

www.aatia.org

# The Letter

of the Austin Area Translators  
and Interpreters Association

January 2006

Meeting notes, December 3, 2005

## Board of Directors applies for ATA link

THE AATIA BOARD has authorized President Esther Diaz to submit an application for American Translators Association affiliate status. The decision was based in part on a recent non-binding referendum, which resulted in 57 votes for and 24 against affiliation, according to Secretary Susana Roca-Smith.

The affiliate status is one step up from AATIA's present relationship with ATA, the so-called unaffiliated status, but one step below ATA chapter status. Requirements for affiliation are an annual status report and newsletter space for advertising ATA events.

Other items of note:

- Membership Director Gisela Greenlee informed the Board that AATIA had 212 members as of December 3, 2005. Greenlee will send membership renewal letters by December 15.
- Leo Bello, departing Director of Communications, reported that starting in January 2006, he and Susana Roca-Smith will succeed Marta and Michael Blumenthal as SpanSIG Coordinators. He also stated that SpanSIG plans to be represented at ATA's Spanish Division 2006 conference in Las Vegas.
- Maurine McLean and Esther Diaz have volunteered to offer interpreting workshops again in 2006, possibly in San Antonio. Laura Vlasman, departing Director of Professional Development, informed the Board that she will continue as Workshop Coordinator.
- The Board discussed ways to evaluate the telephone referral process for possible improvement of this member service.

—Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary ★

### January 14 meeting

## Unusual linguistic job opportunities

START THE NEW YEAR OUT RIGHT by learning how to diversify income sources in unusual ways.

The first 2006 meeting will feature a panel discussion by AATIA members Tony Beckwith, Alejandra McGuire, Otilia Sánchez, and others on "unusual" opportunities for linguists in a variety of fields (we're not telling you what they are—if you want to know, you'll have to come to the meeting!).

AATIA will also ring in the new year with special international refreshments. If you would be willing to provide a plate of appetizer-type food from your native or adopted country, please contact Refreshment Coordinator Merry Wheaton at (512) 451-4772 or mcwheaton@austin.rr.com. ★

## AATIA interpreting workshops set for San Antonio

AATIA WILL OFFER TWO WORKSHOPS in San Antonio for interpreters and aspiring interpreters in early 2006. Each workshop will provide a 24-hour overview of interpreting in various settings.

**Basic Interpreting Skills** will be held January 20–21 and January 27–28 and will cover the following topics: roles and responsibilities of the interpreter in social service, medical, psychosocial, law enforcement, and legal settings; how to achieve accurate and complete interpretation from a source language to a target language using consecutive interpretation; sight translation of documents from various fields; codes of ethics in different settings; and cultural barriers in interpreting and how to deal with them.

**Advanced Interpreting Skills**, tentatively scheduled for late March, will build on the vocabulary and skills learned during the first workshop. Participants in both workshops will have ample opportunity for practice with supervision and practical tips from experienced interpreters and trainers.

The AATIA website [www.aatia.org](http://www.aatia.org) will provide more information and a registration form. ★

## 2006 TCD Conference set for Garden State

ATA's Translation Company Division will hold its annual conference in Jersey City, NJ, on April 20-23, 2006.

Download the flyer at [www.ata-divisions.org/TCD](http://www.ata-divisions.org/TCD). ★



## Harcourt publishes Schwartz translation

MARIAN SCHWARTZ'S TRANSLATION from the Russian of *White on Black*, by Ruben Gallego, has just been published by Harcourt.

Gallego won the 2003 Russian Booker Prize for this collection of interrelated stories about growing up a disabled orphan in Soviet institutions. ★

## Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association

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THE AATIA LETTER offers a great opportunity to advertise your translation- and interpretation-related products and services. The online version of this bimonthly newsletter reaches a global audience through free downloads at [www.aatia.org](http://www.aatia.org). And at rates like these, you can't afford to miss out on this opportunity.

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#### Newsletter Ad Rates\*

Full page	\$125
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\*10% discount to members

## President's Annual Report

### A very good year

AATIA'S 20<sup>TH</sup> YEAR was an eventful one in which we provided our 212 members with a rich variety of professional development and networking opportunities.

