Message from the Board

NAJIT LAUNCHES MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

NAJIT’s 1997 Membership Drive is under way. We are offering special incentives to new members as well as renewals. Any NAJIT member who recruits a new member by March 31, 1997, will be rewarded with an attractive NAJIT T-shirt, while supplies last. Have the new member write “referred by [your name]” on the application form. New members will also receive copies of PROTEUS Vol. V Nos. 3 and 4 with our compliments, supplies permitting. New members who also want a T-shirt have only to join NAJIT, then recruit someone else. The sweetest incentive is that the NAJIT member who recruits the most new members will have the registration fee waived for next year’s conference in Seattle.

Nearly all of NAJIT’s financial support comes from membership dues. The only way we can do more for the membership without raising dues is to grow. Most NAJIT members probably know someone who ought to join but has not yet done so. I urge every NAJIT member to make an effort to persuade at least one or two such people to join NAJIT in the coming months.

Conference 1997

As 1996 comes to a close, the program for NAJIT’s 1997 Meeting and Educational Conference is coming together. We recently signed a very favorable contract with the Embassy Suites Hotel, located just outside of Seattle, which offers ideal sleeping and meeting rooms at quite reasonable prices. Interactive, pre-conference workshops are being planned for the afternoon of Thursday, May 15 and all day Friday, 16. These will be optional, and priced separately. The conference proper, consisting of a series of shorter presentations, will be held on Saturday, 17 and Sunday, 18. Most of the proposals submitted are for language-neutral presentations, so there will be plenty for interpreters across the entire language spectrum. As the planning continues we will keep you posted via Proteus and the NAJIT Web site.

CIASG Meeting

Since May 1995, I’ve had the honor of representing NAJIT on the Court Interpreters Advisory Subgroup, a committee that advises the Clerks’ Advisory Group and the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts on matters concerning interpreting in the U.S. District Courts. The group consists of two Clerks, one Chief Deputy Clerk, two staff interpreters, and your servant. Our primary achievement has been the revision of two policy documents that have been in draft form for several years: Chapter XII, “Federal Court Interpreter Policies and Procedures,” to be added to the Guide to Judiciary Policies and Procedures, and The Federal Court Interpreters Orientation Manual. As reported in the previous Proteus [L. Pelegrin, “Miami Dialogue Continues,” Vol V, No. 3], these documents will be reviewed by the Clerks Advisory group and ultimately submitted to the Judicial Conference. Although AO policies directly affect only interpreters who work in the federal courts, the demonstration effect may well make these developments worth watching for interpreters in the state courts as well.

In the drafting process, some issues were controversial (e.g., when an uncertified interpreter may be used, and policy regarding the use of multiple interpreters). When the interests of saving money competed with those of the quality of court interpreting services (hence, the interests of justice), it was a struggle. A frequently heard theme at the Subgroup meetings was that you cannot tell judges how to run their courtrooms, where they reign supreme. I nonetheless argued for language that upheld the principles that NAJIT stands for. It will (continued on page 2)
Nominations Committee Report: Three Candidates for NAJIT Board

Two of the five members of the NAJIT Board of Directors are up for re-election this year: David Mintz and Laura Murphy. During the first week in October, the 508 members in good standing received the 1997 Call for Nominations. By the due date of Friday, October 25, ten recommendations were received. Four of them were for Laura Murphy, a member of the Nominating Committee who chose to not seek reelection; one was eliminated because she is not a member of NAJIT; and two declined nomination. The remaining three recommendations, having been qualified by the Nominating Committee, are being submitted to the membership. The nominees are Daok L. Lee, David Mintz, and Dagoberto Orrantia.

We hope that in the future the membership will take a more active role in the nomination process so that NAJIT can achieve its goal of geographical and linguistic diversity on the Board.

Joaquin Chan-Sánchez
Dena Millman
Laura Murphy

Message
(continued from page 1)

be interesting to see how these documents turn out after they have gone through the reviewing process and are released by the AO. I am grateful for all the helpful consultations and support I received in preparation from NAJIT members and other interested parties, primarily over courtinterp-l, NAJIT's electronic mailing list.

