



The MITA Reader

MITA freebies abound

File frosty February as Free-for-All and Free for One

By Carol Shaw

Reader Co-Editor

The general MITA meeting of February 5 promises to be an exciting free-for-all. And for one lucky MITAn, a *free computer*, as well!

At 2:30, the TechSIG (Technical Special Interest Group) meeting will find themselves discussing Qs, as in Q&A, only we don't have the A's yet. Anyone attending will have the opportunity to outline concerns to be addressed in upcoming TechSIG meetings.

At 3:00, we will proceed to a brief meet-and-greet period, followed by a business meeting and a presentation by our own **Héctor Rodríguez**. Says Héctor, "Don't miss out on this opportunity to get a Free Database file to keep up with all the necessary information about your billings. You can input company names, contacts, addresses, phone and fax

*MITA Regular Meeting
Saturday, Feb. 8, 2:30 p.m.*

—TechSIG update—

—Meet and Greet—

--Presentation by

Hector Rodriguez for

free accounting database files—

—Raffle of computer system—

numbers, e-mail addresses, what project you're working on, when is it due, your rates, when you e-mailed it to your customer, create your invoice automatically and print it. You can also make reports on who still owes you money, since when, how much, how much have you billed this year, etc.

The only requirement to get this Free Database file is to join us at the presentation to be given on

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Languages, a Social Thing!

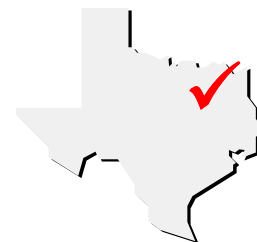
Steve Branton suggested it last year. Others thought it was a good idea. And now **Maria Elizalde** has offered to help get it off the ground. It? MITA social hours. In order to help MITAns gather around the Metroplex in more relaxed settings, MITA invites all members to gather for dinner one evening every odd-numbered month. The *general meetings* are held in the same place on the first Saturday of every even-numbered month. The *social times* will travel around the DFW area, making it easier for everyone to get to at least one of the dinners. Each member will pay for their own meal (and that of any guests), but MITA will make the reservation and announce the place from month to month. The first one will be on **January 25 at Hoffbrau Steaks, 1833 West Airport Freeway in Bedford**. See you there!

MITA Resource Center

Check out the files uploaded to both TAHIT (groups.yahoo.com/group/tahit) and TAJIT (groups.yahoo.com/group/tajit) to keep up-to-date on what these two groups are doing for Texas interpreters and translators involved in the legal and medical fields!

**METROPLEX INTERPRETERS
& TRANSLATORS
ASSOCIATION**

Serving DFW and North Texas



Volume 2, Issue 1

January, 2005

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Solidarity

Of all recent world events, few make us ache more than the tsunami that devastated so many.

MITA member **Nikki Nanongkhai** confirms that her family were not directly affected.

We know that others of you have friends or family who may have been affected; our thoughts and sympathy are with you.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS — meet on second Saturday of odd months — at 3 pm at the home of Diana Ianariello.

MITA regular meeting Saturday, Feb. 6

For directions, go to www.dfw-mita.com

February 2005						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					



February 8 MITA meeting

February 6, 2005, and be current on your membership dues. This Database was created in MSWorks (normally loaded in all new computers). Start managing your translations and schedules more accurately and professionally.”

Thanks are in order for Héctor, for sharing not only his knowledge, but the program itself. Along with the presentation, we will be given information on the Workshop Day planned for this coming May.

Members will be given the opportunity throughout the afternoon to pick up a free raffle ticket from the Steering Committee table at the back of the hall. The only requisite for receiving a raffle ticket is to have your 2005 dues paid (payment will be accepted “on the spot”), and to be present at the time of the drawing. After the end of the presentations, we will hold a drawing for a Hewlett Packard Pavilion Desktop Computer!

Made possible by certain MITAns who shall remain

from page one

anonymous but have our gratitude anyway, the computer comes complete with a 17” flat screen monitor, keyboard and mouse. All that’s lacking is YOU!

Members may also send their 2005 dues in to Treasurer Carol Shaw before the meeting, to PO Box 496236, Garland, TX, 75049. Please include an updated application sheet so we can pick up any changes in phone, email or other data. Current application sheets can be down-loaded from the MITA website, www.dfw-mita.com. However, in order to make sure that your check has reached the treasurer by Friday, February 4, we would suggest that checks not be mailed after January 29. Otherwise it could be en route but not received, and you would not be eligible for the raffle. If you know any interpreters or translators who are not yet involved in MITA, please encourage them to attend this Fabulous February Free-for-All!



HUMOR

50s scientists predict what a “home computer” will look like in the future.

Scientists from the RAND Corporation have created this model to illustrate how a “home computer” could look like in the year 2004. However the needed technology will not be economically feasible for the average home. Also the scientists readily admit that the computer will require not yet invented technology to actually work, but 50 years from now scientific progress is expected to solve these problems. With teletype interface and the Fortran language, the computer will be easy to use.

