

## From the Desk of the PCRA President *Kathleen McHugh, RPR, CRR, CSR*



Well, I won't deny I had hoped to skate through my presidency with only good news for our members but that wasn't meant to be. PCRA is faced with a tremendous challenge, demonstrating the worth of official court reporters and the work that they do in the administration of justice.

We filed an emergency petition with the Supreme Court. Unfortunately it was denied. We have consulted attorneys and experienced official reporters. We have built a chain of court reporters to disseminate information as we receive it to officials across the state. We are developing talking points for reporters to share with their President Judges and Court Administrators.

We have ideas and we want to do the best job we can, but we are limited by our time and resources. Our Board of 12 and the additional volunteers we have managed to recruit are all that, volunteers, with full-time jobs and families and lives that impinge upon our ability to do all that we want to do. That's where you come in. We need all the help we can muster in this matter. Please, whether you can donate an hour of your time or five hours, we need all reporters to step up and take responsibility for the future of court reporting in Pennsylvania. If you have an idea you want to share or want to make a difference, please contact me at [kathymchugh@verizon.net](mailto:kathymchugh@verizon.net). If you want to become a member and support our efforts with your dues, please go to [www.PCRA.com](http://www.PCRA.com).

Talking about making a difference, I want to thank a few reporters who are doing just that. Donna Betza, Immediate Past President, attended a Legal Career Day with Allegheny County students on October 30th promoting court reporting.

Lillian Freiler, RMR, CMRS, and John Kurz, RMR, CRR, conducted a TRAIN seminar at the Bucks County Courthouse on November 20th with approximately 20 reporters in attendance. They demonstrated both Case Catalyst and Eclipse software applications, Stenocast, and writing to an iPad.

Lisa Miller, RPR, and Rhonda Adams, RMR, CMRS, of Lancaster, and Kathy McHugh, RPR, CRR, of Philadelphia, will represent PCRA at the annual Conference of County Bar Leaders on February 26 and 27 at the Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square. We will have an exhibitor table and the Lancaster Ladies will be demonstrating realtime for the attendees as well as answering questions.

Doug Zweizig, RMR, CRR, and his team in Philadelphia and Phil Marrone, RMR, CRR, and his team in Pittsburgh will be administering the last “brick and mortar” NCRA testing in Pennsylvania on May 2, 2015. Going forward, NCRA testing will be conducted online.

The PCRA Board and its Executive team have put together a great convention, with numerous technology-related as well as Flight 93 seminars. We hope you are able to take advantage of our proximity to the Flight 93 memorial to visit either on your way in or out of Seven Springs. We will also be holding a Rule 4000 Update seminar where you can ask questions and get answers. There is more information on the convention inside *The Outline*.

I hope to see you in Seven Springs, April 24-26, to learn, to catch up with friends, and to remind ourselves of the important work we all do every day in this great profession.

**Sincerely,**  
**Kathleen McHugh, RPR, CRR, CSR**  
**PCRA President**

## **PCRA Annual Convention Registration is NOW OPEN!**

Join your colleagues for the 2015 PCRA Annual Convention, April 24 - 26, at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Seven Springs, PA. Earn up to 1.40 CEUs and experience a robust and rich convention including:

**2015 Gadgets: IT and Apps for Court Reporters**

**Editing For Your Dictionary vs. a Transcript**

**Flight 93 Memorial & Orientation Video**

**Rule 4000**

**Trivia, Vocabulary, and Spelling**

**Flight 93: From the Coroner's Office**

And so much more!

**You don't want to miss this event!**

Plan to come early or stay late and take advantage of all that the PCRA Annual Convention – and Seven Springs Mountain Resort - offers!

To register and view the full schedule, visit [www.pcracom.com](http://www.pcracom.com).

To make lodging reservations, call Seven Springs Reservations directly at 866-437-1300 and mention **PCRA**.

On behalf of the PCRA Board of Directors and Convention Planning Committee, we look forward to seeing you at the 2015 PCRA Annual Convention!

## **Call for Convention Sponsors**

We welcome the support of convention and student sponsors. Donations can be made in any amount, and submitted either via the [online convention registration system](#) or [this form](#).

## Convention Auction Items Needed

Please consider picking up an item to donate to PCRA's auction. The auction will be conducted during our annual convention in Seven Springs, April 24-26, and all money raised benefits PCRA. No gift is too small! Donations can be brought with you to the convention, mailed directly to PCRA Headquarters, 43150 Broadlands Center Plaza, Suite 152-269, Ashburn, VA, 20148 or contact Barb Quinn at [relay51@aol.com](mailto:relay51@aol.com) for other arrangements.

Thank you for your help!

## **National Court Reporting & Captioning Week February 15-21, 2015**

The PCRA District Directors have conducted interviews with court reporters throughout the Commonwealth during the past couple of months. We will highlight one of these reporters each day of Court Reporting & Captioning Week by posting the interview on the PCRA Facebook page and sending an eblast to everyone in the membership database. Stay tuned for these interesting and inspiring communications!

Julie Wilson, RPR, CRI, District 7 Director, contacted Representative Kristin Phillips-Hill, newly elected to the PA House of Representatives, to have the legislature pass a resolution recognizing Court Reporting and Captioning Week. Rep. Hill drafted a House Resolution and obtained 24 sponsors for the Resolution and placed it on the House agenda to be voted on. The Resolution will be voted on on Wednesday, February 11, 2015. Julie Wilson and Kathy McHugh have been invited to attend the session. If anyone else would like to be in attendance, please contact Kathy McHugh at [kathymchugh@verizon.net](mailto:kathymchugh@verizon.net) for more information.