The Internet

Which brings us to the next topic: the aforementioned e-mail list, specifically devoted to court interpreting and legal translation, has become an extremely valuable and effective means of communication among court interpreters around the U.S. and elsewhere. It is also a resource for jobs: there have recently been help wanted postings for translators and interpreters of several languages. Sign language interpreters are actively involved in the discussion, as are interpreter trainers worldwide. Interpreters caught in troubling predicaments have asked for help and gotten it promptly. Resources of all kinds—books, videotapes, courses, publications—are announced in this forum. Every NAJIT member who has not done so already should make it a New Years' resolution to get plugged in, and then see <http://www.najit.org/listserv.html> for further information. Court interp-l is but one of many good reasons to get an Internet account. The Net is by no means a panacea, but it is a necessary and important tool.

David Mintz
Chair, Board of Directors

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
July 1 to September 30, 1996

Monica A. Ambrosi, Edmond, OK
Robert B. Anderson, Kennewick, WA
Laura Avila, Bayside, NY
Jacqueline C. Baertschi, New York, NY
Cynthia Joan Berry, Lawrence, MA
Consuelo C. Byrd, Houston, TX
Patricia Clair, Morris Plains, NJ
Alice T. Glick, San Francisco, CA
Paochen Gocrig, Milford, CT
Carmen Gomez, Colleyville, TX
Martita Guzman, Guaynabo, PR
Mark Homma, Mountain View, CA
Dr. Linde Keil, Honolulu, HI
Grace W. Liu, New York, NY
Dana Markiewicz, Newbury Park, CA
Hermes E. Mena, New York, NY
Matthew J. O'Brien, J.D., Lynn, MA
Hong Anh T. Parker, Tampa, FL
Theresa M. Phillips, Spokane, WA
Anh A. Puckett, Marietta, GA
Dieter Rapp, Sausalito, CA
Gloria J. Sera-Mulet, Los Angeles, CA
Lorena I. Sevilla S., Middleburg, VA
Benilda Taft-Kiewek, San Francisco, CA
InHyang Kim Waters, New York, NY
Gabrielle K. Winter, Palm Beach Gardens, FL
Nelly Wolf, St. Joseph, MI
Dominican Argot
By the Terminology Working Group

Oral translation of colloquial language, a difficult task even for someone who is interpreting for a compatriot, is made more difficult by the presence of regionalisms, idioms, anglicisms and underworld slang. In interpreting for Dominican speakers in the courts, we have come across a number of words and expressions which cannot be found in dictionaries, or are found in glossaries of difficult access. The following list of terms and phrases heard recently among Dominican speakers in New York City was compiled by Dena Millman and Dagoberto Orrantia. Marcia Parron, who is herself Dominican, reviewed it for accuracy. This is the second list dealing with Dominican Spanish published in Proteus; the first one can be found in Vol. 2, No. 3, (Fall, 1993). Both are part of continuing projects of the Terminology Working Group to document contemporary speech of interest to the court interpreter.

a la lata mucho: Me ha llamado a la lata, He’s been calling me all the time.
abusador exagerado: No vamos a ser abusadores, Let’s not overdo it.
agallú [<agalludo] ambicioso, hambriento: Ese hombre es agallú, That man is greedy.
ajorao con prisa: Estoy ajorao; no te puedo atender, I’m in a rush; I can’t take care of you.
amarrar poner preso: A Ramón y Miguel los amarraron, They locked up Ramón and Miguel.
andén caminando: Todo el día con su andén por el mall, They walk around the mall all day.
aparato kilo: Un aparato de manteca, A kilo of lard.
azulejos la policia

