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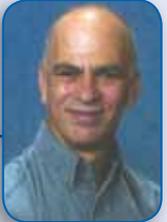
ON THE COVER

*An abstract shot of ice seems a fitting backdrop to
The Winter of 2011: Be Careful What You Wish For! (p. 12).*

**northeast
carwasher**



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www.northeastcarwasher.com

Carwashers are certainly a hearty breed. If this past winter is any example of what a carwasher must endure to make money, you have all come out winners. From Maine to Maryland there has been unprecedented snowfall and to top that off, it came with little reprieve. But despite the deluge of snow, you have endured, and in many cases, you have prospered. Even Mark Kubarek in the snowbelt of western New York, who at this writing was nearing 190 inches of the white stuff, was bullish on carwashing and reported that he had experienced his highest volume day in five years during a break between the Christmas and New Year's holidays. After all, we all know it only takes a string of perfect days to make bank. And luckily, there have been some of those! Let's hope that by the time you read this column you will have had several strings of picture perfect washing days – with more to come!

But what does it really take to be part of this hearty breed? Is it an unflinching will to prosper? Is it sheer determination or does it require a mindset that allows you to look beyond the present, into the future, and change up your way of doing business? For the operators I speak to who are not crying the blues, and blaming their lack of profits on the weather, it is exactly that. There are operators out there who are actually up in volume and car counts and they attribute it to an ability to redefine their business model. They aren't afraid to take a really close look at how they are washing a car, and if necessary, change it up with new equipment, reconfigured equipment or an entirely new washing process. Maybe it's their pricing and packages that aren't right for today's market. Maybe it's their hours of operation or discounting that isn't working any more. Or, maybe it's time to investigate the club plan concept or maybe even delving into the world of social media to better target today's buying public. A wise carwasher once said to me that there is always money to be made; you just have to figure out how best to get at it. But be sure that the operators out there who are profiting are going to continue to push their models and listen to their customers and make adjustments as they deem necessary to prosper.

New Friends

I've made some new friends recently, and I'd like to tell you about them. The start of this year found a close friend's family in need of some financial support as a result of a house fire. The house was not a loss and all but one occupant got out unscathed. However, my friend's husband, who is a pastor at a small Lutheran church in my town, suffered some third degree burns. As a result, he required four weeks of care at Westchester Medical Center's burn unit in Valhalla, NY, 145 miles from his home in Niskayuna. The community came out and supported this family to assist with the miscellaneous expenses they would incur from co-pays to loss of income to ambulance transfers. One of the fundraising events was a pancake breakfast hosted by the local Niskayuna Rotary and facilitated by the pastor's church. I volunteered to set up for the event and work the breakfast. In doing so, I got to meet a ton of really unique and giving Rotarians. Our local Rotary is very small, with fewer than 20 members, but the outreach of the Rotaries in our area drew probably 50 additional participants to the event. The Rotary motto, "Service Above Self" conveys the humanitarian spirit of the organization's more than 1.2 million members. Strong fellowship among Rotarians and meaningful community and international service projects characterize Rotary worldwide.

I was just blown away that the members of this organization were so selfless. They gave of their time and talents to help a family most of them had never met. I walked away from that experience exhausted as we served more than 300 people, but filled with a renewed sense of respect for the human spirit and our ability to help others. I was so proud of my community and so thankful to have had the opportunity to contribute my little part to help this family.



If you never get a chance to give back, be it through a group like the Rotary or simply volunteering your time and talent in some fashion at your church or local school, you are truly missing out. Take the time and make the effort because it will come back to you 10 fold.

For more information on the Rotary visit rotary.org.

Suzanne L. Stansbury

Suzanne L. Stansbury
Editor/Publisher



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In response to our Winter 2011 Cover Story, "Incredible Stories From the Carwash," Stu Levy, a loyal Northeast Carwasher reader, had the following bizarre story of his own to share!

The Burglar In The Furnace

Many years ago I owned a carwash in the Chicago market. It was a cold winter morning and my normal routine before I did anything was to light the fuel oil furnace.

On this particular day, I couldn't get the furnace to ignite. This wasn't the first time this had happened so I went up to my office to do some other things before I gave it another try. I couldn't help but notice that things weren't quite in order when I found a note from the police. The note said they had a report of a break in and had come to investigate. It also said that they didn't find anything and left. (No, I didn't have a burglar alarm and security cameras weren't popular back in the late '70s). Anyway, I then returned my attention to getting the furnace started.

Despite my best efforts, I still had problems getting it to ignite. Finally, it did, and I heard a scream and then the furnace door flew open. IT WAS THE BURGLAR!!!!

Apparently, he had heard the police come and decided to hide in the furnace where he fell asleep until I woke him up. Talk about being terrified! I actually helped pull him out of the furnace and ran across the street to another service station where I saw a police car idling on the property. I ran over and got him to come over to the carwash. I was so scared I couldn't speak, but the officer got the message that something was terribly wrong and came over to investigate.

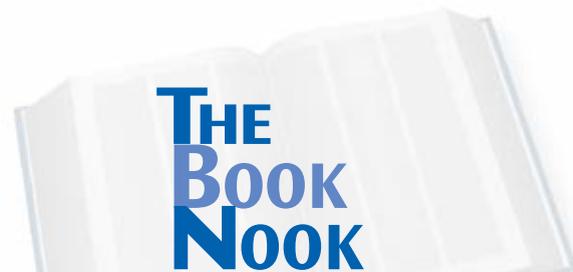
Back on property, the burglar had made his way out of the furnace room to the outside door. Needless to say, he wasn't in very good shape. He turned out to be an ex-employee whom I had fired and had come back to rob me. As for me, I had third degree burns on my hands where I had grabbed the burglar's boots to pull him out of the furnace.

The moral of the story is, "Be careful where you sleep, you just might get burned!"

Stuart Levy owns Clean Car Consulting in Chelmsford, MA. You can reach him at smlcwconsulting@aol.com or 978/828-7712.

Do you have an opinion or view you want to share with our readers?

Send your thoughts to:
 Editor, *Northeast Carwasher*
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 OR mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com



Periodically, we will recommend some reading material our staff believes have value for our readership. You might want to check out the following recommendations!

Biology of Belief: Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter and Miracles by Bruce H. Cipton

Bear: The Story of America's Most Decorated Dog by Scott Shields

The Four Agreements by Miguel Ruit

Make Your Fortune Washing Cars by Ira A. Feinberg

If you have read anything notable, please share it with us at mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com ■

Site on the Mind

Colonial Car Wash, Schenectady, NY, has created a simple and organized website. By using a clear and easy-to-read font the site gives customers a look at the wash's professional services. The layout is clean and the site uses a cohesive color scheme which adds to its attractive appearance. Each service is briefly explained on the site along with information on each wash location.

Another added bonus to the page is the information consumers can obtain on the company's community service program. You can also follow Colonial Carwash on Facebook. Check it out at www.colonialcw.com ■

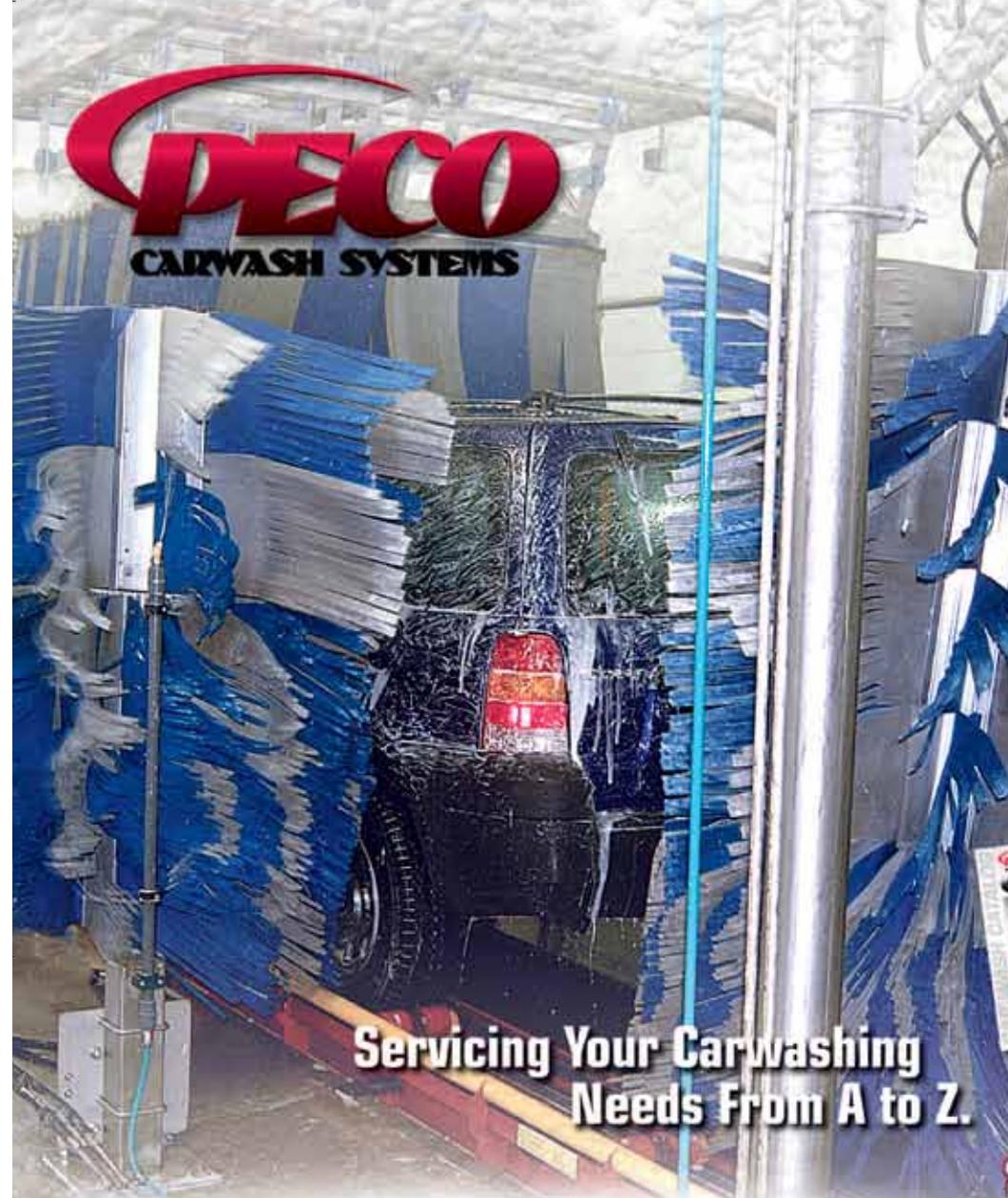
WASH VOLUME INDEX

We have taken the pulse of five East Coast operators to see where their volumes are compared to last year.



We had a high of +13 in the Mid Atlantic and a low of -36 percent again in the Boston market with the rest of the participants falling somewhere in between. We will track this every quarter with our sharing operators!

Thanks to Dennis O'Shaughnessy, Sr. in update New York; Doug Rieck on the Jersey shore; Dave DuGoff in the Mid-Atlantic; Ron Bousquet in Boston and Kevin Detrick in the Poconos. ■

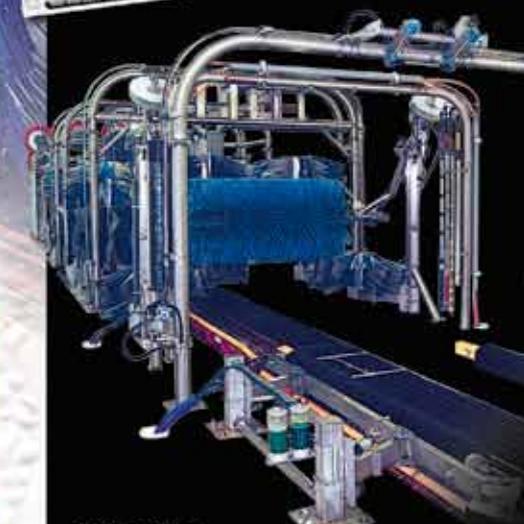


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ANITA BARON JOINS AEF

American Equipment Finance (AEF) has named Anita Baron as Vice President Business Development. In her new role, Baron is responsible for business development across several targeted industries. Prior to joining AEF, Baron spent 12 years with Butler Capital. She is active in the Car Care and Convenience & Gas industries, and is a past officer of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association.

"Anita's financing expertise combined with her vertical market industry expertise is a tremendous asset to AEF," said Len Baccarat, AEF Executive Vice President.

"After an extensive search, I could not have joined a better company," noted Baron. "AEF is a perfect fit for someone who has industry expertise and values a proven management team and sales organization – with vast resources and access to capital. This is a very exciting time for me professionally, as I look forward to building the AEF Brand."

Baron has a degree from American University and resides in Baltimore County with her husband and their two children.

For more information visit www.aefllc.com

MARK VII HIRES NEW SALES MANAGER

Mark VII Equipment Inc., Arvada, CO, the US subsidiary of WashTec AG of Germany, a producer of vehicle washing equipment worldwide, announced that Rob Novak has joined the organization as Sales Manager for Mark VII's direct sales territories.

Novak's carwash industry experience includes eight years at Ryko Manufacturing, where he was National Account Sales Manager. He also has held senior sales positions at Retalix, a provider of retail software solutions, and National Paper and Sanitary Supply. He holds a degree in mathematics with a minor in physics from Auburn University.

"I'm pleased to welcome Rob to Mark VII," said Steve Jeffs, VP Sales of Mark VII. "We have significantly expanded our direct sales operations over

the past few years, and he brings with him a wealth of industry knowledge and experience that will benefit the entire sales organization."

For more information visit www.markvii.net

MACNEIL APPOINTS NEW VP



MacNeil Wash Systems is pleased to announce the appointment of Anthony Antonis to the position of Vice President, Sales and Marketing. Antonis will be responsible for MacNeil's overall marketing strategies, developing sales and fostering distributor development throughout North America and Internationally, according to a company press release.

Antonis has an extensive background in dealer-based sales as VP for US sales at Hanna Car Wash Systems and National Sales Manager for The Jim Coleman Company. He has owned and operated a full-service car wash and a full-service distributorship for Hanna Car Wash Systems. "We are in the process of introducing several new products this year, and have new programs to better service our customers," said Antonis. "It's a simple but effective strategy for success; provide high quality reliable equipment with the best customer support in the industry."

For more information visit macneilwash.com

PDQ ENTERS AGREEMENT WITH AUTOEQUIP LAVAGGI

PDQ Manufacturing, Inc., De Pere, WI, the world's largest manufacturer of touch-free vehicle wash systems, announced that it has reached a marketing and distribution agreement with Autoequip Lavaggi of Vesime, Italy, a leading designer and builder of automobile and industrial vehicle washing systems since 1963.

The agreement allows Autoequip Lavaggi to market, distribute and service the complete family of PDQ touch-free cleaning systems, including the PDQ

LaserJet™ system, in the Italian market. Autoequip Lavaggi will also lend support to other distributors of the PDQ LaserJet product throughout Europe as a way to increase its quality of service and capabilities on the continent.

"The agreement between PDQ and Autoequip is a very important one for both parties as it enables PDQ to develop a much stronger commercial presence in Italy by profiting from Autoequip's widespread network of distributors and agents, as well as after-sales service centers," said Michele Murialdi, Owner of Autoequip Lavaggi. "On the other hand, Autoequip is a leading manufacturing company for advanced 'friction' carwash equipment and this agreement will complement its product range by adding the market-best touchless system to its rollovers, conveyors and self-serve jet-wash systems."

For more information visit www.pdqinc.com

RYKO ANNOUNCES STRATEGIC CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Ryko Manufacturing, Grimes, IA, announced changes to position the company for long-term growth and success within the carwash market. Trivest Partners, a private investment firm focused on partnering with founder and family-owned businesses in the United States and Canada, has made a substantial investment in and now owns the Ryko brand, as well as the assets and operations of the company.

Trivest brings to Ryko not only a solid capital structure, but also a strong history of growing their portfolio of companies through superior customer service.

Tom Carleton, Ryko CEO, said, "Ryko emerges from this transaction as the largest carwash equipment and service provider in North America, with a clean balance sheet and a solid capital partner. Throughout our 37-year history, we have focused on superior customer service, and on innovation in unattended carwash operations. This new investment is a reflection of our commitment to grow our long-term market position, technology and service offering."

For more information visit www.ryko.com

ASSOCIATIONS FORM WATERSAVERS™ ALLIANCE



The International Carwash Association (ICA) is collaborating with the Canadian Carwash Association, the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association, the Southeastern Car Wash Association and the Western Carwash Association to better promote Watersavers™, a carwash industry environmental promotion program aimed at educating consumers and water authorities.

The participating associations include nearly 900 locations across the United States and Canada.

The Alliance represents an unprecedented level of cooperation among carwash associations and a shared recognition of the importance of advancing the industry's commitment to water conservation and quality, according to Eric Wulf, ICA CEO. "We are very excited to begin working with these outstanding partners and their members in growing the WaterSavers program," said Wulf. "Promoting our industry's responsible use of water – both in terms of usage and quality – is a shared priority for each of our organizations and one we are now aligned in supporting," said Wulf.

Carwashes implementing water management best practices are eligible to participate in WaterSavers for \$49 per location annually. Participants are included in the program's online directory of locations and afforded exclusive access to WaterSavers marketing materials.

For more information visit icawatersavers.org

FEINBERG ADDS PUBLISHER TO HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Ira A. Feinberg, a Certified Car Wash Consultant with a 40-year history in carwashing, based in Fort Lee, NJ, has published, "Make Your Fortune Washing Cars." According to Feinberg, it is the first comprehensive book covering every aspect of the carwash business and is geared toward investors as well as operators.

The book will take the reader from understanding basic business principles to buying, building and operating different types of carwashes. It depicts the stories of five successful carwash operators, their life successes, their advice and their contributions to the carwash industry. The book is a must read for those seeking an understanding of this dynamic growth industry, as well as for experienced managers and owners of carwashes as a guide for success.

For more information visit www.carwashworld.com

ZIBIT HIRED TO GROW CHEMICAL SALES



Crystal Care™, a Division of CC Detergents LLC of East Rutherford, NJ, a manufacturer of carwash products, is pleased to announce the addition of Michael S. Zibit as Vice President.

Zibit has more than 30 years of chemical industry experience working his way up from laboratory technician, warehouseman, customer service representative, salesperson, sales manager, general manager and marketing manager. This "from the bottom up" experience allows Michael to see things from multiple viewpoints and is one of his assets, according to a company press release. Zibit will work with the sales force to grow Crystal Care's chemical business.

For more information visit www.diamondchem.com

CAR WASH SOLUTIONS NEW LUSTRA® DISTRIBUTOR IN NY

Lustra® Car Care Products, De Pere, WI, has added Car Wash Solutions, LLC, based in Rochester, NY, as a

distributor for its commercial carwash products, according to a company press release.

According to the release, Car Wash Solutions has more than 35 years of carwash operation and equipment installation experience. "We are very pleased to be able to leverage the experience and expertise of Car Wash Solutions and its employees to provide the best in chemicals and support to the existing, as well as new, Lustra customers," said Dave Krause, CEO and President of Lustra. Lustra's previous distributorship in the region was recently sold.

For more information visit cleaningsystemsinc.com

ICS EXPANDS TEAM

Innovative Control Systems (ICS), Wind Gap, PA, has added new sales managers to its West Coast and Southeast markets, as well as a Vice President of Marketing to its team, according to a company press release.

Mike Antonis, a seasoned industry veteran, will now cover the West Coast for ICS. He brings 15 years of carwashing experience with him including site development, wash ownership as well as managing a large carwash distributorship.

Rob Wingard, a 10-year industry veteran, has spent much of his time in management and development. He has developed 100 carwash sites during his tenure in the industry. His background includes experience in site layout, tunnel design, plumbing and electrical drawings, as well as labor and inventory management consulting.

Also new to ICS is Vice President of Marketing Tiffany Horvath. Horvath is responsible for the company's website, tradeshow and events and communications strategies. She has a 12-year marketing background. "I'm excited to be part of the ICS team," said Horvath. "I'm looking forward to applying my marketing expertise to improve communications and strengthen our relationships with customers and distributors."

For more information visit innovative-control.com

Too Much Snow, Too Many Storms Be Careful What You Wish For...

By Alan M. Petrillo

When lyricist Sammy Cahn and composer Jule Styne put together the song, "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" in 1945, they never could have envisioned the massive pile-ups of the frozen white stuff that have blanketed the Northeast and Eastern seaboard during the winter of 2010-2011.

Some cities have received more than 50 inches of snow above their seasonal averages as of early February, with another four to six weeks of wicked winter weather still possible. As of February 4, Syracuse, NY, led the pack with a total snowfall of 125.6 inches (54.3 inches above seasonal average); followed by Hartford, CT, with 80.6 inches of snow (53.9 inches over); Newark, NJ, with 63.3 inches (49.7 inches over); Boston, MA, with 70.7 inches (48 inches over); and New York, NY, at 57.7 inches (45.7 inches over seasonal average).

