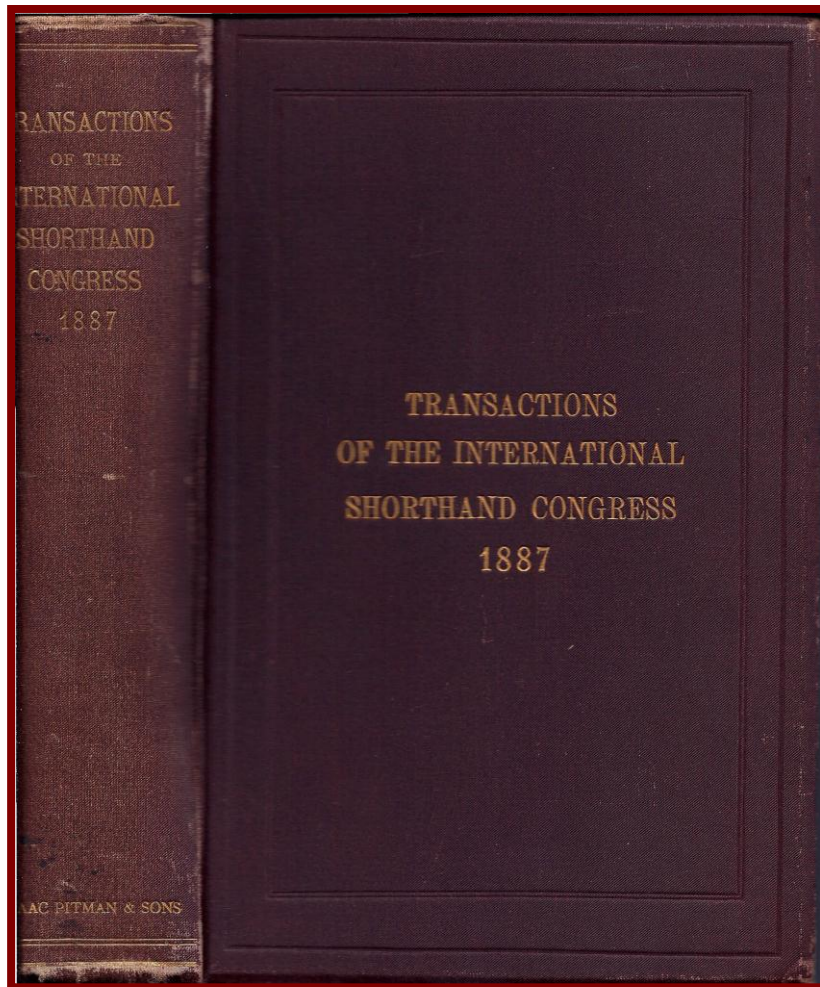


INTERSTENO Newsletter 52



steno e-news 52

Contents

Contents.....	2
From the President's desk	3
Internet competition 2012.....	4
Comments of the Jury President	4
A winning experience by Carlo Paris - mother tongue champion of Internet contest 2012	9
In memoriam prof. Marcello Melani.....	10
Programme of the meetings of the Council and Professional reporters' section in Prague - 29th September - 2nd October	12
A new future for Mr. Mark Golden (USA)	13
NCRA Board selects Jim Cudahy as next executive director & CEO	14
London 26 September, 1887 - The Birth of Intersteno.....	15
From Giuseppe Ravizza to Steve Jobs.....	17
Intersteno Usa group on Facebook	18
Competitions	19
Swiss shorthand competition in Gossau	19
Lipsia Open 2012	19
13-14 April 2012 - International competitions in The Hague and Dutch national competition in Nijkerk, The Netherlands	21
22nd and 23rd March - Slovakian Championship	23
Events.....	24
Finnish shorthand Society celebrated its 140th anniversary on April 21st. 24	
June 21-23, 2012 = AAERT Conference in Philadelphia	25
June 27-30, 2012 = NVRA Conference in San Antonio (Texas)	25
August 9-12, 2012 = NCRA Conference in Philadelphia (Texas)	26
22nd April - Waltraut Dierks - Honorary President of the German Stenographic Association	27
What's New	27
NCRA Secures Nearly \$1 million in Allocated Federal Funding for Real-time Education	27
iTEC in Turkey: educational technology with real-world applications	27
Stenotype on Ipad.....	28
Rules for using computer for transcribing shorthand dictations at the German national Championships.	28
Subtitles on Webradio	29
Vocal memory - insert and retrieve notes on your portable phone.	29
Is stenography a dying art'?'.....	30



From the President's desk

In a recent conversation with Alessandro Tescari, CEO of Pervoice, an Italian company leader in automatic speech recognition technology, the discussion has focused on two main themes which may be of interest to all in the Intersteno community.

An upcoming European project wants to put together and enhance technical research in the field of automatic speech recognition (ASR) which so far has been carried on in some countries (namely Italy, Germany and GB), in order to convey this expertise to a common platform to be used in several (reporting) activities such as subtitling, the European Parliament bulletin with all the languages involved and mobile, automatic translation. We want to learn more about this, which seems to me a crucial step if Europe wants to meet the challenges of development in speech recognition led by international companies such as Google or Nuance.

Another item is related to parliamentary reporting. In the last decade many parliaments, in Europe and the East as well as in South America, have undergone a revolution in the production of the reports of their sittings. Some technologies have turned to be obsolete and no longer efficient: newer communication methods have become the standard for accessing parliamentary information: earlier techniques have been displaced: keyboarding and voice have challenged steno in the production of timely and high quality text; digital has replaced analogue, and so on.

As a result parliamentary officers have faced the challenge of a changing profession, with new tools and new work flows and organizations. Furthermore, the advent of new media (satellite TV, Internet, tablets and mobiles) and new information standard (digital, audio/video/text synchronization etc.) have raised some questions such as: what is now the meaning and the function of parliamentary reporting? Originally it was the only means by which citizens were able to learn about MPs' activities or speeches. Is that still the case? Is the written text the main reporting product? Is it really useful and if so to whom? What kind of information is needed? Shall we update the concept of parliamentary reporting along with the new era of information and communication? Which are the new features of the "parliamentary report"?

These and other questions are to be investigated, taking into account the changes that have occurred in parliaments and focusing on the real need of the citizens. Intersteno must check whether it is possible to define a set of standard features of the report and to indicate the best practices adopted by parliaments. We can start from some results: speech recognition has now reached the best ever standards and keep on improving its performance, thanks to ongoing advancements of linguistic models, opening the way for new services. Synchronization of audio/video and text is more and more an indispensable standard, not only in court but in parliamentary reports. Nevertheless the intellectual contribution of the human being (the professional) in the reporting and editing is still the most important part of the parliamentary report. Starting from this we can understand what reporting will be in the near future, what work organization, what techniques, what technologies will be successful.

The Intersteno Board has created a steering group led by Prof. Carlo Eugeni (Lida Horlings and Jean Charles Le Masson) for organizing the cultural

sessions in the 2013 Intersteno Congress and I am sure that it will take into account the above-mentioned themes.

We expect also that university students and cultural or scientific associations will give us support in seeking a better understanding. Above all, all e-news readers, all Intersteno members and friends are asked to give their valuable advice.

Happy reading.

Fausto Ramondelli

Internet competition 2012

**10th
anniversary**

Comments of the Jury President

First of all, we warmly congratulate the competitors on their participation and their successes together with the teachers who have motivated them.

Exceptionally, the 2012 classifications are a little bit different. We have published 2 classifications lists for the category "Children - Mother tongue" and 2 "Second place" for the category "Pupils - Mother tongue". The reason is that there were 19 young competitors from the same school who had already taken the test in a number of foreign languages but were not able, for technical reason, to fulfill the mother tongue test before the deadline. We have authorized them to compete 2 days after this date.

19 nations have registered for our 10th edition, representing 201 schools, 246 teachers and 1434 students.