bi [<brother] hermano: Me hacen quedo mal con la gente a mí, bi, You’re making me look bad with the people, B.
balsa o barza una balsa de mentiras, a bunch of lies.
bejucos o bujocos líneas telefónicas: Hablamos allá mejor, porque usted sabe cómo son estos bujocos, We’d better talk there, because you know how these phones are.
bomba muy bueno: Eso sí que está bomba, That’s really great.
bosú [<bozudo] bigotudo
bravos policía (federal): Los bravos se le tiraron en el apartamento, The feds moved in on his apartment.
brega dificultades: La brega esa que me hicieron, That job they did on me.
bunchar engañar: Cualquiera no me buncha a mí, Not anybody can trick me.
caballén tontería, nimiiedad: preguntas en inglés como ‘Today is nice’ y aís caballén, Questions in English like ‘Today is nice’ and dumb things like that.
caballén cantidad pequeña: El hombre apareció con una caballén, The man showed up with a tiny little bit.
caballo amigo, camarada: Ayúdeme, caballo, Help me out, man.
caché fino, elegante: Ese reloj es caché, That’s a fancy watch.
cachú cosa fácil: Eso es un cachú en la 74; el alto está así, It’s real easy on 74th; that’s the way it is uptown.
cadenas que usan cadenas como adorno: los cadenas, the guys with the big chains.
camellar trabajar: El resto lo camellamos, We’ll work off the rest.
can fiesta: tener un can, to throw a party
cantazo pase: el chamaquito se dio un par de cantazos, the kid took a couple of hits.
carne de puerco tipo despreciable; individuo de raza negra: Un carne de puerco estaba allí, A low-life was there.
casamente casi, en efecto, de hecho: Yo casamente no lo uso, I hardly use it.
chanche ahora, ya: Me lo das chanche, Give it to me now.
chapiada cortada, diluida: No es vaina chapiada cómo tienen estos por aquí, This stuff’s not cut like they’ve got around here.
chapiar cortar
charlatán informal, que no cumple: El tigüere es un charlatán, ni me llamó pa atrás, The guy’s a bullshitter, he didn’t even call me back.
chequiarse verse: nos chequiámos pues, I’ll see you later then.
cheles, chelitos dinero: Yo lo que quiero es que me den mis cheles, What I want is for them to give me my money.
chepa azar, casualidad: De chepa lo mato, I almost killed him.
chichi niño pequeño
chilata pequeña cantidad de dinero

(continued on page 4)
chimbilín niño pequeño
chín porción ínfima: ¿Tienes un chin de esa vaina? Do you have a little bit of that stuff? Ponme a Tony un chin, Put Tony on for a bit. chínchín poco a poco; porción ínfima. Me lo das chinchín, Give it to me little by little. chinchín niño; porción ínfima
chiva mala, difícil: Ahora es que está chiva la cosa, Now the thing is bad.
clavar esconder: ¿Tá tienes adonde clavar eso? Do you have somewhere to stash that?
clavo escondite; botín; compartimento secreto: Yo tenía un carríto ahí con clavo, I had a car with a trap.
colombique colombiano
corbejú peludo
corozo palma, semilla: Ahora estamos llegando al meollo del corozo, Now we’re getting to the bottom of things. Es más duro que el corozo, He’s harder than a rock.
crucetear pasar repetidamente por el mismo lugar
cuartos dinero
cuívero [<curvero, que tira curvas]: Eso está duro y cuívero, That’s tricky and hard.
de pinga excelente
diamante diez: Trágase un diamante allí, Bring a ten there.
doctor drogadicto: El doctor dijo que no sirve, The doctor said that it’s no good.

echar agua bautizar
El Alto upper Manhattan; Washington Heights
enllave enchufe, palanca: Si no tiene el enllave en la aduana, paga más, If you don’t have a fix in with customs, you’ll pay more.
está todo [tá-tó] adiós, en el teléfono.
estar de vacaciones estar en la cárcel
estudiao instruido: Un hombre estudiao como el Vaquero, An educated man like El Vaquero.

firmar con los azulejos caer preso: Está de vacaciones; firmó con los azulejos, He’s on vacation, he signed on with the cops.
friquiarse Ella se friquió, She freaked out.
fuecé maleficio, fatalidad
funda bolsa de papel

gramear o gramiar vender droga por gramos
grasa heroña: Le pegó a la grasa uno de ellos allí, One of them hits on the grease there.
guáguá brujería
guillo brazalete
guíra güiro

hacer [<to make] ganar
heavy 1. bien: Pues está heavy entonces, So it’s heavy then. 2. bueno: Está heavy, está mortal, It’s heavy; it’ll knock you out.
jabao mulato de ojos, piel y pelo de color claro: El jabao, el de arriba, le dio siete, The jabao, the one from up there, gave him seven.
jarineado o jariniado acatarrado
jarinar illovizar
jarto harto: Ya yo estoy jarto de muela, I’m sick and tired of this bullshit.
jeepta o yipeta jeep: Una jeepeta Grand Cherokee, A jeep Grand Cherokee.
jodedera necedad; el narcotráfico
llante lloriqueo, cuento. No vengas con ese llante, Don’t give me that story.
llantar lloriquear
llantén lloriqueo
llave de chocolate cadena perpetua: Le van a echar una llave de chocolate, They’re going to lock you up and throw away the key.
loco vocativo: ¿Qué pasa, loco? What’s up, man?
loco veintiocho gramos [porque hay 28 kms. de distancia entre Santo Domingo y cierto manicomio]
lucus mil dólares: Hacer par de lucas aunque sea, To make a couple of thou at least.

