



SPRING 2013
VOLUME 16 NUMBER 2

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

By Tracy Bennett, RPR, CRR

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As I write this “summer” newsletter in April, Minnesota is in the grip of yet another winter storm. Schools are closed, roads are labeled hazardous and summer seems, oh, so far away. During an April like this, I sometimes ask myself again, “Why do I live in Minnesota?” The following are just a few of the reasons why a steno reporter would choose to live and work in the great state of Minnesota.

First of all, National Court Reporting and Captioning Week, sponsored by the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) February 17 – 24, 2013, was a big success. Governor Dayton proclaimed the week Minnesota Court Reporting and Captioning Week. There was a lot of publicity around the state and the country. I personally appeared in two local media articles. One was a newspaper article in the Duluth News-Tribune and the other was a segment on WDIO, the ABC affiliate in Duluth. The publicity and local interest in the news stories facilitated discussions in which I was able to share my experiences as a career steno reporter and educate those who may not be aware of all the career options that are available to one with our skills.

MAVRC's Facebook page was full of posts throughout the week. If you have a Facebook account and aren't a “friend” of MAVRC yet, please be sure to check us out.



Tracy Bennett
MAVRC President

Minnesota is home to Anoka Technical College which is training the next generation of court reporters, captioners and CART providers. The college currently has 63 students in their Judicial Reporting program with 26 in the higher (220/225) speeds and 10 students in their CART/captioning program. This successful program is another reason why Minnesota is a good place for our profession.

In March, the Duluth courthouse was lucky to have two students in the higher speeds from Anoka Tech come to do their internships, a requirement of graduation from the Judicial Reporting Program. Paula Thompson, whom I mentor, and Marie Schutz each spent a week working
(Continued on Page 3)



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If you have any suggestions for the Minne-strokes newsletter or stories to share about your court reporting experiences or something that would be of interest to the MAVRC membership, please submit to:

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Hopkins, MN 55343

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Save the Date!

**MAVRC'S
Annual
Fall Convention**

September 6-7, 2013

**Minneapolis Marriot Southwest
5801 Opus Parkway
Minnetonka, MN**

**Watch for further details
coming soon**

(Continued from Page 1)

with the official court reporters in Duluth. They were able to sit in on every type of case a professional court reporter may encounter. Their enthusiasm and excitement was a great jumpstart and motivator for those of us who have been doing this career for 15+ years. They both asked appropriate questions and we all shared war stories and brief forms. On Marie's first or second day, she shared with me a tip for Case CATalyst that I didn't know I could use but now I use almost daily. I thought I'd be the one doing the teaching, but she taught me that there is always something new to learn.

I took two lessons away from this experience. One, I discovered how rewarding it is to mentor a student or new reporter. Your experience and encouragement can help them get through any speed plateaus that they may encounter during school. You can be available to answer any questions they may have and motivate them to succeed. Two, you can share

your knowledge by offering to allow a student to do their internship with you. They need experience in the courtroom, but also depositions, captioning and/or a CART setting. Your experience can help them learn how to handle real-life situations that can't necessarily be taught in school. I know, along the way, you'll be inspired to write better on your machine, learn something new about your software and, through fresh, eager eyes, be reminded of what a great career and profession you have chosen. Contact Jennifer Sati at Anoka Tech if you are willing to mentor or allow a student or new reporter to do an internship with you. Jennifer can be reached at jsati@anokatech.edu.

Both mentoring and interning do not take up much time. I know we all have busy lives, but a quick email asking how it's going or offering to answer any questions might be the catalyst that motivates them to practice because they want to be a working reporter just like you.

Another reason it's good to live in Minnesota is the camaraderie amongst our members. On April 6, about 75 working reporters, students and exhibitors gathered at Anoka Tech for MAVRC's spring seminar. It was a great turnout and the variety of subject matter was informative and interesting. Watch for updates on the fall seminar which is in the planning stages. We know it will be on September 6 & 7, but haven't finalized the venue, so mark your calendars with that date. If you have any ideas for speakers or topics that interest you, we welcome input and feedback.

I hope that as you are reading this, the lilacs are out or maybe already gone, the grass is green, the sun is warm and your garden is planted or close to it. Remember, we all live with this Minnesota weather together. Besides, without the weather, what would we talk about? Oh, I know, how about court reporting, captioning and CART services?

Tracy Bennett is an official reporter in Duluth, Minnesota. ■



MAVRC Mission Statement

The mission of the 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.



PROFILE OF A BOARD MEMBER

By Katriina Hendrickson

Tell us about yourself: My husband and I live in Zimmerman with our three boys (ages 6, 3, 2). I grew up in the western suburbs of Minneapolis with six brothers and three sisters.

Describe your court reporting career: Soon after graduating from high school, I enrolled in court reporting school thinking it was a good intermediate step until I figured out “what I wanted to do when I grew up.” A postcard about the school piqued my interest since I was interested in the legal field and enjoyed typing. After graduating, I freelanced for about a year. Then I spotted an ad in the paper for a job as a temporary legislative assistant at the Capitol in St. Paul. I figured it would be nice to get a steady paycheck for a few months so I applied and got the job. The next thing I knew, I spent the next almost eight years working at the legislature and Governor’s Office (with a year off to work in Helsinki, Finland). After our first child was born, I got a call from a friend who I had worked with in St. Paul and now worked for Hennepin County as an official court reporter. She said it was a pretty good gig to have with kids. So I dusted off my old manual machine from school and gave it a shot. Just like “riding a bike,” as they say, only a little trickier since my brain had some pretty serious cobwebs. But things got better and I spent 5 ½ years as an official reporter in Hennepin County. Last September, I decided to try freelancing so that I could spend more time with my family, and so far, I am very much enjoying it.

What are some memorable moments as a court reporter: A couple trials stand out in my memory.



Katriina Hendrickson

The first was the trial of Jimmy Williams v. University of Minnesota, where a few of my colleagues and I did daily copy. The trial was contentious and witnesses included all kinds of interesting characters like Tubby Smith, Jim Ramstad and various other national basketball coaches. No matter what one’s profession is, there is nothing like the opportunity to truly challenge one’s self. It was a rewarding experience.

