From the President-Elect
New Orleans Conference Update

The preparations for ATA's 47th Annual Conference are in full swing. The program was finalized in early June with 21 pre-conference seminars and 188 conference sessions, which will run in 15 parallel tracks (16 on Saturday). As in the past, the tracks will be either language-specific or subject-specific, and will cover the entire spectrum of the translation and interpreting professions—from freelancers, to educators, to translation companies.

ATA division administrators and other division volunteers did an outstanding job in recommending and inviting speakers for both pre-conference seminars and conference sessions, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all division administrators for helping to make our conference the best in our industry. Here is a sampling of well-known experts in their respective fields who will be presenting at our conference: Yves Champollion and Louise Brunette (French Language Division); Jorge de Buen, Peter Lindquist, and Mercedes Guhl (Spanish Language Division); Michele Berdy (Slavic Languages Division); Ricardo Schutz (Portuguese Language Division); Betsy Wing and Douglas Robinson (Literary Division); Marjory Bancroft (Interpreters Division); Ralf Lemster and Rudolf Leube (German Language Division); Holly Mikkelsen (Medical Division); Huang Youyi (Chinese Language Division); Renato Beninatto (Translation Company Division); Alessandra Fioravanti (Italian Language Division); David Rumsey (Nordic Division); and Ken Sakai (Japanese Language Division).

Also, back by popular demand, we will have the Scrabble® Social, Book Splash, Yoga Stretches for Translators, and Translation Support Tools Forum. Mark your calendar for this must-attend conference for anyone in the translation and interpreting professions: November 1-4, 2006 in the glorious city of New Orleans. This year, your attendance will not only expand your horizons as a language professional, it will also provide much-needed support to the city as it recovers from the Katrina disaster and expends a lot of effort to maintain its status as a popular venue for conferences such as ours. Check out ATA's conference page at www.atanet.org/conf/2006 for more detailed information and updates.

China International Forum on Translation Industry

The Translators Association of China (TAC) invited speakers from abroad to attend the China International Forum on Translation Industry, which took place in Shanghai on May 28-29, 2006. Among the invited speakers were Sheryl Hinkkanen from Finland (secretary general of the International Federation of Translators [FIT]), Johanne Boucher from Canada (president of the Association de l’industrie de la langue/Language Industry Association), and myself in my capacity as the chairman of the FIT Status Committee. I would like to extend my thanks to Huang Changqi, assistant to the president of TAC, who was instrumental in inviting us and who was a most gracious host during our stay in Shanghai.

The Forum, sponsored jointly by TAC and Tongji University, explored ways of regulating the translation services market and finding opportunities for global cooperation. The Chinese translation and interpreting industry is leaning heavily toward regulation and self-regulation. Chinese attendees expressed great interest in ATA’s Certification Program, the upcoming ASTM Standard Guide to Quality Assurance in Translation, and U.S. regulatory measures such as the state and federal interpreter certification programs.

“Self-discipline and effective market management are essential to sustained development of China’s translation industry,” TAC President Liu Xiliang said during the Forum. Liu, a renowned Spanish translator, also stated that, “both national standards and appraisal systems for translation and interpreting should be formulated or perfected to promote the development of the industry.” To that end, TAC and the China Association for Standardization are working together to produce a series of translation- and interpreting-related standards, and the Ministry of Personnel has entrusted China International Publishing Group to organize and implement the China Aptitude Test for Translators and Interpreters as a voluntary credential available to some 60,000 translators and interpreters in China.

Shanghai will also host the 18th World Congress of FIT, and Sheryl Hinkkanen was quite busy during her visit assisting her Chinese colleagues with preparations for the event, which will take place in August 2008 right before the Beijing Olympic Games. Huang Youyi, vice-president of FIT, as well as vice-president and secretary general of TAC, will share more insights on the FIT Congress with us in New Orleans in November.