Countries	Comp.	Countries	Comp.
Australie	1	India	1
Autriche	23	Italy	487
Belgium	13	Poland	13
Brazil	1	Russia	26
Canada	16	Slovakia	121
Croatia	61	Switzerland	40
Czech Rep.	217	The Netherlands	2
France	6	Turkey	258
Germany	18	USA	2
Hungary	38		

The champions of 2012 are:

	1	2	3
Children (< 13 years old)	Artem Yagunov RU	Daniel Ondrašík CZ	Nikol Durčáková CZ
Children (after deadline)	İlyas Pamukçu TR	Zehra Taşkale TR	Fatih Gümüş TR
Pupils (from 13 to 16)	Rabia Kardelen Çağlar TR	Mehmet Kurt TR Klára Odehnalová CZ	Stanislav Yagunov RU
Juniors (From 17 to 20)	Oğuzhan Akpına TR	Zorbey Çiçek TR	Taner Önder TR
Seniors (> 20 years)	Carlo Parisi IT	Hakan Kurt TR	Sean Wrona USA

And the records are:

Children: 568 cpm

Pupils: 602 cpm

Juniors: 622 cpm

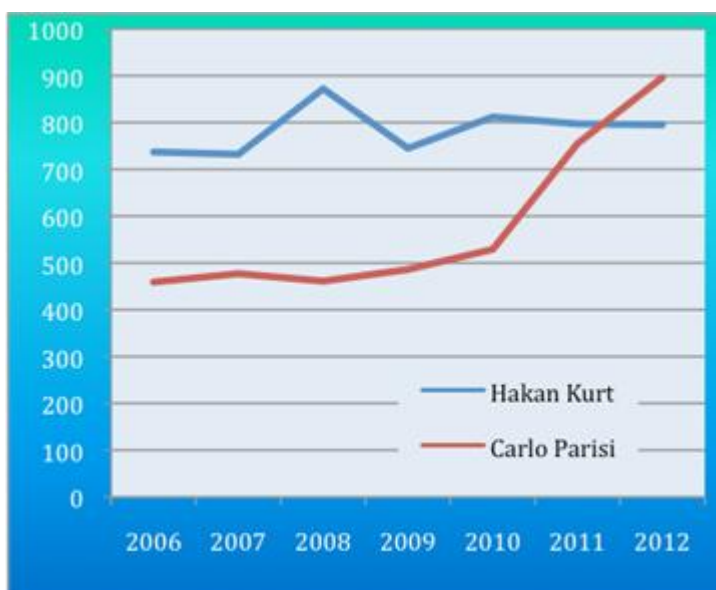
Seniors: 896 cpm

You will find hereunder information about Carlo Parisi (Italy), champion with the highest performance (896 cpm) not only for 2012 but for the 10 Internet contests. He beat the best record (for Internet contest) previously achieved by Mikula Václav (Czech Rep.) in 2007 with 872 cpm.

Carlo Parisi and the competitor with the second best result, Hakan Kurt (Turkey), have been regularly competing since 2006.

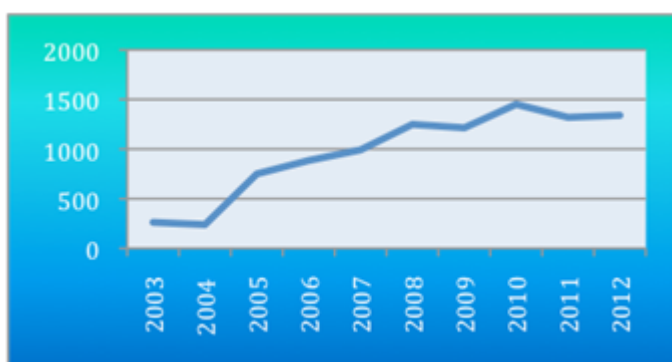
The progress of Carlo is prodigious.

Hakan Kurt was the Internet contest champion in 2008 with 872 cpm.



These 2012 statistics have prompted me to review the 10 first years of the contest.

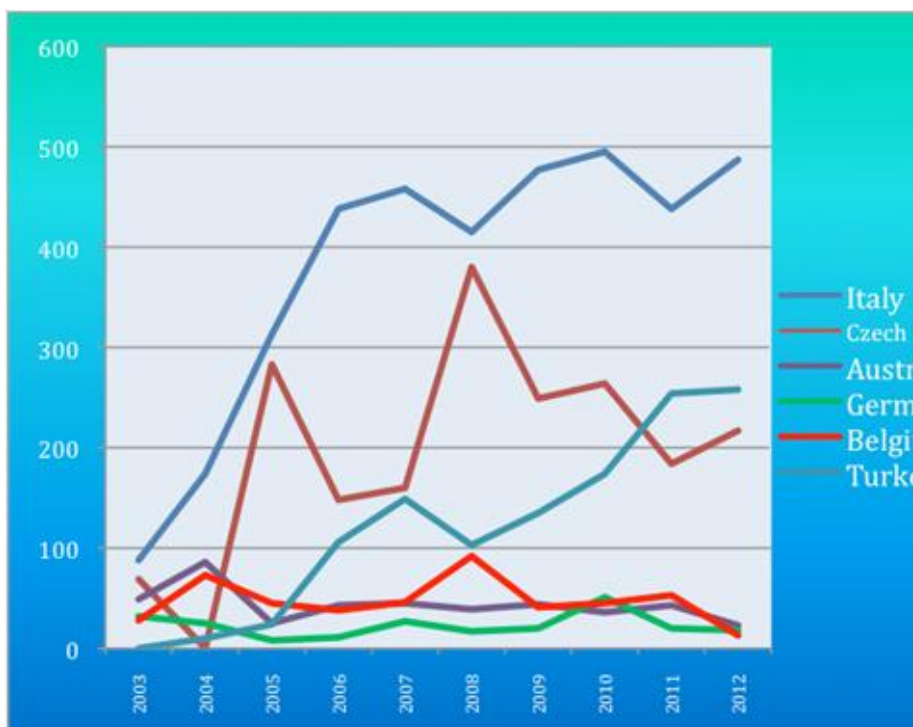
Initiated by the common efforts of Italy and Czech Republic before the 44th congress in Rome (2003), it was followed by 5 countries- Italy, Czech Rep., Austria, Germany and Belgium - and has achieved growing success over the years.



Two software programs were proposed: the well known ZAV-software (which is also a keyboarding learning system) and a JAVA module conceived by the Italian group.

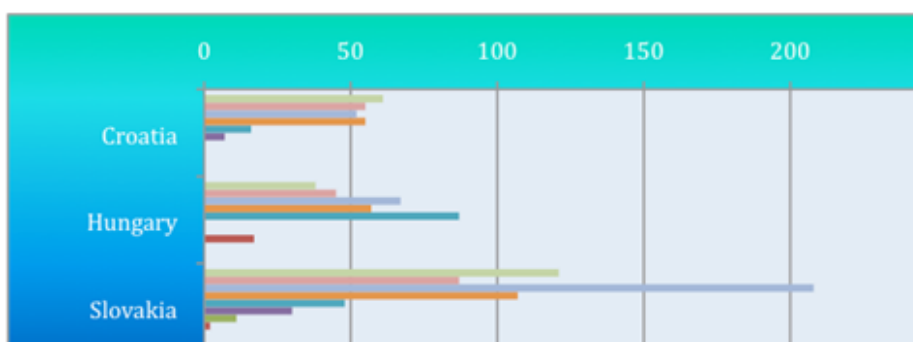
The number of competitors increased rapidly and regularly, mainly in Italy, Czech Republic and Turkey who joined the group in its 2nd year.

The number of competitors from Austria and Germany is fairly constant.
There has been a decrease in Belgium that we hope to overcome next year.



Since 2005 the number of competitors from Hungary and Slovakia have improved and since 2007 the numbers from Croatia have also increased.

Every year more new countries are interested in our contest.



Poland and Russia have attended since 2005 and 2007.

