly; the Ethics Committee, Government Relations Committee, Schools Committee, Pro Bono Committee, just to name a few. Our Ethics Committee keeps us up-to-date on all of our state's

rule changes and court reporting changes and is willing to answer questions for its members. Government Relations works hand-in-hand with our lobbyists and is working diligently on our certification efforts. Our lobbyists are always on the lookout for any issues which might affect our industry and we strive to keep you informed of their efforts. The Schools Committee helps students and schools in any manner we can. I could go on.

Before I became a member of FCRA, I didn't fully comprehend what the association did for its members and what it was going to do for me. Had I not worked in an agency full of FCRA members, I may not have gone on to become a member myself. Once I became a member, I was amazed at everything that was involved in the association. I then joined a couple of committees and couldn't believe the work that went into them, especially Ethics. Becoming a board member was very eye opening and full of excitement as well as a lot more work. Being president... well, I never imagined I would be here. It can be overwhelming, but it is extremely rewarding at the same time.

As members, what is our obligation? What should we be doing for FCRA? We should be spreading the word to any non-members we know, encouraging them to become members. Explain to them the benefits and what you enjoy about FCRA. Join a committee. Sit on the board. Volunteer in any way you can for your association. Tell the non-members what you know about our certification efforts, our lobbyists, and what they do. Explain how much time the committee members and board members volunteer for the benefit of all of our state's reporters.

The conferences are a lot of fun, but are also very informative and are meant to be educational. Last year especially, we had fantastic speakers. It's crazy to think

Continued on page 5



By **Richard S. Sciré, RPR,**
FCR Online Editor

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

I want to begin by acknowledging my predecessor as FCR Online Editor. Sharon Velazco will forever be worthy of the editor tiara and I thank her for turning it into my crown, as she has called it. While the crown fits nicely, however, it is her shoes I am aiming to fill.

There are a few new features to FCR Online that I hope you will enjoy, some I hope will be regular features for us to learn more about each other and hopefully get inspired along the way enough to share our stories and experiences with each other. October's "In a Flash" brought you an article written by yours truly, called "Remember Your Spirit," created to help us remember to nurture our minds, bodies, spirits, and souls that will hopefully make us better reporters, captioners, students, et al. If you haven't read it yet, please do so and get inspired to tell us your story for upcoming issues. We would love to read them! In keeping with that theme, I hope you will enjoy the interview with life coach and personal fitness trainer, Damon "DrSporty" Harper in this issue.

Another feature that I hope will bring you smiles and a giggle or two, the way "Musings from Vana Lou" did in previ-

ous issues, is "Twinspiration," created with my twin brother and fellow official reporter, Michael A. Sciré, about some of the shenanigans we get into, in and out of the courtroom. I hope you will enjoy a "double" dose of Twinspiration in this issue. We are all in this stressful profession together and life is too short not to laugh. We may as well laugh at each other and we hope you will laugh at us and with us.

We close out 2016 and leap into 2017 by honoring the past with the tributes to Raymond F. DeSimone and Anita Paul Johnston, whose influences will forever impact us. We also prepare for the future with new board members and what is sure to be an impactful year on Capitol Hill. Thank you for reading.

In closing, I will quote Mary Anne Radmacher in my wish for all of you. "May your walls know joy, may every room hold laughter, and every window open to great possibility."

Happy Holidays and have a blissful 2017!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

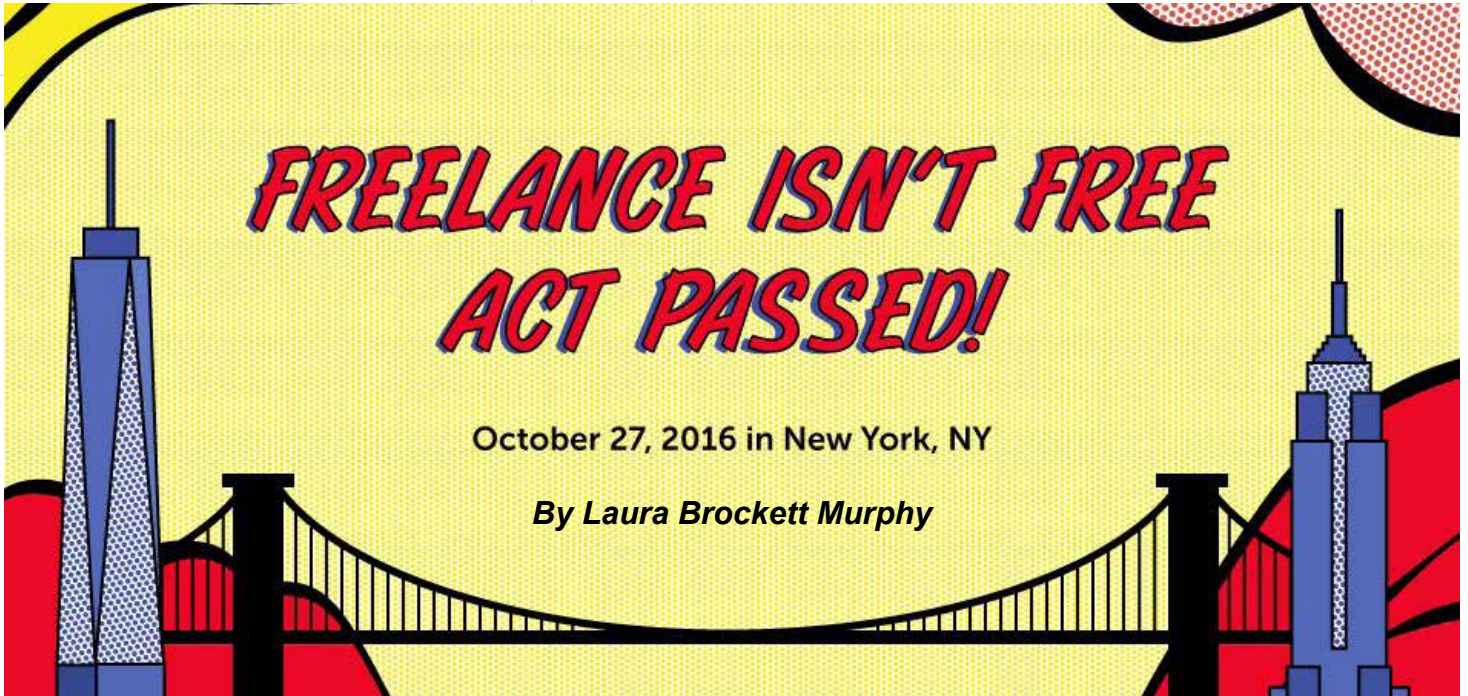
Continued from page 4

that we have only 568 members in our state association, yet there is an estimated 3,000 or so court reporters in the state. If we could get wider participation from the court reporting community, we could decrease our dues, increase our lobbying effort, and better serve the industry in our state.