Another interesting trial was a mortgage fraud trial that lasted seven weeks. The attorneys were constantly at each other’s throats and I was many months pregnant. Whenever there was a bench conference, the judge and attorneys rushed out into the hallway and I waddled behind to join them in a dimly-lit small office where I had an old machine set up. Inevitably, every discussion got heated as they hovered

over my machine. The record probably didn’t always capture the tension, like the time the judge had to physically separate the two attorneys.

Anything else you want to say?

Thank you to everyone who has been so encouraging and welcoming in this profession. I’m excited to serve on the MAVRC Board and continuing learning from the many experienced, excellent reporters out there.

Katriina Hendrickson is a freelance reporter from Zimmerman, Minnesota. ■



DO YOU KNOW AN OUTSTANDING MAVRC MEMBER?

The MAVRC Distinguished Service Committee wants to hear from you. Please send your nominations to Jolene Carrow at jolene.carrow@gmail.com or to MAVRC, P.O. Box 375, Marshall, MN 56258.

Simply use the form on the following pages and state your reason(s) for believing that a member of MAVRC has been a spectacular volunteer or would be a worthy recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. Include your contact information (name, address, phone number and e-mail address).

The deadline for nominations is August 23, 2013, but don't wait for the deadline. Put your thoughts in an e-mail now and send it to us. Don't sweat the small stuff. Just get us your nomination.

Give us a chance to shine the spotlight on someone who has worked hard on behalf of court reporters. Nominate someone today!

Jim Voitalla, Jim Trapskin and Jennifer Sati
Distinguished Service Committee

**MAVRC'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD
NOMINATION FORM**

Nominee's Name: _____

Please provide the following information, if known:

Education Post High School: _____

Number of years reporting: _____ **Certifications held:** _____

MAVRC Offices and/or positions held: _____

MAVRC Committee Chair/Member: _____

Other state association offices and/or positions held: _____

Awards and honors received: _____

Publications and/or seminar presentations given: _____

Why do you believe this person should receive the MAVRC Distinguished Service Award?

Submitted by: _____ **Phone #** _____

Send to: MAVRC, Attn. DSA Committee, P.O. Box 375, Marshall, MN 56258

***DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: August 23, 2013**

**MAVRC'S VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
NOMINATION FORM**

Nominee's Name: _____

Please provide the following information, if known:

Education Post High School: _____

Number of years reporting: _____ **Certifications held:** _____

MAVRC Offices and/or positions held: _____

MAVRC Committee Chair/Member: _____

Other state association offices and/or positions held: _____

Awards and honors received: _____

Publications and/or seminar presentations given: _____

Why do you believe this person should receive the Volunteer of the Year Award?

Submitted by: _____ **Phone #** _____

Send to: MAVRC, Attn. DSA Committee, P.O. Box 375, Marshall, MN 56258

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: August 23, 2013

2013 LEGISLATIVE BOOT CAMP - RESTON, VIRGINIA

By Hart Erickson

Hart Erickson, a member of the National Court Reporters Association, the country's leading organization representing stenographic court reporters, broadcast captioners and CART providers, and President-Elect of the Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters & Captioners, recently met with legislative staff of Senators Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar, and Representatives Michele Bachmann, Keith Ellison, John Kline, Richard Nolan and Erik Paulsen to urge them to support the Local Courthouse Safety Act. The visit culminated a three-day Legislative Boot Camp program

hosted by NCRA, March 3 to March 5, designed to provide advocacy training for the stenographic court reporting profession. Erickson was part of a contingency of 40 NCRA state affiliate association leaders and its national board of directors, representing 27 states, visiting Capitol Hill.

The Legislative Boot Camp program, developed by NCRA's government relations department, included a wide array of sessions that covered grassroots efforts, effective lobbying, communicating with congressional staff, networking tips and public relations, and provided

attendees with a vast cache of skills and tools they can utilize to advocate on important issues for court reporters at the national, state and local levels.

"I don't think any of us could have had such successful visits with our congressional representatives if we hadn't spent two days in boot camp prior to our meetings. The training was worth every penny and the two days of time. It provided me with the strategies and tactics I needed to be able to ensure my message about the importance of courthouse safety was presented clearly to my congressman," said Erickson.



(Left to right) Kristine Mousseau, Rep. Michele Bachman, Hart Erickson

The Local Courthouse Safety Act was first introduced by Senators Al Franken (D-MN) and John Boozman (R-AR) in February, 2012, as bipartisan legislation that calls for supporting courthouse safety by providing them with security equipment no longer being used by other federal agencies. The Act also calls for allocating existing federal funding to supply security equipment and safety training for court security guards. The legislation was prompted by an uptick in violent attacks occurring inside courthouses. The bill stalled in the U.S. Senate, although a companion bill, H.R. 6185, was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives. The legislation received broad support from a variety of agencies, including the National Association for Court Management, the National Sheriff's Association, the Conference of Chief Justices, and the American Judges Association.

In early March, Senators Franken and Boozman reintroduced the same legislation as S. 445.

“NCRA’s Legislative Boot Camp positioned us to carry our message about this important piece of legislation to our nation’s lawmakers,” said NCRA President Tami Smith, and a court reporter for the 37th Circuit Court in Battle Creek, Michigan.

“It is important to NCRA that members of the court reporting profession work in the safest environment possible and we are committed to doing everything we can to help ensure that scenario is a reality.”

“Passage of this Act will provide a real and cost-effective deterrent for potential attacks on courthouses and provide states with additional

resources to provide safeguards,” said Jim M. Cudahy, executive director and chief executive officer of NCRA.

“Our Boot Camp program is just one of the many benefits we provide our members to ensure they have access to issues, regulations and legislation, such as the Local Courthouse Security Act, that affect them. Boot camp provides them with the knowledge and skills needed so that they can serve as vital links between the court reporting and captioning profession and regulatory and legislative agencies from the grassroots level through the national level.”

