



State of the Association report

Recovery

AFTER 1998 OUR ASSOCIATION began losing members: from a high then of 218 our membership dropped to 170 in 2002—down 22% in 4 years. In 2003 we experienced unexampled growth to close with a total of 201 members—up 18%. Some of this sharp reversal of a persistent trend doubtless resulted from the policies the voters endorsed:

- Electronic online payments using major credit cards
- A web site plainly visible to major search engines and the buying public
- Streamlining to minimize procedural paperwork.

Increasing numbers of new and renewing members are taking advantage of the electronic payment option, which goes into our account with no paper to shuffle or remail. The internet visibility test—a Google search for “Spanish interpreter” Texas—now flashes a link to our web site on every results page. Back in April you had to comb through 13 screensful just to find our name—never the Linguist Locator. The difference is due to our added website keyword metatags and a cheap but aggressive ad campaign covering all of our languages. Both of

these efforts bypassed all procedural delays by the simple expedient of using private capital for the ads and volunteer labor, all summarized on one-page agendas and reports as *fait accompli*. This way board members were able to see everything up and working with no risk and no delays before approving the ad campaign.

You will not easily find another association in this country which is working as effectively as ours to represent the interests of individual freelance linguists. This is especially important given the rise of “translation” websites offering free profile listings to desperate, often anonymous, beginners.

Just as individual linguists earn their livelihood in a competitive environment, so it is with associations. The same global communications networks which allow customers to choose among linguists also enable linguists to choose among associations. We have increased our professional member base without weakening our ties to the academic community or our exemplary corporate members.

Our association must continue to earn the trust and cooperation of all our members. To do so we must produce additional practical advantages and still uphold the rights of the indi-

viduals we represent. The volunteer support which has kept our association free and independent all these years flows from integrity—our loyalty to the values we uphold. I’m proud to continue to work with such a fine and dedicated bunch of folks, and look forward to building a productive and successful 2004, with a shorter questionnaire new members can fill out online.

Deadlines

ACCORDING TO THE BYLAWS, timely renewal involves paying dues by December 31, and memberships not renewed by January 31 are considered lapsed. You can’t run for office if your dues are lapsed, so out of consideration for the nominating committee, don’t let it happen.

If you do a lot of networking and sharing of workloads, January 31 is also the deadline for filing 1099-MISC reports. These you can get by calling 800-TAX-FORM (829-3676). They won’t let you download and use PDF versions, so call early.

Oilsig

AATIA’s OilSIG is now a going concern. The first draft of our organizing document can be downloaded for review and discussion as a small pdf file, Oilsig.pdf, from

<ftp://ftp.1929crash.com/>. Otherwise write membership@aatia.org (after January 1) and I’ll send you a copy. We’ll hold our first meeting at the Dog and Duck Pub, 406 W 17th St, five blocks from the History Center after the regular AATIA meeting. It is only fitting that the Roughneck SIG get its start at the old Rowdy SIG venue.



—J. Henry Phillips ★