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INSIDE:

Pro Bono	2
President's Address	
Your Secret Weapon to	
Being Successful.....	3/4
Welcome New Members.....	4
CART Captioning en francais...	5-7
Career Fair -	
Coon Rapids High School.....	7
Court Reporting and Captioning	
Promoted at MSCA	
Annual Conference.....	8
Reporting Funnies.....	9
What I Learned at NCRA	
Legislative Boot Camp	10/11
MAVRC 2016 Spring Seminar	
Session Recap	12-15
MAVRC 2016 Spring Seminar	
Door Prize/Raffle Winners.....	16
MAVRC 2016 Spring Seminar	
Snapshots	17/18
Court Reporting	
Student Profile.....	19
Minnesota Agency Listings....	20/21
Out-of-State Listings.....	22
Promote Court Reporting.....	23
Upcoming Events.....	24

2016 MAVRC FALL CONVENTION

Even though it is only May, plans are well underway in preparation for our fall convention to be held this year on Friday and Saturday, September 23 and 24, 2016, at the Park Plaza Hotel in Bloomington, Minnesota, located at 4460 W. 78th Street Circle.

Off I-494, the Park Plaza Hotel is 5.7 miles from Mall of America and 8.6 miles from Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport. Parking at the hotel is complimentary, and the hotel also provides shuttle service to the Mall of America and the airport. Inside the hotel you will also find a relaxed Italian restaurant plus a cozy bar/lounge with a fireplace. Other amenities include an

indoor pool, whirlpool, business center and an exercise room.

We are contacting potential speakers at the present time and are still organizing our agenda. Please watch your inbox for an upcoming convention newsflash and view updates on MAVRC's website as well as our Facebook page.

Our goal is to provide you with an interesting convention with something for everyone. Please feel free to submit any ideas you may have on topics or potential speakers to info@mavrc.org. We welcome your ideas and strive to organize a successful and informative convention for all of our members!

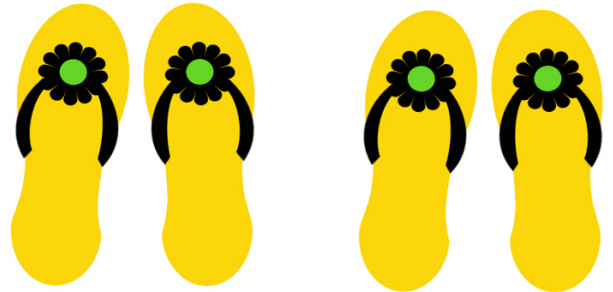


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PRO BONO

Kudos to
Jolynn Graham
and
Lori Morrow
for performing
pro bono
reporting services.



*If you are interested in providing
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contact:*

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS - PASSION: YOUR SECRET WEAPON TO BEING SUCCESSFUL

By Jackie Young, RPR, DSA

It is likely that all of us know a fellow court reporter that is highly successful - a reporter who has attained a number of certifications, is committed to expanding their knowledge and skills, and just generally goes above and beyond what the average reporter will do. While all of us yearn to be successful, the path to success is taken one step at a time and is something that is usually only attained through hard work, dedication, and not being afraid to take on new challenges. A successful person is also someone who is passionate about what they do.

Success in a job basically means being able to do that job well, feeling some sense of accomplishment, attaining the highest pay that you can, and being noticed and respected by your employer and/or clients. This begs the question of what things we can do to be more successful, and the "secrets of success" include everything from being conscientious, hard-working, loyal, dependable, dressing professionally, and taking our jobs more seriously. Unfortunately, sometimes we get caught up in the mundane routine of our jobs and simply go through the motions of performing our tasks day in and day out. Over time, however, this will rob us of our passion or desire to take our skill sets and personal attributes to a higher level. Having a passion about our work and loving what we do gives us a reason to wake up in the morning and energizes us to accomplish our daily tasks and overcome the challenges in our life.

We all struggle in our job from time to time, but if you find that you have reached a plateau in your career and are not as passionate about it as you once were, it is probably time to take a step back and examine what it is that might

be preventing you from reaching your full potential. We are all a work in progress, so a little self-examination from time to time helps steer us back on the right path again and rekindles that passion and desire to succeed that we had when we first embarked on our career path.

During this self-reflection, it is important to realize that rather than focusing on our failures, we should instead learn to cultivate what is known as a "growth mindset." People with a "growth mindset" will look upon failures or shortfalls as a way to grow, will embrace challenges, adapt to new technology, learn from criticism, and ultimately reach higher levels of achievement.

We should also think about how we can improve certain areas of our work or even our state court reporting association. This could involve spending some time analyzing our writing and determining how we can become better at it, such as writing shorter and cleaner; or perhaps networking with other people in the same field, which may lead to better job opportunities; or accepting a leadership role with MAVRC; or striving to have quicker turn-around times with our transcripts. Starting small by choosing one thing to improve every day and then being committed to following through with that one goal is the easiest way to re-energize and achieve success.

This simple self-reflection is something we should all attempt to do periodically, for not only will it make us better court reporters, but it will also result in our attitudes becoming more positive, it will create more passion for our job, and it will help open up



Jackie Young

new opportunities for us to conquer. Of course, prior to this exercise, if we are serious about effectuating a positive result in our lives, we must be open-minded and be willing to change. Just think of what life would be like if we did not have forward-thinking people in our profession who were willing to step out on a limb and enthusiastically embrace realtime technology when it first became available. Without that passion and inner drive to excel by a few insightful trailblazers, within a matter of just a few years court reporters would have found the world leaving them behind; and instead of being on the cutting edge of technology, our profession would have become a thing of the past.