As a court reporter, we all have a vested interest in our profession. Participation in our state association is how all members can insure that we maintain standards, insure our interests and have a say in the future of the industry that we all have worked so hard to build. Getting out there and being an ambassador for our profession will help our association provide the services we all have come to expect. Increased membership

will help spread the cost over a wider segment of the court reporting community. Everyone should want to be a member our association; we just have to make them better informed of the benefits. I can't think of anything more important. Every year we strive to gain more members and at the same time, every year, we encounter those who are going to say we do nothing to help them. We need to educate those people.

It's not what you can do for your association and it's not what your association can do for you... it's what we can accomplish together!



In a truly historic moment, New York City became the first city in the nation to protect freelance workers against client nonpayment today on October 27, 2016. This landmark victory is a testament to what can be accomplished when we stand together for the rights of the new workforce.

Today, 38% of workers in NYC freelance and it's about time our labor laws were updated to protect freelancers. With 55 million Americans freelancing across the country, we hope to replicate this legislation in other freelance friendly cities across the nation.

Passing with 51 votes, the Freelance Isn't Free Act requires written contracts for freelance gigs, allows freelancers to file complaints against non and late-paying clients with the Department of Labor Standards, and institutes penalties against clients found guilty of nonpayment in small claims court.

This victory comes after over a year of collective campaigning - together, we mobilized freelancers across New York City, our allies in labor and business, and our supporters at City Hall. The Freelance Isn't Free Campaign launched in September of 2015 at [Brooklyn Borough Hall](#), with over 100 freelancers in attendance as well as city leaders like bill sponsor Council Member Brad Lander, Council Member Stephen Levin, and Council Member Laurie Cumbo.

Over the course of the year, freelancers across the city shared nonpayment stories, met with Council Members, and stood together at City Hall to spread awareness about client nonpayment – which affects 7 out of 10 independent workers. Together, we rallied for a city-wide [Day of Action](#), brought gig economy issues to the fore at [Civic Hall](#), showed up on the [steps of City Hall](#) to usher the bill into consideration, and [testified before City Council](#) about why we need better protections for freelancers. Finally, over 8,000 freelancers signed the [Freelance Isn't Free petition](#) to push the bill to the vote.

Today, we'd like to wholeheartedly thank the freelancers of New York City, bill sponsor Council Member Brad Lander and our supporters at City Council, as well as our allies in labor and business – all of whom have been instrumental in making this moment of history happen. New York has shown it's at the forefront of the gig economy and this legislation will serve as a national model for protecting freelance workers everywhere.

Editor's Note: Laura Brockett Murphy is a freelancer who describes herself as a new soul and media geek. She writes about community, poetry, and pop culture.

FCRA IS STORMING THE HILL

By Rosa Naccarato, FPR, Government Relations Chair



On Wednesday, February 15, 2017, court reporters from across the state will be storming Capitol Hill, and we need you there! FCRA is headed to Tallahassee during national Court Reporting and Captioning Week 2017, and we have some really exciting plans under way to showcase our unique profession and to help us advance our goal of certification of court reporters in Florida.

Our Government Relations and Public Relations committees, working in conjunction with our the Fiorentino Group and our board of directors, have been very busy planning a field trip to Tallahassee to visit with some of our Florida legislators during CR&C Week, February 12-18, 2017.

Our lobbyists, TFG, are arranging some brief meet & greets for FCRA board and committee members with key Florida House and Senate committee members who will be instrumental in potentially funding and ultimately implementing

certification. TFG is also helping us set up an actual location in the Capitol building for us to have reporters demonstrating our skills to passersby and where we can hand out information about who we are and what we do.

President-Elect Lori Bundy is heading up our CR&C Week poster project this year, and we will proudly have it on display. TFG is working on securing a proclamation recognizing February 12-18, 2017, as Court Reporting & Captioning Week in Florida. We would love as many reporters as possible in attendance as this important declaration is made. A press release will be prepared and distributed locally by FCRA Headquarters and through NCRA's PR distribution means.

Our Hill Day will conclude with light refreshments at a reception in a location close to the Capitol, where we will gather to recap our day's accomplishments and to chat with our members and nonmembers in the panhandle, who oftentimes don't get a chance to make it to convention to learn about everything their association does all year to educate, advocate and advance our profession.

In order to make the day a great success, we urgently need the participation of all of you who are located in areas reasonably close to Tallahassee who could set aside the afternoon to come participate in this super-important and super-exciting event we have planned. And we absolutely need your participation in helping us get the word out to reporters in your areas who are not FCRA members so that they can be present when the proclamation is made, attend the reception, and help us make a strong presence in our state capitol!

All are welcome to attend, and any volunteers to help with real-time demos and passing out our handout and just chatting with folks who are intrigued by court reporting would be much appreciated. Please rsvp to me via email at rosie0057@att.net so that we can have an estimate of how many will be attending. The time slot for our spot in the Capitol building will likely be in the mid-afternoon hours, with the proclamation and reception to follow later in the afternoon into early evening. More precise details will be announced soon, but please mark your calendars for February 15, 2017, and please, please, please tell as many reporters as you can that they will not want to miss this historic event!

FCRA REPORTERS GO TO NATIONAL

Florida was well represented at the NCRA Annual Convention in Chicago this year with FCRA members, including President Christy Bradshaw and Immediate Past President Rosa Naccarato. The convention was held at the Chicago Hilton. I was honored to represent FCRA at this year's NCSA



meeting (National Committee for State Associations) along with President Christy Bradshaw.

Congratulations to Realtime Champion Dee Boenau, RDR, CRR, CRC! Dee, of Sarasota, always makes Florida look so good during the national speed contests! This year Dee placed second in the Literary portion of the Speed Contest with 10 errors at 99.091 percent. It was for the Realtime Contest that Dee came in first place and was awarded the Realtime Champion trophy during the business luncheon. Her overall combined score was 99.489 percent and only 11 errors. She had seven errors and a 99.378 percent score in the Q&A portion and only four errors and a 99.600 percent score in the Literary portion.

FCRA Past President Rick Levy, of Fort Lauderdale, serves on NCRA's Board of Directors and this year Christine Phipps, of West Palm Beach, was sworn in as one of the newest members to the board. Here is Christine's speech and message from the Chicago convention:

Good morning, everyone!! I am so excited to be here today to talk with you about my love for our great profession and to share some of my ideas of how to be the best version of NCRA yet!!

I started on this journey having been nominated by very

well respected leaders in our industry, people who have worked with me on countless and sometimes very challenging NCRA projects, who believe that my entrepreneurial success combined with my unbridled passion could have a positive effect on our membership as well as help shape the future direction of our great organization.

I know from running my own company and having hired many staff and reporters over the last five years, it is a really tough job to choose the right people, but getting the right people has been crucial to the success of my company and will be crucial to the success of our Association. We have a culture of team, equality, ethics, positive attitude, excellence, and always reaching for extraordinary. In the words of Steve Jobs, "Hiring the best is your most important job."

So I have about four minutes left to try to get you inside my heart and let you, the members of NCRA, decide for yourselves whether I am your right choice for director.

