



MINNE-strokes

Minnesota Court Reporters: On and Off the Record

What's Inside?

Winter 2023
Volume 26, Issue 4

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President's Address

By Lori Morrow

Greetings! My name is Lori Morrow. I am a long-time member of MAVRC. Now that my children are grown, I am ready and excited to serve as the 2023-2024 president of the MAVRC board. I look forward to working closely with the vice president and the rest of the board in ensuring that MAVRC remains a strong and vibrant organization that advocates and serves our members and our industry.

I currently work as an official court reporter in Scott County. For the majority of my 30-year career, I worked as a freelance certified realtime reporter and CART/captioner at Paradigm Reporting & Captioning and at Cavalier Reporting. I have two precious daughters, both in their early twenties, and a Chiweenie named Tessa.

(Cont'd on page 2)

I have loved every aspect of this court reporting career. From it I have grown, learned, been challenged, developed connections with wonderful people, and experienced things I would have never had the opportunity to be a part of without this career. A big shout-out and thank you to the past board members and committee volunteers for their dedication, commitment, and hard work. So many dedicated members selflessly give so much of their time for the benefit of others.

As president, one of my objectives over the next year is to continue the work of recruiting new court reporting students by staffing high school career days and participating in Court Reporting and Captioning Week. Anoka Tech and Jennifer Sati are doing excellent work in preparing the next generation of court reporters. We, as officials, CART/captioners, and freelancers, can continue to mentor, guide, and support them as they embark on their career. We want to continue the mentorship programs already in place and build on them.

Another of my objectives is to retain current members, reinstate past members, and recruit new members to this organization. Your membership is critical in continuing our work. Please keep your MAVRC membership current and encourage your friends and colleagues to join as well. Welcome to our newest members! We look forward to getting to know you! When we work together and remain steadfast, we can make things happen. Your membership not only makes us a stronger and larger group, but your membership dues enable us to continue operating and fighting for you behind the scenes. You are vitally important to us. Thank you for your continued support of this amazing profession.

The board continues to be fiscally responsible in how we spend your money. We will continue to retain the services of Joel Carlson, our valuable and necessary lobbyist.

Our membership consists of students, CART/captioners, freelance and official reporters, new and veteran reporters. Over the past few years, the stenographic court reporting community has faced new challenges that we in Minnesota and across the country have never seen before. Going forward, our goal is to address those challenges and to set priorities that align with our mission, our values, and the very important concerns of our members. It is important that we as a group remain unified, that we listen to each other and address our members' needs.

Since its inception, MAVRC has been committed to promoting the stenographic court reporting profession as the preferred method of making the record. One mission in MAVRC's Constitution and Bylaws is to provide educational development to advance the profession of court reporting and captioning in Minnesota.

At a time when information is so readily available to the public, it is our duty as an association of members of this industry to educate ourselves, our colleagues, court administration, and our clients about what we do, how well we do it, and why we as stenographers are the gold standard when it comes to maintaining the accuracy and integrity of the record. We will continue the programs we already have in place and create new forums that address today's issues. One of those issues facing our industry today is the introduction of AI and speech-to-text transcription and the belief that they can function as alternative, less expensive methods to create the record. Just a quick Google search of "AI and court reporting" produces articles and marketing materials directed at legal professionals about AI's transcription capabilities.

We will continue to learn about AI and develop ways to educate and inform our clients and users about the risks and complications created by AI and how dangerous a tool it is to use in the legal and judicial arenas. In 2019, Past NCRA President Sue Terry created a task force called NCRA STRONG. "One of NCRA STRONG's missions is to combat false proclamations that digital and automatic speech recognition (ASR) methods of capturing the spoken word are equal or superior to stenographic means and/or that these methods are less expensive. Don't be fooled. With the assistance of forensic experts, the committee is conducting research and undertaking efforts to educate the users of our services about the dangers and, frequently, more costly nature of these alternative methodologies." MAVRC will align with NCRA STRONG in this mission.

MAVRC will also continue to offer informative educational opportunities at our fall convention and spring seminar, which carry CEU credits to help reporters retain hard-earned certifications. Attending these conferences is important as it provides opportunities to develop personal and professional connections, to learn, network, and gain insights into the latest trends and innovations in court reporting. I look forward to meeting you and getting to know you at these events.

I invite you to take a look on the MAVRC website at our committees and sign up to volunteer your time and talents to a committee that interests you. (Also see page 32 of this issue of *MINNE-strokes* for a list of committees.) You do not have to be on the board to be active and share your wealth of knowledge. Pay it forward! Help others. Take an active role in advancing our profession. Help us help you! "Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action. These actions shape and mold the present into a future of which we can all be proud." -Helen Dyer. I invite you to renew, participate, and join us in continuing to keep us strong.

Let's celebrate each other, our successes, and look forward to the New Year. "New Year = A New Life! Decide today who you will become, what you will give, how you will live." - Anthony Robbins

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.

Current Job Openings:

Judge Steven Hanke - Lake and Cook Counties
Judge David Knutson - Dakota County
Judge Melissa Saterbak - Anoka County
Judge Paula Vraa - Scott County
Judge Richelle Wahi - Dakota County



Don't Forget to Renew for 2024!

Please log in to your Wild Apricot account to renew your MAVRC membership. Dues remain \$120 per year, but if you renew before 1/1/2024, you will be eligible for a \$20 discount.

If your account is set to auto-renew, the payment method on file will be charged on January 1, 2024.

You can also fill out the form on the next page and return it to the MAVRC post office with a check. If you have any questions about renewing, you can email MAVRC@MAVRC.org. Thank you for your continuing support!





**MINNESOTA
ASSOCIATION OF VERBATIM
REPORTERS & CAPTIONERS**

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mavrc@mavrc.org
www.mavrc.org

MAVRC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION 2024

Please return completed application electronically to MAVRC@MAVRC.org or
mail to MAVRC, P.O. Box 18102, West St. Paul, MN 55118.

Membership Type: Renewal New (Endorsed by MAVRC Member: _____)

Name: _____ Email: _____

Judicial District or Firm/Agency: _____

Home Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Work Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Home Fax: _____ Work Fax: _____

Send MAVRC Mail to: Home Work CAT Software: _____

Member Status (circle): Freelance, Official, Captioner, CART provider, Student, Scopist, Retired,
Transcriptionist, Associate, Firm Owner, Federal, Vendor, Instructor

What certifications do you hold? _____

Would you like to be listed in the MAVRC Directory? YES NO

What address/phone information would you like listed in the Directory? Home Work

What services do you provide that you would like to have listed in the Directory?

Overflow Freelance Court Per Diem CART Provider Captioner

Payment of dues: All membership dues are payable on or before January 1st of each calendar year. A \$20 discount will apply if payment is received by December 31, 2023. All members whose dues are not paid by March 31, 2024, will be suspended and dropped from the roll of membership.