That commitment and passion for court reporting was on full display at MAVRC's recent spring seminar, not only by our two distinguished speakers, but also by the large number of reporters who chose to take the time to improve their professional skills. Speaking to a full house, Ed and Nancy Varallo exemplified

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what it is like to truly care about the court reporting profession. They routinely travel around the country speaking to other court reporters without asking to be compensated for their time. They also willingly share their secrets on how to achieve success because they understand that the strength and future growth of our profession lies not in just having a few people be exemplary but, rather, in having all of us become outstanding writers and individuals.

As we go forward into this increasingly competitive world, it is important to remember that passionate people achieve their goals and make the most out of their careers. Passion is the fuel that will empower our forward progress. The small steps we take every day will, in turn, lead to a revitalization of our profession. If all of us make a renewed commitment to improving our job skills and learning about the latest technology, the quality and efficiency of our work will be noticed, we will become more valued, and a positive image of court reporting will be created.

The very best people, in any career, are those who are constantly challenging themselves and are willing to take the time to learn new things. Make the decision today to become a more passionate person. By doing so, you will have rejected the characteristics of being cynical, lazy, or easily discouraged. You will have instead decided to be optimistic, courageous, and dedicated.

The great artist Michelangelo Buonarroti once said, "The greatest danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low and achieving our mark." Don't let the world move on without you. Re-energize your passion and hone the skills and knowledge that will take you to a higher level!

Jackie Young is a freelance reporter from Delano, Minnesota. ■

Welcome New Members

Natasha Anderson – Student
Forest Lake, Minnesota

Jamie Belsaas – Student
Zimmerman, Minnesota

Sandra Fellows – Freelance
Roseville, Minnesota

Adam Graupe – Student
New Richmond, Wisconsin

Candace Kolehma – Freelance
Maplewood, Minnesota

Angela Romick – Student
Coon Rapids, Minnesota

Maria Tweed – Official
Anoka, Minnesota

MAVRC Mission Statement

The mission of 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.

CART Captioning *en français*

By Jean Whalen, RDR, CRR, CRC, RSA, DSA

« Le fou se rue là où le sage n'ose mettre le pied » . . .

(“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread . . .”)

In January of 2014, I accepted a gig at a local university, providing CART captioning for a student in a French class. When the disability services coordinator and I first communicated about the possibility of my covering this class, our conversation went something like this (or at least this is how I remember it):

Me: “Well, I *might* be interested in providing CART for the Fren-” –

Her: “That’s GREAT! Thanks so much! We’ll be in touch shortly with all the details.”

Gloup. (Gulp.) *What just happened?* And why am I left with the distinct impression that I was the only CART captioner who expressed an interest in covering this class?

First of all, you must understand that I don’t speak French. So to say this was a bit of a challenge would be an understatement. I was exposed to the French language when I worked for the United Nations at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, but just being semi-aware that French was being spoken in the same courtroom in which I was working was as close as I had come to French at that time, besides saying “Bonjour” to the French court reporters as we passed each other in the hallway.

Fast-forward to two years later, and my *voyage français* in the classroom has just come to an end. Little did I know this undertaking would last for four semesters! It’s been a wild ride. It’s by far the hardest work-related assignment I’ve ever undertaken, including working for the UN. The Rwanda genocide trials

were hard in a more visceral, heart-wrenching sort of way. But at least they were speaking English, albeit with various accents, depending upon which interpreter was covering that particular shift. Trying to understand beginning French and then figuring out a way to steno it was harder in an intellectual way.

Here are some of the challenges in providing CART *dans une classe étrangère* (in a foreign-language class):

1. There is a language barrier! (*Rire.*) (Laughter.) If you ever are “courageous” (a/k/a *naïf*) (a/k/a naïve) enough to take on an assignment like this, be prepared to shift your obsessive-compulsive disorder into overdrive! The reason your OCD will be an ASSET rather than a LIABILITY is because when you’re not in class, you’ll be either: a) studying the foreign language in print format; b) listening to the oral language and trying to “get your ear on”; c) trying to *think* in the new language; or d) creating entries in your steno dictionary, imagining how that word will sound when somebody who actually speaks the language *couramment* (fluently) enunciates the word -- and chances are, it won’t be pronounced the way you’ve been pronouncing it *dans votre tête* (in your head). I can’t speak for other languages, but the French oral and written languages are two different types of animal. And the way a French word is pronounced is dependent on the words that come before and after it in any given sentence, so its pronunciation changes like a *caméléon*.

2. Accent marks are not a luxury in foreign-language classes, they’re a

necessity. In English transcripts, no one really puts up a fuss if you leave off the accent mark in words like *café* or *résumé*. But in French, if you don’t use the accent mark correctly, it’s just plain wrong. One *must* distinguish, for example, between *e* and *é* and *è* and figure out a way to finger-spell them differently.

3. I figured out how to use the U.S. International keyboard on my computer and would activate it when I was providing French CART. Most of the letters are the same, so it really wasn’t that difficult to adjust to.