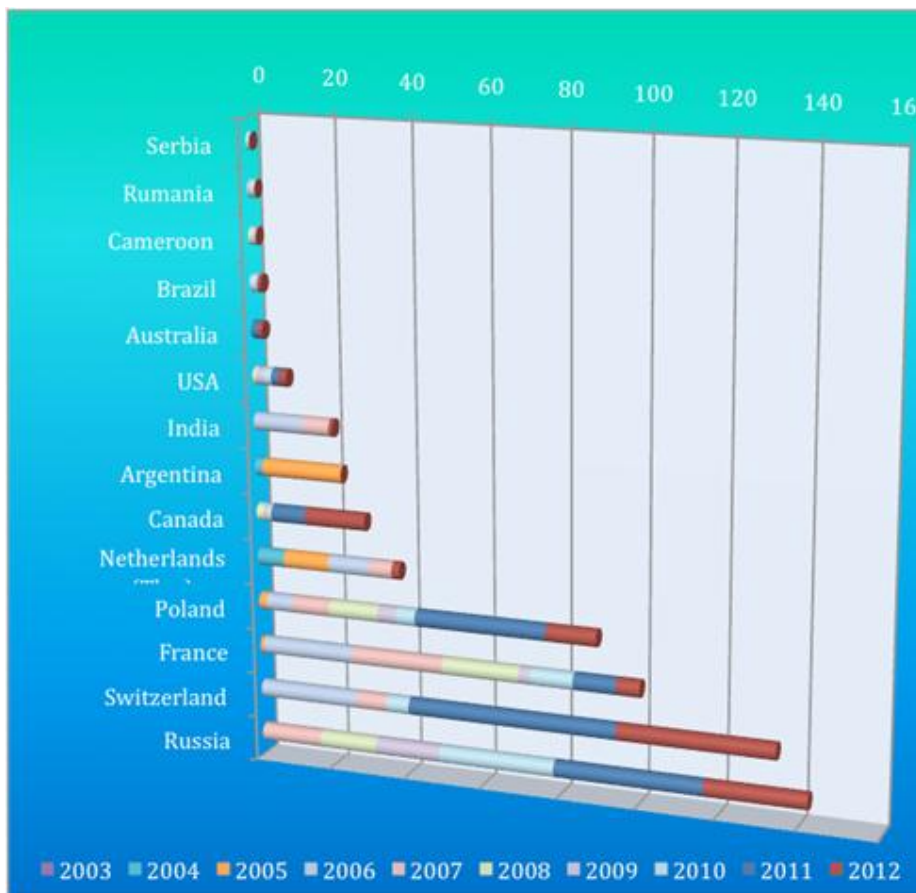
Canadian competitors are more and more numerous.

Despite the presence of the active group "Zonedactylo", the participation from French competitors is irregular and it has proved difficult to recruit fresh competitors.

The Netherlands is returning after 4 years' absence. The same is true of Switzerland.

We regret that the USA has not succeeded in increasing the quantity of competitors and that Argentina, India and Cameroun are no longer able to participate after encouraging tests.

Our sole contact in Rumania, now installed in Paris, is competing (in English) under the flag of France.

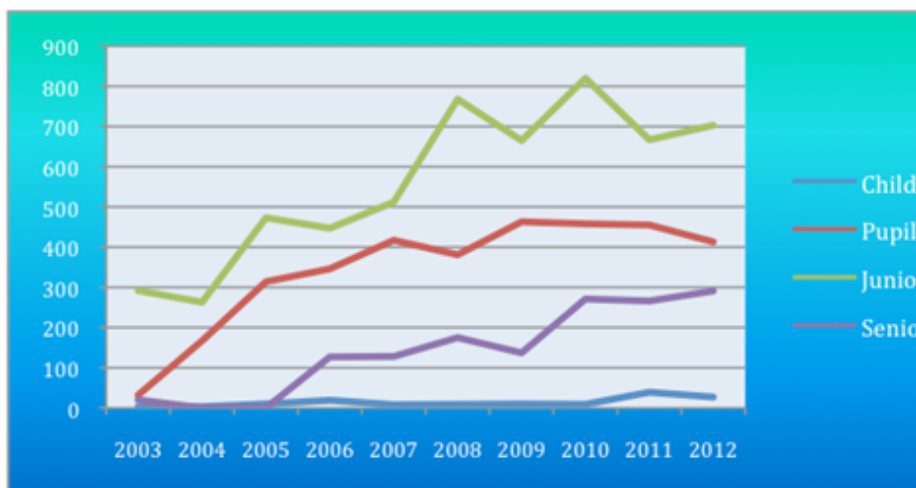


There has also been a significant evolution concerning the age categories.

In the beginning competitors were almost pupils and juniors.

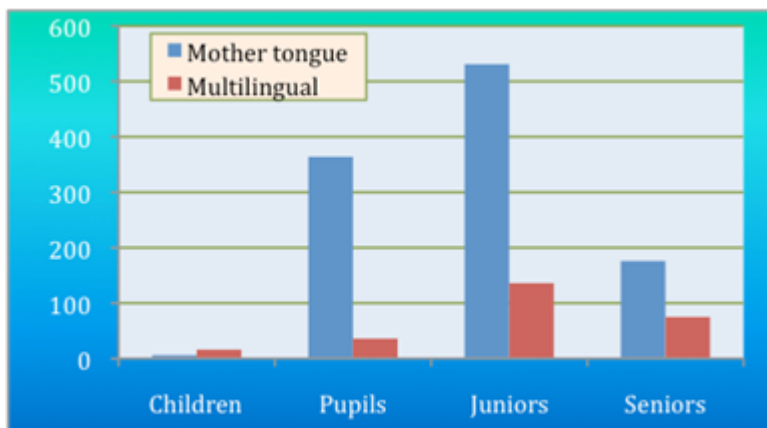
The number of seniors (aged more than 20 years) is constantly increasing.

More and more very young competitors are testing their ability, with great success.

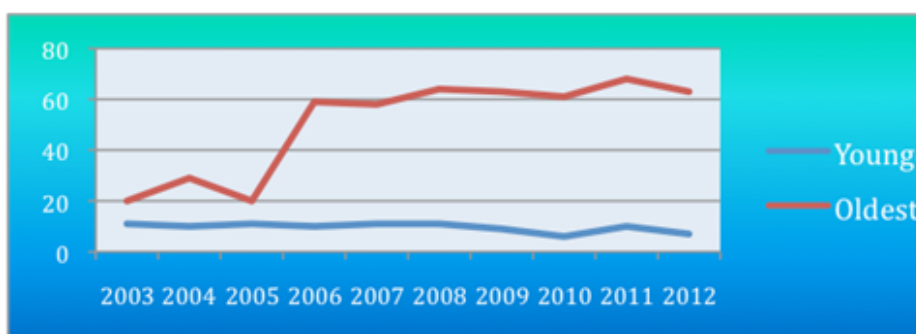


16 languages are now proposed for the contest. When competitors are registered in their mother language, they can also do the test in the 15 other languages.

Some of them have excellent results in all languages.



In the beginning, seniors did not exceed 29 years. Now competitors up to the sixties (68 the oldest) are competing. **The youngest competitor is 7.**



Ever since the beginning, the number of characters per minute of the champion has been high. Nevertheless, it has been increasing. The question is: is it still possible to type faster? (Remember: the record was earned during the World Championship of the 44th Intersteno Congress 2003 in Rome by Helena Matoušková with 955,10 cpm).

2003	Pavel Hlavac, CZ	598
2004	Umit Seker, TR	626
2005	Mikula Václav, CZ	828
2006	Mikula Václav, CZ	809
2007	Mikula Václav, CZ	872
2008	Hakan Kurt, TR	807
2009	Hais Petr, CZ	745
2010	Sean WRONA, USA	775
2011	Sean WRONA, USA	839
2012	Carlo Parisi, IT	896

As you see, our contest has been a great success and represents a challenge for many people: a challenge to be the best but also a challenge to improve their individual performance. Emrah Kuyumcu (Turkey) has been a faithful competitor since 2004; Karen Koulakian (France), has been competing since 2005, and has improved his speed by 38 % ... I am sure that there are a lot of other competitors.

But lower performances are worthy of note. On the job market, speed (and accuracy, of course) is a "plus" appreciated by employers and the minima required by the Internet contest for seniors meet the minimum requirements of many administrations and offices.

I hope that the success of this contest will continue to increase and that "sleeping countries" will wake up. Thanks for your support.

Georgette Sante

A winning experience by Carlo Paris - mother tongue champion of Internet contest 2012

I was born in Milan in 1970 and I have been a professional typist for over 20 years. I learned the basics of shorthand and typing at the vocational school "Lombardini" in Milan. Here I met Prof. Erminio Soldati, my first teacher of shorthand, who motivated me to attend competitions including the Interregional Championships organized by Istituto di Magistero Stenografico, (where I attended the classes of Prof. Ada Garbislander and Prof. Menozzi). I also took part in many Italian Championships organized by EUSI (Italian entity of secretarial activities).

Despite dozens of victories at both regional and national level I have always suffered of anxiety during competition, the panic that at first shakes and then 'freezes' fingers on the keyboard. Irritated by this "handicap" a few years ago, I changed my training methods, concentrating on autogenic training techniques, coupled with archery meetings (I have been an archer for many years). Good results came up in a short time.

I became acquainted with the Intersteno contest through Prof. Erminio Soldati, and in 2006 I attended for the first time.

My big concern was about typing the special characters for foreign languages, which cannot be found on a standard Italian keyboard. As a matter of fact the need to use the ASCII codes consistently reduced my speed.

A friend of mine, keenly interested in informatics, told me that I could "remap" the keyboard keys to adapt them for any language. This permitted me, in the following years, to compete additionally in Eastern languages.