The Board is truly the marketplace for ideas, the place to collect the thought leaders of our industry. I truly believe my company is successful because I reach to do what others haven't thought of yet. "You have to show that you can not only drive your own successful innovation but also that you are making other people's innovation better!" Every court reporter with my firm will say that I made their innovation better. This is what I want for NCRA, for every member to say they are better, that their career is better because of their NCRA membership.

I want members to feel about NCRA how my team feels about my firm, that they are part of something bigger than themselves, that members are part of the outcome because they are included in the process. We support each other and lift one another up, exactly what we should be doing as leaders AND as members. Leading from the heart on a foundation of integrity and ethics leads to unwavering trust by my team that the decisions I make are for the greater good. This is my



Continued on page 9

LOCAL COURT REPORTER ELECTED TO NCRA LEADERSHIP

The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), announced that, Christine Phipps, RPR, North Palm Beach, Fla., was elected to serve on its Board of Directors. Phipps was installed during NCRA's Convention & Expo, held in Chicago, Ill., Aug. 4-7.

Phipps is a court reporter with more than 20 years of experience. She owns Phipps Reporting, Inc., in West Palm Beach, and holds the Realtime Systems Administrator certificate and the nationally recognized certification of Registered Professional Reporter (RPR). She is also a licensed court reporter in New Jersey and Tennessee.

At the national level, Phipps has co-chaired NCRA's Freelance Community of Interest Committee and has served on the Association's Strategic Alliance Task Force. She currently serves as co-chair of NCRA's Technology Committee and on the Association's Education Content and Vendor Task Force committees. Phipps also participated in the rewrite of NCRA's *Deposition Handbook*, is a frequent contributor to the *JCR*, and a speaker at conventions.

She is the recipient of a number of business awards including Woman of Outstanding Leadership by the Interna-

tional Women's Leadership Association and Most Enterprising Women of the Year by *Enterprising Women* magazine. She was included in *Inc.* magazine's Fastest Growing Companies in America in 2014 and 2015.

Also installed to serve on NCRA's Executive Committee were: Native P. Wood, RDR, CMRS, Mechanicsburg, Pa., as President; Christine J. Willette, RDR, CRR, CRC, Wausau, Wis., as President-Elect; Sue A. Terry, RPR, CRR, Springfield, Ohio, as Vice President; and Debra A. Dibble, RDR, CRR, CRC, Salt Lake City, Utah, as Secretary-Treasurer.

Newly elected directors include Kristin M. Anderson, RPR, San Antonio, Texas, and Roy Max Curry, Jr., RPR, CRI, Franklin, Tenn.

Returning directors include: Kerry A. Anderson, RPR, Atlanta, Ga.; Anne Bowline, RMR, CRR, Casper Wyo.; Rick E. Levy, RPR, Miami, Fla.; Linda K. McSwain, RPR, Mobile, Ala.; Michael E. Miller, RDR, CRR, Houston, Texas; Jennifer Sati, RMR, CRR, CRC, CRI, Dayton, Minn.; and Stephen A. Zinone, RPR, Pittsford, N.Y., Immediate Past President.

FCRA REPORTERS GO TO NATIONAL

Continued from page 8

leadership style and what has kept me on the list three years running as one of the fastest growing companies in America and what I bring to you, the members of NCRA.

Members are to NCRA what clients are to firms, and I don't believe that marketing to nonrenewals with discounts and financing is what is going to bring them back; it wouldn't bring clients back. But calling clients and problem solving their issues will. So let's call nonrenewing members as a Board, show them they do matter and solve their problems.

We must create more member value!

We need to do better as an Association at marketing ourselves to the world. Everyone who utilizes our services should know what NCRA is and that it's a valuable resource to find information and nationally certified stenographers. They should know what all those letters behind our names stand

for. We are an integral part of the judicial system. Why aren't we a section in a law textbook about the record? We can change that! That's offering a value for our members to not only belong but to take pride in their achievements because their credentials are recognized. I believe we can restructure our Professional Services Locator so that firms can job post to find credentialed reporters to cover their jobs, thus creating member value.

I continue to work hard to make a difference and to improve the lives of the reporters I work directly with as well as those I have had the good fortune to serve while fulfilling my NCRA committee work and presenting technology seminars; too many to count. I ask for your vote so that I may continue to support our wonderful profession and work together with our NCRA Board!

IN MEMORIAM: RAYMOND F. DESIMONE

SEPTEMBER 23, 1938 - NOVEMBER 7, 2016

I, and we all, have lost a dear friend personally and of the court reporting profession at large. My warmest, heartfelt wishes go to Linda, their children, and all of Ray's family.

I visited Ray Thursday, November 3, at 12:30 at a Hospice care Center in Boca Raton. Linda met me up front to prepare me for what to expect.

As I entered his private room with Linda—I did not know what to expect—the TV was on and his eyes were closed. I sat by his bed and identified myself and his eyes slowly opened. He grabbed my arm and, in a very low voice, said, "Did you sell your NC house"? Amazing, in his condition he was able to think of me first. That's the type of selfless person he was.

Ray has been a very good friend and mentor to me, like a brother, and close to so many of us in the court reporting profession. It was very hard for me to see him this way, but glad I returned from NC to spend some quality time with him and planned to visit as much as he was able to tolerate.

To many who knew him, and for those of the younger generation who should know, at a time when our profession was against the ropes, so to speak, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Raymond F. DeSimone. In 1984-1985, as President of then known as the National Shorthand Reporters Association, he spearheaded a progressive movement to hire one of the world's most prestigious public relations firms in Hill and Knowlton to represent us, thus elevating our reputation in the eyes of the legal and business world.

Moreover, Ray was a great father, supportive and loving husband, provider, listener, with a wonderful sense of humor—and the best friend one could have.

Ray and I met in 1973, at a time when the court reporting profession was under siege by the proponents of sound recording. By coincidence, at the precise moment in time, in Washington, D.C., Ray was sent by NSRA to speak at the State Trial Court Judges conference; I by an attorney committee member, to the American Bar Association, with similar missions. [We shared a hotel suite, had two IBM Selectric typewriters, paper, Scotch tape, pens, yellow highlighters, and stapler ordered in, and prepared to critique each other's speeches, literally cut/paste—with paper and scissors—refining our respective presentations. Of course, today it would be accomplished in a snap.]

Together with another two former NCRA presidents and mentors to Ray, the beloved Irving Kosky and the ever charming country bumpkin from Tennessee, Richard Smith [dumb as a fox], we were able to stave off those in the courts who would, early on, recommend replacement of the reporter's role in the courtroom by electronic recording devices.

As President of NCRA, Ray, as most everyone knew him, was one of the most intelligent individuals I knew. He had the ability to forecast trends, enabling our profession to stay on the forefront of its place in the legal and business communities.

He revolutionized our profession. He also had the Raymond F. DeSimone Pro Bono Program named after him.

In the words of Ray: "America was founded on the principles of equal justice for all and of legal redress for grievances. But there can be no justice for the poor without access to the courts and legal help..."

