



BOARDlines

Arizona Court Reporters Association

Happy 2016 from your ACRA Board!

Friends, how has your year started?

Are you back to the rituals of January, having enjoyed the Holiday Season?

After looking back at 2015, are you ready for Mission 2016?

I want to catch you up on what's been going on with us, as we work to make this Association the best it can be.

At the end, I'll be asking you to play a part in helping us help you.

First off, I want to tell you about the behind-the-scenes work that President-Elect **Diane Donoho** has been doing with a committee of colleagues: They have put together information and numbers to take to the State Legislature with a proposal for a page rate increase in the statute for official court transcripts. The last increase was in 1987, nearly 30 ago. It's long overdue, and our officials deserve it. If we don't ask,

the answer will always be no. This is a work in progress, and a big undertaking. We will need all the help we can get. We don't know yet what it might cost to move a bill, but I can tell you right now we are committed to push it. If you have information or a donation, or know a legislator, we definitely welcome your support. Contact **Diane Donoho**.

Next, our Midyear seminar lineup is complete and impressive! Our theme is *"Write Like A Champion!"*, and we have a great slate of speakers for you!

Vice President **Kim Portik's** sweet program starts with 2015 Arizona Speed Champion **Elaine Cropper** to talk about her big win in the Jim Bouley Memorial Speed Contest, and how she did it, along with her writing strategies, tips and experience.

Next up will be **Nancy Varallo** with *"Stenographer Operations at Guantanamo Bay."* **Nancy Varallo**, owner of The Varallo Group LLC, will tell us about the detailed

process to assemble and qualify an elite team of court reporters to provide stenographic services at Guantanamo Bay – testing, obtaining top secret clearances, selecting technology and equipment, arranging travel and housing, and wading through seemingly endless government documentation. The affectionately called Sten Ops team is currently at work reporting the hearings of those accused in the USS Cole bombings and the terrorism of 9/11 that changed the world.

After lunch, **Ed Varallo** presents: *"Unleashing the Realtime Superstar in You! Or How I Made My Life Easier"* Shorthand for the 21st century boils down to this: write short – write fast – write clean - do it all day! To be truly realtime capable – able to turn out fast, accurate drafts and fast certified transcripts – we need to write smarter. We have to write fast, with clean notes, for hours on end – and then turn out a fast draft transcript on demand. **Ed Varallo**, six-time NCRA Speed



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Contest champion, will outline his systematic approach to writing shorthand which is designed to require less physical effort, produce better realtime output, and thus reduce editing/scoping time. Ed will share his tips and techniques that will set you on the path to unleash the Realtime Superstar inside you!

All in all, a great day to learn how to Write Like a Champion! Be there!

Now, did somebody put the Fun in Fundraisers? Fundraising Chair **Kate Roundy** has done a great job, and we intend to have several new and exciting fundraisers for you at Midyear! We're adding more prizes and chances for you to win at our tables! Bring some cash or checks or bitcoins (not really) and join in the games! We're adding an awesome Dice Cage Bucket Raffle! We'll have the popular playing card raffle again, along with our general raffle, basket raffle and silent auction. All funds raised go to support and improve our great Association!

In that vein, we are welcoming donations of new items to be used in our silent auction and/or raffles. Don't be shy, anything we can use to raise funds is welcomed! Other states have done this and we're

using their experience to add more color to the day. Contact any Board member or our Executive Director **Dick Borgmann** to get something to the fundraisers. We'll use it for good! Challenge your friends to see who can donate the coolest prizes!

In other business, Board Secretary **Haley Westra** reported that our Supreme Court's CR Board still has an opening for an official. This is an important spot for reporters to have a voice at the table of our governing body. If you or someone you know are interested in applying, please contact Haley for more information. We need your voice!

Haley also reported on the fine work of our Ethics Committee. EC Chair **Danielle Griffin** and her team of leaders has compiled an excellent graphics sheet for distribution to reporters and attorneys alike, highlighting the most important aspects of our code. This simple yet powerful tool will be blasted to membership, as well as available on our website. So much work has been put into this document, use it to your advantage!

Another effort made recently was when Official Board member **Robin Bobby** sent

out a questionnaire to officials requesting their feedback to ACRA. This in an ongoing invitation, and we welcome your thoughts.

Official Board member **Nichole Forrest** is also a great conduit for input from the courthouses to the Board meetings. Have a suggestion? We'd love to hear it!

Our Treasurer **Carolyn Sullivan** continues her excellent stewardship of the books, in partnership with our Executive Director **Dick Borgmann**. Together, they keep us on track, on budget, and on task. We could not do it without them.

Our Board Student liaisons **Danielle Griffin** and **Leann McBride** are compiling a list of court reporting students who could use a sponsorship to ACRA, and we'll be putting out an invitation to membership to step up and sponsor a student. We all remember what it was like, so let's step up and get them all into our Association! One day they'll probably cover for you when you're sick!

Invaluably, our Immediate Past President **Pam Griffin** provides a steady eye and experienced voice, and we also continue to benefit from the perspective and energy

of our other Past President, **Laura Ashbrook**. Their knowledge and insights add power to your Board.

And speaking of power, our ACRA attorney **Jimmy Cool** seems to have the power and maneuverability of a speedboat! He is fast, responsive, and sudden when it comes to representing us and our interests. He's got tremendous legal knowledge and dexterity. He continues to devote much time to our causes and meetings regularly, and we are lucky to have him. He is a great advocate for ACRA.

Please know that you'll each be receiving several email blasts in the coming days and weeks as we embark on Mission 2016! I

encourage each of you to stay informed and be engaged. Every member counts. Every member has value.

I further encourage you, again, to mark your calendars for our Midyear, April 9, at the lovely Phoenix Hilton Chandler.

They were such great hosts last year, we couldn't wait to go back! Bring your cash and take home some truly choice prizes from the likes of Coach, Michael Kors, the Arizona Cardinals, and more!

In closing, let me say that this Board, this team of amazing people, puts in great energy for the betterment of our profession and our Association. They continue to impress me with

their willingness to work toward our goals, and they make it all seem effortless. It is an honor and a privilege to sit at the table with them. They have my sincere appreciation and gratitude, and they deserve our thanks.

See you at Midyear!

Mike Bouley
ACRA President