

Fall 2007



# On The Record

## Houston Court Reporters Association

### From The President:

Dear Reporters,

This is a very important newsletter, so please read it through. We have quite a need at this time, and you can help.

We are canceling the Fall Mini-Semi at this time. With all the other seminars being given this time of year, and being that they are so close to home, we feel the attendance would not justify spending HCRA funds on one at this time. This does not mean we won't have another one, just not in the fall.

With that said, in lieu of the mini-semi, we will have a Fall Association meeting. This meeting will not be purely social. We will discuss major issues that HCRA needs to address. These issues will determine if HCRA will continue on from this point forward or not. We have had increased non-participation in functions and membership over the past two years and need to get your ideas on what you think HCRA needs.

The most important thing that HCRA needs is Board members. This coming year we are losing eight people. They have worked their commitment and have done it well. These positions are one- and two-year commitments. Just seems they all came to an end at the same time. Without a Board, we will have a non-functioning association here in Houston. That would not be good. HCRA has done good things in the past and can continue to do so in the future, but we need people willing to participate and join in and take the lead as well.

Please look at the nomination slate and see if there is a position you could or would like to fill. There is no experience necessary, just an able and willing body to step up to the plate, take a swing and make a run for first base. I always thought a nomination slate was for someone else to nominate you, but that is not how ours works. You may nominate yourself. All you have to do

is fill out the form and be willing to stay in for the long haul.

Each of us has a myriad of interests and talents to contribute to the cause. Think about the things you enjoy, the things that make you tick and come alive. Are you an organizational maniac who loves to plan each tiny detail? Be an Official or Freelance director and co-chair our Seminar Committee or our Events Committee. Are you a computer guru? You could be the Treasurer or Secretary, working on either the membership database or the newsletter. Are you a political animal? Become the President Elect and head up the Legislative Committee. Do you love mentoring and cheering on others? Become Vice President and head the Student Committee.

This plea goes out to our students as well. You are our future and can join in as committee members now. Don't wait. Make some connections that will support your future. The future of our profession lies in your hands.

In closing, let me just say that you owe it to yourselves and to the team to join the Board and get to know your fellow reporters, to help HCRA continue to thrive and grow toward the security of our profession and, most importantly, to stay connected with what is happening in your profession. If you care, you must stay in the loop.

These are just a few examples of the opportunities for professional growth available when you get involved. Make a positive choice for yourself and take personal responsibility for the state of your profession. Get involved. It's fun, and you make great contacts and life-long friends. Hey, we will even accept a one-year stint to get you started and then go from there. You might find it's not as difficult as you thought and go ahead and re-up!

May God protect and bless each of you!

Vonda  
2007 HCRA President

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## 2007 HCRA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

### Reporter Sites of Interest

CRCB Web Site:  
www.crcb.state.tx.us

HCRA Web Site:  
www.hcrainfo.com

TCRA Web Site:  
www.tcra-online.com

NCRA Web Site:  
www.NCRAonline.com

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2007 - 2008

### 2007 October

- 15<sup>th</sup> Monday 5:30 pm  
Location -- TBA  
Board Meeting
- 24<sup>th</sup> Wednesday 5:30 pm  
Terlingua Texas Border Café  
Association Meeting  
920 Studemont  
713 665-3900

### November

- 19<sup>th</sup> Monday 5:30 pm  
Location – TBA  
Board Meeting

### December

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Newsletter article deadline
- 17<sup>th</sup> Monday 5:30 pm  
Location -- TBA  
Board Meeting

### 2008 January

- 21<sup>st</sup> Monday 5:30 pm  
Location – TBA  
Board Meeting
- 28<sup>th</sup> Monday 5:30 pm  
Location – TBA  
Association Meeting/Inauguration

### February

- 18<sup>th</sup> Monday 5:30 pm  
Location – TBA  
Board Meeting



**WANTED:  
ALL INTERESTED IN CONTINUING TO HAVE A LOCAL ORGANIZATION  
HCRA NEEDS YOU AND YOU AND YOU!!!**

The October association meeting is vitally important to HCRA's ability to continue into next year. We need Board members for the coming year. We also need ideas to increase membership and participation. We need to know what YOUR needs are in order to fulfill them. Please come to this meeting so we may hear your ideas and suggestions to continue having local representation. We can't do it without your help! HCRA has been around since the invention of the wheel. Well, not really, but it's been over 40 years, and it would surely be a shame to have it go down like the beautiful old buildings downtown do due to lack of care or interest in them. Let's keep HCRA as vital and active as it has been in years past.

