



MINNE-strokes

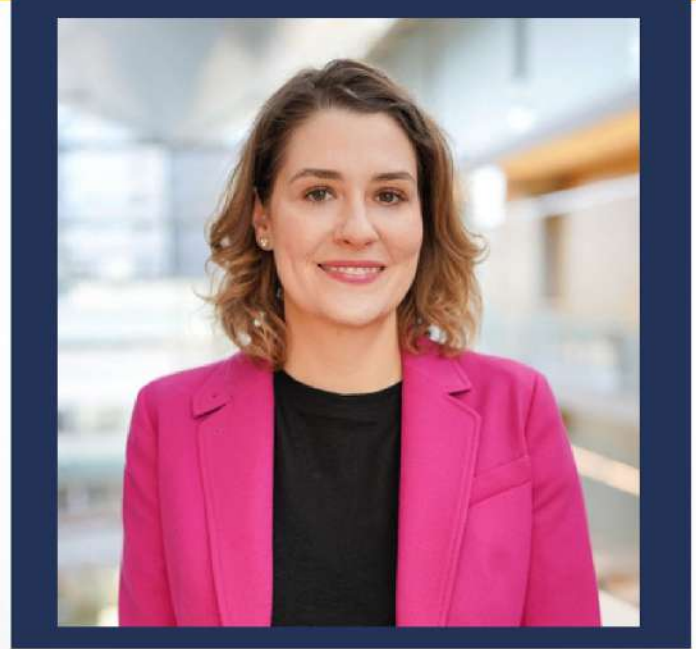
Minnesota Court Reporters: On and Off the Record

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Fall 2023

Volume 26, Issue 3



President's Address

By Lynzie Zempel

My time as president is dwindling down to its final days. It has been an honor to serve as president of MAVRC, and I have grown both professionally and personally. I would like to take this time to congratulate the reporters who have retired this year and court reporting students who have recently graduated.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Karli Pikala. At the time of this interview, Karli was a student in her 225s. I am so happy to announce she graduated last month. Please enjoy our interview.

LZ: What school do you attend and what speed are you in?

KP: I attend Anoka Technical College, and I'm in my 225s.

(Cont'd on page 2)

President's Address (Cont'd from page 1)

LZ: Where have you interned thus far? What did you gain from your mentorship program so far?

KP: I've been very lucky in that I've had many opportunities to intern at several courthouses! I've interned at Ramsey, Scott, Dakota, and Anoka Counties. I'll be at Hennepin County next week! I've also been on a deposition with Lynzie Zempel.

My mentor has been wonderful thus far. I think I was paired up with Carrie Franckowiak when I was in my 140s or 160s, so it's been at least a year. The best thing about having my mentor is that I know I have someone I can always go to when I have questions about anything court-reporting related. It's been so nice to have a working reporter I can consistently reach out to when I get discouraged because it's helped to keep me motivated and remember why I'm in school. She offers so much advice and support, and now she has become a friend too!

LZ: What are you looking for in a mentor?

KP: I didn't really know what I was looking for when I signed up for a mentor, but what I got was someone that's responsive, thoughtful, encouraging, and honest. I've been blessed to have her real-world knowledge and insight when I've come to her with questions. I've even asked her about one of my favorite topics, fashion in the courtroom! I was concerned I'd have to wear boring clothes all the time, but thankfully I was paired up with a court reporter that likes to have fun with their style, just like me. I love mixing vintage and modern, and she encouraged me to wear what I want as long as I still look professional. Phew!

LZ: What were you most nervous about when you first started your internship?

KP: I was nervous about everything! Thankfully, the good thing about interning is that it provides exposure to what life is really like on the job, and it's put me more at ease when thinking about the prospect of starting to work. Interning has allowed me to meet so many amazing reporters, and they've all offered little morsels of advice that I'll carry with me as a new professional. I love that our job is so specific, and yet as many court reporters as there are out there, that's how many ways there are to get the job done. Everyone has their own little ways of doing certain things, and I love that we get to find what works best for us. That's a big lesson I've learned from interning!

LZ: What are your long-term career goals?

KP: First and foremost, I will work to earn my RPR certification, but I really want to become realtime-certified as well. I've been truly wowed by some of the court reporters I've interned with by their realtime abilities, and I can't wait to achieve that level of accuracy too. I plan to work as an official. One of my long-term goals would be to be able to incorporate traveling into my career. It would be amazing to be able to work abroad, whatever that might look like. I love seeing the world and experiencing other cultures, so that would be the dream. I was recently searching for national official positions and found one in Puerto Rico! That position requires at least four years of work experience and prefers a realtime-certified reporter. I have a background in Spanish, so this is my new dream job! If you're ever looking for a place to stay in Puerto Rico in about four years, call me!

LZ: Any advice or tips for students in lower speeds who will be starting their internship?

KP: If you want to be an official, my advice would be to try and intern at as many places as you can. It's good to get a feel for different courthouses. You can see what the drive and parking is like, get the vibe of the workplace itself, and best of all you get to meet a lot of court reporters who are always so excited to have you there and eager to offer their knowledge and expertise!

LZ: What movies, TV shows, books, beauty products, or self-care things have you been enjoying while in school?

KP: The biggest self-care thing I do for myself is my daily walks with my dog. I need my walks to keep my body moving, get fresh air, clear my mind, and keep me grounded. I try to check out different nature places as often as I can, and now that it's spring there's plenty of opportunity for that! Lately, I've been enjoying Silver Lake Park, Theodore Wirth, Nicollet Island, and walking by the river in Minneapolis. I'm going to check out Dodge Nature Center later today!

Other than that, I'm currently reading a Turkish author, Orhan Pamuk, which has been lovely because I haven't been doing much reading lately. Some of my go-to comfort shows I wind down with include *The X-files* and *Schitt's Creek*, depending on my mood. Lately, I've been rewatching *Spaced* and *Arrested Development*. I love those shows!

LZ: Thank you, Karli!

Current Job Openings:

Judge Wahi - First District
Hennepin County - Court Reporter Unit
Judge Buccicone - Tenth District



For more information, go to:
<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/mncourts>

MAVRC Mission Statement:

The mission of Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters & Captioners (MAVRC) is to promote the use of stenographic reporters to capture the record in depositions and courtrooms and to provide closed captioning and CART services.

2022-2023 Board of Directors

PRESIDENT

Lynzie Zempel
218.393.1975
lynzie@zempelreporting.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Shelby Brown
970.488.0789
shelby.delta@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Jennifer Sharp
612.309.8459
jennysharplynn@yahoo.com

TREASURER

S. Ryan Ziegler
612.219.6207
srziegler@gmail.com

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE A (Official)

Rhonda Franken
507.271.3453
rhonda.franken@courts.state.mn.us

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE A (Freelance)

Deanna Oaks
858.231.0383
oaksdeanna@gmail.com

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE B (Official) VACANT

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE B (Freelance)

Jeanna Zunker
320.760.4561
jeannazunker@gmail.com

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

RandiAnn Harvey
320.679.6400
randiann.harvey@courts.state.mn.us

EX-OFFICIO STUDENT MEMBER

Elizabeth Peterson

2023-2024 Board Slate of Nominees

President (Official) – Lori Morrow

Vice President (Freelance) – Nicole Olson

Director-at-Large B (Official) – Rhonda Route

Director-at-Large A (Freelance) – Angie Sundell

Director-at-Large B (Freelance) – Brandi Bigalke

Remaining on Board:

Immediate Past President – Lynzie Zempel

Director-at-Large A (Official) – Rhonda Franken

Secretary – Jennifer Sharp

Treasurer – Ryan Ziegler

September
29-30

MAVRC 2023 FALL CONFERENCE

ARROWWOOD LODGE AT BRAINERD LAKES BAXTER, MN

CHECK IN/REGISTRATION STARTS AT 11:00 A.M., SEPT 29

Full Conference - \$250
Friday - \$100
Saturday - \$150
Students - Free

[CLICK HERE
TO REGISTER](#)

Approved for
1.05 CEUs

- Room block under MAVRC
- Up to 2-night stay
- \$139 a night
- Call 218-822-5634 to book

Must be a MAVRC member to attend



MAVRC

SPEAKER LINEUP

Macey Christian, MSW, LICSW, PMH-C
Vicarious/Secondhand Trauma



Macey Christian

Michael Millios |



Michael Millios, Attorney-at-Law
Imposter Syndrome: Embrace it!

