THE GOTHAM TRANSLATOR

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

by **Leonard Morin**

It seems that by all accounts the New York Circle of Translators saw a comeback in 2012. The current board continues its efforts to professionalize its administration and better serve members. One issue that the board inherited upon taking office in 2012 was dwindling membership. This, in turn, was one of many problems caused by a series of crises in the Circle, including early resignation of several officers in the 2010-2011 period. Membership rose in 2012 to around 250 members from under 200 at close of 2011. This was achieved not least by a series of compelling speakers and monthly events to which former members were also invited, regular publication of the *Gotham Translator*, and the implementation of Constant Contact to improve mass communication to current and former members.

Another challenge that preceded the current board is the New York Circle Web site, which was fraught with problems, including frequent errors occurring in the member database, difficulties registering or renewing memberships, defects in the calendar function that hampered announcement of events, and grammatical and typographical errors in the text of the Web site. The current board, under the leadership of Secretary Gigi Branch-Shaw, has endeavored to bring full functionality to the Web site. Unfortunately, this goal has proven even more challenging than anticipated. Many of the issues have been remedied, but it is apparent that our problems will not be resolved completely until we have migrated the entire site to a new platform (from the outdated ASP.NET in all likelihood to WordPress).

An issue related to the Web site is accounting. Member registrations via the Web site are needlessly complicated for the treasurer (and hence slower for members) since they require a two-step process whereby the treasurer manually has to link member registrations to payments made by PayPal or check. Furthermore, glitches have arisen whereby old members are given current-member status; also, member expiration dates in the system are mysteriously erroneous. These problems underscore the need for a new database that can adequately administer member data and insure acceptable service. Treasurer Paolo Modigliani is also migrating current member data and payment status to QuickBooks from an Excel file where these data are now housed. So the board is tackling all these issues in a multi-step and delicate process.

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The Gotham has been selected by EBSCO to be included in university databases. All articles that are submitted to The Gotham will be included in the databases unless the author requests that their article not be included. All request are to be in writing via e-mail or regular mail.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

The Gotham Translator accepts and welcomes contributions of articles about all aspects of translation and translator-related issues. These may include, but are not limited to:

- specific translation problems
- approaches to translation
- legal issues
- the business of translation
- dictionary and hardware/software reviews
- reviews of books, conferences and workshops.

Any ideas or leads on interesting stories and articles for which we may try to obtain reprint permissions are also welcome.

In general, articles and other submissions should be limited to around 1500 words. All text should be submitted as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word format. In case of previously published submissions, please advise us of this fact at the time of submission.

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The New York Circle of Translators
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When I took office as president-elect in January of 2012, it was obvious that the Circle faced a host of problems that threatened the organization's survival. Despite the sincerity of the current board's efforts to better serve the membership and the profession, however, changes in its *modus operandi* would lack legitimacy if the members had not been consulted. Louise Jennewine, program director, came up with an invaluable proposition to address this issue: an anonymous online member survey. The survey was conducted in January and its results will soon be available for members to consult, complete with anonymous quotes, member statistics, and valuable suggestions, much of which is captured in colored charts. Two salient results are members' expressed priorities of keeping up to speed with industry developments and networking. Another is the overwhelming predominance of European languages represented in the membership (particularly French and Spanish).

What promises to be the 2013 board's flagship project is its campaign to raise awareness of the work of translators and interpreters among potential clients, persons considering entering the field, and society at large. The fact that the New York Circle is unknown even to many practicing linguists in New York City cries out for the organization to raise its profile. An Outreach and Social Media Committee has been established to this end, including the generous collaboration of members Chunwen Wang and Seamus Mullarkey. The primary messages will be (1) the cost effectiveness of hiring professional interpreters and translators, recognizing what good work really entails and the extensive training and experience it requires; (2) the value gained by joining the New York Circle; and (3) some of the challenges that practicing linguists face. The plan is to approach business organizations, government agencies, ethnic community organizations, and universities about speaking engagements throughout 2013.

The other newly founded committee is Fundraising. The impetus for its creation was the need for continuity of the organization. Members appear to agree that the current board is facing these challenges aggressively. But what about future boards? It seems only realistic to assume that the Circle might, at times, have less proactive boards in the future. A further potential bottleneck is the yearly transition of officers, which can cause loss of valuable information and experience of past governance. For this reason, we have set a goal of hiring a paid administrator to ensure the ongoing continuity of the Circle. The current finances of the organization, however, will not necessarily allow this. One or both of two things will have to happen: the board will have to find a way to use the money in the bequest of Charles Stern[1] to this end; and/or the board will have to raise funds from donors. Neither of these tasks is simple, and the Fundraising Committee, under the leadership of Kathy Brahimi, is working hard to address them.