We started the year with a television interview on News 8 Austin in which I shared information about the AATIA website and the importance of using qualified translators and interpreters. The following week, the ATA Board of Directors met in Austin and President Scott Brennan made a presentation at the AATIA January membership meeting and hosted a reception for AATIA members that evening. Pat Bobeck also gave us a behind-the-scenes view of her recently published translation of *The Public Fountains of the City of Dijon* at that meeting. In March, we had a panel presentation on interpreter training opportunities, licensing/certification, and pending legislation on interpreter qualifications as well as a translator-related presentation on harnessing the Internet. In May, professional organizer, Lorie Marrero presented "The Top Ten Productivity Mistakes (and How to Fix Them)." Our Literary SIG members, Marian Schwartz, Michele Aynesworth, Tony Beckwith, and Ingrid Lansford discussed their respective works-in-progress in July. In September, SpanSIG brought us "The Language of Music" presented by Dr. Matthew Hinsley, Executive Director of the Austin Classical Guitar Society, who performed songs in Spanish, English, German and Italian, explaining how melody transforms poetry. In November, John Neale, Technical Manager for Austin Fix-Net, provided tips on how to safeguard against viruses, worms, and the like and how to back up your system and documents. A representative from the International Center of Austin also gave us a preview of the World Congress on Information Technology to be held in Austin in 2006. These general member-

ship meetings were supplemented by the bimonthly meetings of AATIA's Special Interest Groups (Spanish SIG, Literary SIG, Interpreters SIG).

Several professional development workshops were also held this past year: Basic Interpreting Skills, Advanced Interpreting Skills, and Literary Translation. In addition, we hosted an ATA Certification Exam sitting, preceded by a certification seminar. All of these were presented by AATIA's own members who generously shared their skills with others.

In collaboration with TAHIT and TAJIT, AATIA tracked and reported on



several bills during the Texas Legislative Session that were of interest to translators and interpreters:

HB 1601 relating to the use of telephone interpreter services in class C misdemeanor trials. (Enacted)

HB 1642 allowing a court not to use a licensed court interpreter for languages other than Spanish if not readily available in small counties (Enacted)

HB 1717 relating to a licensing exam waiver. (Defeated)

SB 213 relating to requiring more Spanish language content for online information provided by state agencies. (Enacted)

SB 376 relating to a pilot program for language interpreter services under the medical assistance program. (Enacted)

HB 1122 relating to translation of

medical consent forms. (Defeated)

HB 1341 relating to the establishment of qualifications for healthcare interpreters and translators. (Defeated)

But not everything in 2005 was work. We took time out to celebrate AATIA's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a riverboat cruise, during which we shared delicious international dishes, live music, stories of "the early days" from our founders, and poetry readings.

Over the past 20 years, AATIA has become known around the country as a very active, leading-edge local group. The vision we developed so many years ago has become a reality: AATIA is one of the nation's leading resources and advocates for the translation and interpretation community. As evidence of this, several of our members have served on ATA's Board of Directors over the years and, most recently, three of our members ran for Director positions, with Liliana Valenzuela elected to the Board. Our members from the Houston and Dallas areas founded HITA and MITA, respectively, after being inspired by what they saw in Austin. One of our members has served as President of NAJIT, another member founded TAHIT, and two others serve on the Executive Committee of the National

Council on Interpreting in Healthcare. Further evidence of AATIA's leadership and spirit of collaboration is that we have offered to help host the ATA Conference in New Orleans in November 2006, in the absence of a local translators and interpreters association there. You will be hearing more about this in the months ahead. This activity will call for many helping hands and we welcome everyone willing to participate in this special event for ATA and this great networking opportunity for AATIA members.

These first twenty years have been good to us. Let's make the next twenty even better!

