

The Letter

of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association

September 2000



AATIA celebrates 15th Anniversary and International Translators Day

Saturday, September 30^{th} brings two reasons to celebrate: International Translators Day and AATIA's 15^{th} Anniversary. An international theme party at the Main Building of St. Edward's University will mark this occasion. The program will begin with bilingual readings of translated literature [see related article] and a book exhibit and will continue with food, music, and merriment.

AATIA members and their guests are invited to attend this special event and bring an international dish to share as part of an international potluck dinner. Guests are also invited to bring international music on tape or CD to play during this event.

Date: Saturday, September 30, 2000

Time: 6:00 to 10:00 PM

Place: St. Edward's University, Main Building, Maloney Room

Admission fee: Covered dish

In addition to your taped music, AATIA member Pati McLean and the Combo Internacional will provide live music for your dancing pleasure. \bigstar



St. Jerome's Day shines spotlight on literary translators

On International Translators Day, September 30, AATIA's literary translators will present bilingual readings of their own and favorite translations to kick off an evening of celebration for AATIA's 15th anniversary.

The featured reader will be Austin's very own Leslie Willson, former American Translators Association President. Willson will read from his latest translation, Gerhard Koepf's *Piranesi's Dream*, which is being published by George Braziller in September. This is a fictional autobiography of Giambattista Piranesi, the seventeenth-century Italian architect and engraver, best known for his series of prison dungeons fantasies, the Carceri.

Other program highlights include Liliana Valenzuela, reading from her translation into Spanish of Sandra Cisneros's *Woman Hollering Creek*; Michele Aynsworth, reading from *The Mad Toy* by Roberto Arlt, to be published next year by Duke University Press; and Ingrid Lansford, reading from *Aus den Geleisen* by Austrian novelist Inge Merkel, who is known for her irony—including at her own expense.

To round out the readings,
AATIA's Literary Special Interest
Group will exhibit and sell notable
and recently published literary
translations, as well as literary magazines that feature translation, so bring
your checkbooks as well as your
covered dish! ★

Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association

http://www.aatia.org

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Take care with confidentiality agreements

by J. Henry Phillips

One of the traps I've noticed is that some agencies cobble together a laundry-list of terms and conditions—everything from putting up your fistborn as surety to accepting assignments while extending them unlimited credit plus powers of unilaterally paying nothing—and calling that a "confidentiality agreement." This is clearly dishonest use of the English language, but if you turn it down, rumors can then circulate that you refused to sign the "confidentiality agreement," not the assignment in surety of your firstborn, etc.

Attached is an adaptation of a *real* confidentiality agreement [next page] that one of the largest energy companies in America asked me to sign while interpreting one of their meetings. Note that it *only* covers confidentiality; it is not a vehicle for other contractual terms camouflaged as confidentiality-related. It also has an expiration date. This is what I use when an otherwise virtuous client mistakenly presents me with a complex vendor agreement masquerading as some sort of confidentiality agreement.

For agencies the picture is more complex, and I edit it to reflect Client, Contractor, and Subcontractor as contracting entities, but the principle remains the same.

I honestly suspect many of our colleagues have never seen a real confidentiality agreement before, and this one may provide a reality check.



Model Confidentiality Agreement

THIS CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") is effective [date], by and between CLIENT and [your name or company], ("Contractor").

WITNESSETH:

- A. WHEREAS, Contractor had been retained by CLIENT to perform certain translation and/or interpretation services;
- B. WHEREAS, in performing these services Contractor will be provided with certain confidential information, data and communication regarding CLIENT and its business interests ("The Confidential Information"): and.
- C. WHEREAS. Contractor has agreed to treat as confidential all Confidential Information;

NOW, THEREFORE, IN CONSID-ERATION of the promises and mutual covenants contained herein, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, CLIENT and Contractor hereby agree as follows:

- Contractor shall treat as confidential all Confidential Information which may be disclosed or made available to it, directly or indirectly, by CLIENT.
- Contractor shall not use any Confidential Information except as and to the extent necessary to render the services to CLIENT.
- 3. Contractor shall maintain the confidentiality of and shall not disclose any Confidential Information to any third party without CLIENT's prior written consent.
- 4. Nothing contained herein shall in

any way restrict or impair Contractor's right to use, disclose, or otherwise deal with any information of data which:

- a) At the time of disclosure is generally available to the public or thereafter becomes generally available to the public, by publication or otherwise, through no act of Contractor:
- b) Contractor can show was in its possession prior to the time of the disclosure to it and was not acquired directly or indirectly, from CLIENT of any other source bound by a confidentiality agreement with CLIENT: or.
- c) Contractor can show was received by it as a matter of lawful right after the time of disclosure from a third party who did not acquire it from CLIENT or any of its parent, affiliate or subsidiary companies under an obligation of confidence and that without breach of any obligation Contractor is free to disclose it to others.
- 5. All notices required to be given hereunder shall be sent by facsimile transmission or by certified mail, return receipt requested, postage pre-paid, and addressed to:

Contractor: [name & address]

CLIENT:

With concurrent copy to:

or to such other person or address as such party may have specified in a notice duly given as provided herein. Such notice shall be deemed to have been given as of the date of transmission of delivery, as the case may be.

- 6. Contractor acknowledges that the breach of this Agreement would cause CLIENT to suffer irreparable harm, and agrees that legal damages would not be a sufficient remedy for any breach of this agreement by Contractor, it's agents, representatives or employees. Accordingly, Contractor consents to injunctive or other appropriate equitable relief, including specific performance, upon the institution of legal proceedings by CLIENT. Such remedy shall not be deemed to be the exclusive remedy for any such breach of this Agreement, but shall be in addition to all other remedies available in law or in equity to CLIENT.
- 7. Contractor's obligations under this Agreement shall terminate one (1) year from the date the services are rendered.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties
hereto have executed this Confidential-
ity Agreement through their authorized
representatives this day of
, 2000.
Contractor
CLIENT
By:
By:
- J ·
Title:
Title:
11tic

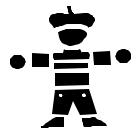












Volunteers needed for International Children's Festival

THE AUSTIN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM will hold its annual International Children's Festival on Thursday and Friday, November 2 and 3. These two days are only for Austin area schools. Some 3000 children will participate, AATIA volunteers will help keep things running smoothly.

Performers lined up for School Days include Chaski (Latin American folk music), Austin Taiko (Traditional Japanese Drums), McCallum High School Band (Caribbean Steel Drums). Tamasha Africana, Sahawe Indian Dancers (Indian Dancers of America and Mexico), and Realidad (Traditional Tejano Music), Alli Aweusi (African Music and Folktales), Seminole Indian Scout (Native American Storytelling and Dance), Anu Naimpally (Traditional South Indian Classical Dance). Antonio Dionisio (Brazilian Percussion). Emily Dedear (Chinese Ribbon Dance and Kung Fu movements), Alkebu-Lan Dance Co. (African Dancing, Song and Folklore), C.J. Menge (Caribbean Steel Drums, Oasis for Children (Multicultural Storytelling), Oliver Rajamani (Indian Percussion), UT Filipino Students Association, and Scottish Country Dancers.

Contact AATIA
Communications
Director Monica
Mitre at
anderm@aol.com
or 328-3641 to
join our volunteers
or obtain more
information about
this fun and
educational
festival. ★

LitSIG resumes after summer vacation

Dear LitSIG members,

Summer's almost over, and it's time for us to get together again. We have a very full meeting planned for Wednesday, September 6th, at 7 pm.

First, we have a change of location. Michele Aynesworth has graciously agreed to host us at 4191 Travis Country Circle (899-9653).

Next, several of us have news on publishing efforts. This can be such a mysterious business; we all find it helpful to hear about specific projects.

Then we will take up preparations for the bilingual readings on International Translators Day. I will bring a suggested program, in search of your opinions as to how to improve it. Several of you have already offered to take part, but there's still time for the rest. Just call 442-5100 or email me at mbs@texas.net with suggestions.

For our hands-on work, I'd like to return to a suggestion made last year that we never had time for: humor. Bring an example (say, 10 copies) of a humor translation—one that worked or one that didn't—and be prepared to talk about it with the group. Humor is incredibly difficult to translate, so we will all try to be charitable toward the failures and suitably impressed with the successes.

