

VPEA Reporter

The Virginia Professional Electronics Association Newsletter

Editor-in-Chief Peter Florance CET/CSM

VPEA Reporter - Oct. Nov. Dec. 2005

Assistant Editor Wallace Harrison, NHH

Top Tech Training; Interaction With Mfrs. Highlight 2006 Conference

VPEA Convention in Va. Beach, June 10-12 Celebrates 51 Years of Success Through Embracing Change.

The 2006 Mid-Atlantic Conference will be held June 9-11, 2006 at the scenic and award-winning Virginia Beach Resort Hotel (VBRH). It is situated on the sandy shore of Chesapeake Bay in Virginia Beach, just minutes from the Norfolk International Airport. The primary thrust of the annual Mid-Atlantic Conference has always been about providing training to technicians in the eastern part of the United States. That's remains true, but this year it offers so much more. In addition to more tech sessions, there are great profit-enhancing opportunities as well.

TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE

Each year, the best trainers from the top manufacturers come to the Conference to teach attending technicians how to understand

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Meeting the Right Challenge – Part 2

“I, for one, fully support the concept of keeping service business where it belongs: in the capable hands of Independent Service.”

By Walt Herrin, Dir, National Service, Hitachi America Ltd., Home Electronics Div.



(Editor's Note: The following is the second of two parts edited from a speech delivered by Mr. Herrin at the 50th VPEA Convention and 15th Annual Mid-Atlantic Conference, June 10, in Virginia Beach. In the previous issue, Mr. Herrin chronicled the industry's reaction to evolutionary changes, and to its search for viable leaders.)

Now I will address the controversial topic of national service

MEETING EXPECTATIONS

The very fabric of society has changed significantly in the last 50 years. We have become a nation with an insatiable thirst for instant gratification. And in this new society of two-income households, the need for convenience has often replaced the need for quality. Predictability has replaced adventure. Spare time has become a precious commodity.

There's a certain confidence level associated with name brands and national entities. You might not particularly care for the taste or the nutritional benefits of McDonald's hamburgers, but *whatever* quality level McDonald's attains is consistent, nationwide. So is their level of service. And, with few exceptions, so are their prices. Customers know what to expect when they go there, so they're rarely disappointed.

Predictability.

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JHMM Scholarship Awarded to Exemplary Student, Richard Hare



(L-R: Peter Florance, Richard Hare, and Paul Mount)

The Jane Hudson Martin Memorial Scholarship Fund was created by the Virginia Professional Electronics Association to help perpetuate the electronics service industry. It is intended to: (1) encourage young people to enter the industry; (2) aid the most worthy of the applicants; and (3) keep alive the ideals of its namesake pioneer.

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From the President's Pen

Association is Holding it's own

By Peter Florance CET/CSM, President, VPEA

It's already 6 months into VPEA's 2005-2006 year. My last 'President's Pen' was titled "It's Time to Roll up our Sleeves". It was time — and we did.

State of the Association

Our membership census continues to stay about flat. We lost a few out-of-state members and picked up a few. As in my last report, I'm grateful we're still basically a status quo, given the state of the industry. I still feel we need to leverage the success of the Mid-Atlantic Conference to reach potential members.

I'm also grateful that the board worked so hard this summer to get a lot of the VPEA business taken care of. The new message board worked well, allowing board members to illu-

minate and debate proposals. By the time we got to our Oct board meeting, there was little to discuss and we were able to 'cruise' through a lot of business. The board has also done a great job of staying on top of things and keeping us informed.

Our Working Rules have been updated to meet today's association. Researching this has been a huge job and the committee should be congratulated for getting it done.

I'm pleased we were able to award the Jane Hudson Martin Memorial Scholarship this year. Paul Mount presented us with a worthy candidate in Richard Hare (*see article page 1.*)

The largest challenge for us was learning each of our roles on the board and in the organization. Most of the 'Old Guard' that was around when I joined in 1992 are long gone. Fortunately the present members are eager to learn and work; I feel we've made great progress and there's more to come.

Mid-Atlantic Conference

As I stated in my platform, this is the biggest item on VPEA's plate. Much of what we are planning for 2006 is built from the successful conferences held previously. We do have a few new items up our sleeves. Stay tuned for updates later this winter.

