Fall 2020

FIRZONOTES

Volume 48, Number 3

Fall 2020



ACRA President's Speech By Marylynn LeMoine

Hello. For those of you who may not know me personally, I look forward to meeting you. For those I have had the privilege of working with and becoming acquainted with, thank you for your friendship. Sharing with you a few thoughts today is a privilege,

although it's very different than I ever imagined. A virtual speech? Very different than in the past.

Thank you, Tracy Johnston, for your service as President this past year and congratulations on a job well done. Since we are virtual today, Kim Portik is going to present Tracy with her plaque, so again, thank you, Tracy.

ACRA is 70 years old this year! What a tremendous milestone! ACRA was formed in 1950 when court reporters from around the state felt the need to have their own association. It was initially called ASRA, the Arizona Shorthand Reporters Association. A few years later the name was changed to ACRA, as it has remained ever since. The ACRA has a rich history of many notable court reporters that have served on the board of directors, chaired committees, served on the national level, and much more.

The issues that court reporters faced 70 years ago are very different from the issues that we are facing today, but what remains the same is the need for an association to advocate for the court reporters of Arizona. What still remains is the perseverance, dedication, expertise, and wealth of knowledge

we bring to the art of capturing the spoken word. The Arizona Court Reporters Association has been the largest professional association of court reporters in the state of Arizona, advocating for the integrity of the profession of "Keeping the Record."

President's Message continued on Page 13 ...

Arizona Court Reporters

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COPE: REMOTE DEPOSITIONS

September 29, 2020 by NCRA (reposted with permission)

BY DANNIELLE COPELAND AND LIZ HARVEY

As the world adjusts to the ramifications of COVID-19, so does our profession. Zoom and other videoconferencing platforms have allowed us to continue our work throughout the pandemic, but the nature in which these remote proceedings began required us to act fast. As the months have passed, questions about process and procedure have been posed by our colleagues and our clients. On Aug. 20, Magistrate Judge Sunil R. Harjani of the Illinois District Court issued an order on one such question, addressing whether or not a court reporter may use the record function on Zoom and certify the recording. He states in his conclusion: "Defendant's Motion for Ruling on Parameters on the Recording of Depositions Proceeding via 'Zoom' [262] is granted in part and denied in part. Plaintiff may only record the upcoming remote depositions using the Zoom record function with a stipulation that she will not use the video recording as evidence in the case."

Absent court orders in the majority of jurisdictions on the issuance of video or audio recordings by the meeting host, we rely on existing advisory opinions issued by the Committee on Professional Ethics.

Advisory Opinion 38 covers release of backup audio. This provision also applies to technology that has a video component. The decision whether or not to release your backup media is your personal choice. A reporter's backup media is your personal property, and absent a court order, there is no ethical obligation to provide a copy to any person requesting same.

If you do elect to provide a copy of the backup media, you must ensure that all discussions that take place off the record, as well as any attorney-client communications, are not disclosed. You should retain control of the original media and provide a copy only. You must also offer to provide the media to all other parties.

It can be difficult to simply say "no" to a valued client. By explaining that you are obligated to maintain confidentiality for all parties and the media they're requesting could contain off-the-record or privileged discussions, you'll help them see why it's not a good idea to put you in that position.

Here is the full opinion on releasing backup audio media.

Advisory Opinion 44 addresses a court reporter acting as both videographer and verbatim reporter in the same proceeding.

Since the Zoom platform allows you to record the video component, this opinion also should be considered. COPE has determined that it is unethical for the reporter to act as the videographer for the same proceeding, as being responsible for handling the video could distract the verbatim reporter, thereby compromising the ability to accurately report the proceeding.

Other issues to consider are that even if the client insists that they only want the video for their own purposes, there are other concerns, one being that they may decide they want to use the video in court at a later time, and it may not be admissible.

COPE: Remote Depositions continued on Page 14...

ACRA Arizona Court Reporters Association

UPCOMING ACRA EVENTS

Midyear Seminar

Date: April 17, 2021 (Subject to change) Location: TBD

ACRA Annual Seminar

Date: TBD Hilton Phoenix/Chandler



the Planet Hollywood Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas

SHORTHAND TRIVIA!

QUESTION 1: What is one of the earliest examples of shorthand?

QUESTION 2: Who was the first stenographer?

QUESTION 3: When was shorthand first used?