Most recently, I have been asked how I have achieved such striking results. Apart from the aforementioned techniques of setting the keyboard, autogenic training, and my professional activity, which involves me daily in a lot of typing, I am still an "emotional person". This year I received a positive "emotional charge" from Elena, a person who has somehow become part of my life. Thanks to her and a big rush of adrenalin, I "flew" on the keyboard. There is no technical secret, nor is it the use of macros (which in fact I never use in my daily work): it is simply the power of the mind and what flows from it.

Ghent is not far off: and I hope the world record as well!

Carlo Parisi

In memoriam prof. Marcello Melani

On 12th April 2012, prof. Marcello Melani died.

He was born in Castelfranco di sotto (Pisa - Italy) on 22nd November 1928 and his family migrated to Eritrea, where they remained till the end of the second world war, due to political changes in that area.

Returning to Italy he obtained the State diploma for teaching shorthand and typewriting, and, since he was living in Tuscany, he begun to have contacts with prof. Flaviano Rodriguez who founded at that time the IDI institute of Florence, which now hosts Accademia Aliprandi-Rodriguez.



He taught at that Institute and took charge of the review 'Specializzazione' (i.e. specialisation) founded in 1963. This review was conceived for spreading the culture of fast writing methods without restriction to specific techniques or systems. During the following years the review increased interest in informatics, office equipment and procedures.

The contacts with prof. Flaviano Rodriguez introduced him to Intersteno and to the evolution that steno machines were undergoing in the United States, especially in court reporting. At that time in Italy the only known steno machine was Michela, but due to patent rights bought by the Italian State, it could not be used outside the Senate.

Thanks to his experiences with Italian shorthand systems, he conceived an adaptation of the American stenotype keyboard in order to comply with the Italian language. He arranged a keyboard with two series of vowels, one series is placed in the middle (as happens in nearly all steno machines), and the second is placed on the right side. This second series is used to terminate the word, since (with few exceptions) all Italian words end with a vowel. This also gives the opportunity to clearly identify the end of a word, automatically inserting the space and thus simplifying the software needed for converting steno strokes into plain, legible words on a computer screen. This feature avoids the use of highly sophisticated software to detect words as happens for the English and French languages.



Prof. Melani founded a company (Stenotype Italia) for the sale and rental of machines, but, being an experienced teacher, he was conscious of the need for good education. Consequently he prepared instruction books for his system, which included a large quantity of training exercises, with the final goal being to prepare professional stenographers. These books were also integrated with audio cassette and cd-rom with dictation on a full range of topics at increasing speeds.

After the release of the new criminal law code in 1990 his steno machine was widely used in the courts, even if at the beginning the quantity of steno writers was not sufficient fully to cover the requirements. In order to

overcome this gap he arranged several training courses also for steno teachers.

When Italian TV began subtitling of the news he specifically trained a group of steno typists in Rome to meet this demand, and the Melani stenotype is still used for this purpose today.

His activity was very successful but was vigorously opposed by many Italian teachers of shorthand who did not understand the strategic and practical value of this new tool.

He adapted his method for the Spanish (it is used in Spain and Argentina), Portuguese, Greek and Russian languages.

Prof. Melani was always supportive of Intersteno activity. He was among the first to become an Associated Member and sponsored participation of reporters using his system in the competitions. I can only mention a few names which can be found in the classifications lists of the world-wide competitions for speech capturing and real-time: Simonetta Cosi Francesca Cabiati, Simona Centurioni, Nadia Rossetto, Denise Mandirola, Busalacchi Daniela and several others. Those who were in Prague cannot forget the exciting moment when the very young, blind Spanish girl, Ms Miriam Martin Garcia won the first place in her category both in the speech capturing and real-time competitions.

The proposal for the first fast transcription competition - held at the Amsterdam Congress - was made by the Italian group following the experiences in Italy and with the backing of Prof. Melani, who also later supported the improvement to real-time formula..

The memory of his childhood in Eritrea, (African sickness as he sometimes called it) led him to publish a newspaper to be spread among Italian people who had to leave Eritrea. He also arranged annual meetings for the same purpose The Journal of South Africa (which can be viewed at <http://www.lagazzettadelsudafrica.net/gli-asmarini-piangono-marcello-melani.html>) following the death of Prof. Melani is testament to the great work done by him and mentions Mai Tacli, the newspaper to which he contributed and which can be read online at <http://www.maitacli.it/>.

May he rest in peace!

gpt



Programme of the meetings of the Council and Professional reporters' section in Prague - 29th September - 2nd October

In our previous issue (e-news51) we announced the general programme of the Council and the IPRS meetings in Prague.

Below you can check the agenda of the Parliamentary and Other Professional reporters' section. Additional information, with the relevant costs, is available at www.intersteno.info or www.iprs-info.org.

Saturday, September 29th	
12.00 - 13.00 h	Lunch at Hotel DUO
IPRS meeting 1	
13.30 - 13.35 h	Welcoming remarks by Ms Rian Schwarz
13.35 - 14.35 h	Plenary introduction, discussion in subgroups, plenary conclusions
14.35 - 15.45 h	mediator: Mr Fabrizio Verruso "In what way does synchronizing a transcript to audio/video affect the editing of verbatim transcripts (false starts etc.) for reporters?" Plenary introduction, discussion in subgroups, plenary conclusions
	mediator: Ms Patti Calabro
	"Can Virtual Reporting* be a solution for freelance (court) reporters to get more jobs covered?"
	[*Virtual Reporting: access to a meeting, trial, arbitration, deposition, by seeing and hearing all participants via Skype or similar software, using an Apple iPad2/an iPhone 4 or a PC with a webcam].
19.45 h	Welcome dinner in Hotel DUO
Sunday, September 30th	
09.00 - 10.00 h	Plenary introduction, discussion in subgroups, plenary conclusions
	mediator: Ms Marlene Rijkse
	"In what way can hiring of external freelance reporting agencies/freelance reporters be a solution for parliamentary reporting offices to better cope with work peaks?"
10.00 - 11.00 h	Plenary introduction, discussion in subgroups, plenary conclusions
	mediator: Mr D'Arcy McPherson
	"Is it a reporter's job to prevent a speaker from looking ridiculous?"
11.00 - 12.00 h	Report of IPRS meetings Paris 2011
	Plenary discussion about further development of IPRS (website www.iprs-info-org ; IPRS-sessions at Intersteno Ghent 2013; questionnaire)

12.00 h 18.30 h	mediator: Ms Lida Horlings Lunch at Hotel DUO Dinner 'Celebration of 125 years of INTERSTENO' in the Castle Mělník.
Monday, October 1st	
IPRS meeting 3	
09.00 - 12.00 h	Visit to Czech Parliament
14.00 - 15.00 h	Lunch in Hotel DUO
15.00 h	Trip to Prague Venice and Prague Castle
Tuesday, October 2nd - Optional excursion	
09.00 h	Optional excursion to northern Bohemia --- CZK 1500
	Visiting the Glass-works and Glass museum in Nový Bor (Those who will not resist temptation can even learn the work of glassmakers and - using the blowing pipe - manufacture their first exclusive glass piece)
	Gorges in Hřensko
	Pravčická brána (the largest natural stone bridge on our continent and a natural monument of our country) and Falkon's Nest
	The price includes entrance tickets to the above places, transfer, lunch, afternoon coffee and cake.
19.00-20.00 h	Arrival in the Hotel DUO

A new future for Mr. Mark Golden (USA)

As many of you know, I am retiring from the National Court Reporters Association as of 1 June 2012. I look forward to a little bit of a rest, enjoying some time at home with my family, then re-entering the association workforce and taking on some new challenges. While this is a very exciting and positive change for me personally, it is with some sadness that I say goodbye to my Intersteno family. I will continue to follow the federation's activities and accomplishments from afar, and I know I have great friends and colleagues throughout the world, wherever my future travels might take me.

While I fade from the Intersteno scene I want to assure you that the National Court Reporters Association will remain a powerful presence within the Federation. Karen Yates, Virgene Biggers, Teri Gaudet, Patty Calabro will carry forward NCRA's involvement in Intersteno and the IPRS, and I promise you can look forward to a continued increase in American participation.

Good luck and Godspeed to Intersteno. I thank you for all you have done for me and I wish you continued success into the future.

mjg

NCRA Board selects Jim Cudahy as next executive director & CEO

This news appeared on NCRA web site on 15th May last.

The Board of Directors of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) announced today that it has appointed Jim Cudahy as its executive director and CEO, effective June 1.

