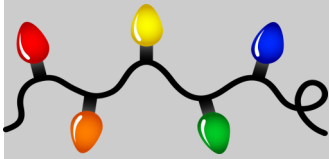




## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“The closer you perceive success to be, the faster you move towards it.”  
-Shawn Anchor



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# THE GUARDIAN

College of Court Reporting

Issue 12

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## THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR REAL-TIME COURT REPORTING BY NANCY VARALLO

In an era defined by technological advancement, stenographic court reporters remain the gold standard for capturing the spoken word. It's not just that they produce the most accurate legal records, including capturing certain interpersonal nuances that digital recordings might miss. Nor is it simply because they are trained to handle complex procedures associated with trials and depositions. Court reporters are indispensable to the legal system because they offer 21st-century solutions to unyielding situations that demand speed without sacrificing accuracy. They are certainly not relics of a bygone era.

“They are certainly not relics of a bygone era.”

Court reporters can now filter their shorthand through computers to provide judges, attorneys and clients with instantaneous, understandable transcripts.

Today's court reporters are able to filter their shorthand through computers to provide judges, attorneys and clients with instantaneous, understandable transcripts. No other technology can come close. Truth be told, the incident that inspired this discussion probably would have been curtailed had the court been using the real-time method.

Traditionally, stenography is expanded into a readable transcript following the day's events. But real-time uses computer software to instantaneously translate shorthand into understandable English. The text then scrolls across the laptop or tablet, much like captioning on a television.

In recent years, court systems have struggled to contain costs. Even in courts that have been forced to implement more affordable methods of record keeping, court reporters nearly always remain in place for complex civil litigation and felony criminal proceedings, because they are the most reliable in high stakes situations. Likewise, in the deposition setting, outside of the courts, where true market demand is at play, court reporters remain the overwhelming choice for attorneys because they know there is no substitute for what we do.

Article from The New York Times

## Students of the Month

### Summer Vaughan

Summer was nominated by her instructor, Eileen Beltz, who had this to say about her as a student:

“Summer, also, deserves recognition for the hours upon hours of work she has logged so far this month. Her relentless pushing has been rewarded with a 180 Jury Charge pass, and I have no doubt the Literary and Q&A are close to follow.”



### Natalie Sandi

Natalie was also nominated by Eileen who said the following about her:

“Natalie has broken the 180 barrier! She has shown her dedication in the amount of hours she practices, and it has been rewarded at her first pass at this level. She is always looking for ways to write things better, and she is doing a great job this month.”

## COURT REPORTING IN THE NEWS

### ‘Like a video game’: Edmonton stenographer speediest in North America

CBC News posted a story Sept. 7, profiling NCRA member Jeffrey Weigl, RMR, CRR, who won the Association’s 2016 National Speed Contest held in Chicago, Ill. Weigl is the first Canadian ever to win the contest. The video shows Weigl captioning and includes an interview with him about the court reporting profession.

Weigl was also featured in a CBC/Canadian Radio interview on Sept. 7 and in the *Edmonton Journal* Sept. 5. In addition, he was featured on a radio segment called “Really Cool Jobs,” and on the “Who Does That Job?” feature aired by CTVNews, Alberta, Canada, on Sept. 28.

### 100 percent of Hulu’s full-length content to be closed captioned by Sept. 2017

Hulu announced that it has entered into a settlement agreement with the National Association of the Deaf to provide closed captioning for all of its full-length English and Spanish content by September 2017, according to an article posted Sept. 6 by *Videoink*.

### Court reporters essential to an effective system of justice

An article posted Sept. 2 by the Orange County Register, Santa Ana, Calif., recognized the work of court reporters and the important role they play in providing the official record of court proceedings. The article was authored by Jennifer Muir Beuthin, general manager of the Orange County Employees Association.

### Massachusetts highlights changes in courtroom recordkeeping

Nancy McCann of the Massachusetts Court Reporters Association was quoted in an article posted Sept 28 by *The Crime Report* that addressed the issue of replacing live court reporters with digital recording equipment in the courtroom.

### Word Tripper By: Barbara McNichol

Homonyms, such as this pair - hangar and hanger - mean two different things but have the same sound and a similar spelling. You can hang up your frustrations by paying close attention to how each is spelled.

**Hangar, hanger** – A “hangar” is a covered and usually enclosed area used for housing and repairing aircraft. A “hanger” is a triangular piece of metal, plastic, or wood used for hanging clothes when they’re not being worn.