If the only contribution you have is to come to this meeting and give us your ideas, that's exactly what we need. If you feel you would like to hold a position on the Board next year, we definitely need you at the meeting. HCRA needs YOU AND YOU AND YOU!!

When: October 24, Wednesday, at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Terlingua Texas Border Cafe, 920 Studemont, 713-665-3900

\*\*very close to downtown and I-10\*\*

### 2008 Nomination Slate

The HCRA Nominating Committee, as approved by the Board of Directors, presents the following openings for committee chairs and elective office to be voted upon at the January 2008 meeting. The Nominating Committee is asking your help to fill these vital positions and is currently accepting nominations. **Do you have what it takes or know someone who does? WE NEED YOU!**

#### OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President	<b>Vacant</b>
Past President	<b>Vonda Treat</b>
President Elect	<b>Vacant</b>
Vice President	<b>Vacant</b>
Secretary	<b>Vacant</b>
Treasurer	<b>Vacant</b>
Freelance Director Seat 1	<b>Vacant</b>
Freelance Director Seat 2	<b>Vacant</b>
Official Director Seat 1	<b>Vacant</b>
Official Director Seat 2	<b>Vacant</b>

#### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership Committee Chair	<b>Vacant</b>
Newsletter Editor	<b>Julie Matson</b>

Pursuant to the HCRA Bylaws, a nomination form is found on this page to be completed by any professional member of the association and returned to the Nominating Committee not later than November 30, 2007. (NOTE: Committee Chairs do not have to be professional members; student and associate members may chair committees.) All nominees shall then be presented by the Nominating Committee at the HCRA first annual meeting to be held in January of 2008 for vote by the professional members present. Otherwise, nominations can be made from the floor.

### NOMINATION(S)

	Name	Telephone	E-mail
President Elect	_____	_____	_____
Vice President	_____	_____	_____
Secretary	_____	_____	_____
Treasurer	_____	_____	_____
Freelance Director Seat 1	_____	_____	_____
Freelance Director Seat 2	_____	_____	_____
Official Director Seat 1	_____	_____	_____
Official Director Seat 2	_____	_____	_____
Newsletter Editor	_____	_____	_____
Membership Committee Chair	_____	_____	_____
Fund-raising Committee Chair	_____	_____	_____
Web site Committee Chair	_____	_____	_____

Nominated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't delay! Please detach the above form and return to P.O. Box 2205, Houston, Texas 77252 or fax to: (713) 802-0201. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Nomination Committee Chair, Jennifer L. Wilson at: [jennifercsr@peoplepc.com](mailto:jennifercsr@peoplepc.com) or (281) 725-2579.



## **IMPORTANT EVENTS!!!!!!**

### **MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!!! GREAT PRIZES!!!**

Who couldn't use a little prize every now and again? Join HCRA for 2008 on or before the night of inauguration and be entered to win a \$50 AmEx card or a \$20 Starbucks card. Remember, inauguration is in January 2008.

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### **REPORTER PAPER DRIVE FOR STUDENTS**

Are you a paperless writer and don't know what to do with your leftover paper? Do you have tons of scraps saved with the intention of taping them together for future use but just can't seem to get around to it? Well, we are here to help!! Donate your packs of paper or scraps to HCRA's Paper Drive. All you have to do is come to the October association meeting and bring your scraps.

What will that do for you, you ask? You will receive a \$5 discount off 2008 dues if you join that night and will have done something good for someone else.

If you can't make the meeting, we have two drop-off sites convenient for you to drop off your paper/scraps, along with your membership application and dues (minus the \$5, of course). Just call Kim Thompson of Downtown Reporting at 713-802-0205. She's just outside of downtown on Memorial. Or call Karen Field, County Civil Court No. 4, at 713-368-6678. She's extremely convenient for the officials!

What is the paper drive? We will be visiting the schools and getting students interested and involved in HCRA. As incentive, they will receive a portion of the paper collected when they join.

## WHAT WAS MEANT FOR EVIL

### Part II

By Mylinda Faircloth

I called my very good friend Vonda and poured out my troubles. The words, “I’ll get it covered for you. Don’t worry,” brought relief and tears. Even now, six months later, as I type these words tears roll down my cheeks. The Bible says that God has a plan for all things, and I believe that with all my heart. It also says that what others intend for evil, He can use for good. I believe that, as well. But in that moment, I just felt helpless, violated and vulnerable.

By the time we got home that night, I was emotionally exhausted. But for those who know me well, you know that I am, first and foremost, organized. Unable to sleep, I pulled out a pad and began to list the items that were in my tote bag and briefcase. As I made my list that night, I tried to envision what was in each pocket, compartment and zippered section of my briefcase. When I was done, I was holding a comprehensive list of items that were lost that night.