"The Board of Directors is thrilled that Jim Cudahy has agreed to be our next executive director," said NCRA President R. Douglas Friend, RDR, CRR. "Having served as the chairman of the search committee that reviewed the credentials of nearly 100 association executives, it was clear both to the committee and to the Board that Jim's passion, expertise, and dedication to the profession of stenographic court reporting made him the ideal candidate to fill the position."



Cudahy, 44, has served for the past two-and-a-half years as NCRA's senior director of marketing and communications, a position from which he engineered several key initiatives, including a membership dialogue initiative known as "Writing Our Future," the development of a comprehensive marketing and communications plan for NCRA, and the introduction of a new enterprise website.

Cudahy has more than 20 years of experience in association management. This work includes nine years as vice-president of marketing and communications at CFA Institute in Charlottesville, Va. where he led a sustained campaign to build wider recognition and appreciation of the Chartered Financial Analyst™ (CFA®) credential among investment professionals and the general public on a global basis. Cudahy likewise was credited for leading an effort to change the association's name from "Association for Investment Management and Research" to "CFA Institute" in 2004 and subsequently launching a highly successful rebranding campaign.

It was as much the experience that Cudahy brought from his previous work as what he has accomplished at NCRA that made him the best choice, according to NCRA President-Elect Tami Smith, RPR, CPE, CSR. "From the outset, the search committee and the NCRA Board were looking for a fresh face, someone who would inject new life and new perspectives into the association as executive director," she said. "In Jim, we get the best of both worlds. He brings an entirely new perspective to us based on his extensive experience from outside of NCRA, but he likewise ascends to the position with first-hand familiarity of our members and knowledge of the opportunities and challenges that we face as a profession."

Cudahy indicated that his first order of business will be to engage directly with key stakeholder groups such as leaders of state court reporter associations, administrators of court reporting schools, and the representatives from the vendor community. "I need to extend my understanding of the issues that are directly affecting our profession," he said. "The best way to accomplish this is to sit down one-on-one with our members and others, look them in the eyes, and ask 'What's on

your mind?' It will be the answers to these questions that will help to inform the strategy we use in the months and years ahead to take stenographic court reporting, CART, and broadcast captioning to higher levels."

London 26 September, 1887 - The Birth of Intersteno

History is not only the experience of the past seen through a list of dates, names, events but is mainly a mirror of how people and organizations met what we generally call 'the progress' even when it is not always an improvement over the past.

The image of a mirror applies very well to the history of our Federation: the mirror has no brain, it only reflects what is placed in front of it, and during the long history many different kinds of persons, using different technologies and in many environments, were reflected.



Today's mirror reflects a situation different from that at the birth of our Federation, and we can better perceive the long and not always easy path followed in its long life by the many mirrors which are the reports that are prepared after nearly all our Congresses.

Monday 26th September 1887 marks the birth of our Federation, and in that year London was the most populous city on earth (4.5 millions people). Telephone connections were to be installed for communications inside the town and also electricity was made available for "offices and homes that saw themselves as the vanguard of a new age". In the same year the British Empire celebrated Victoria's Golden Jubilee and an American statistician, Herman Hollerith, received a patent for his punched card calculator: punched cards were used also on modern computers up to the 1960s.



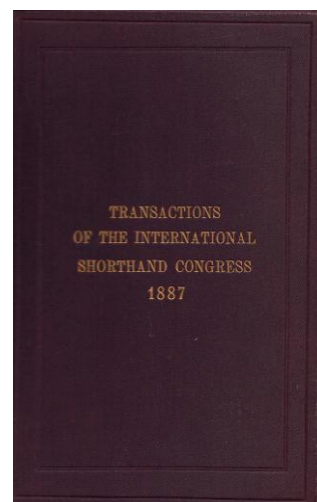
One of the very few photos of the Queen's anniversary

In our previous e-news issue I have given a rough idea of the life-style of those years, which were without Internet, radio, TV, voice recording or social networks.

Despite this lack of the facilities without which today we cannot function in our professional and social life, our ancient colleagues were able to organize a meeting which captured the interest of about 200 active persons (400 for the opening session), coming from very distant countries such as India and United States (no planes were on duty!) to discuss for five days, topics which are still of interest for us and produce a printed report of 460 pages, plus 45 pages of an appendix with the catalogue of the exhibitions of shorthand books, manuscripts, and typewriters.

Pitman & Sons, the company founded by the inventor of the world-renowned Pitman system for supporting teachers and students, sponsored this publication. Sir Isaac Pitman personally attended the Congress and he was celebrated at various times during the proceedings as well as being presented with a bust of himself.

All speeches were recorded with pen-shorthand, in a very accurate and vivid way. All of the discussions that followed were verbatim recorded.



This procedure was adopted again during the two formal meals of the Congress: the first took place on Tuesday at the Holborn Restaurant (24 pages are devoted to the speeches on this occasion) and the second was 'Luncheon', on Friday evening, at the Mansion house (the official residence of the Lord Major). Here the 8 speeches (one of which is in French) cover 12 pages. By reading them I was happy to find again confirmation of my old thought that

although stenographers must remain silent while taking down the speeches, they make up for this long time of silence when they are given the floor!

It's not easy to summarize in this e-news the many important topics, contributions and discussion at this Congress: a full list will be included in a final document about the history of our federation that I am going to arrange, but I give here a list of the main items.

- Parliamentary reporting in all countries
Tables with the results of investigations collected from many countries cover 16 pages, followed by 5 page dealing with the use of shorthand in the newspapers
- Historical section
- Phonography and phonetic subjects
- Legal and official shorthand writing
(tables with info from many countries are published in 18 pages)
- Shorthand in education
- Principles and structure of systems
- Reporting by machinery

- Shorthand for Women
- The typewriter
- Legal and official shorthand writing
- Shorthand in education

The principal actor at this Congress was Dr. John Westby-Gibson, who had the idea of organizing a world-wide meeting to mark the celebration of the tercentenary of the origination of modern shorthand by Timothy Bright in 1586-8, and the Jubilee of Mr Pitman's Phonography, which was first published in 1837.

Dr. Westby-Gibson was not by profession a reporter or shorthand writer, he was a Doctor of Law, public accountant and actuary, and a member of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS). He got the idea of organizing the Congress following his researches when collecting material for the 'History of shorthand' which had not been published at the time of the Congress. In the same year he released 'The bibliography of shorthand' printed by Pitman & Co. (244 pages). His idea dates back to 1885, when he prepared the constitution and bye-laws of the future congress, but it was only on 10th April 1886 that a decision was taken to have a committee to take over the organization of what was called the International Shorthand Congress..

One proposal of Dr Westby-Gibson was not approved on that occasion, namely "to enable the International Shorthand Congress, as a permanent association", but he reiterated his idea in a paper addressed to the Committee and distributed to all members and visitors at the Congress.

His words were "I see no reason, however, why something should not be done to set this scheme going for the benefit of Shorthand generally, so that in addition to the pleasure of the flying hours of a memorable week, we may be able to point to substantial and permanent services rendered to the Shorthand world for the years to come - as the result of this Congress"

What happened after his proposal is now clearly know to us, even if...

Gian Paolo Trivulzio (to be continued)

From Giuseppe Ravizza to Steve Jobs

Giuseppe Ravizza was the inventor and manufacturer of a writing machine,



for which he got a patent in 1855. He devoted 40 years of his life to creating 26 different models. He was born in Novara (a town about 40 kilometres from Milano, Italy) at that time in the Savoia Kingdom.

According to the official patent date Ravizza can be considered the first person

to effectively provide a solution to mechanical writing. His machine was named 'Cembalo Scrivano' i.e. 'Writing Harpsichord' because the keys were similar to those of a piano (harpsichord.)

He was born in 1811, so this year marks the two hundredth anniversary of his birth. The Municipality of Novara with the Chamber of Commerce and

the Tourism Office of the town, organized a celebration which included a competition using mechanical machines as well a meeting covering different topic by leading speakers. These included: "Communication technology' by Massimo Albertini, teacher of informatics, 'The dangers in surfing the net' by Rocco Pergola, police chief; "Newspapers and keyboards" by Dario Corradini, web editor in chief of 'La Stampa' the most important newspaper of Turin which has now (like other newspapers) a digital edition that can be accessed on the internet or on portable tablets.