Jeremy Jackson, Historian & Anthropologist
The Blueberry Wars & Unidentified Remains in MN



Jeremy Jackson

Ann Gross |



Ann Gross, Forensic Scientist
The BCA, DNA, & MN Cold Cases

Owen Middleton, M.D.
Forensic Pathology in MN



Owen Middleton

Adam Rademacher |



Adam Rademacher, RID CI/CT, PMP, LSSBB
Sign Language Interpretation

Jean Whalen, RDR, CRR, CRC, RSA, DSA
Angie Sundell, RDR, CRR, CRC, AE
Suzanne Hagen, RPR, CRR, CBC
Realtime/Captioning Tips & Tricks

Reporter Panel



VENDORS

212 Customs
Custom Steno Swag



Karen Wolson
with Stenograph



Worth Business
Equipment

Machine Cleaning - \$250



Sugarberry Creek Candles
Nisswa, MN
Fragrance and Body Care
(29th only)

Holly Blue
Permanent Jewelry



SCHEDULE

Approved for
1.05 CEUs

Day 1
Friday, Sept 29

- 11:00 - 11:30 Check in/Registration
- 11:30 - 12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 - 2:00 Macey Christian
- 2:00 - 2:20 BREAK
- 2:20 - 3:50 Adam Rademacher
- 3:50 - 4:10 BREAK
- 4:10 - 5:40 Ann Gross
- 5:40 - 6:40 Cocktail Hour

Dinner on your own

Day 2
Saturday, Sept 30

- 8:30 - 9:15 Breakfast
- 9:15 - 10:45 Michael Millios
- 10:45 - 11:05 BREAK
- 11:05 - 12:25 Jeremy Jackson
- 12:25 - 1:30 Lunch/Annual Business Meeting
- 1:30 - 3:00 Owen Middleton
- 3:00 - 3:20 BREAK
- 3:20 - 4:50 Reporter Panel

End of Conference

Profile of a Board Member: Rhonda Franken

MAVRC Q: What is your name?

A: Rhonda Franken.

MAVRC Q: Where did you go to court reporting school, and when did you graduate?

A: Wisconsin Indianhead Technical Institute, New Richmond, WI, graduating in May of 1983.

MAVRC Q: Any particular people who have influenced you in choosing court reporting as a career or helping you during your career?



A: I took a year off after high school to work and save money, while pondering what I wanted to do for a career and where to go to college. My mom was dating someone at the time that said, "How about going to court reporting school, what about that?" The next week I found myself meeting with my high school counselor to inquire about the world of court reporting. Between the cost and it only being a two-year program, it sounded like a good plan for me, since I would be paying for college on my own and wanted to be out making money as soon as I could.

I would say Jo Ann Beier and Patsy Nelson, who were the owners of Northwestern Court Reporters, the first freelance agency I worked for, and Corinne Schieck, Jeff Severson and Ken Dick of the Rochester agency Carney & Associates were most helpful and influential in my early career. They all helped me become more secure and confident as I began my career as a reporter and taught me so much of what was essential to know in this business.

MAVRC Q: Where have you worked since graduating, and what type of work do you do now?

A: When I began my career, I worked as a freelancer, first for Northwestern Court Reporters out of their Hudson, WI office, traveling to all the small-town law firms and courthouses in the northwestern region of Wisconsin. I then went to work for Carney & Associates out of Rochester, MN. Before I began my officialship career in 1993 in the First Judicial District (Dakota County), I worked for Tammy Farley's agency in the Twin Cities, taking depositions and working per diem in the courts. I also taught court reporting at Minnesota School of Business for five years, from 1987-1992.

MAVRC Q: What type of steno machine and court reporting software do you use?

A: It's embarrassing to say this, but my steno machine is an Elan, which I need to update! And my software is Case CATalyst.

MAVRC Q: Do you produce your work all on your own, or do you use scopists or proofreaders?

A: Years ago, when I had a ton of transcript work while working out of Dakota County and my children were young, I did use scopists in order to stay caught up. But nowadays I don't have enough transcript work that warrants or justifies utilizing a scopist.

(Cont'd on page 7)

MAVRC Q: Do you have any tips for other reporters about work habits or routines?

A: I'm a person who very much needs and wants structure. That's why an officialship suits me best. I would say being task-oriented has helped me as far as getting transcripts completed on time and juggling any volunteer work I've done for MAVRC and the district I work for. I'm a list-maker in that regard and use my Outlook calendar to remind myself of any tasks/transcripts that need to be completed and the deadlines for such. I know, big yawn there 😊

MAVRC Q: Do you have a few favorite briefs to share?

A: Boy, I'm the queen of briefs, so I wouldn't even know where to begin. In past seminars where we've had speed writers like Mark Kislingbury, who promotes less strokes and more briefs to achieve higher speeds and keeping up with fast speakers, it's inspired me to follow his methods and in turn stroke less and use briefs more and more. I'm a big user of the asterisk to help with conflicts and for proper nouns, which can also conflict with regular words. For example: Cook – KAO*K for the proper noun, and KAOK for the verb or noun cook.

MAVRC Q: Are you a member of the National Court Reporters Association? If so, what credentials have you earned through NCRA and how do you earn your continuing education credits?

A: I've been a member of NCRA since I graduated and obtained my RPR in May of 1983. I obtained my RMR in 2000. While I taught school, I obtained my CRI (Certified Reporting Instructor); however, I let that lapse when I entered the officialship world since I had to obtain twice the number of CE credits in three years to retain both my RPR and CRI and I was no longer teaching.

MAVRC Q: Have you attended any NCRA conventions, boot camps, seminars? If so, how was that experience for you and would you recommend it to other reporters?

A: For NCRA national seminars, I've attended them in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Chicago, Illinois; and Denver, Colorado. I've been to too many seminars and conventions locally, in Minnesota and Wisconsin, to count! I haven't attended any boot camps yet; but after hearing fellow board members Randi Ann Harvey, Deanna Oaks and Lynzie Zempel speak about their experiences at boot camp this past February, I'm motivated to visit Washington, D.C. and give it a try sometime!

MAVRC Q: Do you recall when you joined MAVRC or approximately how long you've been a member?

A: I've been a member of the Minnesota associations of various names since approximately 1983.

MAVRC Q: When did you become a board member of MAVRC, and when does your current term end?

A: I became a board member, as Director-at-Large B (Official) in the fall of 2022, and I will continue as a DAL until the fall of 2024.

MAVRC Q: How often does the board meet, and do you meet in person or somehow electronically?

A: We meet the first Wednesday of every month via Zoom. It makes it easier to meet up via Zoom when you have reporters from all over the state, but I do miss in-person meetings all the same.

MAVRC Q: What are some of the current issues the board is working on?

A: Promoting the profession/school (recruitment) at the Minnesota State Bar Association earlier this year and at the upcoming Minnesota School Counselor Association in November by volunteering at the booths. Continuing to update the MAVRC website, most recently an A to Z website button linking to the A to Z program, which Shelby Brown once again performed her magic to do. Recruiting board members. Serving on the MAVRC board is something every reporter should try at least once in their career. It's a great way to network and meet other reporters, as well as learn all the happenings of the world of reporting both locally and nationally. Updating the Constitution and Bylaws, which Ryan Ziegler spent many hours working on with input from the other board members.

MAVRC Q: Have you helped out or supported MAVRC by volunteering in any other positions in the past or volunteered your time for MAVRC in other ways?

A: I've been a member of the Publications Committee off and on over the years, most recently serving as editor, along with Angie Sundell, Emily Lettner, Elizabeth Peterson and Ryan Ziegler. Most recently, we network with reporters around the state as well as Anoka Tech (Jen Sati) to gather and proof articles for the design of the quarterly MINNE-strokes publication.

MAVRC Q: On a more personal note, what's your hometown and where do you live now?