Marian Schwartz LitSIG Coordinator ★

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Even a saint can make mistakes

Translators and interpreters the world over mark September 30th as their day, since it is the Feast Day of the patron saint of librarians, scripture scholars, students, and of course, translators and interpreters. Although canonized by the Catholic church (date unknown), St. Jerome's work was not perfect.

Jerome once observed, "I am not so stupid as to think that any of the Lord's words either need correcting or are not divinely inspired, but the Latin manuscripts of the Scriptures are proved faulty by the variations which are found in all of them."

Indeed, Jerome acknowledged his own fallibility and made a few errors himself.

Perhaps his most famous mistranslation put horns on Moses's head. The original Hebrew scripture (Exodus 34) stated that when Moses descended from Mt. Sinai. he had "rays of light" coming from his head. The Hebrew word can also mean "horns." and Jerome chose the latter meaning. This error has been perpetuated in many ways to the present. When Michelangelo sculpted Moses, he relied on the Latin Vulgate translation of Jerome. The

resulting horned statue can be seen in Rome today. ★



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Introducing candidates for 2001 Board of Directors

Board candidates announced

Nominating Committee Chair Harvie Jordan announced the candidates for the 2001 Board of Directors at the August board meeting. Candidates will make a brief presentation at the general membership meeting September 30, 2000. Additional nominations will be accepted until the third Saturday in September. The election will be conducted by mail in October 2000, and results will be announced at the November membership meeting.

Jordan expressed thanks to Esther Diaz and Leon McMorrow for their service on this year's Nominating committee. ★



FOR PRESIDENT
PATRICIA THICKSTUN

I have been a freelance translator for 23 years and interpreter for 10 years. Most of this work has come through the invaluable networking relationships developed in AATIA. The dedication and hard work of our members have nurtured and encouraged me.

In my full-time job, I direct the Office of Language Services for the Texas Department of Health, where I work with other state agencies to share resources and develop an interpreter training program leading to certification.

A member of AATIA since 1985, I served two terms as Vice President for Communications (1991-1993) and participated in two conference planning committees and several panel discussions at membership meetings.

AATIA needs to come a consensus on our future and develop a plan to make it happen. We need to continue to encourage new translators and interpreters and provide continuing education opportunities for established language professionals. We also need to strengthen our collaboration with the business community and expand community service activities.



FOR SECRETARY
LAURA VLASMAN

I have not been very involved in AATIA up to now, but I have decided that the time has come to become more active in the local T&I community and do my modest bit for the advancement of our profession. I have worked as a staff and/or freelance translator and/or interpreter for almost 20 years now and so am well

acquainted with the range of challenges that we language professionals face. I believe that I could serve the Association ably as Secretary, since a significant percentage of my work consists of précis-writing and production of records for various international bodies. *

FOR DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
TRACI ANDRIGHETTI

Ciao AATIA! I completed a B.A. (Sociology/Italian) and an M.A. (History) at the University of Texas. Currently, I teach Italian at UT and Latin at St. Stephen's. I'm also translating a play by Dacia Maraini.

I passionately support translation and interpretation because they have helped ground me in my heritage, and because they have brought so much adventure into my life. My enthusi-



asm for both professions, as well as my experience in bookkeeping, recruiting, and project management, make me a natural fit for Director of Communications. I look forward to spreading the word about the AATIA throughout Austin! ★

FOR DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS DEBORAH TURNER

My name is Deborah Turner and I would like to be your next Director of Communications. I am a graduate of Arizona State University and have a degree in Intercultural and Interpersonal Communications. Two of my college years were spent at La Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara where I studied topics such as communications and sociolinguistics.

