

November 13 meeting

Raise your voice

LAINIE FRASIER WILL PRESENT “Voice-acting Opportunities for Foreign Language Professionals” at AATIA’s next meeting.

Frasier boasts over 1500 credits and nearly 30 years’ experience in radio, TV, industrial, and animation voice-over, winning numerous awards for acting and audio-producing. She can currently be heard on projects for the Texas Department of Health and Department of Transportation, City of Austin, Thundercloud Subs, and Village Builders Homes. Animation credits include Wedding Peach, Final Fantasy Unlimited, Sonic the Hedgehog, and Fist of the North Star.

Frasier also conducts workshops on topics such as creating voices, winning auditions, and the business of the profession. She also guest lectures for the UT College of Fine Arts, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, UT’s Informal Classes, Reel Women in Film, and Austin Information Radio.

Schedule permitting, AATIA member Tony Beckwith will share his experiences as a language professional who occasionally does voice work. Others with voice-acting experience are also encouraged to attend. ★

Bobeck awarded first Berger Prize

THE S. EDMUND BERGER PRIZE for Excellence in Scientific and Technical Translation was awarded for the first time at the 2004



ATA Conference in Toronto to former AATIA President Patricia Bobeck.

The American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) awards the \$1000 prize to recognize excellence in scientific and technical translation by an ATA member.

Kendall Hunt Publishing Company of Dubuque, Iowa, published

2005 Board of Directors elected

TWO NEWCOMERS TO THE AATIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS will join four incumbents in 2005. Results of the recent balloting are given below: Outgoing Secretary Janet Peirce, who is also in charge of the election process, thanked all the candidates for their willingness to serve on the new board. She also thanked Tellers Committee members Gloria K. González and Renee Tanksley.

| Office | Candidate | Votes | |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| President | Esther Díaz | 74* | |
| | J. Henry Phillips (write-in) | 6 | |
| | Steven Mines (write-in) | 1 | |
| Secretary | Susana Roca Smith | 74* | |
| | Nereida Zimic (write-in) | 1 | |
| Directors | Communications | Leopoldo Bello | 43* |
| | | J. Henry Phillips | 37 |
| | | Howard Simms | 77* |
| | Finance | Crysol González (write-in) | 1 |
| | | Anita Stauber Berthold | 75* |
| | | Elaine Quinn (write-in) | 1 |
| | Membership | Beatriz Quintana (write-in) | 1 |
| | | Fritz Hensey (write-in) | 1 |
| | | Laura Vlasman | 76* |
| | Professional Development | Felipe Pérez Cervantes (write-in) | 1 |
| | | *elected | |

Bobeck’s translation of Henry Darcy’s *The Public Fountains of the City of Dijon* this year as culmination of Bobeck’s three years of work translating it on nights and weekends.

ATA member Marian Schwartz nominated Bobeck for the award, and the nomination was supported by Dr. Glenn Brown of Oklahoma State University, Dr. John Sharp of UT-Austin, and Bob Kent of Geomatrix Consultants. Kent suggested the project to Bobeck about 16 years ago, and Geomatrix funded the project

Brown, who became involved in this project four years ago, has conducted research on Henry Darcy and maintains a website on him at <http://biosystems.okstate.edu/darcy/>. He helped edit a significant portion of the book. Sharp, who was Bobeck’s hydrogeology professor in the mid-1980s, wrote the translation’s foreword.

The book is now being reviewed for five hydrogeology journals, and preliminary comments are very enthusiastic. Bobeck has given presentations about the book at the last two annual meetings of the Geological Society of America and at the American Society of Civil Engineers World Water Resources Congress in 2003. At this year’s GSA meeting she will present a copy of the book to Allen Shapiro, the Henry Darcy Distinguished Lecturer for 2003-4.

Bobeck traveled to Dijon twice last year: once to find out what remained of Darcy’s aqueduct and water distribution system, and once to meet Darcy’s descendants.

An article by Bobeck on the book appears in the July 2004 issue of the GSA newsletter (available at <http://gsahydrodiv.unl.edu/newsletter/spring04.pdf>). ★

Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association

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September meeting reviewed

Nuts and Bolts II, T/I Company Views

LANGUAGE SERVICES COMPANIES offered their perspectives on the Nuts and Bolts of Translating at the September AATIA general meeting.

