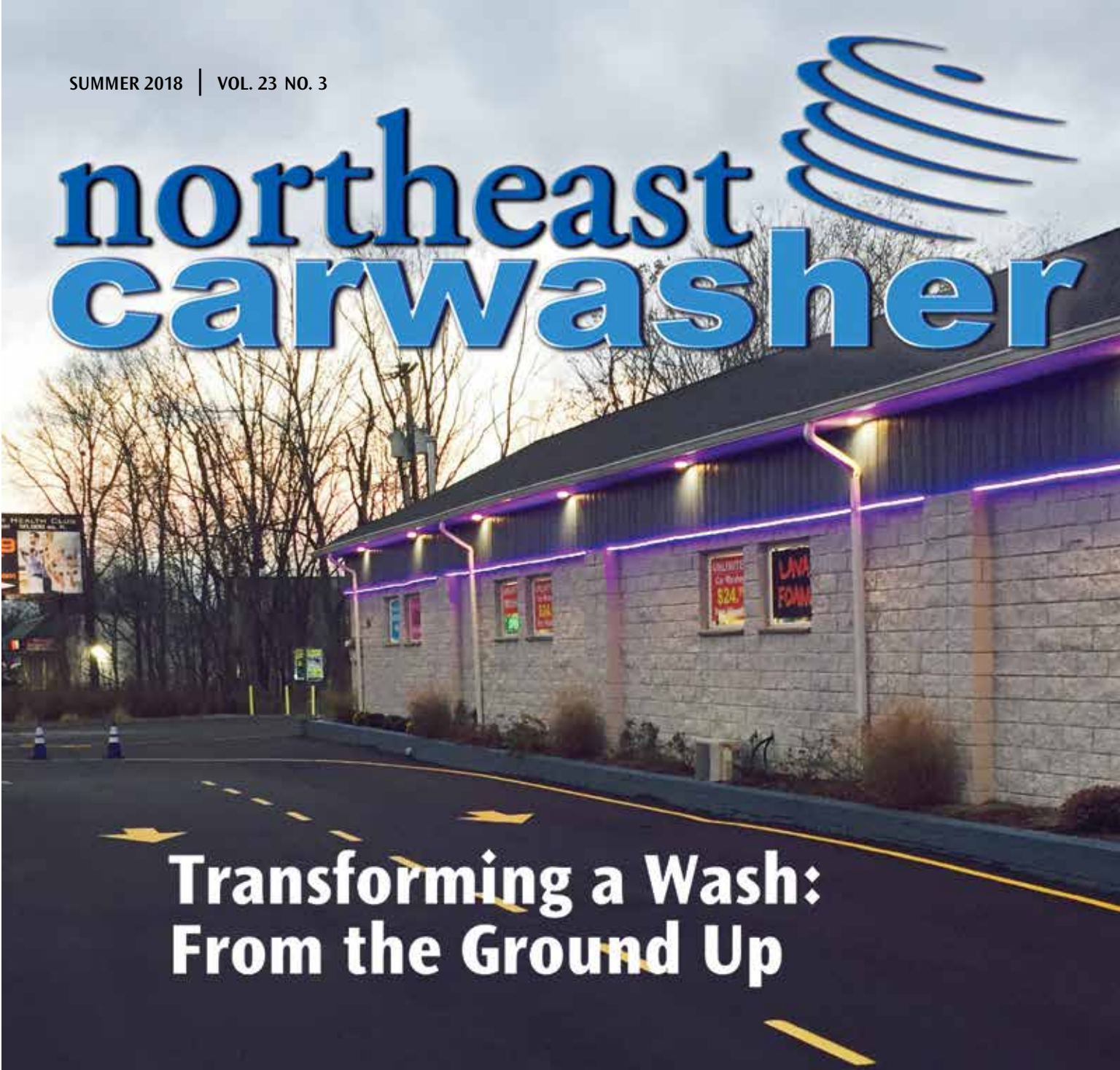
SUMMER 2018 | VOL. 23 NO. 3

northeast carwasher



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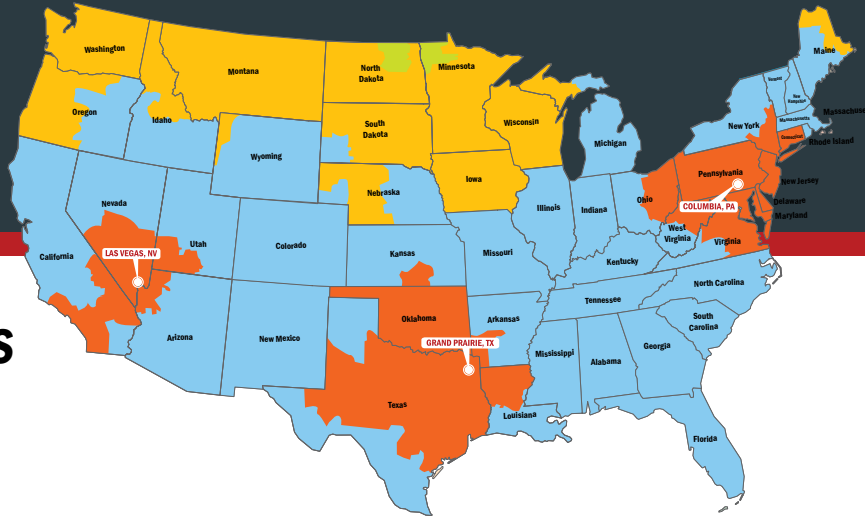

1 DAY | 2 DAY | 3 DAY

northeast carwasher
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ON THE COVER

Photo credit: Photo courtesy of Streamline Car Wash, Rockaway, NJ.

northeast carwasher

Editor and Publisher
Suzanne L. Stansbury

Contributing Editor
Alan M. Petrillo

Art Director
Katherine Watson

Please direct advertising and editorial inquiries to:
Media Solutions, 2214 Budd Terrace, Niskayuna, NY 12309
ph/f: 518.280.4767 • mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com
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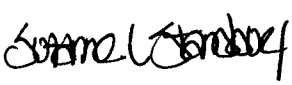
Let's face it, we all like to feel special and appreciated. Making a customer feel special doesn't have to cost anything and it is really pretty easy to accomplish. I got thinking about this topic after encouraging Dave DuGoff, the president of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA) and a frequent contributor to this magazine, to write about his thoughts on boosting customer loyalty. (You can read his piece on page 71). As he noted, there are so many things you are doing at your washes to boost customer loyalty – wash clubs, couponing, week-day specials, push notifications, eblasts, Google ads, Facebook posts, Tweets, etc. But how about just being nice? Sounds kind of old school, right? What does "being nice" even mean, exactly? Well, it's acknowledging your customers with a friendly, genuine greeting. It's holding the door open for them when they get in or out of their car if you're a full serve. It's smiling when guiding them onto the conveyor at your express exterior. It's a thumbs up when you've finished their towel dry. Dave makes his customers feel special and appreciated every single day, that's part of what makes him a great operator. Do you?

Hoffman Car Wash in Albany, NY, just concluded a campaign throughout its washes and lubes that focuses on "Kindness." They implemented this phrase in signage, buttons and on their tunnel televisions. Their Director of Marketing, Kevin Zalaznik, says the idea came from a church sermon in Oklahoma that Tom Hoffman, Sr. heard about after the Stoneman Douglas High School shootings. The two-month campaign started out with "Think Kindness" and then the next month morphed into "Practice Kindness." Zalaznik's takeaway, "We hope that we were able to spread the kindness word. We wanted to change people's moods with an inviting message. And our customers seemed to appreciate us trying to spread positivity in our community."

All in, the campaign cost less than $1,500. More then 3,000 buttons were passed out and no doubt their customers took note. I'd love to hear what you are doing to spread kindness and make your customers feel appreciated. I am a firm believer that the nice guy doesn't have to finish last!

Make Your NRCC Plans Now!

Believe it or not, October 1-3 will be here before you know it. Those are the dates of the 2018 Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) at the Atlantic City Convention Center. This year's show will again include a "Virtual Carwash Tour" and revisit the sites featured last year. It will also include a keynote by West Point Grad Jay Rifenbary who will speak about core values, accountability and balance is life and business. This is our 29th NRCC. I have been to all but one of them and can honestly say it's a highlight of my year. I always walk away with insight and a new perspective on the industry. Visit nrccshow.com to learn more and register early to take advantage of discounted pricing. You will be glad you did.



Suzanne L Stansbury
Editor/Publisher Northeast Carwasher *magazine*

northeast carwasher

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Great Idea!

At Hoffman Car Wash, headquartered in Albany, NY, practicing kindness has become second nature. Thanks to an inspirational sermon touting "Kindness" Tom Hoffman, Sr. was inspired to spread positivity throughout his company and onto his customers. For the months of March and April the company used the phrase, "Think Kindness" and then "Practice Kindness" and displayed the phrases on the company's brand signs, on buttons worm by employees and on their tunnel televisions. For an investment of less than $1,500 they were able to spread some positivity and relevancy right after the tragedy in Parkland, FL. ■

Oops!

In our spring 2018 issue, on page 55, we omitted a photo credit line for Mike Ashley's photo. The photographer who took that image was Rich Cooley, Chief Photographer with the *Northern Virginia Daily*.

Our apologies, Rich! ■

WASH VOLUME INDEX

We have taken the pulse of four Northeast operators to see where their volumes are compared to last year (YTD). WOW! Three of the four participants are up in double digits with Jersey Shore operator Doug Rieck up the most with a 16 percent increase on the corporate level, and a whopping +40 percent on his inbays!!! He equates the positive surge upward to a much better economy, doing a better job cleaning (thanks to new equipment) and the return of a former manager to one of his sites. We only saw a drop with our Boston operator, Ron Bousquet, who was down 6 percent. With our fall issue we hope to report more upswings due to a strong pollen and bug season! Fingers crossed!

Thanks to Doug Rieck on the Jersey Shore, Dave DuGoff in the Mid-Atlantic, Ron Bousquet in Boston and Stephen Weekes in upstate New York for giving us a picture of volumes in their markets. ■

World Book Ranks Longest Carwash!

It's official, at least according to The Guinness Book of World Records... Buc-ee's Carwash in Katy, TX, was named the longest in the world in late November 2017 at 255 feet long. It's rivals include AutoValet in New Jersey coming in at 245 feet and Rocket Express in Boise, ID, coming in at 240 feet. Wow! ■

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NCS ANNOUNCES THE MACNEIL EDGE™

National Carwash Solutions (NCS), Grimes, IA, the nation's premier manufacturer of commercial carwash systems, cleaning solutions and maintenance services has announced its newest integrated solution called The MacNeil EDGE – Your complete, all-in-one tunnel program™. This bundled solution offering to carwash tunnel operators is the latest innovation from MacNeil to provide the easiest path to carwash success with MacNeil's full lineup of products and services for its customers, said a company press release.

The MacNeil EDGE program is based on three core carwash success principles: Education, Quality and Profitability. The MacNeil EDGE is the easiest path to carwash success by giving carwash operators everything they need to successfully plan, build and operate their carwashes.

"We're very excited to launch The MacNeil EDGE program for our tunnel carwash operators. This program takes the hassle and unknown out of getting into the carwash business," said Michael Gillen, CEO of National Carwash Solutions. "Under The MacNeil EDGE program, our customers can find everything they need to easily get into the tunnel carwash business or enhance their current carwash business." ■

For more information
visit MacNeiledge.com
or MacNeilwash.com

ZEP VEHICLE CARE HIRES RIZZARDI

Zep Vehicle Care (ZVC), Atlanta, GA, has hired Rich Rizzardi as its new president to include the Niagara and PurClean/PurWater brands, according to a company press release.

Rizzardi most recently led the label and packaging business of Taylor Corporation. Prior to that he led the most profitable division of Archway Marketing Services. "Rich has an impressive track record of strategic and operational accomplishments," said Lou Purvis, Chief Executive Officer of Zep. "I am confident Rich will bring an authentic leadership style to Zep, a true commitment to the customer, a bias for action and a strategic perspective that will help us create the next stage of our evolution at ZVC." ■

For more information
visit zepvehiclecare.com

REEVES JOINS SONNY'S AS COO

Sonny's Enterprises, Tamarac, FL, has hired 33-year veteran manufacturing executive John Reeves as the company's Chief Operating Officer, according to a company press release. "I'm excited to welcome John to the Sonny's family," said Paul Fazio, Sonny's CEO.

"John understands the global manufacturing business like no other, with an extraordinary track record of helping businesses like ours streamline operations. Most importantly, John's role will help us to provide a uniform customer experience and maintain a high level of customer service excellence across all of our brands."

John will be responsible for daily operations at Sonny's, including its portfolio companies Diamond Shine, Mr. Foamer and Carwash Services of the Southeast. According to Reeves, "Sonny's is uniquely positioned to offer carwash operators the industry's only comprehensive, end-to-end suite of carwash business solutions, and I'm looking forward to helping the company leverage this advantage." ■

For more information
visit sonnysdirect.com

NCS PARTNERS WITH BADGER LAND

National Carwash Solutions (NCS), Grimes, IA, has entered into a strategic partnership with Badger Land Car Wash Equipment and Supplies, a Milwaukee, WI, carwash distributorship, said a company press release. "We are thrilled to partner with Badger Land, a leading Midwest distributor of carwash systems, services and cleaning fluids," said Michael Gillen, CEO of NCS. "Badger Land has a long-term commitment to their customers and an equally long-term history of growth," he added. "We're excited to join with Todd Duthie and Badger Land's impressive success story and sterling reputation they've built over the past four decades."

According to Todd Duthie, owner of Badger Land, "NCS's product portfolio will expand our capabilities; we couldn't be more excited to become part of the NCS family." ■

For more information visit
NationalCarwashSolutions.com or
MacNeilwash.com and Ryko.com

DRB ACQUIRES NOPILEUPS' ASSETS

DRB Holdings, LLC ("DRB"), Akron, OH, a leading provider of technology-enabled devices and software solutions to the carwash industry, has acquired the assets and intellectual property of NoPileups, LLC ("NPU"), Boise, ID, according to a company press release. NPU's advanced software leverages breakthrough computer vision and machine learning technology to assist in preventing vehicle collisions in carwashes by constantly monitoring carwash tunnels and stopping the conveyor when collision threats are detected. "This is one of the most innovative and promising technologies to be deployed in tunnel carwashes in some time," said Bill Morgenstern, CEO of DRB. "Pete Ness and his team have tasked modern video and machine learning technologies to solve a very difficult and important problem in tunnel carwashes, while delivering substantial ROI to carwash operators."

Added Pete Ness, CEO of Pingman Tools, LLC, "We have worked with DRB's team for many years. Without a doubt, they are the clear leaders in carwash technology," he said. "Our entire team looks forward to taking NPU to the next level with DRB. Our plans are to ramp up our sales, support and implementation capacity to meet the overwhelming demand we have experienced. We will continue to support

our product in all tunnel carwashes, regardless of the current point of sale or tunnel control provider."

Added Morgenstern, "We look forward to partnering with Pete, Bill Martin, and the entire Pingman Tools team." ■

For more information
visit drbsystems.com

HUISMAN JOINS PSD CODAX

PSD Codax/An ICS Company, Bristol, England, producer of carwash access technology, has hired Suzanne Huisman to its newly created role of European Business Development Director. Huisman most recently served as owner and operator of Blinkie Car Wash in Maaseik, Belgium, where she managed the financial, marketing and operational aspects of the business. She is also the acting President of the BBRV, the association responsible for promoting the interests of professional carwash operations in Belgium.

In her new role with PSD Codax, she will report to Rob Deal, Managing Director of the company. "Suzanne possesses the experience, skills, attitude and industry relationships that will position her for success in our company, and in the marketplace," said Deal. "Her addition to the PDS Codax team will help us sustain our growth trajectory and support our expansion as we continue to invest in the future of the professional carwash industry." ■

For more information contact
dealr@icscarwashsystems.com
or call +44 1275 866910

CSI® CERTIFIED TO NEW ISO STANDARD

Cleaning Systems, Inc. (CSI), De Pere, WI, has been certified to the ISO (International Organization for Standardization) 9001:2015 standard for Quality Management Systems, according to a company press release. CSI had previously been certified to the ISO 9001:2008 standard.

ISO 9001:2015 certification provides assurance to internal and external stakeholders that CSI delivers a consistent level of quality to their customers.

ISO Certification is a seal of approval by a 3rd party that a company runs in accordance with internationally-recognized ISO management standards. It is a symbol of quality and commitment to product excellence and customer service that instills the confidence of carwash owners, operators, and distributors in CSI as the global leader in chemical technology for the transportation industry.

Dave Krause, President and CEO of CSI, commented, "Our ISO14001:2015 and ISO 9001:2015 certificates show our hard work and dedication to achieve high standards in customer satisfaction and environmental performance." ■

For more information visit
cleaningsystemsinc.com/iso-certifications
or cleaningsystemsinc.com

Transforming a Wash: From the Ground Up

By Suzanne L. Stansbury

The before and after images of what is now Streamline Car Wash in Rockaway, NJ, are pretty unbelievable. What was once a tired, outdated and underperforming exterior wash is now a bright, colorful tunnel filled with new equipment and a whole new vibe.

But the transformation wasn't an easy one and it didn't happen overnight. New owners Adam Gilbert and Jeb Wilson researched their options and worked with a seasoned distributor to help them navigate a six-month renovation of their 41-year-old wash. "We did a lot of research and ran a lot of numbers and knew it would be hard, but not as hard as some other industries to make money in," said Gilbert.

Wilson, who has worked in the restaurant business agrees. "I feel like this industry is more fun and there are fewer moving parts. I think it's definitely easier than being in the restaurant business."

Both Wilson and Gilbert, however, have "day jobs" that make running a carwash a bit of a juggling act. Wilson is a software engineer and has his own consulting company, while Gilbert is a singer-songwriter and producer (adamgilbertmusic.com), who has just released his fourth album, "On Softer Ground," and is also a music director at Central Presbyterian Church in Summit, NJ.

If you're shaking your head, let's back up. Streamline Car Wash, formerly Big Tub Car Wash, was built by Gilbert's father and grandfather in 1976. It was sold in 2003. Gilbert's exposure to the wash growing up was limited, but when his dad got the wash back again in 2015 it was Wilson who first thought it might make a viable business venture for the friends, who met through Gilbert's sister.

So, lots of things needed to happen to transform this tunnel into a profitable wash. The first thing was picking a distributor who they could trust and work with and who would guide them in selecting the right equipment package for their needs. Richie Boudakian of Tameric Equipment in Bloomfield was that resource. Boudakian was already servicing the wash and was all too familiar with its issues. "You could

Continued on page 14 ...

Before the renovation...

The former Big Tub Car Wash was opened in 1976 by current owner Adam Gilbert's father and grandfather. Over the years the wash became run down and in need of a major face and equipment lift that new owners Adam Gilbert and Jeb Wilson began in 2015.

Transforming a Wash … *continued from page 13.*

Nearly all the equipment was taken out of the tunnel and replaced during the renovation. Tameric Equipment's Richie Boudakian was an asset to the new owners in equipment selection and placement.

see light coming through cracks in the building's walls, and there were definitely equipment issues, but there were solutions," said Boudakian.

He suggested that Gilbert, Wilson and Gilbert's dad, Ron, visit other washes to see different layouts and familiarize themselves with possible options. Boudakian made recommendations that were generally followed. "My favorite part of a project like this is creating the tunnel design and overcoming the challenges," said Boudakian. "Taking something that is really bad and making it great is what I love, and each job has its own unique challenges."

Once Gilbert and Wilson decided what they wanted to do to the wash, a six-month process ensued where they basically rebuilt the structure and re-equipped the tunnel. "They left the steel rafters on the roof and peeled everything else off and built a new roof above it," said Boudakian. "There was all new electric and plumbing, lighting, equipment, equipment room and a new office."

The partners kept just one blower and one mitter in the 110-foot tunnel, equipping it with a Belanger conveyor including scrubbers and wraps, an Air Cannon dryer and tire shiner, a Sonny's mitter, ZEP chemical, a CSI mizer, a Kesseltronics controller, a Washify point-of-sale and spot-free rinse. "We are looking at possibly adding vacuums in the future, but we're a little tight on space," said Gilbert. "Adding free vacs would be difficult, but not impossible. Since we're a new wash we want to see what our volume does by the end of our second year before we offer free services."

With a fair amount of competition surrounding them, Streamline needs to set itself apart. "Our nearest competitor is less than a mile away and they are an established wash, but they are a full serve," said Wilson. "We also have a hand wash in the other direction, so it's been really important to make the wash look brand new.