The snowfalls have taken their toll on a variety of operations – municipalities, utilities, budgets, the traveling public, and of course, carwashers.

"The snow has killed business," said Ron Bousquet of Randy's Car Wash in Medford, MA. "If you get a little snow weekly or every 10 days, then that's great, but we've been getting a storm every week since after Christmas. You just finish clearing all the snow out and then you get more, so people don't get a chance to come in and wash their cars."

Bousquet has four locations around the Boston metropolitan area – three exterior tunnel sites with self-service bays and one exterior tunnel location.

"Sure, we're washing cars, but it's not the big numbers that January, February and March should be," Bousquet pointed out.

To get a feel for how much snow is still on the ground in his area, Bousquet noted that he has a deck at his home in Medford that is five feet off the ground. The snow is over the bottom of the decking.

People have told Bousquet that it makes little sense to wash their vehicles because they simply will be dirty the next day.

"Some days are pretty good washing days, but then you get the days with snow showers and that kills the day's traffic," Bousquet said. "Add that to the big storms and it's difficult. But if we could get some warm weather and have one of these storms miss us to the south or north, we might be able to do a reasonable amount of business."

Tom Hoffman Jr., chief executive officer of Hoffman Car Wash in Albany, NY, said he's seen sales at his 21 locations fall behind last year's numbers.

"Last year (2010) was an all-time company record in terms of car volume and sales, so it's difficult to compare,"



From Randy's Car Wash in the Boston, MA, market to Todd Whitehouses's Hartford, CT-area washes the snow just keeps coming!

Hoffman said, "but our January 2011 sales were 17 percent behind last year and we were down 11 percent in our car count. However, the month was actually better than our average January if we consider the five-year average."

Hoffman laid blame for the down-turned numbers on the colder and snowier weather experienced this past winter.

"Our customers get accustomed to cold temperatures and cruddy conditions where they don't get a lot of days between car washings," Hoffman pointed out, "but their cars get so dirty that they're compelled to wash them, even when the weather predictions are bad."

One of the best methods for enticing customers into the carwash, Hoffman said, is through an unlimited wash program. Hoffman's unlimited wash program currently has nearly 7,000 members.

"The unlimited program tends to drive down the average gross per car, but the benefit is that nearly 100 percent of the customers love the program because they feel like they're getting a better deal and more value, so they want to visit more frequently."

While that may seem like a better deal for the customer, Hoffman maintained both the carwash and customer win.

"The lights are already on and the staff is already at the wash, so extra soap and water are the incremental cost elements we use when we handle an unlimited wash customer," he said. "Besides, it's easier to solicit an existing customer to visit more frequently and spend more money (on upgrades) than it is to solicit a new customer. And happy unlimited customers spread the word to others."

In Manahawkin, NJ, Doug Rieck of Manahawkin Magic

Continued on page 14...

2010-2011 Winter Seasonal Snow Totals

The 2010-2011 winter has featured snowstorm after snowstorm, many dropping record amounts of snow across the Northeast. Here is a list of U.S. cities (as of February 4) that have endured snowfalls 3-feet or more above their seasonal average so far this season:

	2010-11 SNOWFALL	SEASONAL AVERAGE
Syracuse, NY	125.6 inches	71.3 inches (+54.3 inches)
Hartford, CT	80.6 inches	26.7 inches (+53.9 inches)
Newark, NJ	63.3 inches	13.6 inches (+49.7 inches)
Boston, MA	70.7 inches	22.7 inches (+48.0 inches)
New York, NY	57.7 inches	12.0 inches (+45.7 inches)
Bridgeport, CT	56.4 inches	13.7 inches (+42.7 inches)
Worcester, MA	74.6 inches	33.6 inches (+41.0 inches)

U.S. Cities and their 2010-2011 Snowfall Totals Compared to their Averages (through February 4):

	2010-11 SNOWFALL	SEASONAL AVERAGE
Connecticut		
Bridgeport, CT	56.4 inches	13.7 inches
Hartford, CT	80.6 inches	26.7 inches
Delaware		
Wilmington, DE	22.0 inches	11.0 inches
District of Columbia		
Washington, DC	9.4 inches	9.0 inches
Maine		
Bangor, ME	70.6 inches	38.0 inches
Caribou, ME	42.7 inches	67.5 inches
Portland, ME	52.4 inches	39.1 inches
Maryland		
Baltimore, MD	11.9 inches	10.2 inches
Massachusetts		
Boston, MA	70.7 inches	22.7 inches
Worcester, MA	74.6 inches	33.6 inches
New Hampshire		
Concord, NH	51.0 inches	38.7 inches
New Jersey		
Atlantic City, NJ	34.3 inches	7.0 inches
Newark, NJ	63.3 inches	13.6 inches
New York		
Albany, NY	58.2 inches	37.6 inches
Buffalo, NY	71.2 inches	65.0 inches
New York, NY	57.7 inches	12.0 inches
Rochester, NY	86.0 inches	58.5 inches
Syracuse, NY	125.6 inches	71.3 inches
Pennsylvania		
Erie, PA	60.9 inches	63.0 inches
Philadelphia, PA	38.0 inches	9.8 inches
Pittsburgh, PA	36.9 inches	24.0 inches
Rhode Island		
Providence, RI	46.7 inches	18.9 inches
Vermont		
Burlington, VT	69.6 inches	47.7 inches
Virginia		
Dulles, VA	11.8 inches	12.1 inches

Source: http://www.weather.com/outlook/weathernews/news/articles/winter-seasonal-snow-totals_2011-02-04

Too Much Snow ... *continued from page 12.*

Wash said that while the second half of December 2010 was “pretty nice washing,” the very heavy snowstorms in January caused all three of his carwashes to fall behind his January 2010 numbers by about 10 percent.

Rieck operates three locations – a flex-service express tunnel with a Laundromat, dog wash and four self-service bays, as well as two locations with in-bay automatic washes and self-service bays.

“Eighteen inches of snow is a lot for the Jersey shore,” Rieck said, “especially with snow coming down every three or four days, whether it’s three inches or six inches. The volume of snow is what has affected us so significantly.”

Rieck pointed out that carwash operators in his area are putting out big outlays of money after each storm to contract

plowers to clear and remove snow from their washes.

“This year, I am looking seriously at buying a plow to put on the pickup truck,” Rieck said. “I think a lot of operators will do the same.”

Rieck noted that it’s difficult to get people to change their way of thinking when weather predictions indicate snow or rain coming in a few days.

“Their cars may be dirty, but people don’t want to bring them to the carwash because they know another snow or rain event is on the way,” Rieck said. “In our area, every four days or so we’ve been getting some kind of precipitation, either snow or rain, which has killed business.”

Dave DuGoff, owner of College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD, called the winter of 2010-11, “very interesting, with

This snow pile in a football field near a Randy’s Car Wash exemplifies the fact that municipalities, and carwash operators, are running out of room for snow removal.



K & S Car Wash in Auburn, NY, not far from Syracuse, has experienced (as of February 4) 125.6 inches of snow. Their seasonal average is 71.3 inches!



Although snow, which can result in salting and sanding, is a carwasher’s dream in the winter, too much of a good thing is not ideal. Also, in the Auburn, NY, market where these photos were taken, the mixture municipalities are using on the roads is making cleaning a real challenge. A new mixture called “Magic,” which consists of salt, magnesium chloride and molasses, is giving K & S operator Mark Kubarek and his staff a run for their money.



some periods of good weather and some that were very frustrating.”

DuGoff has five self-service and three in-bay automatic washes about three miles outside of Washington, DC.

“We got our first real snow in December, enough that they were sanding and salting the streets, so after those first snows, we got a string of remarkable business days,” he said.

Then came January, DuGoff said, “and every three to four days we got some snow, sleet or icy rain.”

He noted that people were watching the weather forecasts, which he termed “remarkably accurate,” and if they saw a prediction for a Tuesday precipitation event, they wouldn’t wash their cars on the weekend prior to it.

But overall, DuGoff said his 2010 year was nine percent better than the prior year, while January 2011 bested the prior January by 13 percent.

“In my mind, if I’m not making a deposit (at the bank) every day, then I consider it a slow day,” DuGoff pointed out. “Too much snow or rain is simply not a good thing for us or other operators.”

Rieck of Manahawkin Magic Wash believes the only businesses doing well this past winter were the snow plowing businesses.

“A lot of pieces of snow plowing equipment were using our self-service bays to get rid of the ice and snow on them,” Rieck said. “Now if we could space out the bad weather events to about 10 days between storms, it would be great.”

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher.



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PCI Compliance ... What You Need to Know

By Jason Dunbar

PCI Compliance... We have all heard of it, but do we really understand it? You may even wonder if PCI DSS Compliance applies to you, and simply put, if you take any credit card as a form of payment, you need to keep reading.

So what is PCI compliance and what does it mean to be compliant? Is it just a set of rules I follow, certain software I run, a specific processor I use, or maybe, a set of procedures I follow and set forth for my employees? With all of the theories that are floating around, it can be incredibly difficult to understand. Just like trying to figure out detailed stereo instructions, understanding the complexities of PCI DSS Compliance can be de-motivating to say the least. So, why bother going through the hassle? The bottom line is that it is required of all merchants and the penalties for being non-compliant could run in excess of \$150,000 per incident.

Maybe we should start defining PCI DSS Compliance. The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) was developed by Visa Inc. Although other companies such as American Express, Discover Financial Services, JCB International, and MasterCard Worldwide have their own sets of standards, The PCI DSS is the most comprehensive and encompassing program, and covers all points of other standards. The PCI DSS is now actively maintained by the PCI Security Standards Council, and represents a multifaceted standard that includes requirements for security management, policies, procedures, network architecture, software design and other critical protective measures intended to prevent consumer data theft and online fraud.

So, what does that really mean? Basically, the credit card industry came up with a set of unified rules to help protect your cardholder data. These rules boil down to these twelve basic requirements:

PCI DATA SECURITY STANDARD	
Build and Maintain a Secure Network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Install and maintain a firewall configuration to protect data 2. Do not use vendor-supplied defaults for system passwords and other security parameters
Protect Cardholder Data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Protect stored data 4. Encrypt transmission of cardholder data and sensitive information across public networks
Maintain a Vulnerability Management Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Use and regularly update anti-virus software 6. Develop and maintain secure systems and applications
Implement Strong Access Control Measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Restrict access to data by business need-to-know 8. Assign a unique ID to each person with computer access 9. Restrict physical access to cardholder data
Regularly Monitor and Test Networks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Track and monitor all access to network resources and cardholder data 11. Regularly test security systems and processes
Maintain an Information Security Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Maintain a policy that addresses information security

Continued on page 18...

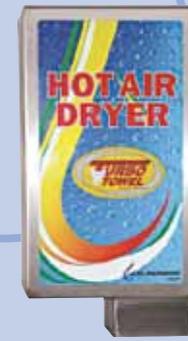
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PCI Compliance ... continued from page 16.

The credit card industry has introduced a complex process of validating that you meet their requirements in order to secure credit card data. So now you may be wondering, "What happens if we don't become PCI compliant?" You may think that you could easily ignore it and never run into a problem, but all credit card processors are now required to ensure that all of their merchants are compliant. The processors are beginning to institute fees and penalties for non-compliance and can revoke your merchant account, thus removing your ability to accept credit cards.

A Case Study

A small retailer experienced a security breach. A CPP (Common Point of Purchase) analysis of credit cards revealed the location of the theft. The merchant was found to have stored more than 2,000 credit card numbers in an accounting system for "reference" and to bill clients "if the merchant or cardholder forgot their credit card number." The merchant's computer was stolen during a robbery, the file was accessed and the credit card numbers were stolen.

The retailer had filled out a self-assessment form and attested that the information was true and correct. The total cost for the breach exceeded \$115,000.

Replacement Costs	\$ 5,000
Compliance Fine	\$ 12,500
Forensic Examination	\$ 25,000
Card Utilization Fines	\$ 74,398.47
TOTAL COSTS	\$116,898.47

The merchant also sustained significant reputational cost due to adverse publicity, legal fees, loss of business and other expenses. The merchant filed for protection under bankruptcy.

So now that we see why compliance is critical for protecting our business, let's look at what we actually need to do in order to become compliant. Although this is no simple task, it can be relatively painless if we partner up with the right people. Most of us in the carwash industry are what they call Level 4 merchants, meaning that we do not do as many transactions as companies like Wal-Mart or Home Depot. If you process credit cards on a computer that is attached to a Local Area Network (LAN) connected to the

Continued on page 20...

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Internet, you must to comply with the following:

- ❖ Prepare the annual Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) C. This is a 7-page questionnaire that will validate that you have complied with the payment card industry data security standard.
- ❖ Complete documentation of policies and training materials to support proper card data handling.
- ❖ Complete a quarterly external scan of your network to ensure there are no vulnerabilities.
- ❖ Complete a quarterly internal scan of your network and systems to check for vulnerabilities.
- ❖ Scan for rouge wireless devices to ensure that they do not exist on the network.
- ❖ Confirm that your software applications are compliant. Your software application MUST be PA-DSS compliant. (Check with your application software vendor or check online at www.pcisecuritystandards.org).

you with remediating any security issues revealed during the scan. Once all of the necessary steps are completed, you will officially become PCI Compliant.

How to Begin

On to the specifics of what you need to do now. Your first step should be to contact your credit card processor and inquire what arrangements (if any) they've made with any QSAs. The PCI Security Standards Council has a list of QSAs who can provide the required services (visit www.pcisecuritystandards.org). Total fees for such services can vary, but all are significantly lower than the cost of a breach if you are non-compliant. Finding the right company to partner with will make the process easier to manage and maintain.

The rules have been put in place to protect cardholder data, now you know what you need to do. Accepting credit cards is good for your carwash and essential to most business owners around the world. Even with the additional time, energy and expense of PCI compliance, it's hard to imagine running a business without credit cards. Furthermore, the process of achieving PCI compliance can result in better business practices that will pay dividends through sound management of customer information, and secure record-keeping. ■

Jason Dunbar is Inside Sales Manager for ICS. You can reach him at Dunbarj@Washnet.com or 800/642-9396.

Nothing to it, right? Well, this may be a little too technical for you to handle on your own, which is why there are PCI Security Standards Council approved companies out there to help you. These Qualified Security Assessors (QSAs) will assist you with completing the self-assessment questionnaire and running your quarterly scans. Some QSAs will even help

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21 Years, 21 Insights

By JoAnna Brandi

This year is my 21st anniversary of being in business. Wow. That's a long time and a lot of learning. I began with an idea. Imagine if you will, that every business sits atop a tripod – three legs, needing to be in balance to keep the business stable. Each leg represents a set of relationships. One is “External” and is all about the relationships you have outside the company – customers, communities, suppliers, etc. The second is “Internal,” all about the relationships inside the company. The third, I call “Inner” is about the relationship each of us has with ourselves and our work.

I call this the Working Relationship Tripod and it forms the operating system for my thinking about what makes organizations and individuals thrive.

Today, on this auspicious anniversary, I want to share 21 simple insights, seven for each of the “legs” of my tripod.

External Relationships

- ❖ Customers have two sets of needs - business needs and emotional needs. Excel at determining and delivering on both sets of needs consistently and you win.

- ❖ The bridge between customer satisfaction and loyalty is built with positive emotions. When a customer feels appreciated, valued, important, welcomed, heard, validated and secure you've got a better chance than the next guy at keeping them longer.

- ❖ Customers love consistency and they love surprises. Make your business processes consistent enough that they feel secure and flexible enough so they are occasionally pleasantly surprised.

- ❖ The customer is not always right so you have to be extraordinarily good at letting go of your own need to be right and skillfully handle all kinds of situations with grace.

- ❖ These days, customers are often tired, stressed and cranky. Ease their pain. Make it easy (and maybe even fun) to do business with you. Ahhhhh.

- ❖ Customers change - and fast. Your ability to be flexible and responsive is key. Listen carefully.

- ❖ Customers are not “targets” to shoot for. They are live, breathing human beings looking to make connections and get what they need. Drop the war terminology. Make love, not war.

Internal Relationships

- ❖ Everyone inside an organization is a customer and/or a supplier. Together they form a “value chain” that extends out to the external customers. Does everyone know the part they play? Do they take good care of each other?

- ❖ Teams need a worthwhile vision to work towards and a leader that keeps them focused on it.

- ❖ Trust, respect, appreciation and clear, open communication without blame or judgment create a safe place where people can contribute, without fear.

- ❖ Fear narrows focus and shuts down the creative process. Optimism and positivity open the mind and help people be more productive and creative. People like working in a positive workplace.

- ❖ Teams thrive in a positive environment. A 5:1 Positivity: Negativity ratio is ideal for expansion, engagement and expression.

- ❖ We can't motivate people - people motivate themselves when we create an environment that helps them feel good (and safe) at work.

- ❖ You can't create real value in the marketplace unless you create real value in the workplace. Culture eats strategy for lunch. The best teams work on their culture and live in their values continuously as part of their strategy.

Inner Relationships

- ❖ People need to know what is expected of them. They usually live up or down to those expectations.

- ❖ People need to feel a sense of belonging and contribution in order to want to get up and come to work every day.

- ❖ People like to be challenged as long as the challenge takes them into their stretch zone and not into the panic zone.

- ❖ Customer CARE relies on “discretionary effort.” It can't be mandated, it has to come from inside. When an individual feels valued and appreciated themselves, it's much easier to create.

- ❖ People operate best when they have a clear personal mission and know how it fits in with the organization's mission. Good leaders help them find it.

- ❖ The “What kind of value can I create today?” ethos thrives when encouraged, acknowledged and appreciated.

- ❖ Organizations don't change, people do. People have to make the personal choice to make a change. The higher the value the higher the motivation. What's in it for them?

The biggest shift I've seen in 21 years is the “power shift” that has occurred with customers. The power has shifted from the people who sell to the people who buy. The customer is in charge. Customer generated media has changed the world we live in, for the better, I think.

Customers today are demanding truth, transparency and authenticity. They can find anything they want at a

Continued on page 24...

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Towel Prices Rise Again: Know Your Options

By Valerie Sweeney

In the Winter 2010 issue, I explained the reasons why towel pricing may go up. Here we are several months later and we are all feeling the effects. Cotton prices have not only increased, they have reached an all-time high. I have been in the business for 16 years, and have never ever experienced the huge price increases that we have endured recently.

By the time this article is printed, I am sure you will already have experienced significant price increases in your towels. But before you waste your time calling every towel vendor on the planet, here is what you need to know:

- ❖ Every towel supplier will have higher prices at some point in time this year. Expect it.
- ❖ While seconds and closeout might also run higher than usual, they are great lower-cost alternatives.
- ❖ If you find a good deal, stock up. Keep in mind a good deal might mean your price only went up \$2-3/ dozen.
- ❖ Some towel suppliers may run out of towels because they didn't want to pay the 30-50 percent increase in their price.
- ❖ Consider switching to a slightly lighter weight towel. If you use a towel that weighs 4 pounds per dozen, consider moving to a 3 pound towel (which is used by many in the carwash industry).
- ❖ Now is the time to practice better towel management. Have control of your inventory to prevent loss. Order new towels because your towels are worn out; not because they disappeared.
- ❖ Switch to microfiber. Microfiber is less expensive, and in many instances, more effective than cotton towels. If you are using a 16" x 27" terry towel, try using 16" x 27" microfiber towels.
- ❖ Don't panic. An increase of \$4 per dozen is \$.33 per towel. If you make your towels last longer, the towel increase will be negligible.

Another factor effecting towel vendors is that orders are taking longer to be made. Our normal 60-75 day lead time is now up to approximately four months. Since the price of cotton is so high, towel manufacturers overseas can't afford to pay for the yarn to run at full capacity, so many are running only a fraction of the amount of towels as they did before. Also, other cotton items are taking precedence over towels because they have a higher profit margin, including clothing such as jeans.

Feel free to have open discussions with your towel ven-

dor to find the right towel in your price range. Just plan on being more flexible, and I am sure you will be able to purchase a towel that meets your needs. ■



Valerie Sweeney

Valerie Sweeney is a towel consultant with ERC Wiping Products. You can reach her at 800/225-8473 or at erc@ercwipe.com.

If you have a towel question for Valerie, email her at: erc@ercwipe.com

Where The Jobs Are Disappearing

The job market is tough these days, and it's probably going to get worse. Here's a look at projected declines in employment by industry from 2008 to 2018, from the National Employment Matrix:

INDUSTRY	CHANGE (PERCENT)
Cut-and-sew apparel manufacturing	-57.0
Semiconductor/electronic component manufacturing	-33.7
Newspaper publishers	-24.8
Support activities for mining	-23.3
Motor vehicle parts manufacturing	-18.6
Printing and related support activities	-16.0
Postal service	-13.0
Wired telecommunications carriers	-11.0
Department stores	-10.2
Gasoline stations	-8.9

21 Years, 21 Insights ... continued from page 22.

better price somewhere in the world – which is now at their fingertips. Companies that get that are organizing around their customers' needs and opening the dialog for change inside the organization.