_____ \$120.00 Regular Member (\$100.00 if submitted by December 31, 2023)

_____ \$70.00 Associate Member (\$50.00 if submitted by December 31, 2023)

_____ \$25.00 Student Member

_____ Retired Member (Board Approved)

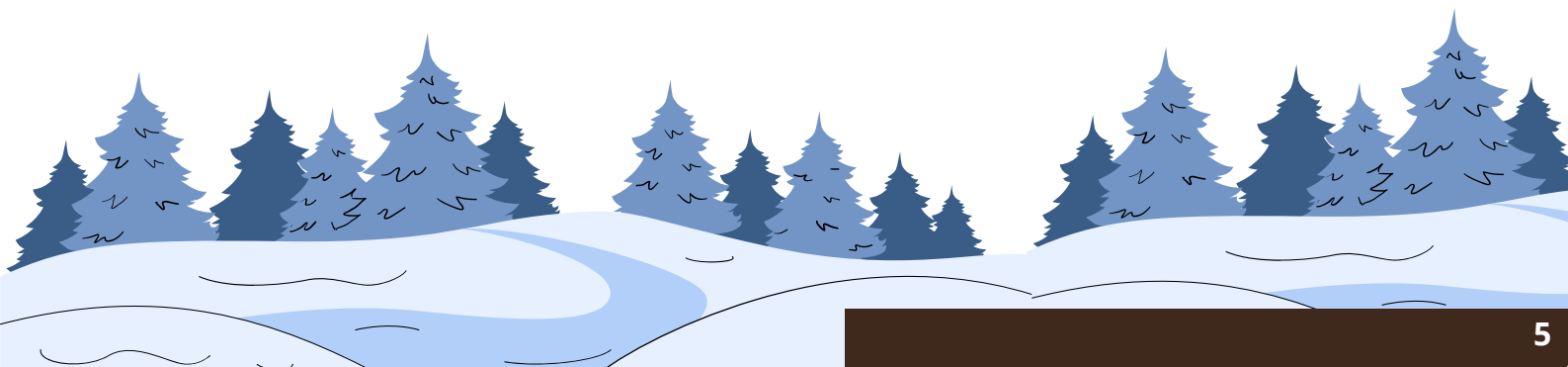
_____ Lobbying Contribution

_____ \$25.00 - I would like to sponsor a student.

MAVRC would like to acknowledge your donations or gifts. If you wish to remain anonymous, please indicate Yes, I wish to remain anonymous

\$ _____ Total Amount Enclosed – Thank you for your support!

Dues payments to MAVRC are NOT deductible as charity deductions for federal tax purposes. Amounts may be deductible as a necessary business expense. Consult your tax professional.



2022-2023 Board of Directors

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Thank You to Our Outgoing Board Members!

Jeanna Zunker has been on the board since 2021, serving as Director-at-Large A (Freelance).



Elizabeth Peterson has been on the board since 2022 as an ex-officio student member appointed by the president.



Both completed their terms at the fall convention. Thank you to Jeanna and Elizabeth!



Fall Convention Recap

FORENSIC PATHOLOGY & CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

By Karen Lebens, RPR, DSA

Owen Middleton is an Assistant Chief Medical Examiner in Hennepin County and has been working there for 16 years. Medical Examiners are trained in Forensic Pathology, including many years of medical training and are appointed to their positions. Not only do they perform autopsies to determine the cause and manner of death, but they will go out to do scene investigations as well as perform microscopic examinations. Medical Examiners are involved with deaths that occur outside of the hospital, and they know that their work could bring them into the courtroom.

Dr. Middleton shared with us that there is quite an extensive history of the use of coroners dating back as far as the 9th and 10th centuries and their duties included the collection of a tax. That progressed into more of a legal official with specific responsibilities and eventually the recognition for the need to have Medical Examiners. Coroners didn't need to have any medical training; but only needed to be of a minimum age, registered to vote, have no felonies and they are elected officials.

While you might think that Medical Examiners are the standard at this time, you might be surprised to learn that that is far from true. Because of a shortage of trained physicians, there are still many coroners throughout the United States. I have to admit that this fact surprised me.

Karen Lebens is an official court reporter for the Hon. Eric J. Braaten, Carver County, First Judicial District



COURT REPORTERS AND SECONDHAND TRAUMA

By **Tim McGowan**

Macey Christian's presentation regarding vicarious or secondhand trauma was awesome. And perhaps a tad uncomfortable at times. Just what the doctor ordered, in fact.

Working in court can have its challenging days, where we can learn entirely too much about what people sometimes do to other people, children, and animals. Captioning the news, and just experiencing life, sometimes, can have just as much emotional baggage to contend with. What we experience and hear about can weigh on the mind, bubbling up at the worst possible times. The answer is, of course, no surprise: alcohol. (Checks notes.) No, wait. That's what not to do. Sorry. The answer's therapy, of course.

Macey touched quickly on definitions of trauma and had us break out into groups to discuss trauma as represented in pop culture. One popular misconception is that trauma is something one can and should get over quickly. That one struck rather close to home for this all-too-stereotypically male man and was a great takeaway: one cannot always simply walk it off and get back in the game.

Macey listed a number of what I noted as victim variables, that is, who might be most susceptible to victimization. Unsurprising factors include being female, being young or elderly, one's race, one's income, familial dysfunction, prior psychiatric issues, and prior trauma. Genetics, I was surprised to learn, can also play a part in vulnerability to trauma.

Macey distinguished levels of traumatic response: acute stress disorder, which is new or short-lived; adjustment disorder, reflecting an emotional or behavioral reaction to a stressful event; and posttraumatic stress disorder, defined as a stress disorder lasting more than one month.

Therapy, again, is the correct answer; Macey pointed out that knowledge of what's going on is very powerful.

What intrigued me most was Macey's description of ART, or accelerated resolution therapy. She is a Master Accelerated Resolution Therapy clinician and says she utilizes that modality often. She claims resolution of issues can be achieved within one to five sessions. Now, if only there were something wrong with me so I could test out her claims...

Tim McGowan is an official court reporter in the Fifth Judicial District.



SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION & THE HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY

By Lisa E. Soma, RMR, CRR

Adam Rademacher spoke with us on the topic of sign language interpretation. Prior to this seminar, I viewed the deaf and hard-of-hearing population more in terms of disability than a language barrier.

The sentence that led me to this conclusion is when Mr. Rademacher explained how the deaf individual is able to function in their day-to-day life. They got up, got dressed, got themselves to this particular medical appointment. The deaf person understands you just fine. You need me, the interpreter, here because it is you that cannot understand what they have to say.

Mr. Rademacher learned sign language in 5th grade to enable him to communicate with friends in his neighborhood and others he met at school. In 2001, he became certified and has been passionate about making sure the deaf community is among the ADA compliant group where information is shared. Why in 2001? During 9/11, there was no deaf interpretation to inform nor notify the deaf community of what was going on or happening in New York City with the bombing of the Twin Towers. Can you imagine?

We learned how the language of sign is more storytelling than of sentence structure. Context is very important to deaf individuals. This can be seen by watching sign language.

Much like the United States has different regional dialects, believe it or not, sign language has regional variations, as well. When signing at a convention, a participant said to Mr. Rademacher, "You must be from Minnesota." He answered, "I am. How did you know?" It is because of the placement of the sign language on his lower body rather than his upper body.

Other similarities are much like using our voice, the louder we speak, the more dramatic or urgent our words are. In sign, the larger and more body movement you see in signing, the more dramatic and urgent the story. An outstanding example of this can be seen in the ASI interpretation of the song *This is Me* from the movie *The Greatest Showman*. As you watch, you are able to see soft, small movements at first, and then they become larger and more powerful.

Another interesting point I learned is the fact that in the normal speaking world, when someone has something "positive," it means good, well, or something upbeat. However, in the medical world the word positive when it comes to tests or exams means bad, unfortunate, or abnormal. For this reason, it is very important and even crucial that certified interpreters are used so that everyone is able to understand one another crystal clear.