"If you're going to pay $8 for a wash, do you want old or new equipment?" (Wash prices range from $8 for their Basic Wash to $18 for the Ultimate Wash.)

The partners hope that rebranding the wash "Streamline" will also help to set it apart. "We definitely wanted the public to know that there are new owners with a new vision," said Gilbert. "We chose the name 'Streamline' because it represented what we wanted to give our customers – a 'streamline' and fast experience. I think our logo shows that."

Both Gilbert and Wilson are Facebook proponents and use the social media forum to promote their wash. "We run Facebook ads and have specials," said Gilbert. "We put up pictures and videos and also post on Instagram." But instead of hiring someone to do that, or giving the job to a Millennial on staff, they do it themselves. "I feel like I'll care a little bit more," added Gilbert. "I might be lying in bed and think of something and then post it."

They also promote their wash with signage in the windows facing the street as signage ordinances in their town are restrictive.

Given Gilbert's background, bringing music into their wash has also been a priority for the partners. Last year they hosted some live music with a BBQ for their customers and they hope to do that again now that the weather

Continued on page 16 ...

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Transforming a Wash ... *continued from page 14.*

is nice. "It's important to be active in our community," said Gilbert. "We did a fundraiser last September with the local high school music programs and the month of September we donated 10 percent of our profits to Dover and Morris Hills and Morris Knolls High Schools' music programs. We'd like to make it an annual thing."

According to the partners, the wash outperformed its projections for 2017. Boudakian agrees that it has potential, especially if their unlimited program takes off. "It's all about figuring out how to make all the pieces come together," he said. "The advice I'd give to someone new to the industry is to do your homework. Go to a lot of different washes and see how things are set up and how they are done and try to understand it. Work at a wash for a few weeks.

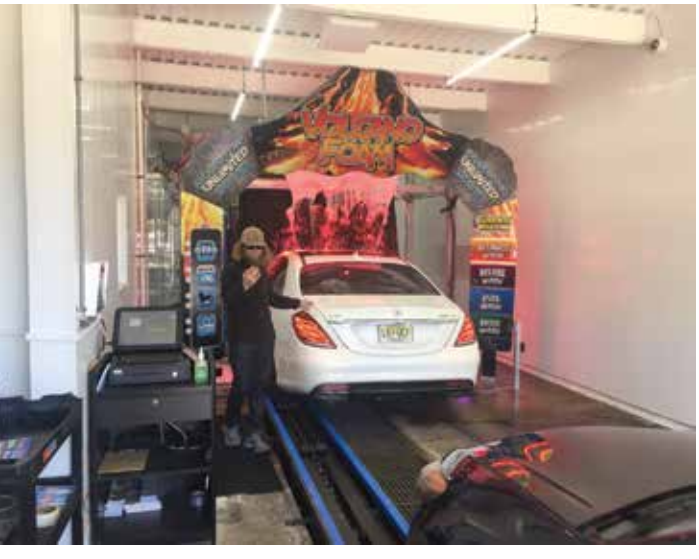
"Typically, a good new investor won't know what he doesn't know for one year. After a year, he should understand it." ■

Suzanne L. Stansbury is the Editor/Publisher of the Northeast Carwasher. *You can contact her at mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com or 518/280-4767.*

After the renovation...

More Photos on Pages 18 and 19!

The light, bright and white tunnel is now appealing and feels like a safe environment for customers and their vehicles.



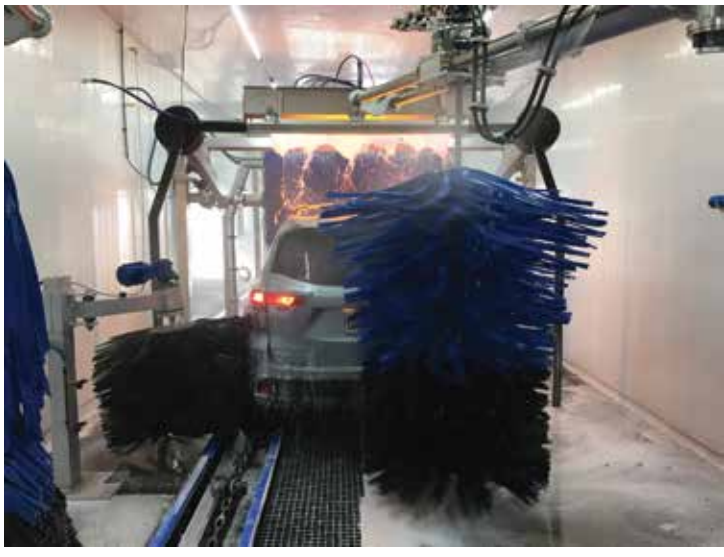
The wash features 110-foot Belanger equipped tunnel including wraps and scrubbers, an Air Cannon dryer and tire shiner, a Sonny's mitter, ZEP chemical, a CSI mixer, a Kesseltronics controller, a Washify point-of-sale and spot-free rinse.

The ground up renovation took approximately six months. The result is obvious and eye catching. Gilbert and Wilson plan on expanding their signage and possibly adding vacs at a later date. They may even entertain opening a second location.

Transforming a Wash …

continued from page 16.

Streamline employees Jose Rivera, Ray Williams, Scott Meser-Michalowski and Zach Antonacci.



Streamline owners Adam Gilbert and Jeb Wilson.

The wash has featured music on site to build customer appreciation and excitment about the facility. The owners hope to do more of that moving foward.

Dealing with Damage

By Chris Brown

"Look at what you did to my car!" Eight small words. Eight small words that can immediately raise blood pressure and lower profits. Handling damage claims, both legitimate and illegitimate, scares and separates even good managers into leaders and followers. In an era of both rising competition and false allegations, operators cannot just "go along to get along" and accept frivolous accusations of scratches, scrapes or more as the cost of doing business. Here are some keys for minimizing the stress and profit-drain associated with this weekly, and in some cases daily, occurrence for most companies.

The more you know, the more you win. We have all been there before, in a discussion about a topic where you thought you knew a lot about it, only to find the person you were speaking with indeed was an "expert" in it. Soon after they have proven your knowledge as inferior to theirs, your slight embarrassment turns to a sudden desire to be quiet. "Better to be thought a fool, then to open your mouth and remove all doubt." Conversely, in our world, when we know more about common causes and results of carwash and non-carwash vehicle damages than an accusing guest, our confidence and ability to handle claims swells. So, what types of common paint damage should your team be able to identify in an instant? Here are a few:

The Terrible 10 non-carwash damage causes, in order of frequency:

1. Bush, brush and pine tree scraping, low-hanging branches (new landscaping, anyone?)
2. Salt corrosion (safer roads, but unsafe for cars!)
3. Bug remnant etchings (The Southeast's infamous love bugs top the list!)
4. Bird droppings and bird bomb etchings (No, the carwash didn't do it!)
5. Keying (The malicious damage of choice for former love-interests!)
6. Egg etchings (Choice number two for former love interests if choice number one is unsuccessful, or a force multiplier if it is!)
7. Door dings (Compliments of other cars parallel-parked near especially where kids are present!)
8. Toy abrasions (When little Johnny's fastball accuracy needs just a tad more work!)
9. Shopping carts (No, they are not bumper cars!)
10. Driver error (Nah, that never happens!)

Carwash Caused – Yes, it happens!

- Long scratches and abrasions proceeding down the length of a car or ones continuing in the same rotation/movement patterns as equipment in the tunnel,
- Detail swirl marks and holograms created and left by inexperienced detailers,
- Marring and micro-marring, buffer haze, dull, scuff-like abrasions frequently caused by overzealous clay bar usage, and
- Larger scale damages from tunnel collisions.

As leaders, it is our responsibility to help our team members who are badgered by and who are negotiating with frustrated, angry customers understand what has happened to their vehicle's finish better than the guest. A "guest" is just that, a person who visits. A consumer visiting your business shouldn't be expected to know what caused the damage and can be expected to be initially emotional or unreasonable when they first see it after your cleaning process reveals it for the first time. So, be patient, educational and understanding. The customer not only had to part with their hard-earned money, but they were also deprived of the satisfaction they expected to enjoy upon looking at their newly-cleaned automobile! This little moment of joy was ripped away by seeing a nasty scratch or issue they never knew existed. Naturally, that person is going to look for someone or something to blame. As your wash was the latest thing to encounter their beloved vehicle, it is natural for them to associate your tunnel or team as the culprit.

So, how does one prepare to handle these emotionally-charged moments? Keep these mental preparations in mind to handle your next encounter with poise and confidence:

Remember, it is not a competition. The overwhelming number of claimants do not come to the wash to make our lives miserable. These people were going about their day when they were surprised, bitterly disappointed, and frustrated to see what they think is fresh damage on their car. They want to know why it happened and who or what was responsible, and they may not tell you in a friendly manner if they think your business is to blame. Avoid raising your voice or mirroring the customer's heightened emotions to minimize escalation. The Biblical proverb, "A calm answer turns away wrath" conveys this wisdom from the ages. Stay calm and listen, without interrupting. When we get defensive, our volume rises, and mannerisms appear more aggressive which, in turn, draw more fire and aggression. If the vicious cycle continues upward, soon the participants are no longer discussing the damage, but are more concerned with "appearing" right so they can save face in front of the challenger. In this situation, the most common result is a customer storming off to grill the company on social media, and a manager left to wonder how they could have handled it better and fearful, knowing a blowback is coming.

Keep the endgame in mind. Know the customer's lifetime value. If your ticket average is $12, and your average customer frequents your wash two times a month, their an-

nual revenue value is $288. Further, if you are in the carwash business for the long haul, it is not unreasonable to expect to retain a satisfied customer for 20 years. Twenty years times $288 per year vaults your customer's lifetime value to $5,760! Add in the exponential impact that the same guest can have on their lifetime circle of influence (especially in the age of viral social media); it's easy to see how important it is to handle damage claims prudently.

Preset your maturity level each morning. A wise man once said, "You can judge the level of a person's maturity by how much it takes to get that person angry." When a mad, sniping stranger is unexpectedly thrust in front of you accusing you and your business of mismanagement (what they are saying when they claim you have damaged their car), the natural reaction is to fight back. Unfortunately, retaliating verbally only exacerbates the situation. The best way to ready yourself for these events is to affirm to yourself at the beginning of each day, "I am going to stay in control emotionally today no matter what happens. I am probably going to encounter a couple of difficult challenges or people, but I am not going to allow their emotions to cause me to lose my cool." Then, when that situation invariably arises, you are ready for it as a "moment of truth" or opportunity to demonstrate your personal, mental discipline. So, what if it doesn't happen all day? Bonus!

Disallow grandstanding. A loud, complaining customer knows their most significant leverage over a carwash operator is influencing others not to visit your store. Making a visible scene on-site that garners the attention of other customers places the upset patron in a more powerful and leveraging situation. Whenever possible, when encountering someone claiming damage, move them to a quieter, more private area so you can remove their ability to "bring others into" the confrontation. Keeping the conversation more private and one-on-one helps remove their power base and emotionality out of the discussion, allowing you to more easily determine exactly what happened and the best outcome for all.

Disarm with tension diffusers. Multiple verbal techniques can be employed to calm the most frustrated of guests. Here are some compelling pressure-diffusing statements:

"I understand." It's a simple, powerful phrase that shows empathy without accepting guilt before knowing the real cause of the damage.

"I can tell you're an intelligent and fair person. Let's see if we can determine what might have caused that." Showing you respect the customer's level of smarts demonstrates you are trying to approach them as an equal trying to find a solution, not as a parent talking down to a child who can further inflame the situation. It also sets an expectation for the guest to be fair.

"You are important to us, so we want to know what did happen." Conveying to the customer their value, not just as a wallet, but as a person shows you genuinely have their best interest in mind.

"It's reasonable to be frustrated if someone damaged your car. I would be too. That said, I'm sure you wouldn't want to accuse us of damage we did not do. And understand we don't want to be responsible for the damage if we didn't create it while being accountable if we did it. So, let's take a clear-eyed look at it and see if we can determine what happened. Is that fair?" The average, reasonable guest wants to know the truth. Help them find it.

A video is the #1 damage dispeller. If a picture is a worth a thousand words, then a video is worth 10,000. Although an average high-quality camera system, in-tunnel and out, can quickly run $15,000 to $20,000, the amount of evidence provided to refute inaccurate or bogus claims can recover that money for most washes in one or two years. In addition, video footage can capture all types of other dangerous and profit-bleeding activity such as:

- Bad safety practices, i.e., walking over the conveyor, unsafe customer foot traffic in proximity to the front or rear of the tunnel, or people moving vehicles with doors open and legs out
- Poor loader behaviors i.e., poor pre-existing damage observation, slow loading speed, poor service and
- Unsafe employee positioning between cars.

In short, invest in good cameras and recording technology. It's worth it.

Convey competence with professionalism. Ask yourself, if a customer sees a dirty tunnel while their car is in it, what do they think about the quality of their wash experience? Their car may come out spotless, but the dirty environment from which the vehicle came still can make the buyer uneasy. Similarly, when a customer accusation of damage sends a team of unorganized managers scurrying into a frenzy looking for this form or that form, the disorderliness in and of itself adds stress and strengthens their accusations. They think, "If they can't find a form, how can they possibly be managing the equipment in their tunnel well?" When it is determined a damage issue is at hand, follow a set process that includes:

- Moving the guest (and car, if possible) to a private area where the problem can be discussed without grandstanding

Continued on page 22 ...

Dealing with Damage ... *continued from page 21.*

- Looking at the vehicle carefully, together
- Cleaning the area thoroughly with a gentle cleaner and non-abrasive, microfiber-type cloth to ensure actual damage exists and not merely a removeable mark or dirt
- Observing the size and direction of any damage
- Walking through the tunnel looking for any loose or damaged equipment (without the guest for safety reasons)
- Determining the type of surface problem and if the wash or an external event caused it
- If the damage was created by the company, or the customer insists it was, and you know it was not responsible, document, document, and document with pictures, date and time of the event in an incident report kept in a file for future reference
- Negotiate with the guest on a resolution – For minor issues, it's better to give future carwash credit away than cash. First, it's less expensive and second, it retains the guest and serves as an opportunity to re-satisfy them and build your relationship with them. In my experience, when customers see how committed you are to them in a difficult scenario, they can become some of your best customers.
- Resolve carwash-caused damages fully and quickly. Resolution = Quality of Response x Speed of Response. Master both to minimize fallout from the incident.
- Address comments placed on social media with sensitivity, evidence and persuasive reasoning. Thousands of eyes are watching not only what you say, but how you say it.

If you practice these scenarios, just as you would practice a sales approach, you can't help but get better at them. As your skills improve, so will your outcomes. There will always be "professional complainers" you will have to shut down for their irrationality, their premeditation or impropriety. They are though, the exceptions. Understand most anger expressed in alleged damage situations is a mask for fear, fear of further damage, fear of being abused by a big company for the sake of profit, or fear of being singled out and taken advantage of resulting in a personal loss. When you understand worry is the root cause of high emotions, it guides you to proceed first with compassion, not confrontation which places your wash in the best position to retain the guest without giving the store away. ■

Chris Brown is Founder and Principal of Myrrh Consulting, a performance management firm based in Orlando, FL. Myrrh has helped carwash owners and managers in more than 100 carwashes improve cash-flow by developing their team performance and profit-building strategy. For questions, a complimentary 30-minute consultation or speaking requests, contact him at chris@myrrhconsulting.com or 1-844-MORE-REV.

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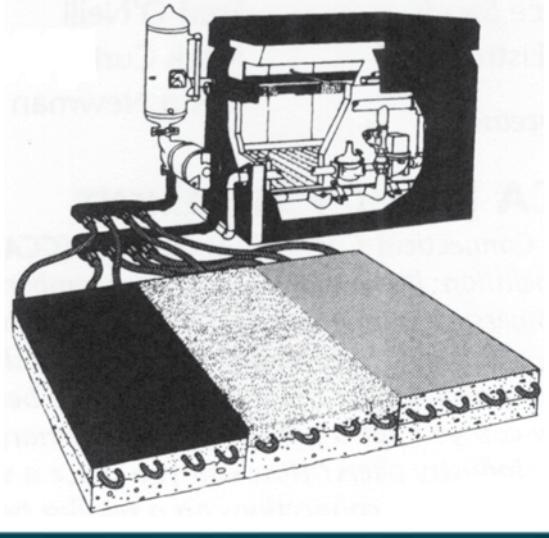

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Jay Rifenbary to Keynote 2018 NRCC

Jay Rifenbary

The 29th Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 1-3, at the Atlantic City Convention Center will feature motivational speaker Jay Rifenbary as the 2018 Keynote Speaker. Rifenbary, president of Rifenbary Training & Development of Saratoga Springs, NY, is the author of the International Best Seller, "No Excuse!" – Incorporating Core Values, Accountability and Balance into Your Life and Career." He has also authored "True to Your Core – Common Sense Values for Living Life to its Fullest" and "Return To Your Core – Principles For a Purposeful and Respected Life."

The West Point grad and Military Commander with more than 25 years of experience as a speaker, trainer and consultant will speak on the importance of several key principles and skills, such as self-responsibility, organizational accountability, integrity, personal honesty, professionalism, self-respect, forgiveness, passion and a positive attitude as they pertain to one's personal and professional success. "We are so excited to hear Jay," said 2018 Show Chairman Doug Rieck. "He comes highly regarded and his message is one every operator can benefit from hearing."

Rifenbary's Keynote, "No Excuse!" is slated for Tuesday, October 3.

To learn more visit nrccshow.com

NRCC Northeast Regional Carwash Convention

NRCC
Emerging Leader Award

Criteria

The Emerging Leader Award celebrates and encourages early-career managers who have demonstrated strong leadership and industry service.

Materials to Submit

The individual making the nomination should indicate in 500 words or less why the candidate has met the Eligibility Criteria.

Eligibility Criteria

1. **The wash the candidate is affiliated with is a member in good standing of the CCA, CWONJ, MCA, NECA or NYSCWA.**
2. **Has demonstrated leadership abilities through work in his/her association or the industry in general.**
3. **Demonstrates strong interpersonal skills.**
4. **Demonstrates initiative and creativity.**
5. **Demonstrates a commitment to the future of the industry.**

Nomination Process

Nominations may be submitted via email to:

bibisim@adgcommunications.com

Deadline for Submissions

September 1, 2018

The NRCC board will review and select a winner who will be honored at the NRCC's Annual Award's Program.

NRCC
Northeast Regional Carwash Convention

Non-Traditional Carwash Investors Are Bullish on Carwashing

By Alan M. Petrillo

When an existing carwash is sold, typically, the new owner has been a veteran of carwashing or has a family history in carwashing. But for several years now, new blood has been emerging in carwashing from outside the industry in the form of investors who have no connection with carwashing, other than using carwash services.

Jim O'Leary of Corporate Consultants International, a business broker specializing in the carwash and quick lube industries for more than 30 years, said his last four broker sales were to a retired bank attorney, a hedge fund manager, a New York City realtor, and a chief operating officer for a top 500 corporation. O'Leary cited one of the top challenges for non-carwash industry investors getting into the business is securing financing.

"Investment groups will have the financial ability to purchase larger chains and secure traditional bank financing, but it's within the individual outside investors that I've noticed a relatively new trend, that is, SBA (Small Business Administration) loans, O'Leary said. "My last three carwash sales, with another one currently underway, secured financing through an SBA. And three of those four sales were with Celtic Bank in Southbury, CT."

> "Yes, car counts are critical, but if you're not capturing that audience, car counts are a moot point," he noted.

O'Leary says that Celtic is one of the largest SBA lenders in the country and does a tremendous amount of automotive-related SBA loans. He pointed out that it's important for an outside investor to work with a bank experienced in writing loans for that particular industry.

"There are often last minute hurdles one might expect, but if financing falls apart due to unforeseen issues, that can be a real deal breaker and extremely disappointing for all parties, O'Leary observed. Working with an experienced lender can give valuable insight to new investors as they work on cash flow analysis for investment opportunities and clearly identify what capital they'll need to bring to the table. "That kind of knowledge can help not only get the deal done, but the right deal for that investor," he said.

Royal Car Wash and Royal Express Car Wash

Robert Rabbino, owner of Royal Car Wash and Royal Express Car Wash in New Milford, CT, said that after nearly 40 years, first at a Wall Street law firm, followed by legal and business positions at two large foreign banks, he "wanted to try something completely new in a business that had always intrigued me. I also hoped to make a financial return that was greater, and more consistent, than what could be earned from the stock market."

