



# ON THE LEVEL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ABC SAN DIEGO TRAINING TRUST

## 2007 Local Craft Championships Send 3 Competitors and Their Guests to Puerto Rico

On December, 1, 2007, Associated Builders and Contractors, San Diego Training Trust, selected three Craft Champions to represent them at the ABC National Convention next year on March 5-9, 2008, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. All three winners received cash, tools and an all expenses paid trip for two to the national competition next year in March.

Competitors were challenged to complete trade-related projects in a short period of time to certain specifications. They were scored on categories such as safe use of tools and ladders, sequence of construction, and the quality of their craftsmanship, among other things. Those scores were then combined with the scores they received on the written exam they took in order to qualify for the competition.

The winners were selected from a group of 14 apprentices and Craft Trainees representing 3 different trades:

Electrical, Plumbing, and Sheet Metal. The winners are as follows:

**Electrical:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place, Chris Gillogly, Bergelectric**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Andrew Sullivan, Bergelectric**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Fred Ludwig, Bergelectric**

**Plumbing:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place, Jessee Emerick, Pacific Rim Mechanical**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Justin Turk, RJ Lanthier**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Bret Wagner, Pacific Rim Mechanical**

**Sheet Metal:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place, Lance Zangger, California Comfort Systems**

The competition took place outside at the ABC Training Facility at 13825 Kirkham Way, Poway, CA 92064, from 8am to noon. Lunch was

sponsored by Bergelectric, and over 30 raffle prizes, such as a 32" flat screen TV, an Xbox 360 Arcade, and a Compaq computer, were given away.

Our thanks to all the competitors who participated and to our sponsors and volunteers. This event takes place annually on the first Saturday in December. For more information on Craft Championships, call Tracey Barrett, at extension 223.

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**MANY THANKS TO OUR JUDGES, SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS, WITHOUT WHOM THIS YEAR'S CRAFT CHAMPIONSHIP COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN PLACE!**

**BERGELECTRIC CORP. CONTRACTORS/ENGINEERS, ROWAN ELECTRIC, MILWAUKEE, FERGUSON, IDEAL INDUSTRIES, INC., KLEIN TOOLS, HILTI, TOOLUP.COM, ABLE BODY LABOR, LOWES, DEWALT, STOWE PLAZA DENTAL, SQUIRES-BELT MATERIAL CO., WESTMARK, IRWIN INDUSTRIAL TOOLS, AND RIDGID TOOLS**



Above Right: Craft Competitors in the first stages of the competition.

Left: Chris Gillogly in the 1st phases.



Above: Lance Zangger at the start  
Below: Berg Electric prepares lunch for 200.



Above Left: Chris Shipp demonstrates how NOT to drive nails.



Left: Jessee Emerick during the Craft Competition





## What is Greenmail?

The past year has been a real eye opener for the merit shop industry, our apprentices and craft trainees, and for the public as a whole in San Diego. Thanks to the efforts of ABC of San Diego, the unions' shameful attempts at "greenmail" have been exposed and are on the verge of being rolled back across the region.

What is greenmail? Greenmail is a term coined by ABC's Kevin Dayton that describes construction union attempts to use the environmental review process to hold up construction projects until the project owners agree to a union-only Project Labor Agreement (PLA) thus excluding merit shop workers, craft trainees and apprentices. The unions use law firms as front groups who in turn file stacks and stacks of environmental objections to a given project

until the owner agrees to a PLA. Once the PLA is signed, the environmental issues raised by these groups are withdrawn. This outrageous form of extortion has proven successful around California including on projects here in San Diego County like Petco Park and the new Poseidon Desalinization Plant in Carlsbad. But thanks to ABC's effort, we are now fighting back and making it much harder for the unions to get away with such blackmail.

On the \$1 billion Gaylord Bayfront Project in Chula Vista, we have led the charge in exposing the greenmail attempts there. We have been responsible for getting endless news coverage on this issue which uncovers the truth to the public. Mailers have gone to area citizens to educate them on what is really taking place and encouraging them to contact their elected officials asking them to

stand up to these greenmail tactics. In January we will be working with the Chula Vista City Council to pass an ordinance banning PLAs in that city, including on the Gaylord project. This will be a monumental achievement and will serve as the first of many such ordinances we will be pushing around the county in 2008! ABC is working hard to ensure that merit shop employees have the right to work on all construction projects in San Diego.



