

www.aatia.org

The Letter

of the Austin Area Translators
and Interpreters Association

March 2005

March 12 meeting



Double your pleasure

A TWO-PART PROGRAM at the March AATIA meeting will feature topics of interest to both translators and interpreters.

Part 1 will focus on training opportunities, licensing/certification, and current and pending legislation on interpreter qualifications. A panel led by Interpreting Special Interest Group Coordinators Esther Díaz and Maurine McLean will reprise and expand on the well-received program presented on these issues at the last ISIG meeting.

Part 2 of the program will be devoted to "Harnessing the Internet." AATIA Director of Professional Development Laura Vlasman will discuss using the Internet effectively to resolve terminology conundrums. Please come prepared to share your tips and your favorite language-related websites and webgroups with your colleagues.

As always, tasty refreshments and productive networking will round out the meeting. ★

Lansford in Words Without Borders

INGRID LANSFORD HAS PUBLISHED "In West Sudan," an excerpt from her translation of Birgit Biehl, *Fragments in the Sand* (Athena Verlag 2001) in *Words Without Borders*, January 2005.

Another excerpt from the same book, "Among the Targi in Timbuktu" will appear in the March issue of the same publication, which may be found at www.wordswithoutborders.org, a free on-line magazine devoted to translation. ★

ATA certification exam scheduled for June in Austin

AATIA WILL SPONSOR A SITTING for the American Translators Association translator certification exam on the morning of June 18, 2005, at an Austin location to be announced on the website www.aatia.org and listserv.

Exam candidates must join ATA at least four weeks prior to the exam date and must meet certain eligibility requirements. Information on eligibility and registration for the exam may be found at the ATA website www.atanet.org.

AATIA will also offer an information session on ATA certification on April 2, 2005. Details on time and place will be announced on the AATIA website and listserv as soon as they are available.

The session will provide general information about the ATA certification program and specific tips on preparing for and taking the exam. It is intended both for candidates planning to sit for the exam in June and for potential candidates who just want to learn more about the certification process and the exam.

Practice tests will not be given during the session, but sample test passages in a variety of languages will be available for participants to take and use for practice on their own.

ATA members contemplating sitting for the certification exam are strongly encouraged to request a practice test from ATA in order to receive feedback from an official certification grader. ★

Looking ahead:

AATIA's May meeting
will be held
on May 7, 2005
(instead of May 14).

Special election ballots in mail for AATIA Membership Director

A NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY JANET PEIRCE has recruited two candidates for the vacated position of Director of Membership: Gisela Greenlee and Abdur (Abbie) Razzaque. The term of office will run from March through December 2005.

AATIA Secretary Susana Roca-Smith sent ballots accompanied by candidate statements [see page 3] to voting members on February 10. To be counted, **ballots must be received by March 9, 2005.**

The Board is grateful to Janet Peirce and the members of the Nominating Committee and to those members who have agreed to run for office.

Results of the election will be announced at the general membership meeting on March 12, in the May issue of the AATIA newsletter, on the AATIA listserv, and on the AATIA website www.aatia.org. ★



Austin Area Translators & Interpreters Association

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The AATIA Letter

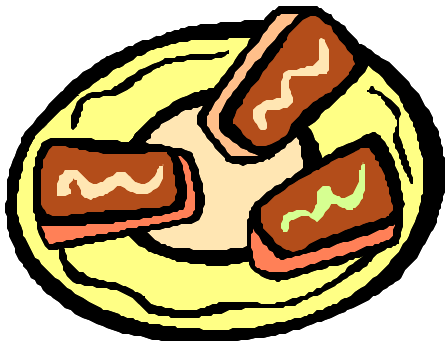
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WANTED: Refreshment Coordinator

ARE YOU A TRANSLATOR or interpreter between the ages of 20 and 100? Are you a member of AATIA? Do you have a spare hour to devote to the Associa-



tion every other month? If you answered "yes" to those questions, then AATIA wants you!

From a generous budget, the Refreshment Coordinator purchases and serves refreshments for our bimonthly meetings. The time commitment is 1 hour (really – just 1 hour!) every other month, in addition to time spent attending the meetings.

Compensation and benefits: the smiles and appreciation of your colleagues and the undying gratitude of the Director of Professional Development.