machete corte, diluyente. El machete lo dañó, The cut ruined it.
macuto mochila de campesino
macuto soborno: Gastos de macuto, Pay-off money.
macuteo 1. sablazo. 2. soborno: Hay macuteo allí, They’re paying people off there.
mamañema tipejo: Es un mamañema, He’s a cock sucker.
mamarse un huevo perder el tiempo
manteca heroña: Un aparato de manteca, A kilo of heroin.
mascota cuaderno
mata y cuarta [game of marbles: very close to the target] Ya estamos en el mata y cuarta, We’re about ready to pounce.
mayimbe apodo del cantante Fernandito Villalona
meter paquetes mentir; inventar historias
miéquina o miérquina exclamación
Mingo Santo Domingo: El está pa Mingo, He’s in Santo Domingo.
mortal excelente
mosquito tractor
muela ncedades: No me vengas con muela, Don’t give me that bull.

palomo tonto; marica: Peleamos porque me llamó palomo, We fought because he called me a faggot.
palea marica
paniquearse asustarse: El amigo mío hasta se paniqueó, mano, My friend panicked, man.
paquete meter en paquetes: Freddy va a paquetearlo, Freddy is going to package it up.
pariguayo zoquete: Mira ese pariguayo, Look at that dummy.
pasola motocicleta
peso tipo importante: Sí yo fuera un peso... If I were a big shot...
picada negocio: Ahí dízque la picada es buena, They say business is good there.
pícar 1. morer: El negocio mío es pícarn, My business is grinding it up. 2. pedir prestado
pingü excelente: Esa vaina allá es pingü, That stuff is fucking great.
pina granada de mano
poderes hechizos: Dígale a la bruja que empiece con los poderes, Tell the witch to start casting her spells.
polvorete polvo
pulgón vividor, aprovechado
quitao libre del vicio: El patrón está quitao, The boss got [is] off the stuff.

recibo dinero: ¿Tú tienes el recibo entero? Do you have the entire receipt?
reguero monzón: Un reguero de vainitas, A whole bunch of stuff.
reventear revender
romper corozos resolver un problema difícil
saco monzón: Un saco de veces te llamé, I called you a bunch of times.
samplear dar una muestra: Pero que te samplee, hermano, But let him give you a sample, brother.
segurete seguro: Si es segurete, pues lo hacemos, If it’s definite, then let’s do it.
sentarse declarar en un juicio: ¿El va a sentarse? Is he going to testify?
seter [set] 1. escoger como víctima: A ese muchacho lo tienen setead, They set that guy up. 2.
Charlotte’s Corner

A Visit to the New York Public Library

Alexander Rainof

These last few weeks Charlotte has spun her web with the purest of silks, having become, for the sake of the NAJIT membership, a bookworm at the New York Public Library (http://www.nypl.org/). Her temporary home proved to be truly magnificent; as it enters its second century of service, the NYPL has created one of the most useful and extensive sites on the Internet. The location is so comprehensive and varied that nothing short of a modern Ariadne is needed to guide the judicial interpreter and translator through this superb Internet labyrinth of interconnected links. Charlotte has bravely assumed the mantle of her sister, replacing the famous gold thread of yore with some cybersilk of her own.


“State Legal Materials” connects to the New York State Court of Appeals Decisions and to bulletins which offer extensive notes and commentary on significant recent New York Court of Appeals decisions by Cornell law students, as well as to the New York State Senate (which includes bills and resolutions, the New York State Constitution, the 1996 Session laws and the Governor’s chapter and veto messages), the New York State Assembly (which also includes bills, resolutions, statutes, etc.), and the New York State Home Page.

“New York City” includes links to the New York City Council (which contains the full text of Local Laws of 1995), to the City of New York Home Page (Mayor) and to the Public Advocate’s Home Page.


“Special Topic: Taxation” connects to the Internal Revenue Service (which includes regulations, publications, and tax forms), as well as to many other sites providing tax information.

“Foreign and International Law Sites” is of particular interest to the forensic translator and interpreter. Under the crosslink it has with the House of Representatives one can access “Laws of other Nations (Listed by Countries)” and “Treaties and International Law.” Other sites available are: Foreign and International Law (Cornell), Canadian Law (Université de Montréal), and the International Trade Law Project (which includes the texts of such treaties as NAFTA, GATT, and the Maastricht Treaty).