—Esther Diaz  
AATIA President. ★

# La Bella Italia

by Tony Beckwith ©2006  
www.tonybeckwith.com

Italy beckoned  
we answered the call  
and had a *stupendo* vacation  
this fall  
Four days in Florence  
five days in Rome  
we felt so Italian  
by the time we came home

Our plane touched down at Fiumicino airport as dawn was breaking. A copse of long-legged Roman pines stood off to one side of the runway, their stylish green canopies flecked with gold from the rising sun. The shuttle driver took us into town, pushing the speed limit all the way, talking on his cell phone and gesturing wildly at every other vehicle on the road. He dropped us at the hotel—hearts pounding, adrenalin pumping—and it suddenly hit us: we were in Rome!

Such a grand, spectacular city. And surprisingly easy to get around in, especially since most of what we wanted to see was within walking distance. We walked about twenty-five miles a day, which is the best way to see it all: the magnificent buildings and monuments and fountains, beautiful balconies and rooftops, and narrow alleys winding this way and that through the belly of the Eternal City. We tossed three coins into the Trevi Fountain, which, according to some, guarantees that we will return. Quite frankly, it won't be soon enough! The Colosseum has been remarkably well restored, and evokes a potent sense of history, of being at the very heart of the Roman Empire. As we walked through the gates of the amphitheater, Lillian thought she heard lions roaring, and we shuddered to think of what took place there two thousand years ago. Twenty centuries! And we are so excited because our house is sixty-five years old.

Such is the presence  
of religion in Rome  
that every few streets  
there's a steeple or dome  
There are priests by the thousands  
and that's no surprise

since they're all tax-exempt  
and don't have to wear ties

We did a lot of walking and gawking, but best of all was hanging out at the cafés in the piazzas—like the Piazza Navona and the Campo di Fiori. Some terrific accordionists serenaded us, playing old favorites like “O Sole Mio” and “Amapola”. In spite of making us feel a little self-conscious, the serenading was beautiful and we loved it just as much as we love hearing Dean Martin sing “When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that's amore!” On a grey, rainy morning we took the number 64 bus to the Vatican and joined the throngs shuffling through the galleries, ooh-ing and aah-ing at the paintings and tapestries and statues.

The Sistine Chapel gave me such an out-of-body feeling  
Perhaps my head just came unhinged  
from gazing at the ceiling

Then we took the train north to Florence, which was wonderful in an entirely different way. So much smaller than Rome, for one thing, and even easier to get around in. Full of tourists, certainly, but not like the Costa Brava in summer or Times Square on New Year's Eve.

Let's go back to Florence  
in October once again  
we can stroll across  
the Ponte Vecchio in the rain  
trudging to the Duomo  
up the narrow, cobbled street  
suffering like pilgrims  
on our swollen, blistered feet

It was heavenly to walk across the Ponte Vecchio, browsing in the jewelry stores clustered on this medieval bridge that has spanned the river Arno for centuries. We strolled along the embankment to the Uffizi Galleries, where we were entranced by the mimes, faces painted and swathed in costume, holding frozen poses and thanking passing tippers with surreptitious winks. Further

uptown, at the Academia, Michelangelo's David took our breath away, and convinced us that no other sculpture would ever seem quite as perfect. One afternoon we hiked up the hill beyond the river to:

The Gardens of the Boboli  
where Earth and heavens meet  
with Tuscan skies above my head  
and Florence at my feet

Though we were constantly in awe of the timeless art and architecture that one sees everywhere in Italy, I kept reminding myself that Italians are also known for their delightful sense of whimsy:

I'd like to be remembered  
with a statue when I'm dead  
but I'd hate to stand for centuries  
with pigeons on my head

We also enjoyed the food, of course, especially one memorable dinner at the Trattoria Marione on the Via della Spada in Florence. I love soups of almost any kind, and really appreciated the *pasta e fagioli* that was on almost every menu.