For 21 years I've been asking the same question – How can I help?

Please let me know how I can help you enrich all the working relationships in your life. Thank you so much for being a part of mine. ■

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@customercarecoach.com or visit www.ReturnOnHappiness.com.



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*Dear Venus and Mars,
Who are the big spenders on extras at a carwash,
men or women? And have you seen this change over
the years?*



Linda Feriod

Venus Says

I have to admit that I don't have a statistic on who is the biggest spender on extras at the wash, but if you added up total dollars spent annually I would guess it would be the men who would win the prize.

I was always amazed at how many men would come into the wash to get their car washed and then in an hour they would be back with their wife's car. For some reason, married couples divide household chores something like this – the wife does the food shopping, laundry and cooking and the husband takes care of the lawn, the trash and the cars (including keeping them washed and waxed).

I would think that men make more trips to the carwash than women, therefore they spend more dollars per year at the wash.

But that being said, I feel that women probably spend the most per wash on extras when they are there. Men take the car to the carwash but they will take it home to wax it and shine up the wheels and tires. Women who take care of their own cars, take their vehicle to the wash to get the "works" because they enjoy driving in a nice clean, shiny car. By getting the upgrades we feel we are taking great care of our investment by getting the additional polish wax. We also love that it is fast, as we don't want to spend too much time or effort on our cars. When the time comes and we need to hand wax, we would rather pay to have that done instead of doing it ourselves. ■

Mars Says

I think when it comes to maintenance of any kind most people would probably think it falls under the category of a "man's job." But when it comes to keeping your car clean, I don't think that gender is a big factor. I think that the desire to keep one's vehicle clean is more of a personality trait.

There are people out there who just cannot stand to have a speck of dirt on their car and will come to wash it immediately when they see one. There are people who just never clean their cars because it's just not important to them and it doesn't bother them to be seen in a dirty car. I've washed many cars in my time and have spoken to many people. I've heard the same stories from both men about women and women about men when it comes to keeping the car clean. Usually, the story goes like this, "If I didn't clean this car it would never get done." Or, "He just doesn't care," or "She just doesn't care."

So, when it comes down to it, man or woman, I believe that it is an individual's preference as to whether they clean their car often, rarely or not at all. ■



Paul Vallario

Ask Venus & Mars

a Question at

mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com

Venus and Mars, aka Linda Feriod and Paul Vallario, are carwash industry veterans. Linda has worked in her family's carwashing business for 18 years. She has also been the President of the Penn/Del Carwash Association and has managed the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. 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.

If you have a question for Venus & Mars please send it to:
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In Praise and Respect of A Clean Car

By Doug Rieck

A clean car exiting the driveway of a carwash is truly a wonder and deserves awe and praise. I think that all of us in the carwash business are aware of this, yet we forget about it. In the space of five minutes or less, the average customer can drive onto a carwash lot, pay for the services, get a dirt-covered sun baked car washed, the wheels cleaned, the tires shined, and the car dried. Furthermore, at most exterior locations he will often pay less than \$10. At some express locations he may only pay \$5. What a deal. What a steal. The car is clean, the body shiny and dry. It doesn't even matter if that same car has not been washed in several months, or is covered with road salt, the result is the same. Clean. Who needs a self-cleaning car – we don't.

There are a lot of moving pieces involved in this creation of a clean car. We don't give ourselves a lot of credit, and our customers give us even less. I guess you could say that we never get any respect. A bright hope on our horizon is the increasing respect that carwashes are getting for our water savings, and environmental benefits. The ICA deserves much praise for their Watersavers program, and recently with the change in the standards, which will allow more of us to join, it is really something that we all can embrace.

Another great industry program is Grace For Vets, where veterans wash for free on Veteran's Day. Both of these programs add excellent visibility and present a caring image to the motoring public.

But the community involvement and environmental aspect are only two parts of the story. What about the rest of the carwash package? Don't forget the bright visuals, with spinning moving parts, and water spraying everywhere. Robotically-controlled machinery that would rival a car assembly line's robots are sprinkled up and down the tunnel and in our bays. Cars, the passion of America coming clean and being massaged is simply a beautiful thing. For the techies among us (and I'm one), high-tech computers and point-of-sale (POS) systems, and great modern machinery with cutting edge designs now abound.

Dispensing systems that meter washing solutions to the ounce and manage water flow to the quart, while washing over a car a minute at peak speeds is impressive. For years, we attend International Carwash Association (ICA) expos and got treated to great offbeat and often flattering television commercials where the carwash is used as a visual prop in selling. Sounds exciting, doesn't it! We have such a great visually exciting industry, yet much of the great unwashed public doesn't know about it and even our best customers take us for granted.

Somehow the image that Will Smith presented with Shark Tales, which was a redo of the old Carwash movie, is what sticks with people. I know the old adage that bad pub-

licity is better than no publicity, but I want better for our industry. What I can't deny is that Shark Tales came out in 2004; and 2004 and 2005 were very good wash years, so the publicity probably did help. At least the Shark Tales image was better than those of the original movie! Yikes!!!

What we need is Mike Rowe to come to the carwash with his Dirty Jobs Crew. Hopefully, it won't be just cleaning pits on a rainy day. Maybe he could follow a carwash tech crew installing a new carwash and getting to show off our industry's high-tech computerized and mechanized future. Actually, that would be awesome. (Hint, some carwash company out there, send him an invite.)

I am very far from being a "Foodie," but in bored moments the television has gone over to the Food Network and I have enjoyed watching Guy Fieri tour and raise his cholesterol count in "Diners, Drive-ins and Dives." This flamboyant, enthusiastic chef/television personality tours the country sampling the food specialties of the many entrepreneur-owned diners, drive-ins and dives that blanket our country. Invariably, there is a scene with him by the grill and another one showing him sampling the hot, freshly cooked delicacy. I gain a couple pounds just watching it. On Long Beach Island where I live, he visited a tiny diner, Mustache Bills, where the specialty shown was a pancake. This is in a town with a year-round population of 700, if you count the Coast Guard station and the seagulls. Needless to say, it was awesome publicity for this small business and town.

What about a cable television reality show with a Guy Fieri clone/wannabe touring the carwashes of America. From the tiniest self-serve proudly owned with immaculate bays, to the staple of New Jersey washing, a full-service conveyor. What about the great exteriors of New England, and New York, or the hand washes of the Connecticut "gold coast?" There are literally thousands of great carwashes out there, each with its own individual take on carwashing and a story to tell. From the wide-open carwashes of California, to the frantic center city washes of New York City. One of the great strengths of our industry is the diversity and individual spin that each of us brings to our locations with our love and passion for clean cars and exceptional customer service. I enjoy going on carwash tours just for this reason. I claim that it is to steal ideas so that I can make more money, but it really is my love of seeing the thoughts and passion and individual effort that other operators put into carwashing.

We as an industry are one of the few, if not only, national industries that has not become a commodity with packaged franchises and cookie-cutter consistency and looks. I enjoy eating at the shiny new Applebee's and TJI Fridays in the town where my wash is located. But I mourn the loss of the colorful, local restaurant tavern.

Carwashes provide a wonderful local flavor that has evolved from their local ownership and community relationships. A great title for the carwash version of the Guy Fieri spin-off would be, "Tunnels, Bays and Rollovers." I can see the closing shot showing the happy customer driving away extolling the virtues of a clean car at "Suds It Up" carwash. Despite cars being our second national pastime, after food, I am not expecting it to happen. Somehow, I don't think that we have the excitement and interest of The Deadliest Catch. But sometimes we certainly have the drama.

What we as an industry can learn from this is that we need to get out and provide a positive image of professional carwashing. We need to get involved in our local communities. Offer your version of the fundraising carwashes, improve your signage and communication about the positive environmental benefits of professional carwashing, show how "green" you are and educate your customer. Start a Facebook page. Just get involved and connected with your local roots.

Every carwash does things a little differently, so accentuate your strengths. At my Express conveyor wash we have offered coloring books and crayons and simple toys to cars with kids in the back.

McDonalds Happy Meals we are not, but the kids and parents love the handouts. I wish there was an industry supplier who offered prepackaged carwash kids toys with a clean car or environmental theme; a new version every few months. I know the number of times my 6 and 8 year old have told me to get lunch at McDonalds so they can complete a collection.

In 1993, a great short business book was released called "Raving Fans." I remember its message and read it several times in the early '90s. I think it is time to reread it. We as an industry must be our own advertisement and creating happy customers or raving fans is what it is all about. Our customers are seeking the best value in their personal lives just as we are while running our carwashes. I agree whole-heartedly that price is a very big part of the equation but customer service is the second unspoken factor. If we are to position ourselves as the truly local business, then great customer service is imperative. ■



Doug Rieck

Doug Rieck operates Manahawkin Magic Wash and is a past president of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. He also sits on the NRCC board of directors and was the 2010 NRCC Hall of Fame Award recipient. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS or dougrieck@gmail.com.



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The Wisdom Of Silence

Sometimes, the best thing to say is nothing at all. In "A Lifetime of Success," by Pat Williams with James D. Denney (Revell), basketball coach Charlie Spoonhour talks about the time his team played a rival whose coach would call for a timeout, then sit his players on the bench but say nothing at all to them.

When the timeout was over, the coach signaled for a second timeout, and again he made his players sit on the bench without saying a word to them. When the horn sounded again to signal the end of the second timeout, the players came off the bench and suddenly played much better without any kind of pep talk or instructions from the coach.

Eventually, Spoonhour figured out the method behind the coach's seeming madness: "He had them thinking about what they should be doing," says Spoonhour. The coach wanted to settle his players down and let them focus their thoughts on what they'd been doing in practice.

Spoonhour learned a valuable lesson from the game, "When I was a young coach, I'd try to tell [my players] 15 things. Now I say one or two things and save my breath. ■

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The Sign's Role in Carwash Frequency

By Perry Powell

In today's carwash climate, customer loyalty and frequency are often tied together. There are a variety of ways that carwash clubs have been designed to alter the cash flow nature of the carwash industry. Some of these programs are well thought out, while others make less sense.

In looking at the way in which customers first find their path to a wash, we can get some clue as to the importance of the sign in this process. Many new owners reach out through media and coupons to initially connect with new clients as the wash opens. But nothing creates as many exposures in any given day as street and building signs.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), 85 percent of customers live in a three-to-five mile radius of the business and pass by a minimum of 10 times per month. When coupled with the knowledge that 52 percent of all new clients say that they are at the business as a result of the sign, one must take careful consideration of the sign at a given location.

The correctly designed sign will play a pivotal role in anchoring the signature of a site. Just as products in the retail establishment must use graphically-engineered designs in order to compete for attention, so must the sign speak in the retail street environment.

Name Recognition

Nothing tells our story as cheaply as the sign. According to SBA bulletin No. 101, the cost of signs as advertising per 1,000 adults is as little as six cents. The bulletin goes on to say that the street sign is the "least expensive, most effective form of adver-

tising." Effective design is necessary for effective performance.

What is meant by effective design? Custom fitting the sign to the specific circumstances and environment in which it will be placed, in order to maximize its visual and economic impacts, is an absolute necessity. Is your sign doing its job? Not is it pretty; is it effective in creating new sales opportunities for your wash?

Out of Site...Out of Mind!

In order to impact frequency, we must remind our customers that we are there and ready to do business on an ongoing basis. The following is an example of how important the issue of frequency is in the success of a business.

Example: A dry cleaner in a community of 5,000 has maxed out the number of clients that use his services but clearly needs growth. In looking at potential solutions to this dilemma, he discovers two possibilities.

Option 1: Mount an advertising campaign to convert the remaining, non-dry clean clothes wearing public, to alter their lifestyles and make such purchases and wear such clothes, as is not their custom.

Option 2: Get his existing clients to come to him three more times next year with the garments they already own, and wear them more frequently. If a consumer drops off the garment quickly after wearing and returns faster for the garment and wears it again right away, then the dry cleaner in a closed market may still be able to affect an increase without any new clothes purchases on the part of his clients.

Conversely, a carwasher could improve his personal economy if he simply brought those cars back with greater frequency. Many people try to do this by discounting. While proper discounting is one method that is appropriate if planned properly, simply reminding customers that we are there with effective signage is another, less expensive way to accomplish the same thing.

Outperforming Competition

The correctly-designed sign should be site specific and should outperform all other signs around it. This kind of sign application will add value and productivity to all other advertising you may be doing and will also bring those very good clients in with greater frequency.

Perry Powell works with carwash owners to assist in creating the correct image with the public including the placement of science based signs, neuro-marketing menus, neuro-marketing sales presentations and conducting hearings before cities. He can be reached at 817/307-6484, per-ry@perrypowell.com or www.perrypowell.com.



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That's a Switch!

By Gary Sokoloski

Switches are one of the most used devices we encounter on an average day. Switches may also be one of the least understood devices by so many operators. However, there may be some sort of satisfaction in conquering the time clock and getting your lights to work correctly for a period of time. There are many types of switches in each of our carwashes. For the most part, they all perform the same function. Turning something on and then turning it off.

While none of us could open our doors to wash cars without switches, all too many operators only know how to use the light. This leaves a large part of their business open to relying on outside vendors to install, repair, or replace any electrical switch on their property. There are some valid safety concerns with working with all electrical equipment, of course. Knowing the purpose, voltage, and importance of the switches in your carwash can make the difference between a quick fix on that busy day, to a long wait for someone else to come to your aid.

Proximity switches are one of the most commonly used switches on automatic carwash equipment. In tunnel carwashes, these switches can be found on conveyor gearboxes,

loop detectors, door controls, as well as a variety of limiting devices and safety systems. Proximity switches are also used extensively with in-bay automatic equipment due to the fact the car is stationary as the equipment moves around the car. These switches make for accurate measurements around a vehicle's surface, as well as providing safety in the event of equipment or customer failure.

Below is an overview of typical wiring to get a better understanding of the proximity switches used in your carwash. These are fairly simple devices that are given an input voltage of typically 24 volts of A/C (Alternating Current) or D/C (Direct Current) and when activated by passing in front of a piece of metal, the switch allows the signal (switch leg) to pass through a set of contacts and return to the carwash controller signaling a command.

An example of a simple 24V DC 3 wire proximity switch circuit could be the following:

- ❖ The first wire is black which is the "Hot" or power to the switch.
- ❖ The second wire is white which is the "Neutral" or common to the switch.
- ❖ The third wire is brown which is the "Switch Leg" and returns the "Neutral" wire's current back to the controller.

In this example, troubleshooting would be to check with a voltage meter for:

- ❖ 24V DC between the Black and White wires
- ❖ 0V DC between the Black and Brown wires "when the switch is off" and
- ❖ 24V DC between the Black and Brown wires "when the switch is on."

This would confirm if the switch is working properly or not.

Proximity switches come in a couple of styles. The first type is with the cable attached to the switch, and the other has a separate cable to connect to the switch. In either case, be sure to always consider protecting the cable from any possible damage and be sure to use dielectric grease on all electrical terminations to prevent corrosion.

Remember, it is always a good idea to have spare switches for at least the most critical functions on your particular carwash system. It is much easier to understand your equipment while it is working properly than learning the basics in the middle of a crisis. The old adage holds true, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." ■

Gary Sokoloski can be reached at 207/375-4593 Office, 774/248-0171 Cell, and at gscarwash@gmail.com.



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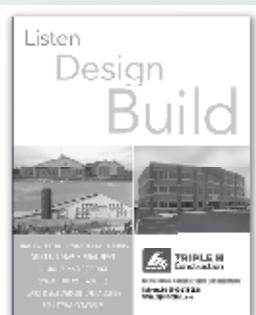
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Happy On The Job – What’s The Trick?

By Ray Justice

What do you think of when you hear the word Happy? How many happy people do you know? According to Google, “Happy” means you are delighted, pleased or satisfied with something. To be happy is to be **pleased, delighted or glad about something.**

We spend much, and often most, of our waking hours at work. Our “job” is where we get most of our social interaction. So, with that in mind it can be the place we really enjoy being or it can be a place where we grumble and complain.

Happy people can be contagious. Being around those “happy” people in the past, you may have thought they were too much or too sweet. But let’s be honest because being happy, being around happy people is such a wonderful feeling if we would just embrace the pureness of the happiness of others, of life, of your job, of your present situation, imagine how happy your life could be!

What does a happy work environment look like and feel like? Is it pleasant, joyful, positive, encouraging, accepting and interesting? Can you imagine getting up and going

to work knowing that your work environment would be all those feelings and so much more? Where and who does that start with? The answer is YOU.... Happy starts with YOU...!!!

Much of our day-to-day lives are by habit, routine, the same old thing mentality. Each day will be different and a different energy for you depending on other circumstances. In the best selling book, “The Four Agreements” by Don Miguel Ruiz, his fourth agreement is “Always Do Your Best.” He goes on to mention that your best is different each day so do your best depending on what that is today. His other agreements, to complete the “Four” are “Be Impeccable with Your Word,” “Don’t Take Anything Personally,” and “Don’t Make Assumptions.”

By following these agreements, according to Ruiz, you will have a better perception of yourself and the world around you. The conditioning we learned from our society and most of our reactions and responses that we assume are normal, can be changed just by how we think.

Here are some basics to consider before you get to your job each day.

Do you arrive rested? Are you getting a good night’s sleep? If your answer is no, a couple of tips are not eating before you go to bed and being aware of what you do, think, watch or read just before sleeping. In other words, do not watch the news or a rough movie and then go to bed?

How is your diet, or really your food, drink, and nutritional habits? The general advice that is out there now is to limit or remove sugar and caffeine, eat healthy snacks in between meals and drink plenty of water.

Are your mornings organized so that you are not running out the door wondering if you forgot anything or leaving early enough so you will not be late.

How do you greet people? When you arrive, get in the habit of saying “good morning” to everyone you encounter and say it with some energy and a smile.

Advice articles on being happy often ask, “Do you know your neighbors?”

The same question fits for your company. Do you know your coworkers?

Social connection is very important and an actual need. That is more so in today’s world where our social connection and interactions are now more by the written word (examples are texting and email) than by actual face-to-face meeting and greeting.

Where and with whom do you eat lunch or take a break? Consider widening your social circle at work. For the President’s State of the Union message this past January Congress changed its seating arrangements so that they were sitting with members of the opposing party instead of the usual grouping together they had typically practiced. This was a direct response to the tragic shooting of House of Representative Giffords.

I am hoping that they keep this new style, as it is more about connection than separation.

Sit, breathe and be silent. A message that comes up strongly from all the experts is to find time, even one minute, to just be silent with you. Sit, breathe and be silent. We pay very little attention to our breathing and are not aware of how shallow we breathe. Stop, sit if you can, be still and breathe slowly a few times. It is a very simple way of managing stress day to day, yet, as easy and beneficial as it is, few really do it.

Here is a challenge for you ... take one week and give it a try.

H Help others – Care, share, and have an attitude of service.

A Appreciation – Feel grateful for all the support around you.

P Positive attitude – Have an enthusiastic, upbeat attitude toward your co-workers and your job.

P Politeness – Be civil. Say “please” and “thank you.” Go out of your way to help.

Y YOU – This happy journey is about you; embrace your YOU and live in the NOW, the present moment.

Help others, Appreciate your life, have a Positive attitude, be Polite, embrace YOU...

“A Happy you, makes a Happy work environment, which in return makes Happy co-workers and being with Happy people makes you feel happy.... So the key of being happy starts with YOU” - A. Weider

In closing, here is a poem written by writer, poet Aimee Weider.

Imagine This...

A Happy work environment

No matter what

You get up ready to go

Leave for work with all you know.

You head out the door

with no delay

Happy as can be

you’re looking forward to work today.

Where you work, is a place with happy people all around

and there is no conflict, no negative sound.

Your Happy work environment may exist or not

but you find a happy place within yourself

and give it all you’ve got.

Being happy starts with YOU.

No matter what you may see

You have a job, a life

you’re lucky as can be.

So be thankful and be happy

and learn how to share,

Lend a hand, pass along a smile

enjoy your job and care.



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Ray Justice is a poet, entrepreneur and business coach. He is a former carwash owner and past president of the New York State Car Wash Association. Follow him on Facebook or follow him on Twitter@ThoughtCompass.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Keith Lutz

I hope everyone has been enjoying this winter. With so many salt-covered vehicles, it has been an operator's dream. In this business we never know what spring is going to bring us so we need to take advantage of any opportunity Mother Nature presents. We also need to be wise and judicious with the resources available to us. Sometimes this may require "thinking outside of the box."

When you hear the word "resources," most of you are probably thinking about the money and equipment you have at your disposal. Unfortunately, this type of mind-set will keep the growth of your business stagnant at best. Often, we are so "set in our ways" that we fail to stop and take stock of our business - what is our business agenda, are we meeting our goals, are we accomplishing this agenda, and if so, are we doing it as efficiently as possible? There are many, many resources available in this industry; some cost money, but many cost only our time.