A: I grew up in Rochester, MN; raised my two kids with my husband in Cannon Falls, MN; and my husband and I now live in Red Wing, MN.

MAVRC Q: Tell us about your family and friends, activities you do with them, your interests outside of work.

A: I've been married to my husband, Mike, for almost 30 years; and we have two grown children who live and work pretty close to us. I like to work out, running (more like jogging these days) and going to the gym. I'm an avid reader as well. I'd say I'm a foodie and a wino, enjoy going to restaurants and wineries locally and any vacation spots.

MAVRC Q: Some other questions about what you do in your free time: What's a recent movie you watched, a recent book you've read, a favorite restaurant?

A: Most recently, while my husband and I were out of town biding our time before going to a concert, we had the Comedy Central channel on at the hotel and the movie The 40-Year-Old Virgin was on. It's from 2005, but we'd never seen it before, and we got a lot of laughs out of it! For books, I like nonfiction. I just finished the book by Prince Harry, The Spare; and I'm now reading the newest Michelle Obama book, The Light We Carry, which my daughter gave me for Christmas.

MAVRC Q: Any places you've traveled to, either for work or play?

A: My husband and I like to take road trips. In the fall of 2022 we did the Route 66 trip, with the Grand Canyon being the final destination before turning around to head back home. Great scenery! We like to go to warm destinations in the winter, such as Key West in 2022. We plan to go to Ireland and England in the fall of 2024. We've never been to Europe, so we're really looking forward to that.

MAVRC Q: How do you balance your work and your home life?

A: I don't know if I can pinpoint how, but I feel like I do it fairly well. I work on being present whether at work or spending time with family and friends. It's not always easy, so it's a work in progress. Since moving to Red Wing in 2017, I live and work , for the most part, in the same city for the first time in a long time, and that seems to make it easier to balance both work and home life.

MAVRC Q: Anything else you'd like to tell us about yourself?

A: Just that I feel so grateful for my family, friends, good health, and for the profession that I sort of just fell into but lucked out to be in. Court reporting has proven to be a great choice in so many ways. I've met so many great fellow reporters along the way, and I look forward to serving another year on the board and possibly meeting some more!

Thank You to Our Outgoing Board Members!

Shelby Brown has been on the board since 2020, serving as Director-at-Large A (Official) and Vice President.



RandiAnn Harvey has been on the board since 2018, serving as Director-at-Large A (Official), President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past President.



Deanna Oaks has been on the board since 2019, serving as Director-at-Large B (Freelance) and Vice President - Freelance.





Join Us!

Judicial Reporting/Captioning Virtual Information Session and NCRA “A to Z Intro to Steno” Class

Find out more about stenographic career opportunities, meet industry leaders and program graduates and see the technology used in the field.

Tuesday, Oct. 3 • 5 to 6 pm

(FREE Intro to Steno course starts following the info session and runs Tuesdays through Nov. 15 from 5 to 7 pm.)

Register Today

Scan the QR code or
visit AnokaTech.edu/JudicialReporting

Questions?

Contact program faculty member Jennifer Sati
at JSati@anokatech.edu or 763-576-4064



MSBA Convention

By RandiAnn Harvey, RDR, CRR, CRC
Immediate Past President of MAVRC

At the Minnesota State Bar Association convention in Minneapolis on June 21 & 22, 2023, MAVRC purchased an exhibitor booth to bring awareness to the value of stenographic court reporters and present the message that stenographers are the most highly skilled and most accurate at preserving the record for legal proceedings.

Elisa Kukuk, Ryan Ziegler, Elizabeth Peterson, Rhonda Franken, and RandiAnn Harvey manned the booth for the two days. There was positive feedback from those who passed by the booth, and they were handed MAVRC logo pens and specially made flyers (as pictured) with short descriptions and QR codes to link the articles of three recent cases in which there were electronic/digital recording failures and no stenographic record was made. Pamphlets about Anoka Tech's court reporting program were also available to hand out.

Anoka Tech and MAVRC will be having a similar exhibitor booth at the Minnesota School Counselor Association conference in Mankato in November 2023 in order to connect with counselors who are in high schools and who are in a position to recruit future court reporting students.

MAVRC remains committed to promoting the stenographic profession. Please email MAVRC if you are interested in serving on any of the committees or have any ideas for further outreaches.



Don't let this happen to you! Use a stenographer.

State of Wisconsin v. Darrell E. Brooks (2022)
Defendant Darrell Brooks drove into a Christmas parade in Waukesha, Wisconsin, killing six people and injuring 62. He had previously been released on bail. The bail hearing was not recorded, which was discovered when the transcript was requested to shed light on why he had been released on bail.



Parole Hearing of Daniel Bezemer (2022)
Convicted murderer Daniel Bezemer was denied parole in an August 10, 2022, hearing before California's Board of Parole Hearings. It was subsequently discovered that the hearing had not been recorded. The Executive Board then voted to allow Bezemer a new hearing. The victim's family will now be required to go through the painful experience again.



California Deposition Transcript Missing 55 pages of testimony (2022)
Attorney Melissa Buchman ordered the copy of a remote deposition that was noticed by opposing counsel. A digital recording was used instead of a certified stenographer. The final transcript was missing approximately 55 pages of testimony, resulting in an adverse court decision for her client.



www.MAVRC.org
Minnesota Association of Verbatim Captioners and Reporters

On July 2, 2023, in Houston, Texas, NCSA representatives from around the US met to discuss topics affecting court reporting and to look for solutions. We started out with roundtable discussions on focused topics and then transitioned into a group collaborative effort to compile our brainstorming. Our topics and some of the solutions included the following:

Increasing membership

- Each one reach one, members reach out to their circles to explain benefits
- Call drive for lapsed members from database
- More social media presence, target younger population

NCRA certification and testing

- In-person testing during conference
- Testing in schools
- Three years at student rate

How to engage the membership to be more involved in their association and creating new leaders

- Discount on dues for doing in-person demonstrations of steno
- Ask them to be in committees
- Social events

How to best address AI issues at the state level

- Bar association presentations
- Provide realtime for judges/attorneys
- Join with consumer groups for more help and support (ADA)

What could a national marketing campaign to promote our profession look like

- Counselor/educator booth
- Bumper stickers
- High school curriculum for college credit

How to get more steno programs in schools

- Writing realtime for mock trials
- A to Z in high school
- School superintendent outreach

Promoting our profession at Bar Associations and with legal professionals

- Captioning demo at conference
- Golf, parties, bar association connections

At the end of our meeting, a complete list of the topics and suggestions was shared with our MAVRC board of directors for consideration.

During our meeting, each state was strongly encouraged to add the NCRA Discover Steno button to our websites to further awareness of this fantastic career. MAVRC is now displaying this on our homepage. There are several “buttons” that you can download and put on your own websites if you have one. It is a quick and easy process.

There are several designs to choose from. Here is the address to access the buttons: <https://www.ncra.org/atoz-button-downloads>



STUDENT'S CORNER – UNDERSTANDING MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY

By Jackie Young, RPR, DSA

(Reprinted from *MINNE-strokes* Fall 2012 edition. Retyped by Rhonda Franken, Editor.)

Fear not – those dreaded medical depositions are very manageable with some brief/short forms and an understanding of a few basic concepts regarding medical terminology.

The key to understanding medical terms is by focusing on their components (prefixes, roots, combining vowels, and suffixes). The same components tend to be used in many medical terms, so by understanding the meaning of a small number of components, the easier it is to comprehend the word and write it quickly and easily.

Most medical and anatomical terms will contain at least one or more root words. The root word typically appears in the middle of the term and signifies its principal meaning. For example, in the word *pancreatitis*, the root would be the word *pancrea* which refers to the pancreas. The prefix, of course, appears before the root word and can sometimes represent the location or area of the body. In the previous example, of course, the word was formed without a prefix but by simply adding a very common suffix. The suffix, found after the root word, modifies the central meaning of the term. Some prefixes and suffixes, however, can also be root words, so do not let this throw you!

