

www.aatia.org

The Letter

of the Austin Area Translators
and Interpreters Association

May 2006

May 13 member meeting

Who needs translators? Localization projects do!



DETAILS WERE SKETCHY AT PRESS TIME, but rumor has it that Dr. Tim Altanero from Austin Community College will discuss the role of translators in localization projects at AATIA's May 13 member meeting. ★

Seminars to prep for ATA certification exam

AATIA WILL SPONSOR an ATA certification examination in San Antonio on July 22. Two seminars will precede it, the first in San Antonio on May 13. The date has not been set for the second, which will be held in Austin.

A flyer with details and a registration form will be posted on the AATIA website www.aatia.org. ★

Advance registration deadline looms for NAJIT conference

REGISTER BY MAY 8 TO SAVE on early registration for the annual conference of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, to be held May 19–21 in Houston. Onsite and one-day registration will be available, at higher rates, if space permits. For specifics visit www.najit.org.

The conference will place a special focus on medical interpreting and translating as it relates to judiciary interpreting and translating. Everette Jordan of the National Virtual Translation Center will deliver the keynote address.

This conference is approved for 10 ATA Continuing Education Points, and an application is pending for Texas continuing education credits, including 2 hours of ethics.

NAJIT will hold several preconference workshops as well, but there will be time for entertainment, too. Friday night's party will feature Tommy Dardar and his special brand of swamp blues.

This is a chance to join colleagues for a fabulous opportunity to network, get the latest word on new initiatives, and sharpen interpreting and translating skills. ★

ATA to conduct patent translation seminar in nation's capital

COMBINE BUSINESS AND PLEASURE by joining your colleagues for a full day of in-depth, advanced-level sessions presented by patent experts on June 17, 2006 in Arlington, Virginia, just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C.

- See the documents a patent translator is likely to encounter and learn how they fit into the patent process.
- Understand the practical procedures for drafting and revising a patent translation.
- Acquire techniques for doing "literal" translations and learn how to avoid common pitfalls.

To learn more, visit www.atanet.org/pd/patent. ★

AATIA volunteers sought for New Orleans conference

SINCE LOUISIANA DOES NOT HAVE a local translators and interpreters association, AATIA has stepped forward to assist in coordinating the American Translators Association's 2006 Annual Conference in New Orleans this fall. An AATIA planning committee is forming, and Beth Nazar, who was our guest last fall during and after Hurricane Katrina, will be point person in New Orleans.

Contact Esther Díaz at president@aatia.org to find out how you can help make this conference an event to remember. ★



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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. And at rates like these, you can't afford to miss out on this opportunity.

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May meeting segments reviewed Mentoring Moment: Getting Started

A NEW SEGMENT DEBUTED at the March meeting—the Mentoring Moment. Tony Beckwith emceed a panel discussion designed to provide information for newcomers to the field of translation and interpretation. In this first in a series of sessions, the host and panelists Esther Diaz and Leon McMorrow all talked briefly about how they got started in the business.

Diaz began as a bilingual secretary/translator for the Institute of Latin American Studies and later translated medical records at the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. Her Greek and Latin classes at school helped her with the terminology, and she also consulted with doctors to familiarize herself with medical jargon. Feeling a need to network with other translators, she learned about the American Translators Association at the library. She then got in touch with Harvie Jordan and Albert Bork, and together they made contact with other translators in Austin and founded the AATIA.

McMorrow came to the U.S. from Ireland to finish his education. After obtaining a master's degree in linguistics, he became a translator and got interested in medical terminology. He then worked as an emergency room technician and an Italian interpreter and later founded a language school in Austin at a time when there were no other language schools in town. Esther Diaz and Harvie Jordan contacted him about joining AATIA. He was later recruited as a translator for a

medical company in Houston and has been an Austin-based freelance translator since the 1980s.

Next, Beckwith posed specific questions:

How did you find your first client?

Diaz's first client came by word of mouth.

McMorrow started his own business and promoted his services by attending informal groups and meetings. As he put it, work tends to come to you but word of mouth is fundamental.

After deciding to become a freelance translator, how did you set up your home office?

McMorrow took over the living room. His advice to new translators is to be very strict about their work schedule. He gets 90% of his work through the Internet, and half of it comes from Europe.

Diaz started with a desk in her bedroom but now has her own home office.

How did you find the reference work you need?

McMorrow said it is very different now; the same rules no longer apply. It used to involve visits to the library, but now he uses Google.

Diaz consults with professionals in the field related to the particular translation on which she is working.

The assembled members were then invited to participate in the discussion, which they did, with questions and comments on, among other topics, using Google as a resource for translation work and receiving payment from overseas.