Lisa Soma is an official court reporter in the First Judicial District for the soon-to-be retired Judge Arlene Perkkio..



The BCA, DNA, & MN Cold Cases

By Kari Opsal, RPR

Ann Gross, a forensic scientist at the Minnesota Bureau of Apprehension, presented an interesting, educational, and detailed presentation. It was evident she is a passionate forensic scientist at the Minnesota BCA -- 35 years of experience. She delved into what a BCA scientist experiences in their day-to-day tasks.

Ms. Gross detailed the BCA lab overview: 1) drug chemistry – testing; 2) criminalistics – latent prints/firearms; 3) toxicology – alcohol testing/drug testing; 4) biology. We learned detailed info about DNA; no two people have the same DNA except twins.

Over many years at the BCA, she explained the history of technology used and its changes. Prior to 1991 serology was protocol. In 1991 – RFLP analysis begin; 2010 touch of swab can determine DNA; used copies of DNA for comparison. She discussed three different types of testing bloods used; mentioned a “large” portion of work/testing at the BCA is testing guns via swabs. By 2015 the BCA began using Mitochondrial DAN testing for agencies throughout the US. In 2018 Familiar DAN testing/searching was prevalent; 2019, YSTRS (Y filer Plus) and 2020 X STRS (Argusx) prevalent; by 2021, STR MIX. She discussed in detail SNP/STR – DNA terminology, such as, Nuclear DAN – both parents carry; two copies of DNA in each person; unique to individual (Linear genome) and Mitochondrial (mt DNA) – maternally inherited; not unique to individual; (circular genome). SO MUCH DETAIL!

Several interesting facts gleaned from her presentation: Siblings share 50 percent of the same DNA. Additionally, BCA made its first national hit in 1991 by using CODIS databases – criminal offender/ forensic/ missing persons. This database helps pinpoint matches of DNA. State and national databases gather forensic samples and help solve cases; additionally, Criminal Database and Missing Persons Database. Ms. Gross briefly touched upon the “Golden State Killer” case out of CA; this was a familial DNA search. (Thank goodness technology keeps improving.)

Beginning in 2009 Ms. Gross began working in the Missing Persons Unit as a caseworker. Within this division there are four scientists specializing in missing person work, which can include things such as: unidentified bones, toothbrushes, medical samples, and razors. From these “samples” the scientists run comparisons through the CODIS database. A specimen collected and combined with DNA can aid in the missing person’s identification.



(Cont'd on page 11)

The BCA, DNA, & MN Cold Cases

(cont'd from page 10)

There are five or six labs throughout the US that deal with missing person cases. If possible, bone extractions are beneficial in solving/determining body identification. Ideally, the best bone “extractions” are petrous (part of the skull bone), the foot bones, and the patella (kneecap). Scientists extract these bones by cleaning the bone, cutting the bone (Dremel tool), and then pulverizing the bone section into powder. This procedure is called “bone extraction” which can help determine one’s DNA.

In 2015 the Minnesota BCA received a grant for the assistance of finding missing persons, which has allowed the BCA to exhume nine buried missing persons individuals. From these nine exhumed burial sites, scientists collected 116 bones, 10 extractions from each body. And, again, from those nine burials exhumed, two cases were eventually solved. Finally, some answers for those loved individuals’ family.

This presentation was interesting, technical, and very educational. It was fascinating to see what a scientist experiences in their day-to-day tasks. Thank you to the MAVRC Board for providing such interesting speakers for our fall conference.

Kari Opsal, RPR, is an official court reporter for the Hon. Colleen King, Scott County, First Judicial District.

Reporter Panel – Tips and Tricks

By Rhonda Franken, RMR

The last two sessions on Saturday was a reporter panel, facilitated by Jean Whalen, Suzanne Hagen and Angie Sundell. Deanna Oaks served as moderator extraordinaire.

Topics covered: Realtime viewing connections - a demo of Text on Top and CaseviewNet Cloud; tips for preparing for certification tests, followed by a meditation led by Suzanne; briefs; stacking/resolving word boundary issues; dictionary management; and home office setup.

It was a great way to brainstorm and network with other reporters from around the state.



Matthew Millios: Imposter Syndrome: Embrace it!

By Elizabeth Peterson

Michael Millios, Attorney-at-Law, presented a seminar entitled “Mindfulness for Stress Management” at MAVRC’s fall convention in Brainerd. Mike shared some of his background, which includes being an army veteran, time as both a prosecutor and a public defender, a mediator, and a wellness coach; along with how his past played into his search for peace and joy.

One of the first things that caught my attention was this quote, “We need to take care of ourselves. We are humans, not our jobs.” As reporters and students, we have all felt the stress of a hectic court schedule with back-to-back jury trials, a longer than anticipated depo with a fast-talking attorney, a tech problem on a soon to start captioning or CART job, and those (sometimes dreaded) speed tests. Even though we love our steno machines – right? – we all have lives outside of them, and taking care of our health is important to continuing to enjoy both our work and personal lives.

Mike believes wellness comes through recognizing the two types of stress, eustress and distress, as we feel them and learning how to deal with them in a positive and beneficial way. To help us discover a personal practice of dealing with stress healthily, he gave us plenty of tools, tips, practices, and examples of practical applications of mindfulness, including a guided meditation, a guided breathing exercise, and a mantra practice.

A practical exercise that’s doable at any time is this quick three-step guide that Mr. Millios uses and shared with us.

1. Notice. “What am I feeling?”
2. Practice and Act. “What am I doing? What can I do?”
3. Communicate. “How am I communicating my need and/or getting support, if needed?”

Although he shared many of the tips and practices that he uses, Michael advocates for everyone to “create their own path” and find what works for you and your life. A couple other resources that Mike shared are Karunacmn.org, a website whose mission is to “offer yoga, meditation, and mindfulness to people impacted by the criminal legal system and under-resourced populations,” and milliosmw.com, which has resources such as blog posts, podcasts, and book recommendations.

Elizabeth Peterson is an official reporter for the 9th Judicial District, Beltrami County.

Convention 2023 Snapshots



2023-24 President
Lori Morrow



Students (above) and outgoing board members
(below) stand to be recognized.



2022-23 President
Lynzie Zempel



Jennifer Sati



Distinguished Service Award 2023: Jane Schleusner, CRI



MAVRC was excited to award the 2023 Distinguished Service Award to Jane Schleusner at the Fall Conference held in Brainerd Lakes on September 30th. Jane is incredibly deserving as she has worked tirelessly for the court reporting profession throughout the years, contributing as an official reporter, union leader, and instructor at Anoka Technical College. She worked as an official reporter for most of her career, 40+ years, and spent most of her time in Elk River, Minnesota.

Jane started teaching at Anoka Technical College in 2004 and is an integral component to student success at Anoka Tech. As many students and grads will attest, Jane has a gift of motivation and encouragement! Oh, and even though she “thinks she’s retired,” she is still teaching. She is someone who is ALWAYS willing to pitch in when there’s a need. This “helping” characteristic is evident from her work in the courts, the union, and at school. Rolling up her sleeves and working to get the job done is just simply her nature. Jane has played a large role in preserving court reporting in Minnesota as we know it, and she is certainly someone who is worthy of this Distinguished Service Award.



