

CAPTIONS

Official Newsletter Publication of the Colorado Association of Professional Interpreters
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Interpreters Explore Ethical Quandaries

On February 3, 2007, the Colorado Court Interpreter Program held a mandatory ethics workshop for certified interpreters in order to review the ethical guidelines for interpreters working in the judicial system. A total of 79 interpreters attended, a tremendous turnout. The session was productive and interesting, although much too short to fully explore the issues, especially since once interpreters get a chance to speak with their own words, we can be quite locuacious! The class is part of the continuing education requirement for state certified court interpreters (see the Court Interpreter Program website: <http://www.courts.state.co.us/chs/hr/interpreters/courtinterpreterpage.htm>) and will be offered again in the fall.



During the small group break-out segment of the workshop, facilitators circulated among several groups and listened to them discuss the various scenarios provided for discussion. Because of the time constraints, by the time each small group presented to the large assembly, alternative viewpoints and options could not be fully addressed. Therefore, to better complete the subject, we would like to share with you some of the responses that were given as well as alternative choices that could have been made.

The judge asks the defendant if she has had any drugs or alcohol in the last 24 hours. She says, "No." You almost faint from the alcoholic stench. The defense attorney appears to be aware of the problem but does not say anything. The prosecutor appears not to have noticed. The defendant is about to be released on her own recognizance and will leave the court to drive herself home, which you know because her attorney asked her previously if she had driven her car to court that morning.

This scenario was controversial for almost every group, with the outcome generally being one of two opinions: 1) Do not do anything, the interpreter just interprets; or 2) Report your concern. For the interpreters who chose the first option, that's the end of the story. For those compelled to do something more, the question then becomes whom to tell. All groups realized that telling either defense counsel or the prosecutor would be a no-no (Canon 3: Impartiality). That left telling the judge, which is a viable option in theory but often difficult in practice. Several groups determined that a word to the security officer present (bailiff or deputy sheriff, for example) or the court clerk at the conclusion of the hearing would be the most practical and neutral way to go about it.

During the highly entertaining, comical portrayal we were treated to by the small group that presented this issue, another factor arose. What is the interpreter to do when the judge addresses a question directly to him/her? In that case, the interpreter must stop interpreting and respectfully answer the judge. The interpreter should politely abstain from giving answers that require an opinion and simply state to the judge that the interpreter is not qualified to make a determination, but would be happy to interpret for the judge if the judge would like to inquire directly of the defendant. (Canon 4: Professional Demeanor and Canon 7: Scope of Practice)

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CAPI GRANTS THREE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR INTERPRETER TRAINING

The CAPI Board of Directors is pleased to announce the winners of three \$500 scholarships to attend a skills building workshop for Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese interpreters in Portland, Oregon on March 24 and 25, 2007.

The awards committee received applications from many qualified candidates and selection was difficult. The winners are Kipyoo Han (Korean), Hieu Smith (Vietnamese), and Kenny Hoang (Vietnamese). Congratulations!

We are proud of all the interpreters working in languages other than Spanish here in Colorado who have devoted so much time and effort to their professional development in an environment where very little opportunity for such advancement is available. The CAPI Board is committed to providing workshops and news of training opportunities outside the state of Colorado, and hopes to be able to contribute sponsorship, such as this scholarship, in the future to encourage continuing interpreter professionalization.

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You are covering a trial with a colleague whose Spanish is good but who does not really know many Mexican idiomatic expressions. The defendant and many of the witnesses are Mexican. The public defender is someone you like and respect very much. At one point, your colleague makes a minor mistake while interpreting for a witness, totally missing a Mexican cultural construct without affecting the essential part of the testimony. The defendant mentions to his attorney that the witness did not say the same thing as the interpreter. At the break, the public defender asks you if you think your colleague is the best interpreter for this job, since he is not Mexican and he has heard this complaint from other clients before.

Always stick by and support your colleagues. If you have concerns you can mention them to your colleague and see if he or she would like to clarify the omission (remember Canon 1: Accuracy and Completeness, as well as Canon 4: Professional Demeanor). It is important to be able to help each other, and improve our skills. And when a colleague makes a suggestion or corrects you, try not to take it personally and have an open mind to learn and be the best possible interpreter you can be.



You are interpreting for a defendant at the podium. The defendant is not responding logically to the judge's questions. The judge asks you, "Is there more than a language issue here?" Do you think the defendant is mentally competent?"