What are these resources you may ask? To start, one resource that is highly underestimated is your business and social network. Your contacts are a wealth of information and in most cases, extremely under-utilized.

Another resource available to businesses is the community in which they operate. Getting involved, sponsoring local non-profit initiatives, donating business services, (often only a nominal cost to you) and participation in community-sponsored events can do more in terms of marketing than thousands of dollars spent on print and radio advertising. Other resources that go "un-tapped are those offered by trade associations of which you are a member. These resources often include discounted business insurance, discounted industry services and products, special rate programs and most importantly, knowledge. Trade associations share information about financial opportunities including grants. They share information about business experiences that can help you save money by operating more efficiently and much more.

And finally, trade associations give you access to industry experts who, quite frankly, can be some of the most valuable business resources you have.

If you are not taking advantage of these resources, they are simply opportunities missed and money lying on the table. Many of us are members of more than one trade association and not familiar with - nor taking advantage of - any of the member benefits offered.

I share this information because as the President of Carwash Association of Pennsylvania (CAP), I want our members to not only see us as a business resource, but to actually use the resources being offered. Before you move on to the next task of the day, and look at what you are about to do, ask yourself, could I do this better? Do I even need to do the task or is there another way to accomplish the same task and if so, could it be beneficial to my business operations? When you're engaged you're able and more likely to tap the knowledge of fellow operators and industry experts. This is an investment of time that has the potential to yield huge business dividends. Pick your head up and look around at what other businesses are doing. Are you connected with your busi-

Continued on page 39 ...

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Grace for Vets Spreads Nationwide

By Alan M. Petrillo

Mike Mountz, a Vietnam-era veteran, always has felt a deep connection with other veterans. In 2002, he felt so strongly connected that he decided to do something for vets that recognized the service they provided.

Mountz, the owner Cloister Car Washes in Pennsylvania, then had a flex-serve facility in Ephrata, a full-serve in York, a lube in Ephrata and a second flex serve in Lancaster.

"I was only exposed to a small portion of veterans' sacrifice, but it motivated me to do something for them," Mountz said.

And thus, Grace for Vets was born.

Grace for Vets is a program that honors veterans and military personnel on Veteran's Day by giving them a free carwash. The program has spread to all 50 states and one Canadian province.

Mountz served in the U.S. Army from 1968 to 1970 and was honorably discharged at age 19, but he never had to serve in Vietnam. "As our carwash business in Pennsylvania grew, we started offering veterans free carwashes on Veteran's Day, advertising the promotion in local newspapers and in veteran's halls around us," Mountz said. "The first couple of years we did the Grace for Vets program, we washed several hundred cars, something that we were excited about. I think the first year we washed 150 vehicles, but the program continued to grow."

Mountz said that, to his surprise, the program brought back more to his business than it gave.

"We found that we got loyal customers from among the veterans who realized that we were willing to give back

something free for their efforts," Mountz noted. "Even if that new veteran customer came back three or four times a year, it was worth it. The program also created a buzz throughout the community and generated a lot of goodwill for us."

In its third year, Grace for Vets was joined by Hoffman Car Wash, headquartered in Albany, NY, 18 locations strong.

"Tom Hoffman, Jr. told me that their findings were the same (and) that giving vets free carwashes was not only a good thing for the veterans, but it made loyal customers out of them," Mountz pointed out. "Things were really taking off by this time."

That's when Mountz decided to take the Grace for Vets program nationally, to reach out to carwashes and veterans around the country.

"I manned the phones that next year and made calls to carwashes in most of the states myself," he said. "I estimate that between 30 and 40 percent of the carwash operators who took my calls were open to participating in the program."

Mountz admitted that by that time, Cloister Car Wash had added an eight-acre carwash facility in Reading, PA, the largest flex serve in the region, so the Cloister Car Wash name was getting well known in the industry.

"That helped open doors for me when I called other carwash operators," Mountz said. "But essentially, we were doing this program for vets and not ourselves, so even if I got denied nine calls and accepted once, that's the way it would be. We would move on."

Producing a website and promoting Grace for Vets on the internet increased its visibility, Mountz noted, as did

getting the assistance of a number of friends who stepped up and helped to make promotional calls to carwash operators around the country.

"In the past several years, the website has been instrumental in promoting the Grace for Vets program," commented Mountz. "A web visitor can now go to an individual participating carwash through our website, which gives those carwashes a lot of additional exposure."

For 2010, Mountz's goal was to wash 100,000 cars in all 50 states. He made that goal with room to spare. When all the numbers were tallied, Grace for Vets washed 101,527 vehicles in 50 states and one Canadian province.

"Those were very nice numbers," Mountz said. "In 2009, we washed more than 60,000 vehicles in 38 states."

A Promising Future

What does the future hold for the Grace for Vets program?

Mountz is cautious in making predictions, but would like to be able to increase the number of vehicles washed during the 2011 event by 40,000 to 50,000.

"Right now, we have between five and eight percent of the carwashing market," Mountz said. "Wouldn't it be nice if Grace for Vets were able to get 20 percent of the market? I'd like to think so."

As part of that potential expansion, Mountz is looking to grow the program in Canada, and to reach out to England, Australia and New Zealand, all of which celebrate days honoring veterans.

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher.

For more information on Grace For Vets visit graceforvets.org

President's Column ... continued from page 36

ness network? Are you active in your business community? Are you engaged with your industry trade association? Are you really taking advantage of the all of the resources available to your business? If you answered "no" to these questions, pick up the phone and give us a call; we'd be happy to discuss the resources available to members of the Carwash Association of Pennsylvania.



Keith Lutz
CAP President



The recent Grace For Vets program included participation from all 50 states and Canada.



PROTECT

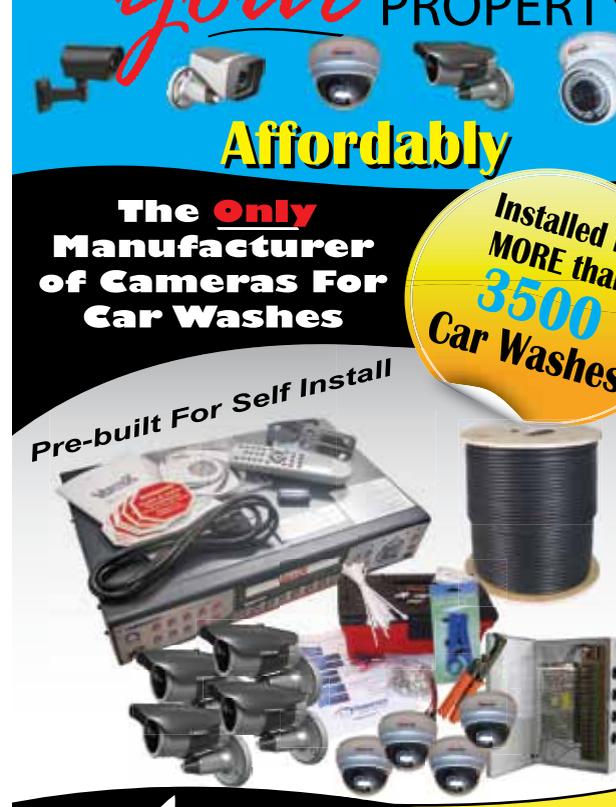
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- Alan Tracy Tom Mathes
- Dwight T. Winter Daniel Petrelle
- Anthony Setaro
- Joe Tracy

**Deceased*

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.

[WEWASHCTCARS.COM](http://www.washctcars.com)

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Todd Whitehouse

WOW! Another 105-year record broken. Need I say more than January? I think all of us spent more time removing snow from our grounds and roofs than washing vehicles. Let's keep the rabbit's foot close by and hope that the lost month of January can be found somewhere in the remaining 11 months.

As my first part of business, I would like to thank all the past and present board members, along with all of our supporters, for their hard work and efforts on behalf of the Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA). The industry has benefited from the leadership and direction that the CCA has provided in the past. I would also like to thank its members who are devoted and passionate about the business which brings a true spirit to the industry. Thanks to all.

Reflecting on the scale of business the last few years has been difficult for many owners/operators. The economy, fuel prices and weather are starting out to be no different for 2011. We also have a newly-elected governor and many new faces in the political arena. One of our biggest challenges this year is the State budget. The large deficit we face in Connecticut will certainly impact business one way or another. The rumblings are that the sales tax exemption that we currently have in place will be on the table for debate and possibly revoked. We will do everything we can as a board to make sure that this tax is not reinstated. With the support of all of our members and lobbyist, PJ Cimini, we can be a positive voice that is heard and potentially keep this tax issue at bay.

We're looking forward to working with all of our members and encourage you to participate in our many great annual events. Our 14th Annual Golf Invitational (September 20 at the Tunxis Plantation Country Club in Farmington) and our Holiday Gathering (December 1 at Carmine's in New Haven) remain on our docket so make sure to pencil us into your schedules.

Todd Whitehouse
CCA President

Annual Golf Invitational
September 20
www.washctcars.com

Kleen-N-Green Remade Into An Environmentally-Conscious Wash



By Alan M. Petrillo

Full-service carwashing, self-service washes, lube and oil changes, detailing – no matter what the service provided for customers, Dave Baum believes it should be environmentally-sensitive and as “green” as he can make it.

Baum bought the former Milford Carwash in Milford, CT, in June of 2010, and went through the facility with an eye toward making it one of the greenest carwashes in the area. Renamed Kleen-N-Green, the full-service wash, located off Route 1 (the Boston Post Road), has a 120-foot tunnel, complemented by four self-service bays, one detail bay and two oil and lube bays.

“When I bought the place it did not have any elements of “green” in it,” Baum said. “I pretty much had to supply everything green in it.”

The first thing Baum did was to put in all fluorescent lighting and install timers and motion sensors on them to reduce the amount of electricity used. The sensors turn off the lights, both inside and out, when not in use.

Then he changed all the chemicals used in the facility from acid-based to water-based so he was washing cars with environmentally-friendly soaps and detergents.

After that, Baum changed all the motors in the wash to more energy-efficient models, and replaced all leaking nozzles and sprays with water-efficient dispensers, reducing the wash's water use by 10 percent.

Baum also replaced all the cloth in the tunnel with cloth made out of recycled material.

“The quality of the recycled cloth is superior to anything else out there,” Baum said. “It retains soap well and cleans cars better than before. It's a big leap forward for us.”

In his Mobil One lube and oil shop, Baum uses Enviro Waste to process waste oil. The company extracts the used oil from the Kleen-N-Green retention tank and then removes it for further processing. In addition, Baum uses synthetic oil in the lube shop, and offers a complete line of environmentally-friendly soaps and other retail products in the carwash lobby.



In the winter, Baum even uses an ice melter on the snow and ice that is made out of natural materials, with no salt or harmful chemicals added. That product also is sold in the lobby.

Throughout the wash and other bays, Kleen-N-Green collects hundreds of cans and bottles and turns them over for recycling.

Baum said that he's currently working with the state of Connecticut on an application to receive funding for installation of variable frequency drive (VFD) motors for his blowers. If the application is approved, the state will partially fund the purchase of the VFDs.

This spring, Baum anticipates working with a contractor to begin installing solar panels on the roof of the carwash.

“How many we put up will be a function of the price and how much in state credits we can get,” Baum said. “The panels will feed a series of batteries to store the electricity, which will be connected to the electrical grid so we can either draw down on the batteries or feed it back into the grid for net metering.”

Baum said it would be great if the solar system could help offset some of the carwash's electrical needs. He's been advised that solar systems typically cover about 30 percent of a facility's monthly electric

bill. Payback on the system, with the state subsidy, is estimated at about six years, he added.

Baum is an avid outdoorsman, regularly hunting, fishing and hiking, so he has developed a healthy respect for the environment.

“We have to give the environment a chance to come back, along with the wildlife and the fisheries,” Baum said. “I believe that what I'm doing at Kleen-N-Green is the right thing to do. I'm the sole proprietor, so I know exactly what's going on in the carwash and I'm the one who is responsible for it.”

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher.

Sales tax fight looms

CCA Members Gather for the Holidays

Carmine's Ristorante in New Haven, CT, was the setting for the Annual CCA Holiday Gathering, December 1. The authentic Tuscan Grill, bejeweled with holiday decorations, served up a spectacular dinner for attendees that included traditional Italian specialties.

"This event is a great way to bring friends together in an intimate setting," said then CCA Vice President Todd Whitehouse. "I really enjoy speaking with other operators and the food at Carmine's is always exceptional."

Although the event is mainly social, the association's Lobbyist, PJ. Cimini of Capitol Strategies in Hartford, prepared the group for the battle that lies ahead in keeping a 6 percent (or more) sales tax at bay. "You all need to get to know your legislators and educate them on our industry," said Cimini. "There is a whole new group of players in Hartford and re-implementing the sales taxes that were repealed in the past is a real possibility."

To keep up with what the CCA board is doing to fight this tax, visit wewashctcars.com weekly and pay close attention to member eblasts sent out by the association. "In the next weeks and months we will be reaching out to all members, so please be prepared to help," Cimini said. ■

For more information log onto wewashctcars.com or call 800/287-6604.



Approximately 30 attended the Annual Holiday Gathering at Carmine's in New Haven.



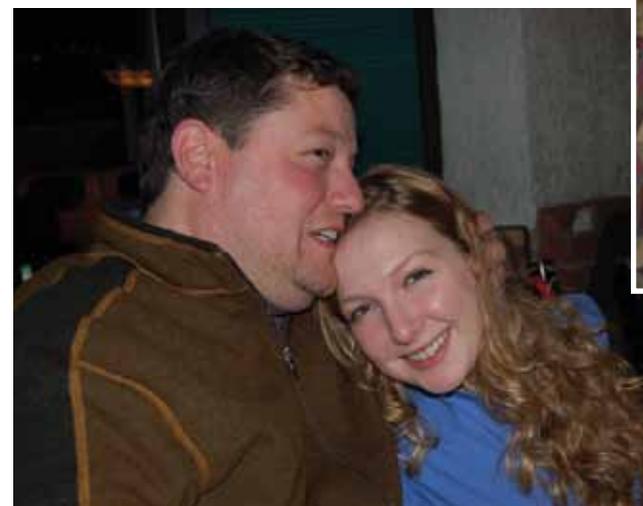
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Fiano of Fiano's Car Wash in Bolton and Job's Larry Vella enjoyed the comraderie and authentic Italian meal.



CCA Lobbyist PJ Cimini warned the group of a likely sales tax battle ahead.



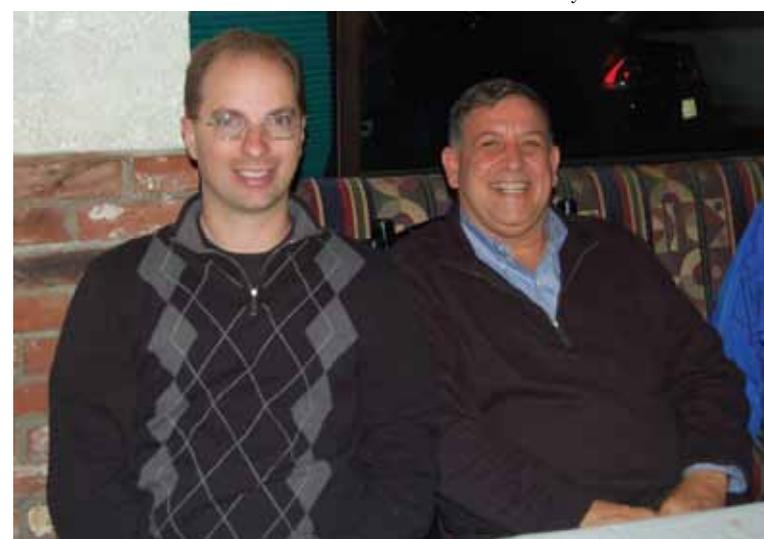
Gary Stevenson, Paul Ferruolo and Tony Setaro got a chance to catch up over dinner.



Newly engaged Dan Petrelle and the lovely Caitlin Robinson.



Simoniz USA's Dave Petit and Jennifer Dodge.



Tony Setaro and Fred Bauer.

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Gov. Malloy proposes New Carwash Sales Tax

By P.J. Cimini

Newly elected Gov. Dannel Malloy's budget plan calls for over \$1 billion dollars in tax hikes, including a new sales tax on carwash services. Carwash services have been exempt from the state sales tax for more than 17 years.

In addition to putting a tax on carwash services, Malloy is also proposing to increase the sales tax rate, from 6 percent to 6.25 percent. In addition to carwashes, he wants to put an end to a laundry list of goods and services that are currently exempt from sales tax, including footwear under \$50, pet grooming services, boat services, manicure and pedicure services, yoga studios, cosmetic surgery, non-prescription drugs, limousine services, airport valet services and haircuts. He also proposed raising taxes on many other items from personal income to cigarettes, alcohol and gasoline.

Among the other tax changes affecting businesses:

- ❖ Two-year extension of the 10 percent corporate income tax surcharge
- ❖ Increase in the personal income tax (most small businesses – S corporations, LLCs, etc. – pay tax on their business income through the personal income tax)



- ❖ Increase in the sales tax, and the removal of many sales-tax exemptions
- ❖ A throwback rule that will affect in-state manufacturers
- ❖ Increase in the premium tax on insurers
- ❖ A new tax on electricity generation

In addition, the governor proposes to lower the taxable estate threshold from \$3.5 million to \$2 million, and eliminate the \$500 property tax credit off the personal income tax.

The new carwash tax comes at a time when the new fiscal year, beginning July 1, is predicted to be anywhere from \$3.2 billion to \$3.5 billion in deficit, which is approximately 18 percent of current spending. The two-year budget increases revenue by \$1.5 billion in the first year. Any budget and tax proposals will ultimately have to be approved by the Democratic-controlled General Assembly.

The Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA) began aggressively organizing to fight the imposition of this new tax on the industry and will be rolling out a multi-pronged plan of attack to counteract and defeat this proposal.

Among the action items the CCA will be undertaking are speaking at Governor Malloy's Town Meetings around the state, holding direct meetings with local State Representatives and State Senators, conducting petition drives at local carwashes, testifying at the General Assembly Finance Committee Public Hearing on the measure and lobbying a grass-roots effort to influence.

We are local, family-owned Connecticut businesses who employ Connecticut workers and provide a discretionary service to Connecticut motorists. Simply put, a new 6.25 percent tax on carwashes will hurt our industry and cause the loss of jobs.

A tax on carwashes was put in for a brief three-year period in 1989, but it was found to be so unworkable, cost too much to track and collect and ended up not raising the revenue they thought it would that it was repealed very quickly.

There are many issues surrounding the imposition of the new tax that policymakers will have to consider. It's not clear that they understand the many different aspects of the carwash industry. We have many different types of modern equipment that will make it hard for this new tax to work fairly. In addition, there are gas station washes that sometimes charge and sometimes do not.

How will we collect 6.25 cents on a \$1 coin-operated vacuum machine? The automatic collection equipment used carwashes cannot be programmed to function in increments of pennies, nickel and dimes.

Carwashes employ thousands of unskilled, entry-level

Continued on page 46 ...

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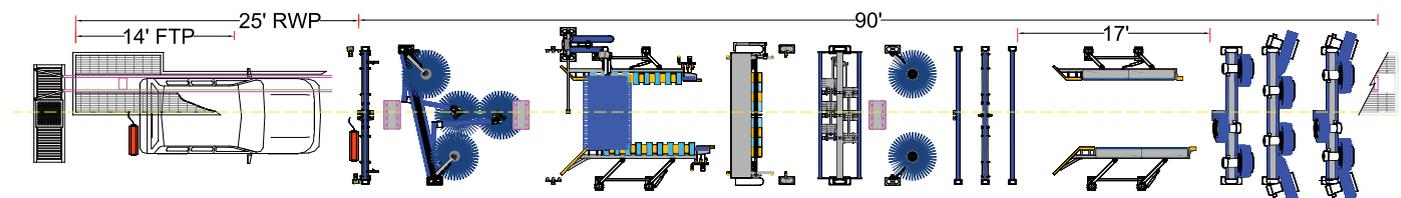
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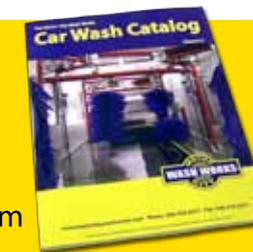


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workers and provide a solid paycheck for them and their families. What happens when we have to lay them off and they go on unemployment? Does that save the state any money?

Also, there is the issue of the many charity washes that our members conduct during the year. Literally, hundreds of local charities benefit from our members volunteerism and community service. Will we now have to charge the tax to them, or worse have to absorb the tax ourselves. Also, will the state also then collect the tax on charity carwashes held at town halls, schools, churches and fast food restaurants?

These are just some of the many perplexing issues that have come to light given the way they have proposed this new tax.

Over the next few weeks and months we will be calling on all the members and others who are involved with the carwash industry in Connecticut to get active and involved. We'll need the collective effort of everyone to contact his/her State Representatives and State Senators to reverse this harmful proposal.

