



WITS NEWSLETTER

Washington State Court Interpreters and Translators Society

Spring 2004, Volume 15, Number 2

2003-2004 Annual Review

by WITS President, Samuel Mattix, Lao and Thai Interpreter

This year marks 16 years since WITS founding in 1988. During the past year, WITS has assisted its members in complying with continuing education requirements for Washington State court certified interpreters by conducting educational programs, and has celebrated International Translators Day and enjoyed a Holiday Potluck with sister organizations SOMI and NOTIS.

Almost six years ago WITS first appeared on the internet as www.witsnet.org. This year our website was given a major facelift by Caitilin Walsh. It's now much more intuitive and easier to navigate. The online directory is now specifically suited to searching for legal interpreters in Washington State, but can also be used to find federal court, conference, medical and social services interpreters and tape transcription and translation services. We can easily help clients find our WITS colleagues by looking them up in the directory or by referring clients to www.witsnet.org. Webpages are in place for our WITS newsletters, articles of interest, client education, membership recruitment, membership renewals, calendar of educational and social events, and more. Be sure your online listing is up-to-date by submitting it online or by mailing it in. You can do it online then click to submit it by email, or mail in the "WITS Directory Listing Form" provided with this newsletter. You can help keep WITS website up-to-date and increase its value to all users by emailing materials of interest such as articles, announcements, and client education materials to our dedicated webmistress, Sheila Harrington: webmaster@witsnet.org. (It's easy to email Sheila by clicking on "webmaster" on the www.witsnet.org homepage.)

Other progress of interest in the past year include:

- (1) Revision of WITS elections procedures to improve efficient cooperation and timeliness between the Board Development Committee and the Nominations Committee
- (2) Preparation of an annual schedule of responsibilities for WITS Board of Directors. This should help new board members transition into their duties by listing what is to be done when, and can thereby ensure that WITS bylaws and policy commitments are maintained.

(3) WITS membership database was re-organized and updated by Caitilin Walsh, who then trained WITS Treasurer and Membership Chair, Claudia Zar, how to use and maintain it. Now when any changes are needed to membership data, such as mail or email addresses, or committee involvements, they need only be entered once in a single place: in the membership database, in order to become available for multiple purposes. Claudia sends updated mailing labels to Programs Committee for mailing out announcements and to Publications for mailing out newsletters. She exports a text file of email addresses and sends it off to our Email & Internet Communications Chair, John Scigliano, for broadcasting emails. And she exports a special directory information database and sends it to WITS webmaster to update all directory listings on WITS website.

(4) WITS Treasurer moved our books to electronic bookkeeping as of the start of this year.

(5) WITS Board of Directors voted to hire a part-time office manager to improve accessibility and timely response for WITS members and the public. A job announcement was published in our winter 2004 newsletter. The duties listed have since been reduced because a willing WITS member volunteered to pick up the mail regularly, and WITS is exploring other options for desktop publishing. Please read the updated job announcement in this issue.

This newsletter is a "WITS Lite" edition, to coincide with our 2004 Annual Meeting, and to accompany distribution of the 2004 WITS Directory of Members. (We apologize that during the 2003 overhaul of our membership database, we were unable to publish a directory.)

A special thanks to Lourdes Pearce who served as WITS Publications Chair and Newsletter Editor during 2003 and early 2004, before asking to resign due to increased responsibilities in Skagit County. Also, WITS is very grateful to Glenna White for the many years she served WITS Newsletter and Publications Committee and did desktop publishing for WITS newsletter. Glenna White asked to relinquish this responsibility upon completion of the Winter 2004 edition. (*Now you know why this edition was done in MS Word instead of PageMaker!*) We are definitely looking for WITS members who have a flair for writing, reporting, digging up interesting articles, photography, editorial talent, ... whatever it takes to put together a dynamic publications committee. Look for something really **BIG** in our next edition.

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WITS Newsletter is published quarterly by the
Washington State Court Interpreters & Translators Society,
PO Box 1012, Seattle, WA 98111-1012.

Our voicemail telephone number is (206) 382-5690.

WITS has a Web page which can be visited at

www.witsnet.org.

WITS accepts advertising to be published in the
Newsletter. Advertisements are subject to approval and
must be consistent with the goals and purposes of WITS.
The acceptance by WITS of a paid advertisement in the
Newsletter does not constitute endorsement of the
product or services advertised. Acceptable sizes (width by
height) are as follows:

6-1/2" x 4": \$60.00

3" x 4": \$30.00

3" x 2": \$15.00

Submit an ad, send camera-ready advertisement together
with payment to the WITS PO Box address noted above.