VPEA Reporter

This issue of the VPEA Reporter will be the last newsletter I will produce. I'm just too busy with other association business and I don't feel it's appropriate for the main voice of the association to be controlled by the president. We have been searching for volunteers and failing that, we'll probably have to contract out the layout job. I've really enjoyed producing the last few newsletters with Wallace and am sorry to let it go. I've learned a lot over the years, but most of it in the last six months. Thanks, Wallace!

Tidewater Chapter

The Tidewater chapter has stayed busy, led by President April Hall of

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The VPEA Reporter is published quarterly by the Virginia Professional Electronics Association Inc. for the enlightenment, education and entertainment of the members of VPEA and other ethical and responsible professionals in or connected with the electronics service industry in and surrounding the state of Virginia. The statements and opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Virginia Professional Electronics Association. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce any material contained herein providing credit is given to the Virginia Professional Elec-

Are You Living Down to Customer Expectations?

By Peter Florance and Larry Dom

Are most customers idiots? Are they universally unreasonable? Or are there more logical reasons for their “irrational behavior”? More importantly, how are you coping with those “unrealistic demands”?

CUSTOMERS ALWAYS GRIPE

Whether in your own service center, or when you listen to other servicers at association meetings, you hear it all the time: “Is it just me, or are customers more abrasive these days?” Or, “Can you believe the customer expected me to show up in an hour?” Or, “They think that whatever part fails in their set, at any time, I should have it in stock right now.”

Well, we had better get used to it. It’s a way of life, and it won’t get any better. That is, unless we collectively do something about it.

EDUCATING THE CUSTOMER

‘Customer education’ is a phrase that has been part of our industry for a long time. Anyone who performs warranty service calls has an opinion of ‘customer education.’ Too often, it means, “I’m not going to get paid for this service call.”

Today, however, we are going to talk about a different type of ‘customer education.’ Servicers need not fear this process, but should embrace it as a means of bringing the uninformed customer into our tent of understanding.

THE “GOOD OLD DAYS”

Years ago, television sets and audio equipment were much more expensive — and much less reliable. A television might require service as often as once a year, and many times in its serviceable life. Service calls were mostly straightforward — arrive quickly, pop in a tube or two or a module, and be on your way.

Even when you had to take it to the service center, you often had an original or generic replacement part in stock, and returned the unit in a few days. Most customers had a service center they knew and trusted. And although they might not have been happy with the prices, they generally knew what to expect.

THE “BAD NEW DAYS”

These days, consumer electronics are much more reliable and much less expensive to buy and maintain. A consumer may go a decade without the need for a repair on a television or audio product. When service is needed, the consumer is often unaware of what is required to perform the service. Unlike many other products that require servicing, today’s more sophisticated consumer electronics products have far fewer universal or interchangeable parts. Nowadays, the average electronic servicer has to obtain specialized parts such as lamps, light engines, and plasma panels to complete the repair. Many warranty products are so new that parts and service information has not been made available for them. And, since there’s no history of their failure patterns, distributors don’t even know what parts to stock yet.

So when the consumer calls with expectations from an earlier time, it’s a real shock to them to find out that your tube caddy doesn’t have the light engine they need for their DLP projection set.

It’s interesting that many of our older customers are pretty easy to deal with. It’s the younger customers, ones who have not had products repaired in the 60’s or 70’s, who are more difficult to contend with. It’s this ‘instant gratification’ type of customer who needs help.

ARGUE OR EDUCATE?

We have discovered that the initial call from the customer can be a pivotal point in the repair process. Imagine these two possible scenarios:

1. The customer is told, “Look, we’ll get there when we can; you’re not our only customer.” Or, “We didn’t make the set, and we can’t make the parts.” Or something similar. What the customer hears is, “I don’t care about your problem, I’ve got enough just running my service center”. That’s not what the customer was hoping to hear right after this expensive product has failed, maybe only weeks or months after purchase.

Often these days, consumers don’t even have a choice of service centers, especially if it’s in warranty. So, they begrudgingly go along, carrying a degree of hostility on their sleeve. This sets the tone for a relationship with minimal cooperation and trust.

