

# ARIZONA NOTES

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## ACRA President's Message

by Angela Miller

First off, let me start by saying it's great to be able to reconnect with all of you in person today.

I want to thank all of you for your trust and faith in me as ACRA's president. I'm still not quite sure how I came to be in this position, and I'm pretty sure I have the fabulous Kate Roundy to thank for her subtle persuasiveness and gentle nudging and guidance to join the ACRA board only a few years ago.

Honestly, though, I am so glad I did. Not only have I met and made so many new friends, but I've also come to realize the amount of work behind the scenes, and the dedication to this profession that so

many court reporters put into upholding and promoting this field.

I want to thank our outgoing president, Marylynn LeMoine Cotton, for her hard work and service. I want to also thank the outgoing Board members for their time and dedication to our profession. This Board is all volunteers and without them, court reporters in Arizona would not have the voice, the standing, and the strength that they do today.

I also want to give a big shout out to ACRA's Executive Director, Kim Portik, who literally is the backbone and machine that keeps ACRA alive.

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**Arizona Court Reporters Association**

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# OUTGOING REMARKS

BY MARYLYNN LEMOINE COTTON, ACRA PRESIDENT 2020-2021

I have always loved a good mystery. I remember checking Nancy Drew novels out of the school library until I had read them all. As I got older, it evolved to watching CSI, 48 hours, and all of those shows where there was a mystery as to what happened. It was intriguing to learn how the pieces of the puzzle went together to solve it.

One of the reasons I have enjoyed court reporting for the past 25 years is not only having the front row seat but even getting paid to make a record of these real-life events.

We are the mysterious people capturing every word no matter how difficult the circumstances are.

I am still intrigued by many mysteries today.

For instance, it's a mystery to me how in our new pandemic protocols with people wearing masks, mumbling, sitting behind Plexiglass or wandering away from the mic, we still make a verbatim record.

It's a mystery to me how in virtual hearings where the camera doesn't always show who is speaking, the dog is barking, the screen occasionally freezes, and the internet sometimes drops calls, we still manage to produce an accurate transcript.

And it's always been a mystery to me how some people are intelligent enough to graduate from law school but can't figure out how to enunciate, speak one at a time, slow down while reading and to focus on making a good record.

Most of all, it's definitely a mystery to me why every court reporter in Arizona isn't a member of ACRA, our professional organization that works to protect, promote and preserve the court reporting profession. For any court reporter who endeavors to be well-informed and educated with the latest happenings in the court reporting field, membership in ACRA is essential.

Likewise, it is NO mystery to me why Angela Miller has stepped forward and will serve as our president this next year. I've had the privilege of working with Angela for several years now, and Angela has demonstrated dedication, experience, and devotion in the many endeavors she has been involved in. She has worked countless hours behind the scenes with our lobbyist and on other issues confronting ACRA to represent ALL court reporters in Arizona and work toward bringing forth the best results possible.



*Outgoing Remarks continued on Page 7...*



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## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Free at last!! In case you missed it, the **2021 Annual Convention** was a huge success. Many court reporters were happy to finally have an in-person convention. We had some great speakers. The panel discussion by **April Escobedo, Laura Ashbrook, Lerryn Roberds and Tracy Johnston** was very informative, especially for the students. **Students**, we can't thank you enough for your wonderful questions.

We also heard from our lobbyist, **Geoff Esposito**. It was great to learn how a bill gets proposed and then passes. Next up was the dynamic safety duo of **Rick Salyers and John Dean**. We learned about how disaster search dogs find people in collapsed buildings.

After being rescued, we had a spelling bee put on by our very own **Marylynn LeMoine**. The first round was spelling words in steno. Talk about a challenge!

On Sunday, we learned how to find a good scopist and learned about Case CATALyst and Eclipse. It was a great weekend with great friends. **I'm sure we will all be looking forward to Midyear!**



Spelling Bee Participants



Treva showing her skills



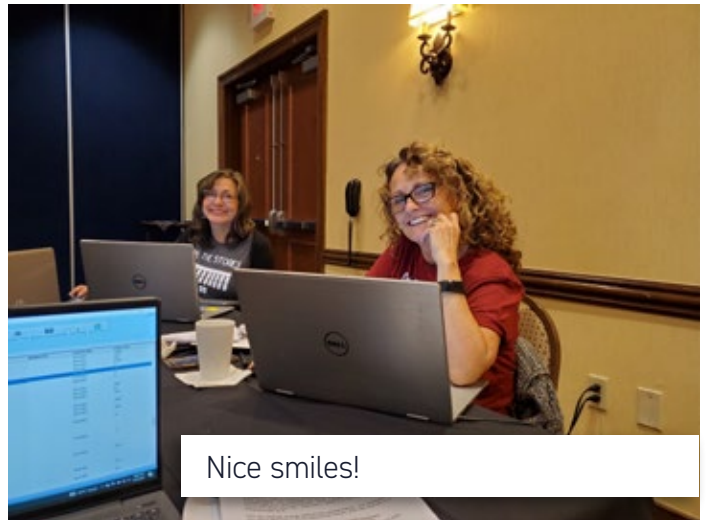
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Learning new tips with our CAT software



Nice smiles!



Our panelists: Lerryn Roberds, Laura Ashbrook, April Escobedo and Tracy Johnston



Some of the rockstar court reporters!