Margarite Heintz-Montez, editor the *Gotham Translator*, and the board were approached by EBSCO Publishing with a request to include our newsletter in one of their periodicals databases. The EBSCO representative told us they had selected the *Gotham* through a strict vetting process and that inclusion in their database would give us much greater exposure. After reviewing their offer in consultation with the board, Margarite and I entered into an agreement with EBSCO on behalf of the Circle. The *Gotham Translator* is now slated to be included in an EBSCO periodicals database that can be accessed by library users at 121 educational institutions.

As the year progresses, the board will keep the membership abreast of these campaigns and their outcomes. Stay tuned! If you are interested in participating in any of these projects, please contact me at Ltmorin@earthlink.net. All the better! ■

1 The current terms of the endowment, which stipulate an award "not exceeding a total of Five Hundred ($500.00) Dollars in any particular year ...to the one worthiest, needy male and to the one worthiest, needy female members of the CIRCLE," have proven unviable due to both the amount of the grant and its wording, which recipients have found stigmatizing. On the initiative of current President-Elect Edna Ditaranto, and aided by her invaluable institutional experience within the Circle, the Board is looking into ways of reallocating the funds to promote the Circle's continued existence and prosperity. Legal restrictions may limit our options, but the task of addressing this problem has been passed down from one board to the next since the nineties.

Choosing the Right Time in Your Career as a Professional Translator to Take the LS Translation Test

You are a professional translator if one or more of the following are true:

- You occupy a staff/in-house translator position;
- You are regularly employed on the freelance translation market;
- You earned an academic certificate or degree in translation from a university;

or

- You were certified as a translator by a professional association or other body with accrediting authority (LS does not have such authority).

Interpreting and language instruction experience certainly enrich one's language skills, but are not a substitute for actual translation experience. As you consider applying to sit for the LS translation test, and becoming an LS contract translator, please keep the following questions in mind:

- Have you gained sufficient experience as a translator? As a general rule, LS considers five years to be the minimum necessary for a successful test and successful long-term performance as its contractor, even for those with academic training in translation.
- Has your work been mentored or reviewed by experienced professionals? If you have been working too independently, bad habits may have become ingrained.
- Has your experience included translating laws, court records, treaties, high-level correspondence, and bureaucratic prose of the type found in government announcements, bulletins, and fact sheets? If your translation work is solely in S&T, life sciences, literature, or computers, you may find the documents LS handles to be too unfamiliar and daunting.
- Have you determined what combination of languages, and in what direction, you work best as a translator? LS prefers that you test in your strongest language combination first, which will generally mean translating into your native language,
- Have you devoted time to mastering modern research techniques and computer applications? Inability to use online research sources and to effectively use tools such as MS Word (including tables), Excel, PowerPoint, Windows Explorer, and terminology databases will make it hard to keep up with the demands of translating for LS.
- Are you able to produce top-quality work under pressure? LS deadlines are often very tight.
- Do you keep abreast of foreign affairs vocabulary in your source and target languages?
- Do you have a methodical approach to translating—one that you can articulate and defend?

An LS translation contract is not a certification, credential, or resume adornment it is a serious commitment to assist in the diplomatic translation of the United States Government. LS demands top-notch work and the documents it translates may be used by senior decision makers, released to the general public, or form the written record of U.S. foreign policy. Consequently, its translation test is designed to be a fair representation of the challenging work LS contractors must confront. The bottom line: take a long-term view of your translation career and choose carefully the moment when you sit for an LS translation test. If you answer "no" to any of the questions above, it may be wise to invest some time in further preparation. LS wants you to succeed as a test taker, and as a contract translator. ■

CAT Corner is a monthly feature that looks at computer-aided translation software and other helpful tools for the translation industry.

CAT Corner

Transit NXT

Taking Translation and Localization to the NXT Level

by **Alan Horvath and Catherine Capretta, STAR Group America, LLC**

STAR Group is a world leader in translation services and technologies. For over 27 years, STAR has been at the forefront of language technology - committed to unsurpassed innovation and quality. Now STAR is bringing translators the next level of translation memory software with Transit NXT.