Jorge Ungo of MasterWord Services, a multilingual translation and interpreting agency in Houston, spoke first. MasterWord Services was started in 1993 by entrepreneur and interpreter, Mila Green. The idea began as a class project while she attended the University of Houston. Since its inception, MasterWord has grown to approximately 40 full-time employees including onsite translators, project coordinators, project managers, proof-

readers, and a sales team. MasterWord also recruits and works with a large number of freelance translators and interpreters.

Ungo, the Project Manager, oversees operation of MasterWord's interpretation services, including the training and recruiting of its team of community and medical interpreters. Approximately 67% of its interpreting requests are for Spanish, but it also handles languages of lesser diffusion, such as Somali and Khmer. Although most interpreting assignments are in Houston and Austin, MasterWord also provides interpreters in Dallas/Fort Worth, El Paso, East Texas, and the Panhandle. About 40% of MasterWord's work is medical, 40% is community, and 20% is legal. It also does some simultaneous conference work.

MasterWord works with both novice and experienced interpreters. It is open to recruiting and training novice interpreters who are willing to learn and abide by its systematic process, as well as adhere to the interpreter's code of ethics and MasterWord's guidelines for interpreting. Ungo stated that although MasterWord prefers to work with more experienced interpreters, experience can sometimes bring habits which are hard to break. He explained that flexibility and willingness to embrace each agency's "system" is the best approach for interpreters.

Ungo stated that MasterWord usually receives résumés by e-mail or fax. After an interpreter is selected, he undergoes a 3-4-hour orientation, followed by an oral assessment over the phone. If he would like to work in a

medical setting, he is also asked to take a written assessment which includes ethics questions, common patient intake questions, medical terminology, and English reading comprehension. The prospective interpreter must also do two sight translations in the languages he will be interpreting.

When Ungo recruits interpreters, he looks for people who are flexible, personable, willing and available to work in emergency situations, and punctual. MasterWord expects interpreters to arrive at least 15 minutes early to assignments. Some of the worst mistakes an interpreter can make are showing up late or not showing up at all to an assignment, scheduling assignments too close together, not submitting paperwork on time, and failing to give a client excellent service.

Ungo explained that community interpreting usually involves working with social service agencies, home visits, schools, and other types of non-technical interpretation. This may be hard at times since the interpreter may be faced with difficult or sad situations. He also stated that each social service agency has its own terminology, and for that reason, MasterWord Services is developing its own glossaries to assist their contract interpreters.

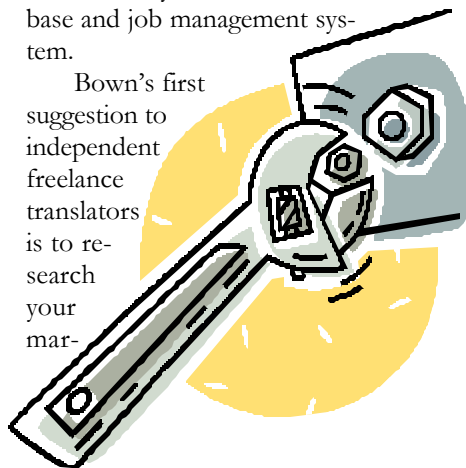
MasterWord Services offers professional development seminars in Houston twice a year in the summer and the fall which are free for their employees and independent contractors. Typical sessions might deal with the roles and challenges of medical interpreting, legal interpreting, and tricks of the trade for translators. The seminars also offer an excellent opportunity for networking and for organizations such as AATIA to have an exhibitor's booth. Contractors from all across Texas have attended MasterWord's seminars, which have featured speakers such as AATIA's own Esther Díaz and Cristina Helmerichs.

Patricia Bown, Translator Coordinator for Ralph McElroy Translation Company in Austin, gave a presentation entitled "Establishing and Maintaining a Mutually Beneficial Working

Relationship with a Translation Agency." Bown stated that the common goal of a translation company and the freelance translator is a "mutually beneficial, long-term business relationship."