2. Or: The customer is politely educated on what is required to service their set: “No I’m sorry we won’t be able to start on it today.

“...it’s a real shock to them to find out that your tube caddy doesn’t have the light engine they need for their DLP projection set.”

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Blue Laser DVD Wars Intensify; Microsoft and Intel Back HD Format

By Ken Belson
*(Published in the New York Times
 September 27, 2005)*

Microsoft and Intel are throwing their full weight behind one side in the long-running battle over the format for the next generation of high-definition DVD's.

The two computer industry giants have announced their backing of the HD-DVD (blue laser) format developed by Toshiba over the Blu-ray standard championed by Sony, Matsushita Electric, Samsung and others. (For more details, see the Jul/Aug/Sept issue of the *VPEA Reporter*.) Microsoft announced in June that it would work with Toshiba to develop high-definition DVD players. Now, Microsoft and Intel say they will develop software and chips that will allow personal computers to play the next-generation DVD's from Toshiba

Toshiba's HD-DVD format has competed against the Blu-ray format.

The companies have not ruled out incorporating Blu-ray technology in their operating systems and on their chips in the future. But they are currently convinced that the HD-DVD format discs can be produced more cheaply and more quickly than the Blu-ray discs, and are therefore likely to become the dominant technology.

For the last two years, Microsoft and Intel have been careful not to alienate either camp in the format battle because they sell software and components to companies on each side. They also hoped that the electronics makers and Hollywood studios developing the formats would reach a compromise.

But the major Hollywood studios are now split between the formats, and electronics companies on both sides plan to start selling next-generation DVD players as early as Christmas. Sony also plans to include Blu-ray technology in its new PlayStation 3 game console to be released next spring.

As the format standoff has deepened, demand for the current generation of DVD's and DVD players has slowed, alarming Hollywood studios, which have come to depend heavily on disc sales. The studios, as well as electronics makers and computer manufacturers, expect high-definition discs to restart sales growth. But the lack of a resolution over the future format has slowed the changeover.

Though Microsoft and Intel do not make DVD machines, they benefit from the sale of next-generation discs because consumers will also want to play the new discs on their PC's. That means that the computer operating system will have to be designed to read those discs.

Microsoft and Intel say that Toshiba has proven that its discs

can be copied onto hard drives and home servers and sent over home networks. The companies also favor the "hybrid" disc developed by Toshiba that includes a standard definition version of a movie on one side and a high-definition version on the other side.

Their decision to support Toshiba's HD-DVD format also creates another fissure in the tug of war between the companies backing the two formats.

For instance, Dell and Hewlett-Packard, two of the world's largest PC makers, are part of the Blu-ray group. Their computers, assuming they include Microsoft and Intel products, will be capable of playing HD-DVD discs. But if they want their machines to play Blu-ray discs, they may have to find a third-party to design software for them.

In addition to developing software to play HD-DVD discs on PC's, Microsoft may also create software so its new Xbox game console, which was just released this November, will be able to play HD-DVD discs.

“...the major Hollywood studios are now split between the formats...”



The Officers and Directors of the VPEA and the staff of the VPEA

Reporter Wish You and Yours

A Bountiful And Joyous Holiday Season.

Plus Good Health and Good Fortune In the New Year

(Continued from page 1)

Drive down to the local Wal-Mart or Costco on a Saturday morning. While you get your oil changed and your tires rotated, you can get your prescriptions filled, have your eyes examined, shop for food and clothing (or a plasma TV), and grab a snack before you go home. And if there's a problem with any or all of these, call one telephone number to set it right. That's the convenience of one-stop shopping.

As a society, we're too busy to be bothered anymore with the trivial affairs of everyday living. Thus, the stage is set for national service. The lights are down, the players are gathering; the audience waits.

IRREVERSIBLE CHANGE

Of course, national service providers have been around in one form or another for many years. Why has it so suddenly become an issue? It's because independent service has been a passive community that is now thrust into an aggressive marketplace.

Manufacturers are constantly dealing with the problems of price erosion in the U.S. market. Dealers' floor space is limited, and competition for this valuable floor space has never been more aggressive. Name-brand loyalty is a thing of the past, as consumers are now driven by price and convenience, not quality.

