Message from the Chair  
Gregory Finch

CRB Plans to Educate Consumers

The difference between a goal and a hope is in the planning. We all hope to achieve greater things, but we can’t reach a goal without a road map of sorts. The Court Reporters Board (CRB) has captured its goals in the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan to facilitate its ongoing mission to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public by ensuring the integrity of judicial records through oversight of the court reporting profession.

One thing I have learned since joining the CRB is how widespread the misconception of court reporting is. Perhaps it’s the name of the license itself, “Certified Shorthand Reporter.” One can see how someone would question why in the world anyone would need a license to write shorthand. The word “shorthand” still evokes a mental image of a small notebook, a pen, and rows of little squiggly lines. What an injustice to the profession of court reporting. Even setting aside the mechanics of writing the record, the court reporter has to be familiar with courtroom and deposition procedure, English, medical and legal vocabulary, and know hundreds of laws pertaining to reporting and producing a verbatim transcript.

This misconception is crippling the CRB’s ability to achieve some of its goals, and I have challenged the CRB and its staff to come up with a consumer information communications plan that will help us overcome this obstacle. We cannot be heard if decision makers lack knowledge of the role of court reporting in the legal system.

My challenge to the court reporting community is to continue to strive for excellence. As an experienced litigator, I know more than most about the incredible job that reporters have. I’ve worked with a great number of very good reporters, but I remember every single time I have worked with a bad one. I urge licensees to keep their skills sharp, stay abreast of changes in law, and work ethically.

The complete Strategic Plan is available on our website, courtreportersboard.ca.gov. The coming year promises to be a busy time for the CRB.
National Total Immersion Pilot Program

The First Quarter Report of the National Court Reporters Foundation Total Immersion Pilot Program was released July 6, 2009. A skills-only training program intended to determine what role machine time plays in a student’s success or failure, participating students have been immersed in a curriculum that focuses purely on theory and steno machine time and sets a goal of 225 words per minute per student within one year.

The pilot began March 16, 2009, with 15 highly motivated, technologically savvy students. Throughout the first quarter, the students typically learned two theory lessons per day and were given regular unit evaluations. Tests included numbers, word lists, transcribing steno into English, and speed-building. Students who scored less than 90 percent were required to go back, review, and retake the test. Those who had difficulty with a theory principle were given remedial review and tutored until they were back on track. All students were expected to spend at least eight hours per day in class or practice sessions.

The first quarter ended on June 5, 2009. Following a week-long break, the second quarter began June 15th. Upon completion of the first quarter, the National Court Reporters Association Total Immersion Task Force met to discuss the students’ progress against the established benchmarks. As a result of the students’ success in the first quarter, the second quarter began with no adjustments. The second quarter runs through September 4, 2009, with a benchmark of 120 words per minute.

For additional information on the Total Immersion Pilot Program, go to ncraonline.org.

Spring 2009 Compliance Review Site Visits

Court Reporters Board staff conducted site visits at Bryan College, Los Angeles and Cerritos College, Norwalk this past May, completing Phase I of each school’s compliance review. Phase I requires that extensive program information be submitted to the CRB regarding instruction practices and compliance requirements and that a follow-up site visit be conducted to verify the documentation. The visit also allows the team to review student files and faculty qualifications, tour the facilities (including the library and learning resource center), and interview students on a voluntary basis about their experience in the program.

School administrators at both sites were very helpful and responsive to inquiries regarding specific program attributes. All of the students interviewed were enthusiastic about their court reporting school experiences, and many had personal stories to share about how their lives had been enriched. The CRB team would like to thank the faculty and students at both sites for their preparation, energy, and participation. Their efforts made both reviews a success!

Court Reporters Board Welcomes Licensee to Helm

Yvonne K. Fenner, Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) 10909, took over as executive officer of the Court Reporters Board on January 2, 2009. Fenner is the first California CSR to hold the position. She initially began working with the Court Reporters Board as a licensee member of the Board appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2006. She moved from a board member to a half-time staff analyst where she was liaison to the Board and various committees.