Ralph McElroy Translation Company, which has been in existence for 36 years, maintains a staff of administrators, project managers, in-house translators, editors, and proofreaders, as well as people who work with formatting, sales, marketing, desktop publishing, database management, and technology. It also works with a large number of independent contractors. Most of translation work is into English. McElroy maintains its own database and job management system.

Bown's first suggestion to independent freelance translators is to research your mar-



ket. Decide what projects and clients you would like to have. Think about what would be ideal, what seems to be practical and possible, and what you want to avoid. Itemize specific services you are qualified and willing to offer, which could be translation solely, or it could also include services like editing, proofreading, and desktop publishing. Verbalizing what you have to offer gives you an edge over other contractors. You should identify potential clients who have the type of work you want to do. Be sure to include your colleagues among your potential clients. This can be helpful when you or one of your colleagues has an overflow of work or when you need to put together a team for a project.

Bown also gave some helpful tips concerning résumés. She recom-

mended that the translator send an updated résumé instead of just sending an update. The résumé should be dated so that if more than one is floating around, the agency can identify the most recent. Include information about the best method and time of day to be reached, especially if you are unavailable during certain hours. Specifically state your native or strongest language and your native country. List experience by project instead of just by client. Customize your résumé to highlight points of interest to a specific prospective client. Use headings, such as Certifications, Memberships, and Projects, to make it easy for the reader to find specific information. Make your cover letter or e-mail message count. Include things like your business motto or any special services you offer. Bown stated that with the advent of databases, résumés no longer have to be just one page.

Typical areas where translators sometimes fall short are meetings and phone calls. You should look for opportunities to meet prospective clients. Bown stated that a phone call or an unsolicited visit to the office may be counterproductive; however, it could just clinch the deal! You should have a specific purpose for following up, such as new capabilities, a completed project of interest, keeping in touch, etc. Give your prospective client a reason to consider you or ask the client what it would take for that to happen.

Bown emphasized that the number one qualification an agency seeks at is availability, followed closely by the quality of the translator's work, especially the agency's assessment of the translator and his translation test on file. Other qualities the agency looks at are relevant experience and rates. The principal factor that contributes to maintaining a long-term business relationship with an agency is the translator's reliability. Other factors include industry awareness and professionalism.

—Janet Peirce ★

All Your Christmases

by Tony Beckwith ©2004
www.tonybeckwith.com



“CHRISTMAS IS COMING, the geese are getting fat, please put a penny in the old man’s hat.” I used to sing that as a child. Like so many facets of my childhood in Uruguay, this song was undoubtedly imported from England. The lyrics use an increasingly smaller unit of British currency to finish the verse: “If you haven’t got a penny, a half-penny will do. If you haven’t got a ha’penny, a farthing will do. If you haven’t got a farthing, God bless you.” The underlying message here seems to allude to the traditional idea that it’s the thought that counts. I would imagine that’s a fairly universal idea, but my friend Keith was the first one to show me how it could be put into practice.

When he was about eleven years old his father gave him and his brother some money to buy a Christmas present for their mother. “Get her something she likes,” he said. On Christmas morning when Keith’s mother unwrapped his present she found her own bedroom slippers. As

she had done with her other gifts, she held them up for everybody to see and comment on, but this time the room was silent. “Keith,” she said, looking puzzled, “these are *my* slippers.” By this time his father was glaring at him, realizing that his son had pulled a fast one and pocketed the money. Shrugging, Keith

looked back and said, “You told me to get something she likes. She *loves* those slippers!”

Keith now has children of his own and lives in Sydney where, as in Uruguay, Christmas happens in summer. The Australians have an exuberance that even the British grudgingly admire, and when something wonderful happens to them they say, “All my Christmases have come at once!” In a politically correct world the word “Christmases” can be replaced with any other equivalent traditional event and the meaning remains unchanged.

Christmas at my parents’ house was a vivid example of the strange disconnect that existed between what we did and where we lived. We were in the southern hemisphere, where the seasons are reversed, but when Yuletide rolled around you’d never know it. The rituals, which were originally northern European, were brought over from Britain by people like my grandparents who came to the coun-

tries of the River Plate region just before the First World War, seeking their fortune on a new frontier. Some worked on the railroads, some with cattle, some in the new business of hides and leather, others worked in banks. They had children, who had children, and when these second and third generation immigrants celebrated Christmas, they did it just as their families had always done back home, in that mythical land that many of us had never seen.