As prices drop, so do profits, and as both are driven downward, manufacturers look for ways to cut costs. Service support groups are trimmed, and the prospect of cheaper support, even if the quality of support is compromised, can become a very appealing option. You might not like it, but these facts are indisputable. You've watched it happen.

BARBARIANS AT THE GATE

About a year and a half ago, I sat across the table from the executive vice president of a national service provider. Some of his comments were foreign to many of my core beliefs. Some made my blood boil, and others sent a chill down my spine. The plans he outlined were bold, and blatantly excluded independent servicers. His plans were aggressive, and they were also quite workable. And backed by resources independent service couldn't begin to match, they were doable.

About a month after this conversation, I began to warn the Independent Service community about the "Barbarians at the Gate." It was intended as a wakeup call.

Since that time, I've paid close attention to everything that's been written or said about previous failed attempts to launch national service. It's absolutely true that national service has been tried before, many times, and always failed. But we were a much healthier industry then. We're not very healthy now.

We're losing service centers at an alarming rate. Many of the owners who are left are nearing retirement, or have simply lost their spirit. A beleaguered industry such as ours cannot withstand a full-scale assault for very long. And it doesn't really matter whether these guys win or lose. The damage will already be done. Such battles don't determine who's right — only who's left.

In response, the independent service community pounds their collective chests and cries out, "Nobody does it better!" I believe

"We're losing service centers at an alarming rate."

were bold, and blatantly excluded independent servicers. His plans were aggressive, and

that, too, with all my heart and soul. But it might not be a question of whether or not you can do it better. It might be a question of, *will you be given the opportunity?* Because, you see, a decision as to whether or not a company like mine will choose to do business with a national service provider won't come from people at my level. The decision will simply be handed down to us to implement.

PATHS TO PROFESSIONALISM

So, what can we do to protect ourselves?

If I were an independent service dealer today, I would immediately take the necessary steps to make my business healthy, profitable, and professional. I've been preaching this for years, and I won't spend any more time on the subject here. You already know the things that must be done, and the tough decisions that must be made.

I would maintain membership in at least one of the trade associations that serve my profession. I would actively participate and press their leaders to be more proactive to industry needs.

Next, I would be seeking the Certified Service Center (CSC) designation. The reason would not be just to garner any manufacturer's potential perks, but to establish my company and myself as service professionals in the eyes of the public.

And if I were a CSC, I'd be pounding on the door of every manufacturer, requesting the CSC logo to be placed in every owner's guide, and every warranty card that's packed in the tens of thousands of products sold in this country each year. I'd want them placed

"And if I were a CSC, I'd be pounding on the door of every manufacturer..."

Certified Service Center (CSC) designation. The reason would not be just to garner any manufacturer's potential perks, but to establish my company and myself as service professionals in the eyes of the public.

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right next to the words: "If your product needs service, XYZ manufacturer proudly recommends the professional service centers who display the CSC emblem." I'll volunteer Hitachi to be the first.

THE ALTERNATIVE NATIONAL

At the end of what was a most unpleasant conversation with that national service executive, I pointed out that what he was describing could easily be construed as predatory business practices of the worst sort. I expressed strongly that neither my company nor myself would be interested in or be a party to his plans. I re-stated my commitment to the independent service community. He calmly replied, "You might not have a choice." I would soon find out what he meant by that statement (but that's for another time).

A few months later, he was at least temporarily proven wrong. That's because a group of businessmen, firmly rooted in the independent service community, "took the path less traveled by." They formed a corporation called the National Service Alliance (NSA).

You have read extensively about NSA in the *VPEA Reporter*, and elsewhere. You have undoubtedly formed some opinions, some of which might even be correct.

But it's a fact that NSA can do many of the things that need to be done; things that our independent organizations cannot do. Primarily, they have given me, as a manufacturer's service representative, an alternative to the so-called national service providers. NSA holds themselves to the very highest of ethical and professional standards, as should each of you. NSA is a noble effort whose time has come, and I, for one, fully support the concept of keeping service business where it belongs: in the capable hands of Independent Service.

"The enemy of my enemy is my friend".

