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The Letter

of the Austin Area Translators
and Interpreters Association

November 2005

2006 Board of Directors election results

President:

Esther Díaz 72

J. Henry Phillips 18

Secretary:

Susana Roca-Smith 83

Steven Mines 1 (write-in)

Director of Communications:

Cristina Pinto-Bailey 82

Al Bork 1 (write-in)

Tony Beckwith 1 (write-in)

Director of Finance:

Al Favela 68

Tomas Leon 19

Nereida Zimic 1 (write-in)

Director of Membership:

Gisela Greenlee 83

Fritz Hensey 1 (write-in)

Director of Professional Development:

Otilia Sanchez 71

Abbie Razzaque 19

Non-Binding Referendum on ATA affiliation:

For: 57

Against: 24

November 12 meeting

Protect yourself from computer catastrophes

DO YOU LIVE IN FEAR that a virus attack or massive system failure will wipe out that 75,000-word job you've been toiling over for the past month? Have you already suffered such a catastrophe?

Join us on November 12 at the Austin History Center (9th & Guadalupe) and learn how to protect yourself. John Neale will give tips on safeguarding against viruses, worms, and the like and backing up your system so that, even if disaster strikes, all will not be lost.

Neale is Technical Manager for Austin Fix-Net, a project of Austin Free-Net, a local organization that provides technical expertise, training, and information technology services, and equipment to community organizations, including AATIA. He has worked with computers for 22 years. Neale was educated at the University of Texas, with post-graduate work at the University of North Texas. For the past 15 years, he has worked for the City of Austin as a system support specialist and network specialist, including the last ten years with Austin Free-Net, during which he has installed over 300 computers at over 50 sites. ★



Texas Book Festival honors translation

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, on Saturday, Oct. 29, this year's Texas Book Festival presented a special panel on translation entitled Found in Translation: Writers and Their Translators in the Texas Senate Chamber. Participants included the famous translator Edith Grossman, Mayra Montero, Liliana Valenzuela, and Nina Marie Martinez.

Edith Grossman is an award-winning translator of poetry and prose by leading contemporary Spanish-language writers, including Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, Mayra Montero, Augusto Monterroso, Jaime Manrique, Julian Rios, and of course, Alvaro Mutis. Her most recent translation is Miguel de Cervantes's Don Quixote of La Mancha.

That same afternoon, the Mexic-Arte Museum hosted a Spanish-language literary feast: short readings by Sandra Cisneros, Edith Grossman, Mayra Montero, Nina Marie Martinez, and Liliana Valenzuela, followed by a special discussion on the murdered women of Juarez entitled Las muertas de Juarez, with Cecilia Balli, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, and Luis Alberto Urrea. ★

AATIA, HITA plan April workshop

PLANS ARE UNDERWAY for a workshop on business and finance topics by AATIA and the Houston Interpreters and Translators Association (HITA). Tentative dates are April 22-23, 2006. Members who have suggestions about possible speakers or topics may contact Director of Professional Development Laura Vlasman at prodev@aatia.org or (512) 891-9207. ★

Lansford, Valenzuela translations published

THREE TRANSLATIONS by Ingrid Lansford have been published recently: "Hair," by Jenny Erpenbeck in *Dimension2*, vol.7, Summer 2005; "Senki," by Meir Aron Goldschmidt in *Scandinavian Review*, Summer 2005; and "Bankrupt," by Jan Sonnergaard, in *Metamorphoses*, Fall 2005.

Un regalo de gracias (Dragonfly Books/Random House Children's Books, 2005), a children's picture book by Julia Alvarez, illustrated by Beatriz Vidal, and translated by Liliana Valenzuela, is out now in bookstores. ★



Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association

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September meeting reviewed

Language of Music

CLASSICAL GUITARIST AND TENOR

Dr. Matthew Hinsley headlined the September joint meeting of the AATIA and its Spanish Special Interest Group.

Hinsley began studying classical guitar when he was ten. He obtained his Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin Conservatory of Music and his Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the University of Texas. Hinsley is now Executive Director of the Austin Classical Guitar Society.

