

Annual Christmas Party

Saturday, December 21, 2002, 6:30 p.m.

*at the home of
Hans-Günther & Waltraud Knudsen
31299 White Rd., Willoughby Hills*

As in the past, this is a potluck party. Please bring a dish for about 8 people, preferably something native to your home country. Also please bring your preferred beverage, as only coffee and tea (and Waltraud's hot wine punch) will be provided. For reservations and directions, call Waltraud **no later than Tuesday, Dec. 17** (440/944-2390) or send an e-mail (w.knudsen@juno.com) to let her know what type of dish you will bring and whether you will come by yourself or bring a spouse or guest.

NOTA Annual Dinner



Manfred Mondt, outgoing NOTA president.

See details in the Secretary's Report on Pg. 3

Monthly Discussion Group

*at Borders Books in Solon
November 14, 2002 – 7:00 p.m.
December 12, 2002 – 7:00 p.m.*

Borders is located on 6450 Kruse Drive (directly off Solon Road) in the same shopping center as the Mustard Seed Market (visible from Route 422). Coming from the south up Route 91 (Darrow Road), take a left onto Solon Road and then an immediate right onto Kruse Drive. Coming from the east, Route 422, exit at the Solon, Moreland Hills exit. Turn right onto Route 91. Stay in the right lane, turn right at the light (turn-only lane) onto Solon Road and then again immediately right onto Kruse Drive.

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Northeast Ohio Translators Association

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NOTA BENE is published by the Northeast Ohio Translators Association, a chapter of the American Translators Association.

Other newsletters are welcome to reprint materials from NOTA BENE, provided they acknowledge the source and send us a copy.

2002/2003 NOTA Executive Board

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NOTA membership fees:

Individual:	\$20.00/yr
Corporate/Institutional:	\$30.00/yr
Student:	\$10.00/yr

For membership information, please contact Dr. Leland Wright at the above number or write to:

NOTA
P.O. Box 994
Kent, OH 44240-0994

President's Message

After a brief NOTA membership while in graduate school back in 1994-95, I have been a member of NOTA for the past year. I am sure that each of you has your own ideas of what you would like to get out of this organization. I think NOTA can be many things for many people. Some of you may have decided to become members for the reference on your resume and listing in the NOTA directory, and that is perfectly okay. NOTA will continue to serve you in that way in the future. I, however, need more from an organization and would like to see NOTA be so much more. I missed my monthly discussion group in Germany, which for me as a new translator was a great source of job references. I also created lifelong friendships with quite a few of my fellow translators and built up a great network of native speakers and specialists with various language combinations. That is why I decided to start one here to regularly network with and meet fellow translators in Northeast Ohio. I figure a monthly meeting would be a welcome break from all our busy schedules where we could sit around with a coffee or a snack and discuss our concerns and questions.

I have many ideas for NOTA that I look forward to implementing. I am also looking forward to attending my first ATA Conference and hope to bring back many more ideas that I can incorporate into the group. I have heard from quite a few of you already and plan to bring up your suggestions and comments to the Executive Committee at our next meeting. As most of you have already noticed, I have also started up an e-mail distribution list, which I will regularly use to forward e-mails of interest and reminders of upcoming events. If you haven't already given us your e-mail address, please send me a mail at js@jill-sommer.com so that I can add you to my address book. Please specify if you would like to be on the discussion group list or on the regular NOTA list, or both. If there is enough interest we might also look into setting up an on-line discussion list under yahoogroups (I am a member of several of these language-specific groups and find them to be extremely informative and helpful). Margaret and I are working on publishing a survey in the next NOTA BENE and will also be sending it in electronic format (another reason to send me your e-mail address!) to get your input on your ideas for NOTA. I am very excited about this upcoming year and welcome your input and suggestions. You can reach me at 440-519-0161 (my home/office number), 330-421-0057 (cell phone) or js@jill-sommer.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Jill Sommer

