

O-BLAST FOR OFFICIALS

August 27, 2010

Hello, my fellow officials:

It has been brought to my attention that I have been remiss by failing to mention how we came up with the term "O-Blast" for these newsy articles. As you know, the Colorado Court Reporters Association puts out "E-Blasts" for the members of CCRA and they are sent out every so often via email. The task force decided that we would have an O-Blast for Officials, the "O" standing for Official. So, there you go, that burning question has been answered.

Okay, one test down. How did you feel about it? Did you take it? Are you practicing for November's test? Are you sick and tired of stressing about the test? Such stress, so many nerves! If you're my age (the 50-ish age range), you may remember that old commercial selling a bath product, and their line was, "Calgon, take me away!" Sometimes that's how we feel, isn't it? Ah, if it were so easy.

Did you feel good about August's test? What helped you? Let us know and we can pass that on to others. The great thing about this task force and the O-Blasts is that it is a great conduit to get information to all officials who are in exactly the same boat.

So what's your focus for the next test? Is it practicing more? Do you remember being back in school and you hated sitting next to that person that banged on their keyboard, or who chewed gum during all the tests, or that person who was just totally distracting? Even though we are not in school anymore, we still need the concentration when we are practicing now.

Would it be helpful to get together with other reporters in your district and practice together? Are you someone who prefers to practice by yourself? Touch base with your fellow officials and see what works for each of you.

What I love about the district I work in is lunch time becomes steno-swap time. We eat lunch together quite often, and as we are talking about our day, we always have someone who comes up with a scenario that happened to them that day in court, and

there's always the discussion of, "How would you write [fill in the blank]?" We have the best ideas and have the greatest discussions that come out of these lunches. Someone always comes up with a better way to write some word or phrase that is constantly coming up, which just makes our lives that much easier. Would that be something that your district could do informally during a lunch time?

One of the ideas that has come up during our district meetings is the need for mentor court reporters. Are you interested in being a mentor for a reporter who's trying to pass the RPR test and/or the CRR test? Are you wanting to be mentored? Let us know and we can help put reporters together. If you want to do this informally with reporters in your district, or reporters outside of your district that you can work closely with, then go for it.

The district meetings that we have had so far have been a huge success. The task force has heard from you, your ideas, your thoughts, your frustrations, and your successes. We will continue to do these meetings. Our plan right now is to get together with you at the Spring 2011 Symposium, as well as the Fall 2011 seminar. We will also plan on doing a third regional meeting at some point during the year as well. Thank you to everyone who has attended these meetings thus far. We have really enjoyed your input and feedback!

I was hoping to be able to put together some ideas for prefix/suffix/conflict resolutions as an attachment for this O-Blast, but, alas, am sitting home after just having had my second knee surgery in two months, so I'm unable to get together the attachment I would like to send. So be patient, my fellow reporters, and I will get that put together and sent out.

If you have great ideas for writing prefixes and suffixes, would you pass that on to me and I will pass that on in future O-Blasts? I would love to hear from you.

Please just shoot us an email and keep us posted on your successes, your failures, your frustrations, and your triumphs. We really do want to know what we can do as a task force to help everyone of us succeed!