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PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK GARCIA

**JATC Apprentices from Local 332 practice their fire alarm skills**

## Practice Makes Perfect For Fire Alarm Certification

It's time to practice for your VDV fire alarm certification test! The pre-test has been posted at [www.evtestcenter.com](http://www.evtestcenter.com). You can take the on-line pretest as many times as you like to achieve the required score of over 75%. Certification for the fire alarm test must be completed by Jan 1, 2005.

Vince Cosentino, Regional Training Director of the Northern California Sound & Communication Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee, said that NORCAL posted the practice test in May. Any sound and communication Apprentice or Installer can get on-line by obtaining the passwords and ID from their JATC instructor or through their local. The pre-test is available without charge.

Cosentino said that all of the locals are also implementing pre-certification testing as course subject material over the next few months to prepare everyone for the January deadline. He added that NORCAL will provide a similar website for the State VDV certification test when a date is set.

The state certification exam for fire/life safety technician is now being offered at the San Francisco testing site. There are 50 multiple choice questions on the computerized fire/life safety technician exam, with a two hour time limit to complete the test.

The fire/life safety test covers principles, testing and certification of systems, fundamentals, fire detection and alarm systems, grounding and bonding applications, conductors and cables, NFPA-72 and NEC, and low-voltage circuits and equipment.

## Two Members Appointed To Health and Welfare Trust

For the first time, sound and communication members are sitting on the Health and Welfare Trust Committee. Mike Mowrey, International Vice President for IBEW's 9th district, recently appointed Scott Stephan from Local 302 and Luis Guittierrez from Local 595 as co-trustees to the committee.

"Sound and communication members wanted their voice to be heard on the trust," said Bob Tragni, Business Manager for Local 332. "They wanted to give input to the committee about what was going on out in the field with the membership."

### Providing more insight

Tragni said that the two new trustees will provide more insight to the Committee about the health needs of sound and communications members. "They can also help the membership understand what has happened in health care over the last few years, and why everything has escalated in price," he said.

Scott and Luis join six other committee members, including Chair John O'Rourke, Business Manager of Local 6; Dan Chivello, Assistant Business Manager from Local 595; Tragni; Secretary Doug Lung, Santa Clara NECA; Ben Wadsworth, River City Communications; and Rick Jensen, J.N. Electric.



A publication of the National Electrical Contractors Association and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers of Northern California.

## How to Download and Use New VDV Logo

The VDV brand is now available for use on your marketing and communications materials. Visit [www.norcalvdv.org](http://www.norcalvdv.org) and click on "The VDV Brand" to download the logo. Your use of the VDV brand will help it grow in recognition and identify you as a qualified member of the Sound and Communications industry.

# Marketing Efforts Increase Union Visibility

## The VOICE

The NORCAL VDV Labor Management Cooperation Committee has launched a full-scale marketing effort this year to heighten the visibility of union contractors within the VDV sector. In addition to this newsletter, aimed to inform contractors and technicians, an 8 page full color newsletter called The Voice will be published and mailed three times a year, with the first issue appearing in August 2004.

The Voice will promote union projects and the advantages of using an IBEW/NECA contractor, as well as technical advancements in the industry. Its goal is to gain increased visibility and new business for NORCAL VDV contractors. With a circulation of about 22,000, The Voice will be distributed to corporations, building owners, electrical and telecomm engineers, facility managers, locals and contractors.



## VDV's award winning website

Extensive information regarding the rapidly-changing VDV industry is available at [www.norcalvdv.org](http://www.norcalvdv.org). Special sections are available for IBEW members, customers, IBEW members, and those interested in a career as a union technician. Other features include a contractor directory, an overview of the training program, a glossary of industry terms, an overview of available services, and an industry outlook.

Established in 2002, the website, [www.norcalvdv.org](http://www.norcalvdv.org) is sponsored by the Labor Management Cooperation Committee (LMCC) of Northern California. The website received a 2002 Crystal Award of Excellence from the Communicator Awards, an international competition that recognizes outstanding work in the communications field.

# 180 Attend LMCC Golf Tournament

If your golf game wasn't that good, it didn't matter! You had a good time and probably won something in the raffle!