The Christmas tree, at least, was real—cut down in one of the many stands of pine trees that bordered an endless string of beaches on the way to Brazil. Then we hung it with twinkly things and cotton wool that was supposed to look like snow. We sent and received cards that were illustrated with variations on the theme of dashing through the snow. I had never seen snow, and had only a theoretical idea of what it felt like to make and throw a snowball, something I keenly wanted to do. On Christmas day family and friends, in shorts and summer dresses, stood outside in the garden drinking gin and tonics under the shade of my father’s grape vine arbor. The children scampered around in bathing suits, playing with the hose. At lunch time we all went inside and consumed a huge, heavy meal that would have been appropriate in the depths of winter somewhere in northern Scotland – or in our own southern winter in July, for that matter. As with many a ritual, none of this made any sense at all. Yet the ritual is important; it’s who we are. Anyway, whatever hemisphere you inhabit and calendar you follow, I hope all your (fill in this blank) will come at once this year. ★

Watch out for the Phish

by Frank Dietz © 2004
www.frankdietz.com

BY NOW, MANY (though unfortunately not all) users have learned to mistrust email attachments that masquerade as “important documents” or “information about your account” and not click on them. However, there is a new and more insidious email scam going around that is called “phishing.”

The Federal Trade Commission has set up a website (www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/phishingalrt.htm) about this type of identity theft and defines the practice as follows:

Phishing, also called “carding,” is a high-tech scam that uses spam to deceive consumers into disclosing their credit card numbers, bank account

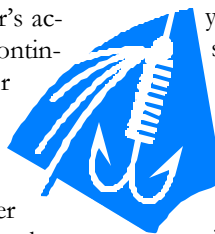
information, Social Security numbers, passwords, and other sensitive information.

How does phishing work? A user will receive an email that appears to come from his or her Internet provider, bank, or an online auction place where the user may have an account. The email warns that the user’s account will be blocked or discontinued unless the user updates or validates certain items of information. The email includes a link to a website set up for this purpose. If the user clicks on the link, he or she is taken to a site displaying a logo and layout just like PayPal, or eBay, or whatever entity claims to have sent the original email. There, the user is asked to input information regarding user names, passwords, or credit card information.

The whole thing is a scam, of course, and the perpetrators use it to make purchases with the victims’ credit cards or to engineer fraudulent

sales through their online auction accounts. According to John Dvorak in PC World, (www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1759,1566739,00.asp) up to five percent of recipients are taken in by this trick and hand over financially sensitive information.

What should you do? First, never click on the link, but rather contact your ISP, bank, or online auction site directly (by phone or regular customer support email) and ask about this email. Do not send financial information by email. Check monthly credit card statements for suspicious activities and report fraud immediately. Also, report this type of fraud to the FTC (see the website mentioned above). Finally, educate yourself about this threat. A good source of information is the Anti-Phishing Working Group (www.antiphishing.org), which provides alerts about recent phishing cases, has an archive of past cases and also lets you report new instances. ★



Open-source, cross-platform software helps you regain control and save money to boot

Take back the desktop!

NOT LONG AGO your editor advised readers to try a new program called MyIE (since renamed Maxthon). Not a replacement, it is an overlay that adds functionality to Microsoft Internet Explorer, but doesn’t do much to solve Explorer’s security problems. Now I’m asking you to try something Entirely New.

The advice this time around? Abandon the buggy, Microsoft software that requires frequent updates to plug security holes. Replace it with faster, safer, free software developed by an international community of independent developers and users of Mac, UNIX/LINUX, and Windows operating systems.

A direct descendant of Netscape, **Firefox** offers a streamlined browser that lets you add only the extras that you want. The companion email client and newsreader **Thunderbird** is the analogous replacement for bug-ridden Outlook and can also be extended with optional bells and whistles. The same developer community also has a calendar application called **Sunbird** in the works. **OpenOffice** provides you with a suite of

integrated programs that replace the Microsoft Office family, including word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, illustration, and database applications compatible with major office suites. Again, it’s free, faster, and more secure than MS-ware.

Did I say these programs are free? That’s right, no charge. You don’t even have to submit an email address to download and install the software.