Many have already joined in the fight and have started to get involved. Noah Levine, of Rapid Car Wash in New London, left his job in New London early one recent afternoon in order to find a front-row seat for the governor's town hall-style forum on the proposed state budget in Bridgeport. Levine, who is already putting two children through college, will soon pay for a third child's tuition – assuming

he doesn't first have to shutter the 50-year-old family business he runs. He fears the carwash customer base, already hurt by the recession, will wither if the governor's proposed 6.25 percent sales tax includes carwashes.

"I'm already paying taxes on electricity and soap," said Levine. "How many times are you going to hit me?" asked Levine, who employs 10 people. "Instead of throwing us a life preserver, he's throwing us an anchor."

The Next Steps

The governor's proposal now goes to the legislature. Its first stop is to the Finance Committee on the tax and capital spending side. Both committees will soon hold public hearings and the carwash industry will be out in force to represent our interests and help policymakers understand the problems and issues surrounding this new proposed tax.

As always, the carwash industry will be vigilant in fighting to set the record straight to policy makers about our industry, the equipment and services involved and the way it functions.

As always, we will continually lobby to have state lawmakers continue to find ways to cut state spending to reduce the need for tax increases and boost prospects for a renewal of economic growth.

P.J. Cimini, Esq. is the CCA's lobbyist and a partner in Capitol Strategies Group, LC, in Hartford. You can reach P.J. at 860/293-2581 or at pj@csget.net.



P.J. Cimini



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SEPTEMBER 20

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OCTOBER 3-5

Northeast Regional Carwash Convention
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nrccshow.com

DECEMBER 1

Holiday Gathering/Annual Meeting
Carmine's, New Haven

*Look for Mini Expo Photos
In Our Summer Issue!!!*

*Check wewashcars.com frequently
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Larry Moore
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Blah or Ooh La-La?

By Cookie Anthony

A carwash is a carwash is a carwash to paraphrase Gertrude Stein's a rose is a rose. So, here's my question, "Do you have a blah, dull, uninteresting look to your wash or an ooh la-la? Do you have flowers that make you stand out and catch the eye of potential customers?"

Color, flowers, plants, shrubs, even vegetables turn a head and can draw a customer into your facility.

Put two washes in the same town, perhaps on the same road, and which would you pick – the wash with the dull exterior or the one ablaze with flowers and blooming plants?

If everything else is equal – service, price, and quality – I bet that colorful and interesting exterior building plantings would tip the balance.

What do plants show a customer? Why bother with all the additional work? Plants represent a caring for detail, a concern for the total location, the neighborhood.

By weeding, watering and tending live plants the carwasher shows a willingness to work hard, and take extra steps to beautify a customer's experience.

The economy is bad now and you say you can't afford to spend money on plants, then maybe you should talk to Joe Coppola at his wash in Revere, MA. He saves his seeds from season to season. His cost, after the initial outlay, is in planning ahead, the time it takes to pick up the seeds and store them until the next planting.

Joe made a barrier around his gas storage. He turned it into a garden with corn, several varieties of

tomatoes, peppers, squash and herbs.

Just as a pretty, well-dressed woman turns a head, a messy, slovenly woman repulses. I hope your "mistress" wash is of the ooh la-la variety!

Ouch! What's Next?

You're making a repair and you cut yourself. After a few curses and a loud "ouch" what do you do? The first thing is triage. What kind of medical treatment do you need? When was the last time you had your tetanus shot? This is especially important with a puncture wound. If the cut is deep and needs stitches, typically, a walk-in clinic will take less time than an Emergency Room visit. Don't forget pressure and elevation helps decrease the flow of blood. But if things aren't bad, you walk to your first-aid kit, open it and surprise! You don't have much to pick from because you forgot to re-supply after using it several times in the past.

After you've taken care of your emergency, your next step is to restock your first-aid kit. The box, plastic or metal, should be located in a prominent, highly visible and easy-to-reach spot.

Inside or on the outside list in large, clearly written print the phone numbers you might need in an emergency such as



911, the nearest hospital, walk-in clinic, doctor, poison center, ambulance, etc.

The following items are basic to a first-aid kit and should be in yours.

- ❖ Bandages of assorted sizes
- ❖ A bottle of alcohol or alcohol wipes
- ❖ Gauze pads of assorted sizes
- ❖ Adhesive tape (doctors recommend paper tape as some people have sensitivity to regular tape. In a pinch, consider duct tape.)
- ❖ Ace bandage
- ❖ Ibuprofen, acetaminophen
- ❖ Antibiotic cream
- ❖ Scissors and rubber gloves
- ❖ Hydrocortisone for bites and itching
- ❖ Calamine lotion for poison ivy
- ❖ A cold pack should be kept in your refrigerator, but if you don't have a fridge, a cold soda can help reduce swelling and pain
- ❖ Tweezers for removing splinters
- ❖ A thermometer

Near your first-aid kit, it's also good to keep a blanket to cover someone injured or in shock.

Do your employees know what to do when chemicals get into eyes? Are your heavy-duty gloves and eye protec-

tors near your chemicals? Ear protectors, masks and gloves should be in easy reach and accessible.

Strategically placing your safety supplies will help ensure timely use and lessen response time in an emergency. Obviously, you are a carwasher not a doctor, but simple preparations can help make a painful experience less so. Now, head to your first-aid kit and re-supply.

Help Wanted – Solved!

Joe Coppola of Barn Carwash in Revere, MA, said he no longer has to pay to advertise for help in the newspaper. He just posts his needs on his electronic sign located by the heavily traveled Route 1 northbound in Saugus, MA. The first day he put up his "Help Wanted" message he got 25 responses. ■

CLARIFICATION

In Cookie's last column she said that Bob Katseff is retired. He is not!!!! Sorry, Bob!!!!



Cookie Anthony

Cookie Anthony is a former CCA Vice President and carwash operator.



Barn Carwash owner Joe Coppola takes special care in his landscaping and it shows!





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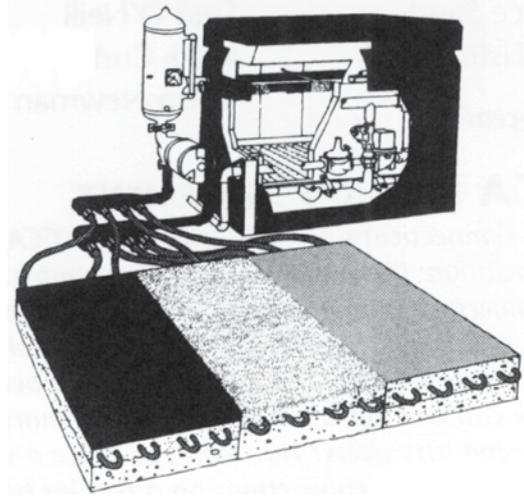
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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Gerry Barton

Last week we held our February General Membership Meeting in Clark. I thought it was one of the best meetings we have had in years. Mike Mountz of the Cloister Car Wash in Pennsylvania was our featured speaker. He did a great job talking about carwashing, its ups and downs, and extensively about how his Grace for Vets program came about. I believe he motivated many of us at the meeting, as you could hear a pin drop while he spoke. It was the perfect time to have someone like Mike speak – and motivate.

Larry Katz of Energy Management Advisors presented his program for energy savings that he has put together for CWONJ members. Many of us are using it and seeing real savings! You can contact him at 732/933-8322 or lskatz10@gmail.com to learn more.

Lobbyist Patrick Stewart of Public Strategies Impact gave our members an update on the happenings in Trenton. We had a number of new members in attendance, as well as a core group of returning members and, of course, our dedicated board.

The Tale of Two States

It always amazes me that as small as New Jersey is geographically, there can be very dramatic differences in the weather and its effect on carwashing. We have the mountains and cold temperatures to the north and west, and the ocean and warmer temperatures to the east and south, and everything else in between. This year, those differences were dramatic in the various storms we saw in December and January. The resulting difference in carwash patterns follows the weather.

I was having a discussion with another operator recently and we were debating the effects of auto leasing and car care. Car companies are once again offering attractive lease deals. There is a belief among business owners in our industry that people who lease a car do care for it as an owner would, including not washing it as often. I would tend to agree with that premise, however, there are still many more cars on the road that are not leased and we need to figure out how to get them on our property and get them in the habit of carwashing.

Gerry Barton

62 CWONJ MEMBERS ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE NJ DEP CHARITY WASH PROGRAM.

Bright Ideas At Magic Wash

Manahawkin Magic Wash, of Manahawkin, NJ, ran a creative Christmas Special this past season. On Friday, December 17, the wash sold \$3 washes from 5 to 8 p.m. in order for customers to see the Christmas display, which included inflatable characters and lights.

The wash provided cookies and hot chocolate in their lobby as a way to bring customers in to purchase gift cards. In fact, more gift cards were sold this past Christmas season than in 2009, according to wash owner Carolyn Coates. "All-in-all, it was a good Christmas sale year," she said. Christmas sales for Manahawkin Magic Wash were up 2 percent. Two more 6-month Unlimited Wash Passes were sold this year.



Magic Wash

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Grace For Vets' Founder Speaks at CWONJ Meeting

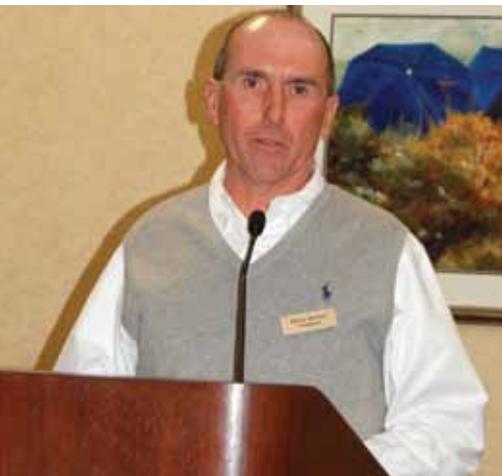


Grace For Vets Founder, Mike Mountz of Cloister Car Wash in Ephrata, PA, was the featured speaker at The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey's (CWONJ) February 8 membership meeting in Clark at the Crowne Plaza. Mountz, a veteran and industry icon, shared his carwash philosophy and love and respect for those who have served their country with attendees during his presentation. His Grace For Vets program honors Veterans with a free wash on Veteran's Day, November 11. The 2010 event saw participation from 1,253 locations translating into 101,537 free washes. "You could have heard a pin drop while he spoke," recounts CWONJ President Gerry Barton. "Mike was one of the best speakers we have ever featured, and one of the most genuine. You can see how much he loves this industry and how hard he has worked for everything he has. He is a real inspiration."

In addition to Mountz' presentation, attendees also heard from association Lobbyist Patrick Stewart of Public Strategies Impact in Trenton. Stewart serves as the association's eyes and ears at the state capitol.

Also presenting that evening was Larry Katz of Energy Management Advisors (EMA). Katz rolled out an energy savings program where members can receive discounted gas/electric through Katz' purchasing power. The EMA program has been tested by some board members and is proving to save a significant amount of money for participants. For more information on this please contact the association at 800/287-6604.

The association's next meeting is its Annual Carwash Tour, April 12. Several washes in the Ramsey market will be featured followed by a dinner meeting. ■



CWONJ Lobbyist Patrick Stewart of Public Strategies Impact updated the group on legislative activities across the state.



Larry Katz of Energy Management Advisors spoke to the group on an energy program he facilitates that can help members save money.

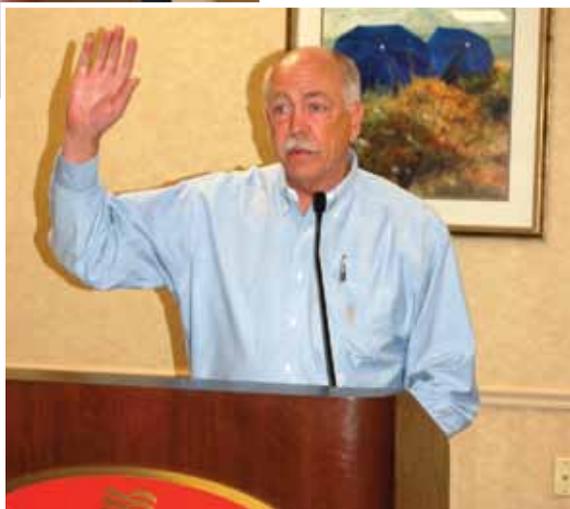


CWONJ President Gerry Barton led the well-attended meeting at the Crowne Plaza in Clark.



Approximately 40 attended the dinner meeting in Clark.

Grace For Vets Founder Mike Mountz gave a tearful and heartwarming talk on the program that has honored our country's veterans.



"Always treat your employees exactly as you want them to treat your best customers."

-Stephen Covey

Mark Your Calendar!!!

Make sure to note the dates of the 2011 NRCC: Oct. 3-5, at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. It's the **LARGEST** regional trade show in the country!

You don't want to miss it!



Get Your Wash On the Web Today



The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ), at no cost to our members, can help you improve your business via the Internet. If you have not signed up to be listed on our website and link page, simply fill out the Website Information sheet on page 60 and fax it to us today. Any questions? Contact Suzanne Stansbury at 800/287-6604.

If you would like your carwash to have its own website, Joycemia will also provide web page services to members at a discounted rate.

Remember to check in weekly with our association web page at www.cwonj.com to learn more about upcoming meetings, events and issues. ■

Visit www.cwonj.com for more information on our April 12 bus tour and lunch!

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CWONJ Cruises The Hudson



The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) boarded the Spirit Cruise Line in Weehawken, December 7, for a dinner event on the Hudson River. The three-hour outing included an extensive buffet dinner, a singing wait staff, dj and dancing and a picturesque view of the Manhattan skyline. "This event is a lot of fun and a great way to kick off the holidays," said CWONJ President Gerry Barton. "You couldn't ask for a better venue." Spouses and friends were encouraged to attend.

The Spirit Cruise Line features three climate-controlled interior levels and plenty of deck space to take in the panoramic views of the New York skyline, including the Empire State Building and Statue of Liberty.

The association's next event is its Annual Carwash Tour, April 12. The tour will travel to the Ramsey market and include a dinner.

Visit cwonj.com for more information.



This singing waitress really belted it out!



What a lovely pair - Patrizia Costa and Betty Feinberg.

These attendees seemed to enjoy the event.



Stu Markowitz, Suzanne and Bill Howell and Jack Bilinsky.



Mary Ricciuto and George Ribeiro.



Mr. and Mrs. Kenny Young enjoyed a well deserved night out!



Al Villani and his lovely fiancé Karen Giultano.



Mang Insurance's Mike Benmoschè made the trip from upstate New York.

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Christie Delivers State-of-the-State Address

By Patrick Stewart

Governor Chris Christie delivered his first State-of-the-State Address to a joint session of the Legislature earlier this year, saying, "it is my privilege to report to you that the State of our State is improving – getting better every day."

Christie reviewed what he views as the major accomplishments of his first year in office including: balancing the state budget without raising taxes; passing a 2 percent property tax cap along with an identical 2 percent cap on interest arbitration awards; taking the first steps in reforming the pension and benefits system; enacting legislation preventing an unemployment tax increase of as much as \$700 per employee; creating a permanent inter-district public school choice program and creating six new charter schools. After reviewing his first year in office, the Governor discussed what he believes to be the three most critical issues to be addressed in the coming year, "sticking to the course of fiscal discipline; fixing New Jersey's pension and health benefit systems in order to save them; and reforming New Jersey's schools to make them the best in the nation."

On fiscal responsibility, the Governor said, "... I will

present to you my budget for fiscal year 2012. I will guarantee you that it will be balanced, and it will not raise taxes. In order for that to be true, we need to better control our Medicaid and health care costs," said Christie. "We need to continue to examine the amount and structure of municipal and school aid programs. And we need every department of state government to start from the bottom up and plan not what they want to cut from last year – but only what they absolutely must fund this year." The Governor went on to say, "If New Jersey is to be a home for growth, we need to reform the taxes we place on business and individuals and begin to roll them back. So, we need comprehensive tax reform – and by that I mean changes that are considered together, not in a piecemeal approach. In my budget next month, I will propose the initial installment of such a package."

On pension and health benefits reform the Governor said, "We must modestly raise the retirement age in an era of longer life expectancy. We must curb the effect of COLAs in a time of low or no inflation. And we must ensure a modest but acceptable contribution from employees toward their own



retirement system, he said. "Finally, if we can make real reform a reality, the State must also begin to make its pension contributions."

On education reform the Governor said that while New Jersey statewide has the highest per pupil spending in the nation, the state's results are "neither uniformly excellent or even acceptable." Saying "the myth that more money equals better achievement is a failed legal theory," Christie called for empowering principals; reforming poor-performing public schools or closing them; cutting out-of-classroom costs and focusing efforts on teachers and children. The Governor advocated for merit pay for teachers and the elimination of tenure saying, "Teaching can no longer be the only profession where you have no rewards for excellence and no consequences for failure to perform. The time to eliminate teacher tenure is now."

The Governor is expected to provide additional details on his priorities for 2011 in his budget address. Expect more cuts in services as the Governor pledges not to raise any taxes while balancing the 2012 fiscal year budget.



Patrick A. Stewart

Patrick A. Stewart is a lobbyist with Public Strategies Impact. You can reach him at 609/393-7799 or email him at pstewart@njpsi.com.

CWONJ CALENDAR

JUNE 13

Golf Invitational
Suburban Golf Club, Union

OCTOBER 3-5

Northeast Regional Carwash Convention
Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, NJ
nrccshow.com

NOVEMBER 8

General Membership Meeting (TBD)

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Help Eliminate Charity Washes!

Join the CWONJ/NJ DEP Program Today



The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) have created a partnership that will provide charities and non-profit organizations with an opportunity to hold fundraising carwashes at commercial carwash facilities. While charitable carwashes perform a valuable service to our communities, these activities can also result in unanticipated impacts to the State's water resources by discharging pollutants such as petroleum hydrocarbons, surfactants as well as nutrients and metals which can flow into a storm drain, eventually making its way to our rivers, lakes and streams.

The CWONJ and the Department are soliciting CWONJ members to join our partnership and provide charities and non-profit organizations with discounted carwash tickets (by 50 percent) that they can resell at face value. This is truly a situation where all parties benefit. Charities and non-profit organi-

zations can raise money for their causes, the Department accomplishes their goal of protecting water quality, and CWONJ members gain valuable exposure in the community. In addition, CWONJ members have the satisfaction of knowing that they are doing their part to protect the environment.

The first step is to become a participating carwash by completing and returning the application below. The CWONJ will then post your wash on our web site and that of the NJDEP's. The CWONJ also did a mass mailing to school and scout groups to encourage participation. Interested groups will then contact your carwash directly. Participating CWONJ members will receive a set of posters and a Certificate of Recognition from the NJDEP. The NJDEP will also publicize the effort through its outreach programs. ■

For additional information contact the CWONJ at 800/287-6604 or 518/280-4767 or visit www.cwonj.com.

CWONJ Mailing Address:
 CWONJ, PO Box 230, REXFORD, NY 12148 • 800/287-6604 • PHONE/FAX: 518/280-4767
mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com

Fundraising Car Wash Participation Form

Sponsored by the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey with support from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Thank you for your interest in participating in the CWONJ and NJDEP's partnership Fundraising Car Wash Program. Your efforts will help numerous charities and improve New Jersey's water quality. CWONJ will create a list of participating CWONJ members that will then be supplied to schools, religious organizations and other charities and non-profit organizations.

Participating CWONJ members provide charities and non-profit organizations with discounted car wash tickets (by 50 percent) that they can resell at face value instead of holding car wash fundraisers.

For more information about this program, please contact Doug Karvelas, Car Wash Operators of New Jersey, at (609)888-2568 or Bruce Friedman, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, at (609)633-7021. Additional information is also available at www.cleanwaternj.org.

Car Wash Facility Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____ County: _____
 Contact Person: _____ Title: _____
 Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
 Website (if applicable): _____



Please mail or fax this application to:

Broad Street Car Wash
 2569 South Broad Street
 Hamilton, NJ 08610
 Fax: (609) 888-4405



PUT YOUR WASH/BUSINESS ON THE CWONJ WEB SITE!

As an added value to our members we will be listing our member's carwash locations on our internet site at NO ADDITIONAL COST to members. Please, complete the form below by providing the information that you want posted on the Web site. (i.e. if you use your home phone number and don't want it posted on the Web site don't fill out that section). If you have multiple locations please copy this form and complete a form for each location you want listed. If you have any questions please call Suzanne Stansbury at (800) 287-6604, Fax (518) 280-4767 or send your information to: PO Box 230, Rexford, NY 12148.

Carwash Name _____ Are you a carwash manufacturer or supplier? (Give a brief description of the service(s) you provide.) _____
 Physical Location _____
 Telephone _____
 E-mail _____
 Owner or Contact Name _____

Yes, I give my permission to have my carwash location listed on the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey Web site.