Together with an investment group, he helped create what has grown to become the largest court reporting firm in the world: Veritext Court Reporting/Legal Solutions.

I could go on with accolade after accolade, but I would like to read to you some quotes from just a few, of many, friends as to how Ray was regarded:

Woody Waga [Past NCRA President]: "And now to our friend Raymond...He did so much for a profession that assisted challenged individuals to be winners with a paucity of education. That includes some of you and yours truly."

Marty Block [Past NCRA President]: "I have read Allen and Woody's news with great sadness. It brings to the forefront of one's mind the realization that even the mightiest of oaks must age and eventually fall; and for me Ray remains indeed the mightiest of all oaks among those in our profession. We are all aware that it would take many volumes to write the history of the contributions of Raymond DeSimone to the reporting profession and NCRA."

Tom Runfola [Past NCRA President]: "Ray's greatness, leadership, friendship & inspiration will live on in the minds and hearts of all who knew and loved him. I am satisfied to hear these recollections from his friends, to honor a man of greatness among us who we knew and loved, and to remember with fondness his strength, his leadership, his articulate speech, his depth and intellect, his humor and humanity."

John Carreiro: "My reply is only to you, Allen, inasmuch as my name would only be recognized by Woody or Tom Runfola. While I had few personal contacts with Ray, I will never forget his soothing voice and his calm presence. It's obvious that Ray had many loving friends, you in particular. I think also of the agony you will feel each day you are able to visit with your adopted brother. I pray for Ray and his family. Tom's words of praise are deserved and worthy."

Jay Suddreth [Past NCRA President]: "He was a visionary leader way ahead of his time and under appreciated by many of his peers. Like many of you, I had the pleasure of working side by side and with Ray on the Board when he served as President of NCRA. Ray's foresight in establishing the courtroom of the future and seeing it to its completion is but one of many of the accomplishments achieved during his presidency." On a personal level, our friendship was always full of interesting point-counterpoint chats—I mentioned he was the most intelligent member of NCRA—often enjoying bantering together

Continued on page 11

IN MEMORIAM...

Continued from page 10

regarding politics [he a Republican, me a Democrat], and always with a sense of humor and warm affection.

Our Ireland golf trip during the Millennium was most memorable, having a driver who was a tenor, and Ray and he singing camp and Irish songs for a week between golf courses. This led to his impassioned short career as "M. C. Crooner," [think Frank Sinatra] where he endeavored to fulfill his life's desire to be a night club singer. His sons created a website and Ray asked me to reproduce his cassettes for national distribution to our profession's friends [it didn't get past the cassettes].

One special memorable moment, at the end of an NCRA Hawaii convention, took us to a cottage I rented at Hana Bay Villas. I remember renting a red Mustang convertible; with the Road to Hana being single lane accommodating two-way traffic, it was treacherous. Ray liked to say, "Geez, with Allen driving and hugging the road on those 300-foot high cliffs and turns, I could pick the flowers off the mountainside, we were so close." We both cooked a genuine Italian dinner, drank Chianti, and watched black and white old film noir movies on AMC [his favorite] via satellite dish until 4 in the morning. Our bond was solid.

Another unforgettable, humorous moment, on one of Woody Waga and Guy Renzi's annual Canada fishing trips, I recall seeing Ray loading up the van with he and sons Todd and Damien's fishing rods sticking out of a golf bag instead of rod carriers: a sight to beholden.

Finally, the generous man he was, when my son Michael was going to NYC on his honeymoon, Ray invited the new couple for dinner at Windows on the World at the World Trade Center. Michael not having a jacket and the maitre d' refusing to allow them in, Ray took out his M. C. Crooner cassette and handed it to him as a gift. The gentleman said, "Oh, I'm so sorry Mr. "Damone," mistaking Ray for Vic, and promptly brought out a jacket for Michael to wear, fulfilling a dream dining experience at the world's most famous landmark.

Using a much deserved time-worn cliché, Raymond F. DeSimone was literally a legend in his own time, to be remembered also by our current generation of court reporters as to whom they, and we, owe a debt of gratitude.

May you rest in peace, my brother, for you deserve it.

Love, Allen

*H. Allen Benowitz, [Ret. 2009]
RMR, CP, SCO [3rd Pl.], SCJC [5th Pl.]
DSA-FL*

IN MEMORIAM...



Anita Paul Johnston passed away in November. Even as she bravely battled pancreatic cancer, she was still inspiring, educating, and making us smile with her messages on Facebook and in her newsletter. Here is an excerpt from her final newsletter from September.

**"No one can make me feel inferior
without my permission."
~Eleanor Roosevelt**

How about expanding this thought: No one can hurt my feelings without my permission; no one can upset me with THEIR anger without my permission; no one can embarrass me without my permission. If you look at some of these words, like HURT, UPSET, EMBARRASS, these are words we give meaning to and choose to engage in that negativity. Not everyone responds negatively to these types of scenarios, and that can include you. Just a thought.

This possibly will be my last newsletter. It's been an amazing experience reporting, running realtime workshops, and most valuable of all, making such deep, meaningful friendships. Seeing some reporters grow, soar, earn more certifications, create such incredible success, increase their incomes, gosh! To be even a small part of this is a gift from the universe and I just feel so very grateful to all of you for sharing in our court reporter greatness.

**In Memory of
Anita Paul Johnston
2016**

OIG AND BOIG AND DOIG AND FOIG AND AND AND...

By Donna Kanabay, donna@kanabay.com



In November of 1993, a room in Orlando started to fill up with court reporters. There was an air of anxious anticipation as they set up their equipment and waited for the main event.

A whirlwind descended on the room. A tornado. A hurricane. A typhoon. A force of nature.

Anita Paul.

My life, personal and professional, changed forever that weekend. And while neither of them knew it at the time, in that room that weekend were two people who would go on to become the dearest of friends.

Anita Paul. Anita Paul Johnston.

On Sunday, October 30, she posted to Facebook: "Hi. I hope I get to talk to you soon. My health is failing and I would love to talk."

Just a few days later, she was gone. It would be impossible to harvest all the love that was sent to her from all over Facebook by so many reporters whose lives she touched.

John Getter, president of the Las Vegas chapter of the National Speakers Association, wrote, "So many of us have been touched by Anita's unique ability to recognize how something small she could do might make a big difference in our speaking. Those who may not be familiar with Anita's story will be inspired and motivated by her significant contributions that directly touched literally thousands, if not millions, of people."

"As Anita posted on Monday evening, 'Whenever the time comes, it is time for celebration, joy, and love.' That is how we will begin. And then we will do as Anita would expect. We will hear from her CSP "classmate" Laurie Guest about how to do better, be more and laugh often."

It was through Anita that I learned of another personal hero, a man named Art Berg, who was a quadriplegic and motivational speaker. I almost remember what I was wearing that day in 2003 that Anita called me and told me that Art had died. Art was just one more precious gift from Anita, and she lived his motto: "The difficult takes time. The impossible just takes a little longer."