4. Homophones! If you’re providing French CART, you had better get used to them, because French is full of them. Just as one example, the words *parler*, *parlé*, *parlais*, *parlait*, and *parlaient* are all pronounced the same way (PAR-LAY), but one must know which *mot* (word) is correct for the particular context. And it’s like that for almost every verb you can think of *en français*. Luckily, Eclipse software, which I use, has a French version. I was able to import the French Eclipse settings into my English version of Eclipse and use the software in a *franglais* (think Spanglish) sort of way so that some of the verbs and adjectives would auto-conjugate for me.

5. Reference materials! My BFFs during these classes were:

- a. an electronic French-English dictionary, complete with audio pronunciations and conjugations.

(Continued on Page 6)

(Continued from Page 5)

b. Google Translate – even though Google Translate sometimes gives an “icky” translation that I know is not quite right, it at least gives a person a springboard from which to start researching a word or phrase.

c. an app called Speak & Translate – you have to be online to use it, but it can be a real time and finger saver if you have an approximate idea of what you’re looking for. It uses voice recognition and often saves having to physically type in the word or phrase. However, my French accent is not yet good enough for the software to understand my French and translate it into English; it only understands my English and translates it into French (although my accent seems to be getting a little better!). One time, the French teacher was talking about breakfast foods and said what distinctly sounded like “NUTE-eh-yah.” I became obsessed, when preparing the transcript after class, with figuring out what that word was. I repeated it, with the best French accent I could muster, over and over and over into the Speak & Translate app: “NUTE-eh-yah! NUTE-eh-yah! NUUUUTE-EHHHH-YAHHH!!!” I burst into laughter when the software finally understood me and spit back the answer: Nutella! *Miam!* (Yum!)

Speaking of transcripts, I was required to prepare and email a transcript to the student within two days of each class. This is where the rubber met the *rue*. Although the transcripts didn’t have to be

verbatim, I did my best to give the student a very useable, correct transcript. If I had a question, I would email the instructor. I really tried to restrict the number of emails I sent to the instructors, though, respecting how busy they all were and the limited amount of time I had within which to complete the transcripts.

The different instructors I worked with over the course of the two years would switch back and forth between English and French at the drop of a *chapeau*, so, with the help of Jeremy Thorne, chief programmer at Advantage Software (Advantage is the parent company of Eclipse), we were able to come up with a one-stroke steno macro that would allow me to flip my French dictionary off and on. This helped tremendously. It also made me realize how far I’d come when I’d glance over at my screen from time to time and realize, *Mon Dieu! J’ai oublié* (I forgot) to hit my macro! *C’est chaos!* I am SO glad the student I worked with was patient with me and had a *sens de l’humour!* I would hear her chuckling softly to herself.

Also, at times the instructors would challenge the students by speaking above their heads, which of course was also above my *tête*. When that happened, I would once again rely upon the student’s sense of humor. (Are we detecting a pattern here?)

Some of my best bloopers during this French odyssey were: *phlegmish* (Flemish) (I LOVED that one, still do), and that perennial French classic, *The Petite Principal*. (Yes, he was a very *small* principal indeed).

There were times during class when I would literally just be writing sounds I’d hear when the instructor was speaking French (I always wrote what I heard, even if I knew it was coming up as gobbledygook), and I

would look at my screen and realize the words were *miraculously coming up correctly* because I had already programmed them in during a prior class. That was FUN.

Numbers were also kind of a riot. Because Eclipse has automatic number conversion, and because I had imported the French settings into my software, when the teacher would say in English, for example, “Turn to page one hundred twenty-seven,” and I would steno “127” on the number bar, it would translate as “*un cent vingt-sept*,” which is French for 127. I’d think, *Oh, so that’s how you spell out 127 in French*. So, yes, there were more times than I care to admit when the software was smarter than me.

As a result of providing CART for this class, I am now on my way to becoming a francophone – I still have a long way to go, because it takes about eight years to become fluent in a language. But for two years, instead of paying to take French classes, I got paid to take French classes! And that was *fantastique*. I have to confess, I placed a giant *carotte* (carrot) in front of my eyes, and just out of my grasp, to help coax me along when the going got tough (which was often): I booked a two-week trip to France a year ahead of time, complete with a home stay in Nice that included a week of tutoring. And since learning French was on my semi-serious bucket list of “things to do when I retire someday” anyway, I am ahead of the game. I plan to continue my French studies, and I’m currently participating in a French conversation class and a French book club. Ironically, we just finished reading *Le Petit Prince*. And a principal of small stature wasn’t mentioned in this book, not even once. How very disappointing.

If you ever have the opportunity to caption in a foreign language, I would definitely suggest giving it

a whirl, as long as it's a 1001-level class and the people you're working with understand that it's not a perfect process. You will need to make a serious commitment, both to yourself and to the student, to stick with it, because you'll be developing a very unique skill set. There won't be another CART captioner who will be able to pinch-write for you if you're sick or want to take some time off. One must plan one's life around the class schedule.

If you have the desire to learn a new language and are willing to spend the time it takes, give it a try, and *bonne chance!*

Jean Whalen is an official reporter in Minnesota's First Judicial District and serves as MAVRC's pro bono coordinator. ■

CAREER FAIR - COON RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL



Rachel Erickson, Jennifer Sati and Sharon Steinbrecher with the Chick-fil-A mascot "Bovine Cow"

Rachel Erickson, Sharon Steinbrecher, and Jennifer Sati manned a joint MAVRC/Anoka Technical College booth at the Coon Rapids Career Fair held on February 26. A number of students were able to learn about all the court reporting career options available, but the "person" most interested in our profession was the Chick-fil-A mascot, "Bovine Cow." No word yet on whether he has registered for the fall semester.



