

WINTER 2011 | VOL. 16 NO. 1

# northeast carwasher



## **Incredible Stories From the Carwash**

**NRCC, Largest Regional  
Trade Show, “Soars Again”**

**Loving Harvey**

**Immigration Reform Is Not Going Away**

**The Eyes Have It!**

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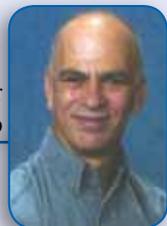
**ON THE COVER**



*An abstract shot of carwash cloth seems a fitting backdrop to Incredible Stories From the Carwash (p. 12).*



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Space reservations and materials for the Spring 2011 issue are due February 1, 2011.

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*Relationships.*

*Forging and then nurturing them can help grow your business and set you apart from your competition. The same holds true in publishing. Despite the glut of social media surrounding us, there is really nothing like sitting down with your friend, the Northeast Carwasher (or other magazines for that matter), and catching up on industry events and issues up and down the East Coast. Being only slightly biased, my readers tell me that they love reading about their friends and competitors, and seeing what is new and innovative that they might be able to implement at their washes. They take the time to read though the issue – the entire issue, I’m told – because they have a relationship with it. And according to MPA, The Association of Magazine Media, magazine readership has actually increased over the past five years; even with the 18-to-34 segment, the segment you would think would only be online or caught up in social media.*

*The explanation for this goes back to “relationships.” Magazines do what the Internet with all its surfing, searching, shopping and blogging cannot. Magazines promote a deeper connection with the reader while engaging him on a more intimate level. Sure, you can read an on-line publication, but it’s not the same. There is a disconnect there; a missing link.*

*The study went on to say that the immersive power of magazines extends to the advertising found within its pages. “Magazines remain the number one medium for driving purchase consideration and intent.” So, for all you advertisers out there, don’t discount the medium as a lost art. Just as diversification in your portfolio is the best approach to long-term wealth, so too is diversification in your media buy. If in doubt, just ask one of my readers!*

**NRCC Success!**

*The power of relationships could be felt at the recent Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) as well. From the Welcoming Reception to the powerful keynote to the quality of education and equipment on the show floor, the show was simply outstanding (see pg. 18). In fact, several people came up to me and congratulated the board and the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (this year’s host) for a job well done, and possibly the best job we have ever done!*

*Everything just seemed to come together and I think the move to the Trump Taj Mahal had a lot to do with it. We listened to our attendees and found a venue that not only better accommodated our trade show, but it better met the needs of our attendees with more cost-effective accommodations and restaurants. And, it provided attendees with a taste of Atlantic City as the hotel sits on the boardwalk.*

*The NRCC is now the largest regional trade show with 60,000 square feet of exhibit space and so much to offer. Make sure you mark your calendar for the 2011 NRCC: Oct. 3-5, again at the Taj. It too is a “relationship” that has been nurtured and grown to a product of which we can all be proud.*



*Suzanne Stansbury*

Suzanne Stansbury  
Editor/Publisher



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## 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 9.9 and a low of -8 percent. Again, the Boston market is suffering more than the other regions. We will track this every quarter with our sharing operators!

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

## Grace For Vets Sees Banner Day!



This Hoffman Car Wash in Queensbury, NY, was one of 1315 locations that participated in the 2010 Grace For Vets program, November 11, according to program manager Bob Ruhe. In total, 552 companies in all 50 states honored our servicemen and women by giving away 91,107 washes, at early reports.

Our spring issue will contain a more accurate accounting of the 2010 event. ■

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

Send your thoughts to:  
 Editor, *Northeast Carwasher*  
 2214 Budd Terrace, Niskayuna, NY 12309  
 OR [mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com](mailto: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!

**The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference** by Malcolm Gladwell.

**Competing for the Future** by Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahalad.

**The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage** by B. Joseph Pine and James H. Gilmore.

If you have read anything notable, please share it with us at [mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com)! ■

## Site on the Mind

Xtreme Clean Auto Spa and Oil Change of South Plainfield, NJ, has a well-organized and eye-catching site. Xtremecleanautospa.com grabs the customer's attention with a bright color scheme and rotating pictures at the top of the screen. It has a user-friendly format, using a large, easy-to-read typeface, and an easy-to-use site map. The prices and services offered are clearly listed.

The photos section of the site gives customers a chance to see the wash and services provided in action. The slide show of photos is well organized and starts up as soon as the user goes to the photo page. The site is easy to navigate and features directions to the wash provided by MapQuest. Xtreme Clean also provides printable coupons to visitors of the site as incentives. **Check it out yourself at [xtremecleanautospa.com](http://xtremecleanautospa.com)**



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**GAUDREAU RELEASES NEW BOOK**

Steve Gaudreau, a carwash industry consultant and trainer based in Fort Myers, FL, has just released "Creating Exceptional Managers in the Car Wash Industry." His latest book focuses on the abilities, skills and knowledge needed to become an exceptional manager of full serve, flex serve, exterior and express carwashes.

For more information visit [stevegaudreauandassociates.com](http://stevegaudreauandassociates.com)

**ICA EXPANDS WATERSAVERS CRITERIA**



The International Carwash Association (ICA) has expanded its WaterSavers program criteria. The changes allow more carwashes to participate in the industry's leading environmental recognition program, joining more than 800 locations already enrolled.

The WaterSavers program promotes the environmental benefits of professional carwashing to consumers and water regulators with the message, "professional carwashing has a positive impact on water quality and water efficiency." That message is delivered locally by participating operators, and nationally by the ICA through coordinated messages and exclusive marketing materials.