Hart Erickson has been a freelance reporter for 31 years and has also been a member of NCRA and MAVRC for 31 years. He resides in Burnsville, Minnesota. ■

BRIEFS, BRIEFS AND MORE BRIEFS

DOCUMENT INTENSIVE DEPO? NO PROBLEM

By Jennifer Sharp

FRAEUJ – first page

SAEUJ – second page

THAEUJ – third page

SLAEUJ – second to the last page

NAEUJ – next page

BAEUJ – bottom of the page

LAEUJ – last page

FREUBT – first exhibit

NEUBT – next exhibit

LEUBT – last exhibit

XUB – Exhibit No.

KWOEK – quote/unquote

AOEM – e-mail

AOEMS – e-mails

AOEMD – e-mailed

MEJ – message

TEJ – text message

VOIL – voice mail

SFOIN - cellphone

FOIP – photocopy

BRUR - brochure

SPRET – spreadsheet

HOILT – highlight

BOIPT – bullet point

LERD – letter dated

FLUK – if you look

DRID – did I read that correctly

JOEURK – Just so I’m clear

JAOERK – Just so we’re clear

Jenny Sharp is a freelance reporter in Minneapolis, Minnesota. ■

A COURT REPORTER'S FITNESS ADVENTURE

By Teresa Schafer, RMR

After viewing photos of me taken over the summer of 2012, I decided it was time to get in better physical shape. I started doing water aerobics again at Lifetime Athletic in White Bear Lake. When I was there one day in July, I saw a brochure for the 90-Day Challenge. I sat there drinking my water reading every word on the page and decided this is for me. I liked the idea of the Try It Tuesday program where you can try other things the club has to offer.

On August 4th I went for my weigh-in and met my personal trainer, Ryan. I didn't know at the time that I would even have a personal trainer. He spent over an hour with me finding out who I am and where I'm coming from.

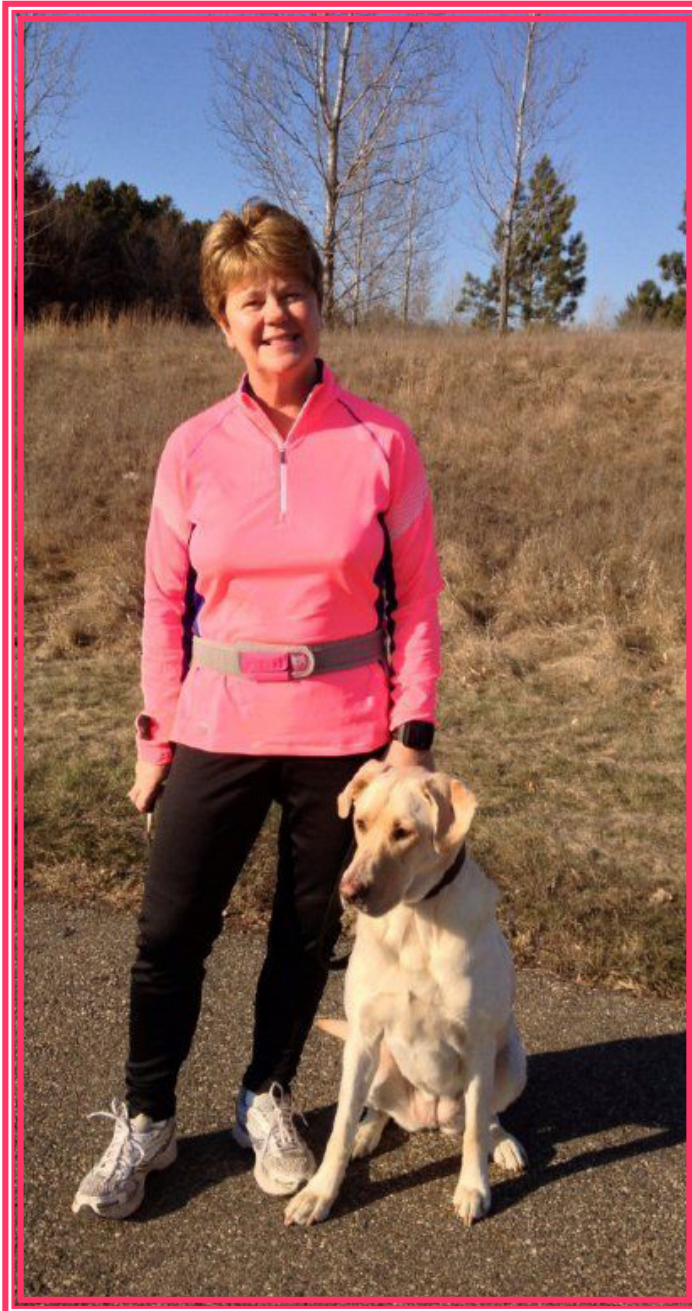
Twenty-nine years ago I had my baby, David, who is now engaged to be married in September. I weighed 164 pounds the day David was born, after having gained 40 pounds during my pregnancy. During my weigh-in in August, I was .4 pounds away from that weight. I am 5'5" tall. I was appalled! My PT Ryan and I discussed how much weight would be reasonable for me to lose. I thought 10 pounds was realistic. He thought 20 pounds would be very doable for me. I had never tried to lose weight before, ever. Never needed to.

I had been noticing that my clothes were getting tighter and tighter. Every time I would go buy a bathing suit or a bra or workout clothes, I was in the large or extra-large sizes. I thought,

years. But in the last couple of years I was just packing on the pounds. I had come to realize that being 57 years old, and hormones not being what they used to be, that I needed to make changes in my diet and exercise routine.

Working with my PT Ryan and doing the Try It Tuesday workout routines opened my eyes to better nutrition and a better exercise regimen for me. I got specifics about diet and exercise, such as protein at every meal, two servings of fruit a day, five servings of vegetables a day, vitamin supplements, using whole milk, using butter on popcorn if I were to have that as a snack. But the biggest part for me was cutting out the carbohydrates. I found that I was eating a lot of carbs. There seems to be carbs everywhere in our environment. I used to have cereal for breakfast, sandwich for lunch, potatoes with supper. I have cut all that out for now.