The next day, I called my Business Owners’ Insurance provider. I was given a claim number and told that an adjuster would call me soon. While I waited, I reviewed receipts, Web sites, and check stubs to

find the replacement value of each item. By the time the adjuster called two hours later, I was able to provide her with a complete list of my claimed items, including replacement value for each item lost. She told me she’d review the claim and get back with me. As I waited, the worries began to seep in. Would they pay the claim? Would they drag it out and make it difficult? Was my equipment covered in my car as well as my office? My worries proved unfounded. My adjuster was great. She knew that every day I was unable to report, I was losing money. When she told me the check was being processed, I began to cry. What a relief. They cut a check within three days and overnighted it to me. I had it by the end of the week.

I borrowed a steno machine and almost everything else I would need to get by from my good friend Cheryl Clark. I then spent the next two weeks reacquiring everything that was lost – everything, that is, except my steno machine. I had to order a new machine – but which one? I don’t handle change well. Typically, I like things the way they are; but in this matter, I had no choice. My beloved Stentura wasn’t being manufactured anymore, but the replacement value was enough to cover a new Mira or a Fusion. I spent a few weeks deliberating this important decision. I knew I’d have

this new machine for a long time, so I had to make the right decision. The Mira is paperless, takes a memory card, and has AudioSync straight to the machine. The Fusion is more like the Stentura and, therefore, scared me less. In the end, I decided to “cowgirl up” and ordered the Mira. By the way, I am so glad I did.

In the end the worst part was losing the business records. For weeks I would reach for my scheduling book, personal calendar or other paperwork, only to realize it was gone. As far as the equipment goes, most of mine was several years old at the time of the burglary and beginning to show signs of wear; now it is all brand new. I would never have thought it at the time, but the burglary of my vehicle was a true blessing in disguise. What was meant for evil became something good.

**Next newsletter** — Mylinda shares her what-to-dos to minimize your losses should this happen to you.

## THANKS FOR COMING OUT TO SEE US

By Keith McCabe

Nothing reinvigorates our sense of purpose as students more than a visit from a real working reporter. We have had a few guests come to our school, at the Court Reporting Institute of Houston, to speak to us about the life. I think what we find the most fascinating are the stories from these very successful individuals about how they remember the days when they struggled with tests, or how much they hated literary. It shows us that conflict is just part of the game.

I think what we like the most, though, is the ability to ask questions. Rarely do we get the chance to talk to you, Dear Working Reporter, and ask you about how you coped with test anxiety, or what kind of material you practiced to

become a better writer. We are always scrounging for tricks of the trade to inch us towards obtaining that sweet, sweet CSR.

We really do appreciate it when you take time out of your busy lives to come speak with us. I certainly hope that there will be more in the future to come to our schools and tell us what it was like for them on that long road towards state certification. After a visit from a reporter, telling us about his or her trials and tribulations, I'm not as bummed out if I don't pass a test. I know, at least, that it's possible to get through school and get that awesome job. Besides, there will always be more tests.

There have been times when a reporter will hand out their business cards and tell us, "I remember what it was like. If

you have any questions at all, please call or e-mail me." That, I think, is certainly going beyond the extra mile by reaching out as a mentor. I know of many people at the school that have built wonderful friendships with reporters simply because they offered to help.

It is rare to see this kind of thing in any school today. You don't see anything like this in the major, four-year colleges. While they may have a guest speaker once every blue moon, the speaker generally could care less about being a mentor. It is humbling to know that these fine men and women of the court reporting profession have never forgotten their origins despite how successful they have become, and that they're willing to share their experiences with us. It really does mean a lot.



## CLASSIFIEDS

### HELP WANTED

There is an immediate opening for an educational CART interpreter to work in class every day with a high school student through the rest of this school year. If you are interested, have questions or would like to know more about being a CART interpreter, please call Susan Henley @ 713.524.6777 or 281.486.7858, or email her at shenley@AlliedAdvancedReporting.com.



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If you would like to become a member or if you would like additional information on MemberSource Credit Union's services, call (713) 627-4000, (800) 877-8828 or visit us online at [www.membersourcecu.org](http://www.membersourcecu.org)

The next time you're at Randall's, pick up a Remarkable Card application at the courtesy booth to fill out and link your card to our account. Randall's will pay us a percentage of our account total, so be sure to use your card every time you shop. By using your card, you will also be eligible for exclusive discounts, giveaways, enter-to-wins, direct mail rewards and air miles.

Clip out the card below and take it with you to the store as your reminder of our organization's Good Neighbor Program account number to fill in on your Remarkable card application. HCRA's organization number is 6081.