Back to that Orlando ballroom that weekend, in between putting us into complete overload with tips and tricks, Anita persuaded many of us to join the CRForum on Compuserve.

And it was in that venue that those above-mentioned two women "met," first online and then later in person, women who would go on to become the closest of friends, and through the online world, other women would join them and form a close knit group of lifelong friends.

The theme of my column is "Sleuthing the Net," and while it seems incongruous that an obituary of sorts would be on topic, it truly is, because it was Anita that introduced me, and so many of her students, to the then-infant online world.

Connie Perks, one of the original "forumites," posted this observation: "Anita was a monumental source for spreading the word of the 'wonders of online communication' throughout the country... it truly was an incredible era... we're the last generation to know what it was like to live 'offline.'"

Today, while CRForum and its NCRA counterpart, VRForum, are long gone, there are a multitude of online court reporter sites on Facebook, but we no longer have That One Place where we all knew we could find each other and talk about anything under the sun. We've lost something there, that cohesiveness, that sense of community. Even when we were hotly debating a topic, we all always knew we had a "safe haven" in the forum.

This last few days, "we" have been together again as one, in some of the Facebook venues, as we all mourn and remember our special friend and mentor.

Another friend I would never have known without Anita and without the forum, Laurel Eiler, NCRA past president, reminisces, "CRF gave me my longest, best, deepest friendships in the business."

Somebody recalled that Anita was fond of nicknames, both receiving them and bestowing them. Laurel further recalls, "I was struggling to remember where "Auntie Kumquat" came from. I went through e-mails unsuccessfully for a clue, but I found this: 'I think of this often, how incredibly blessed I am to run a business filled with love. Working with wonderful vendors, working on a handshake, getting and giving messages of such friendship and warm fuzzies -- what a neat way to live a life, huh! XOXO. Auntie Kumquat.'"

Anita's service was broadcast live on Facebook, but there were technical issues and many of us were unable to view it. While all of us Forumites gathered Sunday afternoon in hopes of seeing the service, and most of us unable to, we were still able to honor and remember her in our own way. One comment was how she was so instrumental in the early days of the online world that she must be smiling now to know that that technology is being used as her final tribute. As far as the glitches, I commented that Anita would not be deterred at the issues, she would simply smile and quickly formulate and move on to a Plan B.

And so, 'Neeters, Godspeed as you begin your next adventure, and know that you, and OIG, will be with us forever.

Love, 'Donski

STUDENT CORNER

Why Should You, as a Student, Join FCRA?

You may be asking yourself that as you struggle to pay tuition, carve out time for school and practice, and keep up with all the other responsibilities in your life. Why not just wait till you're working?

Well, here's why in no particular order!

1. FCRA directly supports our students with:
 - a. A mentoring program for that one-on-one support.
 - b. Student Sponsorships to help defray the cost for students attending convention.
 - c. A placement committee to help reporters find employment.
2. At various times and places throughout the year FCRA holds Reporter Info Exchanges, but it's not just for reporters. Students are always welcome! It's your opportunity to meet reporters in the area, learn what's going on in the state affecting reporters, and what FCRA is actively doing. It's also an opportunity for FCRA to hear from you and the concerns and interests you have.
3. Education and certification opportunities:
 - a. The Florida Professional Reporter (FPR). This seminar and exam will empower you to feel confident and

knowledgeable as you take your first steps as a professional working reporter. It is given at the convention, as well as other times throughout the year and the state.

- b. Software training and seminars covering all aspects of reporting at FCRA's Convention.
4. Social Networking at the Florida Court Reporters Association on Facebook. Here's your opportunity to connect more informally with each other and stay informed on the latest happenings around the state.
5. Student membership is your gateway to becoming a successful reporter. It keeps you connected, encouraged, and informed as you progress through school.

Lastly, never diminish the importance of being part of something bigger than you. Your membership and participation gives back to the profession as a whole. When FCRA's Government Relations Committee is up in Tallahassee promoting the profession, legislators want to know how many care enough to be counted. Simply by joining, you are going on record as supporting your profession.

FLORIDA DEATH PENALTY UNCONSTITUTIONAL



**By Richard S. Sciré, RPR,
FCR Online Editor**

The death penalty statute in Florida has been ruled unconstitutional for the second time this year. The law was revamped in March 2016 after the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in January 2016. Until the beginning of this year, Florida did not require a unanimous jury recommendation of

death in a trial's death penalty phase. The old law was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court because the jury's decision was an advisory recommendation with the ultimate sentence being left up to the judge. Previously, a jury's recommendation of death had to be a minimum of seven to five votes. The first ruling overturning the old law raised the jury ratio recommendation to ten to two. The second ruling was made in October by the Supreme Court because there still

was not a requirement of jury unanimity. The ruling came in two cases that court reporters should keep handy, *Timothy Lee Hurst v. State of Florida*, 136 S. Ct. 616, and *Larry Darnell Perry v. State of Florida*, both 2016 cases.

According to the Florida Department of Corrections, there are 385 inmates currently on Florida's death row. It is not yet clear how many of those inmates' sentences will be affected by the latest ruling.

This new ruling affects all current cases set for trial. Currently, in the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, there is at least one death penalty trial scheduled for December of 2016 that is scheduled to proceed on the guilt phase of the trial only. Pending a guilty verdict, the death penalty and sentencing phases are set to be continued until further notice and formal jury instructions are written from the Florida Supreme Court. A new jury will have to be selected for the penalty phase at a later time.

FROM A NEW BOARD MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE

By Peggy Carpenter



Happy holidays to all my fellow FCRA members. I hope that the upcoming holiday season brings joy and peace to you and your families.

It is with humility and gratitude that this year I have accepted a position on the FCRA board of directors. In the short time that I've been involved at this level, the dedication and loyalty to our profession by the more experienced board members has become very clear to me.

As new email chains from fellow board members have populated my incoming messages, I've gotten a better understanding of how important this organization is to the future of our profession here in Florida. Over the years I have heard feedback from court reporters that the dues for FCRA are too expensive. Here are some of the points I would give in opposition to that stance:

Many ethical and procedural questions are answered by ethics committee members. Often the answers to these questions serve to limit exposure of liability to the court reporters asking the questions. Where would we be if we did not have the FCRA resource to navigate through the ever-changing

world that is our profession? As we go through our daily job routine, we may not find the need for this resource. However, we all know that, just when you think you've experienced everything possible, some new challenge presents itself; and we need guidance to respond appropriately.

The annual conventions offer a fantastic networking opportunity. What an amazing way to meet fellow reporters from across the state, to trade stories and support one another. There's an added bonus: You learn! As Ghandi put it, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." Even a little shred of new information can in some way make our job go so much more smoothly. Whether it's a new brief form, advice on how to deal with a difficult client, a state-of-the-art piece of equipment, or a health tip that could prolong our work life, it can make a world of difference. Additionally, the conventions often serve as a motivating shot in the arm. We come back refreshed and feeling like we're part of something bigger.

