



inforMATION

Issue 12 Spring 2007

From the President

Fellow MATI Members:

Greetings and welcome to a new spring. It is great to see and smell the blooming flowers and thinking of making those plans for traveling during the summer. However, remember that MATI is busy as usual. We just had a very successful educational event in Madison, Wisconsin and we would like to thank all of our sponsors who helped us with this event, American Family Insurance, International Translators, SWITS, Ltd., United Translators, and especially The Geo Group who arranged for the meeting place and all of the onsite coordination. Read about some of the presentations in this edition of *inforMATION*.

Elections for new board members will take place in April and we will post the results after the deadline for voting. New board members will be installed at the Annual Business Meeting on June 3, 2007 in Chicago. Please come to have Brunch with the Board and network with other MATI members. Our extra special thanks to the Nominating Committee, Patrice Van Hyle, Supervisor, Jacques Lacava, Tom Bonsett, and Adalia Jansen.

The National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC) will be holding their First Annual Conference in Chicago June 30 and July 1. MATI has been involved in helping with some of the onsite information, and this will be a good opportunity for those in the area to offer support for this NCIHC initiative and to help with onsite activities.

We have scheduled our Fourth Annual MATI Conference which will be hosted by Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin on Saturday, September 8, 2007. If you are in that area and can help with planning, please contact us. We would also like to know what types of presentations or workshops you would like, so please send us that information also.

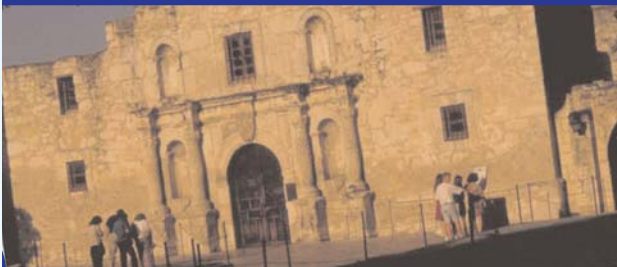
Best regards,
Enrica Ardemagni
MATI President
eardema@iupui.edu

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An Interview with Shiva Bidar-Sielaff

By Barbara Collignon

Based on her Power Point presentation, "National Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care: Raising the Quality of Interpreting in Health Care", delivered at the MATI Educational Event in Madison, March 10, 2007

MATI: What is the mission of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care?

Bidar-Sielaff: to promote culturally competent professional health care interpreting as a means to support equal access to health services for individuals with limited English proficiency.

What are standards of practice?

They are the accepted protocols professional interpreters need in order to meet the core obligations of our profession. They are a clear set of guidelines that delineate expectations for the interpreter's conduct and practice.

What is the difference between the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice?

A code of ethics answers the question, "What should I do?" Standards of practice answer the question, "How do I do it?"

Please elaborate a bit.

A code of ethics provides a set of principles or values that govern the conduct of members of a profession while they are engaged in the enactment of that profession. It gives guidelines for making judgments about what is acceptable and desirable behavior in a given context or in a particular relationship.

Standards of practice define what an interpreter does in the performance of his or her role—the tasks and skills

the interpreter should be able to perform in the course of fulfilling the duties of the profession and they ensure a consistent quality of performance.

You stated there are 32 standards of practice and that they are grouped under 9 headings demonstrating the relationship of the standards to the nine ethical principles of the National Code of Ethics. What are the 9 principles of this code?

Accuracy, Confidentiality, Impartiality, Respect, Cultural Awareness, Role Boundaries, Professionalism, Professional Development and Advocacy.

What steps should the interpreter take to assure accuracy?

The interpreter should render all messages accurately and completely, without adding, omitting, or substituting. He/she replicates the register, style and tone of the speaker. The interpreter advises parties that everything said will be interpreted and manages the flow of communication. The interpreter corrects errors in interpretation and maintains transparency.

What should the interpreter do to respect the principle of confidentiality?

The interpreter does not disclose information outside the treating team, except with the patient's consent or if required by law. The interpreter protects written patient information in his or her possession.

How does an interpreter avoid the effect of interpreter bias or preference?

The interpreter doesn't allow personal judgments of cultural values to influence objectivity. He/she discloses potential conflicts of interest, withdrawing from assignments of necessary.

One of the ethical principles we must follow is to treat all parties with respect. How does an interpreter acknowledge the inherent

dignity of all parties in the encounter?

The interpreter uses professional, culturally appropriate ways of showing respect. He/she promotes direct communication among all parties in the encounter and promotes patient autonomy.