Volunteer of the Year Award 2023: Debbie Peterson

By Rhonda Franken, RMR

Debbie Peterson is the recipient of the 2023 Volunteer of the Year Award. Debbie is most deserving of this award, evidenced by the MAVRC Board positions she's held, most notably as President Elect, President 2019-2020 and Immediate Past President, in addition to the many activities she's been involved with as a member of MAVRC. She has also attended the NCRA Leadership & Legislative Boot Camp in order to train and learn the skills and strategies necessary to effectively advocate for the court reporting profession about important NCRA lobbying items in our state legislature and in Congress.



Among the many other committees and positions that Debbie has served on or held: The CE Committee as well as the Student Internship/School Liaison Committee. Debbie has presented at MAVRC seminars and conventions on a variety of topics and written articles for the MINNE-strokes publication regarding school and MAVRC events. Debbie often helps at Anoka Tech school events, volunteers at many high school events to promote the court reporting program and career and to recruit students for the Anoka Tech program. She's been an instructor of the A to Z Intro to Steno Machine Shorthand Class (Discover Steno) and has an easy rapport with any potential students in that class as well as current students.

As an official Debbie has served on the First Judicial District Court Reporters Board, the Labor-Management Committee as a liaison between Court Administration and Labor/Union members, and as a state union steward. Debbie is a great role model and mentor to new reporters in the field, particularly officials in the First Judicial District where she works as an official out of Dakota County for the Honorable Bruce Erman. Debbie is an excellent and seasoned official reporter. Debbie presented and performed realtime with Judge Wilton, her appointing authority at the time, to the State Court Record Workgroup in 2018, a task that was very helpful in explaining what reporters do. She has participated in the Veterans History Project and been one of the demonstrators of cutting-edge technology at the Court Technology Conference.

Congrats, Debbie, and thank you for your tireless volunteering and work for our state association and reporters statewide!

Willard I. Braun Student of the Year 2023: Matthew Kukielka

By Deb Longley, Adjunct Instructor at Anoka Technical College

Each year the Judicial Reporting Broadcast Captioning program at Anoka Technical College selects the Willard I. Braun Outstanding Student of the Year. This student exemplifies excellence by demonstrating a commitment to and exceeding program expectations, exuding leadership by example. This year's student of the year is Matthew Kukielka.

The Willard I. Braun Outstanding Student of the Year Award was established in 1983 by the Minnesota Shorthand Reporters Association in honor of Willard Braun's outstanding contributions to the development of excellence in court reporting education. Willard Braun was cofounder of the Northern Technical School of Business and was one of the pioneers in utilizing CAT technology. Mathew Kukielka surpasses Braun's professional standards by manifesting dedication and perseverance each week by consistently attending class, transcribing every test, completing assignment expectations with quality work, and contributing valuable class participation. Matthew epitomizes what is illustrative of a future professional.

In the words of Aristotle: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." Matthew Kukielka embodies the words of Aristotle and aligns with the Willard I. Braun conviction of an outstanding student.

Congratulations, Matthew!



*Congratulations to Patrick Mahon!

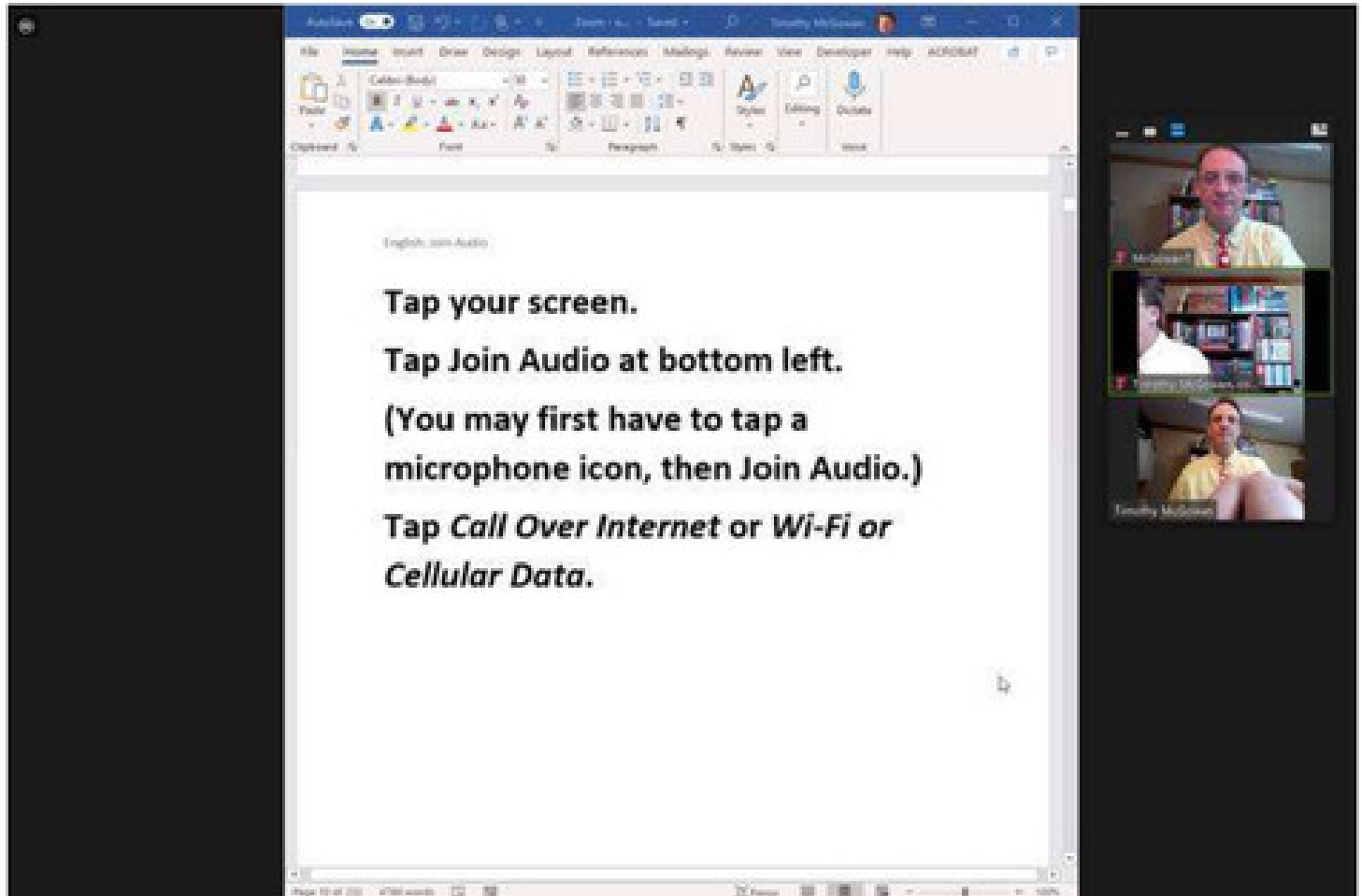
MAVRC member Patrick Mahon tied for 9th place this summer in the Q&A portion of NCRA's realtime contest, achieving 96.27% accuracy for a five-minute leg at 225 words per minute!