To apply for the job, contact Laura Vlasman at prodev@aatia.org or 891-9207.

This is an equal-opportunity opportunity: Men are encouraged to volunteer! ★

What Listserv?

IN AN EFFORT TO GET ALL (or most) association members to join the AATIA listserv, let's clarify some things.

First of all, this is not your regular Yahoo list. Members are not allowed to post (at least not directly). Only the AATIA President and the Director of Communications are allowed to broadcast messages on this list. This means that this is a low-frequency list and NOT a discussion group where members are sometimes inundated with messages and/or spam.

Posts will be relevant to the profession (job announcements, volunteer opportunities, professional development information, etc.) and kept to a relative minimum.

We also announce meeting and gathering information like a last-minute meeting change or the invitation to the recent annual association party.

So, if you are a member of the association, you really also want to join the listserv. If you have not already signed on, please send an email to the Director of Communications, Leo Bello, at communications@aatia.org if you have any questions or if you would like to subscribe to the list.

Our goal is to make the listserv an easy and fast medium for the Board of Directors to communicate pertinent information with its membership at large. ★

February 12 Board meeting highlights

- AATIA will host an ATA certification exam sitting on June 18, 2005.
- An informative session on certification will take place sometime in the spring.
- New members will be added to the listserv.
- AATIA will celebrate its 20th anniversary party on October 1, 2005. The Board will recruit a social coordinator to organize the event.
- The Board will attempt to fill several coordinator positions that have been vacant for some time, such as the advertising and refreshments coordinators.
- The Board authorized Esther Díaz to represent AATIA on support of the legislation for qualified medical interpreters.

—*Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary* ★

Candidate Statements for AATIA Director of Membership

Gisela Greenlee

First a little bit of information about myself – I was born and raised in Germany, but have lived in Austin since 1976, almost a true Texan by now! Since I am fairly new to the business of translation, my membership in AATIA has been extremely helpful in my quest to perfect my skills (as much as this is possibly for a translator, anyway, since there is almost always another word or expression to fret over)!

I would like to be considered for the position of Director of Membership to be able to serve the organization. AATIA has been such a valuable resource with informative meetings and newsletters, referrals from the website and members and other wonderful assistance I have received.

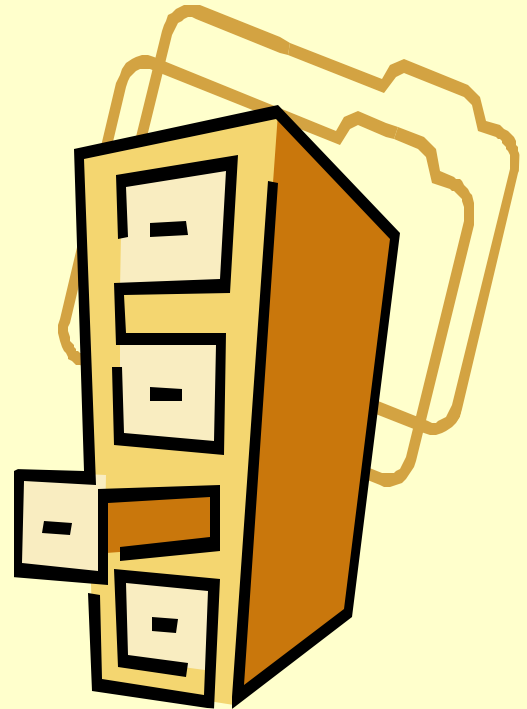
I hope to be just such a resource for new members, whether it be answering questions pertaining to membership issues, prompt recording of new member information and annual renewals or otherwise making new members feel welcome. At the same time, my goal is to take care of timely recording of membership renewals and also assist existing members with any questions or concerns regarding their membership information or status. ★

Abbie Razzaque

My name is Abdur (Abbie) Razzaque. I am a member of Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association. I happen to be the current media coordinator of AATIA. Since our recently-elected director of membership has resigned, I am willing to offer my service.

My educational background includes undergraduate and graduate studies in architecture and city planning at Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas. I work as a project manager of a construction firm in Austin, Texas. I also do interpretation for AT&T Language Line Service. I do volunteer work for Red Cross and Ten Thousand Villages in Austin, Texas.