The annual LMCC Sound and Communications Industry Golf Tournament was held on April 8 at Cinnabar Hills Golf Club in San Jose. About 180 contractors and employees in the Northern California Sound and Communications industry enjoyed a day on the links, along with lunch, cocktails, and a bar-beque dinner.

Great door prizes were raffled off at the end of the day, and a lot of attendees found themselves winners—if not on the links, then by receiving one of the gifts donated through the raffle. Everyone also received a beautiful check in gift.

The golf tournament, organized by the Northern California Labor Management Cooperation Committee, creates



**A foursome takes a break from play at the Cinnabar Hills Golf Club**

an opportunity for members of Labor and Management to get to know each other. It also serves to promote the interests of the Sound and Communications industry with vendors and others.

Members of the LMCC Sound and Communications Committee

include: Bruce Baxter, Doug Lung, John O'Rourke, Chris Payne, Bob Tragni, and Michael Yarbrough.

Thank you to our sponsors for making this a hugely successful event!

# Respect: How to Give and Get It On The Job

R-E-S-P-E-C-T. Aretha Franklin sang about it and Otis Redding wrote about it. But how do you get it—or give it on the job?

Bringing respect into the workplace is part of the professionalism that helps set union workers apart from their non-union counterparts. Treating everyone with respect on the job, from co-workers to foremen to managers is key to having satisfied customers and to being treated with respect yourself, says Bob Tragni, Business Manager for Local 332.

"You may meet people at the workplace in management or supervision that you don't like, but you have to treat them with respect because of their position," said Tragni. "They are professionals who usually have extensive backgrounds and years of experience, and know what they are doing. You

have to respect that and do what they are telling you to do."

Tragni says that it's OK to disagree with someone in a higher position at the workplace as long as you communicate your concerns with respect. "Give a good explanation of why something should be done differently and then give the person a chance to respond," Tragni says.

"You can say, 'I understand what you are telling me to do, but if you look at this situation, wouldn't it be better to do it this way?'"

Tragni adds that it's also important to treat co-workers with respect. "If you feel that are in the wrong, pull them aside and talk to them one-on-one, not in front of a group of people," he said. "Look at them as being equal with yourself."

## The Industry's 'Top Nine' Checklist for Respect on the Job:

1. Earn respect by being good at your job.
2. Speak in a professional manner, without angry tones or vulgar language.
3. Don't yell or raise your voice if you are working in the plant. If you are on a construction site, use a walkie talkie system to communicate with co-workers.
4. Never use alcohol or drugs at the workplace.
5. Follow the directions you are given. If you believe the directions are wrong, politely explain why you think the directions won't work.
6. If you are sick, notify the foreman and the shop that you won't be there. Give as much notice as possible so that you don't affect the job schedule.
7. Respect the onsite supervisor, foreman, or job superintendent. Do what they ask you to do.
8. Respect your co-workers. If you believe they are wrong about something, talk with them one-on-one, not in front of the group.
9. Dress appropriately and use common courtesy.



## Save On Prescriptions By Going Generic!

The high cost of prescription drugs is one of the main reasons that health and welfare fund costs have increased in recent years. If you would like to lower your prescription drug costs and help the trust contain cost as well, consider using generic drugs as an alternative to brand name drugs. On average, a generic drug costs 50% less than a brand-name drug.

Many popular brand name drugs have currently lost the protection of their patent, because it has expired. This means that a generic drug may be available for the prescriptions that you use. Generic drugs are therapeutically equivalent to the brand name drug, and they are an excellent way to save money. Generic drugs cost less than brand-name drug because the companies that make them do not have to recover the costs of research and development.

Generic drugs are widely recognized as having the same quality that brand medicines have. By law, they must have the same active ingredient as the comparable brand-name drug. If you take a generic drug, you can expect to have the same result as with a brand-name drug. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reviews and approves generic drugs before they are made available to the public.

How can you make sure you get a generic drug? The next time your doctor writes a prescription, ask if generic is available to help save money. When you take your prescription to a pharmacy, ask the pharmacist for a generic drug.

Thank you for helping your trust contain costs!