As always, when addressed directly by a judge, keep your answer short, concise and respectful. Refrain from giving an opinion beyond your area of expertise (language). One solution was that you could say, "Your Honor, the interpreter is not qualified to judge mental competency. The interpreter is simply interpreting everything as it is being said." Maybe one could add to the response, "Your Honor, the interpreter would be happy to interpret to the defendant any questions the Court might have in order to make a determination." (Canon 4: Professional Demeanor and Canon 7: Scope of Practice)

You are interpreting for a Spanish speaking witness whose entire family is present in the courtroom. At one point, one of the family members stands up and says out loud "your honor, this interpreter is not saying everything. She is not a good interpreter. I am a lawyer from Honduras and I can tell you that her Spanish is not very good."

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SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS

CAPI's Annual Meeting on March 10 was well-attended and provided the CAPI membership with an opportunity to brainstorm together about what CAPI can do in the coming year. We had some new ideas and activities proposed that you'll be hearing about in coming announcements. We look forward to another fantastic year for interpreters in Colorado!

At the meeting, we also said good-bye to two board members. Ana Mostaccero has been a director on the board representing outlying areas of the state. The board appreciated her perspective on every issue we addressed, and her leadership in some specific areas, such as the Holiday party, the translating workshop last fall, and bringing some pre-certification training to court interpreters on the Western Slope. We thank you!

Ruth Warner has been our co-chair for the last two years and seems to have been involved in just about everything! Thank you, Ruth, for guiding us through countless meetings, the new website, Captions, continuing education offerings, budgets and talking to the press. Fortunately, Ruth has agreed to continue supporting many of these efforts as a member-volunteer of CAPI.

Finally, we are please to announce the results of the CAPI elections. Dave Roberts won a three-way race for the open director seat. We anticipate that Dave's background in medical interpreting and his perspective as an agency owner will enhance the board greatly. Anna Kelsey ran unopposed for the co-chair position. Anna has already been active in CAPI leadership, especially in continuing education, and the board looks forward to working more with her. Isabelle Houlbrequer, who has served as secretary at the behest of the board since that seat was left vacant last year, graciously agreed to serve for two more years and was also confirmed by the election. The other members of the board, whose terms continue for one more year, are: co-chair Julia Davis, treasurer Ana Acosta-Miller, and directors Cathy Bahr and Lee Ann Trujillo.

Special thanks to Ron Olson and Patricia Sprock of the Election Committee who handled the nomination, balloting and absentee voting processes, as well as the in-person voting and vote counting at the meeting, and to Ismael Mendoza for giving them a hand with the vote counting. ■

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In this case, the interpreter should wait until the judge addresses him/her directly. Very often, the judge dismisses the matter without consulting the interpreter. If the judge does ask the interpreter to respond, you should not hesitate to evaluate the criticism and, if invalid, state simply, "The interpreter stands by his/her interpretation." On the other hand, if the objection is valid, you can say, "The interpreter stands corrected. When he/she said X, it should have been Y." The more brief and concise the response, the better. (Canon 4: Professional Demeanor)

During a break in a trial, the defense attorney leaves and the defendant asks you what you think of his attorney, because he's worried that maybe she isn't very good. In fact, you think this attorney is not doing a very good job and you know of many improprieties on her part. What do you do?

First and foremost, avoid this situation by removing yourself from the vicinity of the defendant when the attorney is not right there (Canon 3: Avoidance of Conflict of Interest). If, however, you are unlucky enough to find yourself in this situation, politely explain that you are not allowed to offer any opinions or answer any questions. Then, if at all possible, move away.

You have sight-translated the change of plea form for the defendant and he has signed it, indicating he understands that he is giving up his rights in order to plead guilty. When his case is called, the judge asks the defendant if he gives up his right to a trial and the defendant whispers to you in his native language, "What should I say?" The defendant is representing himself, as it is a minor offense.

The interpreter always interprets everything spoken by the parties to the case. In this case, the interpreter simply needs to interpret the defendant's question into English. Interpreters should never engage in any side discussions with defendants, even if it is about something as

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innocuous as the weather, because such conversation could create the appearance of a conflict of interest (Canon 3: Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest).

You realize, after you leave the witness stand, that you made an interpretation mistake. You are not sure whether the mistake was significant enough to have altered the testimony. You have been dismissed from the case because there is no more interpreting to be done, but the trial is still going on.