Playing and singing songs from the Spanish and English Renaissance, German and Italian Romanticism, and the Americas of the twentieth century, Hinsley demonstrated the ways in which musicians and composers have for centuries transformed poems with music to provide enhanced or new interpretations of those poems. A poem is not only subject to a reader's interpretation; when music is added, an additional layer of interpretation reaches the listener. For instance, the change of tune and the change of volume in music create an interplay of dramatic tension and re-

lease. As Hinsley put it, "the music can illustrate importance, or the degree to which something is excited, while the text provides specific meaning."

Next, Hinsley performed examples of songs where the composers of different eras used their contemporary musical idiom to solve the problem of musical expression of text. He started with Jonathan Kulp's musical interpretation of poems by Emily Dickinson and followed with an Italian aria-style song by 19th-century guitarist Mauro Giuliani. With both songs, Hinsley demonstrated the power music has to express the

general mood through musical tones. Then, he performed a 16th-century Renaissance English lute song by John Dowland, followed by a 19th-century Spanish song by Fernando Sor, where the composer used seemingly contradicting musical moods as compared to what is expressed in the text of the songs.

We then heard a 19th-century German song by Carl Maria von Weber, followed by a Renaissance Spanish song by Luis Milan, and finally a 20th-century song by Castelnuovo-Tedesco setting text of the German Medieval minnesinger Walther von der Vogelweide.

Through his exceptional and expressive playing and singing, and informative explanations, Hinsley delighted the audience with a passionate performance to communicate what cannot be expressed through words alone.

—*Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary* ★



Eva Kamenetsky watches boat bump bridge, then boards.



Therapy sister Maurine McLean [L] and Esther Díaz [R] listen to Al Bork reminiscing.

After bumpy start, riverboat cruise launches AATIA's 20th anniversary party

GOOD FRIENDS, GOOD MUSIC, GOOD FOOD AND A CRUISE combined for a great 20th Anniversary celebration aboard the Lone Star Riverboat.

The excitement began when the riverboat drifted into a bridge support as soon as it left the dock. Crewmembers worked feverishly to turn the boat around. Eva Kamenetsky, who missed the boat, was able to watch the whole episode from the dock and was fortunate to board when the boat returned to the dock to start over again.

Undaunted by this, the partygoers enjoyed the music and humor of The Therapy Sisters, Maurine McLean and Lisa Rogers, and shared delicious international dishes. Allan Adams, Albert Bork, and Esther Diaz told stories about the early days of AATIA, complemented by a photo album and a display of newsletters, photos marking key dates for AATIA over the past 20 years, and a picture of its founders, Albert Bork, Esther Diaz, and Harvie Jordan. Tony Beckwith regaled the crowd with his delightful poems, including a bilingual reading with Liliana Valenzuela.

The many contributors of AATIA were acknowledged and special awards presented to the following volunteers who have served the association five years or more:

- Tony Beckwith – newsletter columnist, board member;
- Marta Blumenthal – SpanSIG coordinator and board member;
- Michael Blumenthal – SpanSIG coordinator and board member;
- Albert Bork – board member and directory coordinator;
- Jane Chamberlain – referral coordinator and database coordinator;
- Mike Conner – webmaster and newsletter editor 13 years;
- Esther Diaz – president and board member;
- Frank Dietz – newsletter columnist and webmaster;
- Elisabeth Joffrain – tellers committee and voicemail coordinator;
- Hank Phillips – newsletter columnist, board member;
- Efrat Schwartz – newsletter mailout coordinator;
- Marian Schwartz – LitSIG coordinator and nominating committee chair;
- Howard Simms – board member;
- Patricia Thickstun – board member, nominating committee chair;
- Merry Wheaton – referral coordinator and newsletter proofreader.

There will be plenty of room for more volunteers on the next anniversary cruise. Don't miss the boat!