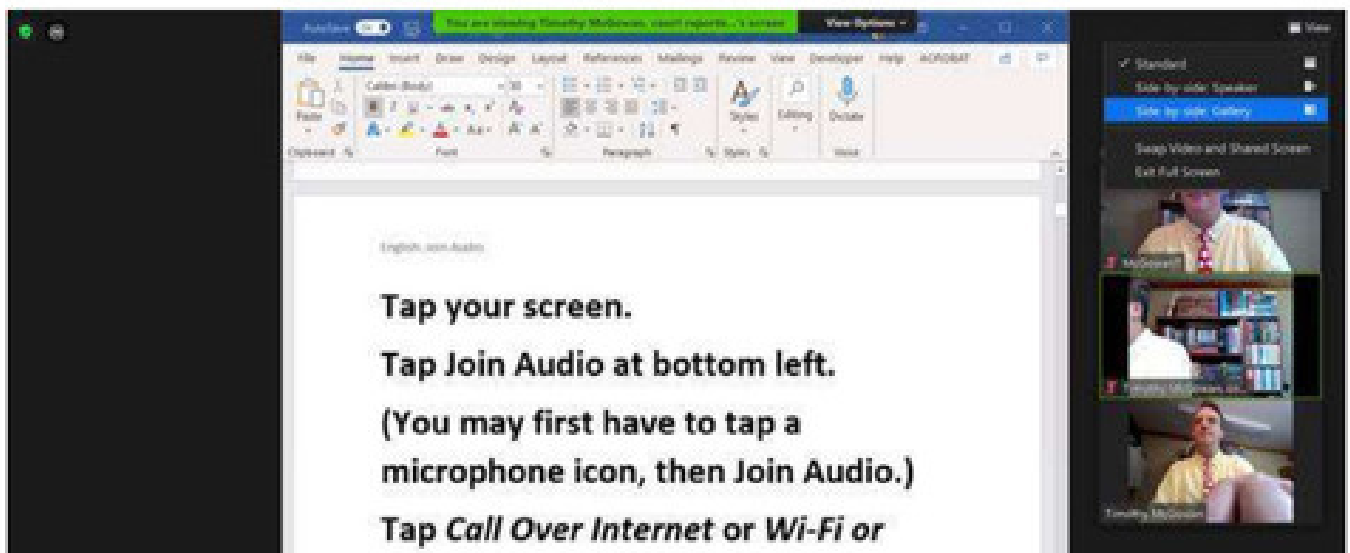
Coping with Zoom Screen Sharing

Screen sharing in Zoom is wonderful – unless you care more about seeing the people than the document or video. It’s hard to read lips normally, and when the person’s video feed has been reduced to a dancing postage stamp, forget about it.

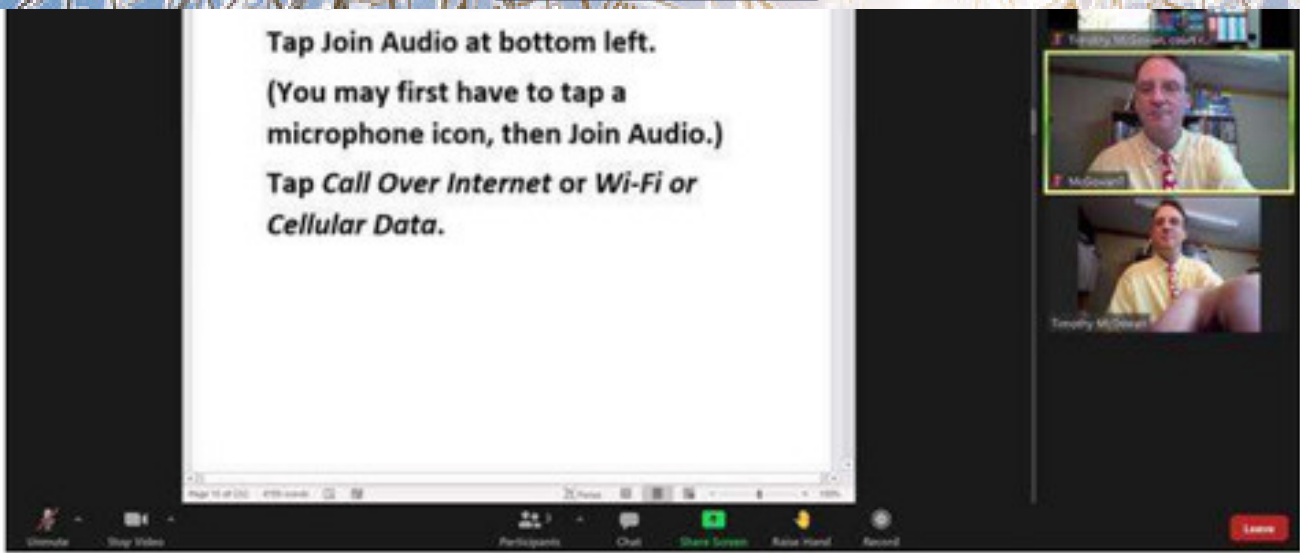
By default, Zoom sets the shared screen to full-screen and gives you a “floating” (movable) panel of participants (or you may see only one video feed).



At the very top right, click on View, and then choose Side-by-Side Gallery.