The key words here seem to be “not sure whether the mistake was significant”. It was felt that we need to clarify mistakes and let other people decide their significance. In this situation one should advise the court clerk so they can bring it to the attention of the judge. (Canon 1: Accuracy and Completeness, Canon 3: Impartiality, Canon 4: Professional Demeanor)



You are interpreting the proceedings for the defendant at the defense table. The defendant asks you a question as you are simultaneously interpreting witness testimony. Do you stop interpreting?

No, don't stop interpreting. If you stop interpreting now, the defendant would not receive an accurate rendition of what is being said at the time. Signal the attorney, and if the chance arises, interpret the question for the attorney. Don't engage in conversation with the defendant at any time. (Canon 1: Accuracy and Completeness) However, if the question has to do with the testimony that is being offered by the witness, the defendant has the right to aid in his/her own defense and facilitating that communication is part of your responsibility. If the defendant chooses to waive his right to hear everything that is being said in order to exercise his right to aid in his own defense, you should interpret his question to the attorney and let the attorney decide how to respond to his/her client.

While getting ready for a change of plea, the attorney asks you to read only three pertinent paragraphs of the plea document. When the defendant appears before the judge, the judge asks him if he read the plea agreement in its entirety. The defendant answers “yes”.

We interpret. If he says yes, we say yes. If we, as an interpreter are asked if we reviewed the entire document with the defendant, answer honestly. One option suggested was to say, “This interpreter, per the attorney's instructions, read three paragraphs to the defendant.” (Possibly another interpreter had already read the entire document to the defendant, we don't know.) But, if we're not asked directly, we do not volunteer information.

You are interpreting for the defendant at counsel table. You hear a colleague make a serious meaning error while he is interpreting at the witness stand. The prosecutor proceeds to use the information given through the interpreter to further her line of questioning.

We must render a complete and accurate interpretation (Canon 1: Accuracy and Completeness), and when working with another interpreter, our obligation is to assist our colleague and work as a team. As a team of interpreters we must correct the record as soon as possible, especially in a situation in which the misinformation begins to direct the questioning. If you hear a colleague make a serious meaning error, wait for a brief lull in the questioning, stand up and address the judge, saying something like, “Your honor, may the interpreter consult with his/her colleague on a linguistic matter?” Once you receive permission from the judge, approach your team member, state the problem, and offer a solution. It is the responsibility of the interpreter who made the mistake to correct the record, saying something like, “Your honor, when the interpreter said X, she should have said Y.”. Then everyone resumes their place and waits for direction from the judge. (Reference also Canon 4: Professional Demeanor)

A defendant is seated next to you as you read him some of the discovery documents in his native language, which his lawyer asked you to do. He interrupts your reading to tell you he did indeed rape the victim, because she “asked for it”. You ask him not to say anything more, but when he is asked questions under oath at the witness stand, he repeatedly denies having anything to do with the rape.

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Again, attempt to avoid this situation by removing yourself from the vicinity of the defendant when the attorney is not present (Canon 3: Avoidance of Conflict of Interest). If, however, you are unlucky enough to find yourself in this situation, politely explain to the defendant that you are obligated to share anything that he/she says with the assigned attorney. Some interpreters preface their reading of discovery documents with a statement like, "I have been asked by your attorney to read these documents to you. Anything that you tell me I will then convey to the attorney when we finish." If you reach the point in the above scenario in which the defendant denies having anything to do with an action that he admitted to you in confidence, you do nothing as it is your obligation to only interpret. (Reference Canon 7: Scope of Practice)



You are interpreting for a defendant as the DA is offering him a plea bargain just outside the courtroom, in a case of domestic violence. The victim's advocate, who has been speaking separately to the defendant's spouse (the victim) further down the hall, approaches your group and interrupts the conversation, proceeding to inform the DA about facts that were just relayed to her by the victim. As you begin interpreting what she says, the DA turns angrily to you and says, "Stop interpreting, you are not supposed to interpret this!" What do you do?

Politely mention to everyone present that it is your obligation as a court interpreter to interpret everything that is being said when the defendant is present (as stated in Canon 1: Accuracy and Completeness). You can also state politely (Canon 4: Professional Demeanor) that you would be happy to continue interpreting for the defendant after they finish their conversation in private. ■



CAPI SPRING TRAINING IS HERE!