The disaster search dog and his handler

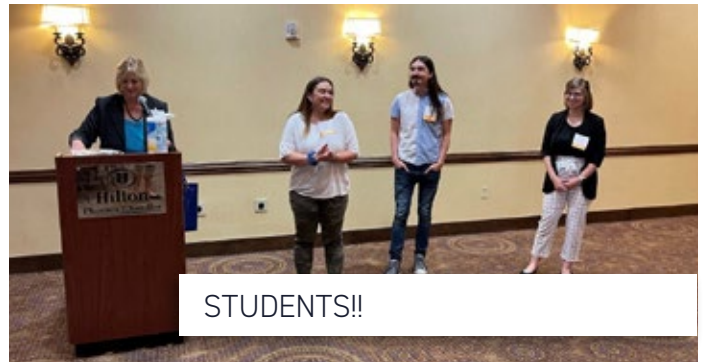


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One of the vendors – thank you!!



STUDENTS!!



Great cookies!



Our lobbyist, Geoff Esposito!



DSA Winner Mary Onuschak,  
Legal Video Specialist



Leslie Foldy and Mary Onuschak



*President's Message continued from Page 1...*

A little about me. I started court reporting school straight out of high school. I had always said I wanted to be a lawyer growing up (boy, did I dodge a bullet there!), and one day we had a school trip to the local courthouse to watch a trial and talk to the judge. I remember sitting in the galley and watching the court reporter; I was so enthralled. I went up and talked to her at a break and she was so friendly, she even invited me to her home office if I wanted to chat with her more. Well, I did. I went over there after school one day and she showed me how her cool green machine worked, and that was it, I was hooked. I knew right then and there: I am going to be a court reporter. I've never looked back.

I started court reporting school on a real-time theory in Provo, Utah, unfortunately that school closed and I chose to move to sunny Arizona and enrolled at American Institute and then transferred to Metropolitan School of Court Reporting where I graduated in December of 1999 with a bachelor's degree in court reporting. Since then, I've worked as a freelance court reporter in court, depositions, and government agencies, opening my own firm in 2004.

There are still days I get ready to start a job and feel like I am a brand-new court reporter and feel all the jitters, the worry that "am I qualified to take this job," and that was never more so than this past year, making our way through a pandemic. I know a lot of us had not only our work lives disrupted and a decline in income, but our personal lives as well. However, if there is any silver lining, it is that this pandemic has reaffirmed that we as court reporters are here to stay, we are the "Gold Standard." Our skill set cannot be replicated, and our dedication to our profession cannot be rivaled. We have proven to attorneys, judges, and court personnel that we are adaptive, we are flexible, and we can provide services on the fly with up-to-date technology and knowledge, and we can provide all of this not only in person but remotely.

We have overcome obstacles, lobbied, and created strong coalition partners to cement our invaluable skill set and profession, not only in the justice system but beyond in providing CART and captioning to those in need.

ACRA was founded years ago by individual court reporters who used their voices and combined efforts to strengthen and secure the future of the court reporting profession. Now, more than ever, you, the individual court reporter, the registered reporting firms, and our related colleagues need to collectively come together to keep our voices strong. You are the most important part; help us help you. We are one profession with many different specialties, but we NEED to stay united. You are the most important part, never let anyone minimize the role you play and the value of each of you.

I would like to leave you with this quote: "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop." Mother Theresa.

Thank you for being members of the Arizona Court Reporters Association and please encourage your friends and colleagues to become active in promoting and upholding this great profession.

Thank you,

Angela Miller



# CURRENT ACRA BOARD MEMBERS

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**Tammy Gillett**

President-Elect

**Dana Valles, RPR**

Vice President

**Sonia Vaca**

Secretary and Treasurer

**Marylynn LeMoine, RMR, CRI**

Past President

## **Directors**

Robin Osterode, RPR -  
Director/Freelance 2021-2023

Laura Ashbrook -  
Director/Official 2021-2023

Cindy Mahoney, RPR -  
Representing Freelance 2020-2022

Lisa Bradley -  
Representing Officials 2020-2022

## **Executive Director**

Kim Portik, RMR, CRR, CRC, CSR(CA)

## *Outgoing Remarks continued from Page 2...*

It has been a privilege to have worked with all of the members of the board for the past several years. At this time, I am pleased to continue on the board as Past President, and I will be giving Angela 100 percent of my support and willingness to follow her lead as we step into ACRA's 71st year.

There will undoubtedly be issues that will continue to confront court reporters in our ever-evolving economy, our ever-evolving technology, and our ever-evolving leaders in government and the court system. ACRA will continue to be our advocate and fulfill its mission to educate and inform the public and to preserve and promote court reporting.

Marylynn LeMoine Cotton

ACRA President 2020-2021



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# JOIN ACRA!

## Value of ACRA Membership

(Students can join for only \$20!)

- **Conventions and Seminars** - Two major events are held each year. ACRA provides NCRA and Cojet approved continuing education credits at our Annual Convention in the fall and our Midyear Seminar in the spring.
- **Legislative** - ACRA advocates on behalf of the court reporting and captioning profession. We combine the voices of many when our profession is attacked or diminished by the legislature or other rule making bodies or board.
- **ArizoNotes Magazine** - The only Arizona State publication devoted exclusively to the reporting profession. Delivered electronically.
- **Directory** - Access to the online Membership Directory, which includes the credentials and listing of services offered by each member.
- **Job Bank** - Access to any job postings as they are submitted.
- **Hertz Discount** - Members receive special year-round discounts.

\* Membership dues update: Annual membership dues is \$150 and will no longer be prorated throughout the year. Renew early to maximize the benefits of your membership!



## VISIT [HTTPS://ACRAONLINE.ORG](https://acraonline.org) TODAY!

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