Authorized Signature _____
 Title _____

I also give my permission to have the CWONJ Web site linked to my Web site. My Web site address is: _____

IMPORTANT: This registration must be returned or your carwash won't be listed and shown on the Web site as a member.

Type of carwash and services provided: (please circle all that apply)

Full service	Detailing
Exterior	Gasoline
In-bay automatic	Lube Center
Self Service	Convenience Store
Express Wax	Other

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If you have an MCA story idea or wash you think we should feature, drop us an email at:
mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Mike Ashley

The first thing I would like to mention is that our organization was recently profoundly touch by a fatal incident of "sudden unattended acceleration" at one of our member washes. The "sudden unattended acceleration" accident claimed the life of one worker and critically injured another. Our organization reached out in support of our owner/operator and spearheaded a fundraising effort for the families through our MCA website. Although very sad, it is our hope that we can all learn from such a tragic event and somehow find prevention methods we all can use. Our hearts go out to the families of the injured and all of the other people involved.

The MCA had a very nice meeting November 17 in Shepherdstown, WV. We enjoyed a nice meal at the Bavarian Inn and were pleased to have our guest speaker, Claire Darminin (Chief Operating Officer of the ICA) as our speaker. She spoke on the Watersavers alliance between ICA and the participation of other associations.

This alliance represents the partnership between carwash associations and the ICA. I believe that this program shares the industry's commitment to water conservation and quality.

Claire also spoke on how this would promote our industry to the public through the use of supplied educational and promotional materials. She did such a good job that we voted unanimously to become part of this alliance. We are pleased that the ICA considered us for this program. For those of you who don't know much about this alliance, we will now be able to offer this program to our members even if they are not an ICA member. We look forward to being able to offer this to our members. More information is available at www.icawatersaver.org.

We also had a very productive board retreat and made great plans for the year ahead. You are invited to all of our meetings, and MCA member operators are free. We always seem to have a great turnout and would welcome some fresh faces in the crowd. If one of our meetings is close to you, please plan to join us and RSVP through the website at www.mcaccarwash.org.

We hope your winter season was a prosperous one as many of us seemed to receive a fair amount of road salt.

If you would like to reach me, I am more than happy to talk with any of you anytime.

Mike Ashley
President Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association

Next Meeting May 25
Richmond, VA

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Charles Town Auto Wash Is Always Up For A Challenge

By Alan M. Petrillo

The Charles Town Auto Wash in Charles Town, WV, has only been open for about a year and a half, yet it has earned a reputation as the wash that can handle anything.

The facility is a 165-foot flex service tunnel with an attached 175-foot interior detailing center featuring two moving belts where hand washing can take place.

"We take on any challenge that we can," said Tara Perry, Charles Town Auto Wash's general manager. "Boats, motor homes, trailers and motorcycles – they may not be on our menu, but we'll clean them for their owners."

Charles Town Auto Wash has 19 full-time and part-time employees and is owned by a real estate company, Uniwest Commercial Realty. Assistant general manager of the wash is Danny Sparacino.

"Both Tara and I were hired for our operational and customer service abilities," Sparacino pointed out, noting that neither he nor Perry had prior carwashing experience. Perry spent 17 years in the restaurant business and five years in self-storage work, while Sparacino worked in the restaurant business for 35 years before joining Charles Town Auto Wash.

Charles Town Auto Wash in Charles Town, WV, never turns down a washing challenge.



The 165-foot flex serve tunnel is a year and a half young.



The facility offers two washes, a \$9 basic and an \$11 premium.

"Everything is a la carte on our menu, so customers can add on any additional exterior services that they'd like," Perry said. "They also can choose interior services such as shampooing seats, carpets and mats."

In addition, Charles Town Auto Wash provides an express buff service, where customers can get their vehicles washed, buffed and interior cleaned in 35 to 45 minutes.

"We also do headlight restoration," Sparacino noted, where we use special buffers and waxes to correct the fogging that develops over plastic lenses."

Charles Town has approximately 4,000 residents, and while there are no new car dealerships in town, there are plenty of used car dealers. The Auto Wash washes the vehicles of many of those dealers, as well as those of limousine services, a soda distribution center, the sheriff's department and police departments.

"We had a casino built across the street from us in December of 2010," Perry said, "when they added table games

The wash flourishes in a town of only 4,000.



Assistant General Manager Danny Sparacino and General Manager Tara Perry.



to a horse track and slot machines facility. That's a big part of what the town is and it draws customers to us too."

The Auto Wash also takes care of the casino's fleet of vehicles.

Competition in the area is thin, with a group of self-serves and an in-bay automatic nearby, and an old three-bay self-service and older tunnel in other parts of town.

"You name it and we've done it to get our name out there and established," Perry said. "When we opened, we did billboards, radio and ads in the daily newspaper. We did a lot of ValPak, which was remarkable for us, and social media like Facebook."

Perry noted that she used ValPak four times with different promotions, all of which turned out successful. But the best promotion through ValPak was for a \$24 wash, hand wax and interior cleaning.

"Customers saw perceived value in that promotion, and by keeping to a higher price point, we got a better return," Perry added.

On Facebook, Charles Town Auto Wash hosts weekly contests and giveaways to keep customers engaged. Customers also are able to check into the wash using a mobile phone application, show the phone to the wash cashier, and receive a \$2 discount on a wash.

Charles Town Auto Wash is heavily engaged with local fundraising efforts, Perry pointed out. One of the area baseball leagues sells \$10 fundraising cards the size of a credit card that list 10 to 15 businesses on the rear. Those businesses offer specific discounts for using their services. Perry said she's participated in three such cards, offering free add-ons or \$2 off a premium wash.

"Fundraising is extremely important, especially in a small community," she said. "People see what we do in the community for schools, hospice, churches, bands, and civic and youth groups. They respect us for it and it's had a big impact on our business."

Sparacino noted that the easy-going relationship the staff has with customers also is a big draw.

"We've created a carwash with a barbershop atmosphere," he said. "People get an experience when they come here. We remember people's names and recognize them when they come in. We think we've changed the perception of the industry around here and we're proud of it."

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher.

2011 MCA EVENTS

MAY 2 – 4

ICA Car Care World Expo
Las Vegas, NV

Remember,
two tickets come free this year
with your paid ICA membership dues!
It's a great time to go
if you have not been before!

MAY 25

Tour & Membership Meeting

Richmond, VA

Embassy Suites Hotel

Tour - 2 p.m.

Reception - 6 p.m.

Dinner - 7 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 21

Tour and Membership Meeting

Charlottesville, VA

Farmington Country Club

**Program: Generational Perspectives on the
Car Wash Business – The Bascom Family**

Tour - 2 p.m.

Reception - 6 p.m.

Dinner - 7 p.m.

OCTOBER 3-5

Northeast Regional Carwash Convention
Atlantic City, NJ

NOVEMBER 2

Membership Meeting

Ellicott City, MD

Turf Valley Resort

Reception - 6 p.m.

Dinner - 7 p.m.

Smart Car Wash to Be LEED Certified

By Alan M. Petrillo

If all goes according to plan, Smart Car Wash at 13589 Minnieville Road in Woodbridge, VA, will be the first LEED certified carwash in the world.

Partners Eric Rosenkranz and Peter J. Mason built the flex-service carwash with a 120-foot tunnel and two detailing bays largely with a set of “green” design criteria in mind from the start because they wanted to show their belief in conserving the environment.

“We’ve filed with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) at the LEED Gold level and believe we have enough points to get Gold through our design and construction,” Rosenkranz said.

Mason noted that Smart Car Wash is believed to be the first LEED certified carwash in the world.

LEED certification is granted by the USGBC to commercial and residential buildings that meet certain guidelines for sustainability, including categories such as water and energy efficiency, sustainable design and construction practices, and sustainable materials use.

One design element of the carwash is that it is largely lit by natural light, having been constructed with a lot of glass. Glass placement took into account the movement of the sun during the course of the day, allowing the wash to take advantage of natural light and reduce its energy demand by harnessing the sun’s energy instead of consuming electricity.

In addition, the lumber and millwork used in the carwash achieved points toward LEED certification because they were certified by the Forest Stewardship Council as being sustainable or recycled.

“We also took into account the element of health,” Rosenkranz pointed out. “A lot of paints and adhesives used

in construction off-gas compounds for years after installation, so we chose ones that don’t off-gas volatile organic compounds (VOCs).”

Rosenkranz noted that it didn’t take any longer to build the carwash in a green fashion than it would have to build a traditional structure.

“We recruited a top-notch design team and hired experts familiar with green building” he said. “We got them together with our equipment supplier and our contractor and took an integrated approach to putting together the project.”

Building green doesn’t have to be more expensive than traditional building methods, Rosenkranz said.

“You have to start with a vision of sustainability from the first, with the design and then the construction,” he said. “We chose approaches that are sustainable and have a quick return on investment (ROI).”

Rosenkranz pointed out that they could have put in solar panels or wind turbines, but such units can be expensive up-front and have a ROI that runs over a number of years.

All the wash equipment at Smart Car Wash is controlled by variable frequency drive (VFD) motors, which allowed the carwash to cut its electric bill in half of what it would have been with a traditional tunnel motor package.

“We wanted low-cost, off-the-shelf, sustainable equipment and building materials, and installing VFDs was one way to drive down our operating costs,” Rosenkranz said.

Besides Rosenkranz and Mason, who are brothers-in-law, there is one other major investor in the carwash, a close friend of the pair, who chose to be a silent investor. This is the first move into carwashing for the three of them.

Smart Car Wash opened for business in late October,



Smart Car Wash in Woodbridge, VA, is believed to be the first LEED certified wash in the world.

Water reclamation is a big part of the LEED certification.



A reverse osmosis (RO) system (left), a water recycling plant in house and ample water storage are all part of the operation at Smart Car Wash.



2010, and serves a population of approximately 400,000 people in a 10-mile radius.

“On our first day we were optimistic, but only washed 25 cars,” Mason said. “Then we decided to give away free carwashes for the entire first week we were open and put 1,600 cars through the wash that week. Then we participated in the Grace for Vets program, where we gave free carwashes to all veterans on Veteran’s Day.”

Mason noted that both free carwash programs got the ball rolling for Smart Car Wash, and average daily totals for cars washed jumped to between 250 and 350 per day during November and December.

Rosenkranz pointed out that many customers are curious about how Smart Car Wash can become LEED certified. He gives them a primer on the process.

The first element, he said, is a sustainable site – how the site is developed, dealing with landscaping and storm water runoff, as well as avoiding construction-related pollution.

The second element deals with water efficiency and considers how water-consuming devices in the building are efficient in conserving water. Devices considered include toilets, sinks, showers, and water heating units. Smart Car Wash uses a tankless water heater in a closed-loop system so there is no water waste when running hot water.

The carwash also has a traditional water reclaim system using three underground tanks. Used water is pumped through the tanks, which reclaim it and send it through a reverse osmosis (RO) system.

In addition, the carwash recycles rainwater off its 8,600-square foot roof. Rainwater is filtered and stored before being fed into the carwash water system. The system will hold nearly 5,000 gallons, meaning there is that much less water needed to be purchased from the water service provider.

The carwash also has a membrane system that takes

the reject water out of the reclaim system and gets it clean enough for drinking water, making up to 1,500 gallons a day.

Rosenkranz said all of the carwash’s water recycling equipment is behind a glass partition where customers can watch it in action.

“It’s almost like a brew pub with all the equipment and big containers in there,” he said. “People spend a lot of time viewing it.”

LEED also considers energy and the atmosphere – how efficient the building itself is, how electricity is consumed and how heating, ventilation and air conditioning are used. Rosenkranz noted that the carwash buys energy credits that brings 100 percent of the carwash’s energy from a wind farm.

Materials and resources also are considered under LEED, from construction products such as lumber and masonry to paints and adhesives. LEED also considers the source of such materials, with local sources getting more credits than those a farther distance away. All the brick and block used in Smart Car Wash came from a local source, meaning there was not a lot of trucking required, which reduced the environmental impact of those products.

Indoor environmental quality is the fifth major category that LEED considers because employees and customers spend a lot of time inside a building. Part of LEED’s consideration deals with what happens during construction and part with the design of the building itself. For instance, natural light is important, which is why Smart Car Wash included it in its design. People tend to be healthier when exposed to natural light, Rosenkranz noted, compared to those closed up in windowless areas.

Rosenkranz and Mason expect the review of their LEED submission package to take up to six months, which is typical of such an application. ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Ron Bousquet

The first half of this winter has been the worst that I've seen in more than 35 years. We are usually happy for snow, however, we want six to 10 more days before another "snowmageddon" so that we can wash all those dirty cars! Snow predicted every three or four days ahead is really keeping our customers from visiting us, that's for sure! Let's all hope that the second half of the season will be more profitable than the first. The only good thing is that Punxsutawney Phil didn't see his shadow and hopefully spring will come early with lots of yellow golden pollen and not too much rain! All I can say is Punxsutawney Phil is lucky that his home isn't in the Northeast as he wouldn't have been able to dig his way out of all this global warming. Where is Al Gore when you need him?

Now on to the important things, such as our charity carwash program. Washforacause.com is up and running and doing well. We have many carwashes in the program and if you haven't yet joined, I ask why haven't you? This program will aid carwash operators in helping local and regional charities raise money and bring in new customers to our locations. After customers see how great their cars look they will continue to come back. This is the best advertising that we can do to promote our industry while also helping struggling charities with new ways to raise money. I would like to thank Adam Korngold, Dan Paisner, Russ Picard and Gary MacKenzie for their hard work in getting this program off to a great start.

Our Legislative committee, led by our intern Dan Blackman and chaired by Bill Stapleton, is reviewing all the new bills that Rhode Island, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts have filled for this year's legislative session. Bill has operators in each state to help review these bills, however, more help is always welcome. If you think that you can give a small amount of time to assist, send Bill an email at: billy@southboroautoteck.com.

I hope to see everyone at our tabletop Show on May 17. It is always a great time not only to visit other carwashes on the bus tour, but also to get to talk to all our vendors and other operators.

Ron Bousquet
NECA President

NECA
Tabletop Show & Carwash Tour
May 17
newenglandcarwash.org

2011 NECA Scholarship

Financial Aid for Members of the NECA Community



Today, a high school education isn't enough but it's increasingly difficult to meet the high cost of post high school education and training.

So, new this year, NECA is offering a scholarship to NECA member company employees and their direct family members. The deadline for application submission is April 30, and the recipient will be notified on or before June 1.



Please encourage your employees and/or their family members to take advantage of this valuable member benefit. Visit www.newenglandcarwash.org for all the details and the scholarship application.

If you've any questions please do not hesitate to contact the NECA office: 781/245-7400



NECA Hosts This Year's NRCC!
October 3-5
Trump Taj Mahal Atlantic City
PLAN TO ATTEND!!!!
nrccshow.com

Before Conflict Explodes, Try This Strategy

Conflicts in the workplace can get out of hand when people stop listening to each other and instead concentrate on defending their positions. When you sense that a simple disagreement is about to spiral out of control, follow these steps:

- ❖ **Be quiet.** Once you realize you're not saying anything constructive, stop talking. Let the other person continue until he or she realizes you've disengaged from the power struggle.
- ❖ **Listen and ask questions.** Pay attention to the other person's words, and try to figure out what he or she really wants. The real issue behind your disagreement may be hidden. Ask questions that will test your theories and draw the other person out: "Do you think I'm questioning your competence?"
- ❖ **Respond to what you hear.** Keep probing and paraphrasing until the person calms down and no longer feels threatened or defensive. Once people realize that you are genuinely interested in understanding what they have to say, they'll get back to discussing the situation rationally.

The Road to Millions is Paved with Hard Work

The game show query, "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" generally prompts an enthusiastic, "Me! Me!" But achieving success isn't a game – it's a way of life. Here are some secrets of self-made millionaires that you can use to make your own fortune:

- ❖ **Set some clear goals.** You've got to dream big if you want to succeed on a large scale. Don't be afraid of your ambitions. Start with a list of what you want to achieve this year, and then select the one goal that would have the greatest positive impact on your life, something you feel real passion for. Then get to work.
- ❖ **Educate yourself about money.** Even if you don't have your sights set on becoming the next Warren Buffett, a good understanding of finance will help you set priorities and make decisions about spending, investments, and savings. Immerse yourself in all the information you can find about the field that interests you. Knowledge is power.
- ❖ **Think of yourself as your own CEO.** Whether you work for a boss or for yourself, view your career and success as your own. That means taking full responsibility for what happens to you – your decisions, failures and triumphs. It also means putting all your energy into your goals. Motivational guru Brian Tracy advises taking the "40+" approach: You work 40 hours a week for survival, but that's only the beginning. Every minute you devote past that 40 hours is devoted to your success.
- ❖ **Serve other people.** Structure your goals so they're not just about you. You'll earn support from the people whose help you need by showing them how your achievements will benefit them – and you'll feel better about yourself than you would if you concentrate only on what's in it for you.
- ❖ **Learn to sell yourself.** Whatever you create, you have to sell to someone else. You'll need to understand sales and marketing no matter what industry you're in. But at the same time, you have to sell others on your abilities. Be honest and reliable so customers, investors, and other important stakeholders know they can trust you to take care of them.

The Truth About Social Media Marketing: A Great Way to Build Your Business...or Not?"

On January 11, Dan Green of The Green Internet Group, provided attendees with valuable information on using social media to market their businesses.

The following are some points on how to get started in social media marketing. More details are available in the "Recent Event Roundup" on the NECA web site, www.newenglandcarwash.org.

- ❖ Monitor online comments
- ❖ Claim your local listings
- ❖ Develop a social media policy for your business
- ❖ Set up your accounts
- ❖ ex. Fan page on Facebook
- ❖ Plan your updates
- ❖ Choose a tool, or tools and learn them
- ❖ Study your competitors and other quality Facebook pages to get ideas
- ❖ Add the Facebook logo to your signs, print, other advertising and emails
- ❖ Track your time
- ❖ Become a student

NECA members can download more detailed information posted in the Members' Only section of the NECA web-site at www.newenglandcarwash.org. Here you will find presentation slides, social media guidelines and a step-by-step guide to successful social media marketing. ■

Continued on page 72...



The NECA board of Directors under the leadership of Ron Bousquet (top row, third from left).



Donato DePinto, Rick Moynihan and Butch Webber.



Brian Stanikmas, John Murray and John Chapin.



Matt Traffie, Jeff Dilauro and Steve Crowell.



Mike Gardner Sr. and Jr. from Supershine and Bob Katseff of Turnpike Car Wash and his son Jeffrey.

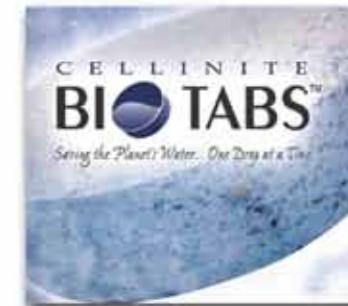
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Social Media expert Dan Green shared his expertise with attendees.



NECA President Ron Bousquet presents Mike Gardner, Jr. with a plaque for his board service during 2009-2010.



NECA President Ron Bousquet presents outgoing President Patti Kaplan with a plaque to symbolize her hard work and dedication to the board and membership while President from 2009-2010.



A Divvy Deal representative educated the group on the association's new fundraising program.



The team from Freeway Carwash in Providence, RI, strike a lovely pose.

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Segregating Your Customer Base To Maximize Profits

By Adam Korngold

I was ecstatically surprised a few weeks ago when I walked into the Gold's Gym next to my carwash and discovered that the price of my monthly membership dropped from \$29.99 a month to \$10 a month, with an annual fee of \$50. For those of you who know

me, it might also surprise you that I actually belong to a gym.

My immediate reaction was, "what are these guys thinking? I have been a satisfied member for the past five years. They have never raised the price, and now they are dropping the cost by 66

percent?" You might be thinking that the owners of the gym, who also are Waves Car Wash customers, might have made this decision after someone spiked their mango energy smoothies. But they are actually very good businessmen and made this decision after realizing the key to profit maximization is to increase their member base by lowering their prices. In the three weeks since the gym dropped the monthly price, the membership is up 50 percent, and they expect membership to increase fivefold.

The gym is able to do this because they have very low variable costs. The additional cost of one membership is a cheap plastic pass, and maybe a few paper towels. Let us assume that their variable costs are zero. Assuming the gym has excess capacity, maximizing revenue will also maximize profits – the more members they have, the higher their profits. And if they can increase revenue by lowering their price, they should lower their price.

After talking to the owners and employees of the gym, I discovered that they are willing to further selectively discount their membership to increase business, as long as the new customers do not compete with their current customer base. For example, if you are a new member they wave the annual fee. Also, if you are an employee of a few select businesses, you do not have to pay an annual fee. This gym has implemented a strategy to maximize capacity by segregating their customer. These concepts should also be applied to the carwash industry.