This story submitted by Eric Christen, VP, Government Affairs, ABC San Diego Chapter.



## Instructor Profile - Ben Gorham

From time to time, a former apprentice will return as a teacher for the ABC San Diego Training Trust. It's a huge compliment for us, and a real win for the students, because they end up with an instructor who has been where they are. Experience affords the best instruction.

Certainly, that is what we have in Ben Gorham, Plumbing instructor. Once a student/apprentice at ABC San Diego in 1999, he has been teaching here for 7 years since he graduated with Honors. Ben's first job in his trade was with Pacific Rim Mechanical, who was the driving force in his enrollment here at ABC San Diego. They encouraged him to enroll to perfect his skills, as did the woman who he wanted to marry. Ben says the truth is she wouldn't marry him if he didn't get a job, so

that was all the motivation he needed. The rest, as they say, is history.

Ben has a very broad view of schooling. "Any kind of education is good, no matter where you get it. It can be in college, or at an apprenticeship program like ours, but get the education you need," Ben states. "We (ABC) have the alternative to the union schools and apprenticeship programs, so you have to make educated choices about what is best for you," he goes on to say. "Union work is now getting outsourced to other places and unions were not my thing at all, as I believe you should be hired on your ability and merit, not your tenure. But that suits some people, and

that's fine for them."

Ben loves teaching and loves math. "New students are like open books, and they can be easy to teach, and I enjoy that." Says Ben.

Ben has a wife and two children, currently works for ICS as a Field Supervisor, and has been there about a year.

Nicole N. Piner





Check us out on  
the WEB!

[www.abcsd.org](http://www.abcsd.org)

Associated Builders and Contractors, San Diego, is a non-profit organization and construction industry trade association committed to promoting the merit shop philosophy and protecting the rights of free enterprise in San Diego and Imperial counties. Chartered in September 1976 with only 84 members, the Chapter has grown to include specialty contractors, general building contractors, suppliers, associates to the industry and many others.

ABC offers a network from which to learn, grow, and to make a difference. We accomplish this through extensive and thorough education and craft training. Our apprenticeship programs are among the best in the country, as we offer registered apprenticeship and craft training in electrical, electronic service technician (low-voltage electrical,) plumbing, pipe-fitting, sheet metal and HVAC. We're currently developing programs in other trades, as well as creating an online delivery system for training.

The ABC San Diego Training Academy and Chapter Headquarters has set a standard in training for merit shop construction. Here is where ABC trains the future merit shop leaders of America! We have the best instructors, contractors and students in our program, so we believe the San Diego chapter membership represents the best our industry has to offer.

For more information about the ABC San Diego Training Trust, please call Nicole N. Piner, Director of Communications and Workforce Development, 858-513-4700, ext. 225.

**Quote of the  
month:**

***Education is  
what you  
get when  
you read the  
fine print.***

***Experience  
is what you  
get when  
you don't.***

***Pete Seeger***

## **Rules and Regs Reminder - ATTENDANCE**

Each Apprentice is required to attend classes in related supplemental instruction for a minimum of 180 to 200 hours per year for each year of the term of Apprenticeship.

Absences result in consequences that range from pay being withheld to being dropped from the program. Apprentices will be scheduled and must appear before the Committee when they receive three (3) or more absences, whether or not they are excused! At their discretion, the Committee can take the following actions:

- ◆ Three (3) unexcused absences in one semester will result in the withholding of a pay upgrade for the duration of the apprenticeship program.
- ◆ Four (4) unexcused absences in one semester will result in being given an incomplete for your school semester and you will be required to repeat the course.
- ◆ Five (5) unexcused absences in one semester will result in being dropped from the program.

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, MUST be made up. It does not matter if you were called before your Committee or not. Talk to your instructor about this process.

Please call Ann Baay, Student Services Administrator, at extension 214 with any questions or concerns.

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