QUESTION 4: Who invented punctuation?

QUESTION 5: In what year was the stenography machine invented?

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS ON PAGE 11



SHORT STORY

by Jill Suttenberg

We all know in the freelance world you never know what the next job will be like, or where it will be held. When the courthouse was crowded in the depo rooms, I've reported short depos on the steps of the courthouse with the attorney holding down my paper notes to prevent them from flying away. (Yes, I am that old.) But my favorite story was a request to take a depo on a Saturday.

At my agency, I was the go-to reporter for medical depos and I was asked to cover this one on a Saturday. No one wants to give up a Saturday, but sometimes you have to. "Oh, it's being held in the hospital. I hate those. Always hard finding the parties." But off I go.

I find the attorney, and then another attorney, and another, and then various parties were there. It turns out this was a product liability/medical malpractice case. They weren't sure if the plaintiff's injury was due to an equipment failure or the doctors, etc.

So now we're mostly gathered in one area, and there is a still photographer there to take pictures. (WHAT??) I'm also surprised by the attire of many of the lawyers -they're wearing blue jeans. Okay, it's a Saturday, but this is still a depo, right?

Then they drop the ball on me. They will be reenacting the surgery and we will be doing it in the Operating Room. And we all have to put on surgical gowns, gloves and masks.

So many thoughts are running through my head. How can I write with gloves on? (After explaining things, I was able to take my gloves off IF I don't touch anything other than my steno machine.) I've never been in an operating room before. Where am I going to sit? You're re-enacting a surgery? How? What kind of surgery? And then how many people are going to be dressed in matching surgical garb? The answer to the last question is 28. There were 28 of us in the OR. The men wore surgical pants. The women dresses. I can tell some people apart because they're wearing glasses. We even had little blue coverings over our shoes and surgical caps and masks. I walked into a room with approximately 20 men looking nearly identical and 8 women. How was I going to report anything anybody said. How would I know who was who?

I took a deep breath and started asking for the appearances.

Resusci Anne is on the operating room table. I asked the parties when they speak if they could state their name as we all look similar and they're moving about the room. The attorneys are rattling off serial numbers to me measuring voltage of equipment, and the various findings of their testing. Sometimes one of the parties speak. I started recognizing a few of the people.

Then someone spoke up, and I asked him to identify himself. Mr. Brown. Um, no, if you're Mr. Brown, then who is next to you that I thought was Mr. Brown. "Oh, that's Mr. Brown, my father." (Great, now I don't know who had spoken the first several times. What do I do now?) The answer is you can't figure out which Mr. Brown said what, you just put in the transcript MR. BROWN. After all, they both work for the same company.

I felt like the hits just keep on coming in this job.

The job ended hours later with not many pages. The still photographer took a picture of me at my steno machine in full surgical garb and promised to send me a copy of it -- but he never did.

I'm sure when Dr. Seuss said, "Oh, The Places You'll Go," he was not imagining a court reporter in the operating room reporting the proceedings.

Jill Suttenberg Court Reporter, Scopist, and Case CATalyst Training Agent 516-729-9499

Arizona Court Reporters

UPCOMING ISSUES AFFECTING COURT REPORTERS.

By Angela F. Miller, President Elect

First and foremost ACRA wants to let its members know how much we appreciate and thank all of you for your dedication to our wonderful and unique profession.

In an effort to keep everyone up to date on upcoming issues that ACRA will be diligently fighting for and on your behalf, please know that we will be sending out e-mails as we have information and as the year progresses into and through 2021.

There are currently three issues that ACRA is aware of that directly affect the court reporting profession in Arizona, and your Board has already begun discussions and attended meetings regarding all three, and we will continue to do so.

First, as you are aware, the Arizona State Board of Court Reporters has proposed a modification to ACJA 7-206, requesting that commencing 2022 the certification rates increase from \$200 annually (renewed biennially) to \$300 annually. Marylynn has attended one Board meeting on the subject and will continue to stay abreast of the proposal. The next Board Meeting will be held on December 3, 2020 at 10:00

a.m. at the Supreme Court of Arizona, 1501 W. Washington St., Conference Room 109 in Phoenix. Please note that the last few meetings have been held telephonically, so be sure to check for updates on status of the meeting. At this time, the agenda has not been posted, but we anticipate this item will be on the agenda for December.