Another Mentoring Moment will be offered at the next meeting on May 13, at which Beckwith and two new panelists will continue to explore the kind of questions for which new translators and interpreters are constantly seeking answers.

—Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary,
and Tony Beckwith ★

Translator at Work: The Nitty-Gritty of Translating Poetry

In the second part of the March AATIA meeting, Fulbright Fellow winner and Portuguese poetry translator Alexis Levitin presented an in-depth analysis of the translation of two poems from Portuguese into English. The poems discussed were *A Rapariga e a Praia* by Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen, a very old sonnet probably written in Italy around the XIV or XV centuries, and *Retrato* by Cecilia Meireles.

Translating rhyme into English

When translating poetry, Levitin's advice is not to focus on the theory of translation, rather one should, instead, focus on the reality of the poem by absorbing the sense of the people, land, and country.

Rhyme does not come as easily in English as it does in either Portuguese or Spanish. For example, in those languages the word "love" rhymes with a wide array of words but not in English. Finding full rhymes is extremely difficult in English, but bearing in mind that rhyme is an important source of order in poetry, Levitin suggests translators aim for an approximate rhyme rather than a full one. Actually, in his "theory" of translation, the concept of "compensation" is central: the translator should strive to produce a poem of equivalent value by using poetic devices like alliteration and rhythm to recreate the emotions and thoughts communicated in the original.

—Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary ★

Joint Venture: The Jugglers

A story by Virginia Brown,
translated from the Spanish by Tony Beckwith
www.tonybeckwith.com

On a recent trip to Buenos Aires I noticed that, although things have improved since the economic crisis that devastated Argentina a few years ago, some people are still living on the fringes and doing whatever they can to earn a few pesos. At traffic lights all over the city, when the light turned red, jugglers appeared and entertained the drivers, then passed the hat just as the light turned green. This reminded me of “Joint Venture”—the story by the Uruguayan writer Virginia Brown that I translated for *Thresholds*, the anthology of world literature that was recently published here in Austin:

HE’D SEEN HIM BEFORE—or someone just like him. But for once, on that rainy afternoon, Juan did not avert his eyes to look down at his dashboard and rationalize, “His parents will take it anyway.” The kid was wearing a large plastic bag, standing in front of the cars at the red light, juggling two oranges in the hopes that his dexterity, or lack of it, would move someone to part with a couple of pesos.

Juan, caught up in his own anxiety, thought of how he too had juggled percentages, acronyms, and English words in the board room, hoping that when the company’s organization chart was shuffled somewhere on the other side of the world nobody would delete Juan.

The light turned green and the cars started honking and moving, and he inched forward. He felt bad. He turned at an intersection and parked on the side street.

He was sweating so profusely that he felt that he too was being soaked by the rain, as though his space-age car and his stylish suit had somehow dissolved and been reduced to something as flimsy as the improvised raincoat the little juggler was wearing. His hands were locked onto the steering wheel.

Juan pictured the boy smiling as he concentrated on keeping the oranges in the air and then, as he panhandled the cars, wiping the smile off his face to shield it from the indifference of the tightly sealed windows. It occurred to Juan that he, drier and better dressed than the kid, hadn’t smiled either during his presentations. This thought made

him chuckle and he loosened his grip on the wheel. With a sigh of determination he took off his tie, shoes and socks, and got out of his car. He retrieved the tennis balls he always kept in the trunk, ever ready to play a game for the sake of public relations.

He walked back through the downpour to the traffic light and introduced himself. The kid’s name was Jonathan.

“Jonathan, we need to sharpen up our strategy here,” said Juan. “Whatever I earn is yours.”

Jonathan shrugged and smiled. Together they waited for the light to change.

When it turned red they stepped out in front of the cars and started performing, the balls spinning clumsily and bouncing off the road. The kid laughed and said, “Hey dude, you’re worse than me.

Nobody’s going to give us anything.”

But when it was time to take up the collection, Juan summoned up all his sophisticated marketing skills and worked the cars with an amusing and convincing line of sales talk. The cash started to flow.

After a good while Juan, who was tired, drenched, and happy invited Jonathan to have a hot dog and they went to the bar at the corner. They counted up their earnings, then ate in silent complicity. Between sips of Coca-Cola, the bun peeped out through Jonathan’s smile.

When they said goodbye Juan gave him the tennis balls. “They’ll improve your image,” he explained.

Juan whistled as he walked back to his car and was still whistling when he drove up to his house in the suburbs.

His wife opened the door, talking on the cordless phone. Juan grabbed the handset from her with his right hand, tossed it into the air, caught it in his left, took her by the waist, spun her around in a tango step, smiled, and told her.

