

O-BLAST

July 5, 2011

Hi, everybody:

It's time to start cranking out the O-Blasts again. I have some reminders for everyone. First, you can register for the August NCRA's CRR and RPR test now through July 13, 2011. To register, go to www.NCRAonline.org/certification/testing. If you haven't heard, this is the last CRR test that National will be giving in the straight-material format. National will be going to two-voice testimony starting with the November 2011 test. Wow, good news! As of this writing, we haven't heard if NCRA is going to have any material that we can practice with for the November test. The task force is looking at all of our options, so we'll get that information out to you as soon as we have it.

The Realtime Task Force is having our next training session in Glenwood Springs at the courthouse, on Saturday, August 6, 2011. We need to know who will be attending so that we can let the security personnel at the courthouse know who to expect. If you plan on attending, please let me know ASAP so we can get a good count.

Also, I've included some thoughts from some reporters who passed either the FCRR exam or the NCRA CRR exam this year, describing what they did that helped them to be successful. Maybe there's something in here that will help you.

Here are a couple of them, with more to follow in future O-Blasts.

"I ordered the past tests/speed contest disks from USCRA, and I just wrote it over and over and over again, going back over my writing to look for anything that was translating incorrectly and fixed it. I knew it wasn't a speed issue, so I focused my attention on things that

were stacking, etc. Also, I made briefs for things like task force, DEA, United States, drug interdiction, FBI, and many others...anything that I could think of that would be said in federal courts, and then made sure it was flawless and that it didn't conflict with anything else, and then wrote it as many ways that I could think of." --Sundae Stoa

"My real inspiration was a book I came across entitled "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother," by Amy Chua. The book is about raising children in the Chinese culture. She was very hard on her kids; she didn't accept that failure was a possibility for them. Hard work and more hard work is the answer. It reminded me that the way I became a court reporter to begin with was through hard work and more hard work. Her daughters played the piano, as mine did, and the philosophy drummed into my daughters was every day you miss practice, you lose two days of work. I believe this is true for court reporting as well. We're wiring our brains and to do that you need to lay down connections by repetition. So I decided that I needed to get back to a serious practice schedule, not just once a week with a group or during court. That had not succeeded in the past. I started in October and practiced every day for at least a half an hour (I admit I may have taken a handful of days off). I generally practiced for an hour or more. If I had problems writing something or it wasn't translating consistently, I changed it. I talked to everyone I know who had passed to find out their practice methods and I tried them. Ultimately, I didn't pass with 96%, but I did pass the state level. I'm still waiting to hear on the CRR. And after all this practice I remember why I became a reporter to begin with, and that is I love the writing. I'm taking a slight break in my practice schedule now, because I've got a lot of work and I'm tired, but I'm still practicing every other day." --Beth Ellis

I hope that this will prove to be helpful to you. If anyone else has

ideas, suggestions, thoughts, et cetera, please let me know. I'd love to pass it on.