Yes, NSA might be an ugly child right now; bruised and scarred from all the beatings. But they've weathered the assaults with pride, dignity, and professionalism. They've created an organization that satisfies the requirements of our changing marketplace. More importantly, they've brought new business to Independent Service that I can guarantee would have been otherwise lost to our community.

They have held some of the national service providers at bay, at least for the time being, by providing that quarter-inch hole. They've provided that very important result that Independent Service could not, on their own, provide. They're gradually filling the chinks in our armor that would leave us exposed and vulnerable. I believe the end result, if allowed to succeed, will be a stronger, more aggressive, more flexible, and *united* independent service community. It will be one where the whole is, indeed, much greater than the sum of its parts.

DARE TO IMAGINE

The NSA concept was an idea born from the imagination of independent thinkers who chose to adapt to the changing needs of a changing marketplace. It was never meant to pose a threat to Independent Service. They're not the Big Bad Wolf; they're merely trying to keep the house of Independent Service from being blown apart by the winds of change. And they just might be the missing link in the chain that finally binds Independent Service together so that it truly becomes a unified Industry.

Meeting the challenges that lie ahead takes ideas and imagination.

"Ideologies might separate us, but imagination can bring us together".

Each of your businesses is unique, and many of the ideas you've heard, and will continue to hear, might not work for you in their puritan form. But like the newspapers in the bottom of a birdcage, one size does not fit all. They must be trimmed to fit. And that, my friends, takes the scissors of imagination.

You must build on the ideas of others, and make them your own. The size of your business doesn't matter — if you have imagination. "A dwarf standing on the shoulders of a giant can often see the farthest."

"There's a boundary to men's passions when they act from feelings; but none when they are under the influence of imagination." Best of all, it doesn't require a great deal of skill; simply use what talents you possess. "The woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best."

To accomplish the things we must do, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe. And if you don't want to believe, then you'd better stay away from me; you're liable to catch my dreams.

I'm Walt Herrin, and I believe with a *passion* in the future of Independent Service. Do you?

**Sign up now
for the 2006
Mid-Atlantic
Conference!**

Details on page 11

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Yes, I know we picked it up this morning but in order to service all our customers, our truck has to run a route. Your sophisticated set is made from thousands of parts, so it's impossible to have all of them in stock. Yes, I understand you're disappointed, and so are we. We'll do everything we can to get the set back to you." Or, "I'm sorry this repair is taking longer than you'd like, but we really want to make sure it's repaired right and will last for you."

The second scenario takes just seconds longer, but it helps the customer understand that you are really on their side, and trying to help them. It also explains that there are real-world limitations that affect when and how their set is repaired.

IN THEIR SHOES

Remember that the customer isn't concerned with *your* problems. It's their good money that paid for a product they never expected to fail them. It's they who must miss this week's episode of their favorite series, or their kids who must be placated. If it's out of warranty, it is they who must work an unexpected and possibly major expense into their already tight budget.

However, if you explain the situation (not your problems), they are much more likely to accept the situation – and continue to trust you as their service center of choice.

Don't Miss Out!

**Register today for
the 2006 Mid-Atlantic Conference**

**Registration Form
on page 11**

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The 2005 JMHMSF was awarded to Old Dominion University student, Richard Hare. VPEA President Peter Florance CET/CSM and Secretary/Scholarship Chairman Paul Mount personally presented the good news to Mr. Hare at the university in Norfolk VA on October 6.

Richard had been nominated by Chairman Mount, who is also an electronics instructor. In his nomination letter, Mr. Mount wrote: "Richard was a student of mine ... in the High Performance Technology Program at Southside Virginia Community College. Richard soon showed he was a leader of his peers; a great team player as well as an individual who took initiative in his studies."

"I highly recommend Richard for the Jane Hudson Memorial Scholarship. He has achieved much success for a young man and I know will achieve many more; I believe we should be behind his success."



History of the JHM Memorial Scholarship

In the early 1960's, some visionary service dealers created the Virginia Professional Electronics Association. It was dedicated to improving the image of the elec-

tronics sales and service industry, and improving relations with the electronics consumer.

These ideals were advanced by adopting a set of rules, regulations, and a code of ethics for the member service centers to adhere to.

Jane Hudson Martin was a pioneer promoting VPEA in the Lynchburg area. A pet project of hers was technical education. This included both ongoing training from the electronics industry for those already in the field, and for students in high schools considering entering this profession after graduation.