Second, we have been notified that the Administrative Office of the Courts will be reasserting proposed legislation regarding court reporters next legislative cycle. We have already begun talks with our lobbyists and will be working to create alliances with supporters of court reporters and opponents of this proposed legislation. We anticipate the legislation that will be proposed is where we ended last legislative cycle, but we will not have a concrete understanding until it is officially brought before the House or Senate in 2021.

Lastly, we have been that the Arizona State Bar Rules Committee has convened a subcommittee that is looking at changes to Rule(s) 28 & 30. ACRA has attended one brief meeting with the subcommittee and will be diligently attending and keeping abreast of the subcommittee and any potential changes to the current rules that will affect court reporters in depositions

Due to all of these issues that WILL affect Arizona certified reporters, ACRA will need to have a combined and united front from ALL court reporters in Arizona to fight these issues. Please renew your membership and tell your co-workers, friends, and colleagues to join ACRA. ACRA will need not only the support and help from its members, but we will also need to raise the funds to fight these disheartening challenges we are facing.

There will be some great fundraisers we will be doing throughout the upcoming months (*hint hint* December), so keep your eyes open! Of course, donations are always greatly appreciated!

As always, if anyone would like to volunteer their time to help ACRA and/or provide any information, please feel free to e-mail: Office@acraonling.org.

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I've been an advocate of fitness nearly my entire life. In whatever capacity you're able, I encourage you to get moving. This is especially important during COVID-19. Why? Because exercise decreases stress in the body, stimulates the immune system, and increases productivity. If you love your gym, staying fit during COVID-19 means abiding by new gym rules, which look and feel different than before the pandemic.

Current State of Business

As gyms in Arizona begin to re-open (again), and as law firms are inviting employees back to the office, even on a voluntary or as-needed basis, there are cleaning protocols that need to be in place. Employees and, in the case of gyms, members, need to be educated about new rules and expectations.

JD Supra comments that, "Although it may be tempting to reopen as soon as possible, be sure to take the time necessary and to work with counsel to figure out how to exercise a new normal while avoiding potential risks. This will not only ensure a safe workplace for employees but also help to avoid future litigation."

I agree with that statement. I'd add that there is no guarantee that any business will be allowed to stay open, especially if protocols are not followed.

Staying Fit During COVID-19

If you love working out at a gym like I do, I highly recommend asking your fitness center what you need to do as a member to keep everyone safe.

- Go at a less crowded time of day, like mid-day.
- Wear a mask while working out.
- Wipe equipment before and after each use.
- Bring your own water to avoid sharing a water fountain.

These are simple things we can do to make sure gyms stay open.

Why is fitness important?

As if our world weren't stressful enough, we worry that every sneeze or cough could give us the virus. Perhaps worse is that we become asymptomatic while having the virus and carry it to vulnerable members of our family and community. That's a lot to process!

I don't mean to scare you, only to express the importance of following gym protocols, and to impress upon you the reason staying fit now is important.

Staying Fit During COVID-19 continued on Page 14 ...



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riddles.tips

Tuesday, Sam and Peter went to a restaurant to eat lunch. After eating lunch, they paid the bill. But Sam and <u>Peter did</u> not pay the bill, so who did?

Their friend, Tuesday



In Memoriam: Miguel A Benitez (Mike)



October 20, 1956 - August 4, 2020

Miguel Anjel "Mike" Benitez, age 63, of Goodyear, Arizona, died on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 after a four-week battle with COVID-19 illness. Mike was born on October 20, 1956, in Chandler, Arizona to the late Fidencio L. and Carmen Alvarado Benitez.

He graduated from Agua Fria Union High School in 1974, where he was a member of the National Honor Society. One of his fondest school memories was how he studied for years and won the Avondale School Constitution award in the 8th grade.

Mike obtained his court reporting certificate from Legal Arts of Arizona, and later achieved the level of Merit Writer. His court reporting career began in Alliance, Nebraska, later working as a freelance reporter in Phoenix, and reporting as an official court reporter for the United States District Court and Maricopa County Superior

Court. Mike also obtained a Series 7 license, working for a brief while as an investment advisor for Edward D. Jones, and a real estate license, working as a real estate agent in Renton, WA for John L. Scott.