I have been a member of the AATIA since moving to Austin two years ago, and I am constantly impressed by its members' enthusiasm regarding the work they do and their openness to share their knowledge. I welcome the opportunity to work for you and with you. I am passionate about what we do, but also frustrated by how little the general public understands and respects our work. If elected I will work zealously to promote our organization and spread understanding of the translation and interpretation fields. ★

FOR DIRECTOR OF FINANCE EDGAR H. GUEVARA

Adequate financial practices are essential for professional associations to successfully conduct the activities necessary to fulfill their mission. I would like to contribute to AATIA's efforts to maintain and further the good financial conditions it currently enjoys by working with the other



members of the Board of Directors and AATIA members to define the financial needs of normal operations and special activities and identify additional sources of funds. I will follow the budget resulting from this assessment and, if necessary and in consultation with the Board, will adapt it to changing circumstances or needs, all for AATIA's good financial status. ★

FOR DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP KATARZYNA PRIEBE (INCUMBENT)

Since I became a member of AATIA a few years back, I've gotten so much out of the organization, I feel it my duty and honor to give back through volunteering. I have been a membership director for AATIA for the last two years and each year I learn more about how to improve the office and its services. I feel that my past experience in this position will help to keep continuity of the office and will allow further



development of the membership programs that we have started over the last couple of years. I have set a goal last year to increase membership by 15%. Although, we didn't reach that, through a mailing campaign to ATA members in other Texas cities, we did bring in quite a few members who felt their local organizations weren't as active and supportive to their members. This year I'd like to organize a campaign to reach out to colleges and university language departments. There are many students out there looking to start a language career who simply don't have the resources to turn to for help. ★



FOR DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EZEQUIEL M. QUIJANO

I will do my best to elevate the professional competency of the members of AATIA.

My efforts will be towards the facilitation of continuous opportunities of enhancing our skills through seminars and workshops.

The primary concerns will be the theory of translation and interpretation, as well as keeping our members up-to-date on technological developments. Guest speakers will be invited to share their expertise with the membership of AATIA.

On the development end, I offer to maintain close contact with ATA and act as a liaison with candidates wishing to obtain their certification.

Market your translation and interpreting services online

by Frank Dietz @ 2000

I HAVE BEEN ASKED REPEATEDLY by novice translators and interpreters how they can "break into the market" and get agencies to take notice of them. One possible answer would be to market your services online.

These days, almost any translation agency will have an email address, and many have their own web sites. This allows translators/interpreters to conduct a marketing campaign that is essentially cost-free (unless you count the amount of time spent—but that presumably would be something you have plenty of in this phase of your career).

How do you find these agencies? One great (and now free) source of information on US agencies is *Glenn's Guide to Translation Agencies* (and its international counterpart *Glenn's Guide International*), which can be opened as PDF files at

www.etranslate.net/en/career/ glennsguide.html. You need the free program Adobe Acrobat Reader (available at www.adobe.com) to open these files and print them.

This list contains detailed contact information, as well as each agency's specialization and the languages most needed. Other sources of agency listings are www.rahul.net/lai/tragsvc.html and http://dir.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Business_to_Business/Translation_Services/.

Many of these agency web sites will have online forms that prospective freelancers can fill out. Otherwise, you can send your résumé by email. Please give it an informative title ("Freelance Translator E>F" is better than "Hello") and do *not* send

your résumé as a file attachment.
Agencies might not want to bother
with converting various file formats,
and recent virus and worm outbreaks
have made many people wary of
attachments sent by strangers. Instead,
include your résumé in the body of
the e-mail (which means giving up
any fancy fonts and formatting).

Lastly, keep track of your contacts in a list or spreadsheet, so you don't duplicate your effort. All this won't guarantee you work, but at least you will have improved your chances. As there are hundreds of agencies in the US, you might want to spread your efforts over several days.

Good luck! ★

Register t/i services on the WWW

SMARTERWORK IS CURRENTLY LOOKING to expand its database of high-quality experts who can provide services in translation, interpreting, voiceover, subtitling, proofing, and language consulting in a wide range of languages and subjects.

If you qualify, after registering at www.smarterwork.com you'll be connected with clients for a 10% commission deducted from the client payments. ★

Suggestion Box

Some hard drives don't like being slaved to smaller, slower brethren. When adding a drive to a system, if it crashes for no reason, the master-slave relationship may have to be inverted with the newer drive in charge.

Tip contributed by Hank Phillips★





by Tony Beckwith © 2000

WE WERE STANDING AROUND THE OTHER NIGHT, waiting for the Children's Carnival to begin. Roy and I were running the Coin Drop. The other volunteers were all paired off and assigned to the Cakewalk, the Hula-Hoop contest, and the Bean Bag Toss. The face painters and caricaturists were settling into their booths at the other end of the Club ballroom.