NOTA Dinner Meeting at Pipers III

September 27, 2002

Manfred Mondt called the meeting to order. He recognized several individuals who have provided outstanding leadership to NOTA over its 25-year history: **Lee Wright**, a past NOTA president who has also held several ATA offices, including Editor of the ATA Chronicle, and who continues to serve NOTA as its treasurer and membership coordinator; **Sue Ellen Wright**, also a past NOTA president and internationally recognized "terminology guru"; **Waltraud Knudsen**, another past NOTA president and our current NOTA BENE newsletter editor; and **Heidi Stull**, who was Manfred Mondt's immediate predecessor as NOTA President.

Manfred also thanked the outgoing NOTA officers for all their hard work and dedication: **Anne Chemali**, Secretary, **Marguerite Wehbé**, Public Relations (who also was instrumental in getting NOTA's Web site up and running), and **Huili Shi**, Programs.

Manfred extended a warm NOTA welcome to several guests in attendance before asking the Secretary to read the minutes of last September's meeting. Because the minutes were already published in NOTA BENE, a motion to omit the reading of the minutes was approved.

Lee Wright, the treasurer and membership coordinator, presented his report on the state of NOTA's finances. (See page 8 for the financial statement.)

Manfred thanked the Election Committee, **Reinhold Federmann** and **Karin Debelius**, for finding members willing to stand for election to NOTA offices and conducting the election. He then thanked the membership for our support and said that although he is stepping down from the office of President, he will continue as NOTA's Webmaster. In this capacity, he hopes to improve the Web site and make it into a searchable database.

Jill Sommer, the new NOTA president, stood and was recognized. Her first official act was to present **Manfred Mondt** with a plaque thanking him for his service to the organization (see front page). After saying a few words about her professional background, she informed the membership of a new informal translation discussion group meeting at the Solon Borders Books on the second Thursday of every month. (The next meeting will be Thursday, November 14.)

Other new officers were recognized and introduced themselves to those in attendance: **Margaret Nevits**, Programs, **Karin E.F. Debelius**, Public Relations, and **Amanda Ennis**, Secretary. (See their bios on pages 4-5.)

A new NOTA member in attendance, **Julia Doyle**, a Russian translator, was also recognized and welcomed to the NOTA family. And last, but certainly not least, **Waltraud Knudsen**, the editor of NOTA BENE, issued a call for the membership to send in contributions for NOTA BENE. The meeting was then adjourned.

NOTA Executive Committee Meeting: October 16, 2002

All officers except **Margaret Nevits** (Programs), who was traveling in Poland, were present.

After opening the meeting and determining that there was no pending business from the last Executive Committee, President **Jill Sommer** and the Executive Committee discussed the following upcoming events:

- *ATA Annual Conference*: **Lee Wright** (Treasurer/Membership) will be taking the NOTA banner, brochures, and a few extra directories and setting up a NOTA table at the conference. The next edition of the directory will be published in February.
- *Christmas party*: **Waltraud Knudsen** (Newsletter Editor) is graciously hosting this year's Christmas party again at her home on December 21 at 6:30 PM. (See page 1 for directions.)
- *Accreditation exam*: **Amanda Ennis** (Secretary) agreed to set up and proctor next spring's sitting of

the ATA Accreditation Exam, which will most likely be held on one of the first two Saturdays in May 2003 at Kent State University. The exact date and location will be published as soon as this information is known.

- *Article on new rules for ATA accreditation/certification for NOTA BENE*: Because some changes to the accreditation process are still in committee and have not yet been finalized, it was decided that we would postpone preparing this article and take it up again at a later date.
- *Member survey*: **Jill Sommer** and **Margaret Nevits** will be e-mailing a survey to NOTA members around Thanksgiving. Questions on desired programs, geographic distribution of members (to determine meeting locations that are favorable to the largest

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Meet Our New NOTA Executive Committee Members

Jill Sommer, President



I'm sure this year's ballot was a shock for many of you. After 8 years as president of NOTA, Manfred was ready to pass on the reins to someone else. He has done a great job and will be supporting me however he can while I learn about the duties involved with the position. I am excited about the opportunity to serve you as president and promise to do my best to meet you and your needs.