"Jane Hudson Martin was a pioneer promoting VPEA in the Lynchburg area"

Mrs. Martin began working in the TV repair shop of her first husband, Tom Hudson. When he suddenly died, she found herself to be a reluctant

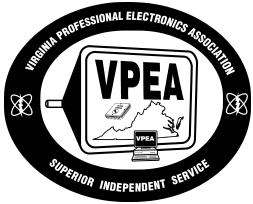
owner. However, she continued the success of the business, eventually re-married, and was elected president of VPEA (the first female to be elected president of a state electronics service association). Then she also tragically passed away at a relatively young age due to cancer.

To honor her goals and achievements after her death, the association established the Jane Hudson Martin Memorial Scholarship Fund. The fund provides \$500 to a selected student (one per year) planning a career in the consumer electronics field after graduation. The scholarship is paid directly to the college or technical School the student is to attend.

Scholarship Application

To apply for the Scholarship, the student must submit an application and two letters of recommendation by June 1st of each year.

The scholarship application and guidelines can be obtained from the VPEA website at www.vpea.org.



Application for Membership Virginia Professional Electronics Association, Inc.

(Fill out any of the following four lines that apply)

Applicant Member's Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Owner/Institution Name(s) : _____

Instructor/Teacher Name : _____

Technician's Name: _____

Complete all of the following:

Address: _____

City : _____ State : _____ Zip: _____

Bus. Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Fax Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Select the type of membership desired (check one):

- Full Voting Member ship (\$48/year); Check which category applies:
 - Affiliate (within an Affiliated Local; Local dues are additional, and are not included;
 - At-Large (outside the area claimed by any local Affiliate)
- Associate, Non-voting; Select the type of Associate Membership (and annual dues):
 - Business (\$24); Industry (\$24); Partner (\$12); Retired (\$24); Student (\$24); Teacher (\$24);
 - Technician (\$24); Vendor/Distributor (\$100); Vendor/Distributor Employee (\$24)

Employer/Business Classification (Check one): Corporation; Partnership; Proprietorship; School

Recommended by (member's name):

Amount Submitted with Application: _____

Recommending Member's Company

Company Representative to VPEA (Member Name)

Signature Approval by VPEA:

Applicant Sig; I agree to abide by the VPEA Code of Ethics

The following is a solicitation for voluntary information to aid VPEA in better serving the membership needs:

Select Categories of Products you sell, install, maintain and/or service (Check all that apply):

- Appliances (Large); Appliances (Small); Audio-Visual (Pa's / Intercoms / Projectors); Communications (CB/2-way Radio/Telephones/Cell Phones/etc.); Computers (Computers/monitors/printers/etc.); Consumer Electronics (Radio/TV/Stereo/VCR); Industrial (Corporate/Factory/School/etc.); Medical (Hospital and Medical Devices); Video Reception (Antennas/CATV/MATV/Satellite Receivers/etc.)

Other: _____

Mail to: VPEA Treasurer, 616 Liberty Street, Martinsville VA 24112-18093; (540) 632-0868 Fax

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Color and Sound. Dinner meetings have featured manufacturer's reps as well as a visit from a local television station engineer. June Lindberg has kept us well fed at our meetings. Our August picnic was fantastic and as well-attended as I can recall in my memory as a VPEA member. Great job, April and Tidewater board and members.

Our volunteer effort refurbishing the Cassette Book Machines for the blind (*see spring 2005 VPEA Reporter*) has picked up steam. A core group meets once a month and that seems to keep the Virginia Beach Sub-Regional Library in working machines.

Inside this VPEA Reporter

I hope you'll take time to read the article on page 3, titled "Are You Living Down to Customer Expectations?". It's been a fascinating piece to write. Larry Dom and Dale Miller have made the ideas in the article an important part of their customer service effort. It's interesting to me that their company, AVSC Electronics just opened for business in April of 2005.

Apparently they aren't carrying any old notions leftover from the 80's and 90's like a lot of us are.

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and service the current crop of high-tech products.

HELP FOR MANGERS

While the technicians are attending their choice of seminars, there are also excellent sessions for management personnel.