“Other Legal Web Sites” connects with the Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, the WWW Virtual Library - Law, Law Links (LEXIS), and others. All of these sites provide excellent materials for training in terminology, sight translation, and simultaneous interpretation. However, “Laws of other Nations (Listed by Countries),” under “Foreign and International Law Sites,” is of particular importance to the forensic translator and interpreter. Being part of the Internet Law Library of the U.S. House of Representatives, it can be located directly through its new site, http://law.house.gov/52.htm, where—oh joy!—one can access 196 nations (including less well-known countries such as Bhutan, Comoros, Kiribati, Niue, Tuvalu and Vanuatu). Each country constitutes a separate link, where one can often find not only numerous legal documents such as constitutions, assessments of human
rights policies, laws in general, specialized laws (e.g.,
elections, copyright), but financial and even philo-
sophical and literary texts as well. Often these docu-
ments are available in both the national language of each
specific country and in English. For instance, Colombia
has the text of its 1982 Constitution in both Spanish and
English. This is the case with several of the other
Spanish-speaking countries from where a variety of
texts in Spanish and English can be downloaded. Brazil
has the text of the Brazilian Constitution in both Por-
tuguese and Spanish, while Canada and France have
numerous documents in French and English including,
in the case of France, the entire text of the Constitu-
tion of the Fifth Republic, the Law on the Use of French, the
Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1787, and docu-
ments on Family Law. Switzerland has a draft text of its
constitution in French, German, and Italian, as well as
texts in English. Germany has a plethora of documents
in both German and English with, surprisingly enough,
some texts in Spanish, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian
as well. Greece offers texts in Greek and English and, of
course, selections from Plato and Aristotle. Hungary has
texts in Hungarian, English, and French; Iran in both
English and Farsi; and Israel in English and, again
somewhat surprisingly, in Spanish. Italy not only has
numerous texts in Italian and English, but also docu-
ments relating to Roman law in German and, naturally,
in Latin. The Japan link includes a text of the Japanese
Constitution in Japanese, English, and yes, in Spanish,
as well as the texts of the Second World War Instru-
cements of Surrender, and the text of the Copyright Laws
of Japan (in Japanese), among others. For the texts in
Japanese a decoding program is needed. Mexico also
has an abundance of texts available, including the Civil
Code, the Constitution, Statutes, Election Laws, the text
of NAFTA, a projection on the National Development
1995-2000, and information relating to visas and
monetary policy. Romania offers the text of its Con-
itution in Romanian, English, and in Spanish. Russia has
the text of its Constitution in English and Russian (the
Cyrillic needs a decoding program), while the Union of
Soviet Socialist Republics, besides Russian, also pro-
vides documents in English, French, Turkish, and
German (including the Communist Manifesto). Yugo-
slavia posts documents, in both English and French,
relating to the proceedings of the International Criminal
Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. In summary, every
nation listed, from Albania to Zimbabwe, offers in-
valuable information which can be used by the forensic
translator and interpreter for training in vocabulary
acquisition, sight translation, and simultaneous inter-
pretation. Charlotte hopes that you will visit this won-
derful site often, and profit from it, and will meet you
again soon, at the New York Public Library.

This concludes today's web on Charlotte's Corner. We would be most grateful to all of you
if you were to share with us any useful URL you may
have discovered. We will try to include them in
Charlotte's Corner, and will most certainly give you credit
for your contribution. Please send your information, or
any questions you may have, to Dr. Alexander Rainof,
either by mail (1021 12th Street, #101, Santa Monica,
CA 90403); by e-mail (arainof@ucla.edu); or by fax
(310-395-1885), or through my Web Site
(http://www.electriciti.com/~trey/alexis/) which has an
e-mail link.

Editor's note: This is the first of two parts.

COURTINTERP-L Mailbombed

David Mintz

On two separate occasions in October and November
1996, NAJIT's electronic mailing list courtinterp-l was
the object of a form of cyber-aggression known as mail
bombing. Approximately 160 subscribers around the
world found their mailboxes flooded with hundreds of
nastily-worded messages that said that they had been
blocked from sending mail to a site known as
ucmhou.fc.net. These messages contained copies of the
e-mail from courtinterp-l that the site was rejecting.
Several people posted messages to the list expressing
indignation and/or pleading for help, which ironically
only exacerbated the problem, since every message sent
to the list was getting bounced back. Other subscribers
retained their sense of humor through the crisis.