If elected Director of Membership, I will be willing to recruit new members for our organization. I need support and cooperation from members. ★





Back to Belgrano

by Tony Beckwith ©2005
www.tonybeckwith.com

THE PHONE RANG and the words I heard turned me to stone: "...your Uncle David passed away suddenly in Guatemala..." The following morning I was on a plane heading south, staring out of the window into the past.

My Uncle David was my idol when I was a boy. He was my mother's brother and she too thought he hung the moon. When we visited family in Buenos Aires, the best part for me was seeing my uncle. He was tall, dapper, and dashing, with a ready smile; a warm, gentle man who seemed to be exactly who I wanted to be. When he occasionally came through Montevideo on a business trip and stopped overnight at our house, my excitement knew no bounds.

My Uncle David was an advertising man. He was among the group of talented young people that entered the Buenos Aires workforce in the late forties, just in time to be employed by an early wave of international companies and their ad agencies that opened branches in Argentina. He was a natural in the agency culture, where his creativity served him well and where good relationships with clients were highly prized.

He was also an athlete, playing club rugby when he was very young and eventually captaining Argentina's national team. In about 1939 he played for the San Isidro Club where he recalled that, "one of my fellow players was Ernesto Guevara, who later on became better known as Che Guevara."

After the memorial service in Guatemala City the family huddled together at my cousin's home, a devastated clan wracked with grief. My uncle had been cremated, and his children were planning to scatter his ashes in a few special places. One of those places was Buenos Aires: they wanted to send part of him home. As it happened, I was going there later in the year, so I returned from Guatemala surreptitiously carrying a plastic zip lock baggie full of grey powder. I felt extremely nervous going through customs, but that was nothing compared to how I felt as I carried the same baggie full of ashes through the airport in Buenos Aires a few months later.

In one of those serendipitous twists of fate that make you wonder about things, my Uncle David's daughter arrived in BA on business the very next day, and she joined Lillian and me on the last leg of this odyssey. We took the train at Retiro station and traveled out to Coghlan, the suburb where my grandparents lived while their children were growing up. The smell of the carriage, the hypnotic lurching of the train, and the rhythmic clatter of metal wheels were so familiar, even after all these years, that I was soon awash in memories of my own childhood. When we stood on the sidewalk facing the old family house at Tronador 2725 the

memories bubbled up into flashbacks that flooded my brain. I wafted through the front windows to the central hall and walked up the creaky staircase, the dark wall paneling echoing the shadowy darkness, to Uncle David's room off to the right . . . But the house was obviously inhabited, and we agreed that the residents probably wouldn't approve of having somebody's ashes scattered on their front garden. So we went back to the railway, to a level crossing near the station from which David had come and gone so many times and finally

left for good. We stood in silence on the rails and scattered half the contents of the bag.

Then we took the train again (*clackety-clack, clackety-clack*) to Belgrano station, and walked a few blocks through the quiet residential neighborhood to the

legendary Belgrano Athletic Club. My uncle began playing rugby there in the sixth division and went on to become a legend in his own right. It was a sunny day, and we walked around the field—now surrounded by apartment buildings where once there was wide open sky—and sat in the stands, listening for the roar of the crowd on a distant afternoon. Then, as the shadows lengthened, the rest of the ashes fluttered to the ground under the goal post, and my Uncle David was finally home. ★

“The smell of the carriage, the hypnotic lurching of the train, and the rhythmic clatter of metal wheels were so familiar, even after all these years....”

Words That Count

by Frank Dietz © 2004
www.frankdietz.com

Counting is wonderful,
Counting is marvelous,
Counting's the best thing to do.
—The Count on Sesame Street

TRANSLATORS USUALLY GET PAID by the word, at least in this country (in some European countries, standard lines are still used as a pricing basis). The usual procedure is to run the Word Count function in your word processor (mostly MS Word these days) and use the result as the basis for your estimate or invoice.