Sharon Steinbrecher and Rachel Erickson with the Chick-fil-A mascot "Bovine Cow"

**Save
the
Date!**

**MAVRC'S
Fall
Convention
September
23 -24,
2016**

COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING PROMOTED AT MSCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

By Rachel Erickson, RPR, CCP

This past weekend, Jennifer Sati and I promoted awareness for court reporting and captioning at the Minnesota School Counselors Association's (MSCA) annual conference held at Madden's Resort in Brainerd, Minnesota. Jennifer Sati is Judicial Program Director at Anoka Technical College, and I am an official reporter/CART Captioner and the school liaison for the Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters and Captioners (MAVRC).

The turnout was great this year with 480 attendees and 60 exhibitors, which was a great experience, as this was our first year attending the MSCA conference.

We promoted the court reporting and captioning profession by



demonstrating real-time on an iPad and monitor and gladly showed people how the steno machine works. We first informed attendees of the national shortage of court reporters and that court reporting and captioning is and will continue to be in high demand nationwide. The school counselors and teachers and various individuals that we spoke with were highly impressed with what court reporters could do and how skilled we are. They were even more excited to hear that our profession was a very lucrative one with a near 100 percent job placement rate and that students in the program can graduate in as little as two years.

I have attended many career fairs and spoken to many students at their schools, and it is one of the most rewarding experiences. And I'd have to say this past weekend was definitely a win for the court reporting profession. We almost ran out of brochures!

Rachel Erickson is an official reporter in Dakota County, Minnesota, and a CART captioner. ■

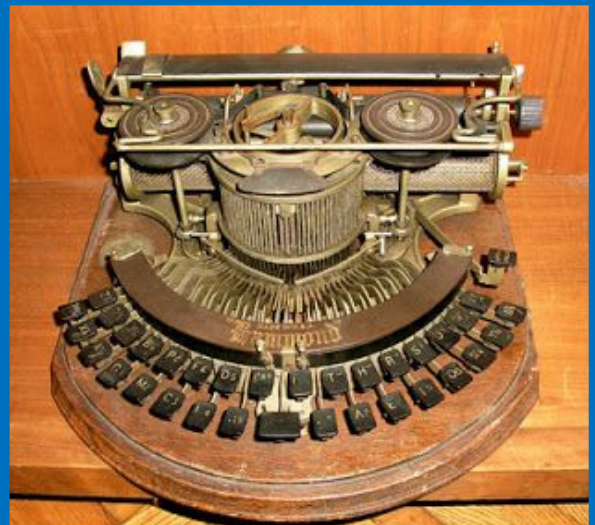
REPORTING FUNNIES



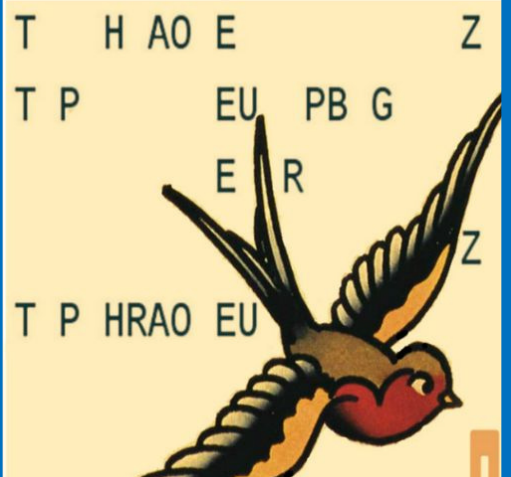
Some people should use a glue stick instead of Chapstick.



Despite the look on my face you're still talking?



1890s Stenographic Typewriter used by Court Reporters



WHAT I LEARNED AT NCRA LEGISLATIVE BOOT CAMP

By Sharon Steinbrecher, RPR

In March, Rachel Erickson and I traveled to Reston, Virginia, to attend NCRA's Legislative Boot Camp. I had no idea what I was getting into when I told Jackie and the rest of the Board that I would attend this event and represent MAVRC. I mean, why not? I would get to go to Washington, D.C. The cherry blossoms would be in bloom. It would be a couple of days of presentations, and I would hopefully pick up some pointers on handling issues that affect our profession. Piece of cake!



Rachel Erickson and Sharon Steinbrecher

From the first meeting early Sunday morning, it became quickly apparent that this was not going to be a walk in the park, cherry blossoms or not! Looking around the room, I realized I was in the midst of court reporting leaders from all over the country, and it was a bit unnerving to think that I was worthy enough to be a part of this distinguished group, but there I was. We were all taken out of our comfort zones and randomly placed with others we had never met before and told that we were now members of that "team" and we would be working with these fine folks for the next three days. Gulp!

Adam Finkel, NCRA's Director of Government Relations, and Dave Wenhold, NCRA's lobbyist extraordinaire, were our "Dynamic Duo" for the weekend, and although they swapped leading roles throughout Boot Camp, from the moment they stood up and introduced themselves and told us about what we would be doing the next three days, I knew right away that these guys were the movers and shakers that knew how things worked on Capitol Hill. Their job for those three days was to prepare us to get things done on a Grassroots level, whether it be at our home state legislature or on Capitol Hill, at our local town hall meeting, in our workplace or even personal life.