In the October incident I phoned Colossus, the
company that hosts NAJIT's Website and listserver, and
reported the problem, which subsided shortly thereafter.
I later received an e-mail from one of Colossus' tech-
nicians, who explained that "we never found out
who did the mail bombing (they were using fake ad-
dresses and our majordomo at the time didn't record
headers), but [we] have put in security to reduce the
chance of this happening again. And more importantly,
we've put in some tracking software so we may catch
the guy next time."

However, as of this writing, a preliminary investi-
gation of the second incident suggests that Colossus

(continued on page 8)
Cascadia '96 Conference
Marcia Gotler

I recently attended the Fourth Biennial Cascadia Conference in beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia. The event was co-sponsored by the Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society (NOTIS), the Society of Medical Interpreters (SOMI), and the Washington State Court Interpreters and Translators Society (WITS), all based in Seattle, along with the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia (STIBC). As one of the only "foreigners" attending this regional conference, and a great lover of the Northwest, I found the meeting to be of particular interest.

One of the highlights of Cascadia '96 actually occurred the day before the conference officially began. Early arrivals were taken on a tour of the Supreme Court of British Columbia. (The Supreme Court designation is similar to that used in New York, and refers to a court that hears cases involving serious felonies and certain civil matters.) We began with an orientation speech by Evelyn Neaman of the Law Courts Education Society of British Columbia, a publicly-funded non-profit organization dedicated to community outreach. Not only does the Society educate citizens on the judicial system and recruit volunteers, from deputies to judges, to speak to them, but it also educates courthouse staff on issues of concern to immigrants and Natives (as Canada's indigenous people are referred to). Three bilingual advocates serve as liaisons to Vancouver's large and diverse Asian community, and a comprehensive, easy-to-understand booklet on British Columbia's legal system, covering such topics as workers' and tenants' rights, police powers, and the courts, is provided in eight languages, as well as English. Mock trials are held regularly for people in all walks of life to become better acquainted with legal procedure. This idyllic scenario is not necessarily the norm throughout Canada; British Columbia appears to be a model in this regard.

The orientation speech was followed by a tour of the court itself. Perhaps because our systems are in many respects so similar, the differences between Canadian and U.S. court procedures stood out. (Some practices also vary from province to province within Canada itself.) The first thing I noticed upon entering the Supreme Court was the lack of metal detectors. (Chalk one up for strict gun and weapons control.) It is housed in the modern Law Courts Building, whose spacious, airy atrium suggests a hotel or suburban mall, rather than a courthouse, and which was designed so that ordinary citizens would feel welcome. Clerks and lawyers wear robes with white collars, while judges sport more elaborate collars, cuffs, and lapels in red. Judges are addressed as "My Lord," and referred to as "Mr." or "Madam Justice." Trial lawyers are referred to as "barristers," while those specializing in contract law are called "solicitors." Lawyers representing the government are called "crown prosecutors." One bows slightly in the direction of the bench upon entering and leaving the courtroom. However, there was none of the exaggerated formality in courtroom interactions that Americans often associate with the British (and no wigs!), and I even spotted a male attorney wearing an earring, something I've seen in New York, but never in the federal courts where I work occasionally in the South and Midwest.

The physical layout of the courtroom is also somewhat different. The witness sits sideways, facing the

Mailbombing
(continued from page 7)

itself may in fact have had something to do with a malfunction that caused NAJIT's mail to flood the umchou.fc.net site, which in turn bounced it back at courtinterp-l in self-defense, which of course sent it back again, creating an infinite loop. If true, this theory belies the explanation Colossus gave us in regard to the first incident. The true cause of these problems remains obscure, but in any event I am looking for another site for NAJIT to move to in case these problems recur.