A video prepared by Alessandro D'Avenia, a well-known teacher and blogger in Italy was screened. His contribution had the title ' Technology is like the hand: you can use it for giving a smack or to release a gentle caress. It is up to us to use it at its best"

The life and work of Giuseppe Ravizza was not widely known, so many other names were better known at international level. Full information about the life of Ravizza (who died in Livorno in 1885) was released by Giuseppe Aliprandi in several of his books and articles. He took on the task of publishing in 1955 (to mark the hundred years of the grant of the patent) the diary, written by Ravizza with main references to the improvements he did on his machines. These included the idea of the inking ribbon for neat printing of the characters in the mechanical machine - a feature now unknown to the digital generation but which was torture for the hands of many secretaries up to the '1970s.

One original model manufactured by Giuseppe Ravizza can be seen in the main room of the Novara town hall.

The meeting was not held in February, as announced on the postcard reproduced above, but on 20th April, since in February very bad weather conditions forced its cancellation.

Intersteno Usa group on Facebook



Linda Boyd Drake activated an Intersteno Usa group on Facebook about 2 months ago.

We thank Ms Drake for this activity which will surely improve the spread of information about our Federation. We hope that many citizen of the United States will join this group. Of course, friends from all over the world are kindly invited.

Competitions

Swiss shorthand competition in Gossau



From left side :Stefan Kampfer, Petra Dischinger and Boris Neubauer, German participants in these competitions.

66 competitors (34 from Switzerland and 22 from Germany) took part in the competitions that are organized every year by the Swiss Steno Association.

These competitions took place on Saturday April 28th and were devoted to traditional pen-shorthand writers, who can take down one or more of the 3 minutes dictations in 5 languages (German, English, Spanish, Italian and French.)

Comments and classifications list are available at www.steno.ch. The complete link is <http://www.steno.ch/0/index.php/veranstaltungen/berichte>.

Lipsia Open 2012

The annual Spring Open held in Leipzig has at least two unique features. First, this event, unlike almost all those organized by the German Stenographic Associations, its clubs and associations, is exclusively dedicate to shorthand competition, which has certain advantages, at least in the length of the prize-giving ceremony. On the other hand, it is the only competition in Germany which works in close association with the regulations of the World contest and thus opens the possibility for stenographers who do not speak the German language to compete.

At the Leipzig Open on 31 March 2012, 25 stenographer of both sexes came from all parts of Germany, from Delmenhorst in the north up to Stuttgart and Munich in the south, from Dortmund and Ettlingen in the west to Dresden in the east. In addition there were five Hungarians, two Czechs and one Austrian. The quantity of participants was numerically as strong as last year but there were some differences in the groups. Some competitors who had been to Leipzig several time, had to cancel their presence for various reasons. This was compensated for by the participation of

nine "newbies" who tried for the first time to write according to the "World wide championships' regulations."

It has become a tradition that many of the participants travel on Friday for an informal gathering in the Gustav-Adolf-Gewölbe, restaurant 'Alte Rathaus' (Old town hall). There had never before been so many persons. The rooms, reserved for 27 guests, were fully booked..

Perhaps the biggest drawback of the Leipzig Open is that the actual shorthand competition takes place in a vocational training centre which is about 8 km from the city centre, but there are favourable conditions. Dictation can be done in rooms with no disturbing sounds , which certainly is not the case everywhere. A professional and extremely dedicated concierge will assist local organizers with help and advice, and ensures, for example, that the school is warm and comfortable even after a sudden cold snap.

Prof. Dr. Reiner Kressmann was nominated as President of the International Jury and available to prepare and dictate the text. The fact that the text was a little harder this year than in 2011 meant that four participants were not able to receive any certificate.

Unfortunately the weather was not so kind to the stenographers in Leipzig. It was rainy, windy and cool. Nevertheless, the participants were able to reach, without problems and through many passages, the inner city where an evening event was arranged at the restaurant "Paulaner"..

The ceremony brought no real surprises. The top three were from the Hungarian parliamentary stenographers' team who succesfully transcribed the entire dictation up to the top speed of 463 syllables at the 15th minute. . Victory went to the vice-world champion of the Paris Congress, Erika Vicai who made two errors fewer than the world champion Zsuzsa Ferenc. Fourth place went to "local matador" Manfred Kehrner with 442 syllables, and the 5th Place to Olaf Rörtgen with 394 syllables. The results of all successful participants are shown in the attached list.

Concerning the outstanding results of the Hungarian lady competitors it is to be noted: Hungary has a long and successful history of stenographic development. The reduction that is possible in the shorthand system arises from the peculiarities of the Hungarian language which is well adapted (almost predestined) for stenographic excellence. The National Association of Hungarian stenographers and typewriters does an excellent job. The Hungarian Parliament appreciates the work of its internal stenographers and it was extremely pleased this year to meet all costs in connection with the participation of four employess in the Leipzig Open. The strong competition among this small group is inspiring and almost automatically leads to excellence.

Many of the participants have already announced that they want to return next year

Results of Leipzig Open on 31. March 2012

#	Surname	Name	Town/Ass.	Cat.	Min.	Penalties	Syllables
1	Vicai	Erika	Budapest	A	5	29	463
2	Ferenc	Zsuzsa	Budapest	A	5	31	463
3	Árvay Dani	Judit	Budapest	A	5	54	463
4	Kehrner	Manfred	Leipzig	A	4	38	442
5	Rörtgen	Olaf	Vest. StV.	B	7	57	394
6	Barna	Beáta	Budapest	B	6	38	367
7	Galus	Uwe	Delmenhort	B	5	29	344

8	Havlíková	Ivana	Prag	B	5	43	331
9	Wothe	Anita	Leipzig	B	4	30	322
10	Butter	Ralf	Dresdner StV.	B	3	23	300
11	Mahlke	Monika	Leipzig	C	7	14	278
12	Erhardt	Peter	Ettlingen	C	7	19	278
13	Jordan	Simone	Aue	C	7	26	278
14	Stolle	Renate	Delmenhorst	C	7	30	278
15	Freitag	Sven-Thorsten	Leipzig	C	7	33	278
16	Brieger	Jochen	Berlin 1949	C	7	35	278
17	Kürzel	Sigrid	Leipzig	C	7	44	278
18	Nittka	Dr. Petra	StZV München	C	6	20	256
19	Möller	Sabrina	Neukirchen	C	6	21	256
20	Masling	Veronika	Dortmund	C	6	27	256
21	Hendle	Marlies	Stuttgart	C	6	35	256
22	Haller	Oliver	Stuttgarter StV	C	5	17	236
22	Schimmel	Rosemarie	StV Leipzig	C	5	17	236
24	Wirsdörfer	Karin	Dortmund	C	4	12	217
25	Baláčková	Hanka	Prag	C	3	9	190
26	Hennig	Margret	Dresdner StV	C	3	18	198
27	Scherzer	Anneliese	Aue	C	3	19	198
28	Vartok	Edith	ÖSTV Wien	C	3	23	198
29	Kriesel	Ingeborg	Dortmund	C	3	24	198

4 transcripts did not succeed in meeting the requirements.

13-14 April 2012 - International competitions in The Hague and Dutch national competition in Nijkerk, The Netherlands



By Geert Bonte

On April 13th 2012, two international competitions were organized by the Dutch Interinfo Group at the premises of the House of Representatives in The Hague. The first competition was a correspondence and summary reporting competition, the second one a 30-minute text production competition. Both competitions were held according to Intersteno regulations and were coordinated by Mr. Jan den Holder. Both contests were attended by Dutch and Belgian competitors. Prior to the competitions all participants had the opportunity to take part in a guided tour of the Dutch House of Representatives.

One participant used a Velotype keyboard (a syllabic chord keyboard and a Dutch invention, by the way), while the others used standard PC keyboards (QWERTY for the Dutch, AZERTY for the Belgians).

After the final whistle the documents for the 30-minute text production competition were stored on USB sticks and then transmitted over the internet to Prague, where Helena Matoušková and Jaroslav Zaviačič processed the files using their special text evaluation software to compute the number of strokes and to detect the errors. The results were then transmitted back to The Hague, where, only moments later, the prize-giving ceremony took place.



In the correspondence and summary reporting competition, the Dutch candidates did better than their Belgian colleagues. Anja Stijnen won first place with a score of 284 points. Second place went to Daniel Tuijnman (278 points), and third place to Wouter Zwijnenburg (272 points). In the text production competition, the situation was reversed: here, the Belgian competitors scored the best results. Geert Bonte won first place with 12,458 points. Second place went to Danny Devriendt (11,062 points) and third place to Yannick Germonpré (10,860 points).