Fenner holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration and Spanish. Her work experience has ranged from selling English as a Second Language textbooks for Oxford University Press in Mexico City to working as a field coordinator for a national seminar production company. She went on to spend almost ten years in association management before discovering the field of court reporting. She became licensed in California in 1996 and has spent her court reporting years in the freelance field.

Being active in local, state, and national industry associations has allowed Fenner to gain an appreciation for issues facing court reporters at all levels. She is a past president of not only the Northern California Court Reporters Association, but also the California Court Reporters Association.

“I’m going to miss reporting, but the chance to add my knowledge and experience to support the Board as they deal with some tough issues just seemed like an opportunity too good to be missed,” noted Fenner.
Backup Audio Media Best Practices Approved

The Backup Audio Media (BAM) Task Force recommendations for best industry practices were approved at the March 13, 2009 CRB meeting. Initially only a concept for exploration in the 2007 Strategic Plan, the CRB is proud to present the following BAM guidelines for your professional use.

COURT REPORTERS BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
BACKUP AUDIO MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

Backup Audio Media (BAM) is the generic term for any audio recording, including the audio synchronization tool built into computer-aided translation (CAT) software.

For the purposes of these guidelines, “party” is defined as a named person or entity in a case and/or their attorney.

The duties and responsibilities of the certified shorthand reporter (CSR) regarding preservation of the official record are not changed by the use of BAM.

Stenographic notes are the official record.

- It is the obligation of the CSR to interrupt the proceedings when the record is in jeopardy due to the speed of the testimony, unintelligible and/or simultaneous speakers, et cetera.
- It is the duty of the CSR to read back from the stenographic notes, which are the official record. Playback of the recording in lieu of readback is not allowed.
- CSRs must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal rules and/or laws to ensure the integrity of the record, including California Penal Code 632.
- When a backup recording is made by a CSR at his or her own discretion and not otherwise ordered for preservation by any federal, state, or local law and/or rule, it is the personal property of the CSR and there is no public entitlement to these recordings.
- The BAM file may be provided at the request of an attorney and/or a party to a proceeding at the discretion of the CSR.
- If the BAM is going to be released, the following best practices should be used.

Providing BAM at the request of an attorney or party to a proceeding:

1. If the BAM is made available to any court reporting firm or party in a case, it is the responsibility of the CSR to ensure that no confidential or off-the-record discussions are contained in the released recording.
2. If the CSR decides to release the BAM, the CSR and/or reporting firm should release a copy and not the original (unless ordered otherwise by a court). The original should be maintained for no less than one year.
3. If the CSR and/or reporting firm makes available a copy of the BAM to one party, the same offer must be made at the same time to the other party(ies) to the proceeding.
4. CSRs and/or reporting firms should check all applicable local, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations to ensure that creating a BAM is in compliance with those laws, rules, and regulations, including, but not limited to, California Penal Code 632, which prohibits eavesdropping on or recording confidential communications.
5. If the CSR and/or reporting firm offers BAM as a value-added service, all parties should be advised prior to the start of the proceeding.
6. If the transcript or any portion thereof is designated confidential or sealed, the BAM file shall be clearly labeled as such.

www.CourtReportersBoard.ca.gov
New CRB School Curriculum Review Task Force

In keeping with the 2009 - 2011 Strategic Plan, the CRB is in the process of creating a School Curriculum Review Task Force. While updates to the court reporting curriculum are made on an as-needed basis, a comprehensive curriculum review has not been conducted in several years.

The charge of the Task Force will be to conduct a complete review of the CRB codes and regulations pertaining to school curriculum, evaluating them for continued relevancy and efficacy in maintaining competency of the court reporting profession. Once the review is complete, the Task Force will submit recommended regulation changes to the Board for consideration.

