

## THANKSGIVING GREETINGS!

I'm still full from all the food from this past weekend. I'm also ready to get back into the swing of working again. I took the whole week off and, frankly, I can't do it anymore – I'm so tired! I hope you all were able to spend some quality time with family and friends. I know I had the opportunity to reflect on what I'm grateful for...

And now, on with the newsy E-skript.

### LEADERSHIP:

Dawn, Jenny, and I had a fantastic time at the NCRA Leadership conference. We came away with some really great ideas, a little better understanding of who we are and how we relate to people, and how to help our association function a little better. I think we had a list of 14 committee possibilities that we could implement to make our association a more meaningful investment for our members. We thought about a finance committee, web committee, education committee, mentoring committee, etc. etc. I'll try to have one or both of them write up a little article for the next E-skript and I'll post a more detailed report of my thoughts about the meeting soon.

The weekend was topped off by a fantastic casino night where Dawn won a great wine basket and I won **TWO registration fees for Boot Camp**, which I plan to donate to the association – so that means we can either send two folks and not pay registration, or send FOUR for the price of two registration-wise. It's a \$200 value. (I had also tried for the single-malt scotch, but this prize is MUCH more useful!)

### EDUCATION:

Jan McElhaney of LCC has requested our assistance in providing mentoring to the students enrolled at the school. We'd love to reinstate the **mentoring committee**. If you're interested either in chairing the committee or being a mentor – you don't have to physically meet your student necessarily, but just be there for them online and help them through the rough spots and celebrate with them when they achieve – let me know and I'll be sure to get students and working reporters hooked up. I'm sure we all remember how helpful it was to have someone to talk to who had actually “been there, done that” and could put things in perspective when we needed it.

*New Class at LCC – INTRO TO CART* – will be offered in the spring semester. Please contact Ms. Jan at her email address ([jmcelhaney@lenoircc.edu](mailto:jmcelhaney@lenoircc.edu)) for more information. Registration for spring semester begins **THIS WEEK!!!** (11/28) I believe that they're working on the Voice Over Internet Protocol, so you may be able to take this program via the internet – **HOWEVER**, please contact Jan for all questions regarding the program.

## **MEETINGS:**

We have some tentative ideas for our spring meeting – mark your calendars for **mid April** of next year. We're hoping to make it specifically a training weekend. Committee chair Briana Nesbit and committee members Carol Adkins and Cheryl Nuccio will be working to put the event together.

Also, **Eclipse** users – A group of folks from the Charlotte area are attempting to put together an **information exchange** of sorts for **January of 2006**. At this point, the group is trying to get CEU information from NCRA. As soon as they have information I'll send it out in a quick E-skript mini.

Next year's NCRA midyear is **March 30/April 2 in Nashville**. Folks, this is right around the corner from us. I would highly recommend attending – you get so charged up. Plus, the venue can't be beat – the Opryland Hotel! I've not yet heard if there's going to be an opportunity for us to get tickets to the Grand Ol' Opry, but I'll keep my ears open.

## **TESTING:**

Thanks to all the folks who assisted at the November test in Kinston. We had an excellent turnout for the CRR! Two students assisted as proctors – they considered it an incredible tool for them – they're in their final speeds and plan on taking the RPR in Spring, and now they have an idea what to expect.

**ALSO – LCC has asked if they could host testing in the spring** (in addition to our Hickory site) and NCRA has said that it would not be a problem, so long as we had enough people to man the testing site. So far, Jan McElhaney has agreed to be Chief Examiner and we've had a couple of volunteers for the eastern site. Keep your eyes open for registration packets – they usually come out early January with an early March deadline.

For those planning to test in Hickory, Lisa Nedrow Garrison and Cheryl Nuccio agreed at our last meeting to host the test again. Thanks, ladies!

## **JOINDER:**

At the meeting in Charlotte, we broached the subject about the possibility of joining all three associations and merging them into one more cohesive unit. As a result of our request, we have a group of folks from all the associations who will work with a mediator to discuss feasibility. Our representatives are Carol Adkins and Jenny Carroll. I've attached, with permission of the author, an article that was presented in NCVRA's newsletter, which outlines how the meeting will proceed. Anyone who wishes to attend may do so, and as soon as we have firm dates, I'll be happy to pass on the information via email.

## A Question Of Joinder

*Allen McClung, NCVRA Vice-President*

At the Fall Meeting of the NCVRA, AOCR, and the NCCRA, in Charlotte, North Carolina, NCVRA members were informed of an overture by NCCRA to combine our state associations into one group. Discussion was had about this, and the membership voted to form a committee to explore how such a combination would work and to report back to the membership at our Spring 2006 meeting.