Rabbino and his wife made the investment in two carwashes and included their children in the ownership. In deciding on the investments, he said the pros included the fact that he was buying two attractive, well-seasoned properties that had been managed by professionals who had built a market presence he has been able to maintain and in some aspects improve upon.

"Another advantage I saw is that the properties are located on the two major north/south arteries running through the northwest corner of Connecticut., in a prosperous part of the state, that contrary to so much of the state, has continued to experience growth," Rabbino said. "Also, one of the carwashes is in a strategic location that might, over time, have a commercial value above and beyond that of a carwash. Lastly, there was an opportunity to increase prices and still be the lowest-cost provider in the market."

The disadvantage of a non-carwash investor purchasing a wash, Rabbino said, was that while he had decades of legal and financial experience, he knew nothing about the carwash business, but thought that with a degree of due diligence he "could manage the risks of my ignorance. Now, a year out, I can see that, with a couple of notable exceptions, what I have seen is pretty much what I expected. The exceptions are non-recurring in nature, and have cost me the equivalent of somewhat less than a year of college tuition."

Rabbino noted that he's faced two major challenges over the past year. One challenge was management and line staffing, and achieving the proper balance between customer service and payroll expense control. He said it took a lot of trial and error to sort out those challenges.

The other major challenge Rabbino said he faced was how much he "underestimated the degree to which carwash investments are akin to gigantic weather options. When the weather cooperates, especially on weekends, they gush positive cash flows. Conversely, when it rains, or there is a disappointing winter month, there can be a torrent of relatively modest cash flows."

He continued, "To increase their value as financial buffers against unfriendly weather patterns, we have placed a great degree of emphasis on the sale of monthly unlimited wash plans by among, other steps, instituting an employee bonus incentive plan. As a result, we have during the past year sold hundreds more monthly plans than have been terminated."

Rabbino said he plans to be in the carwash business for

Royal Car Wash and Royal Express Car Wash owner Robert Rabbino said he faced two major challanges as a new car-wash owner; management and line staffing, and achieving the proper balance between customer service and payroll expense control. The wash is located in New Milford, CT.

Quixpress Car Wash owner, Nick Walters, was attracted to carwashing by its potential margins and low overhead. His wash is located in Newtown, CT.

the long haul. "At age 68, I certainly hope it is for a long haul," he said." My, and my wife's, aspirations are that we leave our children and grandchildren assets that will fund many years of tuition expense.

Fast Lane Quick Lube and Car Wash

Donald Curran, owner of Fast Lane Quick Lube and Car Wash in Brewster, NY, worked in financial services for more than 30 years, employed by institutional asset managers doing new business and client service. He also has extensive experience marketing alternative investment asset funds, including hedge funds and private investment vehicles.

But at some point, Curran said, "I decided that I needed a change in my life and to step away from the Wall Street 'rat race.' I started looking for a stand-alone business that I could purchase, own and run, and ultimately control the leadership and overall client service. I wanted to have more control in my life and leave corporate America, and it was the right time in my life to make a change."

Curran said he invested in the carwash industry because he believes he can improve the experience and outcome for customers. He added he also has a passion for cars and the driving experience.

"I believe the carwash business is a growth industry, and customers will always need their automobiles serviced and cleaned in a timely and professional manner," Curran said. "This is an industry that is not directly tied to the global capital markets, so if markets go down, people still need to service their cars. And many might argue that in tough economic times people tend to keep their cars longer and therefore want to take good care of them."

Speaking of the pros and cons he faced when deciding on investing in carwashing, Curran said the cons he found are that "the industry has a high cost and barrier to entry. Equipment is very expensive to purchase and maintain, and really learning the equipment is key to success and profit."

Continued on page 28 ...

Donald Curran, Fast Lane Quick Lube and Car Wash owner, said he needed to change his lifestyle and leave the rat race behind so jumping into carwash ownership made sense to him. Fast Lane is located in Brewster, NY.

Non-Traditional Carwash Investors … *continued from page 27.*

Regarding the pros, Curran noted, "This is a results and customer driven market. Build and run a good, clean facility and they will come. I am still learning the business and see that the future opportunity looks good for Fast Lane. Each day we make improvements that in the long run will help grow the business. The Monthly Unlimited Program is the future for Fast Lane and it's almost ready."

Curran said he did not have a purchase price in mind before the sale, although he was very sensitive to industry valuations.

"In the end, Fast Lane offered both a lube center and a carwash, and continues to be an impressive looking facility in the area," he said. "I plan to shift to an express model at some point in the future."

As for that future, Curran said he has a 10-year horizon and goal.

"Right now I'm focusing on my commitment to operating Fast Lane Quick Lube and Car Wash as effectively and efficiently as possible to grow sales and car counts, but also to be a real staple in the community and a good employer," Curran said. "It's why I started and I want to keep that perspective and those values in mind for the long haul. In any service industry, having good management and a strong team of people in place with clear policies and expectations are keys to overall success and that focus is what's important to me right now. "

Quixpress Car Wash

Nick Walters, owner of Quixpress Car Wash in Newtown, CT, is a real estate broker and investor who said he always keeps his eyes and ears open for potential investment opportunities, often including a real estate component. "A couple of years ago, I was watching the hit television show 'Breaking Bad' where the leading role purchases a full-service carwash to use as a vehicle to launder illegal drug money," Walters said. "While I'm not interested in the money laundering trade, I started to research the carwash industry and evaluated several deals that were presented to me, and the potential returns, low overhead and industry-wide trend toward the express exterior model were very attractive to me."

Walters said the most attractive pros in investing in a carwash are the potential margins and the low overhead that are realized when an express exterior wash is operating at optimum levels.

"The most challenging part of running any business is hiring, leading, training and retaining good people," he pointed out. "As a semi-absentee owner, this is the most important component that can make a business a profit machine or a money pit."

Walters said that as a "real estate guy," location, location, location is so important to his search criteria when evaluating a site.

"Yes, car counts are critical, but if you're not capturing that audience, car counts are a moot point," he noted. "I will look at any opportunities in the Northeast if the location is right and the numbers pencil out I am looking at existing express exterior washes, or underperforming full-service businesses on a piece of property that I will own that is large enough to convert to an express exterior."

Walters observed that his 10-year plan is to acquire, reposition and operate a portfolio of express exterior sites in the Northeast that will rival the largest owner-operators in the region, with a particular focus on the metropolitan New York City area, including New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

"That said, I know of multiple private equity shops, investment firms and other sources of sophisticated capital who have been entering this space, and the multiples that are being offered by these investors keeps my eventual exit strategy open for discussion." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ-based journalist, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. *He's the author of the historical mysteries,* Full Moon *and* Asylum Lane, *and his latest historical thriller,* A Case of Dom Perignon, *all available at www.amazon.com.*

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Snapshots From The Carwash Show 2018

The Carwash Show 2018, in conjunction with the Automotive Oil Change Association (AOCA) and the Western Carwash Association (WCA), April 26-28, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, NV, attracted more than 8,000 attendees/vendors, according to the International Carwash Association press release. Featuring nearly 160,000 square feet of exhibit space with 380 exhibitors the show was a well earned ray of sunshine for East Coast operators who have dealt with a relentless winter.

This year's keynote was an informal exchange between ICA CEO Eric Wulf and Howie Long, National Football League Hall of Famer and former defensive end for the Oakland/Los Angeles Raiders, who is currently on Fox NFL Sunday.

The 2018 Hall of Fame Award was presented to Roy Wakefield of Mister Car Wash in Houston, TX. The award was presented to Wakefield, who was instrumental in the early days of industry consolidation as well as being a top-notch operator for many years, by 2001 Hall of Fame recipient Ron Peterson.

The Car Wash Show 2019 will be May 13-15 at Music City Center in Nashville.

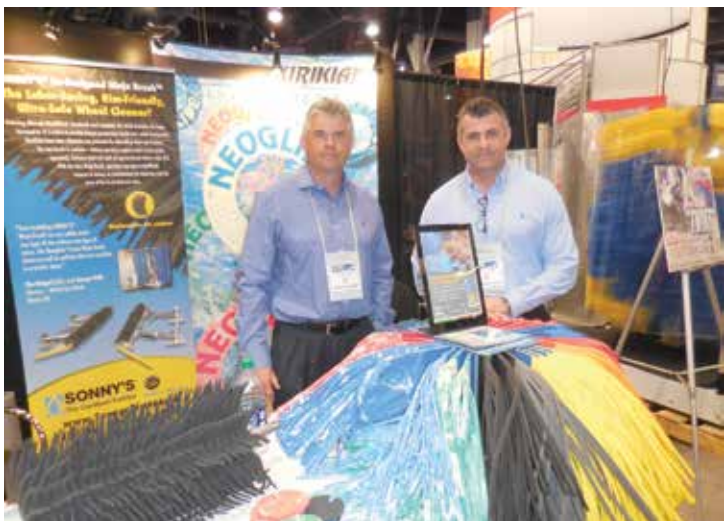
For more information visit carwash.org

More Photos on Pages 32 and 34!

Posh Wash's Stu Markowitz and Carwash Insurance Program by McNeil's Mike Benmoschè strike a pose.

Long-time comrades: Vacutech's Fred Grauer and Hoffman Car Wash's Tom Hoffman, Sr.

May I present, the newly-engaged Wash Co. couple: Jamie Cunningham and Glen Sheeley.



The team from Kirikian Industries: Christian and Serko Kirikian.

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Extrutech Plastics' Matt Traffie.

A photo bomb by the infamous Gary Sloan (center) disrupts a perfectly fabulous photo of Scrub-a-Dub's Doug Kleeschulte and Foam & Wash's Gary Baright. Oh, Gary....

Former Prowash (now WashHounds) owner Scott Freund with WashHounds General Manager John Agosta and owner Brad Levie.

Second and third generation Hoffman Car Washers! Zack Wojtusik, Walt Hartl, Patrick Hoffman and his mom Erin.

Danny Ward, Pete LaRoe, Domenick D'Agostino, Vinny Porzio and Mark DiTommaso strike a handsome pose.

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Class sizes are limited, so sign up today!

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Carwash Show 2018 ... *continued from page 32.*

Approximately 380 vendors showered the show floor at The Carwash Show 2018 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, April 26-28. Here are just a few of them!

Sonny's Enterprises, Tamarac, FL.

Erie Brush, Chicaog, IL.

Simoniz USA, Bolton, CT.

Blendco Systems, Bristol, PA.

Innovative Control Systems, Wind Gap, PA.

Ryko, McNeil & NCS, Barrie, ON, Canada.

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Hoffman Car Wash, Saratoga Springs, NY.

Metered Vacs Trending in Express Washes But Free Vacs Following Still Strong

By Alan M. Petrillo

One of the profitability questions facing carwash operators with express exterior carwashes is the issue of free versus metered vacuums for customers. Supporters of the free vacuum concept have data that shows the use of free vacuums increases traffic counts, and in some cases, average ticket prices.

Those operators who believe in using metered vacuums cite the added energy costs in running free vacuums all day, concerns about the maintenance and cost of replacing critical equipment like motors, and replacing the profit from metered vacuums with another income source.

Mark Kubarek, owner of two K & S Carwash locations in Auburn and Weedsport, NY, offers full service and also metered vacuums. "Where the free vacuum movement started is in the southeastern United States. Their land costs a quarter of what it costs in New York, so for us to put $250,000 into a piece of land that attracts a $50 per thousand tax assessment is not a good use for free vacuums," Kubarek said. "You also have to consider the maintenance of the vacuums and the trash accumulated at the site."

In addition, Kubarek pointed out, "Electricity rates in the south are much less than in the Northeast, so the cost of running those free vacuum motors all day is less down there. And if one of the big motors on a free central vacuum system burns out, it can be $10,000 or more to replace it."

The other side of the discussion of free versus metered vacuums is well illustrated by Tom Hoffman Jr., chief executive officer of Hoffman Car Wash, who has a mix of 21 locations, some running free vacuums, and others, metered vacuums in Upstate New York.

"The first place we did free vacuums was when we built our express exterior location in Amsterdam (NY)," Hoffman said. "We had done a lot of research and determined that people like free vacuums, but were concerned that customers at our other locations might complain there were no free vacuums at their location. But it turns out, that has not been an issue with our customers."

Balise Car Wash, Springfield, MA

Hoffman said his company then put free vacuums in its Troy location, in its Binghamton express exterior, its East Greenbush location, and the newly-built North Line Road express exterior in Saratoga, which is similar in size to the Amsterdam site.

"The revenue that you lose in your existing self-service vacuum system is more than made up in the additional traffic and sales on the express side of the equation," Hoffman pointed out. "We allow anyone, even those who don't buy a carwash, to use the free vacuums. We have the capacity, typi-

cally 14 spots, so we would rather create traffic for the property and maybe gain additional customers that way."

Gary Baright, owner of three Foam & Wash Car Wash sites in Fishkill, Wappinger's Falls, and New Windsor, NY, said that he doesn't disagree that free vacuums might be the right move for the right carwash in the right market, but that an operator has to be sure they are an efficient use for the wash.

"My concern is that if everyone goes to free vacuums, then there is no more value to vacuums for the customer," Baright said. "We looked at one of our sites and figured out how much profit we made on vacuums at that location. We determined we would have to wash 35,000 more cars to make up the difference if we gave up that vacuum profit."

At Baright's Wappinger's Falls express exterior carwash, he has installed a hybrid vacuum system.

"The system has a meter box with a validator credit card reader and keypad," he said. "Vacuums are free for our unlimited customers, and others can swipe a credit card and push a stop button when done, or they can go to the cashier and get a four-digit code to use."

Fred Grauer, executive vice president of new business development for Vacutech, a vacuum manufacturer based in Sheridan, WY, believes the increase in express exterior and flex carwashes means keeping customers in their cars, and to retain loyalty, provide free vacuums. He cited the 95th Street Carwash and Detail Center in Lafayette, CO, as a possible harbinger of the future.

"It's a flex wash where every customer remains in the car through the wash," Grauer noted. "Customers use a RFID tag or drive by the cashier's booth to buy a carwash and other services. A basic wash is $9, and windows and vacuums are an additional $13. If they are a flex customer, they go left to eight positions where they exit the car, and their windows and vacuuming get done. If they are express customers, they pull out and drive to 20 positions with free vacuums."

Grauer said he thinks a lot of eastern carwashes will go to a modified business model.

"They will get rid of the majority of their labor, and let customers do some work on their own, which is the vacuuming," he said, "and the best way to entice them is with free vacuums. I think free vacuums are absolutely the future for the express model carwash." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ-based journalist, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. *He's the author of the historical mysteries,* Full Moon *and* Asylum Lane, *and his latest historical thriller,* A Case of Dom Perignon, *all available at www.amazon.com.*

The Spirit of Aloha!

By JoAnna Brandi

Last week was my dear friend Anita Holland's birthday. It was a notable one. Friends flew in from around the country to celebrate. One, Lorraine, flew in from Hawaii leaving in the middle of the night to get to Florida in time for the party.

She was carrying one of the best gifts ever – a stunning handmade Lei that was made that very day. So many of Anita's years were spent happily living in Hawaii, so this was a very special gift.

Little did I know until I saw Lorraine yesterday that the gorgeous Lei barely made it - having gotten left behind while changing planes. In a heroic burst of energy she turned back around and sprinted through the connecting terminal to find her first plane still at the gate. While I was admiring her love and dedication to her friend, she looked at me and smiled and said, "I had to – it's the Spirit of Aloha!"

> "Are you delivering on the kinds of emotional experiences your customers crave?"

That's when I remembered that five years ago after returning from presenting "Positive Leadership" at a client's 50th Anniversary Conference in Maui, I had a lot to say about that spirit and what it can contribute to your customer's and employee's experience. I want to share that with you today.

Everyone I met at the conference was happy to be there. Within a day we were all greeting each other with the word "Aloha." It's used to say both "hello" and "goodbye."

As the days went on, and I learned more about the island, its people, customs and language, I began to understand how Aloha is so much more than a greeting. In Maui, Aloha is a way of life. It's a practice, a connection to the spirit of the land. It's an invocation and a blessing. It's an honoring of one another's highest presence. It's a joyful sharing of life and of love.

When people live Aloha, you can feel it. Positive energy and emotion flow with Aloha. The spirit of Aloha puts the other first, and like the golden rule, suggests that when we deliver good unto others we bring goodness back to ourselves because we are all connected. Aloha recognizes that each person's contribution to the whole is important.

The elders teach that respect, beauty, love, consideration, mercy and compassion (along with joyfulness and fun of course) are all part of the practice of Aloha. After all, it's the island of love.

When people who practice Aloha are in customer-facing positions the customers facing them can feel the depth of their caring and connection. It creates an experience that has meaning and depth.

The customer's experience (internal customers too!) is all about feelings – how we feel as a result of how you treat us, how we feel about whether or not you deliver the value we're looking for – or something better, how well we feel you are taking care of our needs.

Some of those needs are emotional. We want to feel valued, appreciated, respected, heard, seen, recognized, and sometimes even loved.

While the Aloha spirit may come easier in paradise than it does in Pittsburgh or Peoria, it's a practice and any practice can be learned with sufficient desire.

Would you like your staff to say ALOHA? Try these 7 steps.

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2. **Get into present moment awareness.** Paying attention to your breath is the easiest way to get there. Be present and sincere in all your interactions.
3. **Open up.** Listen to what the customer is saying and what he or she is not saying.
4. **Extend warmth and caring** (and compassion and forgiveness when necessary).
5. **Respect others for the gifts they bring** - everyone brings something.
6. **Honor others** - let the noble part in you connect with the noble part in them.
7. **Spend time in nature.** Notice how nature has cycles of renewal, give and take, and wisdom in its ways. Slow down and do take time to smell whatever's blooming. Keep living things around you and shower them with ALOHA too.

Are you delivering on the kinds of emotional experiences your customers crave?

Aloha!

JoAnna Brandi

JoAnna Brandi is the author of "54 /Ways to Stay Positive in a Changing, Challenging and Sometimes Negative World." You can learn more from JoAnna at Joanna@returnonhappiness.com or visit www.ReturnOnHappiness.com or call her at 561/279-0037 ask about her program, "The Practice of Positive Leadership."

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A Five-Year Look at Towel Trends

By Valerie Sweeney

It's summer time again! Long gone are the days of freezing cold temperatures, and frozen microfibers. Onto bigger and better things, like hot summer days and frozen margaritas! I've been supplying the carwash industry since 1995, and I've seen many towel trends through the years. When I first started out, we supplied domestic irregular towels to the carwash industry. These were towels bought from the mills that were overstocks, seconds, or closeouts of retail towels you would find at your favorite department store. I would sell towels on the phone during the day, then at 5pm I would go out back to the warehouse, and sort big bales of mixed towels by color. Even though we would group the towels by color, each box of blue towels would have varying shades, like indigo, navy, medium blue, colonial, etc. If we were lucky, we would get a big box of all the same color.

> **"The biggest downfall of seconds and closeouts is that it was hard to buy the same towels twice."**

The biggest downfall of seconds and closeouts is that it was hard to buy the same towels twice. If an operator found a towel he or she loved, it would not always be available to reorder. When the American towel mills closed, towel suppliers were forced to have products made overseas. In the long run, this ended up benefiting the carwash industry. Products became more consistent because towel vendors could select the color, size, and weight that their carwash customers preferred. Carwash owners and managers now had the ability to find a towel they liked, and be able to reorder it again and again.

Soon after the towel mills closed in the US, microfiber towels were introduced. While they took a few years to gain acceptance and popularity, they ultimately became a staple of the carwash industry. Over the years, microfiber pricing has come down drastically and people have learned how to wash and use them, and now many washes only use microfiber.

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Five years ago, I wrote an article about what towels carwashes use in the Northeast. I thought it would be interesting to revisit that, just five years later. Here is what it looked like 2013.

Towel Style	% of Total Towels Sales*
Terry Towels	68%
Microfiber	47%
Huck/OR Towels	26%

Here is a current snapshot of towel usage in the Northeast:

Towel Style	% of Total Towels Sales
Terry Towels	35%
Microfiber	63%
Huck/OR Towels	13%

So, just in the last five years, microfiber has continued to gain popularity. It seems that it is the preferred towel for many carwashes, but many still have terry and hucks in their "towel toolbox."