The big issue that NCRA is working on is the reauthorization of the Training for Realtime Writers Act that was attached to the Higher Education Act in 2010 and was funded at \$1 million a year for five years. This funding provided money to be used for student scholarships, improving teaching methods, creating new captioning programs and online court reporting programs and recruiting new students. That funding has expired, so we need to ensure that the program is continued,

although the Higher Education Act does not appear to be moving anytime soon, and there is the fear that the language dealing with the Training for Realtime Writers Act may be altered or dropped as it moves through the legislature. The reporters attending Boot Camp were assigned the task of meeting with their individual state representatives and senators to educate them on why it is so important that the language remain intact in the Higher Education Act.

After sitting through several presentations throughout the day by Adam, Dave and several NCRA board members and staff, we grabbed dinner and worked in our individual teams late into the night to prepare our presentation and returned the next morning for a day of mock meetings with acting senators and congressmen/women. The NCRA board members helped out by taking on those roles and testing our knowledge and presentation skills, often with a sense of humor, and then stepped out of their roles to give us feedback so we could keep improving our presentation as we worked through five or six of these meetings. Then the teams had a working lunch where we tweaked our presentation and came back to a mock congressional panel in a final push to get



Sharon Steinbrecher (right) working with team members at the NCRA Legislative Boot Camp



Sharon Steinbrecher (3rd from right) with team members presenting to mock congressional panel at the 2016 NCRA Legislative Boot Camp

our grant re-authorized. At the end of the day, the board members, along with Adam and Dave, got together and voted on which team had done the best, and I am proud to say that my team tied with one other for the win! My team was made up of reporters from New York, Washington, Texas, Indiana, Florida and Minnesota. We came together as strangers, but I came away from this experience with five new friends who I look forward to reconnecting with at future NCRA conventions!

After a full day of mock meetings and panel presentations, we regrouped with our fellow state reporters and worked well into the night to get ready for the “real thing” on Capitol Hill. Rachel and I were joined by NCRA board



Rachel Erickson, Jennifer Sati, Sharon Steinbrecher and Marie Calhoun, an official reporter at the U.S. House of Representatives

member and Anoka Tech’s Broadcast Captioning and Judicial Reporting Program Director Jennifer Sati as we worked well into the night researching our Minnesota politicians and planning our strategies.

After a short night’s sleep, we headed to Capitol Hill. Jennifer, Rachel and I had appointments with Senators Klobuchar and Franken’s office as well as with each of our individual Rep’s offices. We also did several drop-in’s and left our cards and information with other Minnesota Representatives’ offices, some of which ended up better than our scheduled meetings. As a bonus, we had lunch with one of my best friends, Marian Calhoun, who is an official reporter at the U.S. House of Representatives. She was able to get passes for us to go down into the underground walkways of the Capitol where she showed us the Official Reporters’ office and introduced us to many of her colleagues and showed us copies of the “Congressional Record” which contains transcripts of each day’s

(Right Photo) Sharon Steinbrecher (3rd from right) with team members who tied for 1st place at the 2016 NCRA Legislative Boot Camp



proceedings and kept in the Library of Congress for posterity. Just another day at the office for her, but pretty impressive to me!

The last stop of the day was a fundraiser for an Illinois Representative who has been very supportive of court reporters. Also in attendance was the Chief Official Reporter at the House of Representatives, who invited us to think about a career as a Congressional reporter, along with another official reporter from their office, “Ed Johnson from Wisconsin,” who entertained us with a very funny stand-up routine about reporting.

All in all, this Legislative Boot Camp was a great eye-opening experience, not only because of what I learned about how to effectively get things done, but I also learned how important teamwork was in doing that. We all have something to offer, and we all are more capable than we give ourselves credit for. But nobody can do it all alone. MAVRC is a great example. It takes many people to do the work it needs to do to support our members. Think about MAVRC like a team ... And remember, there is no “I” in “team.”

Oh, and yes, there were cherry blossoms!

Sharon Steinbrecher is an official reporter in Anoka County, Minnesota, and serves on MAVRC’s Board of Directors as President-Elect. ■

MAVRC 2016 SPRING SEMINAR RECAP

“Unleashing the Realtime Superstar in You!”

By Jackie Young, RPR, DSA

The attendees at MAVRC’s 2016 Spring Seminar had the opportunity to hear from Ed Varallo, a real legend in court reporting. To help us understand the basic premise of writing shorthand, Ed quoted the words of Aristotle, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.” To become an excellent realtime writer, you must have sufficient speed, endurance, and be able to write cleanly, all of which can be accomplished by writing short.

Ed explained that since our brains subconsciously looks for patterns, it is important for reporters to consciously look for word patterns that we routinely write and to develop a way to stroke those phrases in one stroke. Approximately 75 percent of the words we hear every day are the same, and if you are writing at 225 words per minute, that equals four words per second. While our brains can easily process words spoken at that rate of speed, it does not give us very much time to write, especially if you are stroking out words individually. Identifying those patterns enables us to write three to five words with one stroke and allows us to keep up with the speaker. Having a consistent theory and then practicing those briefs allows them to become so engrained in our brains that there is not a chance for hesitation to creep in.