After that meeting, NCVRA President Jennifer Knight asked me to facilitate a meeting between the machine and voice writers associations to explore the idea of joining forces. Since that request, several e-mails have been exchanged between the presidents of the associations and myself in an effort to determine who should be on the committee, what kinds of questions need to be addressed, and a number of other procedural matters. The following is a summary of the plans to date.

At this time, I am seeking at least two volunteers from the membership to serve on the committee. The ideal volunteer, though they may have a pro or con opinion personally, will be able to have an open mind and fairly consider other opinions, but not be afraid to share their opinion.

My function is to help the committee define overall goals and specific objectives. Secondly, I will help the group use time efficiently and reach quality decisions. My role is to guide the process. As a facilitator I do not participate in substance of the process. In other words, ideas, solutions, compromises and conclusions come from the committee members.

These are some of the questions to be considered:

- Should NCVRA, NCCRA, and AOCR join memberships into one group?
- What is the gain for each organization in solving the problems of joining memberships?
- How will the individual personally benefit if we solve the problem?
- Is there adequate information to make a decision/recommendation? Is more homework needed to be done?
- What are some guidelines for cooperative and supportive meeting? Participants themselves should write rules. Typical norms include:
  - Be on time
  - Respect other's opinions

- Listening actively
- Debate differences calmly
- Support ideas rather than being judgmental

It is the responsibility of everyone participating--the facilitator(s) and committee members--to enforce the following rules of procedure:

- Respect--for people and process. Deliberations can be hard on ideas so long as they are considerate of people.
- Fairness--equal time for speakers
- Listening--listen to understand
- Openness--to other points of view and to outcome
- Commitment--be present and engaged. No cell-phones or pagers (except for emergency and only on silent signal)
- Timely--begin on time and end on time.
- Focus--no side conversations.

### **MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – JAN MCELHANEY, LCC INSTRUCTOR**

Whoever thought a dyed-in-the-wool Yankee would end up in the Deep South? Well, it happened, folks. From Rhode Island to Florida, Janice and her husband relocated to the itty-bitty place on the map called “Kinston.”

To give you a little bit of Janice’s growing-up years, she was born in Providence, RI, to parents of French descent, the eldest of seven children. She couldn’t speak English until she was five years old. Then she attended an Irish kindergarten.

At the age of six, her family moved to West Greenwich, RI, where her paternal grandparents bought five acres of land. Her dad built a home there for the family.

Her second educational experience – first and second grade – was in a one-room schoolhouse in West Greenwich. In 1947, a whooping cough epidemic affected the entire town. The school was shut down for six months. Following that, she attended St. Vincent de Paul Grammar School from 1948-1954.

After graduation from grammar school – as it was called in those days – Janice attended St. Xavier’s Academy in Providence, RI, for her freshman year. Her only sister was born in the summer of 1954. Following her freshman year at St. “X,” Janice transferred to Coventry High School for the remainder of her high school education.

In 1957, her handicapped brother was born, and he wasn’t expected to live. He was born with the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck and had a cerebral hemorrhage when he was 2 days old. Joe survived and become the force that held the

Dupre family together with love and a closeness that others would envy. Today Joe resides in a group home where he is living independently.

That same year that Joe was born, Janice graduated from Coventry High School as valedictorian of the Class of '58. The highlights of her high school years include being co-author of the high school song that is still sung at football games and other campus events today. Classmates voted her most likely to succeed, and she was a member of the student council.

Being the oldest of seven children, her parents did not expect or desire that she would attend college. However, her thoughts and dreams did not coincide with their plans.

In her high school senior year, she visited various colleges and applied for scholarships. Along with other classmates, she took scholarship tests. She was especially interested in court reporting and teaching. Back in 1955, Janice had observed a live demonstration of court reporting at a school assembly and had never forgotten the "pull" and the "draw" she felt toward that profession.

Guess what? Lo and behold, she was awarded a scholarship to Johnson & Wales Business School in 1958. So she signed up for the Johnson & Wales Court Reporting Program, graduating in April 1961, with top honors.

While in court reporting school, Janice worked full time as a private secretary for a trial attorney. The young attorney she worked for just loved the steno machine, and he frequently asked her to take notes for him. She recorded client interviews, as well as zoning board hearings.

Four months after graduation from business school in 1961, Janice began working as a hearings reporter for Judge Harold S. Arcaro at the State of Rhode Island, Department of Business Regulation. She worked there until her son was born in 1963. During her tenure with that state agency, she met Vincent Murray, Court Reporter *par excellence*. Vinnie took her under his wing, trained her as a freelance reporter, and later she became his business partner. When Vincent Murray retired, she opened her own firm in downtown Providence and later moved the freelance office to Warwick, RI.