Sometimes cultural differences may impede communication. How can the interpreter facilitate communication when there are cultural differences?

The interpreter strives to understand the cultures associated with the languages he or she interprets, including biomedical culture. The interpreter alerts all parties to any significant cultural misunderstanding that arises.

One of the ethical principles says the interpreter must maintain the boundaries of the professional role and refrain from personal involvement. How does the interpreter avoid conflicts of interest?

The interpreter limits personal involvement with all parties during the interpreting assignment by limiting his or her professional activity to interpreting within the encounter.

Interpreters are expected to act at all times in a professional and ethical manner. How does the interpreter uphold the public's trust in professionalism?

The interpreter is honest and ethical in all business practices. He/she prepares for all assignments and is careful to disclose skill limitations with respect to particular assignments. The interpreter avoids sight translation, especially of complex or critical documents, if he or she lacks sight translation skills.

This is interesting. Often times a physician or nurse will ask an interpreter to "sight" translate a lengthy document with legal implications (such as a surgery consent form) What do you advise?

The provider should explain the content and the interpreter will interpret. The interpreter



should say, “I’m sorry. This is too complex a document to sight translate. My skills do not permit me to do it. If you explain it, I will interpret to the patient.”

How else can the interpreter uphold the public’s trust?

The interpreter advocates for working conditions that support quality interpreting. They show respect for professionals with whom they work and they act in a manner befitting the dignity of the profession and in a manner appropriate to the setting.

What do you advise regarding professional development?

It is important for the interpreter to develop language and cultural knowledge and interpreting skills by participating in organizations and activities that contribute to the development of the profession. He/she sees feedback to improve his or her performance and supports the professional development of fellow interpreters.

Under what circumstances should the inter-

preter become an advocate?

Bidar-Sielaff: The interpreter may speak out to protect an individual from serious harm or to correct mistreatment or abuse.

What are the challenges in creating the National Standards of Practice?

To design standards on and solidify existing work and to ensure its relevance to all health care interpreters, irrespective of the languages or particular

venue in which interpreters work. It’s a big struggle. They are Eurocentric standards. We don’t want standards that might cause social injustice.

What should the standards be used for?

They should be used for training, hiring and performance monitoring.

They should also be used for discussion on certification of professional competence.

How can one get more information on National Standards of Practice?

You can download the entire document at no charge from our website, www.ncihc.org.

Bidar-Sielaff joined the University of Wisconsin Hospital & Clinics in 1997. She speaks four languages: English, Spanish, French and Farsi. She obtained her B.A. from the School of Interpreters, University of Hainaut, in Mons, Belgium, and her M.A. from the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California.

On a national level, she has worked extensively on issues of equal access to health care for limited English proficient (LEP) individuals. She is the Co-Chair of the Standards, Training and Certification Committee of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care.

Barbara Collignon is Vice-President of MATI. She has a MA in French from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A former French teacher, she has been a professional French to English translator and interpreter since the beginning of the year 2000.

Say What? - The lighter side of T&I

The Interpreter needs clarification please...

Funniest question of the week: "How old was the child when he was born?" After asking for clarification, the provider repeated the same question. I finally said, "What do you mean by that question??" Answer: "Well, the child was premature, so how many weeks of gestation?"
~ Ann Van Dixhorn, Spanish-English medical interpreter

Do you have a humorous or out of the ordinary anecdote to share? Send it to the editor to be included in the next issue of *inforMATION*.

Presentation Summary: Breaking into the Voice-Over Industry

By Barbara Collignon

Have you ever wondered what other kinds of work your skills as a linguist might open to you besides translation and interpretation? Attendees at a recent MATI event heard Douglas Swenson of The Geo Group Corporation deliver an excellent presentation on the exciting voice-over industry. Swenson was one of three featured speakers at the MATI educational event held March 10 in Madison, Wisconsin.

Douglas Swenson is an Audio/Video Producer with a BA in Theatre and Drama from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a TESOL Certificate from the School of International Training from the Centro Espiral Mana, in Alajuela, Costa Rica. His professional experience as an ESL teacher makes Swenson uniquely qualified to work in The Geo Group's in-house AV Department. Swenson directs foreign language talent to deliver accurate and energetic reads for cor-

porate videos, marketing programs and training multimedia series. He produces in all media forms and in over 60 languages.

What is voice -over?

Voice-over is that disembodied voice you hear in various kinds of programs. You've probably seen examples of it in sales videos and commercials. But it is also used widely in training videos, infomercials, corporate videos and various kinds of educational videos. More recently it has begun to be used in "webinars", e-learning, pod-casts, and audio files.