Ms. Toni O’Neill, Court Reporter Supervisor for the Riverside Superior Court, has agreed to chair the Task Force. “The scope of work ahead of us is daunting; however, it is exciting to be part of a process that will have a positive impact on the future success of court reporters, ensuring their education will continue to put them at the top of their field,” said Ms. O’Neill. “A solid educational foundation is the cornerstone to a successful career, and curriculum is a key component of that education,” she added.

For more information on the Task Force, contact Ms. Miranda-Bursell at Julia_Miranda-Bursell@dca.ca.gov.

Examination Statistics

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<tr>
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<td>First Timers</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
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* Could change after appeals.
Legislative Update

The CRB is currently tracking the following bills:

SB 377 Courts: Judgeships
   Corbett
SB 544 Civil Law: Omnibus Bill
   Committee on Judiciary
SB 638 Regulatory Boards: Operations
   Negrete McLeod
SB 819 Professions and Vocations
   Committee on Business, Professions, & Economic Development
AB 5 Civil Discovery: Electronic Discovery Act
   Evans (Coauthors: Feuer, Tran, Corbett, & Harman)
AB 48 Private Postsecondary Education: California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009
   Portantino & Niello (Principal Coauthor: Negrete McLeod)
AB 170 Court Reporters: Rough Draft Transcript
   Mendoza
AB 176 Maintenances of the Codes
   Silva
AB 250 Criminal Procedure: Trials: Timing
   Miller
AB 484 Franchise Tax Board: Professional or Occupational Licenses
   Eng
AB 996 Courts: Continuous Hours of Operation
   Anderson
AB 1168 Professions and Vocations
   Carter
AB 1461 Shorthand Reporting
   Ruskin (Coauthor: Feuer)

For more information on specific language, latest amendments, and the current status of a given bill, go to http://leginfo.ca.gov/.

How Are We Doing?

The Court Reporters Board recently added a Customer Service Satisfaction Survey to the website. Now whenever you have contact with the CRB, please be sure to fill out the survey letting us know about your experience. Your feedback is important to us. The survey can be accessed at http://www.courtreportersboard.ca.gov/formspubs/cssurvey.pdf.

Occupational Analysis

Thank you to all who participated in the Occupational Analysis!

This past spring, surveys were mailed to 2,000 CSRs across California with the intent of identifying the types of skills and knowledge currently used most on the job. The surveys are now being analyzed by the Department of Consumer Affairs’ Office of Professional Examination Services. Findings will ultimately become the basis for future CSR exams.

Wanted: CSR Subject Matter Experts

Are you a CSR licensee in good standing? Are you currently working in the court reporting profession? If you answered yes to these questions, we need you!

Exam Development Workshops are taking place throughout the year. These two-day workshops, facilitated by the Office of Professional Examination Services, take place on Fridays and Saturdays in Sacramento. All participants receive $150.00 per day to cover meals and incidentals. Travel expenses are reimbursed, including hotel charges for those who reside more than 50 miles from the meeting site. Training specific to the subject of the workshop is provided at each event. You bring your field knowledge and we’ll show you how we translate it into an exam!

A list of the specific workshops and dates are listed at the end of this newsletter. For more information, or if you are interested in participating, please contact Kim Kale at (877) 327-5272.
Frequently Asked Questions and Little Known Facts

Q. There’s a rumor going around that I need to put my CSR number on my business cards. Is that true?

A. Yes. That’s not a rumor, it’s a fact. According to the California Code of Regulations Section 2406, a reporter shall list his license number on the cover page and certificate page of each deposition, court transcript, or transcript of other legal proceedings. The license number shall also be included on any and all presentments to the public including but not limited to advertising, solicitation, business cards, stationery and telephone listings.

Q. I’m an official reporter out on disability and I’m being asked to produce transcripts. What do I do?

A. Government Code Section 69955(g) requires you to turn over your notes in the case of an absence of more than 30 days. (h) gives the court reporter who took the notes the first opportunity to transcribe them.