“I got fired.” ★



Getting So Much Better

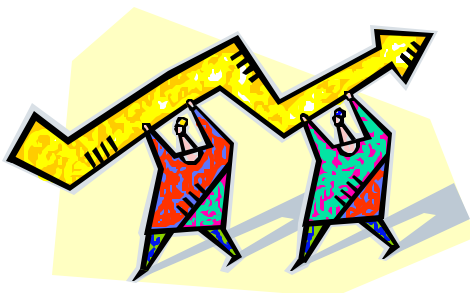
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THE WEB CONSTANTLY ADDS new sites, but sometimes it is nice to see what "old" sites are doing. Here are a few locations that have added new functions or otherwise have become more useful to translators.

First, there is Google. The guys from Mountain View are not just sitting on their pile of cash; they are adding all kinds of new functions (think of Google base, or the new local Froogle shopping function) to their site. **Google Scholar** (<http://scholar.google.com/>), according to Google "covers peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts, and other scholarly literature from all broad areas of research. You'll find works from a wide variety of academic publishers and professional societies, as well as scholarly articles

available across the web." In some cases, the results can even show you whether you can access the full text through your library.

Google Print (<http://print.google.com/googlebooks/about.html>) lets you search the text of



books (from the holdings of several major university libraries) that have been digitized. Right now, though, there is a lawsuit by the Author's Guild going on against this project, claiming copyright violations.

Acronymfinder (www.acronymfinder.com/) has been

around for a long time, but has now greatly improved its interface. The results page now has tabs with such categories as "Information Technology," "Military & Government," "Science & Medicine," etc. that help you focus on the context area of your translation rather than having to scroll through all the possible meanings. An indispensable resource that is now even better!

Not a website, but getting better all the time: **Jost Zetzsche's Tool Kit**, "a biweekly newsletter for people in the translation industry who want to get more out of their computers." Just go to www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit/ to subscribe. The basic edition is free (there is a premium edition that costs \$15/year. Now you will receive an e-mail newsletter every two weeks that contains tips and tricks about the software translators use. Jost has a great knack for finding shortcuts, freebies and other ways to make your working life easier. ★

Beware of this or variations thereof

AATLA member Felipe Perez recently shared via AATLA's listserv his recent experience with a phone scammer who evidently targeted language professionals. Perez's email describing the conversation appears here.

I JUST (11:45 AM, 4/14/06) RECEIVED a call from someone claiming to be from the University of Texas and asking for money. I've done much work for UT before, so it did not seem strange. At first I thought it was work-related and let him go on. He read me a radio spot and as he was doing so I thought he was going to ask me to translate it or hire me as voice talent.

What he wanted was to sell me a set of 30-second spots in one of their radio stations for \$350 for twice a day for a week, or a lower rate (I forget how much) for 3 days a week. He specifically mentioned calling language companies because of current events like immigration reform. The spot was about

language and how my company (he was interspersing the name of my old company in the stock ad) supports diversity, language, and such. I have to admit it sounded like a really good statement of beliefs, but it was hardly a good ad, i.e., it did not mention something as basic as what my company does. After asking him a few questions (see below) I told him this was not for me because I doubted the demographic that listens to their stations is one that buys my services. He then tried to get off the line with me before I could probe any more.

The caller has a very well-spoken demeanor and a good voice, sounds like the real deal. The following tipped me off:

1. He was using my old company name from several years ago. He appeared confused when I told him so and was a little too insistent asking my new company name.

2. First he claimed it was UT, then the radio station. When I asked if the spot was to air in KUT, he said it was to

be with KVRX, the student radio station. I doubted UT is directly involved with KUT fundraising. I know KUT and KVRX are not affiliated. Also these radio stations do their fundraising on the air, not calling people, as far as I know.

3. He claimed the spot was to be broadcast during rush hour. I know KVRX only transmits 9 pm to 9 am, because they share the frequency with KOOP during the day. That is something he did not know and was further confused when I told him.

4. When I asked him to send me information by mail he became flustered. Said this was something that needed to be done today, as they were wrapping up the campaign.

5. He was too eager to let me off the line toward the end, usually these guys insist. Don't they?

6. I called KVRX; they know nothing about this and said they would pass it on to management. ★



What a babe!

