

San Diego Count-Down: Speakers Confirmed for MT Events

by Muriel Vasconcellos

As we head toward the count-down for San Diego, the line-up of speakers on machine translation is looking impressive indeed. It's not too late to sign up for any of the following events.

The all-day pre-Conference seminar (Wednesday, November 4, 9:00 to 5:00), **Machine Translation for Translators**, promises to offer a lot of bang for 75 bucks. As reported in last month's *Chronicle*, the seminar, sponsored jointly by ATA and the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas, will include presentations by Veronica Lawson, Joann Ryan, and Christine Miller. Each of these speakers brings expertise in a particular area of practical MT, and together they combine several decades of first-hand experience in implementing the technology. In addition, at the end there will be an off-the-record, no-holds-barred question-and-answer session, "The MT Users Speak," to be moderated by Veronica Lawson. On the podium fielding questions from the participants will be six users of MT, who will draw on their experiences at AT&T, Intergraph Corporation, Rosemont Corporation, the Inter-American Air Forces Academy, the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, and Union Bank of Switzerland. These applications represent a galaxy of MT systems in use in the Americas: DP/Translator, ENGSPAN, LOGOS, METAL, Systran, and TOVNA (note the alphabetical order!). A Japanese-English system, Sharp's DUET, is also included. Each of the speakers in this special forum is scheduled to give a full presentation later in the Conference (see below). Seminar organizer Muriel Vasconcellos, a SPANAM user for 12 years, will also be on hand.

As part of the **MT Showcase**, exhibits of the major MT systems will run all day Monday and Tuesday (10:00-7:00) plus Wednesday morning (9:00-11:00) and will include sit-down theater-

style briefings on a number of the products represented. Admission to the Showcase will be \$5.00, to be collected at the door. Several of the MT exhibits will open again on Wednesday evening (6:00-8:00) as part of the regular ATA Conference and continue through Saturday morning.

The ATA-sponsored **Study of Machine Translation on PCs**, to be the subject of a special report at the Conference on Thursday (November 5, 1:45-2:30 P.M.), is already well under way. Christine Miller, the author of this study, is unearthing a wealth of information that has never before been gathered in one place. For all the PC systems that do more than word-for-word translation, Chris will be presenting a full matrix of features, bases for comparison, and languages offered. Since each application is different, she will be emphasizing the criteria needed in order to decide whether this one or that one—or none at all—is appropriate for the user's own particular situation. ATA members have been hungry for this information for a long time, and Chris's study will make an important contribution to the translators' understanding of MT. Data will be handed out at the time of the Conference and may possibly be available later through ATA Headquarters.

Finally, a three-hour panel, **MT in Practical Applications**, will be presented on Friday, November 6 (1:45-5:00 P.M.). This event will be moderated by Peter Wheeler of Antler Translation Services, who uses LOGOS, and will feature presentations by Peter and six other MT users: Margarita Baena (ENGSPAN), Doris Albisser (METAL), Bob Hensley (LOGOS, Intergraph, TOVNA, and DUET-E-J), Daphne Walmer (Systran), Ghassan Haddad (Intergraph), and Doris Cabezas (Systran). These applications cover a broad range of subjects and types of discourse, including technical abstracts and articles, military training manuals,

and, of course, documentation for commercial products.

Slowly, incrementally, MT is coming of age, and ATA members who come to San Diego will have a chance to keep up with the times and learn about the latest realities in this technology.

Look for an update on the MT Evaluation Workshop, sponsored by the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas, elsewhere in this issue.