Joe picked up a yo-yo from among the prizes on the table beside us. He checked the string, slipped the noose around his middle finger, and spun the yo-yo in a graceful downward arc. It had a see-through cover on each side, and when it reached the end of its string and bounced back up, a red light flashed, like a fire engine on the way to a fire. I suddenly realized that it had been nearly half a century since I'd played with one of those wonderful toys.

I took one from the table and slipped the string around my finger. I gripped it in my right hand, rolling it with my thumb till the string felt taut and springy. I bounced my hand a couple of times to loosen up my wrist. Then I popped the yo-yo. It spun down the string—the shimmering, silvery discs just a blur—and then the red light started flashing and before I knew it the yo-yo thwacked snugly

back into the palm of my hand.

Grinning all over my face, I looked up and saw that the rest of my colleagues had also helped themselves from the table. We were now all standing around very much as my little friends and I used to stand around in the school playground, playing with our yo-yos, all those years ago. I suddenly understood that I used to love the yo-yo because you didn't have to play *with* anybody or against anybody. Having a few likeminded companions to stand around with was certainly a plus, but even then you were on your own. Just you and your yo-yo.

There was a corner of the playground where a large, thick tree provided refuge from the mayhem of a couple of hundred little boys on break. A handful of us would gather there and, in relative tranquility, take our yo-yos from the pockets of our gray flannel uniforms and spin them. There was a seriousness, a concentration on our artistry, and a restrained exuberance that made recess go by far too quickly. For some reason I never learned any of the flashier tricks, which is surprising since showing off was always my strong suit. But some of my peers were talented and imaginative; they could "walk the dog" and go "around the world" and do a lot of other impressive work as well.

It occurred to me the other night at the Carnival that I had stepped into one of those time warps that you read about. To my left, Amado was making his yo-yo hum and sing. Paul was "walking the dog" and laughing out loud. I could almost smell the dust of the playground. We were all standing around in a semi-hypnotic state, reliving a memory, transported far away and long ago by a tiny time machine spinning at the end of a



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Midnight Confessions of a Medical Translator

"You must know

what the doctors

wouldn't be trans-

lating or interpret-

ing their words."

know, or you

by Leon McMorrow

I LIKE THE WAY PRESIDENT CLINTON PICKED A RELIGIOUS VENUE to make "comments" on his behavior. One might even call them confessions. Then they become something quite different from a statement made to a reporter, a convention, or a court. They take on a nice soft, therapeutic feel, perhaps even a tinge of courage. Baring the soul has always struck a higher chord than exposing the body. Strange!

Let's confess it. For some reason, medical translation is not as exciting as the popular image suggests. Medicine in the U.S. has worn an aura of wisdom and mystery for at least a century now. Most people no longer avoid

doctors like the plague, as they did up to 1900. It attracts them. much to the dismay of the insurance companies. One straightforward reason is that today medical treatment heals more people than it kills. Another. more subtle reason is that scientific medi-

cine has quietly invaded the domain of secret knowledge, once the fiefdom of priests, shamans and "medicine men." In matters of life and death today, healers are more likely to have an M.D. after their name than a Rev. before it.

Some of that glow has diffused to the fringe people in the field, like medical translators and interpreters. It impresses people: "You must know what the doctors know, or you wouldn't be translating or interpreting their words." True, there is some merit to the argument, as the lawyers

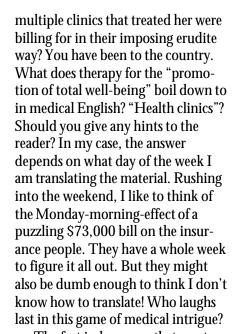
say. But, as an insider, you know "it ain't so." You struggle to echo the medical words in the other language, and echoes can distort. The worry takes the pleasure out of the effort many times, like the tense look on

> a doctor's face before the diagnosis is proved correct by an X-ray.

