



NOTIS NEWS

Volume 17, No. 2, SPRING 2004

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Far Flung Associates

By Kathryn Guttromson

From the Okanogan

Welcome to the sunny Okanogan, land of great fishing and hiking, ghost towns, cowboys and apples! The apples are what have brought the Spanish-speaking agricultural workers to this beautiful region and with them the need for interpreters and translators!

I began interpreting in 1990 for Spanish-speaking clients at the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) in Omak, Washington. The bulk of my work is still at DSHS, but I also interpret at the local eye and ear clinic, occasionally for L&I and fill in for other interpreters at the local hospital and county court. I have enjoyed the variety and challenges this has brought and it keeps my job interesting. Since this is a rural area, few interpreters have full-time work and must seek out opportunities wherever they may be found. Most interpreters here can attest to the fact that the majority of the work they have has been gained through word-

of-mouth. Again, it is a small community and everyone knows each other. It has its advantages! Translation is another matter. Most of the need locally is for English>Spanish, and most entities are unwilling to pay for quality, professional translation. It is what translators run into all the time—the attitude that something

“Most interpreters here can attest to the fact that the majority of the work they have has been gained through word-of-mouth.”

so “simple” should not cost so much. So they just have a bilingual employee do whatever they need to have done, and often with questionable results. Places like DSHS

out-source their major translation needs, while the interpreters do minimal translation of information requests, etc.

There are at least five DSHS departments or divisions housed in our building, and another interpreter, Eva, and I provide services for them. Working closely together as interpreters, the ability to get along is the key to success! And survival! I must say how grateful I am for my colleague, Eva. We each have distinct back-

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**Northwest Translators and Interpreters
Society**

A chapter of the
American Translators Association

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NOTIS NEWS is published in February, May, August, and November. Letters to the Editor, short articles of interest, and information for the calendar and other sections are invited. Please send submissions to Editor sarah.garriott@aolti.com. Submissions become the property of *NOTIS NEWS* and are subject to editing unless otherwise agreed in advance. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor, the Society, or its Board.

Editor	Sarah L. Garrriott (206) 463-2152
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Deadline next issue	July 15, 2004

NOTE: Subscriptions for non-members are \$12.00 a year. Send a check, payable to NOTIS, P.O. Box 25301, Seattle, WA 98165-2001

NOTIS Membership Fees
Individual & Institutional \$35.00 a year
Corporate \$50.00 a year
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NOTIS Notes

Welcome to New Members

Individual

Kenneth Barger
Tatiana Boyle
Helen Crofton
Katharine Ellis
Daniele Favaro
James F. Miller
Wilas Nirunsuksiri
Zuzana Putnam

Language

Spanish <> English
Russian <> English
Arabic <> English
French > English
English > Italian
Spanish > English
Thai <> English
Slovak > English
Czech > English
German <> English
Italian > English
Spanish <> English
Italian > English
Japanese > English
Swedish > English
German > English

Aimee Robinson
Kathryn Sergeant
Brian Watson
Laura A. Wideburg

Corporate

Certified Languages International (Portland, OR)

Traffic is a Good Thing!

By Caitilin Walsh

Any storefront owner will tell you that increased traffic on their street is good for business. Exposure means that folks will stop in, and if they stop in, they may buy and become regular customers. They will also tell you that word of mouth is the best kind of advertising, though they're likely to use other forms of advertising.

The traffic on NOTIS' virtual storefront—our Web site—is booming. Last year I reported that we were up to 40 'hits,' or visits daily. And the trend is continuing sharply upward. We saw 52 daily hits for February and 61 for March.

The table below illustrates how the site has benefited from the increased traffic since the introduction of the online directory in July, 2002.

News, we're still seeing significant increases there as well. That's a lot of new customers!

As we have no advertising budget *per se*, we're always on the lookout for free advertising. This year, we've linked to a few pages, and placed a free single-line listing in the Multilingual Computing's Resource Directory. But, as every good merchant knows, word of mouth remains the best way to get the word out.