Janice passed her Certificate of Proficiency in the early 70s and then passed the WKT and obtained her RPR when it was first instituted in 1976. She also passed two legs of the CM certificate but never passed the JC portion of the merit exam.

Actually, at that time, the test was given in Massachusetts, and she was so busy working in RI, that she opted not to take time out of her schedule to sit again for that test.

In 1981, Janice moved to Vero Beach, Florida. Her parents had retired in Barefoot Bay, Florida, about 30 miles north of Vero Beach on the east coast.

She was hired by Dennis Zambataro and worked in his freelance firm until he moved to Atlanta, GA, in 1988. When she left Zambataro, Janice again became a firm owner/operator of a freelance business and ran JR Reporting until 1999.

Her freelance business was known as JR Reporting. Other entrepreneurial activities included opening a proprietary court reporting school, JM Academy. Janice ran her NCRA-approved school from 1992-1999. From January 1999 until today, she has been with LCC in her present position.

To let you know a little about her personal interests, they include camping, reading, putting together jigsaw puzzles, doll collecting, and bike trekking. Janice and

her husband Roy love to go RV-ing. They take extended trips to visit family and friends whenever they get a chance.

As far as reading is concerned, she is a member of the LCC Book Club on campus and reads anything she can get her hands on – from Christian books to documentaries, mysteries, and historical fiction.

One of her favorite pastimes is collecting dolls. She started collecting over 40 years ago and has over 500 dolls. Some of them are antiques, some are modern – *papier maché*, china, porcelain, composition – you name it. She collects only what appeals to her – mostly for her own enjoyment, not for resale value.

An entire room in her home is filled to the brim with her babies. She does have some bears, but she doesn't really "collect" them. They are just there, sort of an enhancement to the dolls – but claims not to be attached to them!

When you walk into the McElhaney living room, you can always see a jigsaw puzzle underway. Janice likes the 1000-piece ones. The one she's working on now is the Italian Riviera. It's almost done. When it's completed, she will look at it for a few moments, and then break it all up and put it back in the box for another day. She will immediately start a new one. Janice likes to keep a puzzle handy at all times.

Also, when the cooler weather gets here, she'll be on her two-wheel bike going to the assisted living facility to visit her mom. It's only four miles away, and she will ride there any time that she can. Her mom is another big part of her life. Her mom is her best friend, despite mom's failing memory and 88 years of living. Mom lived with the McElhaney's until April of this year when she moved to her new home because she needed 24/7 care. Jan says that she holds mom's hand in my heart even when she can't see her – and the feeling is mutual.

Whenever they can, the McElhaney's hit the road in their RV. They visit their grandkids as much as they can. They have five grandchildren in Florida and four in RI, ranging in age from 21 to 7.

Jan's favorite and best times are spent with her husband. Roy is a house painter by trade and is supposed to be retired. He still keeps his hand in his painting, plus he puts up real estate "For Sale" signs for Century 21 on Vernon Avenue in Kinston. He also is a wonderful cook! He makes spaghetti sauce – with meat and also vegetarian style. He cans pear preserves, tomatoes, and red beets – just to name a few. He roasts whole chickens and many other delicacies. Roy is her soul mate, and she claims that she would be lost without him.

The McElhaney family would not be complete without mentioning their pets, past and present. When they moved to Kinston, they had a little Boston terrier dog, "Sallie." She died in 2001. Then they got "Sir Buddy Cotton," a Maltese.

Nowadays, when they go on a road trip, "Buddy" comes along. He's Roy's shadow, and latches onto Roy like a leach. When Roy is mowing the grass, "Buddy Boy" is at his heels, walking side by side with his Daddy, making sure that he is not left behind.

Janice's favorite time is when her two boys – Dad and "Bud Boo" – come into view when she reaches home at the end of a long, busy day. It is a precious picture to see. As she rounds the final bend in the road and makes a left-hand turn into her driveway, she finds Roy relaxing in a patio chair with Buddy propped up on his lap, gazing expectantly in the distance.

Janice feels that working here in North Carolina has been a wonderful experience, and that only the Good Lord could have sent them to such a fine community. They have met so many special people, and Kinston has made their life complete.

Her wish and dream is that there will always be jobs for proficient machine writers and that there will be people who are able to carry on the profession.

Last but not least, she extends her thanks to you all for allowing her to write a few memoirs in your newsletter.

## **WRAP-UP**

Thanks for taking the time to read this VERY LONG E-Skript. If you have anything you'd like me to add to the December "issue" or if you have information you'd like to get out to the membership promptly, please let me know.

See you next month...

*Tori*