On the following day, April 14th 2012, the Dutch national competition in computer typing took place in Nijkerk. This competition, coordinated by Mr. Bernhard Boot, is intended primarily for students and young people, but others may participate as well. All Belgian participants who had competed in The Hague on the previous day were also participating in Nijkerk. The Dutch national competition in computer typing involves a 10-minute transcript, using the QMTT software, which shows the results on the computer screen immediately after the 10 minutes have elapsed.

A peculiarity of this contest is that all competitors are allowed not one, but two attempts. So they can type two 10-minute text transcripts, consisting of two different texts, and then the better of the two results is taken into account for the final classification.

In addition to Dutch, competitors could also, on a voluntary basis, participate in English.

Because this was a national competition competitors from other countries were welcome to participate but were ranked on a separate list.

The best Dutch performance was provided by Bianca Graafstra (with a typing speed of 612 strokes per minute), second place went to Andrea Schipper (585 strokes per minute) and third place to Willy Nooren (407 strokes per minute). For Belgium, Geert Bonte won first place (534 strokes per minute), second place went to Danny Devriendt (517 strokes per minute) and third place to Katja Germonpré (434 strokes per minute).

For a Video impression of the Dutch national competition in Nijkerk see it on Youtube: <http://youtu.be/hmUpya0fT5s>.

22nd and 23rd March - Slovakian Championship

On 22nd and 23rd March 2012, thanks to the cooperation between the State Vocational Education Institute of Bratislava and the Secondary Vocational Business and Services School of Prešov, the Championships of Slovakia for secondary school students in computer information processing became a memorable event for everyone involved.

The contest's attraction was heightened through the presence of the 9-times World Champion in text processing and the computer typewriting world record holder Ing. Helena Matoušková, as well as the Vice-President of the International Federation for information and communication processing (Intersteno) who was also World Vice-Champion in typewriting, Mr. Jaroslav Zaviačič.



Both were actively involved in correcting the texts submitted during the contest, using the special ZAV-JURY software. Slovakia's 41 most talented students joined the event. In an extraordinarily tough competition they delivered outstanding performances in two contest disciplines: "Computer Typewriting" and "Computer Text Editing". In the "Computer Typewriting" discipline, the winner was Petra Slúková from the Secondary Vocational Business and Hotel Services School in Zvolen, with a performance of 420.6 error-free characters per minute. In the "Computer Text Editing" discipline, the host school - the Secondary Vocational Business and Services School in Prešov - could rejoice thanks to the victory by its student Tomáš Motýľ; he collected 10,550 points in 10 minutes for the performed editing tasks.



Already the winners of both disciplines are working hard in preparation for the World Championships in computer information processing that will be held in 2013 in Belgium in the port and university city of Gent..

Events

Finnish shorthand Society celebrated its 140th anniversary on April 21st.



The Finnish Shorthand Society celebrated its 140th anniversary in Helsinki on Saturday April 21. The Society was founded in 1872, at the time when the Gabelsberger system was adapted for Finnish by Lars Neovius-Nevalinna, whose shorthand system has been used almost exclusively here. It was only in the 1870s that there was some competition from another system, Fabritius, but the Fabritius system never actually had an official printed textbook. It was considered lost until five years ago, when it was found in an archive and we made a small, slightly modernized edition to save it for the historic records.

These days the Society has approximately 150 members. Our printed shorthand newsletter *Pikakirjoituslehti* (four issues a year) has been published for 120 years, with text in both shorthand and longhand. At this 140th anniversary celebration, the Vice-President of the Society, Jari Niittuinperä, gave the main speech concerning the Society's history of international cooperation starting from the 1870s.

After the main speech our online shorthand course was presented by Keijo Kuusisto, one of the persons behind the course. It is still in so-called beta mode but will be fully operational later this year. For the last decades, there have been shorthand courses only in Helsinki, but shortly anyone interested will be able to learn it online anywhere in the world. We'll try to make examples with animated gif files, so that the student can see the movements of the pen and learn them right from the start.

Some years ago, we uploaded audio dictation files on our site to make them available for speed training. With free computer programs such as Audacity, it's very easy to speed up or slow down dictation files, using only one take of dictation for many different speeds. We shorthand enthusiasts may not be the most progressive regarding modern technology, but we really should make good use of it instead of running away from it and this is an example of a simple but effective tool.

At the Finnish Parliament shorthand has not been used for a few decades now. We work with audio recordings, although there are still a few reporters at the Parliament (including me and Teuvo) that know stenography.

Finland is a small country with a small language and machine shorthand has not entered the markets here. Neither has speech recognition. Actually there will be a Velotype presentation here in Helsinki in May that some of us at the Parliament will attend. It will be interesting to see if Velotype can gain a foothold here.

The anniversary celebrations were rounded off with a three-course dinner at a restaurant by the idyllic Töölönlahti bay in the centre of the city in cool but beautiful spring weather.

Niklas Varisto

June 21-23, 2012 = AAERT Conference in Philadelphia

AAERT is proudly looking forward to bringing its associates to the 19th Annual Conference for the Electronic Reporter and Transcriber professional. AAERT is striving to offer attendees more networking opportunities, interesting and useful sessions, while still affording participants time to unwind with friends and colleagues.



The motto of this year's convention is: Making Our History, One Step at a Time and the agenda includes many speeches on topics such as: Implementation and Management of a Successful Social Media Campaign - Use of Social media - Values of certification - Navigating AAERT Website - Pay Rates and Methods - Dealing with Difficult Content - and many others..

Full information is available at <http://www.aaert.org/?page=Schedule2012>

June 27-30, 2012 = NVRA Conference in San Antonio (Texas)



Nuts and Bolts of Court Reporting

Get the most out of your professional association

- Transcript production basics
- The power of professionalism
- Why you can't succeed without a network
- Introduction to CART & Captioning, Federal reporting and more!

Other hints: Ethics in Court Reporting, How to Prepare for a Real-time Job, CART: Recent Issues in the Post-Secondary Setting, Voice Macros, Your Favorites and Mine, and Other Tricks to Improve Accuracy

But do not forget **Eat, Drink & Be Merry - Top Five Things to Do on the River Walk!**

Full agenda and accommodation information at www.nvra.org.

August 9-12, 2012 = NCRA Conference in Philadelphia (Texas)

This Conference has a very crowded agenda of events, among which are the Speed and Real-time contests, certifications, vendors exhibitions and many others.

We take the liberty of reproducing here some thoughts from the welcome message of the President-elect, Ms. Tami Smith:

Dear Colleagues,

Think about this year's theme: Dream, Believe, Inspire.

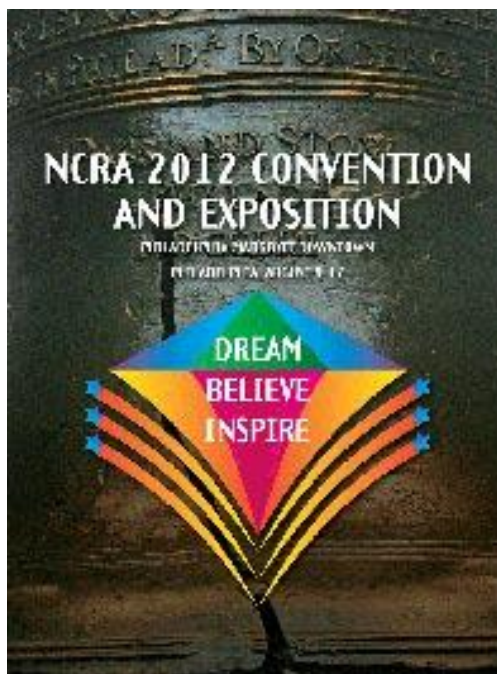
For each of you the journey to becoming a professional court reporter started with a DREAM. Now it's time to update that

dream and take another step on your journey: Find out where your dream can take you now. Transform that dream into reality in Philadelphia:

Your dream begins to take shape when you start to BELIEVE. Begin to build your confidence at the NCRA Convention to take that next step—to believe in yourself and in your ability. It's often said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Take the next step in your journey: to INSPIRE. You will draw inspiration on myriad levels at the NCRA Convention: by watching those court reporters who dare to participate in national speed competitions; by listening to the uplifting stories of those who have achieved extraordinary success in their businesses and careers; and, most importantly, by learning how you can become ambassadors—StenAdvocates—to promote our great profession to clients, students, and others within your community.

Please visit www.ncra.org



22nd April - Waltraut Dierks - Honorary President of the German Stenographic Association

On the occasion of the members' meeting of the German Stenographic Association on April 22nd, there were elections for the Board. President is Hannelore Schindelasch, Vice President Jochen Schönfeld and Secretary Andrea Wilke,



At the same meeting, Waltraut Dierks, President of the Intersteno group in Germany, was elected Honorary President after many years as Vice-President of this organization.