Transit NXT Reliability

The Transit developers have worked relentlessly to make Transit NXT the most reliable translation memory tool available. This is critically important to the thousands of freelance translators, translation agencies and enterprise users of Transit. It is also critically important to the STAR Group. Why? Because STAR is also a language service provider. STAR's project managers along with their translation teams in their 42 offices around the world depend on Transit everyday. This means that you can be confident using Transit NXT.

What Makes Transit NXT Different?

Transit is unique in that the translation memory is stored in a tagged XML file-based format. This creates plain-text language pairs that can be used directly as a translation memory which provides a number of benefits such as smaller file size, easier file-handling and management, and complete segment context. This concept has proven its effectiveness for more than two decades of processing large quantities of data.

Software Localization

Transit NXT is translation and localization in one. Using Transit NXT, you can process software binary formats, including resource files (.rc, .res, .resx), .exe, .bin, dll, and other formats.

Using the built-in Resource Editor, the translator can dynamically preview, adjust, and align the position and size of software dialog elements.

Innovative Features and Functions

Transit NXT has a number of original innovative features and functions that have been years in the making. Transit NXT is a feature-rich system with a proven record of success.

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Transit NXT Key Features:

Dual Fuzzy – Proposes more fuzzy matches by searching both the source and target languages for similar sentences, producing translations with greater consistency.

SynchView – View PDF, HTML and XML source documents in synchronization with the translation text as it is being translated. Previews open at the current cursor position of the language pair.

- **PDF Viewer** – Displays static PDF previews of source files from InDesign, FrameMaker, QuarkXPress, PowerPoint and Word formats.
- **HTML/XML Viewer** – Displays dynamic previews that update each time the translator confirms a segment translation.
- **Media Viewer** – Displays images, sounds and videos contained in the source files.

Markup – Simplifies tag handling and text formatting, allowing the translator to focus on translation, not layout.

Resource Editor – Dynamically preview, adjust, and align the position and size of software dialog elements.

> The objective of Transit NXT is not to replace translators, but to provide them with the support needed to increase translation productivity while improving translation quality.

Web Search – Search multiple websites simultaneously to aid in terminology and subject-matter research from within Transit NXT.

Customizable Environment – Transit NXT offers a variety of ways to customize your working environment. You can even create project templates for quick and consistent project set-up.

Virtual Segment Joining – Content between the source and target languages can be clearly linked, even if the number of segments in the language pairs differ.

Concordance Search – The concordance search with fuzzy-match logic allows greater consistency in translations by allowing the translator to quickly and easily search for individual words, phrases, or similar terms in the language pair and/or translation memory.

Language Support – Transit NXT supports more than 180 languages and language variants. Transit was the world's first translation memory tool to properly display and process complex languages (e.g., Asian languages and Arabic) by using double-byte Unicode.

File Support – Transit NXT supports more file types than any other translation memory system. If you are working with a unique or proprietary file type, the technical staff at STAR can create a custom file filter to meet your needs. Below is a list of file types supported by Transit NXT.

- Adobe FrameMaker
- Adobe InDesign
- Adobe PageMaker
- ANSI/ASCII Unicode text
- Apple Macintosh text
- AutoCAD

- Binary resource files
- Corel WordPerfect
- Custom formats
- DITA
- HTML/XHTML
- Interleaf/QuickSilver
- MS Office
- MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel
- QuarkXPress
- RTF and RTF for WinHelp
- SVG
- Trados TTX
- Visio
- XLIFF
- XML/SGML

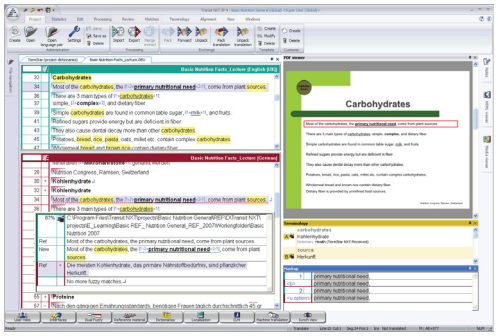
Working with Transit NXT

Transit NXT can be installed as either a standalone or network application. Creating a translation project is simple. The "Create new project" wizard walks you through the process of selecting source and target languages, file types, source files, reference material (translation memory), terminology databases and other project settings. You have full control over segmentation, pre-translation and many other project options. After the project has been created, source files are imported from their native format into the Transit NXT working environment. The translator works in a neutral environment focusing on translation and terminology - not formatting or document layout. Transit NXT protects formatting and non-translatable information from accidental modification.