Ryan asked me in the beginning how much time I was willing to devote to the 90-Day Challenge. I shrugged. He recommended three hours a week of strength training and two hours a week of aerobics. I tried Pilates and discovered that I thoroughly enjoy it. I am now in my eighth month of doing Pilates once a week. I am also in my eighth month of working out with my personal trainer, my hero, Ryan. I continue doing water aerobics. I work out on the treadmill. I purchased a Fit Bit which monitors how many steps I take each day. My goal is 10,000 steps a day.



Teresa Schafer

boy, they don't make clothes to fit me anymore.

I wasn't doing anything different in my lifestyle or my diet for years and

If spring ever comes, I look forward to my long walks with my dogs, and I can't wait to ride my wonderful bike on the Gateway Trail.

Court reporting is easier for me now. I have more stamina. I enjoy it more. I am better at it today. I have more focus. Ryan even said that all this work (working out is my part-time job) will help my golf game also. I can't wait to see. I have golf dates every other Wednesday all summer with my gal golfmates Sue, Sharon and Ann Marie.

The 90-Day Challenge ended on November 2, 2012. At my final weigh-out, I had lost 13.3 pounds. Down to 150.3 as of November 2, 2012. My body has been completely transformed. All my clothes fit me again, even some suits I hadn't worn in three years.

The 90-Day Challenge was so fun and rewarding for me that I joined a second 90-Day Challenge which started in February, 2013, and ends in May, 2013. At my last weigh-in at the club, I was 145.3 pounds. I am down 18 pounds from last August even in spite of the holidays, vacations, eating out (making smarter food choices), celebrating two engagements and hosting a baby shower for our first granddaughter who is scheduled to arrive in May.

My personal weight goal is 140. I now have the tools I need to accomplish this goal and will incorporate them into my future. And I have influenced my husband to do the same.

Teresa M. Schafer is a freelance reporter in the Twin Cities who lives in Stillwater with her husband, two dogs, one cat and three horses.



REPORTER RECIPES

Submitted by Teresa Schafer, RMR

Chili (simple)

For one pound of hamburger (grass fed organic):

- 1 clove garlic
- 1 medium onion
- 1 big can of tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- Kidney beans – for 3 pounds meat, 2 cans beans

Brown hamburger and onion

Blend tomatoes very briefly

Add everything but beans

Add beans at end

Cook for a long time before adding beans

Top with your favorite toppings; i.e. cheese, scallions, cilantro, sour cream, avocado and serve with a salad or corn bread

Feel free to tweak it however you'd like; use turkey, more beans, more garlic, etc.

Bill's Tortilla Soup (more complicated)

- 4 cans chicken stock (14.5)
- 2 cans diced or stewed tomatoes
- 1 can black beans rinsed
- 1.5 cups frozen corn
- 1 poblano pepper, medium, grilled and seeded
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 1 medium sweet onion, diced
- 3 chicken breasts, seasoned, grilled, shredded
- Cilantro
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1.2 teaspoon cayenne
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 fresh tomatoes diced

Saute garlic, onion, green pepper, diced hot peppers

Add seasoning, plus salt and pepper to taste

Add stock, tomatoes, beans, corn

Simmer ½ hour to 45 minutes

Add diced avocado and cheese, diced onion and fresh cilantro as toppings

Add tortilla chips on top or on the side

MAVRC 2013 SPRING SEMINAR

CART/CAPTIONING PANEL

By Jolene Carrow

The 2013 MAVRC Spring Seminar began Saturday morning with a CART/captioning panel consisting of five CART providers and captioners: Kristi Arntzen, Rachel Erickson, Janell Gruber, Suzanne Hagen, Lisa Richardson, and Angie Sundell serving as moderator. Each of the six provided firsthand knowledge and actual experiences they have encountered throughout their careers – whether a seasoned veteran or a newbie in the field.

The panel members shared their CART/captioning biographies.

Kristi Arntzen graduated from Anoka Technical College in December, 2010, with a Judicial Reporting AAS degree and the Captioning/CART certificate. She then interned for about one year unpaid and began part-time work as a captioner and CART provider in November, 2011. Kristi transitioned full-time into captioning and CART in September of 2012 and is currently working on obtaining NCRA certifications. She has already passed the Q&A leg of the RPR. Kristi also has a BA degree in English from the University of Minnesota. She lives in St. Louis Park with her two cats, Claude and Itty-Bitty.

Rachel Erickson recently graduated from Anoka Technical College in May of 2012. Since that time, she has been providing CART in Maple Grove for a late-deafened administrator for the Osseo Area School District. When she was attending college, she had no idea she would be providing CART. For one, CART was realtime, and it was basically like captioning, and those fields require writing near

99% accuracy at high speeds! It's not that CART/captioning wasn't something she could ever see herself doing, but to be providing CART/captioning as her first job out of court reporting school was not the level she envisioned herself at as a new reporter. Rachel has done a couple depositions since graduation in addition to CART and finds CART is easier than doing depositions. This is almost a complete 180-degree turn in what she thought she would be doing after college. Writing extremely accurate at high speeds isn't logistically easier than taking down a deposition where you may or may not have to even provide realtime, but Rachel prefers the thrill of being put on the spot and not having to deal with a transcript afterwards. Once her CART jobs are done, she enjoys the liberating feeling of packing up and being done for the day. Rachel truly enjoys doing CART, finds it is fun, challenging and her joy of serving others is a constant reminder of why CART providers are needed. Rachel believes that when she is 60 years old and still doing CART (or maybe captioning also by then), she thinks she will be one of those lucky people who have enjoyed the one and only lifetime career they have had because she has already found happiness in her job.

Janell Gruber, RMR, CRR, CBC, CCP, has been a freelance reporter since 1988 and then became an official reporter in 1997. She passed the RMR in 1994, the CRR in 1997, and the CBC and CCP in 2009. She also has been captioning as an independent contractor on a part-time basis since 2009.