Perhaps one of the biggest benefits that FCRA provides is the voice it uses to lobby for our interests. Countless hours are spent behind the scenes making sure that legislators are aware of our profession and the unique needs experienced by our members. As previously stated, the world of court reporting is constantly changing. The digital world has in many ways made our job so much easier; however, it has also caused new challenges. Again, without having our state organization, we would not be heard and our interests would not be represented.

These are just some of the many benefits enjoyed by FCRA members. We all know there are so many more.

The next time you hear a fellow court reporter comment about how the dues are too expensive, how about encouraging them to give it a shot? Become involved. Ask questions. Give suggestions. Share your story. Join FCRA!

COURT REPORTERS NEEDED

Full-time or Overflow South Florida area: West Palm; Miami

Please Contact Rick Levy: rick@fcreporting.com



By Richard S. Sciré, RPR,
FCR Online Editor

LESSONS FROM A LIFE COACH

In the past year, I have been taking better care of my health thanks to my trainer, life coach, and friend. Damon “DrSporty” Harper was one of our gift sponsors in our “Reporters Off The Record” event in St. Petersburg last May. I recently had the pleasure of traveling with “DrSporty” to Colorado. That trip was the subject of October’s “In a Flash” article. As a follow-up to that, I asked DrSporty to sit down for an interview to pass along some tips and wisdom for reporters, captioners, and the new year ahead.

Q. As we hear and write, “State your name for the record.”

A. Damon Harper

Q. Who are you?

A. A southern country boy turned personal fitness trainer and life coach.

Q. You are known as “DrSporty”?

A. Yes. That is my nickname. I am not a doctor but I have spent enough years in my certifications that I could have had my doctorate by now.

Q. Tell us a little bit about your certifications.

A. I have over 40 certifications in health, fitness, medical, disaster, business, coaching, trainings.

Q. A life coach is defined as “a person who counsels and encourages clients on matters having to do with careers or personal challenges,” but what do you do as a life coach?

A. I get people to own their own raw truth in their lives on all levels from the inside out, whether they are ready for it or not. I can be assertive but I have much better results with cases and clients when I’m aggressive because it gets attention and focus and I hold them accountable and actions speak volumes.

I’m a different kind of life coach because I work with people one on one. I prefer to work with people one on one so their attention is not lost. If I do a public venue or on stage, the focus is allowed to be breathed in from the audience and after a while it will be absorbed in with the guidance and direction only if they are ready to receive. What I mean by that is you have to be open

to at least listen and not only hear, be open for change.

Q. How did you get into life coaching and personal fitness?

A. In 1998 I got burned out with the rules of society and the boxes that we’re supposed to live in. I began questioning a lot of things and finding my own freedom and truth and became a thinker of my own instead of a robot swimming in the quicksand.

I always had an interest in fitness and personal training. I learned a lot and trained a lot. In 1994/1995, I was a very young, athletic jock. I had a very high metabolism but I had no clue that I was just a hot, dysfunctional mess. I realized I was lacking something. I was mediocre in my life. So I would run up to 24 miles a day, yoga, I started taking multivitamins. I was doing yoga every day. I was doing Bikram Yoga, or hot yoga, swimming, playing tennis, riding my bicycle. I was doing a lot of meditation, journaling, and listening to a lot of classical and opera. I keep a gratitude journal. I’ve kept a journal since sixth grade.



Q. Before you met me and started working with me, did you know anything about court reporting?

A. Well, I have testified as an expert witness before and been a consultant in court cases. I knew the dude or the lady in the corner was typing everything. I thought that has got to be the hardest job I’ve ever seen. One thing I noticed was the posture. No matter what position I’ve been in, in the courtroom, I notice the judge’s posture first, if he’s sitting at a 90 degree angle, and

Continued on page 16

LESSONS FROM A LIFE COACH

Continued from page 15

then I notice the court reporter, and then I observe the bailiffs and then the attorneys and then the jury.

Q. What kind of posture do you mostly notice about the court reporter?

A. To be honest, most have been hunched over. Their back is rounded and their head is pushed forward.

Q. I'm guilty of that myself. Do you have any suggestions on how to sit straight and remember to do so while they're taking down the record?

A. Especially for ladies, they should not cross their legs. It adds more tension and pressure on the spinal cord. And let go of the stilettos!

Q. A lot of women might hate you for saying that one. Some women reading will say they have to cross their legs so attorneys can't see up their skirts.

A. I get that. They need to visualize first a 90 degree angle body form. A lot of people suffer from balance and coordination and flexibility issues, especially people in high level and manual, physical energy jobs.

Q. You have gotten me to see a chiropractor. Is that something you would recommend for all reporters and captioners?

A. Yes. I've been seeing a chiropractor since I was in ninth grade when I was in gymnastics. It's critical that you get a checkup and adjustment on a regular basis just like with your physician and your dentist. Go for an examination, get your x-rays done, and go get adjusted on a regular basis.

Q. How often do you recommend?

A. At least once a month, depending on how active your lifestyle is and your occupation. You have to balance both of those.

Q. We have such a sedentary profession. What are some other things we can do for our balance and coordination throughout the day?

A. Take breaks and stretch. You can get a yoga ball for your office and sit, stretch, dance. I don't care which you do. I have an inversion table that I use regularly for myself and my clients.

Q. Most reporters are freelance, so they can't take a yoga ball with them on a deposition. What can they do?

A. Stretch when they can. When they're home, they can do yoga and swimming, if they have a pool. Those are the best physical therapies you can do for all the sitting you do. Hot or warm yoga loosens the muscles. Swimming is relaxing and healing and it's a thousand times more resistant than air, when it comes to exercise.

Q. You mentioned meditation before. For someone who has never done it, how do you meditate?

A. I would recommend to everyone to attempt meditation. A lot of people get this confused with yoga and breathing. It is coming into center with the root of who you are and understanding the visions, goals, and dreams that you aspire. You can start off from waking up in the morning five to ten minutes before you open your eyes. It's a silent, symbolic, wishful prayer before you start your day, for your day. For me, I'm a night person and I will sometimes meditate for several hours. I run or jog or walk with certain music, too. The music that we listen to is very important as well. It not only cleanses our energy, but it repairs it and it baptizes the dead energy in you and your body wisdom.

Q. How do you recommend getting into personal fitness, especially for those who can't afford a personal trainer?

A. Anybody can start their own personal training but I hate defining it as personal "training." It's your own personal "fitness" and how you find what is best for you, whether yoga, t'ai chi, meditation, writing, anything that you do, including exercise, on all of your levels, is fitness.

I understand financial situations. Everyone always has an option and a choice to take better care of themselves. I would recommend getting to know your neighborhood better or your city or town, find a community center, rec center. Good rec centers by the city or county are very inexpensive memberships. When I lived in Tallahassee, I went to a church that had their own fitness center, pool, sauna, and racquetball and tennis courts. That was it for me. If you're a state employee, the state can offer you a benefit in the form of gym membership coverage and/or a type of coverage that you can even have a percentage paid or be reimbursed and that can include

Continued on page 17

LESSONS FROM A LIFE COACH

Continued from page 16

personal fitness training, therapists, yoga, t'ai chi, and acupuncture. Also, call your insurance company and see what's offered, depending on your health insurance plan. Many people don't know to check that.