In his presentation *How to Break into the Voice-Over Industry*, Douglas Swenson offered yet another way for linguists to use their skills. According to Swenson, there is a shortage of local talent since most foreign language specialists who could do voice-over work are back home in their

native countries. Swenson would like to build a base of talent who don't necessarily do voice-over professionally. There is a learning curve, of course, but he is building professionalism here in Wisconsin at the Geo Group.

What makes good voice talent?

Swenson looks for "standard" language, the type of accent one might find listening to the radio. He has to consider his audience and work from there. For example, if he would use standard Mandarin in Beijing, he could get into trouble. Once he recorded someone who spoke low German when the client needed high German. He sent the demo to the client as a sample and told attendees about the client's response, "I'll never forget this e-mail: 'We cannot use this voice. We can never use this voice.'"

Swenson's background and experience in theater and directing have been invaluable to him in this work since he "directs" the videos so that the correct voice and tone come across. He has to consider regional accents and the tone, pitch and age of the voice. A session checker compares the script to the video. This person is always a native speaker of the language being recorded. Swenson is looking for native speakers. They need to be good readers who are comfortable using their voices and can make sense of a script. He needs talent who can deliver on cue and have the ability to be directed.

According to Swenson, people providing voice-over talent often receive the script just the day or night before a recording session, along with the video, which may be in .mpeg or Quick-Time movie format and run ten to thirty minutes in length. Talent needs to practice speaking with the video, in order to match the timing and be finished speaking when the video ends. They also need to take notes indicating when to slow down or speed up during the recording session.

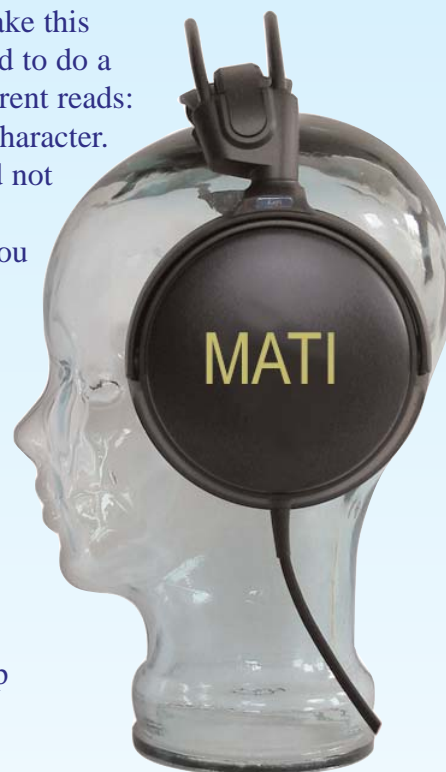
In the studio, it is important that the recording session starts on time. The client may attend in person or remotely. The checker also attends the session. Re-recording may occur as corrections or

changes are made. Sometimes voice work is done remotely when recordings have to be updated. Swenson then has to track down his speakers. He has a studio equipped with a phone patch or ISDN and records in his studio while the speaker might be half a world away.

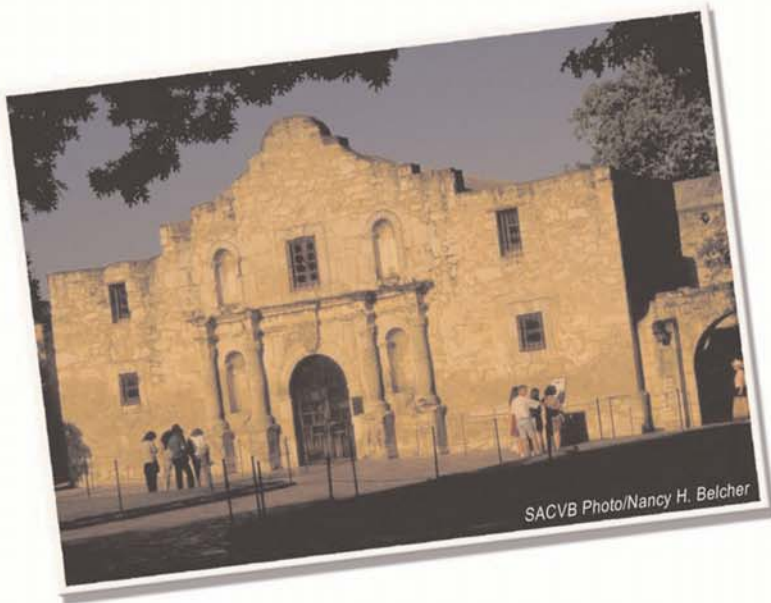
Swenson works with native speakers of 60 languages and is always looking for talent in all languages, including Russian, Somali, Farsi, even Icelandic. Prospective voice-over talent must have a work visa and be flexible.