“I left my flight jacket on a *hanger* in the airplane *hangar*.” – Dick Dale

### October Evaluations Passed

*These students have all passed one or more SAP evaluations during the month of October.*

20 SAPs	5 SAPs	Jamie Bleicher	Melissa Hicking	Sara Smith
Jane McCauley	Christine Saylor	Jamie Johnson	Sara Vaughn	Shannon Gallo
17 SAPs	Diane Talbott	Keely Nelsen	Stephanie McGinnis	Stacey Haines
Brandi Zargo	Katherine Evangelou	Makeba Flanigan	Valerie Lies	Stephen Lane
16 SAPs	Kiana Luke	Nadine Capps	1 SAP	Susanne Gorman
Stephen Brown	Lauren Mancusi	Nicole Wicks	Amy Powers	Tammy Burk
13 SAPs	Lizahaira Alvarado	Rachel Schmidt	Angela Viray	Taylor Behnke
Eric Luft	Mackenzie Smith	Victoria Huntley	Barbara Ufer	Tracie Blocker
11 SAPs	Robin Willey	Yvette Granados	Brett Schatzle	
Jessica Williams	4 SAPs	2 SAPs	Brian Nelson	
9 SAPs	Brandon Herman	Ashley Guillermo	Camille Holmes	
Cassi Knight	Clara Brooks	Ashley Kramer	Carolyn Collins	
LaDonna Younger	Daisy Tamez	Ashley Privett	Corree Brooks	
8 SAPs	Elizabeth Hagstedt	Casi De La Torre	Emaleigh Smith	
Amanda Vernon	Jennifer Hall	Courtney Randolph	Ericka Gibbs	
Kate Hargis	Kathleen Steadman	Jamie Dorgan	Erin Ramsey	
Taisha Herr	Oanh Dang	Jazmine Kersey	Holly McKay	
Treshanna Robinzine	3 SAPs	Kathleen Gravedoni	Jessica Frizzell	
7 SAPs	Adam Marcus	Katie Buckner	Kate Bush-McKee	
Gabrielle Mosher	Ashley Wilson	Kayde Rieken	Katelyn Berch	
Geneva Wildcat	Baley Moore	Kendall Willis	Kevin Martin	
Lisa Major	Brittany Moore	Kolby Garrison	Kimberly Wilkerson	
Martha Obstalecki	Cheyenne Leneair	Kristina Meseck	Linda Day	
6 SAPs	Daphne Tardy	Kristine Rebar	Lori Ingram	
Christine Angel	Debra Selsavage	Lauren Reichenbach	Michael Roberts	
Morgan Maloney	Hannah Wilson	Madeleine Lauer	Rhonda Wentzell	



## A WELL-ROUNDED LIFE

BY AIMEE SUHIE

Tom Crites is a present-day Johnny Appleseed who has planted 2,000 plumeria trees in and around Savannah, Ga., hoping to establish the glorious flowers in the town he loves. So it's hard to imagine him jetting across the world during his 49-year career, away from home sometimes 300 nights a year. The retired court reporter and firm owner laughs that he has reported in the back of a pickup in the jungles of Panama, under an oil tanker in drydock in Curacao, on a train from one side of Holland to the other, on the flights deck of aircraft carriers, on airboats in the Everglades, and on the roadside from Delhi to Agra of a horrific bus accident with students on their way to see the Taj Mahal.

"I was blessed with an awesome career," he says simply. But he does not miss the planes and hotels one bit. He forgets the world when he tends the 1,000 plumerias that surround his 1892 house, one of the most photographed homes in Savannah. But the accomplishment he is perhaps the most proud of is the family he "adopted" in Thailand in the depths of poverty whose members are now not only self-sufficient but true entrepreneurs. "After 15 years of hard work by this family, they now take care of themselves and are waiting to take care of me," he says only half-jokingly. He says he may very well give up his precious house and gardens and move to Thailand one day.

The Texas native learned about court reporting the way NCRA's leaders hoped all young people do— when a court reporting legend put on a program at his high school. "When Thyra D. Ellis ('a true pioneer for all shorthand reporters nationwide' according to the website of the school she founded) said, 'Be a court reporter and make up to \$10,000 a year,' I was sold," Tom relates. He started two months later at her school, the Stenotype Institute of Jacksonville Beach, Fla., and studied for four years. He was reporting, however, after two years and made \$1,300 his first day. "That was huge," he remembers, "in that I lived on \$200 a month while going to school."

His career took him to San Francisco and finally in 1972 to Savannah where he formed Tom Crites & Associates International. He met the right maritime attorneys on a ship fire case covering depositions in Savannah, New Orleans, and New York and was soon traveling all over the world. "Many months of my career I would travel 50,000 miles in a month," he says. He has worked in hundreds of cities in more than 50 countries, focusing on maritime and mass-disaster litigation, following ships and crew members. At his website, [critesintl.com](http://critesintl.com), under the case history section are the tales of two of his most famous environmental disaster cases, the 1978 Amoco Cadiz oil spill off the coast of France, and the 2002 Prestige oil spill off the coast of Spain, "which was four times the size of the Exxon Valdez disaster," he explains. "As a matter of fact, after hundreds of depositions were taken in the Exxon Valdez case, I was asked to provide realtime at the deposition of Captain Hazelwood (the American sailor who captained the Exxon Valdez during its 1989 spill). I asked Sue Terry, RPR, CRR, [NCRA's Vice President] to cover for me, and for days she performed magic."