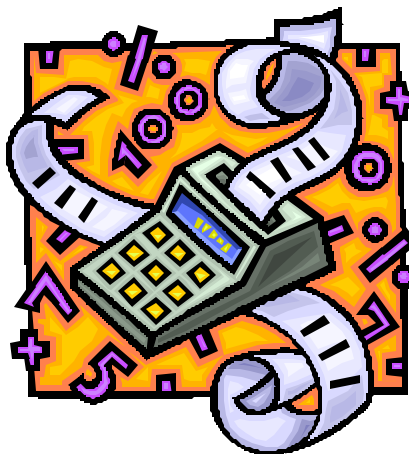
However, you should note that results are program-specific. There is an interesting article at www.triacom.com/archive/wordcount.en.html comparing the word counts returned by various programs for the same sample file. The results range from 386 words to 408—a rather significant range. Make sure that you and your client agree on what program to use for counting.

Note that the Tools/Word Count function in MS Word (I am using Word 2002) allows you to include or

exclude footnotes and endnotes and also offers the option to display this function as a separate toolbar (View/Toolbar/Word Count).

What do you do when the text arrives in a program format that does not offer a counting function? The easiest way is to paste the text into Word, but the layout of the file may cause problems in some cases. I remember one project arriving in a long Excel file with text in differently sized columns, interspersed with illustrations that took a long time to copy and paste.

If you have Trados, you can employ the Tools/Analyze option to get a Word count, even if you do not



work on that particular file in Trados. According to the Trados Help file, you can “use Translator’s Workbench to analyze Word, PowerPoint and Excel documents, HTML, SGML, XML,

TRADOSTag (TTX), PageMaker, QuarkXPress, InDesign 2.0 and Ventura tagged text files”.

A useful counting tool is *Anycount* (www.anycount.com) that covers the formats .DOC, .RTF, .XLS, .PPT, .PPS, .HTM, .CSV, .PDF, .TXT and .ZIP. A free 30-day evaluation copy is available at www.anycount.com/AnyCount3Setup.exe. It provides a great number of options (such as including/excluding headers and footers or text boxes, or ignoring identical headers/footers) and also lets you count standard lines, among other things.

Whichever tool you choose, it is always a good idea to count words in a text you receive. Project managers can make mistakes, and texts can get changed at the last minutes. Remember, it is you who stands to lose money if a project is undercounted.

If you charge your work by the hour, a nifty utility named *Timestamp* (www.syntap.com/products_timestamp.htm) can make your life much easier. It tracks the time for various projects, lets you click on a “slack” button when you interrupt work, and calculates your work costs based on the hourly fee you entered. *Timestamp* is donationware, i.e., you can mail the author whatever fee you consider appropriate. ★

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combined list of the currently most popular bookmarks of all users at www.del.icio.us/popular.

No fees, no ads, just interesting browsing. ★

Learn a new language online

FOR YEARS DEUTSCHE WELLE, Germany’s government-run international shortwave radio station, has been broadcasting German language lessons in English for their

worldwide audience. Now, the audio lessons are available for download from their website, along with the accompanying text (pdf).

Go to www.dw-world.de, select your viewing language, then click on “German Courses” (or its equivalent in your language) in the menu.

The BBC also offers language lessons in English, Irish, Welsh, and Scots Gaelic, along with French, German, Italian, and Spanish and others at a variety of levels. Go to <http://www.bbc.co.uk/> and click on “Learning”. ★

January meeting reviewed

Challenges of translating a classic

PATRICIA BOBECK SPOKE at the January AATIA meeting about her prize-winning translation of Henry Darcy's classic work, *The Public Fountains of the City of Dijon*.

Bobeck recently won ATA's S. Edmund Berger Prize for Excellence in Scientific and Technical Translation for her translation of the book (previously only available in French) into English. After 3 years of working nights and weekends on a project that was supposed to last 9 months, Bobeck saw her translation published in March 2004.

Bobeck is both a translator and a geologist employed by the Radiation Safety Licensing Branch of the Texas Department of State Health Services. She is a long-time member of AATIA and served two terms as its President.

Henry Darcy, a French civil engineer, designed a public water supply system in the 1830s for the city of Dijon, France that provided abundant, free water through a series of aqueducts, pipes, and street fountains. He is also known for bringing the railroad to Dijon.

Darcy's major work, *The Public Fountains of the City of Dijon* is a 647-page book with a 28-plate atlas. It was published in 1856 as an engineer's guide, so the knowledge he gained in the field of water supply could be shared with everybody.