Let me tell you a little bit about myself. I graduated from Bowling Green State University with a dual major in German and Russian in May 1992. I received my Masters in Translation from Kent State University in May 1995 and found myself flying to Germany a month later to work at Translingua Übersetzungsdienst, a translation agency and software localization company in Bonn, Germany. I lived in Bonn for 6 years and acquired a large clientele of direct customers and agencies, many of whom have followed me back to the U.S. I moved back to the U.S. in July 2001 and have been working as a freelance translator and Internet researcher. I also work at Borders Books and Music part-time to get me out from behind my computer.

Dr. Leland D. Wright, Jr.



While working on my Ph.D. degree at Washington University (St. Louis) and after completing that degree in 1970, I taught Spanish at the university level for a total of ten years. In 1974 I changed careers to become a full-time translator/language consultant for a Cleveland-based international engineering and construction firm, where for eight years I handled the company's international communications needs, providing translations of technical, commercial and legal documents to and from Spanish, Portuguese, French, German and Italian. I am a charter member of the Northeast Ohio Translators Association (NOTA), which became a permanent chapter of the American Translators Association (ATA) in 1979. I served as NOTA's first president and subsequently in several other elected offices, as well as newsletter editor. I have been a freelance translator since 1982, specializing in Spanish legal and commercial documents. I joined the American Translators Association in 1975 and passed the ATA Spanish-English accreditation exam the same year. I served two consecutive terms of office as an ATA director (1978-84) and was editor of the ATA Chronicle from 1983 to 1987. In addition to my work as a freelance translator, since 1989 I also have been teaching Spanish-English commercial/legal translation in the M.A. translator-training program at Kent State University.

Margaret Nevits, Programs



I was born in Warsaw, Poland. I lived there for 29 years, came to the USA in 1985 and began my life from scratch.

I graduated from college with two associate degrees: "Arts and Humanities" and "Applied Science" with a major in Physical Therapy Technology. I have been practicing therapy for over 10 years, working as an "On-site Rehabilitation Coordinator" in a small outpatient clinic.

My translating and interpreting experience started about 10 years ago, first as a favor to my Polish friends, and later on when, coincidentally, I had a few Polish patients who needed a therapist and an interpreter simultaneously. Slowly I got hooked on the bilingual world and became a freelance interpreter/translator. My preferred subjects are medical and immigration, but I can handle a lot of different subjects, as long as they do not include finance, banking or machinery texts. I also give private computer lessons to beginners and create business cards, brochures, etc.

I am very excited at becoming "Programs Director" and, therefore, getting to know each of you better and finding out what you would like to learn, to know, to see, etc. I came up with the idea of creating a survey and starting my NOTA duties by asking you some questions (I am still working on it and each of the NOTA officers will have the chance to add questions. Please feel free to email me with any suggestions on programs / meetings or the above questionnaire. In your e-mail subject, please write NOTA. Thank you.)

Karin E.F. Debelius, Public Relations



I have been a translator (German-English) since 1972. I worked full-time for 18 years for an economic research firm, translating leading articles from German daily newspapers, trade publications, government documents and annual reports.

After my employer moved to California in 1994, I became a freelancer. Also since 1972, I have been teaching German to students of all ages and interests, and have been an interpreter for businesses and legal entities. As the Public Relations Chair, I plan to make NOTA more visible within the Greater Cleveland community.

I intend to approach civic groups, trade and business associations, government offices, medical institutions, libraries and large companies to inform them of our local and regional diversified talent-pool. I am looking forward to promoting NOTA as a group of professional, educated individuals who can fill just about any language need in Ohio and bordering states.