On Friday afternoon, exhibitors will display some of the stuff that can make servicing easier, more efficient, and more profitable. Usually, there are also a score of companies showing their wares at the MAC trade show.

August Picnic a Big Hit!



Bill Geiger and Sandy Talley (above) were among the dozens of folks who attended the VPEA-Tidewater annual picnic. It was held August 20 at scenic Munden Point in far-south Virginia Beach (near the North Carolina border). There was good food, fun games, and great fellowship.

Saturday features the Manufacturers' Round Table question-and-answer session. Attending servicers may submit industry-specific questions to representatives of participating manufacturers, distributors, and service contract companies.

TIME FOR FOOD, FUN, AND RELAXATION

The manufacturers, distributors, and service contract companies who contribute to the MAC are generous in their support. That's why the amount charged attendees doesn't nearly equal the amount spent on even their individual meals. And the meals at the VBRH are noted for their gourmet quality. Early arrivals will find the food, service, ambience, and spectacular view of the bay at the TradeWinds Restaurant exceptional. Additionally, there's the lure of the sandy beach and soft surf along the hotel's wide, private beach.

The hotel also has a spacious indoor/outdoor pool, and a well-equipped spa. Hotel guests can hike or bike (with free loaner bicycles) through the cypress trees at nearby First Landing/ Seashore State Park. Or experience the light-

houses at nearby Cape Henry and the boardwalk along the Atlantic Ocean at Virginia Beach.

Those lucky enough to arrive before Thursday can participate in the Tritronics Golf Tournament, which has become a perennial favorite event of the conference.

Something new this year will be the Thursday night shuttle from the host hotel to the resort oceanfront. Those who don't want to participate in the cozy VPEA hospitality room — and others who just want to experience the rest of Virginia Beach — may hop aboard the free hotel van to the bustling resort strip. There, you may stroll the boardwalk, listen to the outdoor bands, frolic in the amusement park, shop for souvenirs, indulge in the plethora of restaurants and fast-food establishments, or bar-hop the lounges along Atlantic Avenue.

Whether you come for the training, the camaraderie, the idea-sharing, the sandy beach, the superb food, or the non-stop fun, there's something of value for everyone at the 16th annual Mid-Atlantic Conference.

Register for the conference, and reserve your room at the Virginia Beach Hotel today.

NESDA NEWS

News from the National Electronic Service Dealers Association



NESDA's NPSC '06 Site Moved to San Francisco Area

NESDA Executive Director Mack Blakely recently announced a change in location for the 2006 National Professional Service Convention. NPSC '06 will be held July 25-29 at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport Hotel in Burlingame CA.

As we reported in the previous issue of the *VPEA Reporter*, the annual convention was originally scheduled for The Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Orleans. However, as you know, that city was recently ravaged by two hurricanes and breached levees. The New Orleans hotel originally thought they could still host next year's event but eventually realized they could not get their property back up to speed by July.

Normally, when you have only nine months to locate, investigate, and negotiate a site for a convention the size and scope of NPSC, you might have to make do in Pocatello Idaho, or settle on \$250 room rates.

Fortunately, the Hyatt located several other sites within its chain that had the scheduled dates open. These were gradually reduced to the chosen site.

Mr. Blakely reported: "While we had hoped we could do our part to help New Orleans get back on its feet next July, we are now hoping to arrange an even greater show for New Orleans in 2008. What looked like it might be a real loss, turned out to be our gain, for 2006."

This hotel offers affordable rates, and free shuttle service to and from the airport (only 10-15 minutes and about 3 miles away). The hotel is gorgeous with many amenities, including wireless Internet in all rooms, a heated outdoor pool, fitness center, a sports bar, cafe and deli, and a lounge. The host city of Burlingame, located on San Francisco Bay, is enticingly picturesque. Attendees may visit the many attractions and restaurants in downtown Burlingame via free trolley service to and from the hotel.

If you visit that "other" city, also on the bay a few miles up highway 101 or I-280, you might just lose your heart. It's less than 17 miles from the hotel to the center of downtown San Francisco, and another mile or two to famed Fisherman's Wharf. Public transportation to downtown San Francisco can cost as little as \$5.50 via BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) or can be included in a ½ day bus

tour of San Francisco from the hotel for \$39.