Suzanne Hagen graduated from Minnesota School of Business in 1990, passed the RPR exam in 1991 and joined Northwestern Court Reporting. She taught court reporting at Rasmussen Business College 1994 - 1995 and then in 1995 she joined Ray J. Lerschen & Associates, during which time she concentrated on honing her CART skills. Suzanne joined forces with Lori Case in 2000 providing CART services to students at the University of Minnesota. In 2001 she joined Paradigm Reporting & Captioning and worked as a freelance reporter and CART provider. It was with Lisa Richardson's tutelage that she became a closed captioner. They captioned KARE-11 news and TPT, among other various programming. In 1994, Suzanne obtained her CRR certificate. In 2008, she joined VITAC to become a full-time closed captioner. While with Paradigm Reporting & Captioning, she enjoyed providing CART services for organizations such as SHHH, now HLAA, Hearing Loss Association of America, as well as MCDHH and Northern Voices. Suzanne has fully enjoyed her career as a court reporter, CART provider and closed captioner and is excited to continue to provide a wonderful service to those that can't hear, whether in person or from the comfort of home, in her slippers.

Lisa Richardson, RPR, CRR, CBC, CCP, is the first person to provide captioning and CART services in Minnesota. She began captioning in 1988 for a local Twin Cities television station and began providing CART services in 1990. Lisa is currently the director of CART and captioning for Paradigm Reporting & Captioning. She has been actively involved with

MAVRC 2013 SPRING SEMINAR

the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing communities in Minnesota since 1990. Lisa also currently serves on NRCA's Captioning Community of Interest Committee. Lisa is a proud recipient of the Distinguished Service Award presented by MAVRC.

Angie Sundell, RPR, CRR, CBC, CCP, graduated from the University of Minnesota Crookston with a AAS degree in Court and Conference Reporting in 1988. She worked as a freelance reporter for Southwest Reporters from 1988 – 1990. It was during that time that she started training to become a closed captioner under the guidance of Lisa Richardson. She worked for Norman E. Mark Court Reporter Service, in Fargo, ND, from 1991 – 1993.

In September of 1993, she moved back to the Twin Cities and joined Ballman, Richardson & Seward Reporting. Angie is currently an associate with Paradigm Reporting & Captioning, providing captioning and CART services. She also serves on MAVRC's Publications Committee.

The panel enlightened the audience with a PowerPoint presentation showing their offices and the equipment they use. Rachel Erickson discussed and demoed the setup she uses to provide CART on her iPad. Each CART/captioner member talked about their variance in needs for equipment, including backup equipment. Quoting one panel member, "Writing is the easy part, troubleshooting is the difficult

part."

Many facets of the industry were explained starting with the basics of the difference between CART and captioning. There is a different meaning in the industry of the words Deaf and deaf. The definition of Deaf, with a capital D, was defined as someone who was born deaf and learned sign language. The definition of deaf, with a small d, was explained as someone who lost hearing later in life.

A very special "thank you" to each panel member for highlighting and sharing tidbits of their career as a CART provider and/or captioner.

Jolene Carrow is a freelance reporter from Marshall, Minnesota. ■



2013 Spring Seminar CART/Captioning Panel Speakers: (Left to Right) Angie Sundell, Janell Gruber, Kristi Arntzen, Lisa Richardson, Rachel Erickson, Suzanne Hagen

MAVRC 2013 SPRING SEMINAR

ALTERNATIVE HEALTH

By Jolynn Graham, RPR

At the spring seminar we had an outstanding presenter by the name of Stasia Johnson Steinhagen! Stasia wears many hats, i.e., homeopath, herbalist, life coach and wellness educator, to name a few. The presentation was very interesting and informative. Stasia discussed the many different types of alternative healing, such as chiropractic, acupuncture, homeopathic and osteopathic, and explained the differences between the modalities. It was interesting to see how many attendees had tried many different types of alternative healing methods. She also mentioned that some of these modalities, such as chiropractic and osteopathic, are often covered by

insurance.

If you are interested in homeopathy, she gave out information on the Northwestern Academy of Homeopathy, which has a student clinic. Initial appointments are \$60 and follow-up appointments are \$40. The clinic is open one weekend per month. If interested, you can contact Kris at kris@homeovista.org or visit their web site at www.homeovista.org.

You can also contact Stasia at stasia@2DegreesNorth.com. I spoke to her afterwards and she also will hold group sessions as long as there is some commonality.

I was intrigued and will definitely



Stasia Johnson Steinhagen

look into alternative medicine at some point!

Jolynn Graham is a freelance reporter from Brooklyn Park and serves on MAVRC's Board of Directors. ■

2013 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Paula Thompson

Joel Carlson was at the MAVRC Spring Seminar on April 6, 2013. It was an honor for us to have him there and to be representing MAVRC and reporters. He stated to us that Governor Dayton vetoed 59 bills. Governor Dayton released his plans for a \$750 million bonding bill on April 8, 2013. In his recommendations are \$109 million for restoring the State Capitol and \$189 million for higher education campuses across the state of Minnesota. This plan would create 21,000 jobs in the coming months.

Sixty percent of senators served in the Senate for two years or less, and 55 percent have spent two years or less in the House. They have been trying to get



Joel Carlson

the members up to speed on the government. At the end of March, the House released many omnibus

bills relating to public safety, judiciary, commerce, etc., which will make up the \$38 billion biannual budget.

The Minnesota Senate DFL released a portion of a tax proposal on April 11, 2013. This plan revives aspects of the sales tax expansion proposal. The Senate plans to extend the sales tax to a number of services and products that are currently untaxed. The House released its tax plan on April 15, 2013. The House Tax Committee completed the omnibus tax bill on April 17, 2013. The bill will raise \$2.6 billion in new taxes.

Paula Thompson is a reporting student at Anoka Technical College. ■

MAVRC 2013 SPRING SEMINAR

FINANCES

By Laurie Cocheran, RPR

Lisa Blanks graduated from the Minnesota School of Business Court Reporting program. We all remember hearing: “set your own hours,” “great income potential,” “variety in your workday,” and many more phrases that kept pushing us forward until we passed our final speed test. We didn’t hear much about “budgeting money,” “find an accounting office,” “pay your estimated taxes.”

Nadene Fruen is self-employed and in her 30th year preparing personal and corporate taxes, payroll taxes, and trusts, to name a few of the tasks that keep her busy, in addition to helping Lisa and others improve and maintain their money management skills.

We all are guilty of setting aside a project because we need to get this transcript out. Lisa pointed out how she had a successful court reporting career but the business side was unsuccessful. She has been a freelance reporter most of her career. Court reporting is a unique field and each individual

reporter has his or her own unique set of circumstances. There is no one plan fits all when it comes to our money management.