Ed’s three basic rules for briefing are as follows:

1. Briefs should be skeletal. Use only as many keys as necessary to suggest the word or phrase you are briefing.

2. Clip-on briefs. Design a brief by adding a single letter (or sometimes two) in front of your regular outline for a given word in order to create another word or phrase. For example, if you write return as RURN, by adding the T, it can become tax return.

3. The Family of Briefs concept. By listening to words in context as two-word, three-word, or sometimes four-word phrases and not as individual words, you will identify groupings of words that are ideal for briefs. A family of briefs is any sequence of words you encounter where you can identify a recurring pattern, otherwise known as phrases. Examples of common phrases we encounter on the job include the **I don’t** family and

the **time** family. The **I don’t** family includes the phrases “I don’t know, I don’t recall, I don’t remember, etc. The **time** family includes at that time, at this time, at the time, and at the present time.

Ed emphasized how a shorter system of writing, based on briefs you can easily remember, will produce cleaner notes with less physical effort. Clean notes mean accurate translations and less time editing your transcripts. By possessing these good writing skills, you can achieve your highest potential and unleash the realtime superstar in you!

Jackie Young serves on MAVRC’s Board of Directors as President.



Ed Varallo and Sandy Burch, originally from the Boston area, share some stories about reporting on the East Coast.

MAVRC 2016 SPRING SEMINAR RECAP

Morning Session 2: “Unleashing the Realtime Superstar in You!”

By Nanette Corbett, RDR

See Jackie Young’s summary of Ed Varallo’s first session in the morning. I’ll add here a key concept I took away from that session: Get your shorthand system in harmony with the way the brain processes language. Our brains are pattern-recognition machines, so they hear things in phrases. Creating briefs for repetitive phrases gets our fingers in sync with our brain.

After the mid-morning break, Ed Varallo continued by giving lots of examples of his briefs for phrases using his three basic rules. All over the room you could hear attendees murmuring gleefully and frantically writing down newly discovered briefs to try out in the weeks ahead. Ed’s book *Ed’s Steno Pro* has pages and pages of his briefs and is worth investing in as a resource. You can find it at www.EdVarallo.com. Ed finished this session by talking about the value of promoting rough drafts to clients, both for client satisfaction and for increasing our income. Rough drafts are one of the great benefits of being a good realtime writer because you are able to get them out quickly. No matter what time a client asks for a rough draft to be sent, Ed says get them out the same day, and his goal is by dinnertime, not bedtime. This is just one of the reasons why realtime is truly the future of our profession.

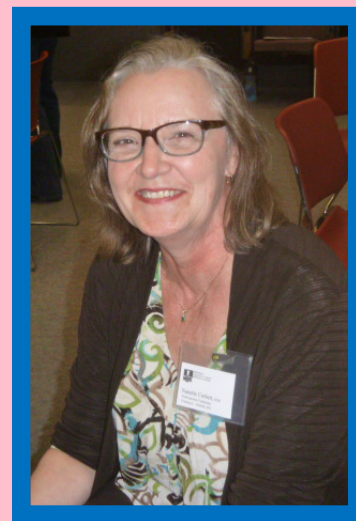
Nanette Corbett serves on the Publications Committee and is a freelance reporter from Duluth, Minnesota.



Ed and Nancy Varallo joined a group of MAVRC reporters for an evening out at Rockwoods Bar & Grill.



Rachel Erickson and Sandy Burch



Nanette Corbett, freelance reporter, is also a member of MAVRC’s Publication Committee. Nan enjoyed listening to Ed and Nancy speak as well as seeing some long-time friends.

Jolene Carrow, MAVRC’s Administrative Assistant, and Judy Wunderlich, Official Reporter in the 7th Judicial District, joined the Varallos for a relaxing evening at the Rockwoods Bar & Grill.



MAVRC 2016 SPRING SEMINAR RECAP

MAVRC's Town Hall Session

By Jackie Young, RPR, DSA

Starting out the town hall session was Rachel Erickson, MAVRC's Vice President of Freelance. Rachel provided an update on NCRA's Boot Camp that was held on March 20-22nd. Attending this year's Boot Camp from Minnesota was Rachel Erickson, Sharon Steinbrecher, and NCRA Director Jennifer Sati.

This year's Boot Camp centered on educating the various state leaders on the Training for Realtime Writers Grants. This program was created to help train more captioners to meet the needs of the deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals. The grant program was subsequently rolled into the Higher Education Act. This training culminated in a visit to Capitol Hill by the state leaders in an effort to convince them to support renewal of the Training for Realtime Writers grants. Further details on Boot Camp can be found on Pages 10 and 11.

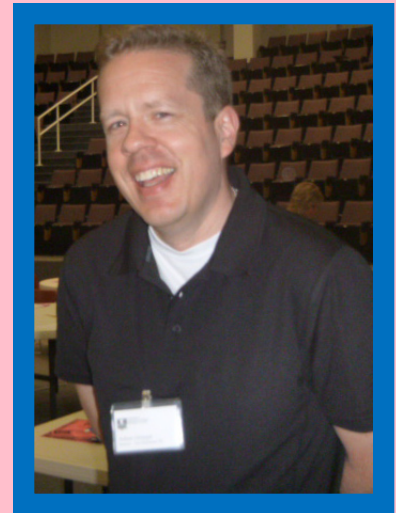
Jennifer Sati then gave a brief recap of the activities that were held by Anoka Technical College during National Court Reporting & Captioning Week. Some of the highlights included receiving a proclamation from Governor Dayton's Office declaring the week of February 14-20 as Court Reporting & Captioning Week in Minnesota and holding the Court Reporting & Captioning Exhibition where live demonstrations were provided on realtime, captioning, and CART. Jennifer also reminded the seminar attendees of NCRA's upcoming convention and expo to be held from August 4-7 down in Chicago, Illinois.

