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Date: June 10, 2007 01:13 PM

Author: Mary Ann Payonk (realrealtime@gmail.com)

Subject: Knowledge is power

Rule 16 of the NCRA Forum Guidelines states: "The promotion of other online message boards is prohibited."

Could someone please tell me exactly why?

Mary Ann Payonk
Washington, DC

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156784)

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Date: June 10, 2007 02:19 PM

Author: Deborah Trujillo (dmtrujillo@yahoo.com)

Subject: Forums

Hi Mary Ann,

This is a little bit of history based on my memory, which isn't as good as it used to be...

Way back when Richard Sherman used to be the "Wizop" of CRForum, then left it to come here to VRF (sometime in the late '90s?), I think everyone thought CRF would die a natural death without him, and I think TPTB at NCRA at the time were perhaps hoping that would drive all the old CRForumers over here. Back then, that rule was enforced, and any post here on VRF that mentioned or had a link to CRF would be edited or removed.

Lo and behold, CRF not only survived but flourished, going through a series of Sysops and, as you know because you're a recent Section Leader, is now owned by the esteemed Jim Barker. (In fact, don't I remember you first coming on CRF years ago and railing against the fact that some CRF users would chastise new participants who chose to use a screen name instead of their real name? I could have sworn that was you.)

I think it's safe to say that times have changed since then and people have been free to mention other boards here at VRF for a long time now. It would be kind of ridiculous not to allow such a thing since everyone now realizes that would be like trying to cover the sun with your finger, and, as you said, knowledge is power! Perhaps it's time to update the rules. Or, if I'm wrong, I'm sure someone will jump in to correct me.

Deborah

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156788)

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Date: June 10, 2007 08:45 PM

Author: Mary Ann Payonk (realrealtime@gmail.com)

Subject: Suggestion to The Powers That Be

Officially delete the rule.

If someone from NCRA cares to explain (1) why it shouldn't be deleted, (2) why it won't be deleted, or (3) the long and drawn-out process of officially doing away with this particular rule, I'm anxious to read every word.

In my opinion, there's absolutely no need to restrict mention of other forums and message boards. If, in fact, NCRA wants reporters to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about ALL things reporting, then they won't restrict mention of or direction to other forums where the flow of information is ... different. That's where I'll leave it. For now. Different.

Deborah, thanks for the acknowledgement of my appointment as Sysop in the Realtime Section of The Court Reporters Forum. I cannot TELL you how absolutely thrilled I was when Jim Barker himSELF extended the invitation to join CRF in an official capacity. If the opportunity presents itself (or perhaps ... perhaps ... I'll create the opportunity), I'll explain

the "why" behind my acceptance. But for now, let me just say that I feel very privileged to have this home base from which to operate. I feel supported in every way, including and perhaps most especially when I comment on very controversial areas.

Because The Court Reporters Forum is a place where reporters come "to share what THEY know and learn what YOU know," even when someone disagrees with me (and I'll get to that head-on in a minute), I feel the CRF is *** THE *** best place for me to get reporters thinking. Again, for emphasis ... Get Reporters Thinking! And once more, for clarification, NOT to get reporters thinking MY way, just get them interested and, yes, if necessary, riled up enough to CARE about what's going on around them.

Preaching to the choir is always nice, because there's not much resistance to those controversial ideas. But I want to reach as many reporters as I can, so it's exposure, viewing of the posts, thoughts, threads, ideas, suggestions, hints, INFORMATION, that matters to me, and I believe the CRF is the very best place for me to concentrate my efforts.

CRF has a very large membership but, more importantly, a HUGE lurker community. And "lurker" is said with the utmost respect, because part of my personal mission is to speak out for reporters who are afraid to speak up for themselves. Many reporters are paralyzed by fear of speaking out against things they know are just plain wrong ... for example, being subject to the whims of vindictive and unethical agency owners and occasionally their hand-picked staff.

People who know me know that even though I'm forced to sometimes tell a story with "Mary Ann" in it, it's NOT about Mary Ann. It's about SHARING knowledge. And you can't share knowledge when you're restricted by rules such as the one we're discussing here. It's not kind of ridiculous, Deborah, it's totally ridiculous to have such a rule in force.

This is my take on the last year, but I feel that NCRA is readying their membership for big-time change in the form of acceptable alternative methods of take-down and change in how we charge for what we do (Case in point: The PACER system).

And not only does NCRA appear to be pushing and encouraging change, I believe they are saying (my take): Listen, people, machine shorthand is just grand, but other technologies can and will take your jobs. We can stick our heads in the sand and not give a bit of validation to those alternative technologies ... or we can come off our high-horse ways and realize that machine shorthand is not the be-all and end-all way to make the record. So if you want to survive as "keeper of the record," you need to arm yourself with knowledge. You need to make informed decisions in your everyday work. And you need to be more tolerant of those alternative technologies, because someday, you may be severely and head-on impacted by them, and then don't come crying to NCRA saying, oh, why didn't you TELL us this would happen. They're telling us.