Nadene Fruen and Lisa Blanks

Both women discussed how important it is to get a plan set up early on and to stay on top of it. When you work with an accounting office, you will be working with a professional who can provide good advice, who will stay up to date on the many changes in the IRS rules, and who will work hands on with their client. You do not need to find an accountant who is familiar with court reporting, but you should ask if he or

she can handle S corporations. If you are self-employed and you have a net profit between \$20,000 to \$25,000 plus, you should talk about the benefits of becoming an S corporation. You should use a Federal ID (TIN) number rather than Social Security number on our invoices.

After working with Nadene, completing the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University online (for which she received NCRA credits) and working with a professional on her credit report, Lisa is enjoying getting on track financially and moving forward in her career.

Thank you, Lisa, for candidly sharing your money management journey (or lack thereof in the early days) as you continue your successful court reporting career! Thank you, Nadene, for your candid advice to “call if you receive a letter from the IRS - they have a lot of power” and to “follow the rules, file the forms and stay current.”

Laurie Cocheran is an official reporter in Austin, Minnesota. ■



Diane Kennedy enjoying beverages and brunch goodies donated by MAVRC board members



Above: Jim Trapskin and Ron Moen



Right: Hart Erickson

MAVRC 2013 SPRING SEMINAR

TIPS AND PROCEDURES FOR TAKING AN NCRA CERTIFICATION SKILLS TEST

By Colleen Maloney

When thinking about preparing to even write about test anxiety, it makes me a little heart-speedy. When I hear the words “Ready, Begin,” I kind of want to run away – literally. I know vividly the feeling of “getting it,” getting overexcited about doing well, and dropping the next ten words due to shaking. I have taken the RPR skills section multiple times. You know what? I’m going to take it as many times as it takes. I have that streak of



Tracy Bennett

determination because of who I am and how I’m built, but I also get it from those that have come before me and have mentored - and continue to mentor – me along the way.

A few weeks ago I attended the MAVRC seminar and was particularly interested in the portion that contained some suggestions to deal with test anxiety and prepping for the skills tests. This session was with Tracy Bennett, Janell Gruber, and Jennifer

Sati – three people that are amazing influences for the entire field of stenography in Minnesota and in all they’ve done for MAVRC; and also privately they’ve all been very accessible to me whenever I’ve had a question as a newer reporter. I was really, really interested in what they had to say.

The first category of advice is all about practice. Practice setting up your equipment, taking mock tests, transcribing/editing those tests, printing your tests, saving your tests to flash drives – basically practice every single thing that you will need to be able to do in order to function the day of the test. Read, reread, and then re-re-read the instructions for what you will need to bring. Checklists may help. This is to ensure you bring everything you need. No one wants to not pass a test because they forgot a printer cable.

This category also encompasses practice of material. This is massively important. It’s totally not the same feel/type of writing (at least for me) to write all day in court. Some of that speed and accuracy obviously does translate, but I can definitely tell you that in my experience, no one speaks that metered in real life for five full minutes. Or if they do, I have yet to experience it. I have clocked myself doing speed bursts before that are substantially higher than any current skills test offered. That is great, but it’s not sustained. Practicing material that is sustained and sometimes practicing material that’s over the speed of the test is helpful. It makes the actual tests sound easier when

you do them directly after. I’m trying that tactic this Saturday for the upcoming RPR skills test instead of writing as much of the practice material they play directly before.

Another section was about dropping the super difficult word. You know the one. Did I hear that right? How



Janell Gruber

is that word spelled? OH, NO! There goes the entire next sentence! We’ve all done it. I am a turbo-perfectionist, so it’s really, really hard for me to drop that one word and keep going. I know there are mixed opinions on whether this is good. Obviously, this doesn’t work in court or at a depo. You can’t get so used to doing this that you do it on the job. I do think
(Continued on Page 17)

MAVRC 2013 SPRING SEMINAR

(Continued from Page 16)

that, just for testing, giving yourself permission to just drop that one word, allowing you to make one mistake instead of ten, may not be a bad idea. It's something that I'm going to try in just my practice tests and for testing.

I think the most helpful advice they gave was to "pound through the nerves." I am getting better with each round of tests, but I really do shake and/or convince myself that I bombed the test and stop writing. Yes, I just wrote that. I'm outing myself – I HAVE STOPPED WRITING during a skills test for the RPR. It was for a test that I knew I was writing realtime perfect for the first minute or two. Then the shakes set in. I don't think I'm the only one that's done that. How self-defeating is that though? I've heard the advice to "just keep moving and get what you get" before. I applied that philosophy to the next round of tests. I was MASSIVELY surprised at how much I actually wrote. So, the moral to this section is, don't let that little voice or shake win.

So I'm going to be at the school this coming Saturday, employing all of these techniques. Wish me luck!

Colleen Maloney is an official reporter in Minnesota's Second Judicial District.



(Left) Mike Melby announcing a door prize donated by Stenograph - a rolling carry case



Mike Melby presenting the Stenograph rolling carry case to door prize winner Adrienne Conzemius



(Left) Colleen Maloney with Sales Rep Jim Weitalla



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2012 Spring Seminar 50/50 Raffle

Morning Raffle Winner -- \$138 -- Jan Young Lund

Afternoon Raffle Winner -- \$38 -- Lisa Richardson

**Thanks to the donors and participants
and also congratulations to the winners.**

MAVRC 2013 SPRING SEMINAR

Thanks to MAVRC members who sponsored a student/s for the spring seminar:

Tracy Bennett	\$45.00
Hart Erickson	\$15.00
Rachel Erickson	\$105.00
Lisa Richardson	\$20.00
Angie Sundell	\$15.00

COME ON DOWN!

An energetic group of court reporters got together on April 20th for a night of laughs and camaraderie. The day of fun started at Sandy Burch's residence in the afternoon where everyone enjoyed a fabulous potluck dinner, followed by a trip to the Mystic Lake Casino to attend "The Price is Right" show with the hope that one of us would walk away a big winner.