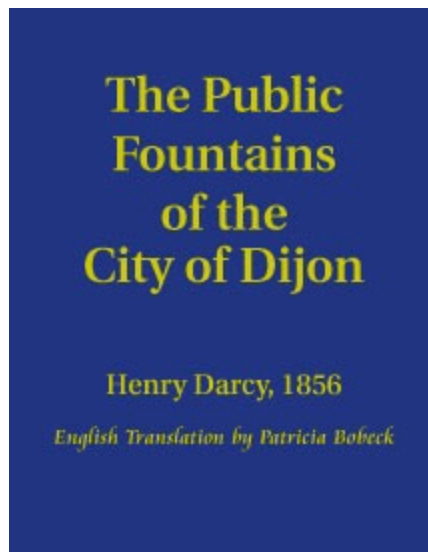
During Darcy's childhood, the people of Dijon collected water running off their roofs, probably into cisterns. The other source of water was shallow wells in the river bed alluvium. The problem with the wells was that they were often located right next to cesspools, where sewage was dumped. As a result, the cesspools easily polluted the water wells.

Darcy calculated the body of water that the city needed and those calculations eventually produced a system that delivered 8 cubic meters a minute from

a spring through 12.7 kilometers of covered aqueduct to two nearby reservoirs. This situated the city of Dijon ahead of Paris as far as water supply was concerned.

The book is divided into four parts and an appendix. Part one describes the historical attempts to supply water for the city of Dijon. Here Darcy put all of this knowledge into an "encyclopedia" format that reflected his ideas of quality of river water versus spring water.

In part two Darcy discusses the construction of the water supply



system, which included the aqueduct that brought water to Dijon and an underground distribution system that provided water to 120 street fountains.

Darcy also designed a water drainage system in the fountains so the remaining water would not freeze. The street fountains were the main purpose of Darcy's system, and they provided free water for domestic purposes, street washing, and fire fighting.

Part three presents the experiments that Darcy conducted on the water supply system.

Part four addresses administrative and judicial questions, such as ownership of the spring, how to purchase the land that the aqueduct would cross, and how to set up a system by which people could have water piped into their homes for a fee.

The appendix provides information about the water supply in London. Darcy was highly critical of London's water supply, which was drawn from the river instead of springs. Darcy's experiments with the water supply lead to the formulation of Darcy's law that is based on the flow of water through sand layers. In recent years, interest in these processes has been growing in the US, and this is the reason why this book has now been translated. In the appendix we also find information about pipe-making with cast iron.

Some of the problems Bobeck encountered in the translation of the book were: old language, old technologies, old ideas that are not in use anymore, and equations. Bobeck contacted a University of Texas professor who helped her better understand 19th-century French.

The book also contained several references to classic works in Latin and Greek which entailed an additional difficulty for Bobeck. To solve this problem she used the Loeb Classics that are available at the UT library. They are a collection of translations of famous Greek and Roman works that have English on one side of the page and the Latin or Greek on the other. However, the most difficult part of this work was figuring out what volume of a particular author contained the quote in question as Darcy did not include the names of the books, just the name of the Roman or Greek author.

Some of the highlights in this project for Bobeck included the two trips she took to Dijon, meeting some of Darcy's descendants, and the enormous response she has received from the hydrology community.

To order the book you can get in touch with Bobeck at Pbobeck@earthlink.net.

—Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary ★

ATA Board evaluates Austin for 2010 conference venue

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS of the American Translators Association (ATA) visited Austin in late January to hold its regular board meeting and inspect facilities for a possible national conference in 2010.

The visit coincided with the AATIA member meeting, so ATA President Scott Brennan was invited to give us an overview of ATA. Founded in 1959, it is a national not-for-profit organization that has nearly 9,000 members in over 60 countries. ATA's goals are:

- to promote the recognition of the translation and interpretation professions
- to promote the communication and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of translators and interpreters
- to formulate and maintain standards of professional ethics, practices, and competence
- to stimulate and support the training of translators and interpreters
- to provide a medium for cooperation with persons in allied professions
- to promote professional and social relations among members

ATA members include freelance and in-house translators and interpreters, teachers and students, private companies, institutions, and government agencies. This breaks down to 42% full-time and 29% part-time independent contractors, 10% company owners, 9% full-time private-sector employees, 6% in academia, and 4% full-time government employees.