The following is a list of common prefixes and suffixes with their combining vowels, a definition of the word, and some possible short forms that can be used. As always, before incorporating the short form, be sure it does not cause any conflicts in your dictionary!

COMMON PREFIXES WITH COMBINING VOWELS:

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| adeno = gland | hepato = liver |
| angio = vessel | hyper = high, elevated (HAOIRP) |
| anti = attacks (AENT) | hypo = below/deficient (HOIP or HAO*IP) |
| brady = slow | infra = beneath (FRA*) |
| cardio = heart | inter = among, between |
| contra = against (KRA*) | intra = within |
| derm, derma = skin | leuko = white |
| dia = complete or thorough | lipo = fat |
| dis = removal or reversal | mal = bad, poor (MA*L) |
| dys = abnormal | megalo = large |
| endo = inside | myo = muscle |
| erythro = red | neuro = nerve |
| gastro = stomach | osteo = bone |
| glycol = glucose | per = through |
| hemato = blood | peri=around |

poly = many (PO*EL or PO*IL)
pseudo = false (SAO*UD)
psycho = mind (SAO*IK)

sclero = hard
sub=under
tachy=fast/rapid
trans=across or over

COMMON SUFFIXES WITH COMBINING VOWELS:

algia = pain
cyte or cyto = cell(s)
ectomy = excision or removal
emia = in the blood
emesis = vomiting
eous = pertaining to
genesis = origin, new
graph = recording instrument (GR-F)
ism = state of
itis = inflammation
lysis = break up
ology = study of (OELG)

pathy = disease
penia = deficiency
pepsia = digestion
plasty = plastic or surgical repair
plegia = paralysis
rrhaphy = to stitch or suture
rrhea = discharge
scope = instrument
stomy = making an opening (STO*IM)
therapy = course of treatment (THAERP)
tomy = incision (TO*IM)
trophy = growth or development (TRO*IF)

COMMON ROOT WORDS:

arterio = artery
angio = blood vessel
brachio = arm
cardio = heart
cephalo = head
cranio = skull
cyst(o) = bladder
dorsi = back
encephalo = brain
hema = blood
hepato or hepatic = liver
mammo = breast

nephro = kidney
ophthalmo = eye
osteo = bone
pathy = disease
pepsia = digestion
phagia = eating
pharyngo = throat
pneumon = lungs
rhino = nose
stetho = chest
thoraci or thoraco = rib cage
thrombo = blood clot

To give you a better understanding of how prefixes and suffixes are added to root words, an example would be using the prefix *per*, the root *cutan*, and the suffix *eous*. By combining these three words, you will form the term *percutaneous*, which is defined as something through the skin. Other examples include the following: *intra/ven/ous*, *peri/card/itis*, *hypo/glyc/emia/* and *cyt/ology*, and on down the list.

Hopefully things have improved since the time that I attended court reporting school, but the one thing I found lacking in my schooling was a comprehensive list of briefs or short forms for common medical terms. As I have gotten older and wiser, I have slowly been incorporating more and more of them into my writing, and I would strongly suggest that you either incorporate some or all of the short forms that are listed above. Or, better yet,

you can take matters into your own hands and create some short forms of your own that best fit with your writing style.

As with all new learning experiences, in the beginning stages of understanding these medical terms, they may seem strange and difficult to learn, but do not lose hope! It will become easier and easier to write difficult medical words if you comprehend how they are created and then take the time to become proficient at writing the frequently used words. Then, before you know it, you will have developed the skills and confidence necessary to write quickly and accurately!

Jackie Young is a freelance reporter in Delano, Minnesota.

Are you retired or retiring soon? Lucky YOU! Please keep in contact with MAVRC!

Did you know you can apply for “RETIRED LIFETIME” status with MAVRC? Your status will be changed in MAVRC’s database to “retired,” and you will keep up to date with what is happening in the organization and your profession. Best thing: **It’s free!**

So MAVRC can stay in touch with you when you retire, email your contact information or any questions to MAVRC@MAVRC.org, and your information will continue to be in MAVRC’s database.

Welcome, New Members!

Jessica Falon, Nelle Rasmussen,
Gabriell Whaley, Paul Neary, and
MacKenzie Bloom, Maya Savage, and
Victoria Bennett

JRBC SUMMER 2023 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

| | |
|--|---|
| Paradigm Reporting & Captioning | \$1,000 scholarship |
| Student Recipient:  | Alyssa Vankempen. Alyssa, an upper speed Anoka Tech steno student, was also awarded this scholarship in 2022. |
| Donor: | Jan Ballman FAPR, RPR, CMRS Principal – Midwest Paradigm, a Veritext Company |
| Jill Rainerson-Karnes Memorial Scholarship | \$1,000 Scholarship |
| Student Recipient: | Melinda Johnson |
| Donor: | Elaine Rainerson (Jill’s mother) |
| Karen McCulloch (JRBC Ansay Summer Scholarship) | \$1,000 Scholarship |
| Student Recipient: | Jackie Resh |
| Donor: | Karen McCulloch |
| Worldwide Litigation Services Scholarship | \$1,000 Scholarship |
| Student Recipient: | Kacie Elijah |
| Donor: | Angela Baker, Owner & Court Reporter Worldwide Litigation Services Chicago (312) 528-9111 + Minneapolis (612) 594-7660 + Henderson (702) 799-9218 |
| James Voitalla Memorial Scholarship | \$1,000 Scholarship |
| Student Recipient: | Karli Pikala |
| Donor: | Marcella Voitalla (Jim’s mother) |

Thanks to all the donors for their generous donations and supporting the students!

Houston, TX - the 2023 NCRA Conference

By RandiAnn Harvey, RDR, CRR, CRC



Houston, TX – the 2023 NCRA Conference

They say Houston, Texas, had crazy heat temps during the NCRA conference in July, but I didn't venture outside for very long. Meeting new people, attending social events, trying out the speed contest, and going to some really great classes kept me quite busy inside. Plus, there was a tunnel system that connected a lot of the downtown area.



A few things I learned from the other contestants at the national speed contest: Posture – I ain't got it. As you can see in this photo of myself to the left (taken at the practice session), my posture is horrible (no wonder I have an aching neck), and along with the RBF, my very short legs are resting on the legs of the tripod. In contrast, look at Jillian Kirchner's posture to the right, a reporter from Colorado. Many of the contestants tilt their machine away from them, like Jillian does, where it's low, at seat level. This allows the shoulders to be more relaxed. I tried this position out during a demo of the Luminex II, and it felt effortless. Even though my current machine does not tilt back, I have altered to a lower position. If you ever get the chance to demo a Luminex II, have your pocketbook ready.



Contestants shared how quickly they made up briefs on the fly for things like a long company name that was mentioned multiple times during the test, and yet I wrote it out painfully every single time. Even though my skill level is nowhere near those gifted with quick thinking and cheetah-like moving fingers, I still had fun sharing in the experience with them. **Pat Mahon**, another Minnesota court reporter who is a veteran contestant and who placed 9th in the realtime 2-voice this year, graciously kept me in the loop of where I was supposed to be and events for the contest peeps. Some say the contests are addictive. I don't know, but I'm likely to try again in Kentucky next year.

The National Congress of State Associations (NCSA) held its annual meeting a day before the conference started. Our Minnesotan delegate, **Jeanna Zunker**, and I attended and participated in a brainstorming session of issues facing court reporting associations across the country.

