THE RECORD NEVER FORGETS
ALABAMA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION
For the Record
A Publication of the Alabama Court Reporters Association
Volume 38, No. 3 • Fall 2021

Still Better Together

By Cyndi Tumlin, CCR, RPR • President-Alabama Court Reporters Association

Cyndi Tumlin
ACRA President

Summer in all its glory appears to be giving way to Fall. COVID had faded to the point of folks feeling like it's a thing of the past but has now raised its ugly head once again with a vengeance. Freelancers are working hard; officials are back in the courtroom with juries and a backlog of cases. What a blessing it is to be part of a profession that allowed us to remain in the workplace and to contribute to the judicial system being able to move forward through this Pandemic. Every one of you is AWESOME!!

At the end of July, Alabama had a fantastic presence in Las Vegas at the NCRA Conference & Expo. What an extraordinary opportunity to attend and participate. Jennifer Kissic, Tatelyn Noda, Jordan Groves, and myself from your ACRA board attended. There were numerous others, including the teaching staff and students from Gadsden State Realtime. We had the honor and privilege of celebrating alongside the One and Only Alan Peacock, the NCRA 2021 Distinguished Service Award winner. Be sure to read the article about Alan's award. It is just a given that I always come home revived and ready to dive back in with a fresh, renewed love for Steno!

Jennifer and I attended the Annual Business Meeting and the NCSA sessions. I have attended conference sessions in years past but have grown to truly love the business meeting and NCSA meetings. This is where the rubber meets the road in my opinion. NCSA has become your voice for the membership directly to your NCRA board of directors. It is also a way for the NCRA board to query each state represented and gain useful information about what is actually happening on the ground in each region. There is always a common theme – reporter shortage and digitals. Some states continue to lose certification and/or officials in the courtrooms, as well. It's beginning to look a little like the Wild, Wild West out there, folks. Makes me very thankful to be a stenographer in Alabama.

It is so very important for every licensed court reporter in Alabama to remain vigilant and mindful, whether freelancing or in a court setting. The Protect Your Record lanyards are such an awesome way to display that you are a licensed stenographer. Speaking up and voicing your name and license number at the beginning of proceedings is also a great way to draw attention to the fact that you're a licensed stenographer. We have license certification in Alabama, and that is helping to protect us,

Still Better Together continues on page 4.

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ALABAMA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

2021 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (FILL OUT ALL INFORMATION COMPLETELY)

Name:		
Address:	E-mail:	
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
District or County Choose an item.	Phone #:	

PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

ABCR License #:	NCRA License #:	
☐ Freelance Reporter	☐ State Official Reporter	☐ Federal Official Reporter
☐ CART/Captioner	☐ Instructor	☐ Student (list school) Click or tap here to enter text.
☐ Retired ***Must not be actively reporting***	☐ Other Click or tap here to enter text.	

☐ Professional dues: $100	☐ Student dues: $15

Legislative Fund Contribution: ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ Other:$ _____

ACRA Legislative Fund contributions are spent on legislative efforts and funds the support of our legislative and special-need initiatives to protect and preserve the court reporting and captioning profession in Alabama. ACRA depends on the support of each member to participate in this fund!

PLEASE REVIEW

I am interested in being a student mentor. ☐ Yes ☐ No
I am interested in being on a committee. ☐ Yes ☐ No
List my contact info on the ACRA website. ☐ Yes ☐ No
Share my contact info with event sponsors and affinity partners. ☐ Yes ☐ No

SIGNATURE

I do hereby certify that the information I provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

X _____

Signature of Applicant

Make checks payable to ***"ACRA Membership Dues"***

Mail or E-mail to:
Karen Strickland
P.O. Box 1995
Dothan, AL 36302
Alcra2015.01@gmail.com

Still Better Together

continued from the front cover page.

but we cannot rest on our laurels, guys. We must be proactive! We must ask for those license numbers and be proud to display ours. We must check transcripts to ensure they're being taken by a licensed court reporter and make sure that the license number is on the certificate. We must keep our eyes and ears open every day and take that stand when it is necessary to report any unlicensed activity. If we won't help protect ourselves, how can we expect others to?