If you are interested in doing voice-over work, you need to make a demo recording yourself speaking your native language. You can probably do this at home and it should not cost a lot to make this demo. You need to do a variety of different reads: narration and character. Each read need not be more than a minute long. You can send it to Swenson electronically via MP3 or by mailing a CD.

Douglas Swenson
Audio/Video Producer
The Geo Group
6 Odana Court
Madison, WI 53719
USA
+1 608 230-1000



Barbara Collignon is Vice-President of MATI. She has a MA in French from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A former French teacher, she has been a professional French to English translator and interpreter since the beginning of the year 2000.



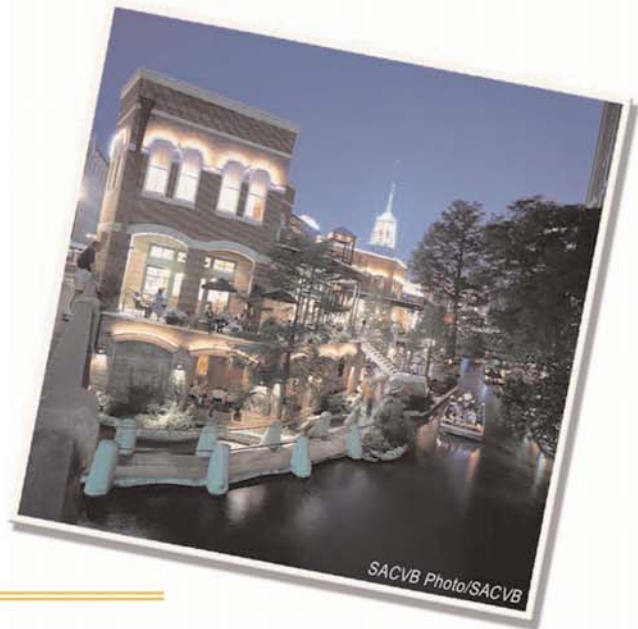
"Deep in the Heart of Translation Trends"

8th Annual Conference

Translation Company Division - American Translators Association
July 26-29, 2007 - Hyatt Regency, San Antonio, TX, USA

Highlights:

- Thursday evening reception and banquet
- Two days (Friday and Saturday) of informative educational sessions tailored to the needs and concerns of translation company owners and managers
- Topics will focus on workflow technology and project management
- Plenty of time and opportunity for networking, networking, and more networking!
- Optional Friday or Saturday evening activity exploring the sounds and flavors of San Antonio (www.sanantoniocvb.com)
- Sunday morning buffet breakfast



**Advertising, exhibit, and sponsorship opportunities available.
Stay tuned to www.ata-divisions.org/TCD for more information!**

Kim Vitray
TCD Administrator
vitray@mcelroytranslation.com
512-472-6753



Ellen Boyar
TCD Assistant Administrator
ellen.boyar@thomson.com
215-386-0100 ext. 1331

Report on Tarragona Translation Seminar

By Vicki Bermúdez

I was excited.

My husband, daughter and I were visiting family in Barcelona, Spain, last May, and I had scheduled it at the same time that a translator's seminar in Tarragona would be taking place, making the trip partially deductible as a business expense. Unfortunately, due to our tight schedule, I was only going to be able to attend one of the sessions.

The seminar was being given by the Intercultural Studies Group (ISG) at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili, which offers free seminars for training researchers in translation studies. The university is in the ancient city of Tarragona, a city with numerous sections of walls dating from the times of the Romans. I had visited there years ago, and fallen in love with the city.

In this instance, the ISG was giving a series of lectures from 5/24-6/2, titled *Translation Studies and the Translation Profession*. Not being a researcher myself, I contacted the organizer, Anthony Pym, to inquire as to the possibility of attending one or more lectures as a University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee student in translation and interpreting studies. He put me in contact with Alexander Perekrestenko, who welcomed me cordially. He informed me that the free lectures were a part of the university's Ph.D. training course in translation studies and was open to students and researchers from other academic institutions, as well as those directly involved with the Universitat. Christiane Nord, a retired Professor of Translation Studies and Specialized

Communications at the University Of Applied Sciences Of Magdeburg/Germany, was the guest lecturer for the session I attended.