But Tom's most enriching experience was his association with a Thai family in the village of Sala in the province of Surin. He met a young man at a restaurant at the hotel where he usually stayed who spoke English very well, and he became Tom's friend, driver, and interpreter. "After three years he invited me to meet his family," Tom remembers. "It was shocking to me to see the way they lived. They were the poorest of the poor. The mother was doing her best to provide for her children and grandchildren. She worked 12 to 14 hours a day tending to the rice of others for \$75 a month. They had no running water, and they all were in rags."

Tom well remembers his upbringing in a housing project in Texas where people donated food to his family, and he didn't have a new shirt until he was six years old. So Tom got to work. He promptly had two wells dug and then got the family



**Position:** Official court reporter

**Location:** Various, IL

**Requirements:** CSR



**Position:** Freelance reporter

**Location:** Knoxville, TN

**Other:** Full-time or part-time. 98% deposition work. Willing to train a bright beginner or new graduate. Please contact

Debbie at

[spdefngrs@aol.com](mailto:spdefngrs@aol.com) if interested.

If you would like more information about any of these positions, please contact

[Natalie.Kijurna@ccr.edu](mailto:Natalie.Kijurna@ccr.edu)

Refrigerators, fans, beds, and linens. He rounded up all 19 family members and headed to a department store 50 miles from Sala. "I had each one get a grocery cart, and we loaded up on clothes, shoes, toiletries, towels, and lots of food. I then got them a car and a truck." Next he helped them to buy parcels of land. "On my 60th birthday, we began the planting of 60 acres of rubber trees," he says and, instead of patting himself on the back, says only: "I have been blessed to have the Lai-Ngam family in my life."

The family now has more than 100 acres of farmland and a rubber tree plantation. All are on computers and receiving a good education. Tom even put the kids to use in his business. "I had an office set up in Bangkok, and these smart children scanned all my exhibits, transferred my steno, etc., to the United States, so I never had to hurry back home," he recounts, "often going off to work from Bangkok to Singapore, Hong Kong, Seoul, Tokyo, and to many cities in India."

In addition to his 43 trips to Thailand, Tom worked often with different governments, and he says many waivers were made so that he could report in venues that most reporters could not. At the same time, however, for seven years he was on the board and executive committee of the Savannah College of Art & Design, with campuses in Savannah; Atlanta; Lacoste, France; and Hong Kong. The college dedicated the performing arts center named in his honor, Crites Hall, in 2000, which houses the 150-seat Mondanaro Theater, set design, and scene shop, dance studio, classrooms, and a costume studio, where 92 classes are taught each week. He also received the Pepe Award from the college that year for his work. "I often traveled to New York, London, Paris, and Lacoste on the business of the college," Tom says. "And on the local scene, I entertained and dined with many visiting movie stars and fashion designers who came to visit the school, including Debbie Reynolds and Diane Von Furstenberg." Tom adds: "The college has more than 10,000 students and 1,100 employees on our four campuses. It will always be a big part of my life."

Even though he is now retired, his firm continues on, a "small agency that handles big work," Tom says. They have a reporter based in Germany covering most of their work in Europe and have had reporters and videographers simultaneously covering assignments on four continents. But on any given day, you'll find Tom working in his gardens or helping a new graduate paint his house in the 100-degree heat of an August day. "It wears me out, and some days I feel I'm as old as this house," he says in his smooth Southern drawl. "But I try to keep myself busy. I still work very hard, and I believe in hard labor. Now I grow tropical flowers, prepare meals, and entertain. I have always had a colorful life, and everyone says I should write a book. But after 700,000 pages of transcripts, my writing days are over!"

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*Birthdays are in bold print! Happy birthday, CCR students and faculty!*

Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday

				1	2 Jennifer Lewis	3 Jessica Perez
4	5 Tracy Soderberg  Patricia Burnett-Anderson	6	7 Kaylen Fetherston  Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8 Emaleigh Smith	9 Ashley Castillo  Kolby Garrison	10
11 Devoureaux Williams	12 Barbara Ufer	13	14	15	16	17 Kristina Meseck
18  Christmas Break	19	20 Alexis Klasing	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day  	26 Chris Crosgrove  Christmas Break	27 Brandi Smith  Holly Furtek	28 Ashley Privett	29 Tim Moody	30	31 New Year's Eve  Camille Holmes Taisha Herr