The November incident apparently drove away nearly a third of our subscribers, destroying several months of progress. Some subscribers exceeded their disk space quotas on their mail servers before they had an opportunity to delete the junk messages, and thus missed legitimate mail that was returned to sender. Anyone who had an account that bills by the hour spent a little money on the time it took to sift through the rubble. For most subscribers, however, the incidents appear to have been upsetting and annoying but otherwise harmless. Proteus readers who fled from the list are encouraged to return.
jury across the room. The accused ("defendant" is only used in Canada for civil proceedings) is seated in a box—a raised platform with a long, padded bench and railing, somewhat like a miniature jury box—behind the attorneys, centered directly in front of the rail that separates the public from the rest of the courtroom. This makes it more cumbersome for defendants to consult with their attorneys during the trial, since they (or an observant judge) must ask a sheriff to call counsel over. (Doubtless many lawyers here would find this a welcome relief from the distraction of having an overly anxious client beside them.) Interpreters sit—guess where—right next to the accused, which doesn’t make hearing any easier.

Aside from these largely ceremonial courtroom practices, other differences are subtle. Rules of trial procedure are quite similar. There are twelve jurors for criminal trials (eight for civil); however, there are no alternates, as a verdict may be decided by the ten remaining jurors, in the case of attrition. The only questions normally permitted in the voir dire are name, age, and occupation; attorneys must otherwise rely on instinct, or bias, as the case may be. At the request of the accused, trials may be wholly conducted in French. There are no sidebars; jurors are led out of the courtroom during sensitive objections. In their jury charge, in addition to explaining concepts such as reasonable doubt and admissible evidence, judges are required to summarize the cases presented by both parties, something some observers feel should be eliminated to avoid inadvertently revealing personal opinions. Finally, in contrast to many judiciaries in the U.S., there are no sentencing guidelines, nor is there general support for the concept.

When it comes to interpreters, British Columbia is back here on the ground with the rest of us mortals. The provincial courts are "experimenting" with headphone equipment, but it is normally used only for multiple-defendant cases. One interpreter per courtroom is the norm. (If it’s any consolation, criminal matters are heard only from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.) Accredited interpreters owe their presence in the Canadian courtroom to a decision in the case of Regina [as in Queen] versus Tran, in which a mistrial was declared because the interpreter—who had only provided summary interpretation—was called upon as an identity witness during the trial to testify that the accused had lost weight during the preceding months. This case was said to be a great educational tool for judges in the importance of using professional, unbiased interpreters.

The first session I attended on the following day did not live up to expectations. Billed as a talk on setting up a home office and "software alternatives" for language professionals, it opened with an infomercial, complete with slice-of-life small business software success stories, followed by a sales presentation by a Microsoft shill. I ducked out to hear about the infobahn (a.k.a. information superhighway) from Caitlin Walsh and Melissa Mcier Tarker of NOTIS. I’m not yet plugged into the Web, so I was very much a passive observer, but the information, complete with an on-screen demonstration, seemed comprehensive and up-to-date. So far, so good. But it wasn’t long before the Microsoft behemoth once again raised its fearsome head. It turned out one of our presenters was married to a Microsoft employee, while the other had formerly been employed there—not to suggest that they were anything less than impartial in their presentation. Perhaps that’s just to be expected out in Bill Gates country.

The afternoon sessions included a talk by Sergeant Koos Dykstra and Detective Robb McLaren of the Vancouver City Police Narcotics Unit. McLaren, who began the session wearing a long wig, shades, and bandanna headband, like a drug dealer out of an old Barretta episode, gradually stripped off his disguise to show us that "narc is normal." We learned that, in spite of Vancouver’s proximity to the U.S., drug usage patterns are somewhat different. Crack is not a popular choice (although it is common in eastern Canada), presumably because cocaine, often injected by addicts, is so cheap in British Columbia. It is sometimes sold in the form of a "ball," a strictly local creation, in which small amounts of cocaine are rolled up in a piece of plastic tied with thread or dental floss. Cocaine and heroin for sale on the street are often packaged in "decks"—tiny, hand-made, origami-like paper envelopes invented by resourceful drug dealers. Drug slang varies as well. "Middlers" are those who bring together customers and dealers. To "buff" is to dilute drugs with a cutting agent. "T’s and R’s,"—Talwin (synthetic heroin) and the prescription drug Ritalin—are currently fading in popularity due to the increased availability of the real thing.