While no one in our group was selected to be a participant on the show,

we enjoyed guessing at the trivia questions and laughing at the hilarious clips highlighting some of the show's past contestants. As you can see from the pictures, our group designed special t-shirts to wear to the event, and we enjoyed the opportunity to share a little bit of information about our profession to those around us.

For those trivia buffs out there, the American version of "The Price is Right" debuted in 1956 on NBC and

was hosted by Bill Cullen. The show ran until 1965 but later returned in 1972, when it was hosted by Bob Barker. Six thousand shows later, it is still going strong and is believed to be the second longest-running game show on television behind the Spanish variety show Sabado Gigante.

Jackie Young is a freelance reporter in Delano and a member of MAVRC's Publications Committee. ■

By Jackie Young, RPR, DSA



(L-R) Sherlyn Anderson, Jackie Young, Paula Berg, Jolene Carrow, Sandy Burch



Seizing the opportunity to promote stenographic court reporting, our group designed t-shirts that incorporated both steno and English.

MAVRC SPRING GET-TOGETHER

On March 14th reporters met at Figlio, The Shops at West End, St. Louis Park, for the annual spring MAVRC get-together.

Reporters enjoyed an evening of great food, beverage and commardarie with peers.



Sherlyn Anderson, Rachel Erickson, Sandy Burch and Ryan Ziegler



Jan Ballman, Jackie Young and Laura Pelletier



(Right) Jan Ballman and Neil Johnson



Ryan Ziegler and Jolynn Graham



Jackie Young, Laura Pelletier, Sherlyn Anderson, Rachel Erickson, Sandy Burch

OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER STEWARDS

TEAMSTER LOCAL 320



By Monica Christensen, RMR

In the summer of 2013, the official court reporter stewards will once again be entering into contract negotiations with the State. Before that begins, however, much preparation needs to be made behind the scenes to get ready for those negotiations. At the time of the writing of this article, a meeting of the stewards will be taking place on May 3rd for just that reason.

The OCR steward group is comprised of official court reporters that are selected from each judicial district. Elections are held in all ten judicial districts to select members to serve as stewards. The stewards represent all official court reporters, steno and ER, in their respective district. Meetings of all the stewards are usually held at the offices of Teamster Local 320 in Minneapolis, approximately every six weeks or when an issue arises that requires a meeting of the stewards of all districts.

The official court reporters that comprise the union stewards this year are as follows: Jeff Agre, Doug Berglund, Theresa Bock, Monica

Christensen, Michelle Foley, Jill Garrison, Vicky Griffith-Fall, Dave Lutzke, Margaret Morgan, Barbara Nelson, Deb Peterson, Lori Ritchie, Leah Sandbo, Patricia Weinberg and Jean Whalen. Our business agent from Local 320 is Kari Seime.



Prior to a new contract being in place, our stewards meet to discuss issues that the members have brought to them and develop a survey of these issues that is mailed to all official court reporters in the state. With the feedback that is obtained from the completed surveys, the stewards can gather a list of the issues important to our members in a new contract. These issues are made into a proposal that is used at the negotiation sessions with the State.

Not all of our union stewards are in attendance during the negotiations. At our next meeting, a “table team” of stewards will be selected to serve as our representatives during the

negotiations. There are an equal number of stewards selected from the “metro” as well as the “out-state” areas. Usually, the number of stewards on the table team is eight. Once the negotiation meetings with the State begin, those members of the table team are not permitted to discuss the contract discussions with other court reporters or even other stewards that are not a part of the table team.

After a tentative agreement is reached by the State and the stewards, it is presented to all official court reporters for a vote. The contract is then ratified by the members if a majority votes to approve it. Thus far, our court reporters have ratified every contract that has been presented to them. Good luck with your negotiations this year, Table Team! We do appreciate your hard work and dedication!

Monica Christensen is an official reporter in Bemidji, Minnesota, and serves on MAVRC's Board of Directors. ■

If you are interested in providing pro bono reporting services, contact:

Jean Whalen, RDR, CRR

MAVRC Pro Bono Coordinator

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St. Paul, MN 55102

Phone: 651-266-5170

Jean.whelen@courts.state.mn.us

STUDENT'S CORNER - OUR ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

By Jackie Young, RPR, DSA

Even though we have been taught the difference between right and wrong as we were growing up, it is important not to forget those valuable lessons we learned throughout our younger years as we venture out into the workplace. As court reporters, we should always be careful that we convey a high standard of business ethics and impartiality toward all parties involved in a lawsuit so our actions and words are not perceived as exhibiting preferential treatment toward one side versus the other.



The National Court Reporters Association has, throughout the years, addressed various ethical dilemmas faced by court reporters and has compiled its own Code of Professional Ethics (COPE) that it encourages its members to follow while performing our duties. MAVRC has also incorporated this code as part of its Constitution and Bylaws to help provide the necessary ethical framework for court reporters throughout Minnesota. The Code of Professional Ethics reads as follows:

1. Be fair and impartial toward each participant in all aspects of reported proceedings, and always offer to provide comparable services to all parties in a proceeding.
2. Be alert to situations that are conflicts of interest or that may

give the appearance of a conflict of interest. If a conflict or a potential conflict arises, the Member shall disclose that conflict or potential conflict.

3. Guard against not only the fact but the appearance of impropriety.
4. Preserve the confidentiality and ensure the security of information, oral or written, entrusted to the Member by any of the parties in a proceeding.
5. Be truthful and accurate when making public statements or when advertising the Member's qualifications or the services provided.
6. Refrain, as an official reporter, from freelance reporting activities that interfere with official duties and obligations.
7. Determine fees independently, except when established by statute or court order, entering into no unlawful agreements with other reporters on the fees to any user.
8. Refrain from giving, directly or indirectly, any gift or anything of value to attorneys or their staff, other clients or their staff, or any other persons or entities associated with any litigation, which exceeds \$100 in the aggregate per recipient each year. Nothing offered in exchange for future work is permissible, regardless of its value. Pro bono services as defined by the NCRA Guidelines for Professional Practice or by applicable state and local laws, rules and regulations are permissible in any amount.
9. Maintain the integrity of the

reporting profession.