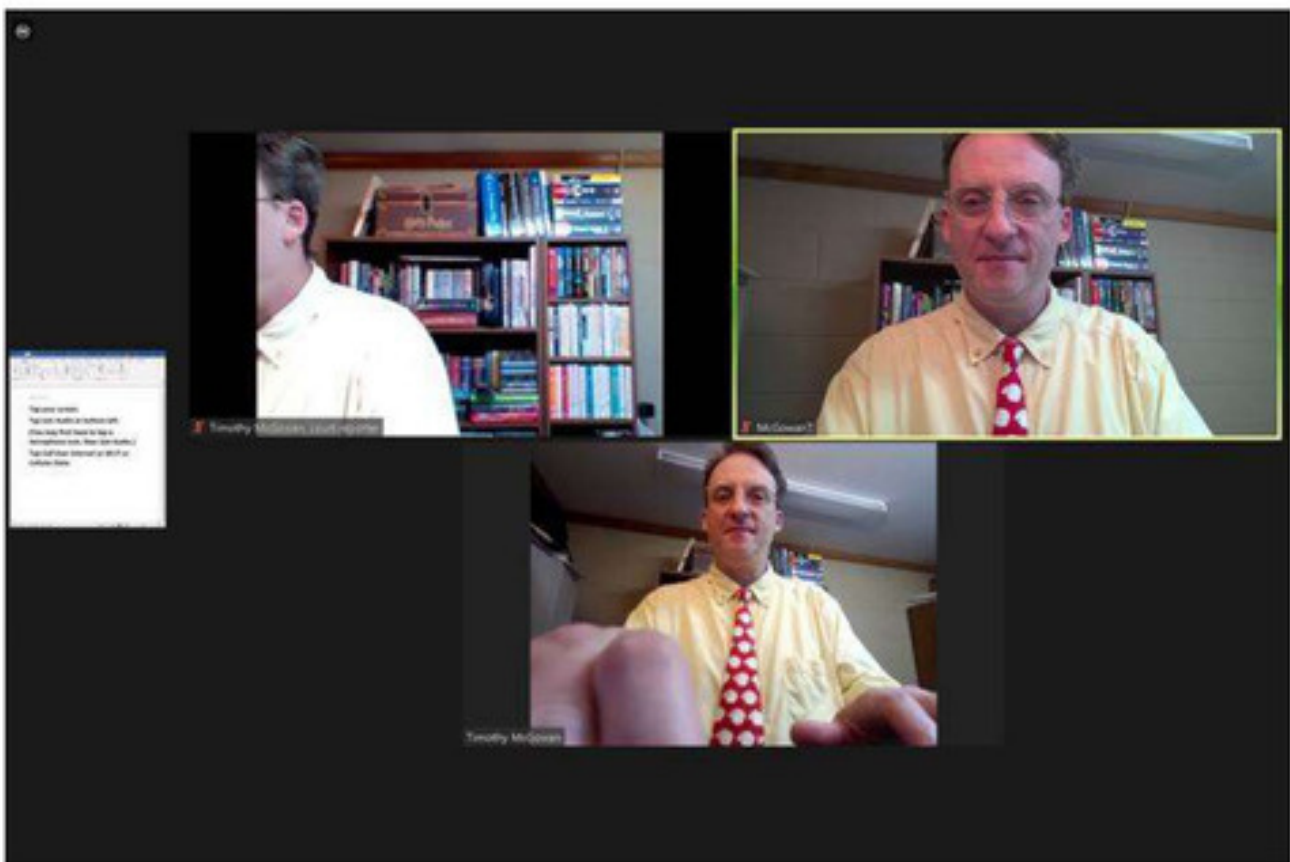


Now the pane of participants does not overlay the shared screen; it’s to the right of the shared screen.



There is a separator control halfway down the screen, between the shared screen and the panel of participants. (In the picture here, it's immediately to the left of the yellow-rimmed pane.) When you hover your mouse over it, you'll see the gray bar light up, top to bottom of the screen.

You can click and drag that separator bar all the way to the left, until the shared screen becomes a postage stamp, and you can now see all the participants at nearly full size.



Zoom will remember your choice of displaying the content side by side, but when you start a new Zoom session (the next day, for example), it will always resize the shared content to fairly full-screen, with the panel of participants on the right. Just drag the separator bar once again, and it will remain as chosen for the rest of the session when they stop and resume screen sharing.

"ELEVATOR PITCHES"

Created by Liz Harvey, Lin Riffle, and Lisa Migliore Black. These are great ideas on how to answer questions concerning why court reporters are essential compared to artificial intelligence and digital recording. (Infographic commissioned by CoverCrow)

1 WHY DON'T YOU JUST RECORD THINGS?



Because it still has to be transcribed later by someone, and that process is inefficient and less secure. Even with advances in technology, it still takes four or more transcriptionists to do the same work as one stenographer can do in the same time frame. And when recordings are sent to multiple transcriptionists, who may be located anywhere in the world, the chances of errors increase. More importantly, the security of your client's private and confidential information could be compromised. We always use good technology to make our jobs better and easier, but just recording things is old technology and a step backwards, not forwards.

2 AREN'T YOU WORRIED YOU'LL BE OUT OF A JOB?



Not at all. Court reporters are early adopters of technology. Our writers are fully computerized. We have sophisticated software that utilizes the latest technology to instantly translate what we write into a readable transcript that requires minimal editing later. While there are many advances in technology, no other system is even close to being able to replicate what we do. Problems with overlapping speech, dialects and accents and speech patterns and noisy environments cause unacceptably high error rates in recording systems, even utilizing the latest voice recognition. Have you ever watched TV captioning that lags behind, misses entire exchanges, or contains nonsense? That's AI translation. When you see high quality captions, you're seeing a trained and skilled stenographer at work.

3 OH, YOU DO IT THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY STILL?



There's nothing old-fashioned about what we do. Our writers are fully computerized. We have software that enhances our skills to provide an instantaneous real-time transcript to anyone in the world, with higher accuracy rates than any voice recognition system currently in use. What's old-fashioned is simply recording proceedings and having to transcribe it later.

4 DON'T THEY JUST RECORD THAT NOWADAYS?



They're trying, but they will never replace the human brain. Have you ever run the closed captions on your TV? Sometimes they're really bad? That's when AI is doing the translating. The ones that are really good, make sense, and provide true accessibility to the viewers are done by a human using the same equipment and software as a court stenographer. If you're a litigant in a civil suit, a wrongfully accused defendant in a criminal matter, or you have a child custody issue, do you want a computer to "guess" at what is being said with predictive text? A highly trained professional stenographer that interrupts to clarify the record when necessary, has multiple backups, protects personal information and biometrics, and does a word-for-word review and certifies the final transcript is the better option.

5 WOW, THEY STILL DO IT THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY?



I have an audio backup that I use as an aid to transcription. Say a prescription name was said on the record. I can listen to the audio to help me find the spelling. What I don't do is release the audio to anyone or allow it to be sent via an unsecure connection over the Internet. Think about how some banks use voice recognition to allow you to log in to your account information over the phone. Your voice is a biometric identifier and something you wouldn't want to be in the hands of just anybody who could use it in a nefarious manner to hack your account. Hopefully, laws and regulations will catch up to the technology and hopefully protect us.

6 WHEN ARE YOU ALL GOING TO COME INTO THE DIGITAL AGE?



Have been for years. I've been using computer-aided transcription since I started court reporting. Realtime was a great advancement, allowing instant access to my draft transcript in the court or deposition room and now even remotely. My stenographic notes are watermarked with the time of creation and other metadata to protect the integrity of the record.

7 I'VE HEARD THERE'S A SHORTAGE OF COURT REPORTERS.



There's a shortage in a lot of fields: veterinarians, electricians, the service industry, even transcriptionists. For years, young adults have been steered toward traditional four-year degrees instead of considering a trade or business college program. NCRA has a program called A to Z that allows interested individuals, whether high schoolers or adults looking for a new career, to try out steno before they commit to a program. Most students can graduate in two to three years. If you're interested or know someone who is, I can give you some information.



MAVRC Holiday Get-Together

December 2, 2023



Merilee Johnson

Some freelancers, officials, CART reporters, captioners, court reporting students, and a proofreader and a videographer walked into a party room at the Lifetime Fitness building in Eden Prairie and

Okay, so no punch line! But even better there were delicious appetizers, treats and wine to enjoy; along with good conversation with past and present co-workers, long-time friends and new acquaintances. It was a great turnout that filled the party room! Thanks to Brandi Bigalke for all her hard work in organizing and arranging this fun holiday gathering.



Sandy Burch, Angie Sundell, and Megan Stumm



Amy Engel-Duong, Rhonda Route, and Rhonda Franken



RandiAnn Harvey and Rebecca Martin



Karli Pikala, Carly Geissler, Kylee Desotelle, Rebekah Rademacher, Gaby Cortes, and Jennifer Sati



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Find a complete list of court reporting programs approved
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Jennifer Sati named 2023 NCRA CASE Award of Excellence Recipient

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NCRA member Jennifer Sati, RMR, CRR, CRC, CRI, from Dayton, Minnesota, a broadcast captioner and program director of the Judicial Reporting/Broadcast Captioning Program at Anoka Technical College in Anoka, Minnesota, was named 2023 Educator of the Year. The announcement was made at the 2023 NCRA Conference & Expo held July 27-30 at the Hyatt Regency Houston Downtown in Houston, Texas.

NCRA's CASE (Council on Approved Student Education) Award of Excellence recognizes the important role student education plays in the court reporting profession and honors educators for their dedication and outstanding achievement and leadership. Recipients are nominated by an NCRA member.



Sati has worked professionally in the freelance, broadcast/CART captioning, and official fields for the past 30 years. She is credited with creating the Anoka Technical College's court reporting and broadcast captioning program from the bottom up and has served on the Higher Learning Commission committee for the college's accreditation. She is also credited with helping to develop the Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters and Captioners (MAVRC) mentorship program.