Interpreters Step Forward To Help at Legal Clinics

by Kenneth Barger, Federal and WA State
Courts Certified Interpreter (Spanish)

The King County Bar Association is in need of volunteer interpreters in its Neighborhood Legal Clinics program. This program serves the community by offering free half-hour consultations with an attorney. There are 25 legal clinics in King County; some are general clinics, others specialize in an area such as family law, elder law, debt, and so forth.

I've been volunteering in the Bilingual Spanish Clinic and the Immigration Clinic for about four years. These two clinics are held simultaneously in a church near Capitol Hill. It's gratifying to serve the community in this way, but the benefit is far from one-sided. I always bring my business cards and give them to the volunteer attorneys, and I have gotten plenty of paid work as a result.

Another enormous benefit I've gotten from my work at the clinics is the exposure to diverse types of legal matters. My regular work is dominated by criminal matters, but the clinics serve folks with all types of concerns in many areas of law. This has helped me to expand my vocabulary in areas I don't have much contact with from day to day.

I would encourage any court interpreter in or near King County to consider lending his or her talents to this worthy program. My experience there has been rewarding in many ways.

Court certification is preferred, but not a requirement. Interpreters must have experience in legal terminology. The greatest demand is for Spanish interpreters, especially in the Downtown, Kent, and Federal Way clinics. The need for other languages is sporadic, but it does exist; there is some volume in Cantonese, Mandarin, and Russian, among others.

For more information or to offer your services, contact Victoria Cherniak at the King County Bar Association's Homeless and Newcomers Project. Victoria can be reached at (206) 267-7027 or VictoriaC@kcba.org. See you at the clinics!

HELP WANTED

(duties reduced since previous announcement)

WITS is seeking an applicant for OFFICE MANAGER who is:

- Preferably a WITS member;
- Detail oriented;
- Well-organized;
- Able to collect WITS mail from downtown Seattle frequently;
- Has email capability.

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. Mail
 - a. collects mail from KCSCt Interpreter Services office (2 times/week)
 - b. date stamps mail, logs mail, especially any checks or bills
 - c. distributes/forwards mail (1 time/week)
2. WITS Voicemail
 - a. checks and logs all voicemail messages (2 times/week)
 - b. answers voicemail promptly according to Board's instructions.
 - c. sends out membership applications upon request.
 - d. creates lists of attendees, who RSVP for programs.
3. Mailings
 - a. organizes printing and mailing of WITS announcements, ballots, newsletters.
 - b. manages WITS office supplies for mailings.

We can offer \$100 per month honorarium for this position

A committee appointed by WITS Board will interview and select applicant for this position.

Cristina Zubelli has volunteered to show how she performs similar duties for NOTIS to help orient the person hired to be WITS office manager. WITS Board will designate a Board Member to supervise office manager and to report regularly to board on office manager's activities.

WITS will consider hiring a Membership Coordinator as a separate decision in the future.

Membership Report as of May 2, 2004

Individual Members	156
Institutional Members	7
Student Members	8
Supporting Members	3
Honorary Members	10
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Total Membership	184

Membership by Location:

WA	186
CA	11
OR	7
TX	6
NY	4
CO	3
FL	3
MA	3
VA	3
AZ	2
BC (Canada)	2
GA	2
IL	1
MI	1
MO	1
NE	1
NJ	1
NM	1
PA	1
WI	1

29 Languages Represented:

American Sign Language, Arabic, Bosnian, Cambodian, Cantonese, Croatian, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Ilocano, Ilongo, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Pangasinan, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Shanghainese, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	INFORMATION
May 8, 2004	Annual Meeting with terminology workshops	Mercer Island Community Center 12:00 m - 3:00 pm
August 14, 2004	Mental Health Commitment Court workshop	Bellevue location TBD (to be determined)
late Sep/early Oct 2004	International Translators Day	TBD
November 11, 2004	Ethics workshop	TBD
December 4, 2004	Holiday Potluck Social with NOTIS & SOMI	UW - Waterfront Activities Center 11:30 - 3:00 pm

BOARD MEETINGS

<p>May 8, 2004 - Annual Meeting August 14, 2004- after program late Sep/early Oct 2004 - after Int'l Translators Day program November 11, 2004 - after program January 22, 2005 - welcome & orientation for new board members (location TBD)</p>	<p>WITS Bylaws - Article 9, pp 1 states: "The Board shall meet at least four times during the calendar year. Notice of the Meetings shall be posted on the Society's Website and provided to any member who asks. Members are encouraged to attend and may, with the President's permission, participate in the discussion of any issue."</p>
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