Some of the classes I attended:

- *Unmasking Your Realtime Superpowers* – Anissa Nierenberger always has great briefs to share and is an enthusiastic speaker. Follow her FB page, Learn To Caption, <https://www.facebook.com/learntocaption>, for brief suggestions that will shorten your writing. When I'm scrolling on FB and I see some that I might like, I screenshot them and enter them later in my dictionary when I've got my steno machine.
- *The NCRF's Veteran's Oral Histories Program* – Kerry Ward, a liaison specialist with the VHP of the American Folklife Center at The Library of Congress, had some touching stories of how the project has affected the lives of veterans and their families. It was hard not to tear up. If you volunteer to transcribe one of these stories, you will be blessed.
- *Mouse Free in '23* – **Merilee Johnson**, a prestigious Minnesota court reporter, gave useful tips on computer shortcuts, like, internet browser shortcuts that are super handy: Ctrl+H opens your history. Alt+Home opens a new tab. Ctrl+E searches web. Ctrl+W closes one tab at a time.

| | | |
|--------------|---|---------|
| A while | = | WHOEUL |
| Meanwhile | = | MOEUL |
| Worthwhile | = | WOEUL |
| Beautiful | = | BAOUFL |
| Careful | = | KAEUFRL |
| Harmful | = | HARFL |
| Mindful | = | MAOEUFL |
| Powerful | = | POUFRL |
| Annapolis | = | A*EUPS |
| Indianapolis | = | NA*EUPS |
| Minneapolis | = | MA*EUPS |

(Cont'd on page 18)

- *Artificial Justice! Small Errors, Big Consequences* – NCRA’s STRONG committee shared some of the pitfalls of AI and concerns about biometrics being datamined. An interesting topic was the American Bar Association’s Resolution 604, which urges organizations that design, develop, deploy, and use artificial intelligence systems and capabilities to follow certain guidelines: <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/directories/policy/midyear-2023/604-midyear-2023.pdf>
- *Speaking Up! Judges Do’s and Don’ts of Reporting in the Courtroom* – A panel of three judges discussed their judge teams and what works for them and what doesn’t.
- *The Mirror Method: One concept, 1000+ Briefs* – With this theory, the opposite side of the bank is used to mirror the finger pattern that is used on the other side so that you have one stroke instead of two. For example, instead of two strokes for “in this” (N/TH-), you mirror the TH pattern position of your fingers on the other side, which would then be N-FL. Although, much of the theory was too hard for my measly brain to comprehend, I did end up incorporating a few ideas. Instead of “understands” as two strokes-NDZ/Z, I now do S-NDZ.
- *Speak up, Steno! Let’s Communicate* – Kim Xavier, the Stenovator, was an energetic speaker who discussed how to support your judge and how to engage attorneys to make a better record. She suggested to always introduce yourself to the attorneys and say in a kind way, “I’m here to help you make your record great.”
- *Journey Along the Yellow Brick Road to a Federal Officialship* – A panel of 3 federal court reporters that discussed what it’s like to work in the federal court system.

At the awards luncheon, **Jennifer Sati**, Anoka Tech’s court reporting program director, was awarded the Outstanding Educator of the Year by the Council on Approved Student Education in recognition of her dedication to students and extraordinary contributions to the court reporting field.



Blythe Norenberg (f/n/a Warwas), an Anoka Tech court reporting student, received the NCRF Student Intern Scholarship. Another Minnesotan court reporter, **Victoria Dudeck**, won the hot blingy fundraiser item – a red Miu Miu clutch.



Jeanna Zunker and I met up with Minnesota colleagues, **Janell Gruber** and **Michelle Pecharich**. The most extraordinary person I met was Grecia Ramirez, RPR, who is a blind court reporter. By happenstance, we were headed to the



same class, and she needed guidance getting to the room. As she placed her hand on my shoulder, she walked briskly along with me. She informed me that she actually uses the same type of steno machine as the rest of us, but she does her transcripts on some type of computer where she can read the Braille screen. If you think you can’t pass the RPR, think about Grecia and imagine what you could do if you didn’t limit yourself.

If you are feeling deflated and burned out about this profession, I’d recommend going to a national convention. If you can’t make it to next year’s conference in Louisville, Kentucky, then maybe the Minneapolis one in 2025! I think you’ll find some extroverted, excited court reporters who will spread their enthusiasm to you and get you energized for the future. Search [#NCRAHouston](#) or [#NCRA23](#) on Facebook to see lots of fun photos and some of the more outgoing personalities from the event.

MASTERING THE ART OF QUALITY SLEEP

By Brandi Bigalke, RPR, RSA, CSR

In the demanding profession of court reporting and captioning, we all know that precision, concentration, and attention to detail are paramount. To excel in this field, one must maintain a sharp mind and an unwavering focus during lengthy legal proceedings. An often-overlooked but essential factor in achieving peak performance as a court reporter/captioner is the quality of sleep one receives.

Melatonin is a hormone produced by the pineal gland, a small structure located in the brain. It earned its reputation as the "sleep hormone" because it plays a central role in regulating our sleepwake cycle, or circadian rhythm. Melatonin production is influenced by external factors, primarily the presence or absence of light, which signals our bodies when it's time to sleep or wake up.

For court reporters and captioners, the importance of melatonin cannot be overstated. Here's how melatonin contributes to their success:

- **Initiating Sleep:** As the evening descends and natural light diminishes, melatonin levels rise, signaling that it's time to wind down and prepare for sleep. For court reporters, a good night's sleep is the foundation for a sharp mind the following day.
- **Quality Control:** Melatonin ensures that we experience deep and uninterrupted sleep phases. Quality sleep directly translates to improved cognitive function, a crucial factor in maintaining precision and accuracy in stenography.
- **Clock Synchronization:** By responding to environmental cues, melatonin helps court reporters maintain a consistent schedule and stay alert during proceedings, even during extended or irregular work hours.

Insufficient melatonin levels can have serious repercussions:

- **Insomnia:** Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep can lead to fatigue and decreased concentration during reporting, resulting in errors and inefficiencies.
- **Circadian Chaos:** Irregular sleep patterns can cause mood swings and decreased focus when it matters most, potentially affecting the overall quality of transcripts.
- **Health Hazards:** Conditions like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease can become more likely with chronic sleep deprivation, impacting long-term career prospects.
- **Immune System Slump:** Melatonin also plays a role in boosting the immune system, so low levels might make court reporters more susceptible to illness, causing unexpected work interruptions and delays.

To enhance melatonin production and improve sleep quality, court reporters/captioners can consider the following strategies:

- **Stick to a Schedule:** Maintaining consistent sleep and wake times helps the body's natural melatonin production and ensures peak performance during proceedings.
- **Optimize Sleep Environment:** Create a bedroom that is dark, quiet, and comfortable to promote melatonin release and ensure a restful night.
- **Control Light Exposure:** Minimize screen time before bedtime, as the blue light emitted by electronic devices can suppress melatonin production. Consider using blue light-blocking glasses if screen use is unavoidable.
- **Supplements:** Consult with a healthcare professional about melatonin supplements, especially if you struggle with sleep issues or experience jet lag. Be mindful of potential side effects or drowsiness during working hours.
- **Dietary Choices:** Incorporate foods such as cherries, grapes, and walnuts into your diet, as they contain small amounts of melatonin and can contribute to overall sleep quality and well-being.

So, there you have it, understanding melatonin and its role in our sleep and overall health can lead to more restful nights and better days as court reporters and captioners. Take these tips to heart, and you'll be on your way to mastering the art of quality sleep and top-tier writing.

Brandi Bigalke is a freelance reporter out of the Twin Cities.

The MAVRC Board recently received notification from the IRS that the late fee from last year's tax return has been forgiven. The payment we made has been returned to us with interest.



Profile of a Student

NAME: Victoria Bennett

SCHOOL: ATC

SPEED: 100 wpm

HOMETOWN: St. Paul, MN

Tell us a little about yourself.

Hello! My name is Victoria, and I am a student at Anoka Technical College. I am a 100s student and am loving court reporting school thus far. When I'm not in school (or practicing), I am at work at my local Starbucks or relaxing with my two cats and one dog. I also enjoy playing video games in my free time as well as watching television shows or going for walks with my partner.

What made you decide to pursue a career in court reporting?

I have always been computer-savvy and fast on a keyboard. I graduated from college in Ohio with degrees in psychology and social work in 2016 and worked as a social worker after graduation. After 5 years in the field, I decided I wanted a change and discovered court reporting by chance on social media. I looked more into the career and fell in love!



What area of reporting interests you the most currently: Official, freelance, or captioning/CART?

I am currently most interested in being an official. I love working with others, and the stability of a 9-5 job really appeals to me.

What's been the most challenging or rewarding part of your schooling thus far?