At the national level, Sati has served on the NCRA Board of Directors, as well as the Association's NCRA A to Z[®], Test Advisory, and Contests Committees. She has also served on NCRA's Certified Reporting Instructor Task Force, and as Chair of the Council on Approved Student Education.

At the state level, Sati holds membership in the Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters & Captioners and actively promotes the stenographic court reporting and broadcast captioning fields by working to organize state conventions serving on various committees, including the organization's Veteran History Project and Court Reporting and Captioning Awareness committees.

According to NCRA member Deborah Longley, CRI, from Anoka, Minnesota, a school administrator at Anoka Technical College who was one of several of Sati's colleagues who nominated her for the award, "Jennifer is always thinking forward about how to engage our students in our state association and our national association. She ensures that students have every opportunity to attend conventions by searching for scholarships and/or financial help."

NCRA member Jennifer Ogaard, RPR, CRR, from Plymouth, Minnesota, a freelance court reporter and captioner and an adjunct instructor at Anoka Technical College, also nominated Sati for the award, citing that Sati stays on top of the latest for the profession. "During COVID-19, she devised an online program basically on the fly, and the students/instructors were able to navigate the remote waters almost without a glitch so that the program could continue without students falling behind. This had never been done before and it worked perfectly."

Congrats, Graduate!

Erika Moravec recently graduated from Anoka Tech. From Erika: "I'm interested in pursuing a job in court, and I actually have an interview today!"



Pro Bono

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



PROMOTING STENO REPORTING AT THE MINNESOTA SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION CONVENTION

By Rhonda Franken and Tim McGowan

A variety of vendors and sponsors set up booths at the MSCA convention on November 5 and 6, 2023, including most notably MAVRC members Jen Sati, Rhonda Franken, RandiAnn Harvey and Tim McGowan. These MAVRC volunteers promoted steno reporting and educated convention attendees, which consisted of Minnesota high school counselors and counseling students as well as a variety of vendors and sponsors who had their own booths promoting apprenticeship programs, advocacy, wellness, technology, and PSEO, along with booths set up to educate others about at-risk students, mental health, the dangers of fentanyl and other drugs and vaping.

The MAVRC volunteers handed out flyers for state officialship job postings, the Anoka Tech Judicial Reporting and Captioning program, and the A to Z Intro to Steno/Discover Steno virtual program. The MAVRC volunteers also provided information on all of the above in addition to answering any questions that attendees had about the court reporting profession. RandiAnn had 150 pamphlets from the NCRA toolkit for career days beautifully printed up in color to hand out for this event and for future events.

The volunteers demonstrated realtime reporting, amazing attendees by captioning everyone's speech while they were conversing with the other volunteer and with each other. Jen and Randi both brought a large flat-screen TV monitor to display the realtime with a laptop, which worked perfectly! Counselors were encouraged to sign up to have their school notified of any future events promoting the reporting profession, and many did.

Both days kept the MAVRC members busy. Attendees were quite impressed with the pay scale and benefits, especially compared to the training requirements. All the different arenas that court reporters work in, including captioning news and sports events, freelancing or providing CART, in addition to officialships, were covered. As Tim McGowan said: It was a great day(s) to promote our wonderful profession!

Jen Sati, Independent Captioner and Program Director at the Anoka Technical College Judicial Reporting and Captioning programs, and Rhonda Franken, official court reporter in the First Judicial District, at the Minnesota School Counselor Association annual convention, located at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center in Mankato, Minnesota, which was held on November 5 and 6, 2023. Not pictured: RandiAnn Harvey and Tim McGowan, who volunteered on November 6.



As a court reporter, our hearing is one of our most valuable tools. It's essential to maintain our auditory health, especially as we age. This article will discuss strategies to protect your hearing, how to identify hearing loss, and aids to support good hearing throughout your career.

Protecting your hearing. Reduce exposure to loud noises. The world is a noisy environment. To protect your hearing, use earplugs or noise cancelling headphones when appropriate. This can help reduce the impact of sudden loud noises. Consider getting custom-made earplugs just for you. I went to an audiologist in my 20s and had a wax mold made of my ear canal and they made me a custom-fit set of earplugs. I use these still to this day, and I use them way more than I ever thought I would. They're great for traveling!

Take breaks. Frequent breaks during long proceedings can help prevent auditory fatigue. Use these breaks to step outside or into a quiet room to give your ears a rest. (Does anyone else drive home after a grueling day in silence?!) **Maintain a safe volume.** If you use headsets or headphones while transcribing, or for anything for that matter, ensure that the volume is set at a safe level. Listening at high volumes for extended periods can lead to hearing damage. And don't even get me started on the Apple earbuds. There is more and more data coming out from studies on the Apple earbuds and the impact they have on your hearing. So if you use those, you may want to do some research on your own to ensure that you're protecting your hearing when using those.

So just how do you identify hearing loss? Just like scheduling dental cleanings and checkups, schedule regular hearing checkups with an audiologist. These professionals can monitor your hearing and detect any changes early. Early intervention can prevent further hearing loss. Pay attention to signs of changes in hearing. Be aware of the common signs of hearing loss such as difficulty understanding conversations, constant needing to turn up the volume on devices, or hearing ringing in your ears (tinnitus.) If you experience these symptoms, consult a hearing specialist

How can we support our hearing? Modern hearing aids are discrete and highly effective. If you experience hearing loss, consult an audiologist to determine if hearing aids are suitable for your needs. They can significantly improve your ability to hear and understand conversations.

Consider using assistive listening devices when in proceedings. These devices can help amplify sounds and provide clearer audio, making it easier to transcribe proceedings accurately. Thank goodness for the audio amplifier on the Stenograph Luminex! Does anyone else use that assistance for in-person proceedings? It has been a lifesaver for me at times. Stay updated on the latest technology and techniques related to court reporting and captioning. Continuous education and knowledge of the latest technology and gadgets can help you adapt to hearing challenges and improve your skills.

As a court reporter your hearing is a valuable asset. Protecting it should be a priority throughout your career. By taking measures to reduce noise exposure, recognizing signs of hearing loss, and using aids when necessary, you can ensure that your auditory health retains intact, allowing you to excel in your profession. Remember that early detection and intervention are key to preserving your hearing, so don't hesitate to seek professional guidance when needed.

SAVE THE DATE!

APRIL 27, 2024

for the
MAVRC SPRING SEMINAR

ANOKA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
1355 West Highway 10
Anoka, MN 55303

More info to come in March!



Welcome, New Members!

Suzanne Hagen, Rebecca Martin,
Jaclyn Ruecker, and Ash Stothard!

First District Court Reporter Retreat

By Mary Johnson, RPR, CRR, CRC

The First District Court Reporters gathered for a Wellness Retreat during the Judges Conference this past fall. The retreat focused on court reporter specific sessions, relaxation, wellness, and getting to know each other as court reporters in the First District. The retreat was held at court reporter Mary Johnson's lake home in Le Center.

The retreat was a great opportunity for court reporters to learn, share experiences, and mentor the newer court reporters working for the First District. The retreat started with a taco bar catered by Pablos/Crumbl Cookies. Session topics included: Briefs/Transcript Formatting Rules in the Courts, the Cloud/CaseviewNet, E-Filing, Appeal Procedures, and Uploading Notes and Audio. The sessions were followed by yoga led by court reporter Rhonda Route. The afternoon ended with a social hour, giving court reporters a chance to laugh, get to know each other, and tell court reporter stories.