Mike met his wife, Debra Hartwig, in Alliance, Nebraska. They married in Issaquah, Washington and spent the majority of their life together in the Peoria and Goodyear, Arizona areas. He was passionate about watches, fountain pens, music, movies, golf, and fishing. Some of his favorite movies were China Town and the Godfather; Ben Hur was a must at Easter. Whether it was singing karaoke or doing his improv comedy for anyone who was near, Mike was ever the showman. He sang Mack the Knife at a charity benefit competition and won; later singing it again at 'A Taste of Phoenix'.

Mike will be remembered for his quick wit and great sense of humor, but what we will remember most was his fierce loyalty to his family and friends. He was a devoted, caring husband and father, a terrific brother, son, grandfather, and uncle. He was admired by many and has left a huge void in the lives of many. In addition to his wife, Debra, Mike is survived by his children: Jessica Reilly of Phoenix, Benjamin M. Benitez, D.O. and his wife Jennie of Hilliard, Ohio, and Timothy J. Benitez of Goodyear; grandchildren Emily Reilly, Leo and Charlie Benitez; his brother Juan R. Benitez (Krista) of Phoenix, sisters Belen B. Herner of Phoenix, Mary E. Barr (Thomas) of Glendale, Arizona, sister-in-law Martha Benitez of Laveen, Arizona; and many nieces and nephews. Mike was preceded in death by his parents, Fidencio L. and Carmen A. Benitez, his brother Stephen J. Benitez, who also died of COVID-19 illness on the same day; and brother-in-law Robert R. Herner.



SPRUCE IT UP

BY KATE ROUNDY

The life we once knew as freelance court reporters has changed. Could we have ever imagined working from home to the extent that we have during the COVID-19 pandemic? My attitude about it has come around. Once dreaded videoconference depositions have actually become enjoyable to write from home. I get to avoid traffic and parking garages. Lugging my equipment around to set it up and tear it down twice a day is a thing of the past. Instead I have started a new routine. I prepare myself and my surroundings to take down the record under these new parameters as if I were there in person. Preparing for each job and having my work environment in optimal shape makes all the difference.

First, my home office had a major facelift. I got rid of the clutter and piles of to-be-filed documents. I cleared off a significant amount of desk space to create a home for my Zoom computer. This computer is slightly elevated for more comfortable, straight-on viewing. A decorative table now sits behind me, always sporting a fresh vase of flowers. I have chosen to spruce it up and, let me tell you, my Zoom background looks the best!

Next, to assure I will have a smooth, uninterrupted job, I have come up with a visual cue to let my family know I am working virtually. Of course, I shut my office door. We also have pocket doors throughout our home that were untouched before the pandemic. Now when I pull one shut to close off the hallway leading to my office, my husband and any kid who shows up to raid the refrigerator or toilet paper supply know that I am working and am not to be disturbed. Finally, I routinely make my space as comfortable as possible. I have started lighting a candle for myself. I am sure to have a cup of coffee or a nice glass of water nearby. Last but not least, I keep a stick of my favorite bright lipstick on hand to keep me looking "put together" for my online appearance.

These preparations and setup routines have made all the difference when it comes to working from home. A clean, clutter-free office is a place I like to be. The scent of the calming candle keeps me relaxed no matter how difficult the testimony. Knowing my work space will be uninterrupted puts me at ease. The orderly, flower adorned backdrop communicates both joy and preparation, telling the world I am ready and willing to do the best job possible. Go ahead, spruce it up. Your attitude and performance while working from the comfort of home will begin to shine.



Arizona Court Reporters

ACRAANNUAL ARTICLE by Kim Portik, Executive Director

Although the year of COVID-19 continued to prevent our members from being able to come together and celebrate each other and our profession in person, it has not dampened our spirit nor our love of reporting. With the delay of the Multistate Convention, we adapted and created an annual convention online so as not to let our members down by simply canceling – this year was ACRA's 70th Anniversary, canceling was certainly not an option.

Once again we reached out to Katherine McNally immediately, requesting her assistance, and she graciously agreed. Katherine joined Tracy Johnston, Kate Roundy, and Kim Portik at "convention headquarters."