Among the conference’s most memorable moments was the keynote address by interpreter Sidney Rittenberg, who was the kind of person you wish you could take home to dinner just to keep hearing his stories. Mr. Rittenberg is a warm, intelligent man who has led an extraordinary
life and gained a great deal of wisdom in the process. Stationed in China in 1945 after a stint at the U.S. Army Language School, he stayed on working with the United Nations after the war. In the true negotiations between Communists and Nationalists during the Chinese Civil War, his aid was enlisted by a U.S. colonel, since the two factions did not trust each other's own interpreters. After thus falling into the profession, Mr. Rittenberg later went on to interpret for Mao Tze Dong and Chou En Lai. However, sixteen of his thirty-five years in China were spent in solitary confinement on charges of spying, of which he maintains his innocence. He came to appreciate the importance of having an interpreter in legal proceedings first-hand, when after three years of linguistic and cultural immersion in China, he was first questioned by interrogators, and still felt he could not adequately express himself under the circumstances. (He never did get an interpreter.) During his first six years of solitary, after one year in a blackened cell, he was allowed reading material in Chinese, which no doubt helped prepare him for his future job as a diplomatic interpreter. Mr. Rittenberg is now a consultant to companies doing business in China.

Mr. Rittenberg suggested that when interpreting, one should focus on the speaker's main point, attaching all secondary ideas to it, as if hanging clothes on a line. He emphasized the need to preserve register and to search for idiomatic expressions which have a similar impact on listeners as the original, rather than the identical meaning. (We Spanish interpreters got a taste of our own medicine when he gave an example of a too-literal translation of an English expression, and as the Chinese interpreters present exploded into laughter we could only look around the room and try not to feel left out.) Those of us who suffer from stage-fright may find it reassuring that Mr. Rittenberg says he still gets butterflies every time he interprets. Finally, he suggested that interpreters practice humility: not to pretend to know, hear, or understand when they do not; to work for improvement in their native language as well as in those they have acquired; and to accept criticism. I left wishing he would write a memoir so I could learn more about his fascinating life and ideas.

The organizers of Cascadia '96 are to be commended for the range of topics and speakers they offered at the conference, as well as for the beautiful facilities they provided. It was both an informative and enjoyable event, as I am sure future conferences will be.
1996 Membership Directory Errata

The names of four members in good standing were omitted in error from the 1996 Membership Directory. We deeply regret the omissions and apologize to Felice-Saeed Bezri, Dr. Jose A. Diaz, A.J. Elterman, and Lorenzo M. Montoya. Their listings follow.

Bezri, Felice-Saeed (IT) 125 Chiswick Rd., #214 Brighton, MA 02135 Home: (617) 787-3647 Work: (617) 787-3647 Fax: (617) 787-3647 French, Italian, Arabic Dept. of State Escort

Diaz, Ph.D., Jose A. (IT) 3915 Lisbon Dr. Chambersburg, PA 17201 Home: (717)369-4714 Work: (717)264-4141 x 3346 Fax: (717) 369-5967 Spanish, P-French Federal

Elterman, A.J. (IT) 13639 41st Ave., #1B Flushing, NY 11355 Home: (718) 353-3536 Work: (718) 353-3536 Fax: (718) 445-1922 German, Turkish, P-French

Montoya, Lorenzo M. 528 Prince St. Oakland, CA 94610 Work: (510) 839-0748 Fax: (510) 839-0748 Spanish, P-Ladino Federal, CA State

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ITEMS OF INTEREST


January 18-19, 1996. Albuquerque, New Mexico. Federal Judicial Center Workshop for Federal Court Interpreters. Draft agenda includes updates on new laws and legislation, telephone interpreting, and Administrative Office activities; group discussions on consecutive interpreting, terminology and vocabulary; and issues of interest to staff and free-lance interpreters. The workshop is open to all federal staff interpreters and to federally certified freelance interpreters who (1) work in the federal courts, and (2) are included on the AOUSC’s roster of certified interpreters. Address: The Federal Judicial Center, 1 Columbus Circle, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002-8003.

April 21-25, 1997. Capitolio Center, Havana. Expolingua Habana 97. The Organizing Committee welcomes papers on lexicography, terminology, interpretation, translation and related topics. Abstract of up to 250 words should be submitted by December 31, 1996. Address: Organizing Committee, Expolingua Habana 97, Capitólio de La Habana, P.O. Box 2014, La Habana 10200 Cuba. Tel.: 62-6531; Fax: (537) 338237; e-mail: cttc@cniai.cu.

May 16-18, 1997. Seattle, Washington. 18th Annual NAJIT Meeting and Educational Conference. Address: NAJIT, 551 Fifth Ave., Suite 3025, New York, NY 10176. Tel. (212) 692-9581; Fax (212) 687-4106; e-mail: headquarters@najit.org; http://www.najit.org

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