Orleans Technical Institute of Philadelphia will be celebrating National Court Reporting & Captioning Week by hosting events at the school all week long, including a special event aimed at introducing high school students to the field of court reporting. OTI was invited by NCRA to be the first school to participate. The event - Texting for Tuition - is a phone texting challenge in which high school students will compete against each other to see who can text the fastest. A court reporting student will also write at the same time as the high school competitors. Through elimination rounds a winner will be offered a scholarship to attend OTI's program. OTI will also have an alumna come in to speak to students and is holding an Open House on Saturday, February 21 that will include a steno demonstration.



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## New NCRA Certifications

Congratulations to Pennsylvania reporters with new certifications from NCRA!

PCRA would like to congratulate members **John J. Kurz** and **Kimberly A. Wilson** of Philadelphia, both of whom became newly certified as an RMR after the November tests, and **Shannan Marie Gagliardi** of Philadelphia, who became newly certified as an RDR after the October tests.

We also congratulate Pennsylvania reporters **Debra Anne Gerstemeier** of Eagleville, newly certified as an RPR, **Sharon J. Ricci** of Philadelphia, newly certified as an RMR, and **Susan Yoder** of Morton, newly certified as a CRR, after the November tests; **William Fefman** and **Monmoney Prak** of Philadelphia, both of whom became newly certified as an RPR after the October tests; and **Irma E. Pavone** of Bryn Mawr, who was newly certified as an RPR, and **Dutcheen O. Cameron** of Harrison City, who was newly certified as a CRR, after the August tests.

Congratulations to all for your achievements!

## NCRA Skills Testing

NCRA Skills exams will be held on May 2 in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The registration period for these exams is March 2 - April 3. Beginning after the May exams, NCRA will move away from the traditional brick and mortar testing sites and shift the RPR, RMR, CRR, CBC and CCP skills tests to an online proctoring model using the advanced technologies of myRealtimeCoach™ and ProctorU.

[Click here for more information.](#)

## **District 8 Director Vacancy**

After years of service, District 8 Director Doug Zweizig, RMR, CRR, has stepped down from this position. We are grateful to Doug for representing and assisting the reporters in Philadelphia and for serving as the Chief Examiner for NCRA Skills tests in Philadelphia for many cycles. His dedication to PCRA and the court reporting profession is an inspiration to us all.

We are seeking a new director for the Philadelphia district. Members should reach out to Kathy McHugh, PCRA President at [kathymchugh@verizon.net](mailto:kathymchugh@verizon.net) with questions or to express interest.

## **Volunteers Needed!**

### **Third-Party Contracting Committee**

Lillian Freiler, RMR, CMRS, heads up the Third-Party Contracting Committee and is looking for new committee members. If you are interested in working on this important issue, please contact Lil at [crtrptr@aol.com](mailto:crtrptr@aol.com) or 570-366-3804.

## **Veterans History Project at Orleans Technical Institute**

PCRA together with OTI conducted a Veterans History Project at the Orleans' Northeast Philadelphia campus on Wednesday, November 5, 2014.

The Honorable Patrick Dugan from Philadelphia worked with Julie Wilson, District 7 Director of PCRA, to have eight veterans of conflicts ranging from World War II to the Iraq/Afghanistan wars interviewed and their conversations transcribed and filed with the Library of Congress.

The veterans were Bill Myers, Lowell Schultz, Norman Newbon, Ed Driscoll, John Dott, Jim Holwood, Alex Pollack and Karen Shevelev, a student in the court reporting program at OTI. The interviews were reported by Julie Wilson, RPR, CRI, Jim DeCrescenzo, RDR, CRR, Lauren Sweeney and Kathy McHugh, RPR, CRR.

If you would like to transcribe a previously recorded interview, visit NCRA's web site, under "The Foundation," go to "Oral Histories," and you will see directions on how to go about doing that. If you would like to conduct your own interview of a veteran that you know, go to [www.loc.gov/vets](http://www.loc.gov/vets) to receive a Field Kit that includes everything you need to do that.





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and Realtime Writing  
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Convention.**

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**For more information, contact:  
Mary Beth Johnson  
[mjohnson@ccac.edu](mailto:mjohnson@ccac.edu)  
412.237.2748**



**OUR GOAL IS YOUR  
SUCCESS.**

## **Update on Rule 4000 - The New Rules Governing PA Court Reporting Services**

PCRA through its attorney, Chris Lucas, filed an emergency petition on Friday, December 19 to determine PCRA's standing to be heard on the effect of Rule 4000 - the new rules on official reporters - and to entertain a petition to permit time to file a detailed Motion for Reconsideration of the December 4, 2014 Order.

We have received a response to the emergency petition from the AOPC (Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts).

[Click here to read the new rules.](#)

[Click here to read the Emergency Petition.](#)

[Click here to read the response from the AOPC.](#)

PCRA is also seeking opinions from two other attorneys to decide how best to proceed. As you can imagine, this will be a lengthy and expensive exercise and our options will be limited by our resources. We need everyone to join PCRA now so we can choose the best option, not just the option we can afford. Please encourage all your reporter friends and colleagues to join PCRA if they are not already members. Every reporter across the Commonwealth should be involved and supporting PCRA, both financially and with ideas and suggestions.

We will continue to update members using the website and email blasts.