



**VN Services®**  
A Project Support Company

# Quarterly

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## Articles Of Interest

**Guidelines for a Successful Construction Project. 2003, Associated General Contractors of America / American Subcontractors Association / Associated Specialty Contractors**

“The Guidelines for a Successful Construction Project” is a joint venture by the above parties to work together to develop, maintain, and promote a comprehensive set of best practices for undertaking a construction project. The document contains over sixty pages of valuable information on every step of the project from design and bidding to project execution and closeout. It even includes samples of various project forms that can be very helpful.

Along with providing useful information to the construction industry, the guidelines will hopefully encourage participants to take a systematic and consistent approach to their projects and all of its details. As a result, project concerns can be addressed and issues can be ironed out before they impact the project. Information regarding these guidelines is readily available at the AGC website ([www.agc.com](http://www.agc.com)). Keep your eyes open for specific references to the guidelines in future newsletters.

## Reverse Auctions

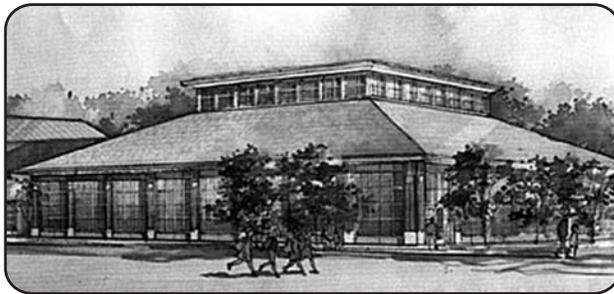
**“Corps of Engineers Study Downplays Reverse Auctions” Engineering News-Record, August 9, 2004**

In a recent article in ENR, the Army Corps of Engineers is cited as stating that reverse auctioning as a form of procurement provides no factual, significant or marginal savings over the sealed bid process. The Corps’ report concludes that reverse auctioning is neither an efficient nor effective method to procure construction services. The article points out two short comings with the process in general. First, it allows for “bid gaming” where bidders

try to determine how low they have to go rather than how low they can afford to go. Second, they address the fact that construction projects do not lend themselves to reverse auctioning because they are rarely similar, let alone the same. The exception may be in the case of big box stores. The main emphasis of the article is that the process is not appropriate for construction services procurement.

## Developing Healthy Bodies As Well As Minds

Ohio's oldest independent preparatory school for girls, Hathaway Brown, selected VN Services to provide owner's representation services on the construction of their new Aquatic Center. The architectural firms for the new center were Graham Gund



Architects and Westlake Reed Leskosky. Complementing their educational mission, the new state-of-the-art 18,000 square foot Aquatic Center will expand opportunities for fitness and health, as well as team and individual sports, at Hathaway Brown School.

## Gone But Not Forgotten

Ann Billak passed away on July 15th of this year after a lengthy battle with cancer. It is with great appreciation that we look back on her life and accomplishments. Aside from performing her duties as the Director of Public Relations for the Master Builder's Association in Pittsburgh for the last 22 years, Ann founded

the local chapter of Rebuilding Together in 1993, was an active NAWIC member and received the Jefferson Award for community service in 2001 and was also Tucker Elliott's cousin. A tremendous asset to the construction industry, she will be remembered fondly and missed terribly by all who knew her.



## Allow Us To Introduce Tucker Elliott

Tucker is VN Service's Vice President in charge of dispute resolution and project controls. He earned his B.S. in Civil Engineering from Case Western Reserve University. Since then he has spent the last twenty four years involved with the construction industry, the last six with VN Services. Tucker has worked on more than 100 projects in twenty states and five countries. These projects have ranged in value from \$30,000 to \$6 billion.



When he isn't busy overseeing our dispute resolution and claim avoidance process, Tucker enjoys working out with his wife Lisa and spending time at their cottage in Canada. While his work ethic and expertise have been a tremendous asset to VN Services, it has been his personality and offbeat sense of humor that have been most appreciated by his colleagues.

## From the President's Desk

### Project Management 101



Whether completing a project successfully or resolving a dispute, communication is the key. Too often we either don't communicate at all, or ineffectively at best. We assume the information conveyed is received and understood as intended.

Often it is not. Take the time to make sure that everyone is on the same page and knows exactly what is both required and expected. Address issues as they arise, before they impact the project. Listen to all parties involved. Good communication is not about making others see things your way; it is about understanding the best way to do things.

*Robert H. Vail*

## Recent Projects

### Speelman Electric

University of Akron Student Affairs, OH

### Jimenez Construction

Sinai Education Campus, MI

### RJ Martin Electrical

SureTrak Training, OH

### DeMattia Group

General Dynamics, MI

### Heery International

West Elementary, OH

### Lorman

Fundamentals of Construction Contracts, PA

### Great Lakes Mechanical

Forensic Psychiatry, MI

### Lorman

Documentation & Scheduling Seminar, MI

### AD Jacobson

Claim Avoidance Seminar, KS

### Hathaway Brown

Aquatic Center

### Panzica

Lorain Police Dept.

### Fairmount Properties

First & Main

## “Quote” of Note

*“One of the secrets of life is to make stepping stones out of stumbling blocks.”*

*— Jack Penn*

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

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