The session was then opened up for

comments and/or questions from the audience. A brief discussion was had regarding whether freelance reporters should hold on to the original transcript rather than the attorney taking the deposition. It was recommended that a statement be included on the record if the court reporter retains the original.

Another topic discussed included MAVRC possibly producing an info-commercial that can air on local cable channels to help educate people on the different facets of court reporting as well as attracting new students into the court reporting program at Anoka Tech. MAVRC will be exploring the possibility of creating an info-commercial focusing on local Minnesota court reporters for use in different venues.

Jackie Young serves on the Publications Committee and is a freelance reporter from Delano, Minnesota.



Adam Graupe, a new student member of MAVRC, attended the spring seminar and is enthused about the court reporting profession.



Hennepin County Official Reporters Sandra Helget and Vicki Pierce were enjoying the break between sessions.



MAVRC 2016 SPRING SEMINAR RECAP

Afternoon Session 1: “Goal Setting and Accountability: Developing a Personal Strategic Plan” by Nancy Varallo

Nancy Varallo uses this process in-house for The Varallo Group and also helps other businesses and individuals use this same process to develop a strategic plan for a course of action to accomplish goals they set for themselves. Fundamentals for creating a strategic plan: Start with SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats); then go on to defining guiding principles/core values; then write out a clear and concise mission statement; and finally set out your vision for where you want to be in the future.

Implementing the plan you develop involves setting OBJECTIVES and GOALS using the SMART technique (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely). Start by identifying three big ideas that you will work on just one at a time, no multitasking, within a set period of time, say three to five years. These ideas should be meaningful, affordable, and attainable. Your goals must have measurable benchmarks. Your ACTION PLAN lists the particular steps for reaching each goal. ACCOUNTABILITY requires a timeline and a list of tasks and who is responsible for each one. ASSESSMENT/REVIEW is usually done on an annual basis to evaluate progress made, what remains to be done, checking to see if there are things that can be let go of or if there are new things affecting the plan going forward. This entire process works both for a business and for an individual. Try visualizing your own personal Big Idea and get started.

Afternoon Session 2: “Stenographer Operations at Guantanamo Bay” by Nancy Varallo

This was a fascinating insider look at the role of court reporters involved in the justice system that’s ongoing at Guantanamo Bay related to 9/11, which is still in the motion phase, soon to be finally heading into the trial phase. Nancy Varallo gave us lots of details related to the massive effort involved in her coordinating role in assembling an initial group of highly talented court reporters from all over the country, getting them through the required top-secret security clearance system, and finding and setting up the equipment in their offsite work area, which has audio and video feed to six giant screens in the courtroom itself.

This team of reporters is referred to as StenOps Guantanamo. They rotate into Guantanamo in groups of six reporters at a time and stay for one to three weeks per month. Three reporters are writing at a time and the other three are doing scoping/editing/proofing and they all rotate tasks and positions. Due to high security, all the equipment, computers, and writing machines STAY THERE, so they’re not working with their own writers or dictionaries. Oh, yeah, the

dictionaries. You can also imagine the high level of difficulty with spellings. They work to prepare what’s referred to as the Press Transcript, which is released online each evening they’re in session, but only after all classified information has been redacted by a separate government agency. The StenOps team started in October of 2011 with 13 reporters and a five-year government contract. Over the years, reporters have come and gone. They are currently down to nine reporters and have five openings. Contact Nancy at Nancy.Varallo@TheVaralloGroup.com if you’re interested in applying as they have received high praise and recognition for their skilled work and are currently in negotiation for a new five-year contract, which would see the beginning of the trial phase. The skill and efficiency of the team on this project has been a showcase of the court reporting profession, and it put on display the many benefits of live reporters over digital recording systems.

Nanette Corbett is a freelance reporter in Duluth, Minnesota, and a member of MAVRC’s Publication Committee.



(L to R): Jennifer Wutz, Angie Sundell, Tracy Bennett, Stefanie Olson

MAVRC 2016 SPRING SEMINAR

Door Prize/Raffle Winners

MAVRC would like to thank the following people for donating the following items and making our event a huge success:

<u>Item:</u>	<u>Donated by:</u>	<u>Winners:</u>
\$60 Nordstrom Gift Card	Mill City Video	Karen Macaulay
Godiva Chocolates	Jim Woitalla	Andrea Heiret, Patsy Nelson Cheryle Doss, Candace Kolehma
Microphone	Advantage Software	Tammy Mathwig
Leather Key Pads	Stenograph	Julie Buehler, Maria Tweed Sandy Burch, Brenda Vanderveur
\$50 Stenograph Gift Card	Stenograph/Karen Wolson	Sandra Helget
Gift Bag	Stenograph/Karen Wolson	Cheryle Doss
Sweatshirt	MAVRC	Cheryle Doss Jackie Young
Jacket	MAVRC	Paula Richter Joanne Ertl
Stylus	MAVRC	Janet Winberg Liz Gangl
Water Bottle	MAVRC	Emily Lettner Katriina Henderson
Bracelet	International Depo	Brenda Vanderveur Melissa Keute
Portable Charger	MAVRC	Karen Macaulay

**50/50 Raffle Winner:
Kathy Hanson - \$127.50**

**iPad Winner:
Jolynn Graham**

MAVRC would like to thank Jennifer Sati and Anoka Technical College for allowing us to hold our 2016 Spring Seminar at their facility.