## NORCAL VDV Makes Up 10% Of All U.S. Technicians!

*NORCAL VDV can pat itself on the back! With 1600 to 1800 Sound and Communications/VDV workers, NORCAL VDV can claim 10% of the total number of workers in the country.*

*A 2003 NJATC survey, just published in April, 2004, counts 18,067 VDV workers nationally and 1600 to 1800 in Northern California. NORCAL instructors also make up 10% of the total teaching force nationally. The survey documented 346 telecommunications instructors throughout the country with 36 in Northern California. Take a bow, NORCAL!!*

## Your Trust Fund Important Phone Numbers

Questions about eligibility for coverage, premiums, reserve accounts and info booklets, call:

**United Administrative Services**  
408-288-4452  
Toll-Free 800-541-8059

### Trust Self-Funded Medical Plan Trust Dental Plan

Questions about claim payment, claim forms and benefit info:  
408-288-4481  
Toll-Free 800-541-8059

### Blue Cross PPO

www.bluecrossca.com  
To locate a participating preferred provider physician, clinic, or hospital:  
408-288-4452 or 800-541-8059  
Refer to Group # 170016M001

### Interplan/DentInex Dental PPO

www.interplancorp.com  
To locate a participating preferred provider dentist:  
Toll-Free 800-444-4036

### Kaiser Permanente

www.kaiserpermanente.org  
Questions about benefit info and ID Cards:  
Toll-Free 800-464-4000  
Refer to Group # 919

### Health Net www.health.net

Questions about benefit info and ID Cards:  
Toll-Free 800-522-0088  
Refer to Group # 57845A

### PacifiCare

www.pacificare.com  
Questions about benefit info and ID Cards:  
Toll-Free 800-624-8822  
Refer to Group # 402457

### PacifiCare Behavioral Health

www.pbhi.com  
Questions about mental health benefits or the member assistance program: 877-225-2267  
Group # 10000824-0001, 0002

### Vision Service Plan

www.vsp.com  
Questions about vision benefits and vision claims or to request a Vision Plan Provider Directory:  
Toll-Free 800-877-7195

To order additional copies  
of The Data contact  
laura@ahcommunications.com

# Check in on Your Pension Plan

## Want to know how your pension plan is doing?

A lot of it depends on you. Each NORCAL Sound and Communications member that is vested in the pension plan (see chart) self-directs the investment of their individual account. Members can choose from 23 different investment accounts in which their

account is invested.

These accounts range from conservative investments, such as money market or fixed income accounts to more aggressive investments, such as international stock accounts.

Members can obtain investment

performance information on each of the 23 investments accounts anytime at the home page, [www.principal.com](http://www.principal.com), or six days a week by telephone at 1-800-547-7754.

We will feature more on your pension plan in the next issue!

### I.B.E.W. District No. 9 Pension Plan - Quick Facts

<b>Plan Name</b>	I.B.E.W. District No. 9 Pension Plan
<b>Plan Type</b>	Defined contribution (money purchase) pension plan with participant-directed investment accounts
<b>Plan Started</b>	March 1, 1968
<b>Number of Participants</b>	1,500 in NORCAL Sound and Communications (Total participants include 21,481 as of 3-31-2004)
<b>Total Plan Assets</b>	\$273,526, 051 as of 3-31-2004
<b>Plan Administrator</b>	Joseph H. Herrle & Associates, Inc., Portland, Oregon 1-800-804-2385
<b>Vesting</b>	All participants are 100% vested with first dollar of contributions
<b>Investment Accounts</b>	23 investment accounts, of which 6 are lifestyle pre-designed accounts
<b>Retirement Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Normal retirement- Age 62</li><li>• Early Retirement-Age 55 or older</li><li>• Disability Retirement (Requires Social Security Disability Award)</li><li>• Death of the Participant</li><li>• No longer Working in the Industry in District 9</li></ul>
<b>Retirement Distribution</b>	Lump sum cash distribution
<b>Options</b>	Direct rollover to another qualified pension plan or IRA 6 different annuity options (No loads, commissions, or fees)
<b>Your Account Information</b>	Call 1-800-547-7754, follow the prompts. Have your social security number and PIN ready.  Go to: <a href="http://www.principal.com">www.principal.com</a> . Click on the login button, choose personal login from the list of options, and then enter your ID and PIN.

**IMPORTANT:** Inform the Plan Administrator if you change address. Failure to do so may result in address search charges to your account.

# norcalvdv.org



SOUND AND  
COMMUNICATIONS  
*of Northern California*