Google continues to be the leading search engine that refers to our site, a sort of Internet word-of-mouth. In fact, that's what the engine was conceived as: the more sites link to us, the more we are considered an expert in our field (the top keywords are all variations on interpreter and translator) and the more we move up in the rankings. Of

	total hits	daily average	NIB/Directory ¹	NOTIS News
1999	3571	10.2	633	319
2000	3860	10.6	466	305
2001	3045	10.9	398	725
2002	9488	27.3	2363	4589
2003	13683	37.5	3394	5486
2004 ²	4648	51.6	1406	2366

¹ NIB=NOTIS InfoBase, the predecessor to the online directory. Numbers indicate downloads of NIB, then visits to the top-level directory page.

² Through March 31, 2004.

Indeed, if the trend continues, we will have close to 20,000 visitors by the end of the year. The two clear winners are the online directory and the *NOTIS News*. Even with the resumption of producing the print NOTIS

course, your efforts are also very worthwhile: people coming to us directly are still the number one source of traffic. My guess is that's people like you, using and referring others to the site. Keep up the good work!

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grounds, especially concerning our acquisition of Spanish, but instead of being the basis of competition, we have utilized it to our advantage. If there is a case or situation that would be better served by Eva's skills, she goes. And vice versa. We also try to be flexible to cover each other's schedule if one of us has to leave to interpret for a DSHS employee out in the field, or if we are called for an assignment outside of DSHS.

Often we are acquainted with the people for whom we interpret, whether it is through contact in another assignment or personal relationships. For that reason it is essential that they know that the encounter will be kept confidential. You can imagine the possibility of interpreting for the same family in different settings. You could interpret for Maria during the process of obtaining a family daycare license and again for her in the hospital when she has her baby. Then you see her husband Jose at court because he got a speeding ticket and interpret for him there. A few months later he hurts himself on the job and eventually goes through the process of vocational rehabilitation. His daughter breaks her arm and goes to ER. His son needs speech therapy. The daycare business doesn't go so well for them and Jose's L&I benefits aren't enough to make ends meet, so they apply for food stamps. It is conceivable that a single interpreter could have contact with each member of the family by interpreting for them in each of these situations, and then, to top it off, run into them at someone's birthday party! Depending of course upon the particular circumstances, I have not found this to be a detriment, but rather a help. Often they are glad that the interpreter turns out to be someone they know.

I learned about NOTIS through a course offered here in Omak in 1993 by the Office of the Administrator of the Courts, but it wasn't until 2001 that I joined. I love where I live, but the downside is that there are virtually no opportunities locally to learn and improve, or to meet with other interpreters and translators. I remembered how I learned such a tremendous amount in that court interpreting course and how it whetted my appetite to learn more. It came back to me how much we all enjoyed being together in the class. So I finally decided to reach

out by joining NOTIS, as well as the American Translators Association.

**"Has my membership in
NOTIS been beneficial?
Yes, it has."**

Has my membership in NOTIS been beneficial? Yes, it has. Because of the distance, I have not been able to attend every function and workshop, but every time I have gone I am always glad I did. The newsletter articles I have found to be informative and stimulating. I would like to see more membership in Eastern Washington and perhaps even a NOTIS event or workshop in a centralized location like Wenatchee, Ellensburg or Moses Lake. The attendance of local interpreters and translators would be an opportunity to recruit new members. However, it may be difficult to get people to attend. Hopefully it is otherwise in other communities, but my personal experience here has been that there has been a general lack of interest among interpreters in improving their skills or even seeing themselves as professionals. They seem to feel that they have "arrived" and need not go further. But perhaps that is because they have not been exposed to anything that would inspire them to grow. Another interpreter and I plan to offer a one-day workshop focused on medical interpreting at a basic introductory level. Part of the strategy is to get a feel for the interest level among the interpreters who attend, and go from there. We hope to interest them in becoming members of NOTIS and/or other organizations! Maybe we could organize a group to take a trip to Seattle for one of the workshops!!

Interpreting is a profession I truly enjoy, and I appreciate the opportunity to be part of organizations such as NOTIS and ATA because the workshops, conferences and publications are an encouragement I need to keep going. I am truly looking forward to attending the 2005 ATA conference in Seattle! The challenges of our work as interpreters and translators are never-ending, and the rewards are great. Thank you, NOTIS, for your contribution to our profession.

Kathryn Guttromson is a Spanish \leftrightarrow English interpreter and Spanish \leftrightarrow English translator and can be reached at spanish@northcascades.net.

Directory Update!