Beth and Gabriel Nazar announce the birth of their son, Lucas, on April 10. He weighed in at 8 lbs, 6 oz. and was 20 inches long. Lucas was also greeted by older sister Sophia. AATIA hosted Beth at the AATIA member meeting in September, when she was taking refuge in Austin from Hurricane Katrina. She will be the point person in New Orleans for the AATIA and HITA members who will be assisting in "local" hosting duties at the ATA conference this fall. ★



March 25, 2006 Meeting San Antonio special interest group explored

Meeting participants: Doris Cabezas, Raquel de Roo, Ezequiel Quijano, Alvaro Peluffo, Esther Diaz, Maria Victoria Ryan, Andres Csihas, Tessa Dodds, Cecilia Williamson, Andrea Nemeth-

Neuhauser, Elizabeth Vazquez, Camelia Joffe, Miryam Van Beveren, Celina Wilt, Edward Palm, Vesna Zrinski, Edgar Terrazas

Doris Cabezas led introductions and explained that the purpose of this meeting was to determine whether there was interest in forming a group of translators and interpreters in San Antonio under the umbrella of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association.

Doris then presented the history and lessons learned from a previous group, the Association of Translators and Interpreters of San Antonio (ATISA).

Esther Diaz then led a discussion of possible activities for this group and AATIA's role. Participants suggested the following activities:

Education and Training —Interested in establishing a college degree program in translation and interpreting somewhere in Texas. In the interim, interested

in continuing education workshops for licensed court interpreters. (CE Requirement becomes effective in 2007). Topics: Medical, ethics.

ATA certification exam—Interested in exam sitting in San Antonio.

Certification information sessions—Interested in ATA certification information sessions to be held soon to inform prospective candidates of eligibility requirements for exam, information about the exam itself, grading criteria, etc., then closer to exam sitting date to prepare candidates for the exam.

Mentoring —Interested in setting up a mentoring program for people entering the profession and also interested in participating in ATA's School Outreach Program to make the profession known to students.

The next meeting of the San Antonio Special Interest Group is scheduled for Saturday, May 6th. For details, contact DorisCabezas@sbcglobal.net. ★



Sojourn solicits submissions

SOJOURN IS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL of arts and humanities published through the University of Texas at Dallas. The journal features publications in art, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and translation.

Currently, Sojourn is looking for submissions in the translation category. Because we have editors and volunteers trained in many languages, we accept translations in just about any language; if you have a question regarding a language, please email the address listed below. Those interested should submit one fiction piece or two poems, plus original language text. Translation submissions should not exceed 10 pages double-spaced; works that exceed the page number restriction will be rejected.

Those interested should submit their translation with the original and cover letter (in Word format) to: sojourn@utdallas.edu.

Please refer to the Sojourn website www.sojournjournal.org for additional submission information, guidelines, and deadlines. ★



2006 Agents and Editors Conference

Friday–Sunday, June 23–25, 2006

Austin Marriott at the Capitol, 701 East 11th Street, Austin

www.writersleague.org/agents2006.htm

The Austin Writers' League's annual Agents and Editors Conference is an excellent opportunity to take your writing to the next level.

Whether your focus is fiction or nonfiction, you can benefit from participating in this energizing conference.

Meet and socialize with prominent agents, editors and writers in the laid-back atmosphere of downtown Austin. Benefit from their expertise during panel discussions and breakout sessions led by published authors.

Your registration includes a one-on-one consultation with an agent or editor. The sooner you register, the better your chances to get the agent or editor of your choice.



WRITERS'
LEAGUE
OF TEXAS

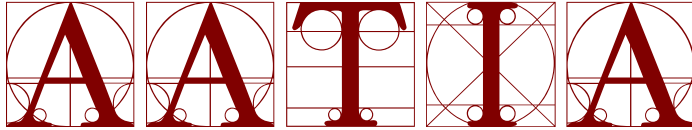


New Valenzuela translation hits bookstores

LILIANA VALENZUELA EVIDENTLY HAS NO TROUBLE staying busy. Her most recent translation, the young adult novel *En busca de milagros*, by Julia Alvarez [see cover, left], will be published May 9, 2006, by Random House Books for Children.

Valenzuela was invited by the Indiana Review to read at Indiana University, Bloomington, on April 6, from her original essay "A Mexican Invented Color T.V.," which will appear in the journal's upcoming special issue on Latino-Latina writers in the United States.

Valenzuela also taught two translation classes at The Florida Center for the Literary Arts at Miami-Dade College on March 31 and April 1, 2006. ★



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

EVENTS IN AUSTIN

May 13 10:15 a.m. Spanish SIG meeting
1–4 p.m. AATIA member meeting
Jun 3 2–4 p.m. LitSIG meeting.9
Jun 10 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



Congratulations to
Ed and Ingrid Lansford
on their
25th anniversary



Last night I dreamed
that the envelope was pushing *me*!