10. Abide by the NCRA Constitution and Bylaws.

In addition, NCRA has available on its website to both members and nonmembers a number of Advisory Opinions dealing with different facets of our job, and it is worthwhile for every reporter to occasionally review those guidelines to help re-enforce and instill those ethical responsibilities.

As an example, Advisory Opinion No. 45 specifically addresses gift giving and strongly encourages court reporters to refrain from the practice of giving items of value to attorneys, clients or their staff since it could create, in the eyes of the public, the appearance that the reporter or firm has some partiality or favoritism toward the recipient and, as such, "these practices undermine and dilute the integrity of the reporting profession and the status of the reporter as a neutral and impartial officer of the court."

Not to be outdone, the Internal Revenue Service has also weighed in on the subject of gift giving by individuals. In 2006, the IRS reached a settlement with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences involving the value of gift bags that were distributed at its Academy Award shows. In that case, the IRS stated that the recipients of those gift bags generally must report the fair market value of the bag and its contents as income.

Individual court reporters and firms should be aware that the IRS considers incentives that are given to attorneys and/or their staff in exchange for benefits as being very similar to the

gift bags. In other words, the incentive will be treated as a taxable payment for services unless the motive for the gift is made out of affection, respect, admiration, or charity. Similarly, an incentive given by a reporting firm to an employee may also be considered as income if it exceeds a certain threshold or does not fall under what the IRS terms as “de minimis fringe.” A de minimis fringe benefit is one which is so small as to make accounting for it unreasonable or administratively impracticable.

Also weighing in on the subject of gift giving is the Minnesota Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility. In response to gift giving, on June 18, 1993, the Lawyers Board adopted Opinion 17, “Accepting Gratuities from Court Reporting Services and Other

Similar Services.” The rule reads as follows: “It is improper for a lawyer to accept, or to permit any nonlawyer employee to accept, a gratuity offered by a court reporting service or other service for which a client is expected to pay unless the client consents after consultation. However, a lawyer may accept nominal gifts, such as pens, coffee mugs, and other similar advertising-type gifts without consent of the client.” Please keep in mind the fact that a gift that may be given to the attorney’s secretary or paralegal does not relieve the attorney of his or her professional obligations and they remain responsible for ensuring that their conduct is compatible with the professional obligations that apply to the lawyer.

Having a thorough awareness of a court

reporter’s professional and ethical responsibilities will help prevent those situations where our integrity and impartiality could be called into question. Following good work ethics will also garner you admiration from your fellow court reporters and others in the legal profession. If you are interested in becoming more proactive and involved in the promotion of a high standard of excellence, give some thought to joining NCRA’s Ethics First program. Information on the program can be found at ncra.com.

Jackie Young is a freelance reporter from Delano, Minnesota, and a member of MAVRC’s Publications Committee. ■

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COURT REPORTING STUDENT PROFILE

By Sarah Colberg

Name: Hollie Selley

School: Anoka Technical College

Speed: Theory

Hometown: Maple Grove

Tell us a little about yourself. I am married and have four kids between the ages of 9 and 18. I love coffee and reading, and I am passionate about music and my kids.

What made you decide to pursue a career in court reporting? I worked as a legal secretary when I was 19. Court reporting intrigued me then, but I never pursued it, choosing instead to marry and have a family. Fast forward 20 years and I am still interested in court reporting, and I am finally able to devote some time and energy to school and learning about my exciting future career.



Hollie Selley (Left) with her children and husband

What area of reporting interests you the most at this time - official, freelance, or captioning/CART? At this point, I am interested in captioning/CART. However, I am a creature of habit and official reporting's regular schedule is appealing.

What's been the most challenging or rewarding part of your schooling thus far? Balancing school with my work and home life has definitely been my biggest challenge. I am amazed each class period at how much information we have to take in and retain. My brain is keeping up; that's incredibly rewarding!

Do you know any working reporters or anyone that's been an influence to you? I do not know any working reporters, other than my instructor, Jennifer Sati. My 18-year-old daughter has actually been a great influence to me. The days when I am feeling overwhelmed, she has been incredibly encouraging, reminding me to look at the big picture.

If you had an hour of free time, what would you be doing (besides practicing on your steno)? I would probably be sitting in "my chair" with a coffee cup in one hand and a book in the other.

What is your favorite band or type of music? I love so many types of music. Two of my favorite artists are Josh Groban and Michael Bublé.

What is your favorite food or restaurant? I also love food! Mexican is at the top of my list.

Where is a place you would like to visit? Hawaii

The last book you read? *Stormswift* by Madeleine Brent

The last movie you watched? *Jack the Giant Slayer* ■

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Court Reporting as a Career???

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To be included in the Fall 2013 issue, your ad and payment must be received by August 1, 2013.

Questions may be addressed to MAVRC's Administrative Assistant, Jolene Carrow, at the MAVRC website or by calling her at (507) 532-0676.

The MAVRC Board of Directors thanks you for your support.

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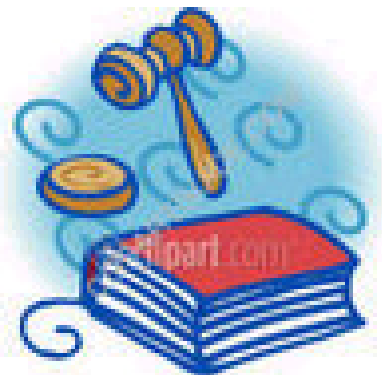
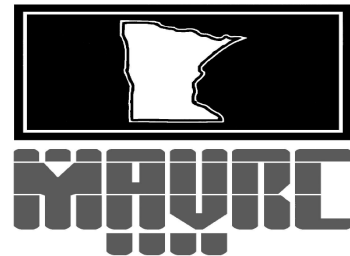
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UPCOMING EVENTS

July

9 MAVRC Board Meeting
Via Skype

**August
7** NCSA Meeting
Nashville, TN

**August
8-11** NCRA Annual Convention
Nashville, TN

**August
17** RPR/RMR and CRR/CBC/CCP
Skills tests
Anoka Technical College
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**September
6-7** MAVRC Annual Convention
Minneapolis Marriot Southwest
5801 Opus Parkway
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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.

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