ATA has 14 local chapters and two affiliated groups, including the Houston Interpreters and Translators Association (HITA), which affiliated two months ago. Brennan emphasized the importance of local groups: they meet a distinct need for translators and interpreters, because it is where their knowledge and experiences are shared.

Brennan explained that ATA has 13 divisions whose purpose is to provide a network for translators and interpreters with common languages and specialties, offer language and specialty-specific seminars at ATA's annual conference, publish online newsletters, and host listservs. The divisions also organize mid-year conferences such as the Spanish Division Conference held in San Antonio in 2003.

ATA's three main volunteer-driven programs include **professional development, certification, and public relations**, each complementing the others. The aim is for translators and interpreters to work together to demonstrate their skills to potential clients and to educate them about the value of highly skilled translators and interpreters.

ATA's annual conference provides **professional development** through educational sessions and exhibits featuring the latest publications and software. Austin and Denver are being considered for the annual conference in 2010.

ATA also organizes local seminars and workshops. They are one-to-three-day events around the country that offer in-depth, language/specialty-specific sessions and often feature presentations by local translators. Some examples are: the 2003 Localization Translation Seminar in Austin and the Legal Translation and Interpreting seminar to be held in Houston in March 2005.

In 2004, 495 **certification** exams were offered and 2,000 members are currently certified. The goal of certification is to promote recognition of the profession. By obtaining certification, translators will establish objective evidence of professional

competency and may refer to their certification in business cards and résumés.

The key message of ATA's **Public Relations** media strategy is that translators and interpreters exist, that translation requires skilled and trained practitioners, and that ATA can help in delivering that expertise to government, industry, and media.

Brennan also handed out ATA's publication, *Getting it Right*, which is a small guide with advice for company professionals who may be considering hiring translation services.

We also heard about ATA's school outreach program. These are presentations at schools that inform students about the profession of translators. ATA has materials available for people interested in giving a presentation.

ATA hosted a reception for AATIA members after the meeting.

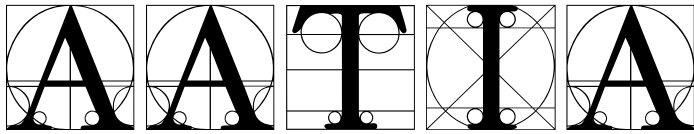
—Susana Roca-Smith, Secretary ★

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do something
with it!”

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www.aatia.org

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

EVENTS IN AUSTIN

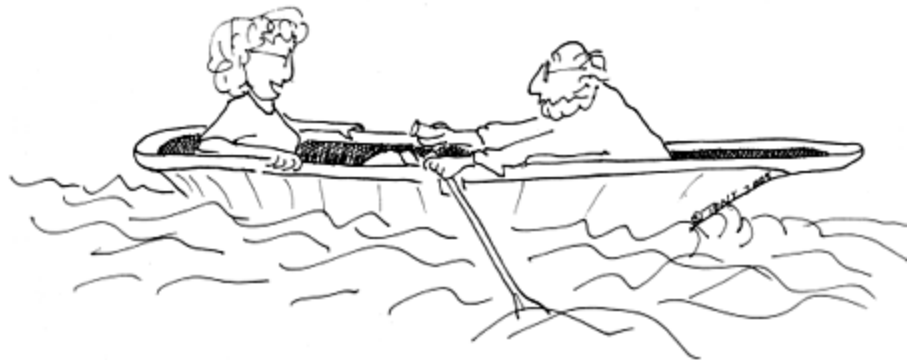
- Mar 12 10 a.m. Spanish SIG meeting
1–4 p.m. AATIA member meeting
Apr 9 10–12 noon. ISIG meeting
1–4 p.m. AATIA board meeting
April 30 1–3 p.m. LitSIG meeting
May 7 AATIA member meeting (rescheduled!)

BEYOND AUSTIN

- Nov 2–5, 2005 **Montreal.** Annual Conference of the American Literary Translators Association.
Nov 9–12, 2005 **Seattle.** 46th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association.

Next LitSIG meeting set for April

THE NEXT LITSIG MEETING will be held Saturday, April 30, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Marian Schwartz's home, according to Coordinator Traci Andrighetti. Call 442-5100 for details and directions. ★



If there's a seventh heaven and a cloud nine,
what do you suppose is on eight?