Very special thanks to our sponsors: Allan Adams, Master-Word Services, and SpanSIG. ★

Siempre he sido traductor

by Tony Beckwith ©2005
www.tonybeckwith.com

Some years ago, as part of a literary translation workshop, I wrote an autobiographical poem in Spanish. I recently got around to translating it into English—and these are both versions. In the original, I was trying to convey the rhythm of the *malambo*, a type of folk music played in Uruguay. I carried the same basic rhyme structure over to the English version, so that both could be sung to the same music. ★

Siempre he sido traductor

Nací en Buenos Aires
de padres muy ingleses,
pero fuimos al Uruguay
al cabo de pocos meses.

El hijo de emigrantes
vive en campos muy fecundos,
porque oye y aprende
lo mejor de ambos mundos.

Veinte años transcurrieron
en la capital uruguaya,
con inviernos en la escuela
y veranos en la playa.

En las calles de mi pueblo
casi nunca hablaba inglés
pero en casa con familia
al contrario, al revés.

Mi carrera publicitaria
me arrancó de mis raíces,
y salí a recorrer
todo un mundo de países.

Cinco años en España:
instrucción fundamental,
que mejor se entiende el río
conociendo el manantial.

Ahora aquí en Texas
con gentiles anfitriones,
llevo muchos buenos años
haciendo traducciones.

Fue la suerte de mi vida
ser bilingüe natural,
y por ende, por supuesto,
peregrino cultural.

Tuve muchas ambiciones:
astronauta; escritor;
pero ahora que lo pienso
siempre he sido traductor.

I've always been a Translator

I was born in Buenos Aires
but not many months went by
till my parents, who were English,
traveled on to Uruguay.

A migrant family's children
can absorb an education
from the cultures of their parents
and their new adopted nation.

My twenty years in Uruguay
were delightful as a rule,
I spent summers on the beaches
and the winters going to school.

Though I seldom spoke much English
on the streets of my home town,
when I mingled with my family
it was the other way around.

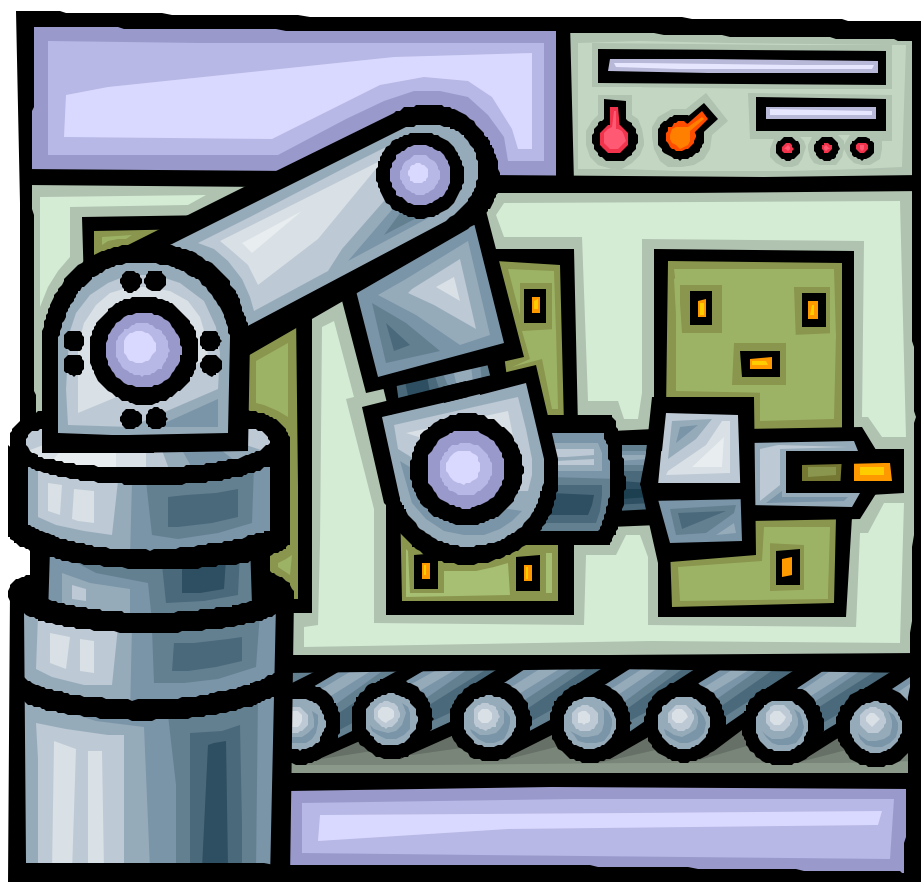
My career in advertising
satisfactorily unfurled,
so I left my roots behind me
and set off to see the world.

