

In Memoriam

Luis "Val" Pastor Valentin, AES life member and recording engineer, died on March 24 at Washoe Village Care Center in Reno, Nevada. He was 79 years old. Valentin, a Grammy-Award winner, worked with many of the music giants such as Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole and Ella Fitzgerald.

Born in Puerto Rico in 1920, Valentin attended the University of Puerto Rico and studied electrical engineering. He lived in Reno for the past 5½ years. Prior to that he resided in southern California. He was nominated for eight Grammy Awards and won in 1960 for the Fitzgerald recording of "The George and Ira Gershwin Songbook."

Valentin attended the Inaugural Ball of President John F. Kennedy and at Sinatra's request was the sound engineer for the evening. He also handled the sound for recordings and movies of the famous Rat Pack composed of Sinatra, Peter Lawford, Sammy Davis Jr. and Dean Martin.

Valentin was director of recording for Verve Records, and a studio engineer for Capitol Records in Hollywood, CA. He also worked for Pablo Records and later was vice president of recording for MGM Records in the mid 60s. He was on the adjunct faculty of the Recording Institutes at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, and served on the Board of Governors of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. He became a life member of the AES in 1985.

He is survived by his wife, Maryann of Reno, NV, and daughter Kimberly Barrozzi of Caracas, Venezuela, and three grandchildren.

An era in audio came to an end with the recent passing of **Val Valentin**. Val and his brother Ralph were among a small group of music engineers who pioneered superb recorded sound for us. They created sonic images in recording's early days



Luis "Val" Pastor Valentin
1920-1999

that sound as fresh today as when they were made—they had ears.

But it was Val's unique combination of talents that made him stand apart from his peers. He always had a unique rapport with the artists he recorded that made them feel comfortable with the recording process. He never let technical issues hinder or intrude on performance. His particular sense of music engineering was clearly electronic artistry. Many of the audio canvases he created are still our measure of the art form. A discography of Val's recordings would fill many pages but would clearly include some of the best recordings of Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole, and an unrivaled collection of jazz artists.

With all this, Val always remained a gentleman. He brought the same level of character to sound engineering that he did to his recordings. He fostered and made opportunities for many young talents. The list is almost as long as his recordings.

Alas, the industry that he helped create provided no residual benefit to him for his creations. His disciples often became engineer/producers in order to have a lasting share in their particular form of artistry. Val's permanent legacy is, therefore, his prolific catalog of recordings and the people he helped along the way.

Goodbye, dear friend.

Edward J. Greene
Granada Hills, CA