On a national level, the mix was similar, but much less huck towel use:

Towel Style	% of Total Towels Sales
Terry Towels	40%
Microfiber	58%
Huck/OR Towels	2%

Moving forward, I predict that this mix will not change as much over the next five years. I think that this towel mix will stabilize. Terry towels will always be a staple for many carwashes, so they will never be fully replaced by microfiber (or at least I wouldn't think so). Regardless, many carwashes understand the value of having different styles of towels in their "toolbox" in order to service their customers the best way possible. ■

Valerie Sweeney

Valerie Sweeney is a towel consultant with ERC Wiping Products. You can reach her at 800/225-9473 or erc@ercwipe.com

**Percentages are based on a large sampling of customers.*

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Isolating Your Signals

By Gary Sokoloski

The more lights and functions that get added to the modern carwash, the more chance of having the signal wires interfering with other equipment. Isolating this interference is important to the life of sensitive new LED (light emitting diode) lights and to the normal signals that run your wash. Following a few electrical best practices can help to eliminate these issues.

One of the easiest and best ways to eliminate electrical interference or noise is to keep high- and low-voltage wires as far away from each other as possible. When referring to high voltage, it is a voltage above 110 volts AC. Most of today's LED sign lighting is 12 volts DC. The majority of bay LED lighting is 48 volts DC. It takes some planning to lay out all the conduit runs and junction boxes to keep these signals separate.

> **"Mixing high- and low-voltage wires in the same conduit will almost always cause issues over time."**

There is an easy way to see if you have issues with your signals needing isolating. Look at your LED lights when they are off and turn the motors in your wash on. If you see dim lights on the LED diodes, you have an issue. The other area to look for this is in your inputs (which are typically 24 volts DC) to see if there is a dim light on your carwash controller for inputs that are not on but getting some voltage from some area where the signals are getting crossed. While you can not stop all voltage bleed (meaning the signals from the higher voltage wires interfering with the lower voltage wires), it is important to try to minimize the impact it will have on your carwash and lighting equipment over time.

Having these wires in separate conduits is crucial. Mixing high- and low-voltage wires in the same conduit will almost always cause issues over time. If this is the only option, consider using a shielded cable that will keep the voltage contained within the cable itself. Running your conduits of

differing voltages at least a foot apart is recommended to decrease the risk of voltage bleed. This is extremely important in longer conduit runs when PVC is used to run these wires. Long parallel runs of high- and low-voltage wires in PVC pipe is one of the most common causes for voltage bleed. Also, plan accordingly when having high- and low-voltage wires entering and exiting junction boxes and panels. Keep the high- and low-voltage as far away as possible when going through junction boxes. When possible, do not mix the two voltages in the same junction boxes.

When looking at most control cabinets, all these voltages are in the same box. So, it would seem there would be a high risk of voltage interference. With good planning and a well laid out cabinet, these signals can be effectively run to not interfere with each other. The size and open areas of the cabinet help to eliminate interference in addition to using wireways to keep them separated will help. In looking at most cabinets, they are laid out in sections according to the voltage levels.

It is also important to keep the lower voltages away from and VFD (variable frequency drives) due to the high level of noise that is created when using these devices. If needed in a cabinet, there are devices to try and limit the discharge of electrical noise. They are typically a ferrite ring or core that the wires in question are wrapped around to silence the noise created from the device. Always remember to ground as many of the devices as possible to help the noise or interference to have a path it can escape out of your system.

In summary, keep the high- and low-voltage wires in your carwash as separated as possible. The result is usually dim lights on in your LED sign or bay lights when they are off. The other is ghost or dim lights on in your carwash controller input modules. This, over time, can cause false inputs and mystery problems with your wash. Plan ahead, isolate as much as possible, and always have an efficient grounding system. ■

Gary Sokoloski

Gary Sokoloski owns Centerline Carwash Sales and Service in Wales, ME. He can be reached at 207/375-4593 Office, 774/248-0171 Cell, or at gscarwash@gmail.com

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Las Vegas 2018: A Healthy Glow

By Doug Rieck

Carwashing is hot. This was the the most upbeat, equipment-filled carwash show since 2006/2007. At The Carwash Show, April 25-28, at the Las Vegas Convention Center, a lot of action, changes, new equipment, talk of suppliers merging and carwashes consolidating took place. There was a healthy glow, compared to the sickly pallor of a few years ago. There was even an educational seminar titled, "M & A and Financing Trends in the carwash industry." Wow, that says something. I'm not sure I like the message, but carwashing has become an attractive business. What I am sure of, though, is that there is a lot of elderly carwash equipment out there needing replacement. And there are many suppliers offering new and improved products. Our equipment is our lifeblood and it does not age well, without even considering technology improvements. If your carwash equipment dates to the Flip Phone era, this was the show for you. It is an exciting new world.

This year, the show opened on a Wednesday and closed on a Saturday. This made attendance more difficult for some, myself included. Normally, the shows are midweek events; saving saturdays for the wash or family, but not this year. Saturday was a return from show travel day for me. I don't know the stats, but the show floor appeared to be bigger with more exhibits than in year's past.

Attendance seemed very good, but again that is a guess. The exhibitors seemed to be smiling, and many were overrun with potential customers. I counted more than a dozen operators from New Jersey, but the reality is that the Vegas show is primarily a West Coast event. But regardless of which part of the country attended, there was a lot going on.

The educational sessions were great, with many overlapping. My only complaint is that with the quantity of quality sessions you can't attend them all. I missed three to four because of the simple fact that I could not be in two places at the same time. Hard choices, but necessary ones. It would be nice if the International Carwash Association (ICA) could video the sessions then stream them to members who paid for the seminars.

This year I tried concentrating on the marketing part of the education and was not disappointed. My favorite was, "Motivating and Marketing to Millennials" by Gerry O'Brien. It was full of great stuff, and I finally learned and grasped how a Millennial thinks. I also learned that a Millennial is between the ages of 18 to 38, a very important demographic for any model of carwash. My one line take away is that Millennials expect and demand more, and won't be back if they do not get it.

I am at heart a carwash equipment geek. Our industry has developed a separate portion of ultra high-volume express washes. Gated entry and entry terminals have made this possible. Our highly mobile and cell phone-toting population demands this wash model. These systems can wash a ridiculous volume of cars with daily counts of more than a thousand vehicles and hourly counts in the hundreds. There may not be one of these places near you, but they exist. As a result of these demands of ultra high-volume washing our conveyor equipment has evolved and improved. Some of our suppliers have seen a need for a special line of overbuilt, extended life carwash equipment. All of our equipment is great, but I can understand the motivation and anxiety of a carwash operator washing 150 cars an hour plus. If the common wash loses an hour of production they could lose 40 to 50 cars and maybe $500 which has happened to me, and I cry. If I lost several thousand dollars, I don't know what I would do.

As a result, there is some heavy duty vastly overbuilt equipment out there. One conveyor being shown uses three-quarter inch thick steel. WOW! My existing name brand conveyor, which is 10 years old, just has some minor scuffing on the deck plates. Its steel is under a half inch thick. But I am only a small town medium volume carwash. My needs are different. The needs of high-volume express washes running 150,000 plus cars a year at amazing chain speeds, require more. What's the difference? Reliability and the ability to run extremely high car counts before needing service and or replacement. I do not see that as a slight toward the normal offerings from our suppliers, however. There is a matter of realism that a carwash washing 75,000 cars a year has different needs than one with a car count of 150,000 cars plus.

I plan on mentioning some equipment that I saw on the show floor. I will be mentioning names. These are my opinions and based on what I saw I have to acknowledge that our industry is so large and diverse that there is much that I could not cover. I might have missed your favorite, or something really neat. My loss. My apologies, but if I did, please let me know!

Starting with the conveyor segment is easy. Those manufacturers have so much floor space and so much on display. Belanger was displaying its SpinLite® system using the slow turning LED lit core brushes. Awesome. I still have not been through one, but I am hearing good things from those who have. Makes a lot of sense. Marketing your wash is the thing to do.

I was surprised when I walked over to the McNeil/Ryko booth. They were showing off a line of belt conveyors. MacNeil made its reputation years ago by selling great conveyors. They must have put a lot of thought into this product.

Continued on page 46 ...

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Also fresh and new was a Buff & Dry system using mid-level brushes mounted horizontally. Another new item was a side brush tucked under the legs of their wraps.

Motor City Wash Works had a full line showing. They had impressive signage and arches, as well. Their Dry N' Shine system was there and has a good reputation. Plus, they were handing out their free show T-shirts with a badge scan.

Sonny's, as usual, was immense. It was possible to get lost in their exhibit space for hours. This year they added their newly acquired company, Mr. Foamer, with its signs and LEDs. They also keep on redesigning and improving their equipment. One of Sonny's virtues is the way they keep improving stuff then offering retrofit kits. I have a set of Elephant Ear dryers that are about 10 years old. Last year they offered a rubber nozzle kit to replace the older fabric bags called the Mammouth air drying system. This year they added a retrofit again, adding the ability to turn the nozzles and aim at the backs of SUV's for better drying.

Conveyor Trends

Each of the manufacturers are trying very hard to capture all of the carwash investors business — from start to finish. Adding site consultation, development, training, signage and now even chemical. This is a far cry from earlier days when you would be buying wraps from one supplier, your conveyor from another and keep a existing chemical supplier. Overall, I think this is a good trend because it introduces greater responsibility for the supplier. If the wash does not work and make a profit, the primary supplier loses reputation and a recurring revenue stream.

All of the chemical suppliers are offering hyper concentrate and dispensing systems now. The days of the Flowjet pump and Hydrominder are fading. The reason being consistent, accurate chemical delivery is a must to ensure quality, and second to ensure economy. I saw one system where you could track usage with a phone app.

Many of our suppliers now have tie-ins with heavy duty equipment as I was writing about earlier. ICS saw the need and developed their awesome wraps. Their Accuwraps are designed to last under the heaviest usage, eliminate prepping and deliver consistent quality.

Another supplier is Hodge equipment. I saw the Hodge conveyor on the show floor and it is a beast.

Sonny's is offering Log Chain Conveyors. Log Chain seems to be the new heavy-duty standard replacing the X458. The bottom line for most of us is that we may not need the heavy-duty equipment at our wash, but we benefit from the learning curve to produce it.

Buff And Dry machines are becoming a staple in our industry and offer dryer and shinier cars. I saw three suppliers: Sonnys, Motor City, and now MacNeil heavily in this market. I have seen them work and heard good things. I just wish my conveyor was longer.

Belt conveyors are increasingly popular. The supposed advantage is greater flexibility on the cars you wash and greater safety. The car is put in park. Possibly in the future this may become more important with autonomous controls on cars.

Free vacuums are here to stay. The best comment I heard in a seminar is that they really are not free. Their cost is factored in to the wash price. Makes sense.

Inbays

Right now inbay automatics are big and rightfully so. I think that our customers have gotten trained at express washes and are ready to use inbays in off hours. These machines may not wash 50 cars an hour, but they sit there all day and night long working. At one of my locations I am working on my third frictionless inbay automatic machine. I love it and so do my customers. My first machine, 25 years ago, had no computers. My newest is fully computerized and the service tech plugs his laptop in to check it.

An inbay trend is friction inbay automatics. With computer control and foam wash media, they deliver a clean car safely for a lower cost than the frictionless. The result

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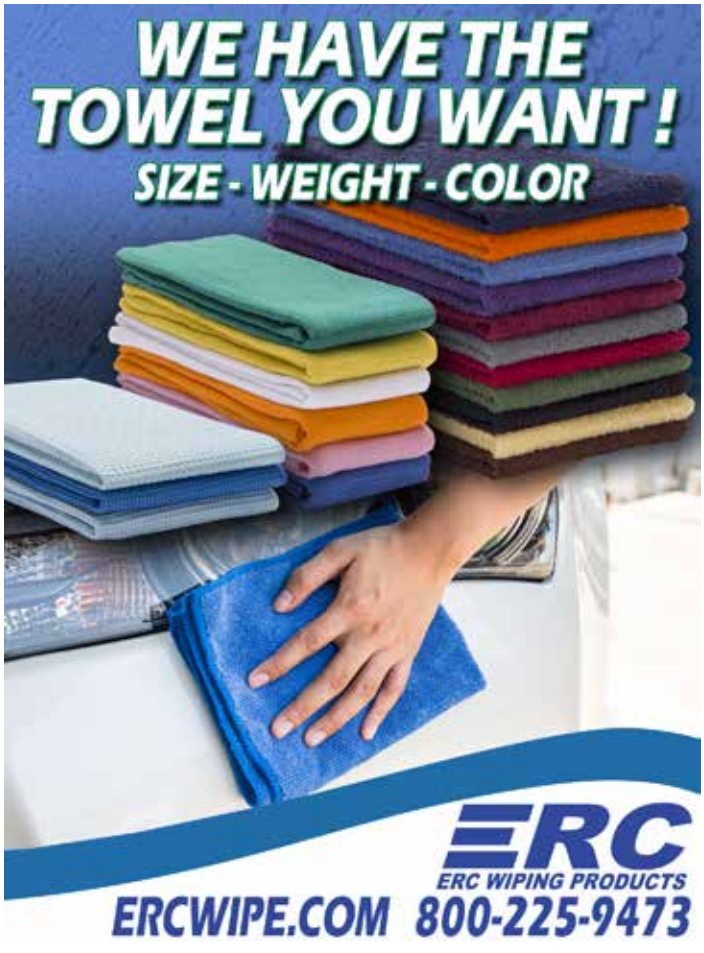

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Dear Venus and Mars,

What promotions do you push in the summer when your volume is less intense than during the winter washing season?

Heather Ashley

Venus Says

Since we operate self service and in-bay automatics, it can be challenging to come up with new ways to push promotions during the summer months. We have found that using our connections with other businesses, and the organizations in which we are members, can really help.

For example, some discounting options or extending times in your bays during your slower days can be profitable. Also, discounting or extending time for after hours washing seems to work well because it is cooler and people are still out and about. Of course, you are always bound by the ability of your equipment.

Being in the self-serve business, we are always thinking outside the box. Some non-traditional ways of bringing more attention to your wash and drawing in more customers might include working with your local Chamber of Commerce. The local Chamber of Commerce really helps with some free marketing for all of our events and special days and we really use that connection in the summer. While we consider it "free," chambers do require membership but it is a modest fee for the services provided and connections made.

Often in the summer, we try to work with local charities to offer a portion of our sales for the day. Some examples would be the Scouts, 4-H, and local not-for-profit groups. Not only does the organization help to advertise our business, but so does the chamber. A lot of people think that this is a lot of work but you have to remember that when you involve children and non-profits, people come. Not only that particular person comes, but they bring their families and extended families to the wash. What better way to try to get someone into your wash who has possibly never been there and has potential to be a lifetime customer! This little effort seems to provide great potential outcome.

Another thing we do is host a radio broadcast onsite to get more traffic into the wash. Not only does the station play mu-

Paul Vallario

Mars Says

The summertime has its advantages and disadvantages when it comes to cawashing. The disadvantages being that the cars do not get that dirty and many people choose to wash their own vehicles. Both of these can significantly bring down wash volumes in the summer.

On the other hand, there are some pluses that you can take advantage of to make up for lost volume. The weather is much nicer, the roads are cleaner and again the cars are not getting that dirty. This being the case, people are willing to spend a little bit more on their cars this time of year. Knowing that their car isn't going to be filthy again in a day or two after washing it, customers are more likely to buy the extras.

That being said, one of my biggest promotions during the summer has to do with express detailing. I try not to get too involved in full detailing any more as it is more labor intensive and requires customers to leave their cars for a day. Express Detailing requires less labor, it can be done while the client waits, and it is more affordable than full detailing. In addition, what I've learned over the years is that an express detail will suffice on most cars. Also, more people are willing to purchase an express because of the convenience and lower price point.

That being said, I focus much of my promotions on the express detail services. However, the same applies to the tunnel extras during the summer. Again, more people are willing to get a hot wax or tire shine when they know it is going to last longer. Train your greeters when the weather is nice and people are in a good mood. Come up with specials that apply to that time of year. There is not a big demand for under car-

Venus and Mars, aka Heather Ashley and Paul Vallario, are carwash industry veterans. Heather Ashley is the President of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association. She is also co-owner of Virginia Car Wash Industries, Inc. and Shenandoah Valley Coin Laundries, and Ashley's Shenandoah Valley Rental Properties in Toms Brook, VA. You can reach Heather at mhashley@gmail.com, as well as Linkedin and Twitter @hrashley or www.thecarwashblog.com. Paul Vallario operates Westbury Personal Touch Car Wash in Westbury, NY, and is the President of Urban Avenue Carwash Distributors and Consulting. He is a board member of the New York State Car Wash Association. You can reach Paul at iwashcars@optonline.net.

If you have a question for Venus & Mars please send it to: Media Solutions, 2214 Budd Terrace, Niskayuna, NY 12309 • mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com

Venus ... *continued*

sic, but they will also bring some prizes of their own to bolster participation and business for us. In addition, you will receive extensive advertising before and during the event. While there is a cost involved, it is no more than what you normally would have had to pay for radio commercials.

Participating in special causes such as Wash to Save the Bay, Relay for Life, and Shriners and St. Jude Hospital can provide an opportunity for customers to learn about a cause/charity and get them to participate when they might not normally. Washes that participate are able to secure advertising and marketing materials from those causes, as well. And most of the time that advertising is free.

Concession trailers are allowed on a temporary basis in the towns in which we operate. In fact, a business friend owns his own trailer and we borrow it on occasion. A free or 50-cent hot dog and soda deal will get some folks onto our carwash lot giving them a Customer Appreciation Day which appeals to many people.

First Fridays are popular down our way. We are lucky enough to have grassy areas that we can host a car show where local musicians can come to play along with a handful of crafters or local artists.

Handing out tokens to potential clients during parades, local carnivals and festivals is another way to draw new folks to your business, as well.

These are some of the ideas that come to mind and that we have been successful with over the years. Some of these things may not be reachable for all of you because of size and time restrictions, but hopefully they will give you ideas that you can build off of and make work for your location. ■

Mars ... *continued*

riage washes or mat cleaning in the summertime!

Last but not least, promoting the unlimited washes is a year-round job. Come the nicer weather, we tend to see a drop off in sign ups and an increase in cancellations. One way to keep the cancellations down is to offer a pre-paid six-month unlimited pass at a slight discount. I run this in the early spring which keeps a customer's membership active through the summer and into the fall. At that point, we hope to continue them on the original monthly membership.

All in all the summer can also be a lucrative season for us carwashers. Run the right promotions and offer the right services and increased revenue per car will make up for lower volumes. ■

2018 NRCC
Northeast Regional Carwash Convention
Oct. 1-3, 2018
Atlantic City
Convention Center

There are some people that if they don't know, you can't tell them.

-Louis Armstrong

Doug's Perspective ... *continued from page 46.*

is happy customers and happy carwash owners. At one of my locations I use a 10-year-old five brush friction machine. After living with it, I think the sweet spot is the three brush machine. It's slower but simpler.

PDQ had at their booth a new Tandem Surfline three brush friction machine. It is their newest friction offering and it looks great. It has all of the PDQ family virtues and I like it a lot. I believe it replaces the older tandem machine.

Belanger had a working prototype of its new Cube friction inbay on the floor. This uses their SpinLite® foam media and is a three brush machine. The Belanger rep said that it is going into testing over the summer. They have introduced a lot of new concepts on this machine. The brushes change their angle and distance from the car. The top brush is non-counter balanced and uses computer control. It has a neat looking set of pantograph style arms for support from the overhead.

I believe that all of our suppliers are trying very hard to deliver great equipment. Carwash equipment is better than ever and we are seeing the flow through benefits from express washes in better washing, reliability and marketing. The most important part of your equipment purchasing decision, however, is NOT the brand but your local distributor! ■

Doug Rieck

Doug Rieck operates Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ, and is the President of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. He is also the Chairman of the 2018 NRCC. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS or dougrieck@gmail.com

How to Make it Difficult for Any Government to Take Your Sign

By Perry Powel

A variety of government entities may place a bullseye on your sign for a variety of reasons. The most common reason is widening the street in front of your business or beautification of a streetscape.

Most sign codes list aesthetics as aim of the sign code.

Consultants hired by the city to tell them how to improve an area (Aka - How can we raise property taxes in this district?) will tell them three things to improve; landscaping, installation of underground power lines and reduction of the sizes and numbers of business street signs.

> "A taking is more likely if the regulators are incorporating roadway improvements in the process."

Often, the planner has a difficult time executing this newly-recommended agenda due to the numbers of existing power lines and signs. One way to "cleanse the street" is to undertake a special improvement project and sweep all of the old signs away in the process.

There are several approaches to this but all mean the landowner is likely to give up some rights to the use of or loss of property, usually a strip of land that just may happen to include the current business sign.

The plan will likely be subtle in the approach to the sign, requiring the property owner to give up the current sign and conform with some more current and more stringent code. The property can be effectively taken by easement or through passing a new "overlay district." They may also out right take the property.