Next, we secured our enthusiastic presenters – we thank Nicole Bulldis and Angela Miller for their outreach and connections. We were motivated by Mike Hensley to make lemonade with the lemons life has handed us lately. NCRA's Representative Keith Lemons walked us through the path of technology as well as performing the induction of our 2020-21 Board of Directors. After our annual business meeting, we were enlightened on how a bill becomes a law, unless of course Creosote Partners aids Arizona's Certified Reporters in putting a stop to the legislation threatening to enhance the use of electronic recording in our courtrooms. We ended the day with encouragement and direction on how to protect ourselves through personal awareness.

We knew we could not drop the ball on the fun of the day, and your Board members stepped up to the plate by donating 26 individual gift cards awarded to attendees drawn at random, as well as offering a \$500 gift card to the lucky winner of the raffle ticket sales – that lucky winner was Marianne Burton. Premier Designs Jewelry has continued to faithfully support our organization at each and every convention, and Kathy Hanchette did not disappoint this year. She donated some beautiful jewelry and allowed us to draw for the lucky winner.

We were thrilled to have 87 people register, which included 22 students. YAY, students!!! Throughout the seminar, we fielded questions in chat and we triggered attendance prompts – okay, so that part did not go quite as smoothly as we had hoped, but we absolutely appreciated everyone's patience while we adapted and tried again.

We are grateful for the evaluation forms and comments that were returned – we are certainly a work in progress and appreciate the feedback. None of us are afraid of constructive criticism, and we look forward to the opportunity to grow and serve your needs better each and every time.

To that end, here is our call to action for each of you – please send us your ideas for speakers, topics that you would like to hear and learn about. Let us know what you like and wish we would do better. And most importantly, appreciate that ACRA needs your support – renew your membership next month; plan to attend the Multistate Convention in May; and be flexible in your plans to join us as we adapt yet again and strive to find the most efficient ways to help our members receive the total numbers of CEUs you need to maintain your certifications each year.

Arizona Court Reporters



ACRA is bringing back their "DID YOU KNOW?" section to keep you informed and up to date on topics of interest to certified reporters! You can find the section on **ACRAonline.org** under the "Latest News" tab.

Volume III

November 2020

Did you know there are a ton of resources and information that provide not only the rules that govern our profession, but great insights and helpful information? In this edition of **"Did You Know?,"** below you will be provided a few links to information that will not only refresh your memory, but also provide helpful resources in the future. Be sure to check ACRAonline.org for future Volumes!

Did you know that the Arizona Supreme Court Board of Certified Reporters governs and oversees all aspects of the Arizona reporting profession, from Certified Reporters to Registered Reporting Firms. In addition to providing court reporting services as either an individual certified reporter or a court reporting firm, in our great state of Arizona, <u>all Certified Reporters and Registered Reporting Firms</u>, <u>must apply for and obtain certification</u>. As Arizona Certified Reporters, we are bound by our Code of Conduct as outlined in ACJA 7-206(J).

- Arizona Code of Judicial Administration Section 7-201 and 7-206
- Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 32, Chapter 40

Have a question you would like to see referenced? Send your suggestion to office@acraonline.com.

SHORTHAND TRIVIA ANSWERS

ANSWER 1: The ampersand (&) is one of the earliest examples of shorthand.

ANSWER 2: Samuel Taylor (1748/49 – 1811) was the British inventor of a widely used system of stenography. He began working on his own method of stenography in 1773, based on earlier efforts.

ANSWER 3: 1837. Invented by Sir Isaac Pitman, an English educator, the Pitman shorthand method was first published in 1837 as Stenographic Sound Hand. Pitman's system classifies the sounds of a language into basic groups and makes use of simple abbreviations for rapidity.

ANSWER 4: According to, "The Grammar Bible," most scholars credit Aristophanes of Byzantium with the creation of punctuation.

ANSWER 5: In 1879, the stenography machine was invented and patented by Miles Bartholomew.

Arizona Court Reporters

Fall 2020





ArizoNotes is published quarterly and e-mailed to members of the Arizona Court Reporters Association, 5350 W. Bell Rd., Suite C-122 #520, Glendale, AZ, 85308. Please send address changes to ACRA at the above address or to office@acraonline.org or (602) 679-6995. The ACRA website is at acraonline.org and pdf copies of past issues are available for viewing. Please send editorial submissions to Jennifer Honn at jenniferhonn@iotalegal.com. The editorials and other views expressed in ArizoNotes are not necessarily those of the Association, its officers or its members. Advertising rates and information are also available from Kim Portik at office@acraonline.org or (602) 679-6995.