Thank you, Texas Instruments, for the invention of the integrated circuit!!

'SeaWolf's' new spyglass earns its keep

By J. Henry Phillips

Special to *The Reader*

That fifty-cent pair of garage sale binoculars was just the thing for making out the tiny numbers on Excel charts and PowerPoint slides from the booth at the very back of the room. It was an awful feeling, however, on lowering the glasses, to see the entire Brazilian audience grinning back at the interpreter's booth like so many Cheshire cats. The cruel nickname "Sea Wolf" stuck like beach tar as I searched for a better solution. I was going to have to lose the binoculars or swap the booth for a U-boat conning tower. Opera glasses would look even sillier, so scratch that idea.

The solution turned out to be a Simmons monocular small enough to hide in your hand yet powerful enough to resolve the numbers and print on speaker presentations before you can say "next slide." You can use one eye, chameleon-like, to watch the stage and—by swiveling the spyglass—read

the speaker's lips with the other. No more flipping through printouts or squinting into the blurry distance. The magnification makes easy work of scanning the presentation just a little ahead of the speaker, thereby avoiding unpleasant surprises. Yet the tool is not without its drawbacks: I once caught a colleague tripping over terminology while using the instrument—but only because he was zooming in on a gorgeous member of the audience instead of paying attention to the speaker. All in all, however, the monocular yields a pretty good return on a \$10 investment.

An added bonus is the ability to read faraway street signs in unfamiliar towns. Bus drivers in South America will not stop unless you begin waving while the vehicle is still a dot on the horizon -- a dot the natives instantly recognize by its size, shape and color. A monocular makes it possible to read bus identifiers in time to flag it down. Rarely will the interpreter find a quality-improvement tool as cheap, small



or light. A monocular will earn its keep without crowding your bag of tricks or weighing you down with ballast. —

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TAHIT advancing health interpreter issues

Yacovone, Diaz staying busy with Texas Association of Healthcare Interpreters and Translators

By Tricia Yacovone

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The Texas Association for Healthcare Interpreters and Translators (TAHIT) is on the way to achieving one of its primary goals: promoting the use of qualified healthcare interpreters.

Last fall, TAHIT founder and AATIA member **Tricia Yacovone** met with State Rep. Jack Stick and his opponent, candidate Mark Strama, both of whom expressed interest in the goal.

After the election, Ms. Yacovone and AATIA president **Esther Díaz** met with Representative-elect Strama and one of his aides to outline the

need for more qualified healthcare and social service interpreters, the population that would be impacted by such a change in Texas and the precedents set in other states for similar legislation.

Rep.-elect Strama demonstrated much enthusiasm for the idea, and offered to sponsor a bill after taking the oath of office in January.

Strama also paved the way for Ms. Díaz and Ms. Yacovone to contact State Sen. Rodney Ellis, who proposed SB 1615 during the last legislative session regarding an interpreter services pilot program for Medicaid recipients, and State Sen. Kyle Janek, MD, a physician and

vice chairman of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

Ms. Díaz and Ms. Yacovone met with an aide to Senator Janek, and Ms. Yacovone met with the general counsel and chief of staff to Senator Ellis.

Plans are developing for contacting more legislators and members of the medical and insurance industries to gauge their response to and support for the legislation.

Tricia Yacovone is the founder of TAHIT, a member of AATIA and other organizations and currently serves as President of TAHIT. She is a Spanish translator, interpreter and instructor in Austin.

'If it's too good to be true, it probably is'

MITAns warn of new Internet scams now targeting interpreters, translators, linguists

By Carol Shaw

Reader Co-Editor

Translators and interpreters are on the radar.
The wrong one.

This time it's scammers coming after us. Now, in addition to the warnings against giving anyone your per-

“Bad English [or any other language] sticks out like a sore thumb in most of these scams...”

sonal information (even if they claim to be a bank, the lottery or your great-uncle Herbert), translators and interpreters need to keep a weather eye out for fake clients with fake checks.

Alert MITAns **Acela Garrett** and **Mies de Vries** forwarded the following, compiled from several email alerts, for the group's benefit:

EXAMPLES OF SCAM MESSAGES CURRENTLY TARGETING INTERPRETERS (from 11/04)
Good day. I saw your information at the (city) circle of translators member services Directory and I will like to engage for your service as an interpreter for my daughters who are coming to New Year in the US for 10 days trip and your personal assistance as an interpreter will be needed for their stays over there..

(goes on to say all travel and accommodations will be paid, then requests email confirmation)

This is to inform you of a seminar taking place in TX and your service will be needed. My staffs are coming over to the united state for a 4 days which is between 14 of Dec till 17 of Dec, seminar which is taking place in a hotel hall in Texas and which involves the discussion of Business around us today Globally..