A taking is more likely if the regulators are incorporating roadway improvements in the process.

A taking happens when an owner is deprived of the use or right to property that is legally held. Our founders wanted to prevent this from happening so they placed a clause in the Fifth Amendment to the US Constitution.

The Fifth Amendment

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

The issue is what is just compensation for the taking.

Over the years, planners have developed several schemes to skirt the citizen's rights on these points. Some have used imminent domain to take the property while others have used police powers through land use development. Still others have condemned property to reduce the values to affordable compensation levels to make the development affordable for the city. Federal courts tend to frown on the use of tactics that violate the "just" part of compensation.

If your property and sign become subject to a taking there are several things you should know.

1. Replacing a curb cut with a curb cut less favorable to the business traffic is not likely a just compensation.
2. The land being taken may make the business more obscure and this may impact the survivability of the business, especially if the roadway improvement removes access from opposing lanes of traffic and a smaller, less effective sign.
3. The taking of the current sign and replacement of a smaller, shorter, less effective sign is not just compensation.

In order to battle such takings you need a certified appraisal of the property in question and especially the sign. This has been to Federal Court and successfully defended by the sign industry. Just compensation includes not just the salvage value of the nuts and bolts, but the revenue generation and goodwill the sign has produced over the years.

Values of such appraisals have been upheld in court as high as $1,200,000.00. That is "Just Compensation!" ■

Perry Powell is a carwash consultant. He specializes in sign design and construction, restructuring quick turnarounds, business model changes and improvements, management methods and sales processes using the consumer behavioral science of Neuro-Marketing. He can be reached at 817/307- 6484 or perry@perrypowell.com

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

In the carwash industry, most of us are small business owners trying to keep our head above water. I can relate to the unique challenges we face! With the recent changes to our tax laws, I want to point out some important ways these changes could benefit your business.

The current reduction in taxes for LLC's and other available tax deductions, like Section 179 and bonus deprecation on equipment, make this an excellent time for people to reinvest in their carwash businesses. Many owners wait too long to reinvest in their business and as a result, leave potential profits on the table! The business environment, in general, is very good and interest rates are still very low. Simply put, now is a great time to be in business!

I urge all carwash owners to do their research and talk with a qualified accountant or tax attorney to understand how these recent changes could help you reinvest back into your business! Now that I've made that important, I want to shift gears toward some exciting events the Carwash Association of Pennsylvania (CAP) is planning for 2018.

Our Annual Dinner and Table-Top Show will take place on Thursday, June 7, at the Hollywood Casino in Grantville. This event is one of the best networking and business development opportunities we offer our membership. A mix of vendors and operators come out each year to stay on top of the latest trends and changes in the carwash industry. This year, we are excited to welcome Jake Oakey of RYKO as our featured speaker. He will provide an insightful presentation on the current state of the carwash industry, both in Pennsylvania and nationwide. Attendees are sure to walk away with a renewed perspective and innovative ideas to take their business to the next level!

As always, our annual dinner is at no cost to current CAP members, so we highly encourage you to join us on June 7 to take advantage of your member benefits! Non-CAP members are also welcome to attend. Registration is open and seats are already starting to fill. For our vendors, be sure to grab your display table early! More information can be found at www.pacarwash.org or by emailing executivedirector@pacarwash.org.

Be sure to also save the date for two other CAP events we have coming up this year! On Tuesday, August 21, we are planning a group baseball outing to see the Pittsburgh Pirates take on the Atlanta Braves.

Thursday, September 22, CAP will host its Annual Golf Outing at the Cumberland Valley Golf Club in Carlisle. Additional information for both of these events will soon be posted on our website, www.pacarwash.org. For now, mark your calendars!

To my fellow carwash operators and vendors, thank you for all you do to support our industry! I am encouraged by the support we show for one another. It's a pleasure to know and work with many of you!

Keith Lutz
President, Carwash Association of Pennsylvania

Carwash Association of Pennsylvania

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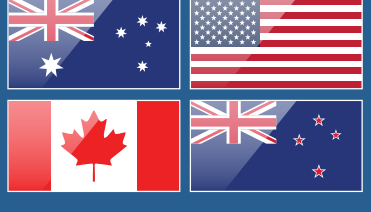

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From Foreclosure to Profitability In the Poconos

By Alan M. Petrillo

If the bones of a structure are good, and the business has the potential to be profitable, then once the due diligence is done, the only thing left after paying for the place is all the hard work of getting it up and running. That's the situation that faced Dave Edwards and his partners in The CAR WASH on Hamlin Highway & Dog Wash Too in Lake Ariel, PA.

Edwards is a project director for a small luxury builder in Manhattan who has a second home in the Poconos, near Lake Wallenpaupack, that he's owned for nearly 10 years. The area has a number of communities with many recreational homes that see an influx of people on the weekends.

Edwards said he had used a run-down Lake Ariel carwash in the past, and when he noticed a 'For Sale' sign, stopped in to check it out in January of 2015. "I was looking for an investment, and by the time I did the due diligence, we bought it out of foreclosure in June of 2015," he said. "It was in rust and ruin by then, but we jumped into this project. We had to gut the entire place; the interior of the carwash looked like a haunted house. But the bones of the structure were good, the roof was in good shape, so we power washed off 20 years of grime, repainted the building and installed all new equipment, opening at the end of August that year."

The CAR WASH on Hamlin Highway & Dog Wash Too is a 60-foot touchless automatic, with three self-service bays, a dog wash, a self-service detailing bay, vacuums, an auto dryer, shampooer and wiper fluid dispenser.

Because the previous operation was a full-service carwash, there was an office that we converted into a Dog Wash that we opened in December of 2016," Edwards said. "It's been very successful for us, with us washing 500 dogs in 2017. Our investment in the dog wash was one-third paid for in the first year."

Edwards said he and his wife Barbara studied dog washes, and because Barbara has a strong background in retail sales, she keyed in on the fact that people want an easy, accessible way to take care of their dogs.

"She realized that a woman in sweats and probably not made up on a Saturday morning wanted to get into a place to wash her dog quickly, safely and easily," Edwards said. "We have two parking spaces immediately in front of our dog wash, which gives them privacy, a heated and air conditioned space, and a place where they can wash their dog in an extremely comfortable environment. We charge $10 for the first 10 minutes on the dog wash machine."

The multi-profit center site was a foreclosure that owner Dave Edwards purchased in 2015 in Lake Ariel, PA.

Edwards converted an existing office into a dog wash bay in 2016 and is pleased with its volume.

The prices at The CAR WASH on Hamlin Highway & Dog Wash Too's automatic wash are $8, $10, $12 and $14, all coming with undercarriage wash and blow dry. Self-service wash charges are $3 to start for four minutes, and $1 a minute thereafter. Every pay station at the wash facility will take credit cards, bills and coins, and Edwards notes that the DSL line into the facility processes credit card authorizations in two to three seconds.

While Edwards spends his weekdays in Manhattan, he has a caretaker who sees to issues at the carwash during the week. He also leases a two-bay detailing shop behind the carwash, where the owner tends to the wash for a couple of hours a day.

Edwards recently invested in the detailing shop, Bennett's Detailing, giving it a renovation that included installing an overhead central vacuum system with colorful hoses and fittings, exposed pipes and conduit for a smooth industrial feel. The space also includes polished aluminum diamond plate wainscoting, a checkerboard floor, big red tool boxes, and 20 minute express detailing for customers in a hurry.

Volume's Up!

Edwards said he's pleased with the 23,000 ticket transactions the carwash did last year, up from 18,000 its first year. "The first Saturday of the month we give the dog wash to the local animal shelter where they get the full value of the dog wash that day," Edwards pointed out. "And we help out the four volunteer fire departments in the region where we give them $50 gift cards to raffle at their pancake breakfasts and Sunday brunches. We've even worked a deal with the local Pennsylvania State Trooper barracks where we put a card in 17 trooper cars to come in and use the carwash at their leisure for 50 percent off the washes." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ-based journalist, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. *He's the author of the hisrical mysteries,* Full Moon *and* Asylum Lane, *and his latest historical thriller,* A Case of Dom Perignon, *all available at www.amazon.com.*

2018 Annual Dinner And Table-Top Show

Thursday, June 7th, 2018
Hollywood Casino ~ Grantville, PA
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Vendor Table-Top Set-up at 4:30 pm

Take Advantage of Member Rates

Table-Top Fee	2018 CAP Members	Non – Members
Rate	**Free**	**$395.00**
Member Registration Fee	**2018 CAP Members**	**Non – Members**
Rate	**Free**	**$40.00**

Vender Registration includes:

- One 6 foot table, 5 dinner tickets, company listing in meeting materials & recognition on website (note: this is a table-top display only, (space is not available for large displays)

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- Attendance to Reception, Show and Dinner for Member and Spouse
- Entry into Raffle Drawing for our Grand Door Prize

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Space is limited; CAP members will be given first priority.

June 7th, 2018 CAP Annual Dinner and Table-Top

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

As I take a good look at our industry, the first thing I see is that we as operators are becoming more sharing. What I mean by this is that more of us, many more of us in fact, are very willing to share our best practices.

As we share, we inquire and also learn from each other. The wash industry is evolving so fast - in all areas of our business. As we each become better operators and suppliers, we raise the bar and lift up our industry. It can be seen by the new wave of growth in washes and new innovations throughout professional carwashing as evidenced on the show floor at the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention and at the recent Carwash Show in Las Vegas. We all have the same business concerns and questions, and are always looking to improve our sites. Yet, when you see it every day, day in and day out, you might miss things and that's why it's so nice to be able to share and have other operators provide their input.

This is seen at every event and especially the carwash bus tours! A carwash bus tour brings operators from all over the region together with shared common goals. We all can learn from each other and we can all share our best practices to better our washes. We all look to be open-minded when raising our children - we need to be open minded in growing our washes, as well, and nurturing our staff. Even if you are fully automated, customers still like to see a nice smile and who doesn't want to be thanked for being a customer!

I'll be reporting on our June carwash tour and meeting with Sonny's Anthony Analetto in the fall issue. I hope to see many of you at that meeting. The only way to improve and strengthen your business is to get involved and participate in our events!

Robert J. Rossini

Bob Rossini
CCA President

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Connecticut Carwash Association

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*Deceased	Joe Tracy

CCA Mission Statement

The Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA) is a member-driven association: it exists solely to serve members' needs, protect members' best interests, and to be responsive to members' requests. The list of tangible CCA membership benefits is long (and growing), but the list of intangible benefits is even longer. How can you put a price tag on the camaraderie you enjoy with your industry peers? How can you place a value on having the ability to make connections on a regular basis with other carwash operators who can help you through tough times? What price would you be willing to pay to have the chance to learn from our industry's most successful operators? Stay active in your local industry trade association.

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Sales Tax Exemption Bill Advances

By P.J. Cimini

The CCA initiative to repeal the sales tax exemption on carwashes (HB 5009 "An Act Exempting Car Wash Services From The Sales Tax") continued to advance through the Committee process and made its way to the floor. HB 5009 was reported out of the Finance Committee and currently sits on the Calendar for the House of Representatives.

The bill received broad bipartisan support in the Finance Committee from all members of the Committee. The long-term prognosis of the bill for the 2018 Legislative Session will depend greatly on the state of the current budget deficit because the bill includes the full repeal of "car wash services."

The Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) Fiscal Note details a revenue loss to the state of more than $13.6 million over two years (see below). The bill results in a revenue loss of $6.8 million annually to various funds by exempting all carwash services from the sales and use tax. As current law requires a diversion of a portion of the sales tax generated into (1) the Special Transportation Fund and (2) the Municipal Revenue Sharing Account beginning in FY 20, these funds will be impacted as well as the General Fund.

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 19 $	FY 20 $
Department of Revenue Services	Various - Revenue Loss	6.8 million	6.8 million

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

Thank you for everyone who worked to support this effort. The advocacy work that so many members have undertaken continues to have a positive impact. This is a very, very positive first-step in a long process. We will let you know how it continues to play out.

Water Policy Still Contentious

Lawmakers held a rare, four-committee joint public hearing April 17 to accept comments on the proposed new State Water Plan. Creating the plan was a nearly three-year task for state officials, several advisory committees, and the public, involving a broad cross section of water-use stakeholders.

The result was a 600-page document that reflected a careful balance among stakeholder interests. Unfortunately, after completing the stakeholder process, the Water Planning Council inserted, without explanation, the text of Connecticut's Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) into the plan. Speakers at the hearing noted that CEPA is not about balance but, rather, about giving citizens a legal tool to force state government to act against any activities they believe will unreasonably impact the environment. By inserting and highlighting such broad and potentially impactful language, without discussion during the stakeholder process, the council effectively shattered a delicate consensus achieved over several years of deliberation and compromise.

The move could jeopardize the Legislature's ultimate approval of an otherwise "grand compromise." Many involved in the plan's development urged lawmakers to remove references to CEPA except in the section that identifies significant topics for future discussion. The delicate balance achieved during the multiyear, stakeholder-driven process should be respected and retained. A reliable water supply is essential for Connecticut business and industry to operate, create jobs, and help drive the state's economy.

Also, being worked on this session is HB 5154 "An Act Concerning Water Usage And Conservation During Drought Conditions" which would require the Water Planning Council to report to the General Assembly regarding its review of state and local processes and authorities for the issuance of drought advisory, watch, warning or emergency and any attendant water use restrictions. The bill was passed out of the Environment Committee favorably and is now awaiting action in the House of Representatives

New AAA Message Positive

A new AAA Automotive Engineering report announced in Connecticut found that salt and magnesium chemicals used to treat the roads for snow can cause damage to vehicles – on a national level an estimated $3 billion are spent in rust damage per year. "The road salts can cause rust and corrosion that can effect your brake lines, your fuel systems, your exhaust system," said Amy Parmenter, from the AAA office in West Hartford.

The AAA report urges drivers to head to carwashes often, and especially get their undercarriage washed. "When you talk about getting a carwash, it's not just a cosmetic issue," Parmenter said. "You've got to get deicers off your car."

AAA said over the past few years, many state and local transportation departments, including Connecticut, switched from using rock salt to liquid de-icers to combat ice and snow on the roadways.

Pothole damage is another issue to drivers, according to the report, they found that nearly 30 million U.S. drivers experienced pothole damage that resulted in car repair in 2016, with the cost of repair ranging from $250 to more than $1000. AAA said in order for this issue to be

resolved, more funding is needed to keep up with the ongoing care of the country's roadways.

Shift Scheduling Mandate Fails Again

Legislation drastically restricting how employers schedule employee shifts has failed for a third time this General Assembly session. The state Senate rejected SB 318 May 1 on a 16-20 vote, with Democrats Joan Hartley (Waterbury) and Gayle Slossberg (Milford) joining all Republicans in opposing the measure. The bill required businesses in the restaurant, retail, lodging, and other select industries to pay one-half of an employee's regular pay if a shift is cancelled or reduced within 24 hours of its scheduled start. Having failed already in two legislative committees, the shift scheduling mandate surfaced unexpectedly in the Senate when Sen. Marilyn Moore (D-Bridgeport) replaced the language of an unrelated bill.

Senate Republican President Len Fasano (North Haven) was among those lawmakers who spoke against the shift-scheduling mandate. "We're the only state in the country who did not bring back all jobs lost in the recession," he said. "The only state in the country. Why? If we're the only state in the country that has not recouped the lost jobs, there's got to be a reason. These types of bills are the reason."

The scheduling restriction mandate first appeared in the Labor and Public Employees Committee, which failed to act on it. It then resurfaced as SB 321 in the Committee on Children, failing on a 6-7 vote March 15.

In a session where lawmakers have acted on few bills that help businesses grow Connecticut's economy, it was disheartening that so much time was spent on a measure that repeatedly failed thorough lack of support.

Labor Department Pitches New Twist on Proposed Employer Tax

The state Department of Labor is again trying to slip a business payroll tax through the Legislature, this time arguing it will help manufacturers meet workforce development needs. Earlier this legislative session DOL proposed an employer tax that would be used to pay department staff salaries. That proposal was included in SB 6, a budget bill.

The department wanted a .05 percent levy on all taxable wages to help meet its payroll obligations, acknowledging that its staff is the highest paid of any state labor agency in the nation. The Appropriations Committee did not act on SB 6. However, DOL still wants the tax – and is now pitching it with a new twist: saying it will be used to fund workforce development training efforts.

There were four specific concerns raised about the bill:

- DOL does not currently fill jobs that have high-skill requirements with unemployed people, who largely come from low-skill, high-turnover industries such as retail.
- The jobs DOL says the payroll tax can help fill are routinely filled from technical education such as that offered in community colleges, state job-assistance programs like the Manufacturing Innovation Fund and Small Business Express, and workforce boards, schools, and industry, including Electric Boat's pilot program in eastern Connecticut.
- Other successful states don't use their labor departments as the primary means to fill high-tech jobs. They use job-training funds coordinated with technical schools to customize applicant training with new or expanding manufacturers.
- Private job boards like Indeed, CareerBuilder, and Manpower place more candidates in technology and service jobs than state DOL websites.

Highway Tolls Vote Unlikely This Year

State lawmakers are unlikely to act this year on legislation paving the way for implementing tolls on major Connecticut highways. House Speaker Joe Aresimowicz (D-Berlin) postponed a scheduled vote, saying he could not guarantee any debate on the issue before the legislative session ends May 9.

The legislation directs the Department of Transportation to develop a detailed plan for installing tolls on Interstates 84, 91, 95, and the Wilbur Cross and Merritt Parkways. The DOT would determine how and where tolls will be installed on those highways, and set significant discount rates for Connecticut residents.

Lawmakers would then vote on DOT's recommendations in 2019, a significant change from legislation that narrowly passed the Transportation and Finance, Revenue, and Bonding committees. That legislation would have ratified the tolling plan if the General Assembly failed to act on it within 30 days.

Senate Approves Amended Workplace Harassment Bill

The state Senate has approved an amended bill that significantly expands Connecticut's workplace harassment prevention training requirements. SB 132 passed the Senate on a 31-5 vote in the early hours of May 4. The measure now requires that businesses with 20 or more employees provide training to all staff every 10 years. Businesses with fewer than 20 employees will be required to provide all supervisory employees with harassment prevention training. That provision strikes a better balance than originally proposed.

When it cleared the Judiciary Committee last month, the bill mandated that businesses with three or more employees train all workers. Current state law requires that companies with 50 or more employees provide training for supervisors within six months of hire or promotion.

The Senate also deleted a troubling component from the bill that eliminated certain protections for companies that strive to create a safe, harassment-free work environment.

While current state law provides affirmative defenses for companies that have a policy in place, investigate claims, take corrective action, and prevent retaliation, SB 132 originally

Continued on page 62 ...

eliminated that defense in many cases. That provision would have unfairly held companies that follow the law strictly liable.

The amended bill also requires the state Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities to develop online training and video courses or "other interactive method of training," which may address some of the cost concerns raised by the business community. The bill now requires that businesses with 20 or more employees provide training to all staff every 10 years.

Employers could face a fine of up to $1,000 for failing to comply with the training requirements. SB 132 also requires businesses to share their workplace harassment policies with CHRO. The bill, which has an effective date of October 1, 2018, now goes to the state House. A similar bill, HB 5043, also awaits action in the House. That measure requires businesses with 15 or more employees to provide sexual harassment training to every employee at least once every five years.

Tax Reform, Equipment Acquisition Strategy

According to the Equipment Leasing and Financing Association, businesses in 2018 are expected to make their largest capital investments since 2012. Driving this activity is an increase in business confidence, a strong global economy and, yes, the first tax overhaul in three decades. For many businesses, equipment financing is a strategic tool. It facilitates the acquisition and immediate employment of equipment. It also is part of long-term planning, whether your company's objective is to enhance cash flow or optimize tax savings – or both.

While the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 won't change tried-and-true benefits of leasing, the playing field has changed. From 100 percent expensing of equipment purchases to the elimination of corporate alternative minimum tax, the new rules require a fresh analysis. The following is a look at important considerations.

The benefits of leasing that have always supported business growth will not change. Equipment financing continues to provide:

- Enhanced cash flow, allowing you to avoid large out-of-pocket costs and effectively manage cash from operations
- Flexibility and asset-management features, including options to keep equipment in place for the long haul or upgrade to the latest technology
- Preservation of credit lines to support day-to-day business operations rather than long-term capital needs

In addition, most equipment will still offer depreciation benefits. Historically, common equipment financing options – loans and non-tax leases – allowed the equipment owner to deduct equipment depreciation expenses from taxable income. This lowered tax liability. The TCJA does not eliminate this benefit.