Q. When reporting a videotaped deposition, is it proper to report and transcribe the comments of the videographer, or should the written record be restricted to what counsel and the deponent say?

A. California Code of Civil Procedure Section 2025.340 provides guidance. In pertinent part, Subsection (h) reads:

“The deposition shall begin with an oral ... statement on camera ... that includes the [video] operator’s name and business address; the name and address of the operator's employer; the date, time, and place of the deposition; the caption of the case; the name of the deponent; a specification of the party on whose behalf the deposition is being taken; and any stipulations by the parties.”

Subsections (i), (j), (k), and (l) specify other matters which must be included in the record. Historically such announcements are made by the videographer. Thus, to ensure a complete record, it is incumbent upon a CSR to report verbatim in shorthand writing all utterances of the videographer made during a deposition.

Q. I just moved into California from out of state. How long do we need to keep our notes?

A. California Code of Civil Procedure Section 2025.510(e) requires stenographic notes of depositions to be retained by the reporter for not less than eight years if no transcript is produced and not less than one year from the date on which the transcript is produced. As far as notes from court, California Government Code 69955(e) tells us that notes may be destroyed upon the order of the court after ten years from the taking of the notes in criminal proceedings and after five years in all other proceedings except for notes that report proceedings in capital felony cases, including the preliminary hearing. No reporting notes in a capital felony case proceeding shall be destroyed until such time as the Supreme Court on request by the court clerk authorizes the destruction.

Q. I know my license expires on the last day of my birth month; however, there’s a box on the license renewal form that shows the delinquent fee if it’s received 30 days after my license expires. That’s just a 30-day grace period so I can continue to work, correct?

A. Business & Professions Code Section 8016 states that no person shall engage in the practice of shorthand reporting unless that person is the holder of a certificate in full force and effect issued by the board. That means you may NOT work with a delinquent license.

As a side note, the CRB is not required to send out the renewal notices, but does so as a courtesy. If a renewal form is returned because the licensee is no longer at that address, there will be no further attempts by the CRB to make contact. It’s not just simply a good idea to keep a current address with the Board, it’s the law under B&P Code Section 8024.6(b).

Spread the Word

DID YOU KNOW... you can receive CRB Today, the Board’s electronic newsletter, and other updates on CRB activities by signing up for the subscription service at https://www.dca.ca.gov/webapps/crb/subscribe.php? The Board is no longer mailing hard copies of the newsletter to licensees, so please help us get the word out by sharing this information with fellow reporters.
Kaitlyn Lancaster is an 18-year-old court reporting student attending school at South Coast College in Orange. On the fast track, she has only been enrolled in the program for about a year and yet she is nearly finished with her requirements. She suggested that she might want to give it a try. So far, she loves her classes and her instructor, and finds learning shorthand to be fun because it is like learning another language and it is helping her become even more proficient at texting.

“I’m excited about being a court reporter because it is different than most jobs. I have always found the judicial system to be interesting, but I knew I couldn’t be an attorney because I just wouldn’t be able to stand arguing all day. This profession will allow me to participate in the process in a way that suits my personality,” said Kaitlyn.

Once licensed, Kaitlyn hopes to go to work for a court reporting company doing depositions. However, her ultimate goal is to open her own firm some day.

Kaitlyn Lancaster grew up around the court system with a father and grandfather who are attorneys and a family friend who is a court reporter. She loves court-based TV programs and finds real-life court cases to be fascinating. She decided to get into the court reporting field after her mom suggested that she might want to give it a try. So far, she loves her classes and her instructor, and finds learning shorthand to be fun because it is like learning another language and it is helping her become even more proficient at texting.

“To Be or Not Too Be...What’s the Difference?”

“Why do court reporters have to learn grammar rules when testimony needs to be recorded verbatim?” This is a common grievance from students struggling to learn the finer points of English in preparation for the CSR exam.