After translation is complete, Transit NXT exports the translated text and creates a target-language version of the original source file. The target-language version retains the same format as the original source. As a result, post-translation desktop publishing efforts are significantly reduced and in many cases, eliminated completely.

Project Exchange with Transit NXT

Project "packages" can be created and exchanged with Transit users throughout the translation process. Transit NXT also supports TMX and thus can create TMX translation packages to be used with other translation memory systems.



Transit NXT's User Interface showing the source and target language pairs, a fuzzy match proposal, terminology proposals, segment markup,and a synchronized PDF in the PDF Synch View window.

Transit NXT Customization

Transit NXT offers many customization options for the user. Options such as the "User Roles" (Super User, Translator, Reviewer, Project Manager, Terminology Manager, among others) allow you to customize the interface to show only the functions needed. "User Roles" enable and disable views, windows and functions based on the selected role. Custom user roles can also be defined quickly and easily at any time.

Windows can be closed, resized or moved (including to a second screen) to suit your preferences. Filters can be applied to source and target text windows to

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display only specific segment types, such as untranslated segments. Transit NXT also incorporates "floating" windows that appear when appropriate and then disappear allowing for a much cleaner and optimized interface. "Floating windows" can be pinned in place or unpinned at any time.

TermStar NXT Terminology Consistency

TermStar NXT is a powerful terminology management system that is fully integrated into Transit NXT.

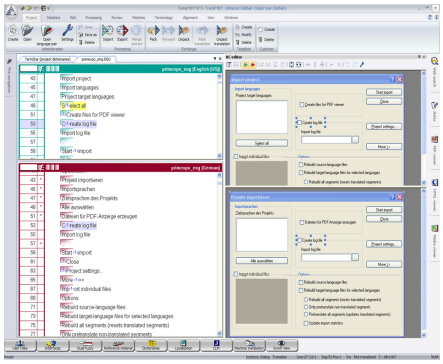
During translation, Transit continually searches the TermStar databases for terminology entries. If source matches are found, the text is highlighted in the language pair and the corresponding translation is displayed in the terminology window. Thanks to Transit's unique technology, it can search for terminology in as many databases as you wish, located anywhere on your PC or network. Terms not found in your terminology database(s) can be easily transferred from the language pair into the TermStar terminology database without the need for retyping.

Additionally, TermStar's fuzzy logic makes it possible to perform a fuzzy search for terms, thus increasing the number of matches returned.

Quality Assurance

To validate quality after translation, Transit includes functions that allow the user to manually or automatically review numerous quality criteria. The list below is just a subset of Transit's quality assurance check capabilities.

- Translation completeness
- Terminology consistency check with the ability to check based on prioritized terminology databases
- Markup/Format and number check
- Spell check via spell checkers, dictionaries, or reference material
- Text length, field size, and structure for software localization verification
- Excess spaces, missing spaces, double spaces, duplicate words and



Transit NXT's Synch View and **Resource Editor** allows the translator to view the completecontext of the text being translated in its original layout in synchronization with thelanguage pair. In the software localization project above, the Resource Editor allows thetranslator to see the software dialog that is being translated for both the source and targetlanguages. The Resource Editor is synchronized with the language pair, automaticallyhighlighting the text string that is being translated. The translated text dynamically appearsin context in the Resource Editor's target window. If the translated text is too longfor the available space, the translator can resize or reposition the software textelement directly in the Resource Editor.

capitalization check

- Number localization check
- Missing sentences in the translation check
- Protected words (words not intended for translation) check

You can attach notes to segments that require clarification and create a print-out of all corrections. You can even create a report that shows all errors in the target language file. The report includes hyperlinks that provide direct links back to each segment in question for easy evaluation and correction by the translator.

Coming Soon to Transit NXT

The Transit NXT development team is currently working on several new and exciting features that you can expect to see in the coming months. Among the features are:

Machine Translation Integration

Integration of Google translate and Itranslate4.eu into Transit NXT. The integration will also be active for pretranslation as well as for interactive work during translation.

MS Office Spell Checker Integration

Microsoft Office Spell Checker will now be integrated into Transit NXT for Microsoft Office documents.