With tax reform, it is important that businesses now select the right option to optimize their tax strategy. Businesses that weren't full taxpayers commonly found more benefit from shifting the equipment's tax ownership to a third-party financing source in return for a lower financing rate. In this scenario, tax leases often worked best. With tax reform, it is important that businesses now select the right option to optimize their tax strategy.

Tax reform: Historic, Impactful Change

The centerpiece of the TCJA – a reduction in the maximum corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent and a 20 percent deduction of taxable income for pass-through companies – will dramatically reduce taxable income for many businesses. Also, the range and size of available corporate tax deductions has expanded. The combination of these two changes begs an important question for most businesses: How many deductions can realistically be absorbed going forward?

Determining the tax deductions and credits that will best benefit your business will be time well spent. Understanding your organization's ability to absorb large deductions (MACRS depreciation, 100 percent expensing of equipment purchases, energy tax credits, etc.) will be important. Here are some areas to consider:

- 100% expensing of equipment purchases. Businesses that invest in qualifying equipment after Sept. 27, 2017, and before Jan. 1, 2023, can expense 100 percent of the equipment cost in the first year of ownership. This unprecedented benefit is a huge windfall for businesses with sufficient taxable income to claim it.
- Interest expense deduction. The TCJA now places limits on deductions related to interest accruals and payments made on debt in a given tax year. Unfortunately, this could negatively affect heavy borrowers and those investing in business growth and expansion activities. Equipment leasing could help to offset the pain, however, because rental payments arising from a tax lease are not included in this calculation.
- Alternative minimum tax. The repeal of the corporate alternative minimum tax gives many organizations something to celebrate. In the past, those paying AMT benefited from a tax lease equipment acquisition strategy, as capital asset depreciation was an AMT preference item and lease payments

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were not. This meant equipment depreciation benefits were effectively neutralized and had little value for AMT payers.

• Net operating loss carryforwards. Net operating loss generated in 2018 or later can no longer be carried back (with certain natural disaster exceptions), but it can now be carried forward indefinitely. The time sensitivity of NOL use will moderate in the future, allowing affected businesses to consider a wider set of equipment acquisition options.

State Incentives and Tax Credits

In addition to the TCJA changes, Connecticut and Massachusetts have incentives and tax credit options to consider as part of your equipment financial strategy. These include: Machinery and equipment expenditure tax credit. For companies with 251 to 800 full-time employees, a credit of 5 percent of the amount spent on the machinery and equipment will be given. Those with no more than 250 full-time employees will receive a 10 percent credit.

• Electronic data processing equipment property tax credit. A tax credit equal to 100 percent of the personal property tax owed and paid on electronic data processing equipment may be applied during any income year. If the equipment is leased, the lessee is entitled to claim the credit if the lease imposes the personal property tax on the lessee. Otherwise, the lessor can claim it.

• Manufacturing reinvestment account. An interest-bearing, tax-deferred account designed to help small companies with 50 or fewer employees fund capital investments and workforce training.

• Manufacturers are exempt from the Massachusetts property tax, receive an investment tax credit and are exempt from the sales and use tax. ■

P.J. Cimini

P.J. Cimini, Esq. is the CCA's Lobbyist and a partner in Capital Strategies Group, LLC, in Hartford. You can reach him at 860/983-2581 or pj@csgct.com

CCA CALENDAR

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OCTOBER 1-3

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This is an exciting time to be in the carwash industry. We are washing cars, and we keep getting better tools (equipment) and ideas. I am writing this while flying home from The Carwash Show in Las Vegas. It was a good show with a lot happening. This was the most upbeat, positive show since the busy days of 2006. There are a lot of vendor changes and an increasing consolidation on our side as operators.

I'm going to go into the show specifics later. What I want to convey in this column to the members of the CWONJ is that there is a place and need for carwash associations. They bring us together and let us keep up on our profession of washing cars. Would any of us use an accountant or other professional who did not keep up? Carwashing very much is a business and it is a dynamic one by nature with trends and ever-changing technology. While we are busy washing cars and earning our living our vision is focussed on our customers and the daily issues we face a carwashers and small businesspeople. This is proper but we need the opportunity to get a larger view of our industry. Membership and participation in trade associations help fufill that need. When you look around so much of retail is franchise or chains or corporately owned. We are not. We are independent businesses. We do not have a franchisor or corporate leader to give us a vision. We need to develop our own.

I was fortunate that my wife and children and carwash manager let me get away for four days and to see what is going on. While at the show I saw more than a dozen people from our state, and many more carwash friends from the Northeast and rest of the country. Las Vegas is more difficult for us East Coast folks to get to because you lose a day each way getting to and from the venue. Next year, the show will be in Nashville in mid May. As much as I do like Las Vegas, Nashville is easier. There's only a one hour time change and it's a shorter flight. Three years ago the show was in Nashville and it was a wonderful venue and trip.

The CWONJ tries very hard to have several valuable meetings every year. In March, we had a great speaker at our meeting, Chris Brown of Myrrh Consulting in Florida. The meeting was moved from a date in January due to the weather, to another snowy day in March. I had to miss it because the snow was much worse in South Jersey. Fortunately, the closer members were able to beat the snow and make the meeting. Coming up in June, we have our bus tour which should be awesome. We get to go see Kevin Detrick's new Sparkle Car Wash in Easton, PA, and two Shammy Shine locations. In August we will hold our annual Children's Specialized Hospital Golf Outing. We will then roll into the October 1-3 NRCC in Atlantic City at the Atlantic City Convention Center with the Borgata our host hotel. All of us read the Northeast Carwasher and often in neighboring states there are bus tours and other events you can take advantage of as a member of the CWONJ. Take advantage of every opportunity you have to learn and grow your business, and make new friends in doing so. There is a lot to learn from what others do — benchmarking.

This year New Jersey is the host association for the NRCC and there is no excuse for any of us to miss it. Really, Atlantic city is less than a 90 minute drive from

Continued on next page...

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President's Column ... *continued*

any place in the state. You can open your wash in the morning, make the show floor and be home for dinner. Go one day yourself and send your manager the next. Bring your wife and spend an extra day at the Borgata. Go on the Boardwalk and checkout the new casinos. Unfortunately, in the past few years Atlantic city has gotten some bad press, but the city has improved tremendously. HARD ROCK bought the old Taj Mahal and is spending in excess of $500 million to completely re-theme and re-build it. The Revell, which opened in 2012 and closed in 2014, has a new owner and a new name OCEAN RESORT. They are also getting building upgrades. From what I have read, both are planning on opening on June 28. This will add more than 3500 rooms to the city and two new mega casinos. In addition, it will be adding more than 6000 direct jobs for the two casinos. Atlantic City should be the place to go this summer. Better yet, wait until the NRCC show and come then and bring your key staff!

Doug Rieck
CWONJ President

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How to Motivate Performance

Winter Meeting Features Myrrh's Chris Brown

Despite rescheduling the date due to weather and then dealing with a second weather event the night of the meeting, the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) powered through their March 20 Winter Membership Meeting at the APA Hotel Woodbridge in Iselin with a stellar presentation by Myrrh Consulting's Chris Brown. Brown, the founder of Myrrh Consulting, an Orlando-based privately owned professional services firm that specializes in helping companies and organizations of all sizes dramatically improve their frontline sales, services and organizational effectiveness, has a strong background in carwashing with more than 100 carwash clients under his belt. Brown has also been a featured speaker at the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC).

His March 20 program focused on "Getting the Best From Today's Frontline" by motivating for peek performance.

"Chris was an extremely professional speaker and really knew his stuff about our industry," said Immediate Past President Mike Conte. "His program was exceptional and full of a lot of take-home ideas we can all implement."

The program also included hors d'oeuvres and a buffet dinner. ■

For more information on Chris Brown visit chris@myrrhconsulting.com or call 1-844-MORE-REV.

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Edward E. Harm: A Life Well Lived

Edward E. Harm

On February 26 the world lost a kind and loving man who devoted much of his life to being the best husband, father, friend and carwasher possible. Edward E. Harm of Langhorne, PA, passed away surrounded by his loving family and wife, Louise A. (Smith) Harm, of 67 years, at Attleboro Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Langhorne. Ed was 88.

For those of you who may not have had the pleasure of meeting Ed Harm you might know his daughter Linda (Harm) Feriod. Linda was the President of the Penndel Carwash Association and the Executive Director of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey for many years. During that time, she worked with her father at the three family carwashes called Magic Touch in Buck's County Pennsylvania. Ed's tireless devotion to his washes was evident as was the importance of customer service and producing the cleanest car possible. But for Ed, his greatest accomplishment was his family and his deepest love was for them.

Ed and Louise spent 55 years in Croydon, PA, raising their three children Don, Linda and Kathy, before moving to Langhorne.

A member of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Croydon, the Penndel American Legion and the Bristol Alumni Athletic Association, Ed was never at a loss for activities, but he cherished most the time he spent with his close-knit family.

In addition to his wife, Ed is survived by his children Donald Harm (Anna Marie), Linda Feriod and Kathy Firth (Richard). He also leaves behind his grandchildren Jason Harm (Katie), Tricia Adams (Zac), Kevin Feriod, Bonnie Henshaw (Jeff), Jenna Moral (Andy), and Jonathan Firth, as well as five great grandchildren. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his siblings Frank Foster, William Harm and Betty Matusek.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to the Harm family at the loss of such a kind and caring man. ■

In lieu of flowers donations may be made in his name to St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 1305 State Rd., Croydon, PA 19021.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Never let it be said that the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA) does not fulfill its promises. We said that we would arrange a double dose of pollen for the areas around each of our attendees at the Dominion Raceway meeting on April 11. Even as I write this column in late April, there is a fleet of drones making deliveries to all. If you don't believe it, come to our cruise on the Delaware River on May 23. Signup now at www.mcacarwash.org

As you know, there are a lot of people who want to get into the carwash industry. Some find their way, some take a different path. A few leap through the hurdles of planning, design, permitting, construction and opening for business. We heard from a young couple, both Marine veterans, who dreamed of owning their own business. Mike Escher and Suzanne Denault have poured their hearts into Jack's Car Wash in Fredericksburg, VA, which opened on July 1, 2017. They were very generous in letting us tour the site and shared their experiences of the first-year in business. Fortunately, everyone in the room has had a first year in business. For many, that first year was a painful experience of working hard, learning and hoping. Think back on your own experience. We all wish Mike and Suzanne the best of luck!

This spring we have another meeting that will be a lot of fun. On May 23, we are taking a cruise from Wilmington, DE, (we board the ship at 5:30 p.m. so don't be late). Our friend from Carwash Insurance Program by McNeil, Mike Benmoschè, will talk about safety issues at the carwash.

June 2 will mark the 6th Annual Wash to Save the Bay kick off. To date, MCA raised more than $50,000 for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and we want to keep the ball rolling. Every contribution helps, and you can structure it anyway you like. See our website, mcacarwash.org, for details.
I look forward to seeing you in Wilmington.

Dave DuGoff
MCA President

www.mcacarwash.org/wash-to-save-the-bay

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Loyalty for Free, A Nod, a Wave & a Word…

By Dave DuGoff

We were talking, as carwash people often do, about things that work and don't work at the wash, and this particular topic came up, and I was asked to write about it.

A lot of money is being spent to boost customer loyalty – wash clubs with RFID, loyalty cards, loyalty smart phone apps, fancy-dancy stuff that's all shiny and new. All of that is all well and good, but I think some of it might be missing two important things. First, as Perry Powell our industry signage expert preaches, you have to clean the car. Second, you have to give the customer a positive experience.

So, what can we do to improve the customer's time at our wash? I think most people just want to be acknowledged. Most people just want to be noticed. There's a pizza shop up the street that I've been going to for 15 years. The owner/manager, who is always behind the register, has never greeted me or shown any recognition that I am a returning customer. Never! It feels like he is always on the phone with his bookie, or something. So, why should I feel any sense of loyalty to him?

At the wash, there are some very easy things that we can do to show the customer that they are valued. First, just look them in the face and nod. You can raise a hand and wave. You can say, "Hi," "Good morning," or something similar. Greetings can get complicated, there are so many that have cultural attitudes imbedded that we may want to be careful. "Wazup," "How are you doing?" (Joey from Friends), "What's happening?" Your staff may have some examples that may or may not be appropriate.

Give some thought to the level of formality and casualness that you want to set as your tone. Sir and Mam are commonly used in the South, but may feel awkward up north. Just think about how you would like to be addressed. Some women resent "mam" because it makes them feel old.

When I hang out by the auto cashier/entry unit in front of our in-bay automatics, I often ask if I can help. When it is a first-time customer, I want to convey a couple of points, and people don't really listen to directions. I have found that if you can get them to smile, they relax and hear better. "It's very easy, all you have to do when the green arrow comes on is drive in slow and straight. I'm sure you can do that, but some people have trouble with driving in straight." Most times, they will crack a smile and respond, "I think I can do that." Then I have their attention, and add, "drive slowly until you see the red X. The wash has eyes and will start when it sees your front bumper."

Other times, it is clear that the customer knows exactly what to do. Then, I can say, "Thanks for coming back" or "We appreciate your business." That always elicits a smile.

It all seems kind of simple and obvious, but I bet many of us don't to it. Put yourselves in your customers' shoes and treat them just like you would like to be treated. It will go a long way!

"Have a nice day!" ■

Dave DuGoff is the president of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association and owner of College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD. He also sits on the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention Board of Directors. You can reach Dave at dave.dugoff@gmail.com

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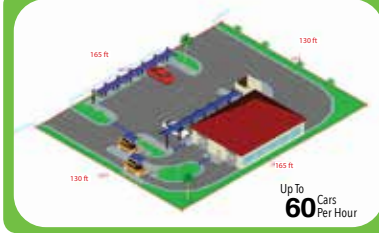

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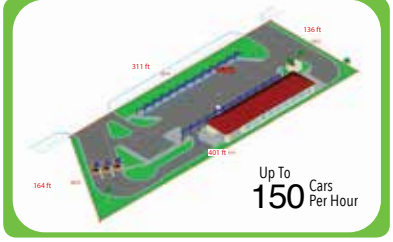

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Snapshots from "An Event to Remember"

The Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA) met April 11 at Dominion Raceway in Woodford, VA, for "An Event to Remember" that included fun at the track, a wash tour of Jack's Car Wash in Fredericksburg, VA, as well as a reception and dinner program featuring the wash's two new operators, Mike Escher and Suzanne Denault. The duo spoke about their first year of business.

More Photos on Page 74!

Look for photos from the association's May 23 River Queen Dinner Cruise in our fall issue.

Mike Eshcer is with Jack's Car Wash in Fredericksburg, VA.

At the Chesapeake Bay Foundation – Dave DuGoff, Sandy Travis Bildahl, Jan Case, Ben DuGoff, John Rodenhausen, Matt Bascom, and Pat Troy.

MCA Director and Westminster Car Wash & Detailing owner Sean Larkin.

Anita Baron, Dave DuGoff, Suzanne Denault and Ben DuGoff posed for a photo at Jack's.

Snapshots ... *continued from page 73.*

The group enjoyed taking to the track. Luckily, there were no injuries!

Sandy Travis-Bildahl is the Editor of WashTrends *magazine.*

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

What crazy winter and early spring seasons we had: snow, rain and 70 degree days in late winter, followed by an early spring featuring snow and unseasonably cold temperatures. I hope it produced a memorable pollen season for all of you.

With spring came The Carwash Show in Las Vegas and the New England Carwash Association (NECA) Table Top Show and Carwash Tour. The NECA Table Top Show is a much more intimate setting in which attendees can meet many of the manufacturer's representatives. On our tour, we traveled west to Hogan Center at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, and to new and recently renovated carwashes in Springfield. This was a terrific opportunity to network and acquire some new ideas.

NECA scholarship applications were due in May and announced in June. The winners are posted on our website. The NECA scholarships help the next generation prepare for the job market and possibly help some of them take over a family business. Which leads me to an article I came across. It said, "A bad job with a good boss is better than a good job with a bad boss." Since the carwashing industry is a great family business, I started to think, "What if your boss is your mom or dad?"

Well, it is certainly an interesting question and probably a little more difficult to answer. As my son entered the business, just about a year ago, to start the 4th generation and celebrate our 50th anniversary, I found myself in the beginning stages of a transition. I certainly don't want to treat him any differently, however, I expect more from him because he is my son, hence the conundrum. I want to keep my father-son relationship intact and continue to grow but as a boss, I need him to understand and appreciate hard work. I want him to understand how much a bad boss can affect your life and well-being. I hope this will guide him into the path of offering good jobs and being a great boss.

As we near his one-year anniversary, things are great! They say everyone is replaceable, well, I'm on my way to being replaced. I owe a lot of that to our manager who is helping to develop my son's skills from apprentice to master. Then with my help and guidance, he will go from master to owner when I retire.

If you have an eager son or daughter entering the business, in my opinion, it's the best thing in the world! We have our disagreements, but I would not change my decision.

Remember, we work hard for the benefit of all!

Dom Previte III
New England Carwash Association President

NEW ENGLAND CARWASH ASSOCIATION
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Officers

President - Dom Previte III
Somerville Car Wash and Detailing
680 Somerville Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143
617/625-9027 fax: 617/625-3309 dom@seeyoushine.com

Vice President/Operators - Mat Paisner
ScrubaDub Auto Wash Centers
172 Worcester Road, Natick, MA 01760
508/650-1155 x241 fax: 508/655-9261 mat@scrubadub.com

Vice President/Suppliers - Jeff Arimento
Harrell's Car Wash Services
P. O. Box 1506, Littleton, MA 01460
978/268-0513 fax: 978/278-9292 jarimento@necwe.com

Treasurer/Secretary - Patrick Mosesso
Auto Bright Car Care
105 Hollis St. Framingham, MA 01702
508/879-3585 fax: 781/762-1465 pfmosesso@gmail.com

Immediate Past President - Dave Ellard
Triple Play Car Wash
100 Washington Street, Attleboro, MA 02703
508/915-4820 fax: 508/915-4824 dellard135@aol.com

Operator Directors

Ken Calabro - Haffner's Car Care Corporation
2 International Way, Lawrence, MA 01843
978/640-1100 kcalabro@haffnersoil.com

Tony DeBarros - Balise Car Wash
574 Bearses Way, Hyannis, MA 02748
508/771-0003 fax: 508/957-2947 adebarros@baliseauto.com

Mark Delaney - Allston Car Wash
434 Cambridge Street, Allston, MA 02134
617/783-4308 fax: 617/ 783-3915 mark@allstoncarwash.com

Darrold Evans - Sandwich Car Wash
360 Rte. 130, P. O. Box 990, Sandwich, MA 02563
508/833-1522 fax: 508/ 833-0249 sandwichcarwash@comcast.net

Kevin McLoughlin - White Water Car Wash & Detail Center
525 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820
603/749-1990 fax: 603/ 742-4338 kjmcloughlinjr@yahoo.com

Micah Smith - Global Partners LLC
800 South Street, Ste 500 4th Flr. Marketing, Waltham, MA 02453
781/ 697-8438 fax: 781/ 674-7799 msmith@globalp.com

Supplier Directors

Brandon Berriault - Tapco LLC
58 Shangri La Boulevard, East Wareham, MA 02538
800/977-8562 fax: 508/295-4101 tapco.bb@gmail.com

Matt Unger - Atlas Water Solutions
100 L Messina Dr., Braintree, MA 02184
617/678-8881 munger@atlaswater.com

Association Offices

NECA c/o The Association Advantage
591 North Avenue, Suite 3-2, Wakefield, MA 01880-1617
781/245-7400 fax: 781/245-6487
info@newenglandcarwash.org www.newenglandcarwash.org

Executive Director: Sherri L. Oken, CAE
Management Company: The Association Advantage LLC
solutions@TheAssociationAdvantage.net
www.TheAssociationAdvantage.net

NECA's Annual Golf Outing Slated for Sept. 25

By Mark Delaney

The New England Car Wash Association (NECA) will host its annual Golf Tournament on September 25. Golfers will be teeing off at Brookmeadow Country Club, in Canton, MA, and looking to score low. This is a great and fun event for the NECA, and we're expecting no different this year!

The Association is proud to announce that this year we have decided to raise money for Lovin' Spoonfuls Food Rescue. Since 2003, the NECA has donated more than $70,000 to various charities and since 2011, also has helped to support NECA's scholarship program.