CAPI is excited to offer an interpreter Skills Building Course on April 14-15, 2007. This workshop for Spanish language interpreters will cover simultaneous, consecutive and sight modes of interpretation through a variety of materials suited for interpreters working in any field, at all levels of experience.

Where: UCD Auraria Campus, Denver
Cost: \$175 for CAPI members, \$185 non-members
Instructor: Cristina Helmerichs, federally certified interpreter, past faculty member for the Agnese Haury Institute at the University of Arizona, and past Chair of the NAJIT Board of Directors.

To register, please send the registration form found on the CAPI website by April 1, 2007.

CAPI SKILLS BUILDING WORKSHOP (SPANISH)
 April 14-15, 2007 Denver, Colorado
www.coloradointerpreters.org

GUNNISON SUMMER INTERPRETING WORKSHOP

By Rosemarie Price

I attended the Gunnison intensive workshop last summer because I wanted to prepare for the Federal Written Exam, and sharpen my interpreting skills.

At first, I was a little worried that I would only be working with beginners, and I was also concerned that it was so far away and I was not going to be able to work during that whole week. However, the range of experience of the attendees surprised me. There were people who had never interpreted before, some whose language skills were weaker, as well as people who had worked as court interpreters for many years and were very good at their craft, so I fit in nicely somewhere in the middle.

The fact that the workshop was held so far away was actually very helpful, because I could just concentrate on practicing and learning without having to worry about daily problems. And the gorgeous backdrop of the mountains was both relaxing and invigorating.

The instructors, Anna Kelsey and Melinda González-Hibner, very ably put together the groups according to levels of skill, so we all managed to really work to improve. They were extremely well prepared and had good chemistry. The materials covered all skill levels and there were even enough to bring home many exercises to practice afterwards. The feedback for the attendees was given from different perspectives, which allowed us to see that there is often more than one way to do things properly. There was plenty of time to ask the instructors questions, clarify matters and to have one-on-one practice.

I would recommend this workshop for any interpreter who wants to brush up and improve his or her skills, as well as those trying to get certified. I saw a noticeable improvement in all three interpreting modes as a result of this class. My final recordings were a lot smoother and by the end of the week I was more comfortable speaking in front of an audience that could actually critique my work. That was a bonus! ■



***ANNOUNCING: CAPI'S SECOND ANNUAL
SUMMER INTERPRETING WORKSHOP AT***

WESTERN STATE COLLEGE OF COLORADO

JULY 23-27, GUNNISON, COLORADO

The Colorado Association of Professional Interpreters invites you to escape to the Western Slope of Colorado for a great training opportunity! You can focus on improving your Spanish-English interpretation skills for a full five days while enjoying the beauty of the mountain town of Gunnison, Colorado.

Lodging is available on campus through Western State College, and off campus at a discounted rate at the Gunnison Quality Inn. The cost for the workshop is \$450 if you register by June 5, 2007.

For additional information on the course, please visit www.coloradointerpreters.org

Or contact Anna Kelsey at skillscourses@coloradointerpreters.org.

A HISTORY OF THE COURT INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION PROCESS IN THE STATE OF COLORADO

Captions asked Judge Irving Ettenberg, who was closely involved in implementing the certification process for court interpreters in Colorado, to tell us how it all started. We hope this will provide our readers with a historical perspective on how much things have changed in a relatively short time. It also clearly illustrates how the small steps and contributions of many individuals in the interpreting community have made, and continue to make, a difference to our profession.

by Judge Irving Ettenberg

The judges of our court became increasingly concerned over the lack of qualified interpreters, mainly in the Spanish language. As a result, at an *en banc* meeting in 1986, our Judges formed a committee to examine and attempt to solve the problem. Eventually, the committee evolved into a one-person body, to wit – me!

I was rather ignorant on the subject of interpreters and there was no program within the state dealing with interpreters. I sought information from the states of California, Arizona and New Mexico; however, not one of them would allow the Denver Courts to review or utilize their tests, claiming confidentiality.

Upon the recommendation of the Chief Interpreter of the California Federal Courts, I prepared a simple screening test and contacted the Hispanic Bar Association to see if their best bilingual members could serve as examiners on a volunteer basis.

The test consisted of interpreting proceedings of a guilty plea to a charge of driving under the influence of alcohol. The test was given from English into Spanish and only in the consecutive mode.

Beginning in 1988 and over the next two years, we administered the test to 90 persons: 37 passed and only those persons were allowed to interpret in the Denver County Court. Though the test was inadequate, it was an improvement over what we had.