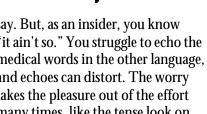
If you are the standard nosy type, and love the afternoon talk shows or Dr. Laura, you will like the sense of mystery and intrigue that occasionally comes your

translation. You will wonder what Mrs. Loretta Smith was really doing in Italy on June 21, 1998, and

June 25, 1998, Her American insurance company wants every scrap of medical report, drug store bill, and taxi receipt translated. But do you really want the insurance company to know what the



The fact is, however, that most medical translation into English involves discoveries made 30 years ago overseas that never made it to the prestigious journals, and are now being mined by later researchers. If you translate from English to other languages, most of your work will be in helping to sell the latest American research in the form of new drugs and gizmos for your heart, kidneys, knees, teeth, and hair (or its absence). Either way, it is hard work, but for the translator, it can be a nightmare, since the terminology either does not yet exist in the target language, or is not being propagated by the specialists. But there is one small reward: you get to know about the latest medical advances before your neighbors and



way in medical Switzerland on



Tereza d'Avila Braga

Member of the American Translators Association ATA Accredited English-Portuguese Contract Interpreter with the U.S. Dept. of State

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friends back home—the medical glow appears.

The curse placed upon medical translators is the unlimited opportunity for becoming a hypochondriac. Over the years you analyze word-byword a lot of the world's illnesses. Dosed with indications, contraindications, side effects, and special precautions, you cannot help but wonder if you too don't have the exotic disease you are now translating. You can remember having had most of the symptoms described, maybe not at the same time or in the exact same spot on your body; such minor background details get fuzzy in the heat of translation. But you hear a voice up there suggesting that all those mysterious aches and pains from different periods in your life, when summed up and totaled, now make sense as the newly discovered syndrome you must deliver by Friday

morning. Forget that last week it was a different disease. Pain is the subject of your translation life. Wouldn't it be better, you think, if it had been bank rates in Thailand or a patent for an auto lifter in the car wash. You wonder. Especially at night.

It's midnight. I'll leave the rest until morning; it will still make the West Coast before they get out of traffic. Wish me a good night's sleep. Please! ★

Medical, Community Interpreters SIG

AATIA IS SOLICITING INPUT on the formation of a new special interest group (SIG) to establish a venue for information, professional development, and dialogue about medical and community interpreter issues.

Medical and community interpreting is an emerging discipline.

Most interpretation in health care and community settings is still provided by untrained, ad-hoc interpreters. The lack of training results in inaccuracy and misunderstandings which could have serious consequences.

An increasing number of institutions are seeking to professionalize their language services by beginning to screen and train their interpreters. Several states now require certification of medical and community interpreters. AATIA is in a unique position to prepare Texas interpreters to take full advantage of opportunities that lie ahead. The first step in this process is to share information about upcoming changes and requirements, then to provide educational opportunities for interpreters. This can be accomplished through a special interest group within AATIA.

For more information, contact Esther Diaz at ediaz@flash.net. ★

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http://www.aatia.org



AATIA welcomes visitors to the Austin History Center (AHC) at 9th & Guadalupe on the 2nd Saturday of odd-numbered months for general meetings and even-numbered months for board meetings.

EVENTS IN AUSTIN

Sep 6 7 p.m. LitSIG, 4191 Travis County Circle. Info Marian Schwartz 442-5100 or mbs@texas.net

Sep 9 10 a.m. SpanSIG meeting, AHC. Info Harvie Jordan 444-8537

NOTE: regular meeting moved to Sep 30.

Sep 30 International Translators Day & AATIA 15th Anniversary celebration 6-10 p.m. Info 707-3900

Oct 14 1-4 p.m. AATIA board meeting, AHC Nov 11 AATIA regular meeting and SIG meetings

Page 8 The AATIA Letter September 2000

AATIA reprises KLRU pledge drive

AATIA MEMBERS VOLUNTEERED for the second year on Sunday, August 27 to help Austin's public television station KLRU meet its \$150,000 goal in its 10-day fall pledge drive.

We answered phones, ate great food, and hung out with Ray Benson of Asleep at the Wheel. The event was great publicity, since our time slot attracted approximately 10,000 viewers.

Members had so much fun that AATIA plans to make this an annual tradition for our association. This year's participants found it a great way to help the community, raise AATIA's profile, and spend an enjoyable evening with colleagues.

Monica Mitre

Director of Communications ★



"Translating or interpreting?"