Lovin' Spoonfuls is a nonprofit food rescue organization based in Boston dedicated to facilitating the rescue and distribution of healthy, fresh food that would otherwise be discarded. They distribute food to 150 community nonprofits that feed hungry people across Greater Boston and the MetroWest region. Read about Lovin' Spoonfuls at www.lovinspoonfulsinc.org

We'll be bringing back the Golf Ball Cannon, which proved to be a very cool opportunity to effortlessly shoot a golf ball 325+ yards. There also will be plenty of prizes, a raffle, as well as auction items to be won. Make sure to book your foursome for this event, as it will not disappoint!

Golfer registration is now open on the NECA website. Pricing: $150 per golfer includes cart and greens fee, lunch and dinner. Sponsorship Opportunities also are posted on the NECA website. Call NECA at 781/245-7400 for sponsorship availability and to reserve your sponsorship. ■

Mark Delaney is the 2018 Golf Outing Chairman. He is with Allston Car Wash in Allston, MA. If you have questions about the Outing or would like to help out, contact Mark at 617/640-7416.

NECA's Annual Golf Outing

An event for fun and charity

Tuesday, September 25, 2018

Brookmeadow Country Club, Canton, MA

Golfer registration is now open and sponsorship opportunities are posted on **www.newenglandcarwash.org**

A signficant portion of the proceeds from the Outing will benefit Lovin' Spoonfuls Food Rescue & the NECA Scholarship Fund.

Questions about the Outing?
Contact Outing Chair Mark Delaney 617-640-7416

Progress Report on Implementing NECA's Strategic Plan

By Sherri Oken

During the summer of 2016, a group of New England Carwash Association (NECA) current, past and future leaders spent a day, facilitated by ICA's Eric Wulf, CAE, evaluating how far we've come since the last strategic planning session, and determining in which direction we'd like to go. They met again during the fall of that year and since then the leadership has been working diligently to fulfill our mission, realize our vision and implement our goals.

Mission:

We connect carwash professionals to promote and protect our industry

Vision:

Drive more consumers to use professional carwashes

Goal #1:

Create a NECA-led consumer-marketing program

Goal #2:

Improve Infrastructure and processes for all stakeholders

Goal #3:

Develop/improve educational opportunities for members, directors and consumers

Recent Highlights:

Education to Promote and Protect

As promised, we are following up on the excellent winter panel presentation on autonomous vehicles. Tony DeBarros of Balise Car Wash contacted the Massachusetts State Automobile Dealers Association, Inc. (MSADA) to enlist their assistance in addressing challenges with washing vehicles with new technology. We hope to create "cheat sheets" that would be useful for both carwashers and their customers. Tony and panel discussion facilitator Mat Paisner of ScrubaDub are continuing discussions with MSADA.

Communication Infrastructure

To expand our ability to communicate with our members and other stakeholders, each month (and no more than twice a month), in addition to broadcasts and mailers, we've been sending text messages. These messages include updates, reminders and information about NECA members services – what is most timely and immediate.

Please be sure that we have your correct cell phone

number. If you wish to opt out of receiving these messages, all you need to do is respond to the text or contact the NECA office 781/245-7400 or info@newenglandcarwash.org

Digital Reputation Management

We have embarked on an ambitious initiative to counter some of the negative online videos that misrepresent the industry. Patrick Mosesso of Auto Bright Car Care Center is leading a task force to develop 1-2 minute YouTube videos. Our Digital Reputation Management Task Force has written a preliminary scope for the project and interviewed several companies. The Board has approved preliminary funding.

Members will be able to use the videos on their websites and Facebook pages. We hope for wide use and to get support from influencers on Facebook and Twitter. Some of the topics proposed include...

- Demystifying Car Washing
- The Environment and the Professional Car Wash
- Proper Care of a Vehicle

In addition, we have created a blogging platform on which we can post positive content about the industry. We plan to use crowd sourcing to acquire appropriate written content. In the future, we will hire an SEO (search engine optimization) consultant to ensure our good content comes out on top of searches.

If you would like to assist with any of these initiatives or, if pressed for time, would like to learn about micro opportunities to get more involved, contact the NECA office at 781/245-7400 or info@newenglandcarwash.org. ■

Sherri Oken, CAE, is the Executive Director of the New England Carwash Association.

Table Top Kudos

By the time you read this issue, the Table Top Show and Car Wash Tour will be a great memory. Photos and a follow-up article about the tour, table top and best exhibit winners have been posted on the New England Carwash Association (NECA) website. In the meantime, the association cannot thank its great tour hosts and sponsors enough.

Kudos to ...

- Tour Guide Brian Messina of Royal T Car Wash
- Tour Host Tony DeBarros of Balise Car Wash
- Tour Host Richard "Smitty" Smith of Golden Nozzle Car Wash

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Hire Safe: Make Sure Employees are Careful About Being Careful

Workplace safety is every employee's responsibility. Management plays a crucial role as well, of course, especially in recruiting and hiring workers with a good attitude about avoiding accidents and injuries. Ask these questions during job interviews to identify candidates who understand the value of safe work:

- "What would you do if you didn't have the right protective equipment?"

You want people who know how to take care of themselves, not workers who blindly accept any assignment without thinking of the consequences.

- "Have you ever disagreed with a supervisor about a safety issue?"

Listen to how the candidate approached the issue and how it was (or wasn't) resolved.

- "Have you ever corrected a co-worker who wasn't working safely?"

The answer shows a candidate's willingness to accept responsibility for safety around the workplace. ■

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Membrane Technology in Water Purification

By Matthew Unger

Does salt dissolved in water still negatively affect cars? The answer to this is "No," as long as it is properly treated. And, when it comes to treating your carwash water, there are a variety of options depending on the water quality and the end results you want.

There are many conventional technologies that have been proven to be successful over the years. These treatment options include…

- Sediment filtration for removal of suspended solids,
- Activated carbon for the removal of chlorine and some organics and
- A more complicated ion-exchange which is often used to soften water ideal for mixing with soaps or in deionization vessels to generate spot free water.

In today's market, there are many options for sediment filtration units from different size filter housings to different micron-rated filters. There are now many self-cleaning sediment filter options that require little to no maintenance, and will clean its filter screen automatically when a pressure drop is recognized across the filter.

In the spot free treatment, where traditional deionization vessels are used to completely remove all dissolved minerals, these vessels often need to be replaced and sent back for regeneration. In some cases, these tanks are now being replaced with continuous deionization (CDI) units or electrodeionization (EDI) units which utilize an electrical current to consistently de-mineralize water without the need of regeneration chemicals. In a similar manner, electrocoagulation technology is being used to treat some of the worst waters, with the ability to separate out oils, dissolved minerals and even heavy metals using an electrical current and sacrificial anode/cathode plates.

I am often asked, "What is the best available treatment to purify water?" The answer to this depends on the application as it may require a combination of many technologies to achieve the desired results, but overall membrane technology is the best available treatment to purify water. It can be applied to treat just about any water, no matter the source or quality. This is accomplished by using specialized

membranes that function to block out contaminants. These membranes can be categorized in descending order of effectiveness from:

- Tight knit ultra-filtration (UF) membranes, which are great at reducing total suspended solids (fine clays and silt) and oils, and often are used as pretreatment for NF and RO systems,
- Tighter weave nano-filtration (NF) membranes which operate similarly to RO but with a focus on the rejection of divalent ions, the ions that make your water hard. A NF can be looked at as a water softening membrane that operates without a brine tank, great for applications where some total dissolved solid (TDS) is acceptable such as in making beer and
- The tightest semi-permeable membrane is the reverse osmosis (RO) membrane.

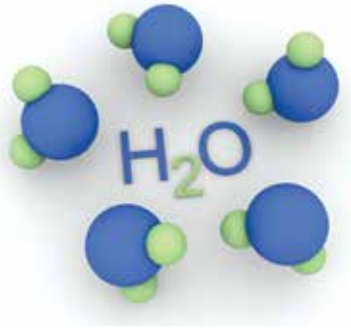
There are three types of RO membranes:

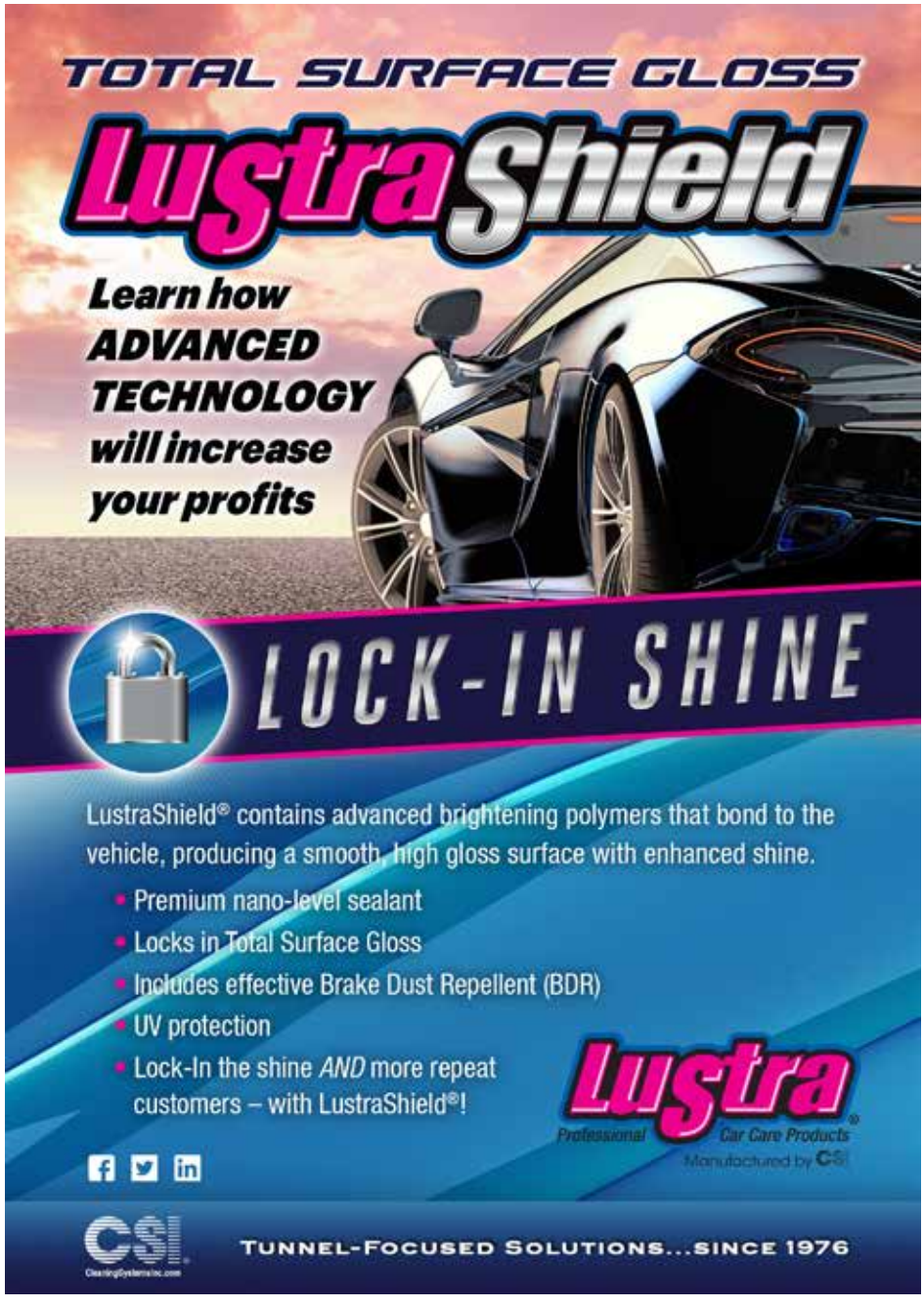
- TW or tap water which de-mineralize water with a TDS level of less than 500 ppm,
- BW or brackish water which de-mineralize waters up to 5,000 ppm and
- SW or saltwater membrane which de-mineralize waters up to 30,000 ppm.

These RO membranes can reject up to 99.85 percent of all feed water total dissolved solids, but need to operate at increased pressures based on salinity. The RO membrane must operate at osmotic pressures up to 1,200 PSI to achieve the feat of producing pure water from a concentrated solution. Membrane fouling is inevitable and is the biggest downside of membrane technology, but unlike a traditional filter, the membrane can be cleaned and reused multiple times, and last up to five years or longer if you use the right type of membrane, employ preventative maintenance and proper system design.

Technology is changing the way we clean water today and into the future. Carwashes will have the ability to use these advancements to meet discharge restrictions or produce reclaimed water clean enough for spot free. Any water can be cleaned, and clean water makes clean cars. ■

Matt Unger is with Atlas High Purity Solutions in Braintree, MA. He can be reached at 617/678-8881 or munger@atlaswater.com. For more information visit www.atlashighpurity.com





A Call For Nominations

The 2019 New England Carwash Association (NECA) Board has openings for both Operator and Supplier Directors. These are one-year terms, renewable by mutual agreement, for a maximum of three consecutive terms. By August 1, please nominate yourself or a colleague by contacting David Ellard, Immediate Past President, at 508/277-0955 or dellard135@aol.com.

Participation in the work of the NECA is a membership privilege open to all employees of member companies. Those who are actively involved make strategic decisions about the direction of the Association and the profession on our members' behalf. Most importantly, participation is a networking opportunity, an excellent way to make industry contacts and tap into the collective knowledge of the NECA community.

Eligibility for the Board of Directors:

- Owner or full-time employee of an member company in good standing,
- Interest in becoming more involved in the activities of the Association,
- Desire to have an influence on the future of the industry and Association and
- Willingness to be a full participant in the work of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors meets in person six times a year. Dates are set in advance so that Board members can plan ahead. New Board members are inducted in the fall and officially take office on January 1. Non-profit governance training is provided during the fall transition period and at a new Board orientation lunch.

Deadline to nominate yourself or a colleague:
August 1, 2018

How to nominate:
Contact David Ellard, Immediate Past President, at 508/277-0955 or dellard135@aol.com

More Opportunities to Get Involved (without the Board commitment)

One or a few people cannot do alone what we can do together! Become an active and engaged member to reap the full benefits of membership.

Even if you only have an hour or two to spare, there are opportunities throughout the year to get involved and to get to know (and learn from) other NECA members. Make some phone calls, research a possible member service, help out at the special event, share a best practice, identify a speaker for a program, take photos at a meeting. The possibilities are limitless.

Contact the NECA office about these micro opportunities at 781/245-7400 or info@newenglandcarwash.org. ■

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Howard Perkins Dies at 86

Howard E. Perkins, 86, of Hanover, MA, a stable in the carwashing industry for many years, passed away on April 29. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Patricia R. (Stokes) Perkins. He is the son of the late Erwin and Agnes Perkins.

According to long-time friend John Millerick, "Howard put Blue Coral on the map in New England; he was the "Seal Team Six" of chemical sales for many years."

Perkins proudly served in the U.S. Marines during the Korean War. He was also an avid sports fan. After his run in chemical sales he started two companies, Tapco and then HE Perkins Associates, Inc. (Tapco was also founded with Terry Berriault). Millerick referred to Perkins as his mentor and said, "Howard had an infectious smile and laugh. We lost a good one."

He is survived by his son Thomas Perkins and his wife Karen; Nancy Johnson and her husband William all of Corpus Christi, TX; Mark Roush of Hanover and Michael Roush and his wife Diane of Woodlands, TX, as well as his brother Lloyd Perkins and his wife Dorothy of Sherman, TX. He leaves behind six grandchildren, three great grandchildren and his loyal dog, Max.

Donations may be made in his memory to the American Heart Association, PO Box 417005, Boston, MA 02241-7005.

TREASURER'S REPORT

New England Carwash Association, Inc.

January - March 2018

Income	
Interest Income	$560.27
Meetings	$9,200.00
Member Services	$857.87
Membership	$13,625.00
NRCC	$30,023.98
Scholarship	$440.00
Total Income	**$54,707.12**
Expenses	
Advertising and Promotions	$-
Board Expenses	$830.81
Charitable Contribution*	$5,400.00
Insurance	
Management Services	$10,336.44
Meetings	$7,912.54
Member Services	$236.20
Membership	$248.79
Office Expense	$988.29
Professional Expense	$450.00
Scholarship	
Tax	$24.45
Other	
Total Expenses	**$26,427.52**
Net Income	**$28,279.60**
Cash Balances	
Citizen's Bank Savings	$89,306.04
Citizens Checking	$97,354.97
EverBank CDs	$103,537.63
Total Checking / Savings	**$290,198.64**

** $5400 from NECA 2017 Golf Outing donated to NEADS*

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

In all the time that I have been a part of the New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA), I don't think there has ever been a time where small business in New York State, including carwashes, have been under such assault by its own state government. I have been keeping you updated through email blasts and updates on NYSCWA.com and through this column as to the battle we are waging in opposition to the "Call In/Call Out" regulations put forth by the Department of Labor (DOL). We have testified at the open hearings and submitted letters in opposition. With the guidance of Bill Crowell, our invaluable lobbyist, we have recently successfully submitted a bill and have sponsors in both houses (Senator Rich Funke and Assemblyman Robin Schimminger) which asks that the proposal be tabled until a study can be completed that validates the State's position that there will be "no adverse impact to employers or employees." We believe that this assertion is false and the impacts to small businesses were testified to at the open hearing held across the state. We are hopeful that this pending bill will cause the DOL to slow down and reconsider their position and take seriously the testimony of small businessowners from around the state including Tom Hoffman Jr. of Hoffman Car Wash and Ron Benderson of Delta Sonic, who both explained in detail the negative impact these regulations would have on their collective staff.

Right on the heels of these proposed regulations Governor Cuomo announced his proposal to end the Employee Tip Credit (information on the Tip Credit can be found on our website.) We believe these regulations are an overreach of the government without getting any input or listening to the individuals who operate small business or the employees who work in them. Ron Benderson of Delta Sonic supplied the Senators with letters from his employees who do not want the "Call In/Call Out" regulations passed. They understand the negative impact that these regulations will have on their income.

The restaurant association, as well as a waiters, waitresses, bartenders, carwash attendants, etc. have voiced serious concerns about the impact of the removal of the Tip Credit. They say it will result in higher retail prices and therefore reduced tip income for service employees.

As an association we have been very active in voicing our concerns along with other like businesses to these regulations. Just recently, we became aware of a proposed county regulation that if passed would provide "sick time" for any employee who works 80 hours/year. There are a host of issues that surround this proposal, far too numerous to get into here.

But the lesson is very clear. We as small business operators can no longer just worry about the business of washing cars, volumes, staffing, sales or just the weather, we need to now be aware of the governmental regulations, at all levels, and voice our concerns together to help protect the interests of employees, as well as employers. In many cases, the noble idea of protecting employees will have just the

Continued on next page ...

OFFICERS

Walt Hartl, president
Hoffman Car Wash, Albany
518/527-4202 • whartl@hoffman-development.com

Steve Weekes, vice president
Sitterly Road Car Wash LLC
518/383-8126 • sweekes@nycap.rr.com

Rob Peter, secretary
Lustra Car Care Products
585-754-0005 • rpeter@lustrabear.com

Mike Benmoschè, treasurer
McNeil & Co., Inc., Menands
607/220-6344 • mbenmosche@mcneilandcompany.com

BOARD MEMBERS

Gary Baright, Foam & Wash
914/757-2700 • gbaright@foamandwash.com

Jake Collison, Simoniz USA
978/518-0018 • jcollison@simoniz.com

Miguel Gonzalez, Micrologic Associates
973/945-3339 • miguel.gonzalez@micrologic.net

Christian King, KNC Holdings, Albany
518/783-2100 ext 5 • cking@clean2o.com

Chris Kubarek, K & S Car Wash
315/255-1414 • cjkubarek@me.com

Mackenzie Wilock, Spritz Car Wash
518/376-7681 • weekmac@gmail.com

PAST PRESIDENTS

Tom Hoffman Sr.
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*Deceased

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Suzanne L. Stansbury
Ph/F: (518) 280-4767
mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com
P.O. Box 230, Rexford, NY 12148

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President's Column ... *continued*

opposite effect. If you attended The Carwash Show in Las Vegas in April, I'm sure you noticed the number of auto cashiers and robotics on the show floor. This is just the beginning.

Help the NYSCWA to continue to work in opposition of these regulations and others like them that will reduce our workforce, eliminate employees and take away the opportunities for many workers who like a flexible work schedule and enjoy receiving tips for the work they do. These regulations will take away the opportunity to use their "first job" as a positive launching pad for their careers whether it's in the carwash industry or somewhere else. Consider joining the NYSCWA and making a donation to our Political Action Fund (PAC) to help us represent all the carwash operators in New York State.