One of the members of the Hispanic Bar Association, Pablo Encinias, Esq., served as chairman during the screening tests and suggested that I contact the State of New Jersey. I found out that New Jersey was

a leader in the field of interpreting, and that it had the assistance of United Nations interpreters and federally certified interpreters.

I contacted the Administrative Office of the Courts of New Jersey and spoke with Robert Joe Lee, Chief of the Court Interpreting, Legal Translation and Bilingual Services Section. He offered to allow us to use the “New Jersey” test if I agreed to be keynote speaker at their annual Institute for Court Interpreters meeting in November 1989.

Over the next two days, they instructed me regarding the parts of the test, method of scoring, prior results and instructions to be given to examiners and examinees. At the end of that time, I was convinced that if we administered the test properly, we could arrive at a group of competent interpreters.

Qualified people were needed to examine the test and tell me if they

believed it too localized to the New Jersey area, or whether it could be reasonably applied in Colorado. Three people formed the backbone of our Denver program, to-wit: Cathy Bahr, a U.S. Court Certified Interpreter; Dr. Francisco Rios, University of Colorado language department and Dr. David Conde, language department of Metropolitan State College at Denver.

They all agreed to volunteer their time to examine the test. I met with them and after reviewing the tests, the method of scoring, scoring units and general overview, they unanimously agreed the test could be given in Colorado, or anywhere else in the United States. They served as examiners at the first use of the New Jersey test, slightly modified by calling it the “Denver” test.

The first “Denver” test was conducted in the Denver City and County Building in November 1990. There were 30 people who took the test: 16 passed and were certified to practice in Denver County Court.

Shortly thereafter, the Denver District Court required interpreters to take the test and be certified by Denver County. Over the next few years, we

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received numerous requests to administer a statewide test. I contacted the Administrative Office of the State of Colorado and asked if they would administer the "New Jersey" test. Sadly, I was informed that there was no money budgeted for such an outlay.

I then offered to conduct the test for them, without cost, except that they would provide space in each of the four quadrants of the state where the tests could be given and use their mailing services to send out notices and applications to all parts of the state. My offer was accepted.

To defray costs, the examiners, the Denver County Court Administrator, Matt McConville and I set an application fee of \$50.00.

The statewide test was to be administered in two segments. The initial test was a screening test utilizing simultaneous interpreting. A tape recording of a closing argument during a jury trial was played through earphones. Once the subject taking the test had been instructed and given opportunity to adjust the volume level, the tape was played. The closing argument was in English and the subject was required to simultaneously interpret into Spanish. We also recorded the proceedings on a court recorder which recorded only the Spanish interpretation.

I traveled to Pueblo and conducted the screening tests. Afterward, I returned to Denver and delivered both tapes to the examiners, who listened to the Spanish interpretation and graded the subject. Of the 192 persons signed up for the test, only 26 passed.

These 26 persons then were administered the full test in three parts; simultaneous, consecutive and sight interpretation. Of the 26 remaining applicants, 3 passed, 7 failed and 15 passed to the critical list. Those on the critical list had to improve their skills in order to pass the next time the test was given. The examiners were Denver Certified Interpreters, along with Cathy Bahr and Dr. Rios. We were able to pay the interpreters from application fees.

The costs involved were far less than anticipated and we had a large sum of money left over. We used these funds to conduct a training program utilizing two professionals from California. All the individuals who had paid the application fee but failed or were on the critical list were invited to attend, without cost to them. The training program was successful and resulted in an increase in the number of those who passed later tests.

New Jersey proposed a consortium of states to develop laws and ethics relating to interpreters. The advantages included tests in all languages thanks to the assistance of Sergio Vaggio and other interpreters of the United Nations. Colorado initially refused to join because of budgetary problems.

About this time, I retired, and others took up the fight to have Colorado enact laws, administer the tests and join the consortium. In particular, Mary Bollander has been instrumental in securing cooperation from our state judicial administration department.

None of this would have been possible without the assistance of many people. Those of us who are interested in securing equality of justice for those who are linguistically challenged, we owe a debt of gratitude, in particular Robert Joe Lee, The Hispanic Bar Association, Cathy Bahr, Dr. Francisco Rios, Dr. Conde and Matt McConville.

Interpreting is a proud profession. Some day, each Judicial District should have a salaried chief interpreting officer to administer to the needs of courts within the district.