It may be a small point to some, but it's not to me. NCRA's membership base cannot possibly make informed decisions armed with JUST the knowledge they gain from what's found on the NCRA website and here at the VRF. To prohibit mention of and direction to other websites with that very different flow of information is doing a great disservice to reporters who NEED to know the kind of information that can be found on other forums and message boards.

I have 40 minutes left until the start of The Sopranos finale, so let me just say, Deborah, that

you've got a g-r-e-a-t memory! In my very first post oh, so many years ago, on what was called CompuServe, I signed off with my "MaryAnnRDR" handle, never giving a thought to the fact that someone wouldn't read my post or give serious thought to what I said simply because I didn't sign off with my "real" name. Plus, I thought the "RDR" was pretty self-explanatory, that I was, indeed, a reporter.

While I was warmly greeted after that first post, I was also spanked for not using my full name. And at that time, I wrote a little piece that I'm struggling to find called "Names vs. Handles," and thus was my entry into posting on forums and message boards. And I've come a long way since then ... but I still believe it's not what you say you can do, it's what you can actually do, that matters. And I still believe it's what you say that's important, not whether you sign off with a name or a handle. And both here at the VRF and over at the CRF, names are required, and I follow that rule. But I disagree with it. Mildly, yes, but I do disagree.

I've taken the liberty to use the (small to some, big to me) point of prohibiting reference to other boards on the VRF to make a few statements that will be edited, changed or simply deleted because of this rule. We'll see what happens.

Please join me and other of your fellow reporters at:

The Court Reporters Forum

community.compuserve.com/n/pfx/forum.aspx?nav=start&webtag=ws-crforum

The depoman.com forum

depoman.com/

and

The MSN Court Reporter Assistance forum and message board

groups.msn.com/Courtreporterassistance/_whatsnew.msnw

Mary Ann Payonk

Washington, DC

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156806)

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Date: June 10, 2007 09:21 PM

Author: Laura Van Nostrand ([lajetvioun2 at hotmail dot com](mailto:lajetvioun2@hotmail.com))

In the last issue of the STudent Newsletter from NCRA there was an article that listed several different boards that students were encouraged to check out. Granted, it's not this forum, but it is NCRA. I believe there will be another article in a subsequent issue of the Student Newsletter listing several discussion groups (it was too much to include in one issue.)

I also posted several months ago about advertising about starting a discussion group specifically for studying grammar - with the blessing of the NCRA forum staff - something which I was told ****was inappropriate**** for pursuing on another popular forum (which forum is unimportant.)

I think your point about deleting the rule makes sense, since it doesn't seem to be the prevailing attitude.

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156809)

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Date: June 11, 2007 12:27 PM
Author: Deanna Dean (DeannaRV@cs.com)
Subject: Laura, I'm a bit surprised ...

... to hear that you feel you were "chastised/slapped" for pursuing a grammar study group in "another popular forum." I believe I know which forum and which discussion you are referencing, and, having just gone back and reread it, I fail to see anyplace in the thread in which you were treated in any manner other than professionally and politely.

I'm very interested in being corrected if I'm mistaken, but your remarks on this subject have me wondering just what I'm missing.

Deanna

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156836)

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Date: June 11, 2007 03:10 PM
Author: Deanna Dean (DeannaRV@cs.com)
Subject: Thanks, Laura!

I appreciate your willingness to review your original choice of words. I also fully understand the perils of internet (mis)communication, as well as the feelings that accompany same. Might even be engaging in a bit of hypersensitivity here, myself, huh? (Nah, that would never happen . . .)

Deanna ;-)

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156845)

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Date: June 11, 2007 03:04 PM

Author: Jim Barker (searchmaster.jim@gmail.com)

Subject: Suggestion . . .

Hello, Mary Ann.

"Preaching to the choir is always nice, because there's not much resistance to those controversial ideas. But I want to reach as many reporters as I can, so it's exposure, viewing of the posts, thoughts, threads, ideas, suggestions, hints, INFORMATION, that matters to me . . .

Well said. And your words are backed up by the fact that even though you were gracious enough to accept my invitation to be a sysop in the realtime section of the CRF, you are still found here, expanding upon those issues that lie dear to your heart. That is as it *should* be.