What's New

NCRA Secures Nearly \$1 million in Allocated Federal Funding for Real-time Education

As a result of NCRA's ongoing efforts to secure federal funding for court reporting education, the Department of Education has allocated \$990,000 for NCRA's "Real-time Writers" act in the current fiscal year. That means roughly \$1 million in grants is available immediately for schools that can demonstrate they have the capability to train and produce real-time writers. Court reporting programmes have one month to submit applications (by August 2nd) to receive consideration for funding.

NCRA has already mobilized an effort to work with schools to alert them to this development and will guide them in their efforts. This is a major victory for the court reporting profession and a tribute to the benefits of NCRA exerting a sustained legislative relations effort on behalf of its membership.

iTEC in Turkey: educational technology with real-world applications



Determined to improve access to technology in Turkish schools, the Ministry of Education is carrying out a major initiative, FATIH, which will promote efficient use of ICT tools in teaching environments. To this end, the Ministry of Education is also implementing the iTEC project to expand the efficient

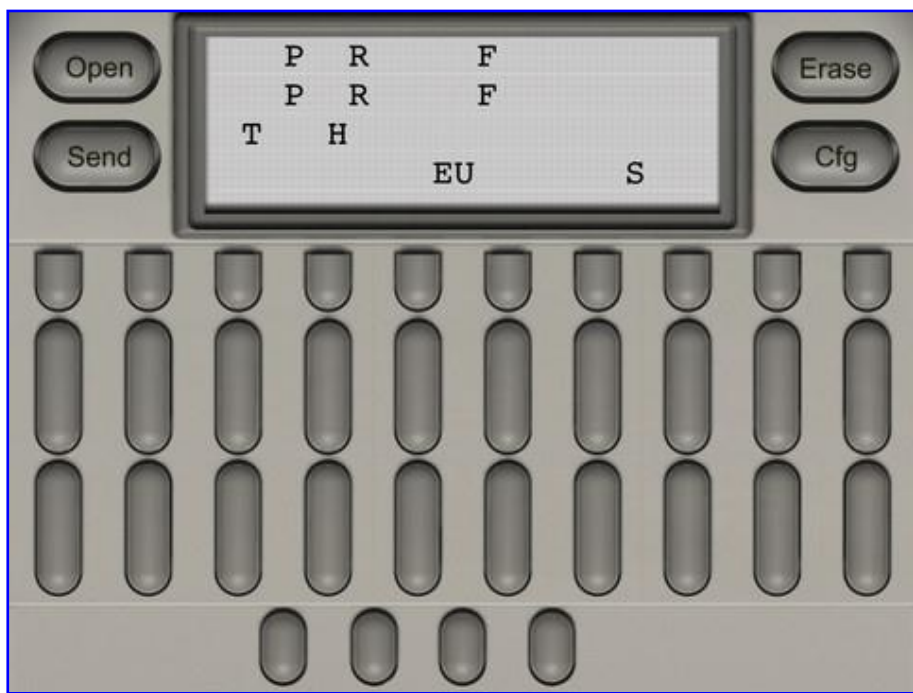
use of ICT in Turkish schools.

The ongoing FATIH projects include the provision of tablet computers and smart boards in 42,000 schools across the country, and the creation of an educational resource portal, the EBA, that will provide teaching materials and community support for 770,000 teachers and 17 million

students. These initiatives provide a good basis upon which to carry out projects such as iTEC.

The iTEC project in Turkey has been rolled out in 42 classes in 29 different schools. iTEC is introduced to the school curriculum through the use of learning stories - flexible frameworks that facilitate the use of technology-enhanced learning activities in classroom environments. In Turkey, learning stories have been implemented successfully in teaching English, science, Turkish, mathematics, and biology and many other subjects.

Stenotype on Ipad



Stenotype is a shorthand machine software application designed for iPad devices. It can be used as an alternative to physical stenotype machines. The iStenotype application has a full screen keyboard of stenotype with display and four additional functional buttons. On the display the current steno document is printed. You can easily scroll up and down and remove selected rows by simple finger sliding on the row. Functional keys were designed for configuration, quick sending of email with current steno work, loading or creating new steno and for removing chords as an alternative of sliding of a finger.

From the application you can export created documents by sending them via email or access directly through your desktop computer.

Additional information can be found at
<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/istenotype/id422100154?mt=8>

It requires iOS 3.2 or later.

Rules for using computer for transcribing shorthand dictations at the German national Championships.

The following information is taken from
<http://www.stenografenbund.de/index.php?id=116>

This year for the first time it will be possible for the transcripts to be released on notebook at the the Stenocompetitions of the German

Contests. In order to effectively prevent any forbidden help (audio recording, wireless communication with other competitors, digital dictionary etc.) all competitors must participate using an operating system supplied by DStb on CD-ROM or USB-Stick.

Please note the following instructions:

- Competitors transcribing by handwriting or with PC will work in separate rooms. Therefore, if necessary, they must change the room after dictation.
- Competitors must use a laptop or notebook working with batteries, since no power connection is supplied. The batteries must be charged and able to work for the time needed.
- The maximum time allowed for transcription is reduced by a third
- No printer is needed. The texts will be saved on a USB_stick and will be printed at the competition office.
- Proofreading is mandatory for all participants
- Those who are registered for transcription using a PC can still decide on the spot, to transcribe with handwriting, for example, if there are technical problems.
- During the competition there will be CD-ROM or USB_sticks available for all competitors who registered for transcription with PC. Only these materials (technologically identical but visually distinguishable) must be used. The Jury members will maintain the necessary control.
- It is possible to download the software mentioned here at the web page shown at the beginning of this message.
- Technical questions can be submitted by e-mail at the following address: jochen.schoenfeld@stenografenbund.de.

Subtitles on Webradio

Until now subtitling has been applied to video and films to enable hard of hearing persons to better understand what is happening on the screen.

A project is now under development aimed at producing subtitles for webradio transmissions. This project is carried out by the non-profit organisation On A.I.R. for webradio of Sardinia (Italy). You can check it at www.respeakingonair.org.

Subtitles are produced with respeaking, i.e. with speech recognition of the words pronounced by a reporter who listens to the radio transmission. Dr. Carlo Eugeni, who is a member of our Scientific and Education Committee is involved in this project.

Vocal memory - insert and retrieve notes on your portable phone.

Combining speech recognition technology and advanced logics of word prediction, this application is able to keep recordings of notes and messages that are dictated to your portable phone, enabling easy retrieval of recordings simply using your voice.



*Synthema
Vocal Memory*

You can for, example, insert all information for a meeting, including date and time as well as the agenda and the software will recall you in time or

you can search for the information you have recorded, simply indicating the possible event, or the date you want to search. This application is available for phones using the Android operating systems and at the moment it is conceived and tested for the Italian language only.

A demo of the features is available at http://youtu.be/-QAxNM_xlU

Is stenography a dying art'?

On 27th April, in a BBC news item with the same title, Chris Summers announced that court stenographers are being phased out in England and Wales with the last contract at the Old Bailey set to expire in March 2012.

Besides giving information about the technique of steno machines, the reporter also stated: " The advent of high-quality audio recordings and digital storage has inevitably cast a shadow over court stenography. The Ministry of Justice has decided to dispense with stenographers and replace them with a Digital Audio Recording and Transcription and Storage (Darts) service. It believes the new system will be cheaper and deliver good results."

But stenographers don't believe it's a wise decision.

"The strength of stenography is that if you are listening to something on a tape it's hard to distinguish tiny nuances. Sometimes you need to almost lip-read. Sometimes there is patois or slang or you need to know the context of the case, Sally Lines, a court stenographer at the Old Bailey says.

Some judges are believed to be unhappy with the changes too but so far none has put their head above the parapet..

You can read the whole article at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-13035979>

n.b. It is to be noted that Stenography and stenographer refer to steno machines (like Stenograph, Velotype, etc.), not to hand stenography (shorthand).

Many thanks to Peter Walker for the revision of this text.

This newsletter is published under the responsibility of the Board of the International Federation for Information and Communication Processing - Intersteno - and sent to all e-mail addresses of persons participating in the work of the members of Intersteno known to the Board. Contributions to the newsletter can be sent using the form on the web site www.intersteno.org. Publication will take place at the discretion of the Board. Text with signature could not reflect the official position of the Board of Intersteno, but only the one of the writer.

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