As a member of your ACRA board and current president, I have had many opportunities over the last few years to be a part of committees and discussions with our state leaders in an effort to keep our rules concise and direct and only allow licensed court reporters to practice within this state. There are many rules being reviewed during this COVID Pandemic time that involve court reporting. We are trying to stay ever vigilant and keep an active presence to ensure that court reporters have a voice in any rule or statute that involves making, taking, and/or maintaining the record. We are the Guardians of the Record! There has never been a more important time for us to come together for the greater good and work alongside each other, regardless of what discipline of court reporting we practice, for the future of stenography in Alabama.

To that end, the theme and mindset of the NCRA Convention & Expo was geared toward practicing, certifications, and promoting stenography in a positive, yet aggressive manner. Promoting ourselves in a positive, upbeat way is so critical. Practice to improve your already awesome skills, seek out new certification, review your rules and policies to make sure you are current on the best practices in your field, update yourself on grammar and punctuation rules – those things are always changing – dig into new technologies that are out there and see what you might implement to better your skillset. Virtual video conferencing for officials and freelancing has brought on a new challenge and a wonderful opportunity to showcase your talents. Familiarize yourself with IT issues that keep occurring in your virtual proceedings. Being useful, prepared, and knowledgeable is one of your greatest weapons!

Along those lines, ACRA is live and in person in January! How exciting is that? I am looking forward to seeing everyone and regaining some of our normal. Jennifer Kissic is planning an awesome conference. She's included some details here in an article in FTR. Don't miss out on those new and exciting events that are in the works.

As I've said in every article that I've written, "We are Better Together!" This is such a crucial time for Stenography. Let us all be a contributing part of the solution and never part of the problem. Alabama has the best network of contributing court reporters in the entire nation, without a doubt. I stand proudly at every opportunity and say that I represent Alabama Court Reporters.

Let's all continue to stand together.

ALL ACCESS GRANTED

By Jennifer Kissic
ACRA President-Elect

ACRA's 2022 Annual Conference will take place in person on Friday, January 21 and Saturday, January 22, 2022. It will take place at the Embassy Suites Hoover-Birmingham in beautiful and centrally located Birmingham, Alabama. When (not if) you come, you will receive All Access to wonderful seminars to obtain your CEUs.

The Embassy Suites Hoover-Birmingham is the same place we held our 2020 conference. If you came to the 2020 conference, you know that not only was the meeting facility nice and convenient, but the rooms were big and very nice, too.

The lineup of speakers includes: Margie Wakeman-Wells, Margie Holds Court; TeeJay Wilson, Fresh Start Ministries; Tamara Chapman Maiello, iheartsteno.com; and Brent Cosby, who spoke at our 2021 virtual conference. I have an amazing student/new reporter session planned which will include Q&A with a freelance reporter, a captioner, and an official reporter.

We will have our third annual realtime contest, so start practicing now and come prepared to put your skills to the test. Challenge yourself! I can't wait to see who shows up and shows out at our 2022 Realtime Contest!

We will be having our fun & exciting basket extravaganza, so start putting your basket donations together now!

Stay tuned to the website and social media for updates

Updates from ABCR

By Ashley Dickey • ACRA Past-President

I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer despite the health concerns we're still facing. Summer seems to pass more quickly each year. I can't believe it's already time for school to start back! Stay safe and healthy. Now, let me catch you up on all things ABCR.

It's license renewal time. Please renew your state license by the deadline of September 30th. Be sure you've earned your CEUs for the year before you renew in case you're audited. If you do get randomly selected for an audit, the process is easy and there are instructions you can review to make sure everything is submitted correctly. Keep in mind that you can snail mail these audit documents, or you can scan and email them to board@abcr.alabama.gov.

The most important thing to remember when renewing is that you will only be allowed **one** opportunity to print your certificate. That time is right after you renew. It won't be available again! Be safe and print it immediately. It's best to renew at a time when you have access to a printer. If you renew on your phone, consider taking a screenshot of your certificate, emailing it to yourself, and then printing it or saving it so it's on hand if you need it.

ABCR's latest board meeting was held July 1st, 2021. Some good news is there were no disciplinary actions addressed during this meeting. Let's all continue to make every effort to comply with the rules of licensure.

ABCR hopes to present legislation soon to address housekeeping matters, including giving the board the ability to meet virtually if needed in the future without having to be under a state of emergency order. I'm sure we can all agree that COVID has taught us to plan for any contingency.