Walter Hartl
NYSCWA President

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Wash and Storage Business Compliment Each Other at Bay Wash

By Alan M. Petrillo

Steve Canale, the owner of Bay Wash at 485 E. Main St. in Middletown, NY, complements that business with a Storage Solutions USA facility at the rear of the same property, cross-marketing both businesses to benefit each of them.

Bay Wash has one in-bay automatic and five self-service bays, while Storage Solutions USA has 288 units occupying 3,500 square feet of space. Canale's wife, Anne, sons Christopher and Matthew, and daughter Jennifer Barrett are partners with him in the dual operations. They have three part-time employees on staff, Jeff, Heidi and Donna, who staff the office complex in the center of the property between the two businesses, and perform maintenance for both.

Canale is the former owner and operator of Mount Ivy Car Wash, a 100-foot tunnel wash with six self-service bays in Pomona, NY, which he sold in 1989. He later acquired a small self storage facility at the 485 E. Main St. address in Middletown, and in 1999, built the self-service bays and the automatic wash on the site.

"I wanted to get back into carwashing, and liked the self service end of it," Canale pointed out. "I thought the mix of a carwash and the self storage on the same site would make a good combination, and it has for us."

Canale opened Bay Wash in 2001 on two acres of vacant land in front of the existing self storage facility. Since that time, Canale has expanded the self storage facility four times, with the most recent expansion being two-and-a-half years ago, when he went up to 288 units.

Bay Wash recently began a loyalty program that cross markets the two businesses.

"We have a gate system that people use to get in and out of the storage area," Canale said. "We use the same code for them on the storage gate and on our touch free automatic as part of the free loyalty program. Anyone using our storage facility gets a discount on a carwash through the program. We also give discounts for birthdays and holidays."

Bay Wash's price points for the in-bay automatic, which uses a Petit Auto Wash all-stainless steel system, are $7, $12, $14 and $18, while the self service charges $3.75 for four minutes, with extra minutes running 94 cents. Canale noted that the most popular package people choose in the in-bay automatic is the $12 wash, followed very closely by the $18 wash.

Canale said that the combination of the two businesses, "Is a very good business model that allows a low number of employees to handle both. I'm very particular in how I run my operations," he added. "I'm a very hands-on owner."

He pointed out that keeping the facilities clean and maintaining the equipment are important elements in his business philosophy.

"We follow a strict maintenance program for Bay Wash, and also for the storage facility," Canale said. "The self stor-

Colorful signage makes selecting a wash option a breeze at Bay Wash!

Bay Wash in Middletown, NY, features five self-serve bays and one inbay automatic. It also boasts a Storage Solutions USA facility.

The 288 unit, 3,500 square foot storage facility is a great revenue boost for the wash.

age business is low maintenance, but you're always chasing money, and the self service carwash business is just the reverse, higher in maintenance, but there's no chasing money because carwash customers pay in advance."

Bay Wash and Storage Solutions USA don't do a lot of marketing, Canale noted.

"We are at a four-way intersection with great exposure," he said. "There's a hospital down the street, and a Home Depot, Wal-Mart and huge shopping center nearby. We use our LED message center sign out front to do marketing, and plan on using some marketing features of our new pay station very shortly." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ-based journalist, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. *He's the author of the historical mysteries,* Full Moon *and* Asylum Lane, *and his latest historical thriller,* A Case of Dom Perignon, *all available at www.amazon.com.*

Great Training: Follow These Five Steps

The secret to successful training is to define up front what you want employees to be able to do once training is complete. Once this is clear to you, use these guidelines to develop your training session:

❖ **Explain and demonstrate.**

Begin with both an explanation of what you expect the employees to learn, and a thorough demonstration of the skill so no one misunderstands the point of the training.

❖ **Plan practice sessions.**

Consider how employees can effectively practice the skills. In some cases this may be obvious; in other cases you may need to consider role-playing exercises or other approaches.

❖ **Provide tools.**

Employees may need manuals, "cheat sheets," or other documentation to better master the material. Don't begin training without these, and ask for evaluation of their usefulness when training is complete so you can improve them.

❖ **Set a time frame.**

It's often not reasonable to expect employees to fully master the skills during the training session. Work with employees to determine how long they'll need to feel comfortable, and how they'll practice the skill once the formal training session is over. ■

An Unorthodox Savings Perspective??

By Mike Benmoschè

A short time ago, at a carwash meeting, I was asked a question that inspired me to respond with a unique explanation. It seemed a logical response, but turned out to be one that would encourage this carwash operator to think differently than, most likely, he had expected. The attendee asked if he could save money on his insurance premium if they installed a video surveillance system at the wash. I told him that I couldn't guarantee that he could reduce his premium, but I could assure him that it would most likely lower his costs!

When most businesses think of ways to lower their insurance expense, they inevitably focus exclusively on the premium. What I hope to accomplish in this article is to offer that there is an alternate, more effective approach to attain a reduction in your out-of-pocket insurance related expenses. I would challenge readers to consider better managing their cost versus the premium as a method to reduce your annual insurance related expenses.

Most everyone knows what an insurance premium represents. After applying a multitude of rating factors, the insurance company computes an annual cost. This is the monthly/quarterly/bi-annual/annual payment made to the insurance company and, in return, the insurer must provide coverage for claims made against the policy by the insured. However, costs generated by factors outside the premium charged are generally ignored by operators. In most cases, these expenditures are excluded from their calculations. I submit that if you are appropriately comparing one quote proposal against another, the following needs to be added to the final figures as they can vary significantly from company to company. Listed next is the first one of the ingredients that I refer to as cost of insurance:

- Coverage sub-limits that can be inadequate to meet the specific needs of the exposures.
- Example would be sign coverage that the policy provides an automatic limit of $5,000 when your sign is worth $50,000 to replace
- Off-premises business income due to loss of power, communications or water supply. Often not covered, but when it is, limits are often below $10,000 and exclude overhead lines. This can be significant if a storm blows out the power and the next two days turn out to be the best weather you have had all month. This sublimit will most likely be grossly inadequate to compensate your business from the loss of income suffered.
- Pollution on premises coverage limit $5,000 is not uncommon on many automatic enhancement policy endorsements. However, an operator I knew was charged more than $10,000 for emergency vehicles to just show up after a car's gas tank punctured and leaked all over the property. This is before the additional charges for the cleanup process.

What does your business model establish as an acceptable cost from vehicle damage? As a percentage of sales, let's assume it's between 7 – 10 percent. Whatever that number is, plus the costs associated with indirect costs, needs to be added to the premium to calculate the final insurance payout during your policy period. Say you're annual receipts are $400,000 so that would equate to between $28,000 and $40,000 paid. The indirect costs are typically around three times that amount. When you consider that some insurance companies have programs and processes that can reduce this percentage by half of what you are paying now, imagine how much in savings that means to the bottom line. This needs to be a part of your cost of insurance comparisons along with the proposed premiums. Confused by what qualifies as an indirect cost? Here are some examples:

- When an employee is injured there is a cost in retraining a replacement
- Lost production time cleaning up the mess caused by an incident
- Consumer distrust of your operations
- Cost of the paperwork associated with reporting the accident
- Loss of production due to diminished cohesiveness of your team
- Time spent monitoring and administrating the claim process
- Loss of clients at the scene due to safety concerns that won't return and
- Reduction of production due to employees focusing on discussions around the loss in lieu of properly performing their job functions.

Another cost factor that adds up quickly is the dollars spent on paying the applicable deductible option selected. Many operators don't keep track of these numbers even though they too affect bottom-line profits. Such as, if you have five claims with a $1,000 deductible, that means $5,000 out of pocket. Another notable deducible factor is the use of a waiting period in lieu of a specific dollar amount on business interruption due to equipment breakdown claims. If this type of loss happens on a busy weekend and not a slow day, this can amount to considerable loss of revenue.

Insurance Limitations

Insurance coverage limitations are yet another item that must be factored into final costs. Insurance policies vary significantly from one company to another. Such as:

- Ordinary payroll limited to 60 days of coverage under a business income claim

Continued on page 90 ...

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Unorthodox Savings ...

continued from page 88.

- Limitations on ordinance and law coverage – cost to re-build a structure where only 51 percent is damaged and increased costs due to new standards adopted by the community since the original building was constructed and
- Off-premises power failure business income where coverage is not included for damage to overhead transmission line.

Add costs that may be related to OSHA fines and penalties incurred due to violations discovered during a surprise inspection. If your risk management program is unprepared for this potential eventuality, it can amount to a substantial expense.

Keep in mind that the aforementioned costs can be easily managed. Conversely, premium reductions are usually much less reliable. It would be prudent to keep the following limitations in mind regarding premium savings:

- Premium reductions can be arbitrary and are at the complete discretion of the carrier
- They are often short term in nature
- Can easily be eliminated by the company on renewal
- Can turn out to be an illusion when rating bases are manipulated by brokers
- Underpriced policies can often lead to significant renewal increases, or might create a situation where they are in greater peril for non-renewal status
- They are inconsistent and
- They offer little or no control by the client.

All these items need to be a part of your calculations when determining the expense you pay for insurance each year. Don't position yourself so that your premium turns out to be nothing more than a deposit each year. Clearly, after you include all the unexpected costs listed above, the final amount you spend can be substantially higher than what you planned. Can your business afford to absorb those increased expenses?

This industry is already subjected to a multitude of unknowns that can have a substantial negative impact on your profitability. For example, at the top of the list is dealing with the weather, followed by legislative amendments affecting labor, new tax law legislation, new competitors moving into your territory, in some states double taxation, along with new government regulations on both national and local levels.

Think about it. Can you really afford to ignore the information shared in this article regarding potential added costs? Next time, be serious about including these factors in your decision making. Avoid being duped into comparing only insurance premium expenses. It's time to revisit how your prejudice in the way you view insurance premiums can totally be misleading and unknowingly adversely affecting your bottom line profits. If your competitor is doing a better job of understanding and managing costs, you're losing an important edge.

Continued on page 92 ...

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Funke, Schimminger Bill Opposes Proposed Call-In Pay Regulations, Calls for More Study

William Y. Crowell, III,

The carwash industry, together with the Business Council of New York State and numerous other groups, have vigorously opposed the adoption of pending regulations by the New York State Department of Labor (DOL) on scheduling and call-in pay. The Senate Commerce Committee held a hearing earlier at which a number of groups including the New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) either testified at or filed comments in opposition to the proposed regulations.

The hearing unfortunately occurred in Albany during a snowstorm. Despite the weather conditions, there was significant opposition from a wide variety of businesses and not-for-profit groups that testified at the hearing.

To date, the Department of Labor has not moved to adopt the proposed regulations. The DOL indicated it was processing and evaluating the comments that were forwarded to them on the proposed regulations. There is no indication as to whether the Department of Labor would consider changes to the proposed regulations to respond to the problems caused by not including an exception for weather-related businesses such as the carwashes, construction and snow plowing. Besides weather-related issues, these regulations fail to appreciate the challenges that this regulation causes for small businesses. There is no exemption for compliance based on the size of the business.

The regulatory flexibility analysis which was included with the proposed regulation, indicated that there was no impact on small business and no loss of jobs as a consequence of the regulations. Senators Rich Funke and Assemblyman Robin Schimminger have introduced legislation, S.7908A and A.10423 respectively, to respond to this apparent lack of information in the regulatory flexibility analysis. Clearly, a state agency should have an obligation to accurately account for the impacts: on job and employment opportunities and on small businesses. The testimony presented at the Senate Commerce Committee hearing pointed to the real costs to small businesses and the resulting job loss that the regulations would cause. One carwash operator calculated a potential loss of 1200 jobs for his company. Another operator pointed to employee reductions through automation.

Senator Funke and Assemblyman Schimminger's legislation requires the proposed regulation to be held in abeyance pending a study by a third party under the auspices of Empire State Development to evaluate the impacts on jobs and employment and small businesses. The Department of Labor would be required to minimize any impacts determined by the study.

This bill is a reasonable response to a proposed regulation which, based on the testimony provided to the Senate Commerce Committee, would have significant impact on New York's small businesses, most particularly carwashes and numerous other businesses.

Senator Funke's bill has been reported to the calendar from the Senate Corporations Committee for action. It would be helpful not only for operators but also for your employees to contact their legislators to express support for this legislation. Please reach out to your individual legislators and ask them to support the Funke-Schimminger legislation. Please don't forget to thank Senator Funke and Assemblyman Schimminger for their leadership on this issue.

The NYSCWA and other business groups want the impacts of the proposed regulation to be transparent prior to any final action on this regulation. This bill would require the Department of Labor to review the study and to minimize any impacts. If the study confirms the industry concerns with respect to job loss, it would require the Department of Labor to respond by considering changes to the proposed regulations.

This bill only requires the Department of Labor to do what should have been done initially, review the impacts and minimize them. Carwash operators and other small businessmen throughout the state have been ignored. Their business models are in jeopardy and the state in fundamental fairness to these taxpayers needs to respond to protect the impacted businesses and their employees. ■

William Y. Crowell, III

William Y. Crowell, III, is a partner with Cozen O'Connor. You can reach him at 202/883-4944 or wcrowell@cozen.com

Unorthodox Savings ... *continued from page 90.*

Remember:

- Inadequate sub-limits
- Indirect costs
- Deductible expenditures
- Coverage limitations
- OSHA fines and penalties
- Unreliable premium credits

Based on these aforementioned considerations, improve your bottom line by adopting this new business practice now. ■

Mike Benmoschè

Mike Benmoschè is with Carwash Insurance Program by McNeil, Cortland, NY. You can reach him at mbenmosche@mcneilandcompany.com or 607/220-6344.

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"Lonely is the Night" – Loud and Clear

By Ray Justice

How much of my life, of your life, is a habit or pattern?

My answer is quite a bit, often much more than awareness allows.

The way it has been is often the way we do it, think it or believe it. A great deal of this we are not aware of and live with a form of automatic pilot.

Here's my story and what happened to me. There was a time, many years ago, when my son John was about 12 years old and wanted to go to a concert featuring rock star Billy Squire. I did not like his music, with his loud screeching guitars. So, my belief was I don't like rock, or at least this type, at all.

Often at home, while walking down our bedroom hall, past my son's room, I would become distracted, no actually annoyed, by the very loud, shrieking noise coming from my son's bedroom. It was often Billy Squire or AC/DC full blast. It vibrated in my body, felt it in my bones, in an evil and chilling way.

I asked him to turn it down and he did, and then replied "Why?" It, at the time, was extremely irritating to me, just loud noises and I told him that.

The Potential Concert

In my eyes he was too young to go alone or with friends and he really wanted to go. I had an idea and asked him to record for me a tape of Billy Squire songs. Remember, this was years before iPods and mobile phones were invented. This was for a bright yellow Walkman cassette player.

He copied several Billy Squire songs that I listened to twice a day for the next couple weeks. Regularly, I would go for a two-mile run early in the morning and again when I got home from work. This habit and routine was usually to clear my head, but out of necessity became a Billy Squire audio concert.

I estimated that I listed to about seven hours of Mr. Squire's guitar and vocals during those couple of weeks. I intentionally decided to work on my mind before I took him and his friend to the concert. I had to find a way to not be aggravated by it all. Earplugs were also on my list of possibilities.

Guess what? The concert was fun, and to this day I still enjoy Billy Squire.

It had worked beyond my expectations, "Lonely is the Night" still pops into my head now and then. I love it as a wonderful memory that could have been missed. I just needed to be open to change and new possibilities.

In summary, my belief was that I do not like this type of music. Even stronger I would of said, back then, that it drives me nuts and is annoying. I changed my belief because I had a reason, big enough, to have me figure out a way to enjoy it or at least tolerate it. I reprogrammed by thoughts and with that my belief. Questions to ask ourselves when we become aware of repeating thoughts and beliefs: Are they real? Are they true? Or just what you are used to?

With "Lonely is The Night" as the theme it becomes a reminder that when we go to bed at night it is a perfect time to pay attention to what we are thinking.

What is going on with our thoughts?

It is also a perfect time to practice thinking about, or visualizing what and how we would like things to be instead of how we don't. Change is possible and not as difficult as you would think. The current coaching programs I am involved in teach us to "Remember the Future" so I will leave you with that to ponder over.

Rock on Billy Squire!

Ray Justice is an entrepreneur, poet and creativity explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the New York State Car Wash Association. Visit him at ThoughtCompass.com

Here are a few bonus notes that relate to reprogramming yourself.

1. The Power of Repetition – practice, practice, practice and do it enough so that it automatically becomes second nature, your instincts seem to do it for you.
2. Habits are basically mindless, meaning you do not have to think to do them.
3. Willingness starts the process
4. Know Thyself: Learn and know as much about yourself as possible.

   Once you understand yourself you grow forward from there.
5. Move into action, or write quickly, beat your mind from distracting you,

   because it will, every time.
6. Create a sense of deliberate, intentional appreciation for what is already there.

   We feel grateful when something good happens for us. Let's create a habit of feeling appreciative for what is already there, the good stuff – everyday – create that hab7. 7. Take a moment, sit down and think about what you like about yourself.

   What you like about who you are and what you do. And again, create that habit.
8. Make a list, focus on what you like about yourself.

   It may create automatic or a way of being that you haven't thought about.

p.p.s.s. additional bonus concepts.

Do it on purpose:

New habits can be consciously developed; creating additional pathways in the brain that can create new thinking in fresh and innovative ways.

Make an effort to try new things on a regular basis. The more new things you try and the more you step out of your comfort zone, the more creative you can become.

To change habits, you need a fascination with wonder. People with a sense of wonder are always exploring different possibilities, they are automatically, instinctively, curious.

Our minds have constant chatter that is automatically rapid and lightning fast.

That busy, rambling mind keeps us from being present and mindful.

If you are normally afraid of taking risks it will be more difficult to create a new habit.

Fear based thoughts are faster and seem to take up more space in our minds.

Most of the time we think about what can go wrong and what we don't want to have happen.

If you worry quite easily it keeps that gloomy critical, busy, part of you quite active. ■

Ray Justice is an entrepreneur, poet and creativity explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the New York State Car Wash Association. Visit him at Thoughtcompass.com

Ray Justice

Repeat. Repeat. Repeat, Repeat, Repeat, Repeat, Repeat.

Repetition is a way to learn, to remember and a reason to practice.

The important questions are,

What are we learning?

What are we remembering?

And why?

The thoughts that we constantly repeat in our minds–

where did they come from?

When your thoughts hear "should," "shouldn't," "don't," "be careful,"

Whose voice are you remembering and repeating?

Repetition of the same thoughts and words makes them automatic.

When under stress we go to our automatic responses, what has been programmed?

So if you repeat, repeat, repeat, again, again, and again the same, words, thoughts, or actions, what happens?

It all works the same way: building muscle with action or motions, building automatic response with repetitive thoughts and words.

Some sources say we have up to 90 percent of the same thoughts each day.

If that is so, what are you repeating and building?

Use the words and thoughts that say where or how you are now or how you want to be, not what you are afraid of or what you don't want.

Do you need a new script? Notice the words you use first, then your notice your thoughts.

What are your daily, or your regular, repetitions?

Encourage, calm, and humor yourself; think about the beauty, not the beast.

Now raise your right hand, now repeat after me,

"I am an exceptionally happy person, I like people and people like me."

"I can do it."

Repeat often – you don't get it by doing it just one time.

Ray Justice is an entrepreneur, poet and creativity explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the New York State Car Wash Association. Visit him at Thoughtcompass.com

New York State Car Wash Association

Profit and Loss

January - March, 2018

Income	
Meetings Income	2,275.00
Membership Dues	13,001.00
Northeast Convention Income	30,023.98
PAC Contributions	150.00
Promotional Fees	0.00
Vendor Sponsorships	350.00
Total Income	**$45,799.98**
Gross Profit	**$45,799.98**
Expenses	
Advertising/Promotional	64.80
Bank Service Charges	20.00
Board of Directors Expenses	363.96
Director Fees	7,000.00
Dues & Subscriptions	2,475.00
Legislative Expense	50.00
Legislative Fees	4,500.00
Meetings Expenses	1,401.24
NRCC	137.50
Office Expenses	917.69
Postage Expense	175.73
Printing/Graphics	26.00
QuickBooks Payments Fees	201.45
Telephone	73.02
Travel	88.51
Total Expenses	**$17,494.90**
Net Operating Income	**$28,305.08**
Net Income	**$28,305.08**
PAC Checking	12,431.75
NBT Checking	72,711.36
Money Market	58,211.43
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							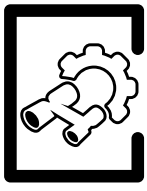
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