

Upcoming Events:

Feb. 6 is the application deadline for participation in the accreditation test Feb. 20 on the UW campus. If you still wish to be included, please call 361-0369 (Willy) or 527-0994 (Laura) immediately.

Friday March 4: "MEET THE BOARD" Cocktail Party. The ATA Board will be holding its quarterly meeting in Seattle March 4-6 and is inviting all area ATA members to a cocktail hour on Friday March 4 from 6:00 to 7:15 pm, followed by a discussion on the upcoming conference. This is your opportunity to meet the directors, learn about the conference, and ask any questions you like! The activity will take place in the Presidential Suite of the Stouffer Madison Hotel (Madison between 5th and 6th Ave). Please let us know by Feb. 20 whether you are planning to attend, either by calling one of the numbers listed above or by returning the form on the last page of this newsletter.

"Newsletter" News

Although a number of readers have responded favorably to the first "Informal Newsletter" (November), our request for contributions of \$1 per person to help defray postage and printing costs is repeated here for those who intended to participate but forgot, and for new readers who wish to remain on the mailing list.

The article below was contributed by Judy Langley (a former United Nations translator and long-time ATA member who recently moved to Seattle), and the (unofficial) editor hopes the article will help convince readers that it is worthwhile to support the newsletter—with written material as well as operating funds—as a first step toward the establishment of a local translators/interpreters group. If you would like to be part of such a group, please take the time to fill out and return the Reader Survey on the last page of this newsletter.

Note: Letters to the Editor and (short) articles of interest to the readers are invited and should be sent to Willy V. Evans (see name list).

WHY ORGANIZE?

by

Judy Langley

It is 7 p.m. You're working on a rush translation due the next morning. You stumble on a term you cannot translate. It is crucial to the text, and you can't go on translating without it. However, your experience and your home library of references are of no avail. You would like to consult a colleague, but you don't know whom to call.

This scenario, although not commonplace, probably occurs often enough to bear out the familiar assumption that most translators work in isolation from others in their profession, possibly even unaware of the languages and subject specialties of other local translators. Knowing other professionals in our field to consult about a terminology problem obviously is just one reason why joining a local translators and interpreters group would prove beneficial. Other advantages were summarized by Javier Escobar, a former ATA Chapters Committee Chairman, when he wrote in his 1981 report to the ATA Board of Directors that participation in a regional group "creates an opportunity for action where translators truly associate, where they can readily be identified as a real interest group, where immediacy and strength through numbers [offer] a possibility for action . . . through the exchange of ideas, through the sharing of resources, through the pooling of talent, and finally, through the coordinated and aggressive pursuit of particular and common objectives."

There undoubtedly is much we can learn from one another. All it takes is the willingness to attend meetings, participate in the group's activities, lend a hand with its projects, in short, demonstrate our commitment to our chosen profession by sharing with like-minded colleagues.

Moreover, the fact that ATA will be holding its 29th Annual Conference in Seattle in October of this year presents the professional interpreters and translators of this area with a timely opportunity and compelling reason to organize now. By conscientiously launching our efforts well before October, we can be a visible, vocal force at the Conference. We can become a force that practicing local translators and interpreters who are not ATA members, as well as representatives of the Seattle area business, media, government and educational communities attending the Conference, cannot fail to notice. Such visibility can serve us well, provided that we approach the organizational tasks immediately ahead with foresight and dedication to professional excellence.

Among the specific programs which a local interpreters and translators group might undertake would be workshops (those of general interest to the profession, as well as language-, subject- or industry-specific sessions), ATA accreditation exam preparation sessions, a formal newsletter, translation users' panel, and professional services directory. Topics to be addressed might include computer hardware and software, dictionaries and other resources, translator and interpreter training, relations between translation bureaus and free-lancers, court interpreting and literary translation. These are just a few ideas. No doubt you have additional suggestions to offer. You are invited to share them and help establish a local translators and interpreters group here in the Seattle area.