The most rewarding part of school thus far has been the feeling of camaraderie I feel with my fellow court reporting students. We all come from different walks of life, and I never would have thought I would make such good friends during the process. Our teachers are also so knowledgeable and incredibly helpful. I am so thrilled to have chosen Anoka for my training!

Do you know any working reporters or is there anyone that's been an influence on you?

I do not personally know many working reporters, aside from my teachers at Anoka. There are many court reporters on social media who provide great inspiration for me though! The Facebook group "Encouraging Court Reporting Students" and some reporters on TikTok have been great encouragement, and their posts help keep me going when I'm having a tough time!

If you had an hour of free time, what would you be doing (besides practicing on your steno machine)?

I would probably play video games! I am a huge nerd and love playing games, watching sci-fi TV shows, and playing Dungeons and Dragons.

What is your favorite band or type of music?

My favorite band of all time is blink-182. I also in general love pop-punk music and have recently started listening to K-pop.

(Cont'd on page 22)

What is your favorite food or restaurant?

My favorite restaurant is actually a local food truck in Saint Paul called Eggroll Queen. They make jumbo size egg rolls that are to die for!

Where is a place you would like to visit?

I would love to visit Ireland one day. I have never been to Europe in general, and my dream is to one day travel around the continent.

What is the last book you read?

The last book I read was *Sylvanas* by Christie Golden. It is based off a character from my favorite video game, *World of Warcraft*, and follows her life to show why she is the way she is.

What is the last movie you watched?

The last movie I've seen is *Asteroid City*. I had never seen a Wes Anderson film before and instantly fell in love.



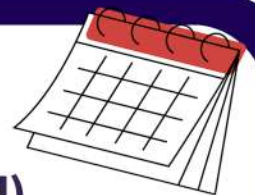
Congrats, Graduates!

Karli Pikala and Dina Kunin both recently graduated from Anoka Tech.

From Karli : "I'm so happy I had the opportunity to intern at a number of courthouses. I'm confident in my decision to work in Dakota County because of it! Thank you to Jennifer, Jane, and Deb. You are all amazing!!!!

Dates to Remember:

September 29-30: MAVRC Fall Convention (Brainerd, MN)



Pro Bono

*If you are interested in providing pro bono reporting services, contact: Christine Clark, MAVRC's Pro Bono Coordinator.
Phone: 952.250.4030 chriselarkzimm@gmail.com*



Realtime Principles Class

Join Us! This four-month course will transform your realtime writing to an advanced level!

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Nov. 2, 9, 16, 2023*

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- Online access to learning platform (D2L) with extensive practice material
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PRACTICE

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*Thursdays, 6-8:00 p.m.
Jan. 4 & 11, 2024*

Instructor: Jennifer Sati, RMR, CRR, CRC, CRI

Tuition: \$500

Bringing more than 25 years of realtime CART and captioning expertise to you!

Scan to view website and register:

Questions: JSati@anokatech.edu or 763-576-4064



In the Fall of 2022 edition of MINNE-strokes, we included an article on past recipients of the Willard I. Braun Outstanding Student of the Year Award. We'd now like to highlight and get to know a few of those students (then reporters) in the next few editions.

Students of the Year - Where Are They Now?

By Nancy J. Meyer, RDR, CRR

Deb Maves was awarded the 1984 Outstanding Student of the Year from Northern Technical School of Business Night School. (Yes, there used to be a court reporting night school for many years.) Thank you, Deb, for taking the time to answer some questions about what you have been up to since court reporting school.

Currently resides in: Woodbury, MN and Tucson, AZ

Certifications: RPR

Theory: **I don't remember back that far. I just called it computer-compatible theory.**

Favorite Brief: **Now, that's a good question. I think it was whatever I came up with on the fly for whatever I was working on. Although I think the one I think of the most often, although I only used it in tests in school, was BARD – beyond a reasonable doubt. My husband, Jim. was noted for his briefs when we were in school. Someone asked him in class one day after a dictation how he was writing "forest," and he said, "tree tree." That wasn't a brief I used.**

Retired from Court Reporting: **2007. Wow! That was a long time ago. I still find myself "finger writing" the news when I watch it, although not nearly as often as I used to.**

How did you learn about a career in court reporting?

A high school friend of mine became a court reporter. I was teaching high school business courses in Manitowoc, WI, and suggested to one of my very good typing students that he might consider it. I wasn't thrilled with teaching so started thinking about court reporting for myself. I visited with my high school friend, traveled to Minneapolis to check out Northern Technical School of Business, and enrolled for the following fall.

What's your favorite memory while in court reporting school?

Meeting my husband Jim.

You attended court reporting school at night. Tell us what you were doing during the day and how you juggled it all.

I started out in day school, but ran out of money and had to get a job. Jim and I married and I decided he could be the court reporter and I would continue with the job that I really liked. But about seven years later, that job went away so that's when I decided to go back to court reporting school at night. I spent my days practicing diligently in order to get out of school as quickly as I could. I was fortunate that Jim could support us while I completed the program.

What was your best advice you received in court reporting school?

I really can't think of anything specific. Too long ago, I guess. I'm sure there was something.

After graduating from school, what was your career path?

I went to work for Oliver, Jered/Helget & Mitchell Reporting, which later became Oliver, Mitchell & Maves Reporting, until the time of the merger of three court reporting agencies into Paradigm Reporting. One interesting thing about becoming a partner in Oliver, Mitchell & Maves Reporting is that my husband was one of the original owners of the TomCat computer we used. Jim, Sandy Oliver and Mary Mitchell were owners of the computer. When Sandy and Mary formed their firm, they bought Jim out. When I became their partner, I bought into the computer Jim originally owned.

What surprised you most about court reporting?

I think how much work it was; and secondly, how much I enjoyed it. It fit my personality. I like projects and organization. You have to be organized to be a reporter and have to stay focused and on task to get the transcript out the door.

What has been your greatest professional accomplishment?

I think the career itself was an accomplishment. Maintaining a client base through a quality transcript was certainly an accomplishment. Making the transition to more and more technology was also a part of it. I served on professional organization committees, was a partner in a firm, and hopefully represented the field well.

Now that you have retired from court reporting, what do you do to keep yourself busy?

I think maintaining two homes in two totally different areas of the country has been my biggest project. My hobbies are knitting and cooking/baking, reading, and I am trying loom weaving as well. I have six great nieces and nephews and another on the way and I love spending time with them and the rest of my family and friends. I have done some traveling, and now that Covid has settled down somewhat, I plan to do more.

Do you have any advice for current court reporting students?

Love what you do, because if you don't, it becomes a job. Court reporting can't be just a job. It has to be a commitment. If it isn't, your work product suffers and you may lose clients. Be prepared to have the job take over your life, but find the happy medium between work, family, friends and activities. It can be feast or famine in the freelance business and you have to learn to roll with it.

Anything else you'd like to tell us?

Answering these questions has taken me back all those years. I didn't even remember that I was Student of the Year. When my husband started reporting, he dictated his notes into a tape recorder, then drove that tape to his typist, who typed it on packets of erasable onion-skin paper with carbon in between each page, depending on how many copies were needed. When I left reporting, we were connecting our computers to multiple computers in front of the attorneys in attendance at the deposition and to modems sending the realtime transcript to support staff in whatever city they were from. Things are even more technologically advanced now and I'm happy to not have to know how to do all of that. Back "in the day," our TomCat computer held big revolving disks or platters, one holding our dictionaries and others holding the translations. Our machines used cassette tapes as recording medium and those were "read" by what looked like a tape recorder. The computer translated at roughly 50 pages an hour. The last person to leave the office at night would "stack" the translation and give the command "Go\$Tran." How do I remember that when I can't remember what I ate for breakfast?

Minnesota's Remote Notary Law

By: Jackie Young, RPR, DSA

If you are a freelance court reporter practicing in Minnesota, it is required that you become a notary public, which allows you to administer oaths or affirmations at depositions and other hearings. Traditionally the rules of civil procedure required a court reporter or stenographer, as officers of the court, to record the deposition and administer the oath or affirmation to the witness in person.