It is not necessary to lower your base price in order to increase volume if you can find a new customer base, segregate that customer and offer only that specific customer base a different price. As long as you have excess capacity and are not cannibalizing your full paying customer, you should accept new customers as long as they are paying more than your current variable cost (soap, water, and

part of your electrical costs) to wash a car. For most of you, your variable cost is less than \$1. You probably already do some type of customer segregation by offering coupons, many of those coupons are used by customers who normally would not get a carwash at full price.

When deciding upon a new pricing structure for a specific customer group, ask yourself, "Will my overall revenue increase more than my variable costs?" If the answer is "yes," you should implement this new discount.

Below are some suggestions of buckets representing potential new customers and how to evaluate whether this customer is worth targeting.

Bucket 1: People who will only use your wash if they get a discount.

This customer only washes his or her car if they are given a large discount. He will use your carwash not because you provide a premium service, but because you are willing to give them a great deal. Effective ways of reaching this customer are through traditional paper coupons in direct mailings, supermarket receipts, local newspapers as well as through "deal of the day" websites.

If you believe this customer would not otherwise patronize your carwash without a discount, you should be willing to offer them a wash where the additional revenue after the discount is greater than your variable costs plus the cost of the coupon. For example, if your wash is \$10, the cost of distributing the coupon is \$4, the coupon is for \$3 and your variable cost is \$1, you are left with \$2, which is \$2 more than you would have earned if you did not offer this coupon.

Bucket 2: Dealership washes.

Most dealerships offer a free carwash to their customers with any vehicle service. Many carwash owners

would hardly call the dealer wash process a "car wash," because most dealerships simply rinse cars or have their own low-tech equipment. The carwash does not lose business to this customer because the customer did not go to the dealer to get a carwash.

By understanding that this market segment is not a regular user of your carwash, you should be willing to offer the dealership a low price to wash its cars at your facility (either in the form of a free wash coupon to give to their customers or having the dealership drive the vehicles directly to your carwash). You should price this potential customer significantly lower than your full paying customer.

Bucket 3: Unlimited customers.

The unlimited customer cares about keeping his car clean (I am using his because the unlimited customer is overwhelmingly male), and will wash his car more often because of an unlimited pass.

The unlimited customer is your most loyal customer because he has a huge incentive not to use a competitor's wash. Finally, the unlimited customer is spending significantly more at your wash overall than he did when he was not a member of an unlimited club.

The benchmark to offering an unlimited membership club should be if your overall revenue increases more than the additional variable costs of washing cars.

There are many other buckets that can be created, such as taxi or livery vehicles or by creating a partnership with an oil lube or gas station. By segregating your customer base, you should focus on targeting and pricing customers by groups. Through maximizing profits of your customer buckets, you will be able to increase your overall profits. ■

Adam Korngold is the owner of Waves Car Wash in West Roxbury, MA. He is also the NECA vice president. You can contact him at adam@wavescarwash.com.



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Tuesday, May 17, 2011

Hilton, Woburn/Boston

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Buffet dinner from 6:00 p.m. Prize drawings at 8:00 p.m.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS for NECA TABLE TOP SHOW PARTICIPANTS at the Hilton Woburn/Boston at the SPECIAL RATE OF \$119 PER NIGHT, SINGLE OR DOUBLE, FOR RESERVATIONS MADE BY MAY 3, 2011. Call 781-932-0999, ask for reservations Be sure to mention you are with the New England Carwash Association Table Top Show. The group code is NECA.

REGISTRATION

NECA Members: \$275.00 Non-Members: \$325.00

REGISTRATION INCLUDES one 6-foot table; electricity (upon request); buffet dinners and vendor prize drawing tickets for two (2) company reps (3 if you purchase 2 tables); exhibitor "tools"; promotional credit in printed and broadcast material, on the NECA web site and in the Northeast Carwasher.

Reserve an Additional Table and Save \$50 off the above table rates - maximum of one extra table per exhibitor. If available, additional tables may be released after May 6th, 2011.

THREE EASY WAYS TO REGISTER

1. EASIEST! VISIT OUR WEB SITE www.newenglandcarwash.org OR
2. Complete this form and fax with credit card information to 781/245-6487 OR
3. Complete this form & mail with a check payable to NECA to 591 North Ave., Ste. 3-2 Wakefield, MA 01880

QUESTIONS? 781/245-7400 neca.org@verizon.net

Please note: Registration fees for this event are not tax deductible as charitable contributions; they may be deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses. If you have special needs (per ADA) in order to participate in this event, please contact the NECA office.

*NOTE: If your registration payment is not received by May 6th, 2011, your table may be released to another exhibitor.

CANCELLATION POLICY: All cancellations are subject to a \$25 administrative fee.

Refunds may not be available for cancellations received after May 6th, 2011.

2011 NECA Table Top Exhibitor Reservation Form - PLEASE COMPLETE AND PRINT NEATLY.

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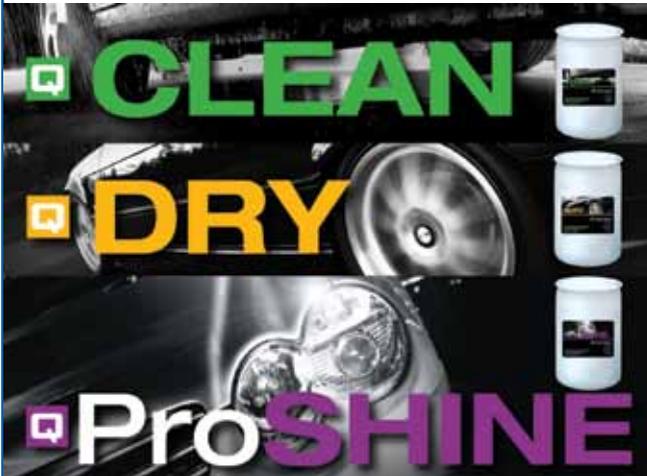
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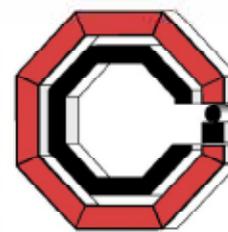
Members: Are you utilizing all opportunities to increase your company's visibility and reach?

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- ◆ Have you provided us with your website address? NECA's website features profiles of each member company with a hot link to their website.
- ◆ Have you created a hot link on your website to the NECA site using a NECA logo? Google rule: The more links, the more traffic.
- ◆ Is the NECA logo on your business cards? Just contact the office for a brief form that provides guidelines for use.
- ◆ Have you created your "Supplier Profile" on NECA's Facebook page yet?
- ◆ Would you like to be the subject of our member "Vendor Spotlight" in an upcoming issue of the quarterly NECA E-NEWS?

For a full description of opportunities for our industry partners/supplier members, go to: <http://www.newenglandcarwash.org/category/3370/opportunities-for-our-industry-partners-supplier-members.htm>

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Foam Thrower Can Add Excitement to Carwash “Experience”

By Alan M. Petrillo

Put a little pizzazz back into the carwash “experience.” That’s the advice of Al West, northeast sales manager for Simoniz USA Inc.

And the way West, a former carwash operator himself, sees that being accomplished is through a relatively innocuous piece of equipment called a foam thrower.

“Basically, it’s a prep gun that can be used in tunnels or anywhere else,” West said. “It looks like a flamethrower, but instead it throws foam. It’s a very exciting device to use at the entrance to tunnels.”

Jeff Siegel, the owner of Southside Car Wash in Dover, NH, agreed. Siegel runs a full-service carwash with an 80-foot conveyor and 90-foot tunnel, along with one detailing bay.

“Barry Smith is our Simoniz rep and he always comes up with interesting ways to add onto our wash,” Siegel said.

Smith told Siegel about the foam thrower, showed him one of the units and then the two of them hooked one up.

“The first day the kids in all the cars screamed with joy – they loved it,” Siegel said. “Then Barry brought us

The Foam Thrower provides a whole new “experience” for the wash customer.



the scented foam product, and not only did the parents enjoy it, but the employees did too. The customers are tipping the guys more now and the best part is the employees love using the foam gun.”

Simoniz offers the foam used in the thrower in four different color-scent combinations – blue/blueberry, red/strawberry, white/vanilla and yellow/banana.

“It’s the same product with different colors and scents,” West noted. “The operator runs the foam at the same solution, no matter what kind he’s chosen.”

West added that he advises his customers to switch to a different color/scent when they reorder the product to add something different to their carwash when customers return.

“It brings more life to the carwash,” he observed.

Dennis Fitzgerald, owner of Fitzzy’s Car Wash in Ashland, MA, uses a foam thrower in his 90-foot full-service tunnel. He also has four self-service bays attached to the carwash.

“We always prep the cars when they come in, spray down the front and back, and clean the wheels with a brush,” Fitzgerald said. “After the prep work, we hit the vehicle with the foam gun. People like it, especially because it’s a feature that we added and we don’t charge extra for it.”

Fitzgerald thinks the action of the foam thrower is “impressive, easily reaching out 10 feet with a good shot. It sputters at first but then boom – it shoots out. Sometimes, people nearby jump when it shoots.”

Siegel of Southside Car Wash said he’s expanded to two foam throwers now, one on each side of the vehicle at the entrance.

“It only takes our prep guys an extra 10 seconds to use the foam throwers,” Siegel said. “They give the car a fast spray over the windows, onto the hood and across the front.”

He noted it hasn’t added to the carwash’s cost. He’s used two five-gallon buckets of foam in about three months and estimates he’s gotten about 5,000 applications out of those two buckets.

According to those using it, the Foam Thrower is a cost-effective way to deliver more to their customers.



“This is another way that we can show our concern for cleaning a car well and still be entertaining,” Siegel noted. “When our guys spray the cars they get a lot of smiles. We’ve seen a good improvement in traffic because of the guns.”

West agreed with Siegel’s assessment.

“As a former carwash operator, I see an underlying benefit to this feature that might not be apparent immediately,” West said. “The guys working to put the cars through have been going through the same routine for years and then all of a sudden, with this foam thrower, customers in the cars are smiling and laughing. It makes the wash experience more enjoyable for the customer and the employees get to have fun in pleasing the customers.”

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher.

Brainstorming: How to Get the Juices Flowing

Effective brainstorming sessions may be fun, but they shouldn’t be uncontrolled free-for-alls. You want the atmosphere to be relaxed so that creativity flows, but you also need some structure to ensure productivity. Striking this balance takes planning.

Here are some strategies to make your next brainstorming meeting a success:

- ❖ **Have an outsider join the meeting.** This can provide a fresh point of view. Choose someone who hasn’t been involved in previous sessions and who doesn’t have a vested interest in any particular outcome.
- ❖ **Try speed games.** Make everyone offer 10 ideas in five minutes. The tactic discourages self-censorship.
- ❖ **Don’t count on employees alone.** Sometimes, ideas don’t immediately flow, so bring some ideas with you to get things started.
- ❖ **Don’t forget food.** When people are hungry, their minds tend to wander.
- ❖ **Keep things moving.** Don’t aim exclusively for high-quality ideas, but also for quantity. You want lots and lots of ideas to choose from.
- ❖ **Don’t rule out impractical ideas – at least at first.** You want to encourage creativity. Worrying about feasibility doesn’t facilitate new thinking.
- ❖ **Stay seated when you offer up an idea.** If it bombs, you don’t want to literally and figuratively sink back down into your chair.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Mark Kubarek

What happened to global warming? We had 87 inches of snow in December and as I write this we are approaching the 190-inch mark for the season. We have had some down days because of weather, but volume on good days has been very strong. We had the busiest day in five years the week between the holidays.

We have also run into some challenges this winter with some of the new de-icing mixtures they are using on the roads. One called Magic has really caused some cleaning challenges. It is a mixture of salt, magnesium chloride and molasses. It works to lower temperature and the molasses makes it bond to the road surface. It successfully bonds to the surface of vehicles. We have been working with our solution supplier to try to find a product to make our job a little easier to remove the Magic! Hopefully, we will have an answer before next winter.

We have a very exciting spring meeting, May 25, in the Hudson Valley region. Come along and see some of the most advanced technology in the carwash industry during our carwash tour of several incredibly innovative washes. I can guarantee that you will come away with at least one great idea to implement at your wash. Hope to see you there. You can visit nyscwa.com for more information and to register on line.

If you know of anyone interested in serving on the Board of Directors, or in any capacity, please contact the association at mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com or call us at 800/287-6604. Service to the Association is very rewarding. You will get back tenfold what you put in, I assure you.

We will again be heading south to CitiField to partake of a Mets game (Mets vs. Angels) on June 17. It's a Friday night game, so it's ideal for families and friends to join you at the ballpark. We have three huge Empire Party suites and all the food and drink you can consume, so come out and mix and mingle with 100 or so carwashers in a great setting! A special thanks to Mike Benmosche for organizing this event and growing it to its current size. It's really a great outing and don't forget, there is a bus that leaves from Albany to make the drive in easy! I'd also like to thank Stuart Rosenberg for introducing us to the venue and opening doors for us to make this a truly great outing.

I would also like take the time to thank the board and members of the association for the kind expressions of sympathy during the recent loss of my Mother and Father. Mom passed on January 5th after a life-long battle with diabetes. Dad passed on January 30th, I think of a broken heart. On behalf of myself, Terri, Chris, Amanda, my brother Joe and my sister Ann, your kindness and friendship made a very difficult time much easier.

Time to think spring, cleanup, flowers, bugs, etc. Yes, lots of bugs and pollen, too!

Mark Kubarek
NYSCWA President

It's Time To Start Learning Again!

By Mike Benmoschè

After just completing the five-day management course at the CarWash College in Florida, I was inspired to write this article. For the past three years, I have been teaching the safety program on the last day of this course, this time I decided to attend the entire week as a student. I was very impressed.

This article is not intended to be a commercial for the CarWash College, but rather an opportunity to share a new perspective that arose from this experience. As I watched the students throughout the week, it seemed obvious none of them had any idea of what was to come. Hours of instruction on some of the best practices designed to maximize the success of a profitable carwash was at their fingertips in the form of years and years of experience shared over a five-day period. Though, at times, they were clearly overwhelmed without exception, all of them learned far more than they had anticipated. As an added benefit, there was also plenty of time to network with other owners/managers which enhanced the total learning experience.

One new operator about to open his first wash commented, "I had no idea how much I didn't know. I am sure glad that I elected to enroll in this class." He felt light years ahead of where he was just a few days ago.

So, what's my point? As I travel, many operators complain that the industry is becoming saturated with new washes. Between the economy, weather and competition it has become very difficult to maintain a profitable business.

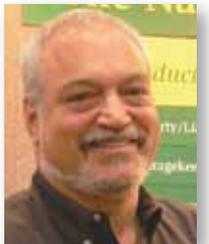
I think most operators would agree that the good old days are just that 'the good old days.' Clearly, to survive today and in the future, it is time to re-think your strategies.

With that said, my point is this, when I talk to operators and ask if either they or a manager have recently attended a carwash course, tradeshow, association meeting or any other educational forum over half answer NO! And why is that? I am told it's either too much money, a waste of time or they don't see the value. Well, the way I see it there continues

to be new investors and current operators investing \$100's of thousands of dollars buying land or renovating carwashes. Consider then the cost of any educational experience and it is like a grain of sand on a beach, yet the value and return on that invest is enormous. It follows that each owner/operator should make every effort to use the many new resources available to them to help bring their wash to greater heights. Frankly, I'm just baffled at how any operator or their key people can afford not to be part of some educational program!

I can promise you one thing, many aggressive people are getting into this business. They often have an extensive financial background and embrace a lot of the new technology. This is your competition. They are the ones attending the meetings, networking and availing themselves of every educational opportunity they can to learn how to run their businesses more profitably. Next time you ask how they are doing it, think about the answer.

Mike Benmoschè is with Mang Insurance. You can reach him at 800/891-9274 or at m.benmosche@manginsurance.com.



Mike Benmoschè

Can You Be A Good Mentor?

You know how important mentoring can be to younger or inexperienced employees. But how do you know if you're cut out to be a good mentor? Here are four key characteristics of an effective mentor:

❖ **Commitment.** Are you willing to dedicate the time and effort necessary to mentoring a relationship? You should already be involved in helping employees learn new skills and develop professionally.

❖ **Courage.** Do you have the courage to take risks, admit mistakes, and let others do the same? You'll have to tolerate the occasional error and use it as a learning experience, and at the same time teach your salespeople how to tell the difference between a reasonable risk and an unacceptable one.

❖ **Curiosity.** Are you hungry for knowledge? Don't limit your answer to professional areas. If you're always asking questions, trying to find out how things work and why, you'll be a good mentor.

❖ **Compassion.** Are you patient with others when they make mistakes? Do you try to understand situations from the other person's point of view? You can't be wedded to "right" answers and one-size-fits-all solutions. As a mentor, your job isn't to pass judgment but to create opportunities for insight and growth in other people.

First Step

By Ray Justice

When I exercise indoors, the platform that I use is called a "Step." Somedays it's easy, and I love it. Other days, it's a struggle just to get going. That first step, the hard one, is getting started.

Music makes a big difference, stirs my soul. It seems that once I take that first step, just one step, my other foot just automatically follows.

A step is a movement in a direction, it takes us to a new position. That is, once we get going.

A mile looks a long way, a project or goal seems too large to accomplish. One small step gets you started, you pick up a cadence, and before you know it you are there.

Left! right! left!

Left! right! left!

A series of steps becomes a flight of stairs.

Take any overwhelming project and ask yourself what can I do that will only take 20 minutes? If you do that, the next day ask yourself the same question, "what can I do that will take 20 minutes?"

Step by step, inch by inch, you get the idea.

Some popular steps:

First step	Step up	Step forward
Side step	Step down	Last step
Two step	In step	Step out
Giant step	Small step	Step up to the plate
Next step	Step back	Step in

Notice one thing they all have in common – movement and action.

If our thoughts, words and actions are all the same, then one will affect, and build on, the other.

So where do you think you should start, with your thoughts, words or actions?

What fear or doubt is keeping you from taking that first small step?

Some people give up before they begin, remember it's never the right time.

Take that first step.



Ray Justice

Ray Justice is an Entrepreneur, Poet & Creativity Explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the NYSCWA. Visit www.rayjustice.com or email ray@SiteBrandBuilder.com.

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Your Laughter

By Ray Justice

You have rollicking laugh in you that I'd like to meet.

It's when you let it all go not having thought to look or sound neat.

Your laughter within rolls naturally on its own as you feel fun, play and freedom with a silliness tone.

Laugh for me now help me get going Begin with a smile 'till the chuckle starts showing.

Then let it rip loud and clear hold nothing back even bring a tear.

Let's howl together with our internal toy as we connect with each other spreading wonderful joy.

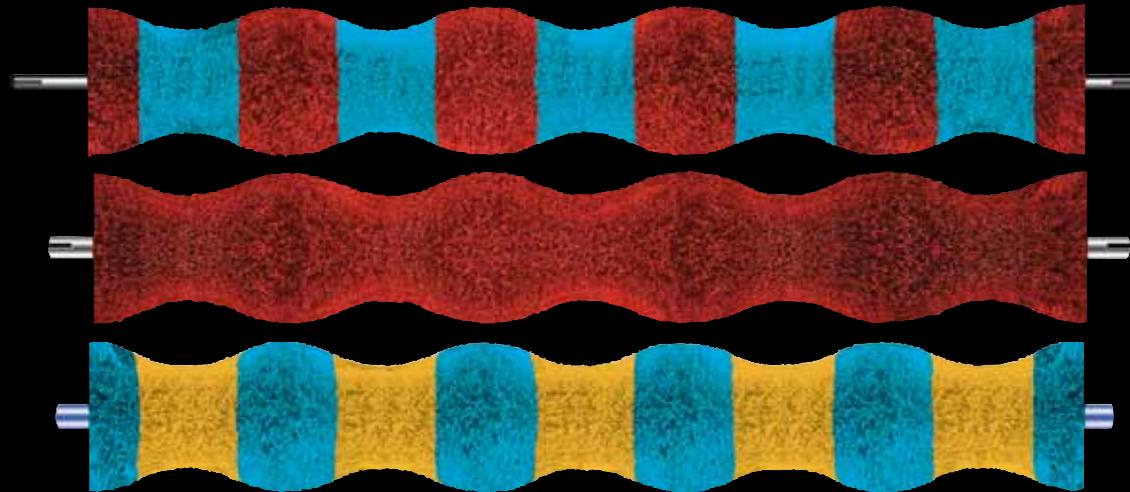
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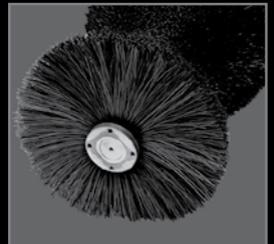
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What's New In The Plant World For 2011?

By John Van Etten

As a gardener or even a plant enthusiast – springs hope is truly eternal! Even with feet of white snow piled up around every hidden flower mound, glossy vivid color catalogs of what is new in the green world arrive daily in our mailboxes. Pictures of flowers and shrubs warm even the coldest of days, plus there is always something new out there that beckons for us to try it out, maybe we will be the first in our area to highlight these wonders. Won't we be the envy of our neighbors or competitors!