Half a decade spent in Spain
was educational, of course,
since you understand the river
so much better at the source.

Gracious hosts have since encouraged
my complete assimilation,
and I've worked for years in Texas
in the field of translation.

It was my immense good fortune
being bilingual born and bred,
so the path of cultural pilgrim
was a natural one to tread.

I'd aspired to be a writer
or a spaceship navigator,
but I see now that I've always
been a working translator.



Running on Autopilot

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www.frankdietz.com

TRANSLATION IS A TYPE OF WORK that resists automation. No matter what kinds of computerized translation aids and translation memory programs we use, language remains stubbornly resistant and demands our full attention. Yet there are other, related activities we can safely let the computer do in order to focus better on our core task. Fortunately, most of these do not require any fancy new software, but rather use functions of programs that we already own or of Windows itself:

- **Automate repetitive tasks.** The other day I was involved in a project that required the translation of hundreds of small MS Word files. In order to check

the spelling of each file, I had to deactivate hidden text, select the entire document, then select Tools/Language/Set Language and pick German. Only then could I run the spellchecker. I streamlined the process by recording a macro for it in MS Word (Tools/Macro) and assigning a key combination to the macro. This macro saved me hours!

- **Automatically sort your e-mail.** Your e-mail program or service provider probably already sorts out spam (or tries to, and it is always good to check the spam folder, as legitimate e-mails might end up there), but you can take this much further by filtering e-mails into various folders based on your own criteria. Wouldn't it be useful to have e-mails from important clients in specific folders, while the jokes your uncle Max sends you end up in another?
- **AUTOMATE YOUR BACKUPS.** Everyone recognizes how important data

backups are after it is too late! Eventually, your hard disk will crash, or your motherboard die. Why not anticipate this by hooking up an external hard drive and setting a backup program to save your data every night at 11 p.m.?

- **Let virus and anti-spyware programs work on their own.** How often do you scan your computer for malicious programs? Well, that's not often enough! Why not set these programs to run automatically at certain times, or use Start/Settings/Control Panels/Scheduled Tasks to do this?
- **Set up reminders.** Your calendar/scheduling program (such as MS Outlook) lets you set up reminders for recurring events, such as quarterly tax payments. You could also remind yourself that an invoice is due a certain number of days from now.
- **Build an invoice template.** Some bookkeeping programs, such as Quicken Home & Business, as well as specialized utilities for translators allow you to set up invoice templates, but you could easily use MS Word with an inserted Excel spreadsheet to do the same. Save it in .dot format and then rename it every time you create an invoice from it.
- **Use AutoText in MS Word.** The AutoText function can be a real time-saver. You can assign anything from the closing phrases of a letter to often-repeated terms such as "sulphur hexafluoride" to a shortcut, type in the shortcut and then press F3. You could also use the AutoCorrect function to do this, but that could lead to faulty insertions. ★

ATA office-seekers include three AATIA members

The twelve candidates for office in the American Translators Association (ATA) this year include three AATIA members. Their candidacy statements, which appeared in the September 2005 issue of the *ATA Chronicle*, are presented here so that their fellow AATIA members who do not belong to ATA may read them.

Tony Beckwith candidate for President-Elect

LIKE MANY ATA MEMBERS, I come from a multilingual, multicultural background. I was born to a British family living in Argentina and have been a translator/interpreter ever since.