That all changed in early April of 2020 as the COVID lockdowns began, which in turn caused the legal system throughout the United States to struggle with the health and welfare of staff and members of the public and result in a backlog of cases. Faced with the need for litigation to move forward during the pandemic and to help protect people's health, a number of states adopted new regulations granting court reporters who were current notaries reprieve from the physical presence notarization rule when participating in criminal, civil, and administrative proceedings.

The Minnesota Legislation, on the other hand, was ahead of the game, and on January 1, 2019, enacted remote online notarization pursuant to *Minnesota Statutes 358 and 359*. These statutes allow a notary public who is physically located in this state to perform a remote online notarial act as defined in *Minnesota Statute 358.645*, which is the Remote Online Notary Public. According to the National Notary Association, "remote notarization" happens when a signer or deponent personally appears before the notary at the time of the notarization using audio-visual technology over the internet instead of being physically present in the same room. Remote online notarization is also called webcam notarization, online notarization, or virtual notarization.

Subd. 2 of 358.645 outlines the qualifications someone has to meet in order to obtain authorization to administer the oath/affirmation remotely and eliminates the need to physically be in the presence of the witness. Those qualifications specific to court reporters require that they be a current notary public and apply online for online notarization registration at the Minnesota Secretary of State website. Before a notary performs a remote online notarization, the notary must register with the Minnesota Secretary of State according to *Section 359.01, Subd. 5*, and must certify that the notary intends to use communication technology that conforms to this section.

Unless terminated under that section, the term of registration to perform remote online notarial acts begins on the registration starting date set by the Secretary of State and continues as long as the notary public's current commission to perform notarial acts remains valid. The Secretary of State may reject a registration application if the applicant fails to comply with Paragraphs (a) to (d) of *Subd. 2*.

Court reporters should be aware that *Subd. 3 of 358.645* only authorizes a remote online notary public to perform a remote online notarial act while the remote online notary public is physically located in the state of Minnesota. It does, however, allow a remote online notary public located in Minnesota to perform a remote online notarial act using communication technology outside the state of Minnesota but within the United States.

Once the remote proceedings are over and the transcript has been prepared and is ready to be delivered, you should note on the cover page and your certificate page that the deposition was conducted using Zoom teleconference technology or WebEx or other communication technology.

Even though the height of the pandemic seems to be over, remote depositions are still being utilized by attorneys. To apply for remote online notarization authorization, applicants must be currently registered as an active Minnesota notary, must have filed the notary public commission in the county where they live, must be in possession of proof of filing (receipt or copy) and be able to produce that proof upon request. If you have not filed with your resident county, you will need to comply with *Minnesota Statutes Section 359.061, Subd. 1 and 357.021, Subd. 2 (12)* before applying for remote online notarization authorization.

Note: If your notary commission expires, you must re-register for remote online notarization authorization with the Minnesota Secretary of State.



MINNE-strokes Publication Team

Editor: Rhonda Franken
Designer: Ryan Ziegler
Editorial Staff: Emily Lettner
Elizabeth Peterson
Angie Sundell



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To submit articles, send to:
Rhonda Franken, *Minne-strokes* Editor
Rhonda.Franken@courts.state.mn.us

NEXT NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: December 1, 2023

Q&A ON PASSING THE RMR CERTIFICATION TEST

Submitted by Emily Lettner, RPR

If you are currently working towards or are interested in working towards acquiring your RMR certification, please enjoy this conversation from four of our Minnesota reporters, Julie Buehler, Michelle Foley, Janell Gruber, and Lynne Krenz, who have achieved this goal.

Q: Please tell us whether you are an official or a freelancer.

Julie Buehler: Official.

Michelle Foley: Retired official.

Janell Gruber: Captioner, retired official reporter.

Lynne Krenz: I am an official reporter in federal court.

Q: When did you pass the RMR?

JB: 2014.

MF: May 1991.

JG: 1994.

LK: In 2013.

Q: Did you take the test in person or remotely?

JB: In person.

MF: In person.

JG: In person.

LK: In person.

Q: Did you pass all three legs of the RMR exam on the first try? If not, how many tries did it take to succeed?

JB: Two times.

MF: Pretty sure I did? I know I had some struggles with the CRR test.

JG: Yes.

LK: Passed on first try.

Q: What other certifications do you hold in addition to the RMR?

JB: CRR, CRC.

MF: RPR and CRR.

JG: Certified Realtime Reporter, Certified CART Provider, Certified Realtime Captioner (although now the CCP and CRC are combined into just the CRC).

LK: The CRR and CRC.

Q: What was your motivation for wanting to obtain your RMR certification?

JB: Just the challenge of it.

MF: In addition to improving my reporting skills, a big motivation for me at the time was I needed the points for my continuing education points! 😊

JG: It's common knowledge that half the battle to have a shot at the job YOU want is simply getting an interview. Having your RMR certification not only puts you at the top of the list for an interview, it also gives you a competitive edge against all of the other reporters in the job market. Depending on the employer, it may also garner you a higher wage.

LK: To improve my skills and be a better reporter. At the time I was an official in state court and aspired to work in federal court. I decided to obtain my RMR as well as other certifications to be better qualified, along with the benefit of being eligible to be at the top of the pay scale if I obtained a federal position.

Q: What sort of prep did you do for the test? Did you take practice tests? Did you have a daily practice routine?

JB: I purchased practice audio tests from NCRA and practiced multiple times a day.

MF: I recall a study pamphlet or study questions which may have been distributed by NCRA for the written exam, and, yes, I did practice with “speed tapes” back at that time as often as I could.

JG: My test prep consisted of practicing to speed tapes at least an hour each night. It’s been so long ago that it was actually cassette tapes played in my Walkman, lol! I would start out at a comfortable speed and then play a faster dictation until I couldn’t keep up. I would then practice the same material until the faster speed didn’t feel so fast anymore, and then I’d move on to different material.

LK: I practiced quite a few days a week at 300+ wpm as well as went through each transcript to correct errors and change my writing.

Q: Was there anything that happened on test day that caught you by surprise?

JB: I thought the literary was completed and stopped writing, but it was just a slight pause at the end. I dropped too much to pass.

MF: Not that I recall.

JG: Not that I remember.

LK: No. I sat in the very front of the room so there would be less distractions.

Q: Is there anything else you’d like to share with us?

JB: I also concentrated on my physical health in conjunction with the steno practice. I think that part gets neglected. Eating healthy and exercise helped in being more composed and feeling good about myself. And right before the test I ate peanut butter for extra energy!

MF: As inconvenient as it was for some people to have to travel to take the exams in person, I’m glad I did all my test taking back in the day. Being in a room with others similarly situated, stressed out, all hoping for the best for each other was not such a bad experience. Being isolated testing remote I feel would be much more stressful. That’s coming from someone from the old school though.

JG: Personally, I’m a big proponent of the slop-and-drop method. During the test when you feel things getting away from you, just slop it down and move on so you don’t lose your focus. You’d be surprised what you can discern from your notes when you’re transcribing later on. If there’s a word that completely throws you and it might take five strokes, just drop it. It’s better to have one error for a missed word than eight errors for slowing down to think about how to write it and then missing the rest of the sentence. I would also advise people to obtain their RMR first and then work on their CRR. The slop-and-drop method is just not conducive to obtaining the CRR. The CRR requires much more finesse and accuracy, and there’s no going back to fix untranslates.

LK: Being focused and having practiced helped with passing the test. I would encourage everyone to continue to achieve additional certifications.