Easy Footnote / Index Marker Handling

Transit NXT will make it easier than ever to handle footnotes / index markers with dynamic linking between footnote / index markers and the segment (text) they reference. The Footnote / Index Link and Display feature will allow the translator to view the content of a referenced footnote / index on demand and dynamically navigate back-and-forth between the referring segment and the reference segment. With this feature, a translator can translate with accuracy and consistency segments containing footnote / index references and the segments (text) they reference.

Exclusion of Hidden Cells and Slides from MS Excel and PowerPoint Documents

With Transit NXT you will be able to easily set the translation project import settings to exclude any hidden cells or slides in Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint documents when creating translation projects. Hidden cells and slides will be excluded during import into Transit NXT so there is no risk of unintended translation.

Subtitling

Transit NXT will have the ability to translate subtitled videos. The translator will be able to view the source documents in synchronization with the translation text and video as it is being translated.

MS Word / PowerPoint Dynamic Previews

In addition to Transit NXT's many Synch View modes, Transit NXT will also include dynamic target preview for Microsoft Word and PowerPoint files during translation.

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Transit NXT addresses the real issues in translation today – developed by a team of software engineers and language experts with extensive translation experience.

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A Version for Everyone

Switching to Transit NXT is easy. Using the built-in conversion utility, you can easily convert your existing translation memory for problem-free use in Transit. Importing your existing terminology databases into TermStar NXT is just as easy.

Transit NXT is available in three different versions accommodating the personal needs of freelance translators, translation agencies, and enterprise users. Transit can be implemented in both a standalone desktop environment or a network environment.

- **Transit NXT Professional** – The complete package for organizations, project managers, and translators responsible for the project management, distribution, and execution of multilingual translation projects.
- **Transit NXT Freelance Pro** – Designed for the individual translator who works alone and is responsible for the project management and/or translation of single-language translation projects.
- **Transit NXT Workstation** – Designed for the individual translator who is primarily responsible for translation.

Transit NXT Subscription Licenses

Interested in working with Transit NXT but not ready to make a full commitment yet? No problem. Just visit STAR's WebShop – http://shop.star-group.net. There you can purchase 3-, 6-, or 12-month subscription licenses of any of the Transit NXT versions. If you decide you would like a perpetual license, your first time-limited purchase will be credited towards the purchase of your perpetual licenses.

Try Before You Buy

STAR offers 30-day fully-functional evaluation licenses of Transit NXT. If you would like an evaluation copy, send an e-mail to TransitNXT@us.star-group.net and mention promo code NYCT13. Indicate which version of Transit you would like to try.

To learn more about Transit NXT or any of STAR's products or services, visit www.us.star-group.net. ■

NYCT Member Spotlight

Esma Gregor

Interview by **Margarite Heintz Montez**

Esma Gregor is a German native from Berlin with PhD in linguistics from the Humboldt University in Berlin (Russian and English). She has worked as freelance translator on and off since 1989 and has extensive experience in the real estate investment and the financial sectors. Esma is ATA certified English>German, holds Certificate in Financial Analysis from NYU and is currently working towards a CFA certification.

Q Thank you so much for agreeing to do the interview, I'll start with the obvious, how did you come to the translation industry?

A I had my first "gig" as an interpreter at age 5 and had decided then and there that this was nothing for me, but life-long immersion in more than one language keeps you constantly alert to the way language works and it never left me it seems. I wasn't quite sure what to do after high school and decided to go the "easy" route. I was good at languages and initially decided to become a "Sprachmittler" as it was called – a language mediator – for English and Spanish at Humboldt University in Berlin before I switched to English and Spanish studies and eventually got my M.A. and then Ph.D in linguistics. My background almost predestined me to become a translator and I moonlighted for many years trying out various things before taking the plunge and becoming a full-time freelance translator.

Q Which if any are your favorite CAT tools? Do you feel that the vendors are really addressing translator's needs with the updates?

A I tried WordFast first. I liked the fact that I could work in a Word file and that you could us it for free with a TM up to 800 segments. It was a great way to get a feel for how CAT tools worked. When I became a full-time translator, somebody suggested Trados to me and one of the agencies I work for actually walked me through the who process of how to use it at some point. Initially, I really disliked Trados, but eventually I got very proficient in it and now I use it all the time. I am by now on to the Studio 2011 version of Trados and I do like working with it. I also have Trados 2007 on my XP system and work with it, too. There are quite a few agencies that still use Trados 2007 in Word, so I am hoping that my XP system will last for a bit longer.