Arizona Court Reporters

President's Message continued from Page 1 ...

Our mission is to educate and inform the public, reporters, and related legal professions about all facets of court reporting. ACRA has enjoyed a respected history of being a leader in pursuing and supporting all appropriate measures that preserve and promote Arizona certified reporters.

As guardians of the record, we are "essential."

Thank you for joining us today even though it's virtual. I learned long ago that you can tell what is important to a person by how they spend their time and how they spend their money, so it is evident that you hold your career in high regard, as you are spending your time and money to participate with us today. To you, I say thank you for choosing to be the best you can be, and thank you for supporting ACRA. Without member support, ACRA would cease to exist. If you have colleagues who are not members of ACRA, please invite them to join with us. With the perceived shortage of reporters, it is more important than ever that we work together to promote the profession of court reporting.

If someone had told us a year ago that most of us would be doing depos and holding court hearings remotely and virtually, it would have been hard to believe, yet we are doing it, and as always, have adapted to our current environment and are thriving. Time and time again, we have shown that we can rise to the occasion and provide the expertise and skill to ensure an accurate record. We support each other and learn from each other and will continue to do so. We still CONTINUE to be the gold standard for a verbatim record.

When I joined the ACRA board many years ago, it was an eye opening experience to get a glimpse of how much work goes on behind the scenes. It takes a lot of time and energy to provide members with current updates in technology, changes in local code, changes in the marketplace, watch the legislation and court rules that are proposed, attend meetings, produce the ArizoNotes newsletter, organize seminars, monitor the Request a Reporter program, and much more, as well as providing an open and friendly environment to network and collaborate with the top professionals in the state.

There have been so many dedicated and skilled reporters throughout my career that have mentored and encouraged me. They range from firm owners and school instructors to colleagues at the courthouse, as well as members of the board from past and present from all over the state who have contributed so much of their time and talent. They have each taught me what it means to give back to the court reporting community, and I am thankful for their examples.

There are many of you who also have much to give to the court reporting community. We need you. We need your ideas and your participation to preserve our profession far into the future. If you would like to play a more active role and become involved, I invite you to do so. Our organization is strong because we have always had strong members that rise to the occasion when called upon.

You are the future of this association. As we continue to face the challenges that come our way, ACRA will continue to be a strong supporter and ally for ALL court reporters of Arizona; freelance, official, CART, captioners, or any other role that we fill. If we continue to work together for the good of our "essential" profession, we will continue to succeed and continue to serve the citizens of Arizona as "Guardians of the Record."

Thank you, and remember to take care of yourself and your family in this unique and challenging time.

Marylynn LeMoine

Arizona Court Reporters

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COPE: Remote Depositions continued from Page 2...

In addition, just as with backup audio media, off-therecord and private attorney-client conversations may be captured on the video feed and would need to be edited out. This falls under the purview of a videographer. The video recording itself is captured to the Zoom cloud, unlike using a videographer who maintains their own equipment and repository for the video files.

The reporter's duty of impartiality would again require notification and agreement from all parties. All parties must be offered the same services. In the event one of the parties objects, the reporter cannot proceed with the recording feature enabled.

The best practice for any client who wishes to have a video recording is to notice the deposition as a video deposition and hire a certified videographer.

Opinion 44 is found here.

Dannielle Copeland, RDR, CRR, is a freelance court reporter based in Crestwood, Ky., and Liz Harvey, RPR, is a freelance court reporter based in Seattle, Wash. Both are members of NCRA's Committee on Professional Ethics.

Staying Fit During COVID-19 continued from Page 6...

Researchers studying **work and self-reported work performance** asked 200 employees at three organizations to evaluate themselves on days they exercised and days they did not exercise.

On workout days, participants reported scores that were 21% higher for concentration at work, 22% for finishing work on time, and 25% higher for working without unscheduled breaks. Most notable was that 41% reported feeling more motivated to work on the days they exercised!

If that isn't enough to convince you to take a walk during lunch, there are many studies that report working out, even just 30 minutes on most days, results in weight stabilization or loss, less stress, lower blood pressure, and better mental health and quality sleep.

Even if the gyms are closed again, we are heading into the best winter weather in the country here in Arizona. Get outside and walk. Buy an exercise bike and/or weights. There are free videos and apps all over the internet. Staying fit during COVID-19 is key to your overall health and productivity.