A bit of clarification as to the use of "handles" on the CRF. I own the management contract for the Court Reporters Forum. Even though the CRF is now accessible to anyone with a Web browser, the CRF is still, ultimately, the property of Compuserve. Within my contract is a stipulation that I am forbidden to *require* CRF members to use real names instead of handles, a fact that I make crystal clear in my welcome post to every new member of the CRF. I do go on to say, though, that there are many members who are not comfortable exchanging information with people who use handles instead of their real names, and that that being the case, new members will probably find that using their real names as opposed to handles will result in more responses from other members. In other words, using a real name serves to *enhance* the forum experience, but there is no *requirement* that members use their real names.

You are an asset to the reporting community, Mary Ann Payonk. I am proud of my decision to invite you to function as a member of the CRF staff, and I am tickled pink that you accepted that invitation. We often hear it said that "It's the product, not the method, that counts the most." In that vein, I suggest that it's the *message*, not the *venue*, that is of the greatest importance.

Rock on, Mary Ann! Whether you're holding court on the CRF, the VRF, or the MSN forum, I'm reading *every* word, as are many others.

Sincerely,

Jim

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156844)

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Date: June 11, 2007 02:42 PM

Author: Jim Barker (searchmaster.jim@gmail.com)

Subject: Forums

Hello there!

"I think it's safe to say that times have changed since then and people have been free to mention other boards here at VRF for a long time now."

Indeed, times have changed, Deborah. Just as an aside, I received from the NCRA, a few months ago, an E-mail request that I include a link, on the CRF, that would lead to this forum. I responded immediately to the effect that I would be very happy to include an NCRA forum link on the CRF if the NCRA forum would be so kind as to reciprocate. I never heard back from the NCRA.

Allow me to observe that in no way do I operate the CRF as though we were in *competition* with the NCRA forum. Our respective forums exist for the same primary purpose, actually: to serve the interests of the reporting community. In our respective approaches to that calling, I believe that both the NCRA forum and the CRF are conducting themselves commendably.

Heck, I'm the administrator of the CRF, and yet I hop over here on a pretty regular basis. Why? Because different forums have different personalities, different focuses, different ways of interacting, and different methods for conveying important information to those in the reporting community. It is my conviction that the NCRA forum and the CRF, taken together, serve this community better than if there were *only* the NCRA forum or *only* the CRF.

Have a fine week, everyone! (And thank you very much for your kind words, Deborah.)

Jim

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156842)

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Date: June 10, 2007 08:30 PM

Author: Candis Bradshaw (candisbradshaw@gmail.com)

I've sent a message to Marshall Jorpeland to give the official take on this. :-)

But as Deborah said, we haven't been enforcing that rule for a long time (as has been evident by recent posts about the Depoman and other forums).

:) Candis
Forum staff

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156805)

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Date: June 10, 2007 08:46 PM

Author: Mary Ann Payonk (realrealtime@gmail.com)

Subject: Thank you, Candis!

Thank you so much, Candis! You must have been writing your reply as I was writing mine.

M.A.

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156807)

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Date: June 11, 2007 09:44 AM

Author: Marshall Jorpeland (mjorpeland@ncrahq.org)

Subject: good memory

Deborah's memory is very good. The nature of and expectations surrounding online communication have evolved a lot since the days of 300 baud modems and Section 7 of the LawSIG on CompuServe. As others have noted, this particular rule has taken a place alongside those 'it's illegal to sell cornflakes on Sunday' kinds of laws and will be gone from the next rendition.

Marshall Jorpeland
NCRA Director of Communications

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156830)

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Date: June 11, 2007 02:34 PM

Author: G. Allen Sonntag, CCR, CRR, RDR, FAPR (gallens@excite.com)

Thank you, Marshall. Good Job!

GAllen, remembering LawSIG, Section 7 very well.... where it all began.

Allen

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156841)

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Date: June 11, 2007 03:19 PM

Author: Jim Barker (searchmaster.jim@gmail.com)

Subject: good memory

Hello, Marshall.

As others have noted, this particular rule has taken a place alongside those 'it's illegal to sell cornflakes on Sunday' kinds of laws and will be gone from the next rendition.

A wise policy revision, that.

Whether on the VRF or the CRF, our primary purpose is the same: to serve the reporting community. Let us continue fulfilling that purpose, via our respective forums, with the kind of dedication and community spirit that best serves the interests of all.

Have a fine week, Marshall.

Jim

(http://forums.verbatimreporters.com/Index.cfm?CFApp=3&Message_ID=156846)

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Date: June 12, 2007 04:59 PM

Author: Marshall Jorpeland (mjorpeland@ncrahq.org)

Hi, Jim,

Hope all is well up your way. My role is a little different here than yours is at CRF, but I certainly share your optimistic and constructive viewpoint. Cheers to you and Lynda!

Marshall

Marshall Jorpeland

NCRA Director of Communications

mjorpeland@ncrahq.org

703-556-6272

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