After ABCR's board meeting, Victor Biebighauser was approved as permanent part-time executive director. Even though the position is part-time, you should not see any interruption in your access to ABCR. The phone number, email, and P.O. Box remain the same. This is wonderful news and I hope you agree that he's been doing an excellent job as the temporary executive director. He will be a huge asset to the board during the license renewal season.

Victor has been made aware that the reminder emails generated about license renewal were not received by everyone. Also, some people were not sure if the email was legitimate since they didn't recognize his name as the sender of the email. If you've been reading my articles, then you're familiar with his name. He's working on solutions to these problems so renewal reminders will be more easily recognizable in the future.

As always, thank you for letting me serve you, ACRA. I wish you a safe and happy school year and continued good health.

Have you visited the ACRA Website lately?

Please visit us at www.alcra.org. We are working on adding lots of information for our members. Visit the ACRA store to purchase ACRA merchandise, buy or sell equipment, and advertise scoping or proofing services.

We welcome any suggestions you have for content on our website.

Meet Victor Biebighauser

By Ashley Dickey • ACRA Past-President

Do you recognize this name? I hope so because I've been telling you about him since last November. He is now officially the part-time director of the Alabama Board of Court Reporting. Don't worry – his part-time status won't affect your access to ABCR. The phone number, email, and P.O. Box remain the same.

I've had the opportunity to see Victor at work when I've been a fly on the wall at ABCR's board meetings. When he came on as executive director under an emergency contract, he immediately began working. He was able to obtain a phone number for ABCR in short order. His work ethic and efficiency have impressed me.

The Board has been seeking to obtain a new executive director since Paula McCaleb stepped down more than a year ago. Finally, they can breathe a sigh of relief to have this process completed. You can imagine the hurdles that had to be overcome when walking through the hiring process with a state agency, not to mention the ongoing pandemic.

Victor is an experienced professional. He previously served as Associate Executive Director at Associate of Independent Colleges & Schools, Washington, D.C.; as Interim President and CEO at CareerCom Corporation, Middletown, PA; and as President at South University, Montgomery, AL. Victor is also involved in various professional and community activities, such as Montgomery Rotary Club, Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce, and River Region United Way. He is a Paul Harris Fellow recipient, accorded by Montgomery Rotary Club.

In my interactions with Victor, I have found him to be courteous and respectful. He's been interested in listening to my concerns, answering questions, and providing information, all in a timely and professional manner. I believe he will be an asset to ABCR as well as a helpful resource for licensed court reporters. If you have any questions or concerns, I encourage you to reach out to Victor and see for yourself how professionally he conducts the business of ABCR.

WHAT ACRA DOES *for its members*

By Sabrina Lewis, CCR, RPR • Vice President, ACRA

There was a recent social media post: "Question to all 50 states. What are your CR associations doing for your state/the profession? Feel free to chime in if you are on the board in any of those states."

I thought about it for a while and came up with a list of some of the functions our association's board members perform. This was my response:

"I am the vice president of the Alabama Court Reporters Association. We perform many services. The ones that come to mind are: Board members attend quarterly meetings of the Alabama Board of Court Reporting, which is the licensing authority in our state. We keep association members apprised of issues in the state legislature affecting court reporters. The association presents an annual convention wherein attendees have the opportunity to achieve enough continuing education units needed for annual license renewal. We also maintain an electronic record of those same CEUs that members can access. This comes in especially handy when members are randomly audited by the state board. Currently, the association is working in conjunction with the Administrative Office of Courts to update the state official reporters manual. Members call us when they have problems with attorneys and/or judges or have questions regarding best practices, ethics, etc. We travel throughout the state visiting reporters at their offices. We interact with judges when we attend the judicial conferences. We act as a liaison between our members and the national association. Board members have presented A to Z programs and visited schools for career days. Basically, whenever someone needs help on a court reporting related matter, we are there." *

Three days later, there were no responses from other state association members. The original poster then said, "Let me just say, when people ask me why I am not a current member of any state association, this thread will become Exhibit A."

Sadly, there are many of our colleagues who do not recognize the value in belonging to a state or national association.

When you choose to be a member of the Alabama Court Reporters Association, you support the profession we have all worked so hard to be a part of. Your membership says that you trust us, the ACRA board, to be responsive and to do its best to represent you. If you ever have a reason to question that trust, please contact me at any time of the day or night.