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

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Scan to view website and register:

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



2023 MAVRC Silent Auction

A huge thank you to everyone who donated and bid on this year's silent auction at the fall convention. Your generosity made it a great success!

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Victoria Dudeck

Merilee Johnson

Deanna Oaks

Nancy Utke

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Wine Bottle with Wine Tags

WON BY:

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Nancy Utke

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Lisa Soma

Nicole Olson
Lynzie Zempel
Rebekah Rademacher
Adrienne Conzemius
Elizabeth Peterson

Deanna Oaks

Suzanne Hagen

Rebekah Rademacher
Adrienne Conzemius

Nelle Rasmussen
Nelle Rasmussen
Deanna Oaks

We also would like to thank Jan Ballman and Veritext for the donation of Minnesota Vikings tickets, which were auctioned off to great benefit for MAVRC!



Thank you to all our bidders, including winner Kirsty Schouweiler, for supporting MAVRC!



Thank You, Donors and Sponsors!

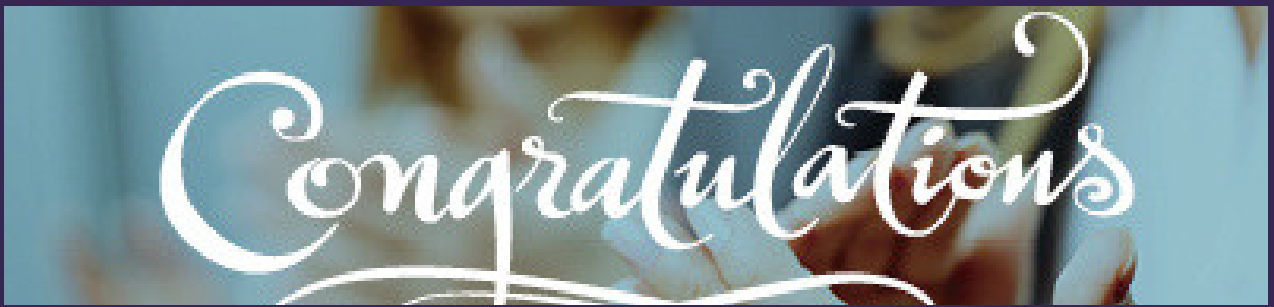
MAVRC would like to extend a big thank-you to the First District Court Reporters for their generous donation in support of our fall convention. Thank you!

We also owe major thanks to Merilee Johnson for a generous donation to MAVRC!

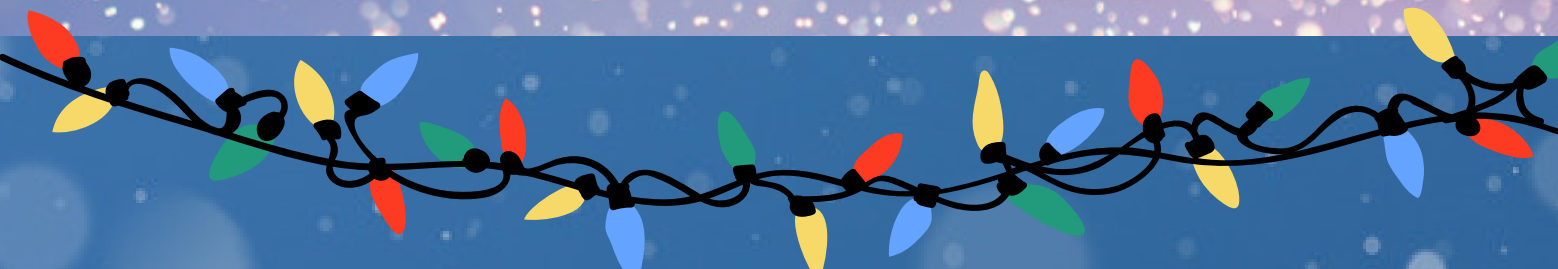
We would also like to recognize the reporters who sponsored a student for the fall convention. Thanks to all who contributed!

**Shelby Brown
Victoria Dudeck
Rhonda Franken
RandiAnn Harvey
Amy Lundgren**

**Tim McGowan
Patrick Mahon
Debbie Peterson
Jennifer Sati
Angie Sundell**



Congratulations to Michelle Clifton, RPR, Minneapolis, MN, who recently passed the RPR (Registered Professional Reporter) exam to earn her certification!



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.

MINNE-strokes Publication Team

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

MINNE-strokes is the official publication of MAVRC, the Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters & Captioners. MINNE-strokes is published quarterly. Statements of fact and opinion within this newsletter are the responsibility of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the officers or members of MAVRC. All advertisements are the sole responsibility of the advertiser alone and do not express the opinion or endorsement of MAVRC. Articles submitted are subject to editorial revisions.

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



NEXT NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: March 1, 2023

DATES TO REMEMBER:

February 3-10, 2024: Court Reporting and Captioning Week
February 8, 2024: Court Reporting Exhibition at Anoka Tech
March 19, 2024: New A to Z Class at Anoka Tech
April 27, 2024: MAVRC Spring Seminar at Anoka Tech

BE THE PERSON TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Help MAVRC make a positive impact and volunteer for one of the following committees:

AUDITING COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Lori Morrow
lori.morrow@courts.state.mn.us

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

CAREER ADVANCEMENT/CONTINUING ED.

Board Liaison: Brandi Bigalke
bnbreporter@gmail.com

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

PRO BONO COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Jennifer Sharp
Contact: Christine Clark
chrisclarkzimm@gmail.com

Facilitates services to people who are low income.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Board Liaisons: Rhonda Franken and Angie Sundell
rhonda.franken@courts.state.mn.us
angiesundell@gmail.com

Prepares and issues the official publication of the Association.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Board Liaison: Lynzie Zempel
lynzie@zempelreporting.com

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

STUDENT INTERNSHIP & SCHOOL

Board Liaison: Nicole Olson
moxiecourtreporting@gmail.com

Assists with student internships and administers a mentoring program.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Ryan Ziegler
srziegler@gmail.com

Stays abreast of technological advances in the court reporting field.

OFFICIAL COMMITTEE

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

Deals with issues affecting official court reporters.

CART & CLOSED CAPTIONING

Board Liaison: Angie Sundell
angiesundell@gmail.com

Handles issues affecting CART providers and broadcast captioners.

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Board Liaison: Ryan Ziegler
srziegler@gmail.com

Reviews and suggests necessary changes to the bylaws of the Association.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Lori Morrow
lori.morrow@courts.state.mn.us

Helps promote and monitors ethics among court reporters.

FREELANCE COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Lynzie Zempel
lynzie@zempelreporting.com

Deals with issues affecting court reporters in the freelance field.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Rhonda Route
rhonda.route@courts.state.mn.us

Helps raise funds for the Association.

LEGISLATIVE/GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Board Liaison: Angie Sundell and Ryan Ziegler
angiesundell@gmail.com
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.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Lori Morrow
lori.morrow@courts.state.mn.us

Works to increase the membership of the Association and assists in developing an annual membership directory.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Board Liaison: Lynzie Zempel





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To complete your order, please email your order and business card, in JPEG format, to MAVRC@MAVRC.org, or mail this completed form, your payment, and your business card to:

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Questions may be addressed to the board of directors at MAVRC@MAVRC.org or call 651.998.9119. Thanks for your support!

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