Lillian finally got  
the spot  
of olive oil off my jeans  
But we've not  
forgot *fagioli*  
is Italian for beans

One evening we found a laundromat on a side street in Florence, and decided to use it. After some false starts we managed to figure out the system, and soon had clothes tumbling in sudsy water. There was a *birreria* across the road, where we asked if we might buy some glasses of wine to take back to the laundromat. Of course, said the young lady behind the bar, why not? Her spontaneous response expressed in a nutshell all the charm and hospitality we encountered on this trip. Bella indeed, this Italia. ★

## Raise your profile with a blog

© 2006, Frank Dietz, [www.frankdietz.com](http://www.frankdietz.com)  
WELL, WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT—now that you are finally comfortable with websites, URLs, and mailing lists, some new forms of information distribution have appeared on the web, blogs and RSS feeds (which will be discussed in a later article). This is of course the nature of the Internet, which never stands still for long.

**Blogs**, which is an abbreviation for weblogs, are basically online journals that discuss pretty much every conceivable topic, from recipes to politics. Naturally, there are also blogs on the topic of translations, such as “About Translations” (<http://abouttranslation.blogspot.com/>) or “Transblawg” ([www.margaretmarks.com/Transblawg](http://www.margaretmarks.com/Transblawg)).

The search engine Technorati ([www.technorati.com](http://www.technorati.com)) will let you search over 20 million blogs.

Of course you can also set up your own blog. There are a number of websites that let you set up a blog for free, such as [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) or [www.iblogs.com](http://www.iblogs.com). The entire setup process takes only a few minutes, and is really quite easy. I recently helped my fiancé set up her own blog ([www.cyberbeader.blogspot.com](http://www.cyberbeader.blogspot.com)) and was amazed how simple the process was. You sign up, select a particular layout and start your first post. There is even a plug-in for MS Word that lets you upload postings, though I have not yet tried that.

Why should you set up your own blog? It gives you increased visibility. If you are an expert on French business law, or the Japanese high-tech industry, you might want to share your insights and thus get better known in your field. You can also list your website in your blog and give it more exposure, or if you do not have a website, you can use the profile section of your blog as a kind of substitute website that describes your qualifications and services.

Of course people have to find your blog first, and there are quite a few (free)

services, such as [pingomatic.com](http://pingomatic.com), [www.pingoat.com](http://www.pingoat.com), or [www.kping.com](http://www.kping.com) that will submit your blog to various directories. Just remember to “ping” these directories each time you update your blog.

And regular updating is the difficult part about blogs: they are very easy to start but hard to maintain. If you are thinking about launching your own blog, you must ask yourself whether you will be able to write something every day or so, for months or even years to come. I have come across a number of blogs that appear to have been abandoned after a few postings.

Maybe the entire blog phenomenon will turn out to be somewhat of a fad, but for now it is an interesting new part of the internet.

[Here are few more language-related blogs that illustrate the breadth of this phenomenon:

[literarytranslators.blogspot.com](http://literarytranslators.blogspot.com)  
[languagehat.com](http://languagehat.com)  
[polyglotconspiracy.net](http://polyglotconspiracy.net)  
[lughat.blogspot.com](http://lughat.blogspot.com)  
[languageglog.org](http://languageglog.org)

And check out Language Sandwich [oreneta.com/language](http://oreneta.com/language) for a list of more language-related blogs.

—Editor] ★

## Global Voices Online: international blogs

IN THE LATE 1990S IBM advertisements featured people around the globe enthusing about the world's growing interconnectedness. Back then the notion was merely a clever ad; today it's an undeniable reality. A new Web service, Global Voices, aims to “call attention to conversations and points of view that ... will shed new light on the nature of our interconnected world.”

From India to Russia, from the Philippines to China, Global Voices tracks and summarizes the blogosphere nation by nation. Some highlights: A fascinating interview with an Afghan blogger, a daily world blog roundup, and an archive of international podcasts. This is citizen talking to citizen, without governments or mass media in between. That can only be a good thing.

Check it out at <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/globalvoices/>. ★





## November meeting reviewed

### Protecting your computer assets

JOHN NEALE FROM AUSTIN FREE-NET showed attendees at our November meeting how to protect against computer catastrophes caused by viruses, worms, and the like with a combination of antivirus software and backups.