(goes on to say all travel and accommodations will be paid, offers a certified check for payment, and requests an email confirmation)

My Name is Daniel Howard. My fi-

ancee Mary and I will be getting married at St Ann Church, Cincinnati, Ohio on March 25th, 2005. Mary my fiancée is from Spain and speaks Spanish and she does not speak English and I would require the service of a professional interpreter like you to help interpret whatever she says on the wedding day to make things convenient for her, myself and the officiating ministers along with the invited guests..

(goes on to say all travel and accommodations will be paid, offers a cashiers check for payment, and requests an email confirmation)

These are all just the first phase of a fake check scam. There are several things that will help in recognizing and avoiding such frauds. For one thing, check the spelling and grammar of any such plea. One could forgive one wrong word or phrase, but “bad English [and any other language] sticks out like a sore thumb” in most of these scams.

Then there's the catch. Usually, the “client” will send a check or money order for perhaps \$7,000 or \$10,000 to cover the agreed rates, in advance, as well as travel and accommodations.

The check or money order will look real, even to your bank. Once deposited, the interpreter pays for travel and accommodations, usually to a “travel agency” selected by the pretend client. A few days or weeks later, the bank finds that the check or MO was fake and **removes that amount from the interpreter's account**. Meanwhile, the “travel agency” has received the interpreter's payment for the supposed travel and accommodations.

There are a good many variations of the fake check scam. It could start with an offer of work, goods or “fees” for a sweepstakes award. Often, the contact will claim to be from a foreign country. Whatever their approach, they may sound quite believable.

If someone you don't know wants to pay you by check or money order, but then wants you to wire some of the money back, beware! There is no legitimate reason for anyone to do so. If a stranger wants to pay you for something, insist on a cashiers check for the exact amount, preferably from a local bank or a bank that has a branch in your area.

If you are approached with a fake check scam, report it to the National Fraud Information Center/Internet Fraud Watch, a service of the nonprofit National Consumers League, at www.fraud.org or (800) 876-7060.

MITA wraps up '04 with great program

By Carol Shaw
Reader Co-Editor

Music, conversation, and a great special speaker provided MITA members with a Christmas party to remember.

On Saturday, December 4, 2004, nearly 50 MITA members (including a few spouses and other guests) enjoyed a three course meal at Mi Cocina in Irving. Once the main course was served, Public Relations Chairperson Mariana Peterson, introduced our special speaker, Jeff Crilley. Mr. Crilley is an award-winning journalist and local TV personality, as well as the author of "Free Publicity", a practical how-to book for anyone interested in raising their profile.

Before and after the special presentation, members were

also able to participate in a silent auction. Proceeds from the auction helped to offset expenses, but the greater benefit was in our members' generosity. We had more donations to the auction than we expected, and we thank you all! Long after the dinner was over, people stayed to visit with colleagues and friends. "The dinner party was nice," Lyda Baro commented, "it was wonderful to see everyone!"

Those of you who came, thank you. Those who were not able to make it, we missed you. It was a great way to close a year that has brought renewed growth and vigor to our organization. - and a great way to start the new year! Happy 2005, Everyone!

May Flowers - and Seminars, too!

"April showers", the proverb says, bring "May flowers".

This year, May is also scheduled to bring a day of seminars and workshops for MITAns far and wide.

Your Steering Committee will keep you posted!

CE rules for TLCIs begin 'early '06'

On the subject of continuing education for licensed court interpreters, the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, which governs the licensure of court interpreters in Texas, recently advised that "The rules [for continuing education] will be effective early 2006."

That date is a bit earlier than the original prediction of "late 2006 or early 2007" that was announced at several TDLR workshops on Continuing Education held last year in Austin.

The department promises to keep interpreters informed, as will *The Reader*.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 29	ATA Board of Directors Reception, Austin, Texas
February 5	MITA General Meeting
March 5	MITA Steering Committee Meeting
March 5	Legal Seminar, ATA Professional Development, Houston, Texas
March 6	Legal Seminar, HITA, Houston, Texas
Apr 29-May 1	Financial Seminar, ATA Prof. Development, Jersey City, NJ
May 13-15	NAJIT Annual Conference, Washington, DC

Several MITA members also provide interpreter training: check out the education page on our website to see what is offered locally and elsewhere in the state. Links for details: for ATA, www.atanet.org; for HITA, www.hitagroup.org, for MITA, www.dfw-mita.com.

Profiles needed

One of the more popular features of The MITA Reader is the "Meet your fellow MITAns" profile.

We need nominees for the column, or even volunteer yourself. Nominees will need to have a headshot photograph, a resume and a completed questionnaire.

It is perfectly acceptable to nominate yourself! (nobody will know). Remember that The Reader is YOUR newsletter and one of the reasons it exists is for the marketing of interpreters and translators and the education of the public about professional interpreter/translator resources.

The Reader will attempt to publish 15 or more profiles throughout the year. Editors of The Reader have developed a Q&A interview for Profile nominees and a CV and individual headshot photo are also needed. Email editor@dfw-mita.com.