Sabrina Lewis • Vice-President
Alabama Court Reporters Association
(205) 515-3101 • sabrina.lewis@bellsouth.net

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*Updated to include that yesterday, we helped an out-of-state attorney locate a retired court reporter!

Shelagh Dunckley

Retirement

By Teri Stewart • Secretary, ACRA

I would like to take this opportunity to wish my dear friend, Shelagh Dunckley, farewell and HAPPY RETIREMENT!!!

Shelagh began her court reporting career as a freelance reporter in 1986 and she also owned her own firm. She later began working for the State of Alabama in January of 1999 when she obtained her position as an Official Court Reporter in Baldwin County working for Judge Charles Partin until he retired. Upon his retirement, she worked for Judge Joe Norton until her retirement on August 31, 2021.

Shelagh is a member of the Alabama Court Reporters Association where she served as president of the association for the 1995-1996 term and received the Distinguished Service Award in 2006.

I am sure Shelagh has many great plans in her future to enjoy retirement. She has mentioned one of her retirement adventures is to do some camping, traveling across the United States. Doesn't that sound right up her alley? I know wherever she goes, she will be a blessing to whoever she meets.

Shelagh is a great leader, mentor, listener, counselor and most admirable, friend. We are all happy that you are able to retire and "do what you love and love what you do."

CEU's in a Nutshell*

1. Licensees are required to obtain and keep record of their continuing education units (CEU's).
2. 5 continuing education units (.5 CEU's) are required to renew your license.
3. CEU's obtained anytime during the 36 months prior to renewal are accepted.
   (For example: For this year's renewal date of September 30, 2021, all CEU's obtained from September 30, 2019 through September 30, 2021 are acceptable.)
4. Once a CEU is applied to a renewal, it cannot be used again.

QUESTIONS:

Please call the Board of Court Reporting office at: (334) 215-7232
Their staff will be happy to answer any questions you have.

*ACRA in no way determines how CEUs are earned, credited, or applied.

ALAN PEACOCK!

ALABAMA'S TREASURE

By Tatelyn Noda • District 4 Director

On July 30th, 2021, in Las Vegas, Nevada, one of Alabama's finest received the highest honor NCRA has to offer: the 2021 Distinguished Service Award.

The DSA recognizes the distinguished work and service by an individual member for the benefit of the court reporting profession, including service to NCRA as a member, a committee member, a director, or an officer of the Association. Other displays of distinguished work include contributing to the JCR, service to a state or local court reporters association, or service in the field of public relations or public affairs. Award winners are nominated by their peers and are recognized at the NCRA Conference & Expo.

Active at the national level, Alan has been a member of NCRA since 1987 and currently serves as chair of the Association's Technology Committee. He has also served on NCRA's CART Task Force and on the Association's Captioning Community of Interest.

At the state level, Alan is a past president of ACRA. He has also served as the organization's president-elect and treasurer and has served on numerous of its committees and subcommittees. He was instrumental in helping ACRA pass the state's Certified Reporting legislation in 2006.

In January 2019, Alan was appointed by Governor Ivey to serve a three-year term on ABCR's board.

Alan is the recipient of numerous awards including the ACRA Distinguished Service Award in 2011, Professional of the Year by the Council of Organizations Serving Deaf Alabamians in 2009, the Distinguished Service Award by the Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness in 2009, and the Award for Outstanding Service by ACRA in 2006.

I was honored to witness Alan receive the DSA, and I will forever remember this quote from one of his peers:

"Everyone who has ever met you walks away a better person. This world needs more people like you."

When I think of Alan Peacock, a smile immediately comes to my face. Not only is he humble, kind, giving, brilliant, loving, and inspirational, but he also has a contagious air of positivity that exudes every time he enters a room. He has given so much to our profession and has touched so many lives.

There is no one more deserving of this award than Alan. Alabama loves you, Mr. Peacock!

Amy Holland, CCR
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Address SERVICE Requested

For The Record is published by the Alabama Court Reporters Association on a regular basis each year.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE FOR 2021

March 15, 2021
June 15, 2021
September 15, 2021
December 15, 2021

Deadline for articles and ads is **30 days** immediately preceding the above publication dates. Please submit articles, ads, etc., in **DIGITAL FORMAT** attached to an email to:
Amy Holland, awholland22@outlook.com

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Send your change of information to:
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sabrina.lewis@bellsouth.net

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