#### Malware

Malware are viruses, Trojan horses, worms, adware, and spyware. Viruses are programs that replicate themselves in the machines in several locations such as disks and attached files. Trojan horses appear to be something good because

they can provide a service they were intended to do, sometimes for free, but in the background, they can cause data loss.

One of the key defenses against malware is to adopt the “best practices” policy which consists in making sure where things come from before opening any attachments (mostly when the sender is unknown). Some of the antivirus software that should be considered are Bit Defender, PC-cillin (which includes WiFi and firewall), Norton, and McAfee (both of which require annual renewal).

It is also important to scan a floppy disk whenever we need to use one. Neale also talked about SonicWALL, which prevents access to the Net or network if

the antivirus software has not yet been updated. There are antivirus software updates every day and he suggested performing the virus scan at night when the computer is not in use. Neale recommended Spysweeper, Adware, and Spybot as software that combat adware and spyware. The latter two are free software.

#### Backups

By doing backups we can avoid situations like having our most important files lost or experiencing a hard drive failure just before a deadline. Several types of backups are copying the files to another location, such as removable media or a “keychain” RAM drive that you can store at another location.

Neale also talked about a registry/system state backup which allows you to recover the system. Windows 2000 and XP have a utility that runs the backup and it should be done before running Spybot or loading software. Backup types include “image,” a system backup that restores Windows in the event of a crash; “full,” which restores programs and settings; and “differential” or “incremental,” which backup only the data that has changed since the last backup.

CDs are a cheap way to do backups, and they are the best choice as far as the stability of media is concerned, according to Neale. He also pointed out that CD/RW are not as reliable as CD/R. Tapes are faster and the cheapest per megabyte, although the drive may be costly, and it is also more complex to use. Hard drives are very good but if there is total failure, they are expensive to repair.

To sum up, Neale offered the following advice:

- Copy important data is some way
- Make backup copies of software if you can
- Do not get more technical than your staff can handle
- Consider inconvenience, lost work, and disasters
- Computers may fail us at any time
- Keep a typewriter in the closet

—Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary ★

## What is Web2.0?

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET A GRASP on the buzzword "Web2.0," but it's a slippery one. It seems to encompass the confluence of several tech trends, and there is a lot of overlap.

Web-based services, accessed via browser, now compete with local applications (programs on one's own PC). High-speed connections and new programming tools have made online work practical and even desirable, not to mention free or at a reasonable cost.

The rise in "social" Web apps also contributes to Web2.0. You may now share photos (**flickr.com**), bookmarks (**del.icio.us**), and opinions (in your blog). Some sites offer free or very cheap storage for files of any type: **Xdrive**, the soon-to-be-released **Omnidrive**, and many others.

Personal home pages or portals aren't new, but now they offer optional modules that feed you content drawn from other websites headlines from the news, your favorite blogs, and even subject lines from new email. Check out the customization options on your **Google** or **Yahoo** home pages and try

a variety of news aggregators like **Netvibes** or **Digg**.

The open source (OS) movement also contributes to Web2.0. Coders, designers, and testers form pro bono or nonprofit communities that create new services or software. Many extensions (add-ons) are available for such credible OS alternatives as **Firefox** (MS Internet Explorer replacement), **Thunderbird** (MS Outlook), **OpenOffice** (MS Office equivalent) for local use, as well as browser-based word processing (**Writely**) and other services.

Organizers comprise another major Web 2.0 category. Small companies, nonprofit groups, and freelancers could benefit from online project management, calendaring, and billing services.

By now you are asking, "Why should I use these online services instead of desktop software?" It is true that those with slow or undependable Internet service providers will not find much advantage, if any. But those who travel a lot will appreciate the worldwide availability of their bookmarks, data, and other information. It won't be necessary to synchronize your desktop and laptop computers any more.

Additionally, groups may now collaborate online on password-protected material.

Ultimately, it doesn't matter how you define Web 2.0. It's enough just to take advantage of this new phase of the Internet's evolution.

—R. Michael Conner ★

## ATA shuffles annual conference sites

DESPITE THE DESTRUCTION wrought by hurricane Katrina, the American Translators Association will still hold its 47th annual conference in New Orleans in 2006.