My first career was with international advertising agencies, which allowed me to live and work in a number of countries around the world. Then came a chance to do something completely different and I spent about ten years managing a successful chain of restaurants in Texas. I am now a certified, full-time, freelance Spanish/English translator and interpreter, and have been for the last fifteen years.

I served two consecutive terms as President of the Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association, after serving one term as Director of Communications. My proudest achievement during that time was the launch of the AATIA website. Although I had no special knowledge of website development, I understood the need and assembled a team of volunteers who met at my house in the evenings and soon accomplished our goal.

As a commercial and literary translator, as well as a conference and court interpreter, I believe I can represent the interests of a broad cross-section of our membership. I think of myself as an innovator, but I also have a deep respect for the value of continuity. As president-elect of the ATA I would work hard to connect the past, through the present, to the future.

What does the future hold for us as language professionals and for the Association as a whole? There are chal-

lenges, of course, but there are also, as always, great opportunities for those who can learn to adapt to the changes. I believe the role of the ATA should be to strive to understand the trends evolving in this country and in the rest of the world, and then do everything possible to help our membership prepare for the days ahead. Translators working in other economies influence our market in a variety of ways. Machine translation is becoming more sophisticated all the time. These and other factors affect US-based individuals and agencies, though not always with the same results. But we have all faced challenges of many kinds before and know that resourcefulness, teamwork, and determination will always win the day. As president-elect, I would commit the ATA's wealth of resources to helping our membership develop the flexibility and skills we'll all need to succeed in the years to come.

In these global times, I believe that the ATA should build and strengthen ties with other language-based organizations, both here and overseas, as a means of keeping our membership informed about worldwide developments in the fields of translation and interpretation. We must continue to promote a broad, outward-looking approach and keep improving our system of internal membership communications. We must also keep seeking creative new ways to educate the client community on the value of professional translation and interpretation: it's a struggle that will never be completely won, but it must never be abandoned.

Thank you very much, I appreciate your consideration. ★

Tereza Braga candidate for Board of Directors

I ACCEPTED THE IDEA of running for the Board because my two terms as division administrator are up and I find it hard to stop once I get involved in something I really care about. ATA has helped me to find pleasure in working, the same way that my family and friends help me to find pleasure in living. I could never separate ATA from my personal growth, even if I wanted to. I always knew I could translate and interpret, but ATA inspired me to take a road never traveled, which was to own my own business and make a good living doing what I always loved to do.

In my life ATA has served as the best definition of an association – a venue in which we can freely associate. The results of this interaction, in my opinion, are up to us. We don't really learn anything with ATA. We learn, yes, with each other – colleagues and clients. ATA can't do a single thing for our bottom line, if you ask me. Achievement had to come from inside, from our ability to get inspired. My goal as a Board member is to help ATA continue to inspire others as it has inspired me.

I have been the administrator of the Portuguese Language Division for the past four years and editor of our division newsletter. I hold ATA certification from and into Portuguese and my freelance work includes contracts with the U.S. State Department, the Organization of American States and the World Bank.

I was a teenager in my native Brazil when I passed the Cambridge proficiency exam in English with specialization in translation from and into Portuguese. My graduate studies were in international business, sprinkled with electives in everything from literary translation to political economy. My work history before translation was in the corporate world and the Brazilian foreign service.

If I join the Board, you can count on a director who believes that respect and understanding for our craft have to begin within ourselves. If you love this business, let us continue to inspire each

other and help ATA continue to be a homecoming experience for more and new talent in the years to come. ★

Liliana Valenzuela candidate for Board of Directors

AS A YOUNG MEXICAN IMMIGRANT to Texas in my twenties, I discovered that translators are a unique group of people. Having lived in different countries, and learned to be sensitive to the cultural peculiarities of others, we are natural border-crossers.

I grew up in an oil refinery company town in Mexico City, learned so-so English from the nuns, a better English from a former Harlem-Globe-Trotter-turned-teacher at a Mexican high school, but didn't really master the English language until many years later, thanks to my American husband, my many jobs, and writing countless papers in college and graduate school where I studied Cultural Anthropology. I also learned quite a bit of Danish while an AFS exchange student in Denmark, during one frigid year on a farm, on the island of Lolland. Like many ATA members, I've had a life-long love affair with languages and other cultures.