Ms. Isabelle Houlbrequé was the first salaried interpreting administrator in this state. She passed our first test in 1990 and has contributed to the interpreters program in Denver and the State of Colorado.

As I travel about the state, sitting in various counties as a Senior Judge, I am proud to observe qualified, competent interpreters. ■

Judge Ettenberg has been a Colorado resident since 1930. He graduated from North High School in Denver, attended Denver University, University of Colorado and graduated from Westminster Law School. He served as a Deputy District Attorney for four and one-half years and was then appointed to the Denver County Court as a judge on June 1, 1970. He served 25 years on the bench before retiring and signing on with the State Judicial as a Senior Judge, a position he currently holds.

CAPI WEBSITE

www.coloradointerpreters.org

Check back soon for CAPI's new look on its website!

by Samir Farah

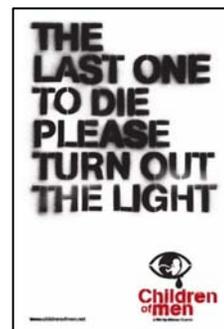
BOOKS & MOVIES

Judging by the Oscar nominations 2006 was a pretty decent year for movies. One has to be relatively thankful when movies with great artistic insight are included for Best Picture. However, there were other gems that were overlooked. After all the Oscars not always are given to the best of the best. There were excellent films that were basically unnoticed or did not get the recognition they deserved. Here's a list of the most underrated films of the year:



The Fountain (US): The search for eternal life through immortal love was the main theme of the movie and maybe the reason why most people didn't get it. Beautifully colored the story develops in three different centuries. The music's one of the best soundtracks by Kronos and Moogwai . A movie that leaves you nailed to your seat even after the credits roll.

Children of Men (Mexico/US/Britain): Best dystopian science fiction movie since "1984", and a wake up call to a non-so distant future. Humanity is not able to reproduce and repression towards illegal immigration has reached an extreme. Full of 8-10 minute long single shots, it is technically impressive.



Inland Empire (US): David Lynch's new movie was barely released probably because well, it's a David Lynch movie. In other words there is little plot, a lot of surreal and absurd imaginary, gloomy situations, a dark score and a dancing midget. However, that is what makes Lynch's movies so unique.



The Proposition (Australia): It's a Western with guns, good guys, and bad guys, but set in Australia. This movie was the revival of a genre that seemed forgotten.

discover a rodent's corpse blocking the waste pipe of their sink.

Lemming (France): One of the best psycho-thriller of the year, made by the new French "Hitchcock". A young couple in a troubled relationship goes into a downward spiral after they



Cache (Switzerland/France): The other best psycho-thriller of the year. Michel Haneke's study into social hypocrisy is nerve breaking. One had to watch every single scene of the film closely just as the characters are being watched by somebody unknown.



The Descent (England): Best horror movie of the year. Secrets are kept among a group of six women who get trapped in a cavern in France just to discover they are not the only ones there. More than horror the movie is about the group's dynamics, the measures they take to survive and the psychological implications.

The Aura (Argentina): Another film that got almost no distribution. It is the story of a man with photographic memory who suffers blackouts and goes on a bank robbery spree. And he is a taxidermist. ■



CAPI, FIVE YEARS OLD AND GOING STRONG

In 2006, CAPI turned five years old. It was a busy and productive year for our organization, as we continued to strive to support our members and strengthen the interpreting profession in Colorado. All of this continues to be achieved through the volunteer efforts of our board and members. So, congratulate yourselves!

In line with our goal to provide a range of continuing education opportunities for interpreters, last year CAPI sponsored and organized several classes and seminars that received great reviews. A tour of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation crime lab was such a resounding success that we are repeating it this June (sorry, registration is already full!).

For the second consecutive year we held continuing education workshops as part of our fall general meeting. This year the meeting was held in Greeley and classes were offered on Accident Reconstruction and Victim Advocacy.

Improving interpreter skills is a high priority and this year a new format was offered with a week-long intensive skills building course that was held in Gunnison at Western State College. This opportunity to focus on specific skills and receive constructive feedback from instructors was a very effective training tool. This course will be offered again this summer as it was a big success!

CAPI provided a consecutive skills building course for interpreters in Denver in September, held at the Auraria Campus. In October we were pleased to host Leticia Leduc Segura, from Mexico City, who offered an advanced Spanish Legal Translation Workshop for CAPI.