Q. How can people stay motivated and disciplined once they've started?

A. By using a calendar. If you make an appointment with yourself, you will hold yourself responsible and accountable. This is not about the power of will and power of pain. This is about the power of happiness. When you do what you want to do and you are authentic with yourself first about it, no matter what it is, you will have complete solutions and find your most inner joy and peace and this equals your anchor as you are.

Q. Keeping a journal is good for relieving stress, too; right?

A. It's a good practice because you express your inner self. As you write it, you release it. Especially with court reporters, they listen to everything. Whether anybody wants to believe it will affect you, it does affect you from the outside in, which is why court reporters need to pay more attention to themselves. Journalizing is a great way to begin. You don't have to write a page a day. I have written up to 20 pages in one day. Releasing it is just like in yoga. You release it. You disown it from owning you. If you hold it in, you're owning it. It's just like with any scar, any trauma, any disaster, and any dream. I would challenge everyone, regardless of your spiritual or religious practice, to journalize every morning or night. It makes a huge difference in the observance of yourself. When you journalize, you are mirroring your soul. My journaling got extensive in 1998. In 2000, I ended up writing 22 songs and that helped me symbolically. It's not only therapeutic. I call it church for me.

Q. A new year is upon us. People will have resolutions and/or goals that most often involve fitness. I've always felt like resolutions set us up for failure. What do you think about that?

A. Resolutions are illusions. Goals to me are something like a fantasy. A blueprint is something that an architect starts with to build a structure. It's a plan you build so you can implement.

Q. I want to talk about the physical strains on our bodies. We talked about posture but what are some things we can do to relieve the damages we do to our bodies from sitting hours on end at the steno machine or computer?

A. Your head is as heavy as a bowling ball. You need to be proactive in your health. I train a court reporter now and we are proactive for carpal tunnel syndrome and for the rest of the body. Regular massages is one way. A deep tissue massage is preferable but even the slightest touch can heal. Something you can do on your own is you can rub a tennis ball all over and around your arms. Massage it in heavy. That is an awesome massage. Same thing for your back. Another thing you can do is buy pool noodles, cut them in halves or quarters and roll on them on your back. Sleep with a small one in your pillowcase where your neck is. Remember to visit the chiropractor to get adjusted. Heat therapy with a sauna, steam room, hot tub, and/or even just a hot relaxing bath at your house.

Q. Let's talk about nutrition.

A. Bottom line: Fruits and veggies are always good. Always eat bright colored food. Stay away from things that are heavy and white, low carbohydrates and plenty of protein, lean meats. Think of the Mediterranean diet.

Q. Reporters and captioners don't always get to dictate when lunch will occur. What is a good go-to snack or quick lunch item to stay full and focused?

A. Fresh fruit, peanuts, saltines, crackers. Basically fruit on-the-go is best. Cut up bananas, apples, or your favorite fruit ahead of time.

Q. Any final words?

A. I want everyone to concentrate on taking an hour or at least a half an hour every day to honor their health on each of the levels of their body, the mental, the physical, the sensual, the sexual, the emotional, the spiritual, and the symbolic. People need to find their own peace and happiness within themselves from the inside out. I encourage them to contact me with any questions on programs or services.

If you have questions or comments for DrSporty or want more advice or inspiration, he can be reached at www.drsparty.com.

TWINSPIRATION: “PARTNERS IN CRIME”

By Richard S. Sciré, RPR



Working with my twin brother, Michael A. Sciré, RPR, CMRS, as official reporters in Sarasota definitely has its advantages. Borrowing his suit, for example, after I got drenched in a torrential downpour, came in handy when I had to go court. Luckily, for him, my hearing was finished before he had to go back to his courtroom in his underwear.

When we began our reporting careers in the '90s, while working in Charlotte County under a contract system for criminal and family courts, our judges were allotted only one reporter at a time, which I know makes perfect sense normally, until you know one of our judges was notorious for taking so long that he would spill his hearings into two and sometimes three courtrooms at a time, taking “five-minute recesses” to hop back and forth between hearings. He never told us which courtroom he was going to pop into next, so, with our machine in tow, we would run to each of the other courtrooms praying we chose the right door like a game show, except the only valuable prize was the remainder of our sanity. It certainly made covering three courtrooms easier the day Michael camped out at one of the courtrooms when his deposition ended to save me from the 12-hour marathon.

As official reporters, now in Sarasota, the twin advantages have “doubled.” The most effective help Michael gave me was during a jury trial. Two nights before, I either ate or drank something that gave me an allergic reaction that caused my mouth and tongue to swell with welts that left me lisping, slurring, and drooling. To make matters worse, whatever my doctor prescribed numbed the side of my face to where it was close to paralysis, or so it appeared. I didn't worry too much about it since we are in the silent profession after all; right?

The first two witnesses took the stand. The first was a 92-year-old man who had only two teeth left in his whole mouth and was drooling almost as badly as I was. The second witness was a 40-year-old woman who had just suffered a stroke. She spoke just like I did, which made it easier for me to understand her, not to mention empathize with her more permanent situation. Unfortunately, the jury could not decipher what either she or the 92-year-old man said, so they wanted me to read it back. I saw my whole world crashing. How was I going to read it back without sounding like I was mocking each of them? With a quick clean-up of the untranslates in my notes, I printed the testimony and handed it to Michael as he walked into the courtroom as me. I wanted to whisper to everyone in the courtroom, “The role of the court reporter is now being played by Michael Sciré,” like the voiceover you hear during a soap opera to announce a recast. Michael took center stage as my understudy. He surely should have gotten to take the credit. He played my part perfectly and even remembered to say “you're welcome” to the judge when he said to Michael, “Thank you, Richard” in front of the jury.

On another occasion, during a high-profile death penalty murder trial that made national headlines, the assistant state attorneys prosecuting the case wanted to bring the car the victim was murdered in into the courtroom. The only way that could be accomplished was to bring the car into the judges' parking garage of the courthouse on the ground floor. Court administration obliged them by setting up a courtroom in the garage for the sole and short purpose of publishing the car (a/k/a the crime scene) to the members of the jury. We all know as court reporters, it is never about us. With the television cameras, including Court TV, and other media present, I certainly didn't want the attention of having everyone wait, staring at me while I have to get situated. When the day approached, we did what only twins could do. On the day of the trial that the car was to be exhibited, I was the official court reporter in the courtroom that day. When it came time to relocate to the garage, the court deputies instructed that the judge, clerk, and court reporter would exit first out of the back door to the secured hallway. Then the attorneys would be escorted out the front public courtroom doors and into a side door of the garage, followed by law enforcement and any spectators. The judge, clerk, and I stood, I grabbed my steno machine, and we walked out the back door. Except I didn't get on the elevator with the judge and the clerk. I hid in

Continued on page 17

TWINSPIRATION: “PARTNERS IN CRIME”

Continued from page 18

the hallway. When the judge and clerk got off the elevator on the ground floor, Michael was there waiting for them, dressed exactly like me, holding his steno machine that was already connected to realtime to the judge’s garage computer. It was like a cooking a show when the chef opens the oven door after preparing a lasagna and there is one inside already made without delay. When I knew the coast was clear, I entered the courtroom from the secured hallway and waited for the parties to return. The prosecutors we’ve known for known for years now so they could tell us apart and laughed when they figured out the switch. Some of the detectives, on the other hand, some of whom we had known for years from working in the courtrooms, had no clue we’re twins and kept asking the assistant state attorneys how the court reporter got back and forth and reconnected so quickly.

