

# JAMES W. KALANA WINS 1997 DSA

by Julie Matt Graeber (1996 DSA Winner)

**The** Distinguished Service Award is the highest honor the Colorado Court Reporters Association can give to one of its members. It goes to a reporter who has shown outstanding leadership and service to our profession and our Association. This year's recipient of the DSA was just such a person, James W. Kalana.

**Jim** has been a member of CCRA for 35 years and a reporter for 36 1/2 years. He has served our Association as a director, vice-president, president-elect and was president in 1977. He's been active on the state testing committee, officials committee, spring banquet, fall seminar, public relations, students and fundraising committees.

**In** 1992, he received the Colorado State Judicial Department's Honorary Service Award.

**He's** written numerous articles for Ramblings in his 35 years with CCRA and has given seminars on such topics as English usage and professionalism.

**He** grew up in Lubbock, Texas. He married his high school sweetheart. He and his wife Wanda have raised 6 children and have 35 grandchildren. Prior to becoming a court reporter, he farmed, raised potatoes, grain, hogs and sheep. He's been a commodities broker and a radio announcer.

**At** the age of 30 he began reporting school and graduated in 11 months. He worked as an official reporter in Alamosa from 1961 until his retirement in June of 1996. Since that time he's been freelancing in the Alamosa area.

**One** of the judges he worked for, Judge Kuenhold, has this to say about Jim:

"I have no secretary, no division clerk and no law clerk. Jim serves as eyes and ears, secretary, advisor, confidant, intermediary, and buffer to the word. He maintains our calendar, reminds counsel of impending deadlines, and checks on the status of settlement negotiations. He corrects my grammar and punctuation (and sometimes my memory as to

facts) on opinion and orders. And occasionally he leans his head back as I speak from the bench, with the silent message: 'Are you sure you want to say what you are about to say?' We spend a lot of time traveling between our six courts. The intellectual exchange on our trips covers every subject. Because we have radically different perspectives, the exchanges are rich, thoughtful, and challenging, but never heated. Jim is a Renaissance Man: self-educated, independent, pious, a learner for life, as the educators like to say these days."

**He** has overcome cancer, quadruple bypass surgery and almost constant angina.

**Judge** Kuenhold also had this to say about Jim:

"The second year we worked together, we were listening to motions in a criminal case in Del Norte. Del Norte is 35 miles from Alamosa where we both live. I looked down and saw that Jim appeared pale. When the district attorney finished with the witness, Jim asked me: 'Could we take a minute?' Of course, I did so. As we walked into chambers, Jim sat down, looked at me and said matter of factly, 'John, I don't want to alarm you, but I'm having a heart attack.' I told the clerk to call an ambulance. Jim said, 'No, that's not necessary. I can finish the docket. Just give me a minute.' I said we were going to the Del Norte Hospital. He argued that if I insisted that he go to the hospital, at least I could take him to the Alamosa Hospital because he didn't want to make Wanda drive all the way to Del Norte. The clerk called the hospital to get them ready. I drove him as fast as I could to the Del Norte Hospital. All the way to the hospital, Jim alternately expressing his pain and his disgruntlement that I would not listen to him. I carried him into the Del Norte Hospital. Fortunately, he is still with us today."

**Jim** is a very active member of his church, the La Puente Organization, which is a homeless shelter in Alamosa, District Chairman for the San Luis Valley Boy Scouts (he took over 200 Boy Scouts to the International World Jamboree in Japan), Valley Chairman for the American Heart Association, and has served as secretary of the San Luis Valley Bar Association.

**Jim Kalana, a man of incredible integrity,  
the 1997 Distinguished Service Award  
Winner!!**