What I do not like about the Studio 2011

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version is that it seems to focus much more on agencies than on the individual translator. I have been thinking of taking a look at MemoQ. I have heard lots of good things about it, but I have not tried it yet. Another software I worked with for a bit was Across. Across wasn't bad, but it was so buggy at that point that I did not like working with it b/c there was always something.

Generally, I suspect that most CAT software out there is similar since they are all based on the same principle. What's important is how easy and intuitive they are to use, how stable they are and how compatible they are with various other programs.

Q Have you thought about changing direction or your area of expertise because of the current economic environment?

A There was a moment right after I had quit my old job and become a full-time freelancer - I quit a few months before Lehman Brothers went down - when I thought that I maybe had made the wrong choice. For an eerie two weeks it felt as if the market had stopped breathing and everybody was waiting for the other shoe to fall … and then it passed. I do see some fluctuation in the number of agencies that send me jobs, but my impression is that the economic crisis has brought more work to freelancers as companies seem to prefer to outsource translation jobs rather than have to pay for an in-house person to do them.

I primarily translate and edit financial, legal and technical texts. I can't say that I receive fewer financial texts, but then, my expertise has increased (particularly in finance) and I am able to accept a wider range of financial topics and more complex financial texts then, e.g., five years ago, so I can't tell.

Q According to various news articles and reports translation is booming. The industry is making huge revenues. Do you feel the reports are accurate of the state of a freelance translator or is this only an agency phenomenon?

A In my experience, there will always be an agency that at the end of the year or the beginning of a new one will try to lower rates claiming that their clients had cut their rates. It is very hard to raise rates with an established client and the industry is so flexible that they can find the translator that asks the lowest prices possible and still delivers quality. The only way to raise prices or to have continuously high prices in the industry, in my experience, is to be a specialist (i.e. have a specialized degree) in a well-paid field, such as finance or law.

As for agencies or jobs that go away - somehow they always seem to get replaced by new ones. Sometimes it takes a bit of an effort to get back in touch with

some agencies you have not worked with in a while because the project manager has changed and does not know you, but, in general, I get the impression that there is enough work out there. It just might not necessarily translate into more income for translators.

Q What do you do to stand out from others in your language combos and areas of expertise? What is the single best thing for someone to do in order to stand out from the competition?

A I took classes at NYU towards a certificate in financial analysis a few years back. I read annual reports for fun and I actually like finance and accounting. The texts are rather boring to most people. I, on the other hand, find financial reports rather exiting. When I started working as a full-time translator, I almost by default fell into the financial field, but even then it was very hard. When translating finance, you have to know what you are doing and you also have to know what you don't know because there are so many sub-fields that can be really tricky if you don't know what it's about.

In my experience a degree in some specialized field is extremely helpful: law, chemistry, engineering, anything health-related, accounting, marketing, etc. It helps to produce and deliver high quality translations, but it also creates credibility if you can speak the client's language and ultimately you can command higher prices.

Q What do you do in your free time to relax and unwind?

A I watch Bollywood movies, I like photography and I travel a lot. Luckily, I can work from everywhere in the world and I have gotten very good at working while traveling. Somehow long flights have become much more bearable, if I have a large financial or legal text to concentrate on. I suppose this does not fall under "relax and unwind", but I really like my job, and one could argue that a large legal text has the same effect on me that Dramamed or similar medications have on other people. ■

ATA Exam

The NYCT will be holding an ATA Exam as follows:

Saturday, April 27, 2013
10:00 AM

Woolworth Building
15 Barclay Street, Room 430
New York City

Candidates must be ATA members.
Sign up directly with the ATA

NYCT FEBRUARY MIXER

NYCT FEBRUARY MIXER

THE GOTHAM TRANSLATOR

The New York Circle of Translators (NYCT) is a New York State not-for-profit corporation grouping independent translators and interpreters as well as companies and organizations. It is a chapter of the American Translators Association (ATA) which is, in turn, an affiliate of the International Federation of Translators (FIT).

NYCT members work in a variety of languages and specialties. Our members are committed to the exchange of ideas and mutual support. One of our goals is to educate the general public about the professional nature of interpreting and translating.

NYCT members enjoy the following benefits:

- Free monthly meetings featuring speakers on all aspects of the translation profession
- Networking opportunities at monthly meetings, summer picnic and holiday party
- Professional development workshops and seminars
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