BRIEF FORMS FOR PROPER NOUNS – FIRST NAMES – PART 2 (J-Z)

Compiled by Rhonda Franken, RMR, *MINNE-strokes* Editor

As a rule, use an asterisk with proper nouns, if possible (for example, J*IL for Jill, JO*EN for Joan), combining two or more strokes into one stroke (for example, Sabrina, SBRAO*EN rather than SA/BRAOE/NA). I apologize for some of the combined strokes if it's offensive (P*IG for Peggy) 😊. If it is not a conflict with another word (such as is the case with J*IM for Jim and JIM for gym), then depending on preference use the asterisk for consistency or omit the asterisk. When it is not possible to write with an asterisk, then disregard the asterisk if it doesn't create a conflict (for example, LAER for Larry), or get creative 😊. The following list is somewhat abbreviated (N for TPH, etc.).

| | | | |
|----------|------------------|----------|--------------|
| Joseph | JOEF | Patricia | PRIRB |
| Josh | JORB | Patrick | PR*IK |
| Joshua | JAORB | Paul | PA*UL |
| Joy | JO*I | Paulette | PA*ULT |
| Joyce | JO*IS | Pearl | P*ERL |
| Juan | WA*UN | Peggy | P*IG |
| Juanita | WA*UNT | Perry | PA*ER |
| Judith | JAOU*UGT | Pete | PAO*ET |
| Judy | JAO*ID | Peter | PAO*ERT |
| Julia | JA*UL | Phil | F*L |
| Julie | J*UL | Phillip | F*P |
| Justin | J*INTS | Quinn | KW*IN |
| Karen | KA*IRN | Rachel | RAIRBL |
| Karl | KA*RL | Randall | RA*NLD |
| Kate | KA*ET | Randy | DRA*IND |
| Kathrine | KR*IN | Ray | RA*I |
| Kathleen | KLAO*ENT | Raymond | RA*IMD |
| Kathy | KAE*GT | Rebecca | BRA*K/BRA*EK |
| Katie | KAO*IT | Reece | RAO*ES |
| Kay | KA*I | Reed | RAO*ED |
| Kayla | KLA* | Rex | R*EBGS |
| Kaylee | KLAO*E | Rhonda | RAO*ND |
| Kaylynn | KLA*IN/KL*EN | Richard | RIFPD |
| Keith | KAO*EGT | Rick | R*IK |
| Kelly | K*IL | Riley | RAO*IL |
| Kelsey | K*ELS | Rita | RA*IT |
| Ken | K*EN | Rob | RO*B |
| Kendall | KA*ENLD/K*ENLGTS | Robert | RO*BT |
| Kent | K*ENT | Roberta | RAO*BT |
| Kevin | K*EFN | Robin | RO*IN |
| Kim | K*IM | Roger | RO*J |
| Kimberly | KB*ERL | Ron | RO*N |
| Kirk | K*IRK | Ronald | RO*NLD |
| Kirstin | K*IRTS | Rose | RO*EZ |

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
| Kristin | KR*INTS | Ross | RO*S |
| Kurt | K*URT | Ruth | RAO*UGT |
| Kyle | KAO*IL | Ryan | RAO*IN |
| Lane | LA*IN | Sabrina | SBRAO*EN |
| Lee | LAO*E | Sam | SA*M |
| Leslie | L*ELZ | Samantha | SMA*N |
| Lewis | L*US | Samuel | SAO*UM |
| Liam | LAO*EM | Sandra | SDRA* |
| Linda | LA*IND | Sandy | SA*IND |
| Lisa | LA*IS | Sarah | SA*IR |
| Liz | L*IZ | Scott | SKO*T |
| Lloyd | LO*ID | Seth | S*EGT |
| Logan | LO*EG | Shane | SHA*IN |
| Lori | LOIR | Shannon | SHAO*N |
| Lou | LAO*U | Shawn | SHA*UN |
| Louis | LAO*US | Shea | SHA*I |
| Louise | LAO*UZ | Sheila | SHA*/SLA* |
| LuAnn | LAO*UN (Lu=L*U) | Shelby | SH*EBL/SH*IBL |
| Lucas | LAO*UKS | Shelly | SH*IL |
| Luke | LAO*UK | Skyler | SKAO*IRL |
| Lydia | LA*ID | Sophia | SO*EF |
| Lyndsey | SL*IND | Spencer | SP*ERNS |
| Lynette | L*INT | Stacy | STA*IS |
| Lynn | L*IN | Stephanie | ST*IFN |
| Macy | MA*EZ | Stephen | ST*EFN |
| Madison | SMAO*ND | Steve | STAO*EF |
| Mandy | MA*IND | Steven | STAO*EFN |
| Manuel | MA*NL | Susan | S*UFN |
| Margaret | MARGT | Suzanne | SAO*UFN |
| Nancy | NA*INS | Sydney | S*IND |
| Naomi | NAO*M | Tamara | TA*RM |
| Natalie | NA*LT | Tammy | TA*IM |
| Nate | NA*IT | Tanner | TA*ERN |
| Nathan | NA*IGT/NA*INT | Tara | TA*IR |
| Nathaniel | NA*NL | Taylor | TA*IL |
| Nicholas | N*IKS | Theresa | THRAO*EZ |
| Nick | N*IK | Thomas | THO*MS |
| Nicole | NO*EL | Timothy | TH*I |
| Noah | NAO* | Tracy | TRA*IS |
| Nolan | NAO*NL/NO*ENL | Wayne | WA*IN |
| Oliver | LOIFR | Wendy | W*IND |
| Olivia | LOIF | Whitney | WH*INT |
| Paige | PA*IJ | William | W*M |
| Pam | PA*M | Wyatt | WAO*IT |
| Paris | PA*IRS | Zach | STKPWHRA*K |
| Parker | PA*ERK | Zachary | STKPWHRA*IK |

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lynzie@zempelreporting.com

Works with the Treasurer in reviewing the financial records of the Association.

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Board Liaison: Deanna Oaks
oaksdeanna@gmail.com

Assists in the coordination and facilitation of the various NCRA certifications.

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Board Liaison: Jennifer Sharp
Contact: Christine Clark
(Christine is no longer on the board but is still running the pro bono program)
chrisclarkzimm@gmail.com

Facilitates services to people who are low income.

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Board Liaison: Rhonda Franken
rhonda.franken@courts.state.mn.us

Prepares and issues the official publication of the Association.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Board Liaison: Shelby Brown
shelby.delta@gmail.com

Represents MAVRC in forming relations with legal associations to further the interests of the Association.

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Board Liaison: Jeanna Zunker
jeannazunker@gmail.com

Assists with student internships and administers a mentoring program.

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Board Liaison: Shelby Brown
shelby.delta@gmail.com

Stays abreast of technological advances in the court reporting field.

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randiann.harvey@courts.state.mn.us

Deals with issues affecting official court reporters.

CART & CLOSED CAPTIONING

Board Liaison: Deanna Oaks
oaksdeanna@gmail.com

Handles issues affecting CART providers and broadcast captioners.

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Board Liaison: S. Ryan Ziegler
srziegler@gmail.com

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Board Liaison: Deanna Oaks
oaksdeanna@gmail.com

Helps promote and monitors ethics among court reporters.

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Board Liaison: Lynzie Zempel
lynzie@zempelreporting.com

Deals with issues affecting court reporters in the freelance field.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

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lynzie@zempelreporting.com

Helps raise funds for the Association.

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Board Liaison: S. Ryan Ziegler
srziegler@gmail.com

Acts as a liaison on behalf of both official and freelance reporters with the state legislature, judicial districts, SCA's Office, and others.

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Board Liaison: Shelby Brown
shelby.delta@gmail.com

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: RandiAnn Harvey

BUSINESS AGENT

Chad Orgon- corgon@teamsterslocal320.org

First District

Dana Carmichael - danacarmichael@outlook.com

* Lori Krenik- lorikrenik@gmail.com

Second District

* Jennifer Brama - brama.jennifer@gmail.com

* Lora Kohan - lora.kohan@gmail.com

Third District

* Jessica Berke - jessica.berke@outlook.com

Fourth District

* Barb Schultz - barbara23@yahoo.com

Fifth District

Leah Cornish - gustafsonlr@hotmail.com

* Christian Pfeiffer - cwpfeiffer8@gmail.com

Sixth District

(Non-Contact Person Only) Jen Wutz - bookwormwutz@gmail.com

Seventh District

* Amanda Salber - amandasalber@gmail.com

* Holli Zortman - holli.zortman@gmail.com

Eighth District

Lisa Vosika - visalisa@tds.net

* Ashley Welz - ashleylange24@gmail.com

Ninth District

Paula Weitnauer - paulawits@hotmail.com

* Victoria Dudeck - victoriadudeck@gmail.com

Tenth District

Sharon Spartz - srsparz@mac.com

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