Amanda Ennis, Secretary



I did my first paid translation work in Göttingen, Germany, in 1995. After completing my master's degree in German Translation at Kent State University in May 1997, I became a full-time freelance German-English translator. I liked the work, but found freelancing very lonely, so I accepted an in-house project management/translation position with Langua Translations in the Detroit area in January of 1999. I returned to Kent in September of 2000 and have been working as a full-time German-English technical/medical/marketing translator ever since. I also teach part-time in the German Translation program at Kent State University. I have been an ATA member since 1995 (accredited for German-English translation since 2001) and a NOTA member since 1996. In addition to my duties as your new Secretary, I will continue working with Waltraud Knudsen on the NOTA BENE newsletter. I hope to increase communication and discussion between the NOTA Executive

Committee and the membership. If you have suggestions or ideas you would like the Executive Committee to consider, please let me know, and consider writing an article about your idea for NOTA BENE!

NOTA Executive Committee Meeting – cont'd from Pg. 3

possible number of people), and the Web site, among others, will be put to the membership. We are actively seeking your feedback on the path NOTA should take for the next two years. Because the survey will be sent via e-mail, please make sure that Jill has your correct e-mail address!

- *Discussion group:* the next meeting of the informal translators' discussion group is Thursday, November 14 at 7:00 PM at the Borders Bookshop in Solon. We hope to see you there!

The following new issues and ideas were discussed as well:

- *Web site:* As was mentioned at the Pipers III dinner, the NOTA Web site may receive an overhaul to make it easier to search for individuals, change entries, assess traffic, and add new features. Specifically, we would like to add the directory to the Web site in PDF format so interested companies could download it and print it out, saving NOTA the effort of mailing them a directory. (We would have a link on the page along the lines of, "Click here to download the NOTA Member Directory in PDF

format.") We would also like to add a hit counter to see how often the site is being accessed.

- *E-mail/Membership:* NOTA would like to increase the use of e-mail for communications in order to save the organization money. Members may opt-in to have their initial dues reminders sent to them by e-mail in August 2003 instead of through the USPS, resulting in substantial savings on postage expenses. Of 110 members, 30 have still not paid their dues for the 2002-03 membership year. Please send your dues to Lee Wright if you have not yet done so.
- *Public relations:* **Karin Debelius** (Public Relations) will make additional copies of the directory and approach libraries, civic groups, large corporations, and law firms in the greater Cleveland area who are not already familiar with NOTA and inform them of the services our members offer.
- *Outreach:* The following outreach activities were suggested as ways of raising public awareness of NOTA:
 - Performing a *pro bono* translation for a major Northern Ohio attraction every year, similar to the ATA's practice of performing a *pro bono* translation for an institution in the city where each year's Annual

Conference is held. Hopefully, a ceremony could be held when the completed translation is presented to the lucky recipient, and NOTA could receive press and media attention. Some possible locations include the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Great Lakes Science Center.

- Volunteering at fund drives for local public radio (e.g., WKSU) and television (WVIZ) stations and having NOTA's name and mission broadcast (e.g., "We'd like to extend our thanks to NOTA, the Northeast Ohio Translators Association, for staffing the phones this evening. NOTA is a group of local translators and interpreters who provide language services in over 35 language combinations to people and businesses across the North Coast...")
- Speaking to high school foreign language students about careers in translation and interpretation. Anyone who has done this knows how fun it is and how much the teachers appreciate having a working professional in front of their students.
- Buying a table at the World Trade Conference at the Renaissance Hotel in Cleveland in Spring

2003. Although the idea was greeted with enthusiasm, the high cost of participating (\$400-\$500) may prevent this idea from being implemented.