The NOTIS Directory Committee is delighted to welcome longtime NOTIS member Dorene Cornwell as the new Print Directory Publisher for the *NOTIS Directory of Translators and Interpreters*. Dorene will be taking on getting our beloved print directory out the door after a one-year hiatus.

We are also still seeking a motivated volunteer (or volunteers) to serve as Directory Advertising

Coordinator for the print *Directory*. Duties consist of contacting potential advertisers via mail and telephone, and coordinating placement and artwork, with support from the Committee. Ability to make calls during business hours is necessary. If you're interested, please contact Caitilin Walsh, Directory Committee Chair, at cwalsh@nwlink.com.

NOTIS News Editorial Calendar

Issue	Submission Deadline
August / Summer 2004	July 15, 2004
November / Fall 2004	October 15, 2004
February / Winter 2005	January 15, 2005
May / Spring 2005	April 15, 2005

Submission Guidelines:

- Articles are due by the 15th of the month prior to publication (i.e., January 15th for February / Winter publication).
- Articles should not exceed 2,500 words.
- All articles must be published in English.
- Articles may include a brief biography (6 sentences maximum) along with a digital photo of yourself if you wish. Please do not send photos via US mail without express permission.
- Please submit all articles electronically via email to: sarah.garriott@aolti.com
- Text should be formatted for MS Word.
- All articles become the property of NOTIS News once they are submitted and are subject to editing for grammar, style, punctuation and space limitations.
- A proof will be sent to you for review prior to publishing only if you so request.



ATA is coming!

That's right, the 46th Annual ATA Conference is going to be held in the City of Seattle. While the conference sessions and logistics are handled by headquarters, we as a chapter of ATA have a terrific opportunity as hosts. We're starting early, organizing ourselves and brainstorming via email and in person, and will be providing regular updates. Of course, you're more than welcome to join in. Please contact Caitilin Walsh at cwalsh@nwlink.com.

Mark your calendar!

Save the date!

ATA 46th Annual Conference

Seattle, Washington

November 9-12, 2005

The Association of Swedish Translators in North America has its home here in the Pacific Northwest

By: Laura A. Wideburg

The Association of Swedish Translators in North America (STiNA) has its official home right here in the Northwest. Two of the founding members, Paul Norlen and Laura A. Wideburg, both former students of the University of Washington's Scandinavian Department, worked diligently to bring about the formation of the association, which took place on March 18, 2004. The officers are Paul Norlen, President; Robert Greer, Vice President; Laura A. Wideburg, Secretary-Treasurer; and Anne-Charlotte Harvey, Officer-at-Large.

The organization serves the Swedish translation community by reducing isolation among individuals working with a relatively small language. Its goals: to encourage professionalism among translators, to be a resource for translators entering the field, and to promote Swedish literature of all genres in North America. A website will soon be in place.

Membership runs from June 1st to May 31st and dues are \$15/year. STiNA can be contacted c/o Laura A. Wideburg, 6008 Corliss Ave North, Seattle WA 98103 or via: wideburg@ix.netcom.com.



Please join us for our biennial picnic event

When: June 13th 12:00pm - 3:00pm

Where: Lincoln Park - Shelter # 1

Bring a favorite dish to share. We will provide drinks and utensils

For directions to the park, please visit:

<http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/parkspaces/Lincoln.htm>



Fun Ride: Join us at 11:00 am for a Bicycle ride from Lincoln Park to Alki in support of our colleague Courtney Searls-Ridge who will be riding across the country this summer to benefit the American Lung Association.

For further information about the ride contact:
funride2004@covad.net



Looking forward to seeing you there.

Calendar

Date	Event	Details	Time & Place
June 13, 2004	Bi-Annual NOTIS Family Picnic & Fun Ride	www.notisnet.org	Lincoln Park, West Seattle
August 28 & 29, 2004	ATA Business Seminar & 2 nd Sitting of the ATA Exam	www.atanet.org Registration for Exam Required	Seattle
Early Fall, 2004	International Translators & Interpreter's Day with Harry Obst	www.notisnet.org	Portland & Seattle
October 13-16, 2004	ATA Conference	www.atanet.org	Toronto, Canada Sheraton Centre Hotel
November 6, 2004	Annual NOTIS Meeting & ATA Recap		
December 4, 2004	NOTIS/ WITS Joint Holiday Potluck		UW Waterfront Activities Center, Seattle

For more international and national events, please see www.notisnet.org

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