Traditionally, most of the places NESDA goes to in July are steamingly hot. But, in the San Francisco area in July, you will definitely want to bring a coat.

Room rates for NPSC 2006 are \$109 single or double (plus 10% room tax). If you're driving, be prepared to also pay \$10 per day for parking (which has been reduced from the usual \$15 rate). Children 17 years and under stay free with parents. A special block of rooms has been set aside for NPSC attendees. However, be aware that rooms might not be available after the entire block is sold, or after the hold expires on June 28, 2006. To be sure that you get a room and avoid a higher rate, reserve early. Phone (650) 347-1234 Fax (650) 696-2669.

The hotel's website is www.sanfranciscoairport.hyatt.com. To find out more about NPSC, go to www.nesda.com/npsc/index.html

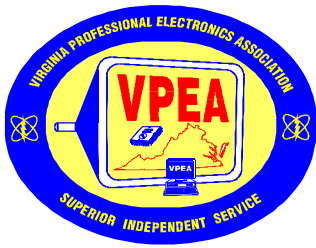
Benefits and Programs for NESDA Members

- NESDA SERVICER LOCATOR
- NESDANET, THE E-MAIL SELF-HELP PROGRAM
- TECHMATE, TIPS PROGRAM
- ACCESS TO INFORMATIVE NESDA.COM WEB PAGE
- INDUSTRY MAGAZINE
- ANNUAL DIRECTORY AND YEARBOOK
- INSURANCE PROGRAMS
- CREDIT CARD PROGRAM
- ANNUAL NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONVENTION
- LEGISLATIVE WATCHDOG
- INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURER RELATIONS
- MEMBER DISCOUNTS: PARTS, INDUSTRY, OFFICE SUPPLIES, SHIPPING

For more information about NESDA, contact:

The National Electronics Service Dealers Association, 3608 Pershing Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76107-4527 (817) 921-9061 FAX (817) 921-3741 info@nesda.com

Apply for a **FREE 1-Year Membership in NESDA**: Includes full membership, plus FREE subscription to NESDAnet, and FREE TechMate (Tech Tips).
Go to: <http://www.nesda.com/servicers/angelmember.html>



2006 MID-ATLANTIC ELECTRONICS CONFERENCE

June 9th – 11th, 2006

Hosted by the

Virginia Professional Electronics Association

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____ E-Mail _____

FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INCLUDES:

All programmed meal functions, banquets, door prize drawings, trade show admission, dealer/ manufacturer meetings, admissions to all unrestricted meetings and workshops, and includes all sponsored functions.

Full Paid Registration RECEIVED BY:	1st Fully Paid Adult Registration	Each Additional Adult (same family / bus.)	Children (Age 5 – 16)
Dec. 31, 2005	_____ @ \$100	_____ @ \$90	_____ @ \$70
Full Convention	_____ @ \$135	_____ @ \$130	_____ @ \$90
Subtotal :	_____	_____	_____

Make checks payable to: "Virginia Professional Electronics Association" or "VPEA".

Total Amount Enclosed: _____ Check or Money Order Number: _____

Room reservations will be handled solely by:
Virginia Beach Resort & Conference Center
2800 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23451
(757) 481-9000 (800) 468-2722
www.virginiabeachresort.com
Special room rate \$99.00 (+12% room tax)

PLEASE PRINT NAMES OF ALL ATTENDEES, AS THEY ARE TO APPEAR ON THE NAME BADGES.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

Please Mail Registration Form to: **Mid-Atlantic Electronics Conference**
C/O Michael Gorbett
PO Box 2956
Virginia Beach, VA. 23450-2956

Need more info? Check <http://www.vpea.org/ConventionDetails.htm>

Next VPEA and VPEA-LA Board Meetings – Saturday, December 3rd, 2005

Virginia Beach Resort Hotel, 2800 Shore Drive., Virginia Beach VA, 757-481-9000

Board Meeting Meeting starts at 4:00pm; Holiday Party at 6:00pm;

All VPEA members are invited to VPEA Board Meetings — Holiday Party optional: \$10 per person.

Join VPEA Today!

Contact one of the following people for more information about VPEA

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