While grammar may seem to be an extraneous qualification for court reporting, it can actually make or break the intended meaning of given testimony. “You certainly can’t change what someone says while testifying,” said CRB Executive Officer Yvonne Fenner, “however, even if you record statements exactly, the wrong placement of a comma could change the entire meaning of a sentence. It is difficult to get punctuation correct if you don’t know about basic sentence structure, thus the emphasis on grammar. Additionally, it’s almost impossible to proofread without an excellent command of the English language.”

Students also often question the importance of CSR vocabulary requirements. Fenner continued, “It is important to comprehend as much of the testimony as possible as it makes reporting an easier task. Even if you can’t remember the precise meaning of a word, prior exposure to it before hearing it in the middle of an oral proceeding will help prevent hesitation that may create an interruption in concentration while writing.”

From a business standpoint, it is also important to remember that recorded testimony is kept along with the name of the court reporter who took it. Those documents are often viewed by numerous people. Producing the highest quality product possible will help others see you as a professional, thereby promoting you as a valuable reporter.
CSR Profile: Lynda Goddard

Lynda Goddard, a resident of Redondo Beach, Los Angeles County, was licensed in November 1994 after attending South Coast College of Court Reporting, now located in Anaheim. Upon graduating, Lynda began court reporting with a single firm doing depositions. Her career has since evolved, leading her into freelancing, which allows her to work with various firms throughout the country that are conducting depositions in the Los Angeles area. She enjoys freelancing for many companies because the deposition subject matter is so varied.

When asked how she decided to get into the court reporting profession, Lynda said, “It is actually quite the family affair.” She went on to explain that one of her sisters went to court reporting school right after high school. Another sister also decided to get into court reporting after her children were grown. Upon the second sister’s decision, Lynda felt she too was ready to make a change. So, she left corporate life in her 30s and joined her sister at South Coast College. She was drawn to court reporting as a profession because it is based on self-reliance. “The corporate world is more about team building and interdependancy rather than individual responsibility. I really appreciate being able to work independently and the flexibility that deposition reporting affords,” said Lynda.

In addition to her work, Lynda also participates in industry issues through local, state, and national court reporting associations. She initially got involved in the advocacy aspects of her profession when, as a brand new reporter, she was asked to fill in on a local board after a member had resigned. “I have been hooked ever since,” Lynda continued, “Working with industry associations allows one to make a difference. In a world where we are so removed from the political process as individuals, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to make an impact in a field I love and in which I believe.” Lynda’s political activism is most often expressed through the legislative process. She also has given seminars and written articles on CSR obligations and on the importance of knowing the laws pertaining to those obligations.

Lynda is an ardent supporter of the Court Reporters Board, believing that protection of the consumer and the judicial system through the assurance of an accurate record and professionalism in the industry ultimately benefits the individual court reporter. Lynda added, “I drop everything whenever the threat of eliminating the CRB looms, which seems to be every couple of years. It is a self-funded board, so eliminating it does not result in a savings to taxpayers. It administers the Transcript Reimbursement Fund for indigent litigants, and ensures equal protection under the law in requiring minimum competency for those protecting the record.”

“Lynda’s knowledge of the codes applicable to court reporters is amazingly extensive. She has been instrumental in our exam development workshops,” noted Kim Kale, CRB’s exam analyst.

Late Breaking Board Member News

Court Reporters Board Member Toni O’Neill regretfully will not be reappointed for a second term. The CRB has been informed that this change is the result of Governor Schwarzenegger’s desire to take the CRB in a different direction. While the Board still has a quorum, Ms. O’Neill’s licensee perspective and knowledge of the court reporting profession will be missed.
**Court Reporters Board of California - Citations & Fines Issued**  
**November 2008 - July 2009**

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<th>RESPONDENT NAME - CITY</th>
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<td>Bushaw, Joanne C. - Monterey, CA</td>
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<td>Business &amp; Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct.</td>
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<td>Caruthers, Kristine - Costa Mesa, CA</td>
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The Citation and Fines remain posted for one year from the date initially issued. To find out whether a specific licensee has ever been issued a Citation and Fine prior to the date shown, or to obtain further information on a specific Citation and Fine, please contact the Board office toll-free at 1-877-3-ASK-CRB (1-877-327-5272). The above respondents’ Citation and Fines that reflect “Satisfied” have been satisfactorily resolved. Payment of a fine is not an admission to the violation.