Literature is my passion, and translating is my life, but I started at the very bottom some 15 years ago, translating anything from employee manuals, to recipes, to birth certificates, whatever came my way. As a freelancer, I know what it takes to be a stay-at-home entrepreneur—meeting impossible deadlines, juggling childcare and home responsibilities, educating clients and the public, and doing your own public relations. Among the clients I have served in my professional career as an English-Spanish literary translator are publishers such as Simon & Schuster, Alfred A. Knopf, Rayo/HarperCollins, Random House, Harcourt Brace, museums like the Smithsonian Institution and the National Museum of Women in the Arts, as well as numerous translation agencies.

These days I get invited to conferences and book festivals—such as Publishing Latino Voices in New York City, Border Book Festival in New Mexico,

Texas Book Festival, Latina Letters Conference in San Antonio, Texas—and at these events I always take the opportunity to speak about translation and translation issues. I also give public readings with the authors I translate—such as Sandra Cisneros, Denise Chávez, Nina Marie Martínez—and help raise awareness about the very important role that we as translators play in our digital society.

As a literary translator I have achieved some minor and major victories in the publishing industry, such as insisting that my name appear on the cover and copyright page of each book, a right that translators could only dream of not too long ago. My version of the novel *Caramelo*, by Sandra Cisneros, was picked up by the Spanish publishers—a most unusual accomplishment, as they generally prefer to commission their own Peninsular Spanish translations.

Much remains to be done, and if I receive your vote, which I respectfully request, I will do my best to continue

the outreach and education I've been engaged in for so long. I intend to improve communications among members and between members and the board, to further educate clients and the media, and to inform the younger generations of future translators about the invaluable services we provide as border-crossers in our increasingly small world. ★

October 8 Board meeting highlights

THE AATIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS has approved rental of a small, centrally located, climate-controlled storage unit in order to keep all the AATIA files together which have been, until now, located separately at various board members' homes.

AATIA will have a member-staffed association table at the November ATA Annual Conference in Seattle.

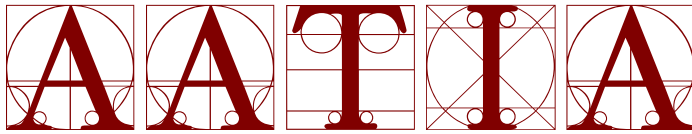
—Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary ★



The AATIA Board of Directors
extends special thanks to

Allan Adams
MasterWord Services
Spanish Special Interest Group

for their generous support
of our 20th anniversary celebration.



Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association
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www.aatia.org

AATIA holds meetings at the Austin History Center, 9th & Guadalupe, unless otherwise indicated. Visitors are welcome.

EVENTS IN AUSTIN

Nov 12 10 a.m. Spanish SIG meeting
1–4 p.m. AATIA member meeting
Dec 10 10–12 noon. ISIG meeting
1–4 p.m. AATIA board meeting

BEYOND AUSTIN

Nov 2–5 **Montreal**. Annual Conference of the American Literary Translators Association
Nov 9–12 **Seattle**. 46th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association

Turkish law bans Q and W

REUTERS REPORTED RECENTLY that a Turkish court fined 20 people for using the letters Q and W on placards at a Kurdish new year celebration, under a law that bans use of characters not in the Turkish alphabet.

Since Q and W do not exist in the Turkish alphabet, the court in the southeastern city of Siirt fined each of the 20 people 100 new lira (\$75.53) for holding up the placards, written in Kurdish, at the event last year.

The 1928 Law on the Adoption and Application of Turkish Letters replaced the traditional Arabic script by a modified Latin alphabet and required all signs, advertising, newspapers, and official documents to use only Turkish letters.

Under pressure from the European Union, Turkey has improved language and human rights for its Kurdish minority, but the EU says implementation has been patchy and loopholes remain. ★