There are some setbacks too when it comes to working together. One of the assistant state attorneys swears she lost one of her cases because the jurors weren’t listening to her closing argument, as they were too busy whispering to each other their speculations about why the court reporter

had a wardrobe change during the lunch break. Too bad the observant jurors didn’t seem to notice the court reporter also grew a beard during the lunch break that day. Additionally, we aren’t able to vacation together as often as we used to. Our trips are now revolved around the convenience of court holiday three-day weekends, but that is a minor sacrifice.

When all is said and done, Michael really isn’t the evil twin, though as I write this article I am beginning to wonder if maybe I am. The real reason why these situations, and plenty of others, in our careers and in our lives, work out successfully the way they do is because we make a great team. We aren’t just twin brothers, but best friends and respectful coworkers. We know we can always count on each other for help first as well as last. Having someone to help with an expedite transcript so you don’t have to stay up all night is always appreciated. Having someone to celebrate the victory of completing that expedite is appreciated even more. The largest gratitude though comes from being a part of the team of which we are both honored to be a part, making us cohorts who are very happy partners in crime.

TWINSPIRATION: “THERE’LL BE PARTIES FOR HOSTING AND COCKTAILS FOR TOASTING”

By Michael A. Sciré, RPR, CMRS



*Michael and Richard Sciré
Jack Dusty Restaurant
Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Sarasota
Kentucky Derby Party – May 2016*

Every other year my twin brother and I throw a party in the month of December. We offset the party years with New York City vacations. The parties start out as a holiday parties for court reporters during our view of the annual Holiday Boat Parade of Lights in Sarasota Bay. The guest list usually expands to attorneys, judges, clerks, bailiffs, our personal friends outside of the workplace, and basically anyone we know who

wants to attend who can spell “court reporter,” just to keep it relevant. One year the party started as early as 5:00 p.m. to accommodate anyone who wanted to arrive early in order to avoid the traffic. The last guests left just after 2:00 a.m.

This year should be the year for our party and we are planning and hoping for the best. The high-rise condo in which we live has been under a major renovation for the last six months. As I write this, we still are unsure when we will regain access to our 9th floor balcony or if all the new windows will be installed in time for a view of the boat parade.

Needless to say, a party is not a party without a signature drink. This year we thought to have one that is significant to our profession. Unfortunately, there are no recipes called “The Captioner Cocktail” or the “The Deposition Daiquiri.” We may

Continued on page 17

TWINSPIRATION: “THERE’LL BE PARTIES FOR HOSTING AND COCKTAILS FOR TOASTING”

Continued from page 20



have to work on creating those later. We did, however, find a drink called “The Dead Lawyer.” On its face, the recipe did not sound as enticing as the title. Lucky for our location, we visited our favorite mixologists at the hotel conveniently located next door at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel’s Jack Dusty Restaurant for some help. The recipe is below.

THE DEAD LAWYER

- 1 ¾ oz white crème de cacao
- 1 ¾ oz maraschino liqueur
- 1 ¾ oz dry vermouth

It is served in the glass of your choice. We wisely chose a martini glass. Being the dry martini men we are, the amount of vermouth sounded very unappealing. Vermouth is traditionally more of an accent flavor. It’s like ordering a cheese pizza and only being served the cheese with no crust or sauce or wanting salty potato chips and only being served a salt shaker.

The mixologist warned it would taste terrible but obliged in our taste test. Well, lo and behold, after the first sip, we each had the sudden urge to lick the sidewalk outside just to get the terrible flavor off of our tongues. It lingered like a wart you can’t get rid of no matter how hard you try. The mixologist then offered a substitution for the vermouth called Dolin Vermouth De Chambéry. She said the blanc vermouth would be easier on the palate than the dry vermouth. She was right. It was a lot better and the sidewalk was spared, but it still was not what we want for our signature drink.

The mixologist then offered up her secret recipe. She pulled it conspicuously out of her pocket like we were in a back alley making a drug deal of a controlled substance. The drink is one she invented for the Florida Bar Association recently that she calls “The Esquire.” Not only did she make us the drink but she let us have the coveted recipe to share with others.



It was delicious and refreshing, the way a margarita is. Apparently the Florida Bar attorneys thought so, too. We aren’t quite sure what made the flavors synonymous with the law but that gives us hope and more options for future drinks we can name after reporters, captioners, and scopists.

Alas, we knew found our signature drink for this year. Then we thought of the people who don’t drink alcohol. The

Esquire can easily be turned into a “mocktail” by eliminating the absinthe and replacing the brandy with cider and the peach bitters with juice. Even a non-alcoholic drink tastes better in a prettier glass. Now if we can only get the rest of our windows and balcony railings, we’ll be all set!

THE ESQUIRE

- Egg white
- 2 oz Laird’s Apple Jack (brandy)
- ¼ oz lemon juice
- ½ oz orgeat (sweet syrup made from almonds, sugar, and rose water or orange flower water)
- ¼ oz peach bitters, and an absinthe rinse, meaning you’re only coating the glass absinthe

FCRA WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

(Includes all members who joined as of December 21, 2016)

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS		
NAME	CITY	SPONSOR
Patricia Falls Leitz Moran, Judith Merker, Sarah	Naples Sandy Springs, GA Lake Worth	Rosa Naccarato Susan Wasilewski Susan Wasilewski
STUDENT MEMBERS		
Vaughn, Sara	Jacksonville	Susan Wasilewski

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

Billing Address: (If different from above)

Account #: _____ Exp Date: _____

Submit by Email

Print Form



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
 Anyone 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.

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:

Membership Dues \$ _____

Florida Manual on CD:
 ___ copies @ \$75.00 each
 (Includes 7% sales tax + handling) _____

One-year subscription
 to Florida Manual Updates
 ___ subscriptions @ \$25.00 each
 (Includes 7% sales tax + handling) _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Check # _____ MasterCard VISA AmEx

Account # _____

Exp. Date: _____

Amount to charge: \$ _____

Authorized Signature _____

*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.

For Administrative Use Only

Date Rec'd _____ Ref # _____ Amount _____

Date Approved _____ Computer _____

Make check payable to FCRA and mail to FCRA Headquarters, 222 S. Westmonte Dr, Ste 101, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
Telephone 407-774-7880 • FAX 407-774-6440 (for charge payments only) • www.fcraonline.org

Rev 11/2014