- *Miscellaneous:*
 - The Annual Dinner will be held at a different restaurant next year. Several locations were suggested, and all Executive Committee members agreed to scout out possible candidates.
 - All officers will receive some NOTA letterhead and envelopes to allow them to contact local businesses and institutions on behalf of the organization.
 - The Executive Committee members agreed to consider the possibility of conducting a joint activity of some kind with translators in the Pittsburgh area, who are numerous, but currently without an active local translators' organization.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM. The tentative date for the next Executive Committee meeting is Wednesday, December 11 at 6:30 PM. As always, we welcome your comments, ideas and feedback. Please feel free to e-mail or call us.

TM In Your Future?

By Kevin Fulton

This article first appeared in the October 2002 issue of the MiTiN Newsletter. Kevin Fulton is a member of Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network (MiTiN). He performed his first paid translation in 1969. In 1981 he quit his job in banking, bought a computer and started translating full time. To get out of the office, Kevin also teaches German and ESL.

If you came of age in the 1960's it's possible you thought the title referred to Transcendental Meditation. In this case, however, TM refers to Translation Memory programs, a subset of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools. TM allows the translator to leverage prior work when performing new translations by storing sentence and terminology pairs into databases. Let me offer a simple example: a translator might come across the phrase "see Drawing ..." a few dozen times in a single translation, and in the course of a career, several thousand times. Once the phrase "see Drawing" has been stored along with its counterpart in the source/target language, the translator, in theory, will never have to type it again if the TM is used. Likewise, terminology databases built a word at a time can be created during the course of translating a text, thus saving the translator the trouble of looking up a term the next time it is encountered. Words can be tagged for specific clients, enabling the translator to use "airbag" or "air bag" depending upon the customer's preference.

Translation memory is not the same as computer translation. Although sometimes "fuzzy" logic is used to

match terms, there is very little artificial intelligence in a TM program. A translation memory tool does not parse sentences; there is no grammar algorithm. Unless the translator has put some effort into identifying parts of speech when storing terminology pairs, the database cannot distinguish between "face" used as a verb or as a noun. At best, several terms in a brand-new sentence will be matched by the translation memory program. Computer translation, on the other hand, attempts to determine the parts of speech in a source sentence and provide a grammatical rendering into the target language. Effective computer translation is only possible using controlled source language and software well beyond the financial means of any single translator. TM software, however, costs a few hundred dollars and works quite well in the hands of a skilled user.

There are numerous advantages to translation memory tools. As I mentioned above, the translator can employ client-specific databases, facilitating, for example, the appropriate use of "powertrain" or "drivetrain." In the same vein, the translator can apply terminology consistently throughout a long translation (the screw/bolt

problem, for example). Obscure terms, once researched, can be stored for future reference. As I mentioned above, the translator puts old work to use. RFQ's tend to be very formulaic: I've seen variations on "The Contractor will provide the Project Manager with ..." literally hundreds of times over the past 20+ years that I've been using computers. Once the phrase has been entered into the TM, it can be recycled *ad infinitum*. Similar sentences can be identified, which is useful when updating previously translated text. Instead of redoing the entire sentence, the translator can instantly compare the old and new versions and make any required modifications ("XYZ can display 4 pages at once" / "XYZ can display 6 pages at once"). In many cases a translator can see an increase in output of 25-50%. Clients commissioning document updates can likewise realize a savings advantage, as a translator in possession of the translation memory database of the first translation can perform the changes efficiently and inexpensively.

An additional attractive feature of many TM programs is that translations predating the acquisition of the translation memory software can be aligned and turned into memory databases. This means that corresponding source/target sentences can be correlated and stored in a memory database for re-use.

A further argument in favor of TM tools is related to quality control. A properly constructed database will enable the translator to apply terms consistently following guidelines established by the client. The software will call attention to those instances where the terminology might differ (and properly so!) from that specified by the client.

If it's so wonderful, then why aren't we all using TM software?