Open-source software makes its programming code public so that anyone can create and share “extensions” that add extra functions or change the way they look and work. In time, new versions incorporate the best modifications. Until then, end users can easily assemble the extensions that enhance their own particular work styles.

All these products offer forum support and a large user/developer base. Two months using FireFox and Thunderbird have been trouble-free. Familiar keystrokes and menus brought me up-to-speed quickly. Although I have just begun to use OpenOffice, it already feels comfortable. Give them a try, but read up on them first, and don’t forget to do a backup before installing *any* new software.

Go to www.russianmoon.com for links to get details about and download these must-have tools.

Be smart. Be safe. Be free.

—Michael Conner ★



Streamlining membership

by J. Henry Phillips
Director of Membership

HERE IN THE SILICON HILLS, Austin Free-Net puts people in touch with skilled computer programmers willing to work for little or nothing. Dale Thompson put us in touch with programmer Iain Gray, and AATIA members can see the results by clicking the word join on our web site.

Database Coordinator László Eösz provided the basic specifications, and the result is a tidy, compact form where in less than two dozen fields your basic data may be entered and member dues calculated automatically. Members may enter their newsletter options, security preferences, categories, options, and special-interest groups without ever typing a word. A drop-down menu and option buttons minimize the work involved. The interface makes it easy to add payments for merchandise or special events or to make an angel donation. If you experience any difficulty, an email link is provided to send questions to the Membership Director.

An optional field for comments and questions is also provided to make it easier to add explanatory notes or volunteer in any capacity.

If you are paying your dues by check, a box is provided for recording the check number. The other option is to use PayPal, which accepts major credit cards.

Due to its compact size, the completed form may be checked for accuracy without the need for scrolling up-and-down. Once satisfied with your choices, you may click the Send Application Information button to take you to the next screen. If you chose to pay by check, that screen will total the amount for you and display the address to which your check made out to AATIA should be sent. If you selected the PayPal option, that screen will take you to the PayPal icon which links to the secure PayPal web site.

With no joining required, you may enter your total amount and relevant information directly in the PayPal interface—updated by Webmaster Mike Conner to offer you the option of adding an explanatory note.

Only database administrators have access to the information, which is directly used to create your AATIA member account and send you a password and username. Typewritten characters eliminate many legibility issues and incorrectly-copied email addresses. Because the database managers can retrieve the information independently with no mailing or transfer of paper forms, member records are created with fewer delays, errors, and omissions.

When your record has been created you should receive a password and username. Once you have those, you may click on the Members Only link at the top or bottom of our web site. There, you may enter your password and username to gain access to your record. If you experience any difficulty or have forgotten your password, a link is provided to send mail to the Membership Director and Database Coordinator

When you have successfully logged on to the system it is a good idea to change your password to something you can remember. You may also change your contact information any time of the night or day and add new information to your profile whenever the need arises.

If you experience any problems or feel uncomfortable dealing with database interfaces, the Database Coordinator and Membership Director are usually very prompt in lending assistance. The interface and database are amazingly easy to work with, considering their complexity. Much of this is due to the programming skill of Andrew Coulson, who was instrumental in getting the entire user-correctable database online and working. Adding data is therefore relatively quick and simple. Your contact information should be kept up-to-date in order for customers to be able to find and hire you and to

receive ballots and other AATIA mailings. This is important for a fully functioning organization, so please do not hesitate to ask for help if you need it.

We will continue to offer the print-and-send paper forms, and preparations are underway to simplify these as well. AATIA's web site, linguist locator, and database system is a benchmark for excellence which is attracting inquiries from translator association webmasters and board members across the United States. I expect that before long translator association web sites will emerge from near-invisible obscurity to incandescent visibility as more and more people use Internet search engines to actively seek out professional services. ★

Board highlights: October 9 meeting

AATIA PRESIDENT ESTHER DIAZ announced the results of the recent election and extended congratulations to the newly elected members of the Board of Directors.