In response to requests for more opportunities for working interpreters to hone their skills, in March 2007 we will have a weekend intensive in simultaneous and consecutive interpreting modes for certified

interpreters, given by Agustín de la Mora and Barry Slaughter Olsen. For skills building this spring we're also bringing in some outside talent with a weekend intensive by Christina Helmerichs. The first workshop is full, but registration is available for the latter at our website www.coloradointerpreters.org.

CAPI continues to be represented on the Court Interpreter Oversight Committee of the State Judiciary, and we publish Captions four times a year. Please let us know if you would like to contribute articles or news, or write a regular column in Captions, we'd love the help. In addition, we are in the process of updating our website to provide better access to information about interpreters, and for interpreters. If you are on CAPI's email list you receive regular announcements about job and training opportunities for interpreters.

CAPI also has fun, and last year held a member appreciation workshop about gender polarities, as well as a successful summer picnic. For the second year running we held our holiday party at the Mercury Café where good food, dancing and fun was had by all. We look forward to continuing this work in 2007 and hope that you will actively help CAPI achieve its many goals. ■



SPANISH PRACTICE EXAM KIT AVAILABLE!

The Consortium has developed a practice exam kit to provide an additional resource for Spanish Interpreters working toward certification. You will find the link on the Colorado Court Interpreter Program's website:

<http://www.courts.state.co.us/chs/hr/interpreters/courtinterpreterpage.htm>

WORDPLAY

By Ron Olson

Words that sound similar to each other challenge an interpreter's agility. Homonyms are tricky because while in the source language they create interesting wordplay, in the target language there is little similarity between the words used in translation. These words are also easily misunderstood by a person learning a new language. One of my favorites is "waive" or "wave". Someone not completely familiar with the context around this sound may think of a good-bye wave or of rolling water. In the courtroom the word is usually "waive," meaning to concede or to renounce.

One of the pitfalls we have as interpreters is that we hear what we expect to hear. When we hear a word with which we are unfamiliar, or one that is used in an unusual way, we tend to supply our own assumptions about what we heard to fill the gap. For years, when I heard the Latin words "Motion in limine", I thought that what I heard was "Motion in limiting," and interpreted the words as such. Fortunately, this was fairly close to the real meaning, but not close enough. FindLaw supplies the following definition: "a pretrial motion that requests the court to issue an interlocutory order which prevents the opposing party from introducing or referring to potentially irrelevant, prejudicial, or otherwise inadmissible evidence until the court has finally ruled on its admissibility." Fortunately for court interpreters, we don't need to figure out how to roll that off our tongues in a couple of words. That is, unless we have been hired to be Latin interpreters!



Wherever we work in the interpreting trade, we will find words used in novel ways, defined by the people who use them or by a new context unfamiliar to the interpreter. This week I heard the words "acute," "sub

acute," and "chronic," used by a forensic pathologist to describe "subdural hematomas." By the coroner's definition, these were "recent," "a week old," and "over two weeks old" bleeding in the brain, respectively. A nurse writing a report about the same patient used the word "hematomas" in the same place where he could have used the word "bruises." And they expect us to interpret these words to a "reasonable degree of interpreted certainty!"

What would you do with "a shell PSI?" (Hint: a pre sentence investigation report, but nothing to do with seafood.) How about "global settlement" (Nothing to do with world-wide villages)? Or a doctor's words, "When you look at the constellation of symptoms in the patient, or the 'gestalt,' if you will, then the earlier diagnosis was deficient." Find your own interpreting puzzles in the weeks ahead, and share them with your colleagues. That is what makes this profession so interesting. ■



CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!

Spanish interpreter **Silvia Ruiz** became a grandmother for the first time: Ainsley, a girl, was born January 4, 2007.

Urszula Bunting, Polish Interpreter, gave birth to her second son, Anthony, on January 23, 2007.

Ana Mostaccero has been hired as Community Relations Specialist for Montrose County. We will miss seeing her at CAPI meetings and Southwestern Colorado will miss having this very qualified interpreter in the courts!

Norma Ventura de Gallo and **Ali Salcedo** (AZ) are our newly certified Spanish interpreters. Congratulations!

CAPI'S ORGANIZATION MEMBERS

CAPI provides its organization members with the option to include an ad featuring their services in the CAPI newsletter. These agencies show their support for CAPI by joining as members instead of individuals. If you have questions about their services, please contact the organizations directly.

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