Unfortunately, a major renovation project at the Miami hotel formerly planned for the 2007 conference has caused that conference to move to San Francisco, which was the scheduled venue for 2008. The board is now investigating other possible sites for that year.

The venues for 2009, which is ATA's 50th Anniversary, (New York City) and 2010 (Denver) are unchanged, at least for now. ★

### 29th Annual ALTA Conference

## Scandinavia Meets Asia in the Pacific Northwest

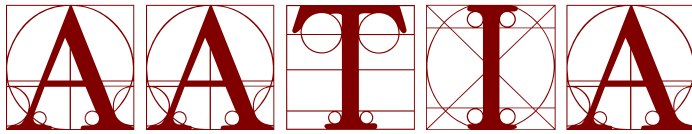
Seattle/Bellevue, WA  
October 18 - 21, 2006

The theme of the 2006 conference has been chosen to reflect the primary cultural poles of the Pacific Northwest: the descendants of the Scandinavian settlers who were the first Europeans to populate the region and the more recent (but well-established) influx from the Asian Pacific Rim.

As always, however, the program will not be limited to events tied to the theme. All ideas and contributions will be warmly encouraged.

Additional information on the conference will be available at the ALTA website **www.literarytranslators.org** in coming months. Until then, the conference organizers look forward to welcoming you to a wonderful conference in the shadow of the Cascade Mountains!

Conference Host Chair: Laura Wideburg [wideburg@ix.netcom.com](mailto:wideburg@ix.netcom.com)



**Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association**  
**PO Box 13331 ★ Austin, TX 78711-3331 ★ 512-707-3900**  
**www.aatia.org**

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

#### **EVENTS IN AUSTIN**

- Jan 14 10:15 a.m. Spanish SIG meeting  
1–4 p.m. AATIA member meeting  
Feb 11 10–12 noon. ISIG meeting  
1–4 p.m. AATIA board meeting

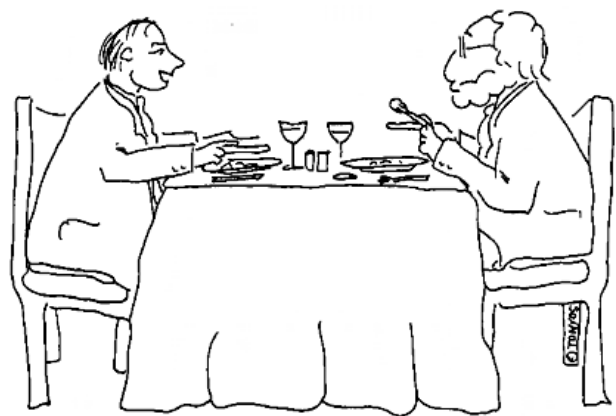
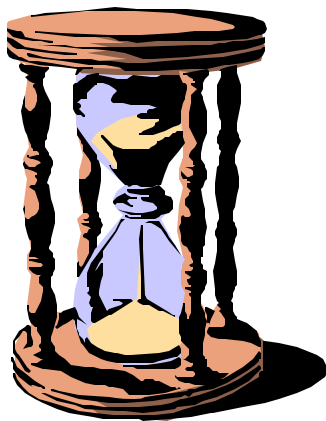
#### **BEYOND AUSTIN**

- May 19–21 **Houston.** 27th Annual Conference of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators  
www.najit.org  
Oct 18–21 **Seattle.** 29th Annual Conference of the American Literary Translators Association  
Nov 2–5 **New Orleans.** 47th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association www.atanet.org

## **Time to renew**

THE NEW YEAR MEANS IT'S TIME TO RENEW AATIA memberships. Current members who have not received renewal notices by mail should contact Membership Director Gisela Greenlee [see page 2] right away or go to [www.aatia.org](http://www.aatia.org) and click on "renew."

Please consider receiving The Letter by electronic download to help reduce printing costs, and sign up for AATIA News to get late-breaking emails on job opportunities, AATIA events, and other news. ★



So if I go the extra mile, who pays for the gas?