In other matters:

- AATIA Director of Finance Howard Simms reported that the Association has a total of \$13,480 in all accounts. All expenses associated with the recent AATIA/HITA regional conference have been paid.
- The Board approved a policy authorizing the Director of Professional Development to offer meeting speakers who are not members of AATIA a free one-time quarter-page advertisement in *The AATIA Letter* in lieu of monetary compensation for their time.
- The Board decided on several revisions to the membership application/renewal form designed to facilitate the upcoming membership renewal campaign.
- Coffee-drinkers, take heart: The Board approved the purchase of a

large thermal coffee dispenser so that coffee can more easily be served at all AATIA general membership meetings.

—submitted by *Laura Vlasman*
for Secretary *Janet Peirce* ★

What's in a milliarium?

McELROY TRANSLATION COMPANY reached a remarkable milestone in the past month. McElroy processed job number 100,000 just two days before International Translation Day was celebrated worldwide on September 30, 2004. Celebrating this milestone within days of the annual Translation Day festivities was uncanny timing—the two events complemented each other perfectly.

McElroy, like its clients, is more focused on the work at hand than analyzing historical data, however, job 100,000 caught everyone's attention. The atmosphere at McElroy was celebratory and festive.

Founded in 1968 the company's history predates use of computers in business and the current numbering system. So while it can't be certain how long ago McElroy actually

processed 100,000 jobs, the job designated number 100,000 was still a significant event.

Shelly Priebe, General Manager noted, "I am thankful for the many clients with whom we have built and strengthened relationships over the years. This job made me reflect on our long term presence in the exciting industry of translation and localization. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else but leading McElroy. Job 100,000 is a number worthy of some fanfare and hoop-la! Our employees enjoyed a champagne toast and we thank our clients and our translators who have sustained our longevity and created our success." ★

Miss the Party?

AATIA'S ANNUAL TRANSLATOR'S Day party was held Saturday, October 2, 2004, at AATIA member Elsa Taylor's home. Sixteen members spent a lovely evening together sharing food, wine, and stories from around the world.

If you missed the festivities, make sure you are on the AATIA listserv to find out about future social events. ★

Words Without Borders

EVERYONE HATES A DO-GOODER, especially when he speaks Norwegian. Still, it's impossible not to admire the intelligence and idealism of Words Without Borders, a website (see www.wordswithoutborders.org) devoted to the translation of foreign writing into English.

As the site administrators point out, half of all the books in translation are translated from English, but only 6 percent are translated into English—an extraordinary imbalance that can't help affecting the way people in different parts of the world view each other.

A recent issue, focused on religious literature, included Abbas Saffari's wry Adam-and-Eve poem "Our Story," as well as Adolfo Albertazzi's tale ["The Devil in the Decanter," translated by Traci Andrighetti] about a demonic spirit that resists all attempts to banish it, only to be overcome by a German professor's stunningly boring lecture on demonology. ★

—from a *New York Times Book Review* article about literary websites, 10/3/ 2004



Out of this world translations!

MASTERWORD SERVICES is a leading provider of industry specific language support. MasterWord is currently recruiting interpreters and translators to work with over 300 clients on 4 continents in over 75 languages! Join our team.

- Translation and Interpretation vendors needed
- All languages
- 24 Hours a day, 7 days a week
- Professionally managed



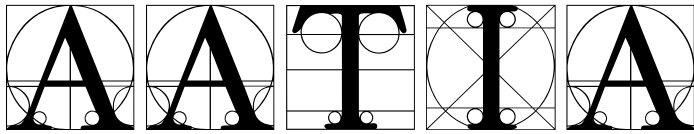
Communications Across Language Barriers

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★

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

EVENTS IN AUSTIN

- Nov 13 10 a.m. SpanSIG meeting
1–4 p.m. AATIA member meeting
- Nov 20 1–3 p.m. LitSIG meeting [see below]
- Dec 11 10–12 noon. ISIG meeting
1–4 p.m. AATIA board meeting
- Jan 8 SpanSIG meeting and AATIA member meeting

BEYOND AUSTIN

- Nov 9–12, 2005 **Seattle**. 46th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association.



Gelato, anyone?

WARM UP YOUR TASTE BUDS.
AATIA's Literary Special Interest Group will meet on Saturday, November 20th from 1 to 3 p.m. at Dolce Vita on 4222 Duval Street to discuss our experiences and observations at the ALTA conference held in Las Vegas on October 27–30, 2004. ★



Can I be grandfathered in if I don't have any grandchildren?