As a commercial grower, we typically see these new arrivals firsthand the prior summer at growers' days at either production greenhouses or display gardens hosted by the local university or cooperative extension. Master gardener programs with industry connections will also receive trial materials. These displays can be either very gorgeous and well composed or functionally boring with rows after rows of the same plants, with slightly different hues. The real pros (my salesmen) go to the spring trials in California where every new plant imaginable is trialed. You may say, why bother, and I get that. I would feel the same way looking at carwash equipment at a trade show. But as we can attest, first-hand observation of how something performs and how it looks is invaluable!

Why new stuff? In the plant world, there are endless possibilities with breeding and creation of new varieties and "sometimes new" plant species. Breeders spend a lot of time and resources to make good plants even better. Uniformity of height, color and habit is always a desirable outcome. Breeding can be for enhanced color or longer bloom, self-cleaning flowers that don't require deadheading, etc. Breeding plants to be more resilient, insect and disease tolerant and for characteristics that help the plants thrive with adverse environmental conditions, like drought, heat or pollution are major advances designed to make our lives easier in maintaining them.

Here are a few recommendations I have for 2011:

Bedding Plants ~ Annuals (one season)

Without a doubt, the best new plant selections are propagated and produced under the Proven Winners label. These

plants are tested extensively and prove to be hardy, durable and outstanding producers for the garden. Here are my personal favorites for 2011.

- ❖ Angelonia – Angelface blue
- ❖ Begonia – Big Rose & Big Red
- ❖ Dahlias – Mystic series
- ❖ Lobularia – snow princess (alyssum)
- ❖ Salvia - oceana
- ❖ Ageratum - Artist blue

Perennials ~ (come back every year)

- ❖ Sedum - Autumn Fire
- ❖ Geranium- Tiny Monster
- ❖ Hibiscus - Luna series
- ❖ Hosta - Fragrant Bouquet
- ❖ Gaura – Perky Pink
- ❖ Oenothera – Lemon Drop (evening primrose)

Shrubs ~ (woody stemmed plants up to 10' high)

- ❖ Hydrangea – Little Lime
- ❖ Syringa – Bloomerang (Lilac)
- ❖ Exochorda – Blizzard (white pearl bush)
- ❖ Ilex – Berry Heavy (holly)
- ❖ Clethra – Vanilla Spice (Summersweet)
- ❖ Hypericum – Sunny Boulevard (St. John's wart)

Other New Plants of Merit

KEY: A-ANNUAL P-PERENNIAL S-SHRUB T-TREE G-GROWER/ SOURCE

- ❖ Solidago – Solar Cascade (goldenrod) P; G-garden center
- ❖ Rosa – Munstead Wood (double rose) S; G-David Austin English Roses
- ❖ Abelia – Lime Twist (glossy abelia) S; G-Monrovia nursery
- ❖ Acer s. – Autumn Fest (sugar maple) T; G-Monrovia nursery
- ❖ Sunpatiens – Rosy (New Guinea impatiens) A; G-Sygenta Growers
- ❖ Guinea (impatiens)



In summary, this is just a small sampling of what is new and exciting in 2011. I have seen all of these selections and feel confident to use them myself, as well as recommend them to you! Have fun and enjoy the spring planting season! ■

John Van Etten, CGM, is the Landscape Manager for Hoffman Development based out of New York's Capitol region. John also runs a residential and commercial landscape division for Hoffman. He has a horticultural degree and is a nationally certified grounds manager.

John can be reached at jvanetten@hoffman-development.com.



Hibiscus (top), Dahlias (middle) and Hydrangea are sure signs of spring.

Profit & Loss

January - December 2010

Income

Meetings Income	\$14,305.60
Membership Dues.....	16,780.00
Northeast Convention Income.....	19,947.63
Promotional Fees	1,957.98
Services.....	450.00
Vendor Sponsorships	2,200.00

Total Income \$55,641.21

Expense

Board of Directors Expenses	155.48
Convention or Meeting Expense	62.50
Credit Card Fees.....	681.45
Director Fees.....	16,500.00
Entertainment Expense	105.95
Insurance Expense.....	1,513.00
Legislative Expense	240.85
Legislative Fees.....	12,000.00
Meetings Expenses.....	18,407.79
Office Expenses.....	573.12
Postage Expense	625.17
Printing/Graphics.....	121.50
Professional Services fees	1,560.00
Telephone.....	272.44
Travel.....	281.41
Website Host.....	230.00
Website Maintenance	2,062.50

Total Expenses \$55,393.16

Net Income \$248.05

Total Checking \$21,575.00

Total Money Market \$39,999.46

Grand Total \$61,574.46

Mike Benmoschè is with Mang Insurance. You can reach him at 800/891-9274 or at m.benmosche@manginsurance.com.



NYSCWA CALENDAR

MAY 25

Carwash Tour & Membership Meeting
Poughkeepsie Market
 More details to come on nyscwa.com

OCTOBER 19

Carwash Tour & Membership Meeting
Albany Market
 More details to come on nyscwa.com

JUNE 17

Mets vs. LA Angels
Empire Party Suite
Night Game
 More details to come on nyscwa.com

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Discipline is a responsibility you can't duck if you're a manager, but it doesn't have to be a hostile confrontation. Here are some keys to handling it effectively:

❖ **Timeliness.** Just as rewards have less meaning if they're delayed, discipline will have little force if it doesn't occur immediately after an infraction. Take action right away, while the behavior is fresh in the employees mind.

❖ **Performance.** Keep personal issues out of any disciplinary procedure. Focus on what the individual did, without speculating on why he or she did it and without bringing personalities into the discussion. Use the conversation as an opportunity to make sure the employee understands performance standards.

❖ **Fairness.** Although you need to respond promptly to issues requiring disciplinary action, take the time to make sure you understand what happened. A hasty decision that doesn't take everyone's position into account will only increase tension and reduce productivity in your workplace. ■

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With Condolences

The NYSCWA board's deepest condolences go out to Mark Kubarek and his family on the loss of his mother, Josephine Morabito Kubarek, on January 5 and then his father, Joseph P. Kubarek, on January 30.

Contributions in memory of the Kubarek's can be made to St. Hyacinth's Church, 63 Pulaski St., Auburn, NY 13021. ■

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Carwash in Amityville Doesn't Scare New Owners

By Alan M. Petrillo

Amityville, NY, on Long Island, may be notorious for sensational murders, but neither the name of the town nor its background were enough to scare Craig and Elizabeth DeLuca from plunging into the carwash business there for the first time.

The couple bought an existing carwash in January 2009, Amity Car Wash & Detail Center, which was in an established neighborhood and had been around since the early '70s, fully realizing that it needed a lot of work in terms of updating and refurbishment.

They also were aware of the background of the town, brought to the attention of the world by The Amityville Horror, a true story written by Jay Anson and published in 1977, that tells the story of newlyweds who move into a house where six murders were committed (in 1975) and the paranormal happenings that drive them away. The book served as the basis for several films between 1979 and 2005.

Craig DeLuca knew the Long Island area well, having served eight years as circulation manager for the daily newspaper *Newsday*, headquartered in Melville, and another 16 years as an independent distributor handling home delivery for the newspaper.

"As we were searching for a business opportunity, we looked at convenience stores, gas stations and delis," DeLuca said. "Then we looked at a convenience store with gasoline and a carwash operation, and that seemed to ring a bell with us. We decided to go with a carwash exclusively."

The DeLucas engaged a business broker and looked at a number of carwashes for sale around Long Island. They also talked with a friend in the business and ultimately settled on purchasing Amity Car Wash & Detail.

The carwash is a full-service soft cloth wash with a 127-foot conveyor in a 140-foot tunnel. Amity Car Wash &

Detail has a convenience store that sells auto accessories in the cashier area and a separate canopied area for detailing that can handle four vehicles at a time.

"We knew exactly what needed to be done when we bought it," Craig DeLuca said. "We had to update the look and equipment in the carwash, work in the right chemicals and really show people the changes by getting cars cleaned well for them."

DeLuca pointed out that in putting money into the carwash by upgrading, it shows customers that the owners care about the end product. As part of the upgrade, DeLuca said they cleaned up all the walls in the wash, upgraded the entrances, added uniforms for the staff and developed a new logo – a life ring with a wave inside of it.

"Amityville is a very nautical community, so our new logo resonated with people," DeLuca said.

The family lives about two minutes away from the carwash, he noted, so it's a family-oriented business with himself, wife Elizabeth or daughter Monica always present. The carwash employs a total of 14 people.

Amity Car Wash & Detail Center offers four washes – Value wash, which is the full-service basic wash for \$13 (tax included on all prices); Super wash, which adds undercarriage, polish wax and Armor All on tires for \$16; Deluxe at \$20 and the Ultimate at \$26, which adds Teflon double bond and Vision Clear arches, and cleaning door panels, dash and console.

"We added a special parking area for the Ultimate wash and when people see the door panels and console getting

cleaned, they often move up to the top wash," DeLuca pointed out.

Amity Car Wash & Detail Center provides fleet services for a local Chrysler Dodge Jeep dealership, washing all the dealer's service vehicles. DeLuca also gives the dealer a complimentary 30-day carwash to give with each new car sold, a program that DeLuca says has worked very well for the carwash in attracting new customers.

The carwash also instituted an unlimited monthly pass for customers and started off with 100 passes bought right away at a cost of \$39 per month. DeLuca issues a laminated card pass that's vehicle specific, which includes the full-service Value wash. The customer can pay the difference and upgrade at any time.

Radio and television advertising is expensive on Long Island, so DeLuca has spent his ad dollars on direct mail through ValPak and other direct mailers, as well as through register tapes at a local King Kullen supermarket chain.

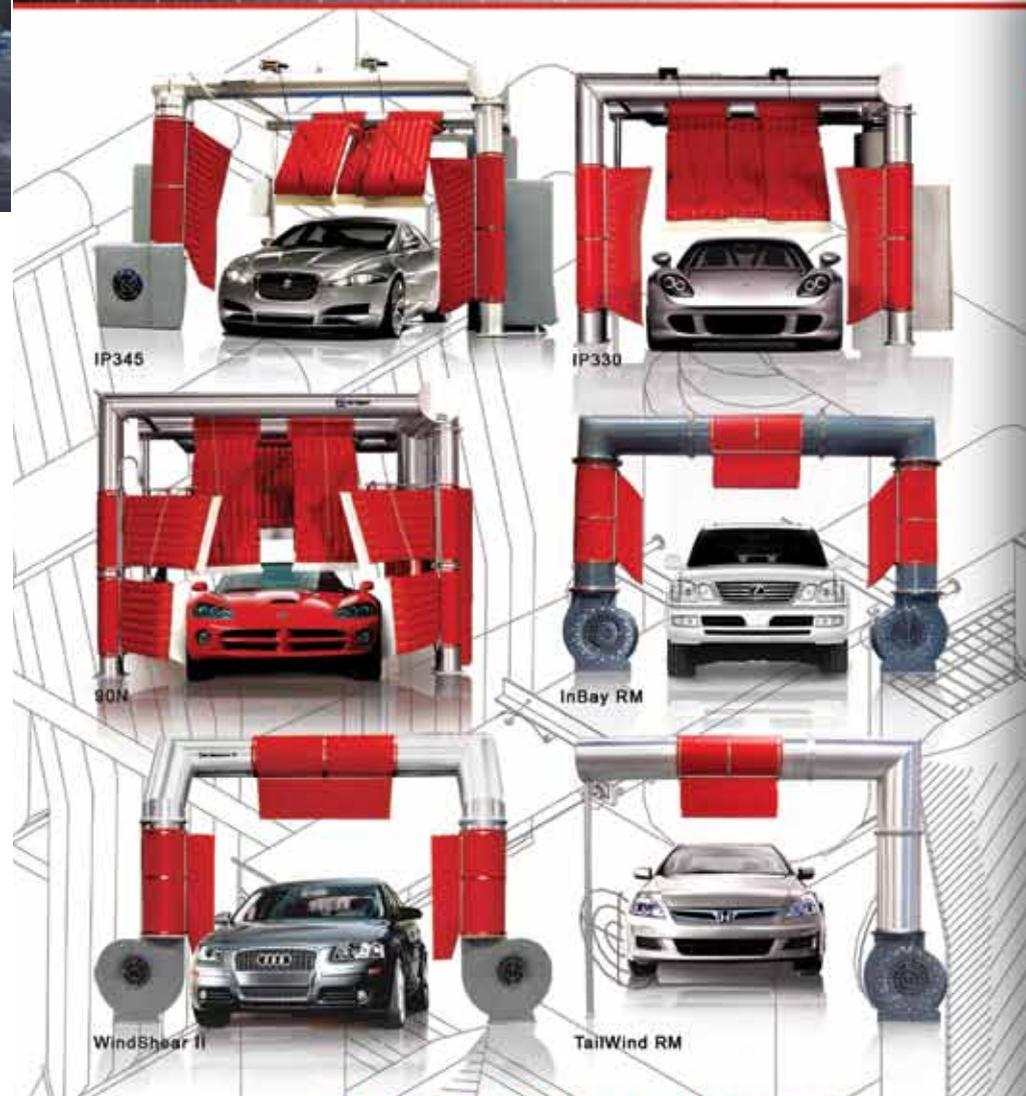
"We have the register tapes in one store a couple of miles away from us and get a good response for the amount of money it costs us," he said. "It gets us different eyeballs, and that can mean different customers." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of *Northeast Carwasher*.



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Association to Set Legislative Direction

By William Y. Crowell, III



As the 2011 Legislature begins its session in earnest with Governor Cuomo having delivered his budget message, the New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) should establish its legislative priorities.

Under existing law, the sales tax exemption for coin-operated carwash services applies only to currency-operated or coin-operated machines. It does not include debit or credit cards where the coin-operated equipment also accepts payment by a debit or credit card. A customer who uses an in-bay automatic carwash and pays for the carwash using currency or coin pays no sales tax, where a consumer who uses their debit or credit card does pay sales tax. The current application of the sales tax effectively discriminates against carwash consumers based on their form of payment. Consumers often direct their frustration with this situation to carwash operators who bear no responsibility.

Legislation to correct this unfair treatment was vetoed by Governor Paterson in 2008 based in large measure on the negative fiscal impact ascribed to this change. It was calculated by the New York State Department of Taxation & Finance to cost the state and local governments \$4.6 million.

Despite the fact that the State's fiscal condition worsened since 2008, this measure should be re-introduced to keep this consumer-oriented issue alive. Assemblyman Joseph Morelle has agreed to sponsor this legislation, and Senator Jim Seward is reviewing it for introduction.

Legislation was also included on the Association's agenda in 2008 to provide an exemption from sales tax for receipts from the services of washing, waxing and vacuuming a car by full-service and exterior carwash operators. This bill would apply to situations where the carwash operator or his employees assist the purchaser by washing, waxing or vacuuming the vehicle. This proposal would not extend the exemption to full-out detailing.

The current distinctions for the application of sales tax

create inequity within the carwash industry. Payment to a person rather than an automated machine should not be the basis for application of sales tax. In fact, when the employment numbers in New York State are distressed, the State should be evaluating the merits of a tax policy which encourages automation of carwashes.

Carwashing is a manufacturing process and sales tax is paid on all products and equipment used in connection with the carwash. The application of sales tax on the service in addition to the products and equipment represents double taxation. Tax policy should support an industry dominated by small businesses which are producing an environmentally friendly product.

Even though the passage of such a sales tax exemption proposal will be extremely difficult to achieve with the current budget crisis, this important issue should be continued as part of the Association's legislative agenda. Introduction of this legislative proposal keeps these tax issues on the table. As this industry appreciates, changes in tax policy are incremental and require continued effort until conditions are ripe for change.

The dire fiscal situation in New York State, with at least a \$10 billion shortfall, requires the carwash industry to be vigilant as to an elimination of current sales tax exemptions. We only need to look to our border state of Connecticut, where there is an effort to re-impose the sales tax on carwash services. In New York, despite pledges of no new taxes, there have been distinctions made based on "loophole closers." The thirst for revenues in New York State will be great so at this point, nothing is impossible. ■



William Y. Crowell, III is a partner with the Albany-based law firm of Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP. He can be reached at 518/487-7677.

William Y. Crowell, III

What If You Held A Meeting And No One Said A Word?

As a manager, you need all of your employees to be actively involved if you are going to conduct a productive meeting. If no one talks, you might as well issue a memo – and you won't have the benefit of your workforce's insight and experience. Here are some tactics for generating a substantive discussion:

❖ Become and "active listener." Give nonverbal encouragement to speakers while they are talking – nod,

lean forward, raise your eyebrows, etc. Restate what people say to confirm you've understood their points. Acknowledge employees' enthusiasm, concerns, or anger.

❖ Ask effective questions. Open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a "yes" or a "no," promote the exchange of ideas. On the other hand, when you want specific information or you want to move the group to

action or agreement, ask close-ended questions. Accept all answers, and let your people determine their value.

❖ Direct the conversation. Call on specific employees by name if necessary, but try not to embarrass anyone. Discourage interruptions when employees are speaking. Keep the discussion on track and rein in speakers who veer off into irrelevant subjects, or employees won't know what you want from them. ■



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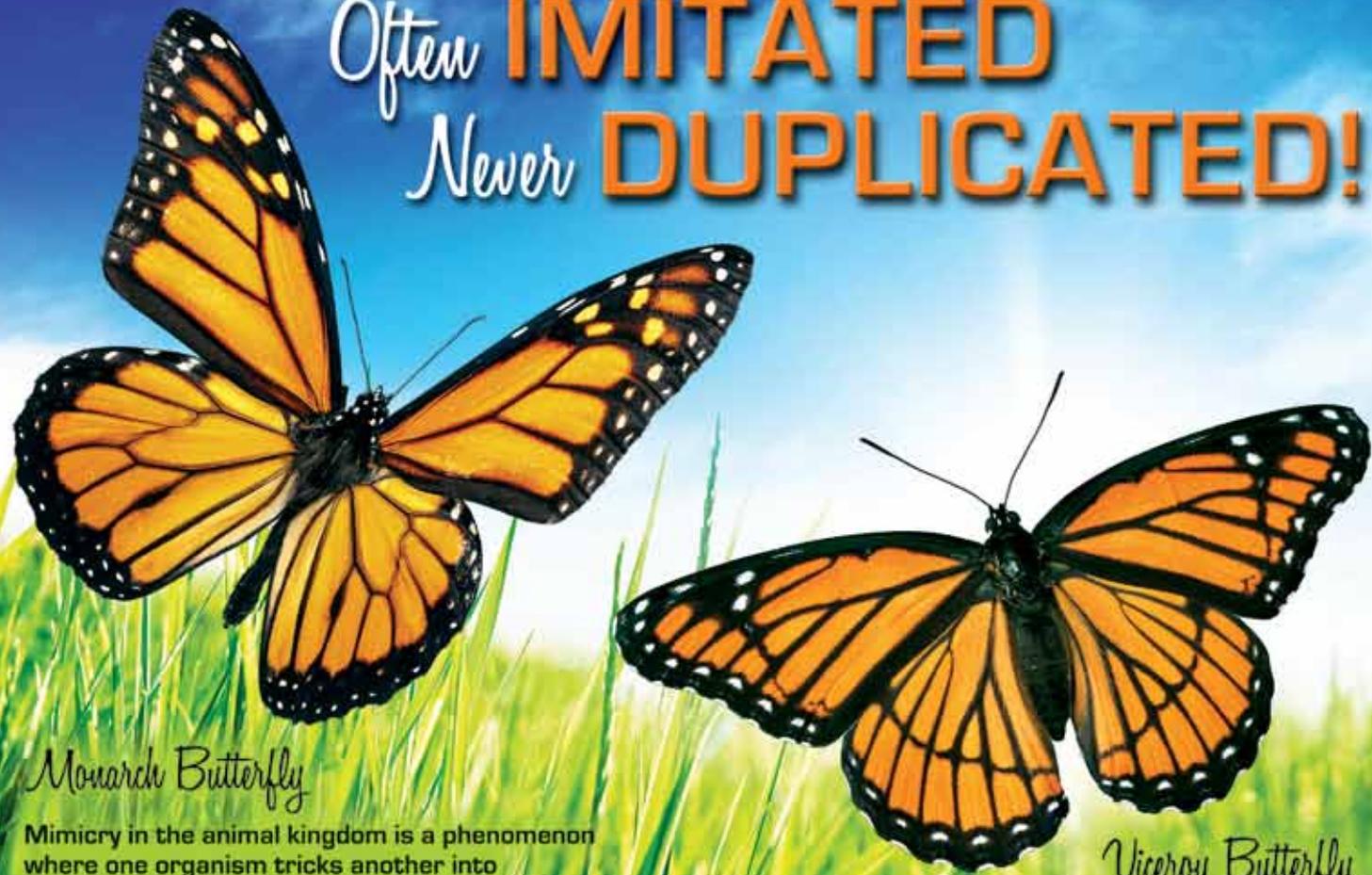
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