**Court Reporters Board of California - Disciplinary Actions**

The disciplinary actions listed below cover the period of time from November 2008 to July 2009. To find out whether a licensee has had disciplinary action prior to November 2008, or to obtain further information on specific disciplinary action for a licensee listed below, please contact the Board office toll-free at 1-877-3-ASK-CRB (1-877-327-5272).

A disciplinary action is a formal proceeding that includes the basis for the action sought against the licensee. These disciplinary actions are held in front of an Administrative Law Judge and allow for attorney, testimony, and challenges as provided in the legal system. The administrative law judge then issues a decision that the Board can accept, reject, or send back for additional information. Disciplinary cases can result in license revocation, suspension, and/or a probationary status with conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONDENT NAME - CITY</th>
<th>LICENSE NO.</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>EFFECTIVE DATE</th>
<th>CHARGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapa, Sandi - Hayward</td>
<td>11031</td>
<td>Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order: 3 years probation; $2,000 cost recovery.</td>
<td>04/08/2009</td>
<td>Business and Professions Code Section 8025(d): Gross negligence, incompetence, unprofessional conduct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris, Diana - Sanger</td>
<td>12451</td>
<td>Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order: 2 years probation; $4,734 cost recovery.</td>
<td>04/06/2009</td>
<td>Business and Professions Code Sections 8025(d): Unprofessional conduct; 8025(e): Repeated unexcused failure...to transcribe notes of cases on appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bentley, Elayne - Riverside</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DENIED</td>
<td>Decision and Order; license denied.</td>
<td>04/06/2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COURT REPORTERS BOARD OF CALIFORNIA - DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS PENDING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONDENT NAME - CITY</th>
<th>LICENSE NO.</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>EFFECTIVE DATE</th>
<th>CHARGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goldsmith, Hope - San Diego</td>
<td>12794</td>
<td>Accusation</td>
<td>03/03/2009</td>
<td>Business and Professions Code Sections 8025(d): Unprofessional conduct; 8025(e): Repeated unexcused failure...to transcribe notes of cases on appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heard, Patrick - San Francisco</td>
<td>11055</td>
<td>Accusation</td>
<td>08/27/2008</td>
<td>Business and Professions Code Sections 8025(d), Unprofessional conduct; 8025(f), Loss or destruction of stenographic notes...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander, Gary - Fort Worth, TX</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Statement of Issues</td>
<td>07/28/2009</td>
<td>Business and Professions Code Sections 8025(i): ...disciplinary action against a license...by another state; 8025(d): Unprofessional conduct; 8025(e): Failure to transcribe notes...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BOARD CALENDAR

BOARD MEETING &
CSR DICTATION EXAMINATION
OCTOBER 16, 2009
Sacramento
Red Lion Inn
1401 Arden Way

CSR DICTATION EXAMINATION
FEBRUARY 19, 2010
Los Angeles
Sheraton Gateway LAX
6101 W. Century Boulevard

CSR EXAM WORKSHOPS
Sacramento
2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 265

EXAM CONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP FOR MARCH 2010 EXAM
OCTOBER 9 - 10, 2009

PASSING SCORE WORKSHOP FOR MARCH 2010 EXAM
NOVEMBER 13 - 14, 2009

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE RECLASSIFY ITEM BANK TO NEW EXAM PLAN
JANUARY 15 - 16, 2010

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ITEM WRITING/REVIEW WORKSHOP
FEBRUARY 12 - 13, 2010

ENGLISH RECLASSIFY ITEM BANK TO NEW EXAM PLAN
MARCH 5 - 6, 2010

CRB* TODAY

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Katie Palmieri, Senior Writer