MAVRC 2016 SPRING SEMINAR SNAPSHOTS



St. Cloud Business College/Rasmussen Business College Attendees: Jolene Carrow, Vicki Pierce, Rachel Erickson, Myrina Kleinschmidt, Cheryle Doss, Jeanna Zunker, Denise Rothfork, Linda Schwenzfeier, Joanne Ertl, Ruth Holdvogt, Judy Wunderlich, Jim Woitalla, Brenda Vanderveur



Brenda Vanderveur, Judy Wunderlich, Jolene Carrow, Jackie Young and Cheryle Doss gathered Friday evening to share stories and catch up with each other.



Jolynn Graham is proudly displaying the iPad she won from a raffle at the Spring Seminar.

MAVRC 2016 SPRING SEMINAR SNAPSHOTS



7th Judicial District Official Reporters in attendance at the MAVRC Spring Seminar were Denise Rothfork, Melissa Keute, Cheryle Doss, Brenda Vanderveur, Linda Schwenzfeier, Judy Wunderlich



Wisconsin Official Reporters Lisa Weber and Mary Bader joined MAVRC for the annual spring seminar.



Kudos to Monica Christensen for all her hard work in arranging the Spring Seminar!



Melissa Keute and Joanne Ertl are having a bit of fun with the MAVRC fundraising items.

COURT REPORTING STUDENT PROFILE

By Kelley Riley

Name: Kelley Riley

School: Anoka Technical College

Speed: 180 wpm

Hometown: Plymouth, Minnesota

Tell us a little about yourself. I have been a part of the Judicial Reporting Program at Anoka Tech for almost a year and a half.

What made you decide to pursue a career in court reporting? A family friend had been an official court reporter for a few years when I reached out to her and asked her about the career path and the program at Anoka Tech. I sent an e-mail inquiring about the program, applied, and the rest is history.

What area of reporting interests you the most at this time - official, freelance, or captioning/CART? I've leaned towards official some days and freelance others. It's a decision that I haven't been able to make yet.

What's been the most challenging or rewarding part of your schooling thus far? I think both the challenging and rewarding parts are test days. I've had to let go of the idea of passing or not passing and just focus on how the writing feels and gauge my progress off that.

Do you know any working reporters or anyone that's been an influence to you? I have to say the instructors that I work with every day and my mentor. The amount of experience and how successful they have been in the profession is not only encouraging but inspiring. It's definitely something I know I will strive for once I am out in the working world.

If you had an hour of free time, what would you be doing (besides practicing on your steno)? Spending time with my niece and nephew or watching a Minnesota sports team.

What is your favorite band or type of music? Mat Kearney or Eric Church. They both are great performers.

What is your favorite food or restaurant? RPM Italian in Chicago. It is fantastic!

Where is a place you would like to visit? I've always wanted to visit Vietnam. I love being immersed in new cultures because it reminds me how big the world is.

The last book you read? [Presumed Guilty: Casey Anthony: The Inside Story](#)

The last movie you watched? The Martian ■



Kelley Riley



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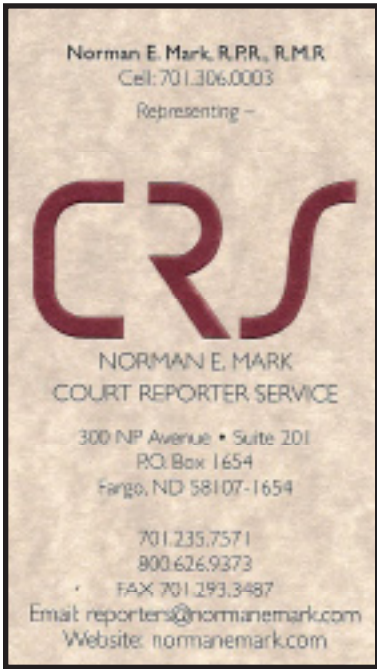


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Court Reporting as a Career???

If you know someone who is interested in court reporting, closed captioning, or CART, the contact person at Anoka Technical is:

Jennifer Sati

JSati@anokatech.edu

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a student?**

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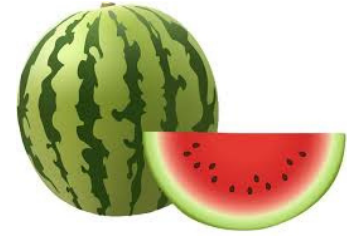
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**If you are willing to donate any of
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UPCOMING EVENTS

June 8, 2016	Ice Cream Social Anoka Technical College Anoka, MN
August 4- 7, 2016	NCRA Annual Convention The Hilton Chicago, IL
September 23 & 24, 2016	MAVRC's Fall Convention Park Plaza, Bloomington, MN

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