During the lecture, which was more of a workshop than a lecture, Nord distributed a short paragraph from a novel and asked students to evaluate the translation. A lively discussion followed as to the merits of the translation. The piece we were given had to do with the author's children, who were romping on a reddish orange shag carpet. In translating it, we were faced with a cultural difficulty. Many people in the United States would understand the word perfectly, but in a country where carpets are not common, it presented a linguistic challenge.

The rest of the sentence also posed a problem, because it was related to a particular type of carpet. I don't remember the specifics, but if I set forth the example of a toy car being able to roll along fairly well on a tightly woven Berber carpet, as compared with being unable to roll at all on a long-haired shag carpet, it gives you an idea of the type of challenge the sentence posed.

Having just finished a university course in translation from English to Spanish, in which we used *A Textbook of Translation* by Peter Newmark, I was extremely interested in the subject. I had learned that there are several ways of handling challenges in translating. One way is to simply explain the word in the target language. Another is to coin a word, approximating it into the target language. A third option is to not translate the word at all, leaving it in the source language,

either with or without an explanation.

Newmark expounded on several translation theories, and I found that the one I agreed with most closely was the one in which a translator does his very best to translate exactly as the original author has written, sometimes called “formal equivalency.” The one I completely disagreed with was at the opposite end of the spectrum, in which a translator simply explains the author’s ideas. This is sometimes called “paraphrasing.” Between these two theories is the concept of “dynamic equivalency” — to translate as literally as possible — but when that becomes challenging, the translator attempts to explain, within the translation, what the original author meant, keeping in mind cultural differences between the recipients of the source text and the terminal text. Equating this to interpreting, it would roughly be the difference between interpreting in the first person, (akin to formal equivalency) as contrasted with explaining what the person means (akin to paraphrasing). Somewhere in the middle would be the use of the third person, i.e. “So-and-so says...” (akin to dynamic equivalency).

I surmised that Nord held to a belief in dynamic equivalency. In doing further research, I found that I was correct and that she believes chiefly in three elements of this translation theory. In Nord’s 1991 book *Text Analysis in Translation: Theory, Methodology, and Didactic Application of a Model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis*, she sets forth these elements. Very briefly, she says that, first, the translator must be aware of extra-textual elements; that is, he should have knowledge of such factors as who the original author is and what his intention is in writing his message.

Second, the translator must know who the recipient of the message will be. This knowledge will enable him to be sensitive to the cultural context. Since words themselves are related to context, a word may not mean the same thing in both languages. Nord gives the example of the word “tabloid,” as used in England and in Italy. Denotatively, both mean a publication that is half the size of a traditional newspaper. In England, however, the connotative meaning is pejorative and sensationalist. In Italy, no such meaning is attached.

By implication the writer of the English tabloid has in mind an audience of a more limited cultural context than his Italian counterpart. In both cases a journalist must keep in mind the age, sex, education level, social background, geographic origin, social status and role of the recipient. The English writer, however, can use a lower level of language than the Italian journalist, based on his knowledge of his readers. If the original writer knows this, and chooses his words accordingly, the translator should be aware of it as well.

Third, the medium by which the message is transmitted is also important, and will therefore influence the tone used. Technical writing for a tool manual, for example, differs greatly from the tone a colloquial newspaper columnist would use. The translator must know, therefore, from what vantage point the messenger is writing. Given all of these elements, Nord professes a belief that a translator must, of necessity, translate not only the words, but have an understanding of the original author’s intent and of the audience’s cultural context.

There were only a few students in the lecture and it became clear that most of the students accepted what Nord propounded. One, however, argued against it. Since I was a guest, I refrained from giving my opinion, but later sought out that student, wondering if she and I were in translation-theory agreement, namely, that the most literal translation, i.e., formal equivalency, was the best and highest standard for which to strive, regardless of the intent of the author or the recipient audience. Indeed, I found that we both adhered to that belief, that in order to do justice to the original author, it was important to preserve the specific, original words. This becomes particularly important when translating an original piece, such as a novel, poem, or legal document.

Since the excerpt we had been given was from a novel, we believed the author’s words were more important than simply the meaning. If I had had the opportunity to translate the paragraph, I would have considered other ways of meeting the challenge. I may have used the closest word as possible in the target language for carpet (for example, the word rug), but I would not have explained it within the



translation. Rather, I may have added a translator's note to explain that a shag rug is fibrous and thick, which prevents the toy car from rolling easily. I would have stopped at the description "fibrous and thick" had it not been for the fact that the toy car rolling easily was important to the paragraph. Or, if there were many words and concepts in the novel that were foreign to the reader, I may have added a glossary to the book. Or, I may have left the word in the source language, with quotation marks, leaving it to the reader to look it up in a bilingual dictionary.

