



**VN Services®**  
A Project Support Company

# Quarterly

8132 Mayfield Road  
Chesterland, OH 44026

Phone 440.729.0514  
Fax 440.729.0804

mail@vn-services.com  
www.vn-services.com

Cleveland | Detroit | Pittsburgh | Chicago | Kansas City | Baltimore | Nashville

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## Articles Of Interest

**"Critics Can't Find the Logic in Many of Today's CPM Schedules" Engineering News-Record, May 26, 2003**

The ENR cover article cited the pros and cons of today's Critical Path Method scheduling. One point that the article makes is that, with the advent of the PC and new scheduling software that is relatively inexpensive and easy to learn, many schedulers can create impressive-looking schedules without having proper training. To make matters worse, schedules may be created without proper logic ties and they may be intentionally manipulated to give a desired, but inaccurate representation.

According to the article, "[Experts] see abuses of powerful software to produce badly flawed or deliberately deceptive schedules that look

good but lack mathematical coherence or common sense about the way the industry works. The result is confusion, delayed projects and lawsuits." CPM pioneer, James J. O'Brien states, "Polished, easy-to-read graphics are being emphasized over process integrity." In the article, it is suggested that schedulers work together with the project staff to get the right level of detail for the project. Primavera's President, Richard K. Faris closes the article by stating, "We have the responsibility to provide a tool that provides correct answers." In short, a CPM schedule and the software to produce it can be a powerful tool; but like all tools, it is only as good as the person using it.

## Making a Difference

Garfield Heights Superintendent, Ronald L. Victor is the recipient of the 2003 Ohio Superintendent Outstanding Performance Award from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation. This award is one of the highest honors for an educator and recognizes excellence in public school district administration. The award includes funds of \$20,000. Mr. Victor has decided to apply these funds to Leadership Garfield Heights, an educational and civic partnership program for

the improvement of the Garfield Heights City Schools. The program will have its next leadership conference from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on October 10, 2003 at the Jennings Center at 10204 Granger Rd. We would like to congratulate Mr. Victor on this well deserved honor.

*"Superintendent Wins Outstanding Performance Award", Garfield Heights Community School Report, June 2003*

## Staying Out of Trouble

The use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) techniques has become increasingly popular and valuable in the construction industry. Mediation and arbitration are more time and cost effective than litigation. The proceedings are private, confidential, and less adversarial, helping the parties to maintain a working relationship.

Mediation calls for parties to work together with a neutral facilitator to assist them in reaching a settlement. The mediator's role is one of an advisor, and resolution rests with the parties involved. Mediation is a very successful technique, with more than 85% of cases at the American Arbitration Association resulting in settlement. Arbitration is the submission of a dispute to impartial person(s) for a final and binding decision. The parties may control the range of issues, the scope of relief awarded, along with other procedural aspects through contractual provisions. Governed by the Federal Arbitration Act or state arbitration laws, arbitration agreements

and awards are legally binding and enforceable in virtually every jurisdiction.

There are a number of other non-binding ADR techniques that are useful in resolving conflicts. For example, partnering brings together all parties prior to the start of a project in order to avoid disputes once the work gets underway. Dispute review boards (DRBs) are another ADR tool. A DRB is a three member panel selected by the owner and contractors after the contract is awarded, but prior to any dispute in order to offer immediate on-site solutions to resolve disputes before they get out of hand.

Regardless of the technique employed, ADR offers tremendous benefits to the construction industry. It provides huge cost and time savings, and most importantly, ADR can keep parties out of court and on the job.

*"Resolving Construction Disputes Outside the Courtroom" Katherine Burton, American Arbitration Association*



Is Now



## Allow Us To Introduce

**Tom Williams**

A native of the Cleveland area, Tom joined VN Services as V.P., Sales and Marketing with over 13 years of experience. He has a B.S. in Marketing from Miami University and an MBA in Executive Management from Baldwin-Wallace College.



Among his responsibilities, Tom develops our marketing plan, presentations, direct mail program, newsletter, brochures, information booklets, web site, promotional items, and all additional sales and marketing material. When he is not riding his motorcycle, Tom is at home in Chesterland, Ohio with his wife Carrie and their 160 lb. Mastiff, Willie.

VN Services Quarterly is a publication for our employees, clients and friends with a circulation in excess of 2,500.

To find out more about us, visit our website at [www.vn-services.com](http://www.vn-services.com), or call (440) 729-0514.

We would like to hear from you. To submit article suggestions, contact Tom Williams at Ext.28

## Lending a Helping Hand

Bob Vail, President of VN Services, continues to support the construction industry by participating in presentations and seminars. Most recently, he gave a seminar in Cleveland, OH on May 22nd titled "The Fundamentals of Successful Construction Projects in Ohio." Bob was part of a panel of experts, including: Barry J. Miller from Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP; Henry I. Reder A.I.A., Esq.; and Thomas D. Robinson from Jance Construction LLC. Bob's portion of the presentation focused on methods for monitoring projects. He brought specific attention to the variables of project cost, time and quality, and the issues related to them. We will keep you apprised of future presentations.

## Serving Up Success

VN Services' office manager, Angela Scalera, handles all of our administrative needs along with being a restaurateur and world traveler. Angela's customer service experience at GE Credit Co. and Charter One Bank combined with her pleasant voice and helpful attitude provide a tremendous asset to VN Services. Angela can answer your questions about VN Services, tell you when to visit Europe, and where to get the best Dover Sole in the tri-state area.



## Recent Projects

**Harding Elementary School**  
Heery International

**Seminar**  
AIA Dayton

**East Palestine High School**  
Heery International

**Taft Elementary School**  
Heery International

**Top Gun Construction Claims**  
Bricker & Eckler

**Lorman Seminar**  
Detroit

**Seminar:**  
**Construction Project Documents**  
ASA Chicago

**East Palestine Middle School**  
Heery International

## "Quote" of Note

*"The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can't find them, make them"*  
— George Bernard Shaw

### From the President's Desk

Our growth has caused me to reflect on the development of VN Services. Over the last twenty years, we have grown from a one-man operation into a firm doing business in over 20 states. The number of services and how they are provided has changed as well. The one constant has been our desire to meet the client's needs. We have been blessed with wonderful customers and excellent employees. Our reputation is a testament to the commitment of our staff, and as we continue to grow, I can only imagine the wonderful opportunities the future will present.  
— Robert Vail

Editor:  
Robert Vail  
Managing Editor:  
Tom Williams  
Contributors:  
Luke Andrews  
Richard Leach  
Tucker Elliott  
Pat Dunn  
Dennis Hoover  
Mark Cummings  
Angela Scalera  
Becky Reed

National Headquarters  
8132 Mayfield Road  
Chesterland, OH 44026  
www.vn-services.com