The first limitation is that CAT tools rely upon an electronic source text. Hard copy, Adobe Acrobat files and faxes can't be processed unless they can be accurately scanned by OCR software or otherwise converted into an MS Word document. For reasons related to the software market, primarily Microsoft products are supported, apart from some DTP programs, although many TM tools allow the translator to translate HTML files.

PowerPoint files are very difficult to translate using a translation memory program. This has to do with the structure of these documents. Although the database function of TM software is sometimes helpful, to be honest, the translator is generally better off translating PPT files "by hand."

A third serious limitation is that well-written texts generally don't lend themselves to translation using TM tools. Repetitions generally occur in instructional texts where examples rely upon material previously stated in the text, or when questions are phrased similarly. TM software is useful in providing consistent terminology,

but there are generally few real savings in time and effort.

Fourth, the GIGO factor plays an important role in TM-assisted translations. I used TM software for the first time in 1997 for a very large job, and the program paid for itself in time savings. However, I managed to include some incorrect terminology in my database which was consistently inserted into my target text. Post-editing took a lot of time to identify and correct the errors, as I hadn't figured out how to remove faulty data from the database. It was a learning experience that led me to understand how to utilize the software properly.

The final limitation is economic. Some agencies specify the use of TM tools because they don't want to pay for every use of "the," "and" or "with" and adjust their prices accordingly. First-time uses of a term are frequently paid at one rate, repetitions are paid less, and matches of typical articles, conjunctions and prepositions are paid at a third rate, if at all, even if these have a different use in the target language. Of course, an argument can be made that 20 years experience goes into the selection of the correct preposition or conjunction, and that these words are as important to the meaning of the text as the nouns, but many agencies don't see it that way. My point is that using TM software can position the translator at the low end of the market in terms of rate per word. On the other hand, many translators claim they can make it up in volume.

To be fair, many clients have terminology databases they specifically want used in their translations and don't feel they should have to have to pay full price for a word they've supplied. The use of TM software in such instances can be beneficial to both the translator and client. The translator is spared the effort of researching or selecting a term, and the client can be confident that the document contains the desired terminology.

An additional economic issue is related to the investment in software, training and possible upgrades. TM software is not easy to learn, and unless you're a confident computer user, you're likely to have a difficult time mastering the program without formal training, which in many cases, can cost as much as the software itself. Depending on the type of work you do, it might take as long as two years before you see any real return on your investment.

Translation memory software isn't for everyone. It won't make an inadequate translator perform any better. People who work with xerographic or fax copies of documents will not realize any appreciable benefit. However, translators engaged in highly specialized areas or who need to maintain extensive databases will appreciate the degree of organization that computer assisted tools will contribute to their overall efficiency.

NOTA Financial Statement

as of August 31, 2002

Beginning balance	\$3,725.77	Expenses:	
Revenues:		Meeting expense, including September dinner meeting	\$ 509.24
Membership dues (Includes 2002-2003 dues revenues received as of 8/31/02, totaling \$820.00)	\$2,270.00	Membership Directory (printing, postage, labels & envelopes)	\$ 1106.42
Bank interest	\$ 33.16	Newsletter printing & postage	\$ 310.63
Receipts from Sept. '01 dinner meeting	\$ 326.60	Other postage & mailing expense (incl. dues notices & ballots)	\$ 233.70
TOTAL REVENUES:	\$2,629.76	Web site maintenance	\$ 320.00
2001-2002 revenues + balance carried forward	\$6,355.53	Supplies	\$ 135.51
		Other expenses	\$ 54.50
		TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$2,670.00
Balance as of 31 August 2002:	\$3,685.53	Note: Expenses exceeded income by \$40.24.	

We Welcome the Following New Members:

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Michelle **Bohbot's** correct and current e-mail address is **ilbebmme@apk.net**, not lbobmme@apk.net as listed in the last NOTA BENE.
We apologize for the mistake.

Jill **Sommer's** phone number is **440-519-0161**, not 440-579-0161 as listed in the last NOTA BENE.
We apologize for the mistake.