In keeping to the most literal translation, the preservation of the tone and flavor of the original document is upheld. Such things are what distinguish one author from another in the source language. Words indeed have meaning and context, but the specific words chosen and the order in which they are written are part of what gives a piece its particular tone and flavor in the original language. Paraphrasing, by its very nature, will lose much of the author's individual tone, and dynamic equivalency will necessarily lose some percentage of it as well. In both instances, the translator is involved in inserting his understanding of the author's intent, which will color his translation accordingly.

A question I could not help but ask myself involved the fact that Nord is co-translating a new German version of the Bible with her husband. Since she is a proponent of dynamic equivalency, what, I wondered, would prevent her from inserting her own meaning into the words,

rather than translating them as closely as possible from whatever source text she is using? In addition, how many times removed is she, as a translator, from the original Bible texts, or even from the oldest sources that are known to us today? Furthermore, how far a jump would it be for Nord, or for other translators, to include gender-specific language in the Bible, even though it was written with the all-inclusive words "man" and "mankind," to indicate both men and women? How important are the little words, such as "a" and "the," for example, in translating the words of Jesus Christ as "I am a way..." (one of many roads to God) versus "I am the way," (the only way to God)? What implications might such translations have for readers, as some attempt to integrate biblical teachings, or what they think are biblical teachings (but which may be skewed by the translator's own understanding, perhaps erroneous) into their lives?

These types of questions have, in fact, been raised within circles of the American Translators Association. At the 43rd Annual ATA Conference, Peter Silzer addressed the gender neutral/gender accurate issue. ATA's monthly publication, *The Chronicle*, has also devoted space to it, in articles by both Silzer and Nord. In addition, Nord presented a paper at the conference of the European Society of Translation Studies in Copenhagen in 2001 titled *What About Functions in Bible Translation?*

In fact, it was the very title of that paper which sparked my interest in the Tarragona seminar in the first place, since Nord was scheduled to give a lecture on it. However, the day that Nord was scheduled to lecture, we had planned to be in Seville, so I was unable to attend. Be that as it may, having attended the lecture that I did, I came away with a renewed understanding of translation theories and what the practical application of those theories can mean in terms of influencing others. And I am convinced now, more than ever, of the imperative to translate literally, for they are not to be my own words, or my own ideas, but rather, those of the author.

Welcome new MATI members:

Ondina Andino-Salgado

Edmund K. Asare

Vicki Bermúdez

Marie Clark-Doane

Imelda Dávalos

Assane Diakhate

Natalia V. Dmitrieva

Claudia Garay

Kristof Haavik

Ana A. Hantke

Michelle Bounghning Her

Cynthia R. Herber

Sandy Read Hofmann

Joann Jelenic

Daina Jauntirans

Aniko Karadi

Yolanda Kruhaj

Elisabeth Lyman

Lindsey S. New

Alicia Padovano

Alexis Pollitz

Theresa Rasmussen

Aliyah B. Seck

Mary A. Sicard

Crystal A. Szymanski

David J. Wagstaff

Casa Pérez Real Estate

Culturalink, Inc

Translatus, Inc



Newsletter Guidelines

We encourage our members to actively contribute to *inforMATION*. We ask that you submit items of interest in the fields of translation, interpretation, and languages. Below is a list of submission types we accept:

- ◆ comments on issues within the profession
- ◆ letters to the editor
- ◆ biographies
- ◆ book reviews
- ◆ Q&A
- ◆ summaries of monthly meetings
- ◆ announcements such as awards, job opportunities, weddings
- ◆ announcements of events relating to the profession

Maximum length for features is 2500 words. Photographs and graphics in the form of .gif or .jpeg are also accepted.

Submission deadlines:

- ◆ April 1 for the Spring issue
- ◆ July 1 for the Summer issue
- ◆ October 1 for the Fall issue
- ◆ January 5 for the Winter issue.

Microsoft Word files may be sent as e-mail attachments, with clearly labeled e-mail subjects. File extensions (*.rtf or *.doc) should be added to short file names. Do not send files with *.exe extensions. Please add a title and author's name inside the word file-please do not put it only in the e-mail. Add 3-4 lines of biographical information at the end of the article.

Submit articles to the Editor at matiemail@gmail.com. The editor reserves the right to edit each article.