Participating WaterSavers locations are also included in an online searchable carwash directory at [icawater-savers.org](http://icawater-savers.org). "Those within our industry already know the environmental benefits of professional car washing," said Eric Wulf, ICA CEO. "But, too many consumers and water authorities are unaware," he said. "Thanks to these new criteria, now more operators can participate in and benefit from our industry's most successful consumer campaign. The more locations that participate, the greater our ability to raise awareness and influence behavior."

The new criteria includes best management practices collected from operators and local carwash certification programs that directly affect water quality and water efficiency. Most significantly, now carwashes which recycle wash water or meet actual water usage levels are able to participate. Further, the criteria for participants now include the use of a backflow protection device as an additional practice for protecting water quality.

The International Carwash Association encourages members to see if they qualify and register their carwash today. WaterSavers participants are able to leverage the credibility and resources of the industry's only national environmental promotion program – and make an impact in consumer and water authority understanding of the benefits of professional car washing.

For more information visit [www.carwash.org](http://www.carwash.org)

**NORTHEAST CARWASHER REVAMPS WEBSITE**



The *Northeast Carwasher* magazine, the industry's only East Coast focused quarterly publication, has revamped its website, according to Editor/Publisher Suzanne Stansbury. "Thanks to the help of Gail Benmoschè of BusinessKeeping in Clifton Park, NY, we were able to reformat the site and make it more user friendly while keeping its personality in tact."

The site also includes links to the East Coast carwash associations and trade shows dates across the country. The *Northeast Carwasher* in its 16th year of publishing. You can visit the site at [northeastcarwasher.com](http://northeastcarwasher.com).

**UNITEC CEO ONE OF BALTIMORE'S TOP FEMALE LEADERS**



*Pam Piro, center.*

Unitec Electronics President & CEO, Pamela Piro, has received a Baltimore SmartCEO 2010 Brava! Women Business Achievement Award. This award recognizes 25 female CEOs making unprecedented strides in business, building stronger communities both financially, philanthropically and most importantly, through leadership.

This year also marks a significant milestone in the history of the Brava! Program – the 2010 awardees will join past recipients to form the Brava 100 – an elite group of the first 100 female entrepreneurs recognized in the program. SmartCEO was proud to acknowledge their success at the July 23 awards event held at the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, MD. The annual Brava! Women Business Achievement awards program serves as an extension of Smart CEO's mission to educate, motivate and inspire decision makers.

Piro was named President of Unitec Electronics in 2006 and has been with the organization since 1996. Unitec Electronics designs and manufactures carwash entry systems and auto cashier equipment for all segments of the carwash industry – petroleum and C-store, self-serve and flex-serve.

Piro is also active in the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA) and serves as its Secretary.

**ICS PARTNERS WITH PERIMETER TO PROVIDE PCI COMPLIANCE SOLUTIONS**



Innovative Control Systems (ICS), Wind Gap, PA, the leader in integrated business solutions for carwash operators, would like to announce a strategic alliance with Perimeter E-Security. This partnership enables carwash operators to achieve sustainable, certified PCI compliance and eliminate unnecessary expense.

The PCI compliance regulation went into effect on July 1, 2010, yet many merchants aren't fully aware of the consequences for not being compliant. Stolen card information that is tracked back to any merchant will trigger a costly investigation, whether or not directly involved. "The PCI compliance issue is a mine field for every merchant who accepts credit cards," said ICS President Kevin Detrick. "The card payment industry has shifted much of the responsibility for credit card security breaches back to the merchant. The compliance certification is complex. It involves a confusing Self Assessments Questionnaire and a number of comprehensive hardware, software and system integrity checks that can only be handled by a certified inspector.

"We did a careful evaluation of those suppliers, and chose Perimeter E-Security," said Detrick.

ICS is in a unique position to apply its expertise because it provides payment kiosk hardware and software as well as a full line of business solutions for the carwash industry.

For additional information about the ICS/Perimeter E-Security PCI Compliance merchant solution, please visit [washnet.com](http://washnet.com)

**WORLD TRAVELERS!**

Mr. Wash, pictured in the background in Essen, Germany, is one of 31 washes owned by Dr. Joesph Enning.



*From left: Ron Slone of Hoffman Car Wash, Dale Claybolt, Bob Fischer and Scott Kascka of Delta Sonic; Tom Hoffman Jr. of Hoffman Car Wash and Ron Benderson of Delta Sonic.*

Touring some of his impressive facilities was the driving force behind these diehard carwashers making the journey to Deutschland. They also enjoyed experiencing Automechanika, the world's leading trade fair for the automotive industry in Frankfurt this past September.

*LOVE this sign from Colonial Carwash in Guilderland, NY. Yup. It's that time again!*



# Incredible Stories From the Carwash

By Alan M. Petrillo

We asked a number of long-time carwash owners and operators about the strangest things that had ever happened in their carwashes. Not surprisingly, they had plenty of colorful tales to tell.

Michael Gardner Jr. of Super Shine Auto Wash, with 10 locations in Massachusetts, probably has the only carwash in the Northeast that became part of a police chase.

One night, the Weymouth, MA, Police Department was in pursuit of a vehicle that turned into a Super Shine wash to avoid capture. When the police followed the vehicle onto the lot, the criminal found the exit road blocked by a truck. Activating his Plan B, the criminal crashed through the exterior tunnel's closed entrance door and smashed it to the ground.

"The driver's alignment was so good, however, that he actually ended up on the conveyor," said Gardner, "and he raced through the carwash tunnel, bending wraparound brush shafts, smashing shocks and damaging equipment. At the exit end, he never slowed down and smashed straight through the exit door onto Main Street in Weymouth."

The police apprehended him a short time later.

## Ghost Driver

At the exterior-only Super Shine in Randolph, MA, customers are always told to put their vehicle in neutral, keep their hands off the steering wheel and their feet off the brake.

"What we never thought we had to tell them was to stay in the driver's seat," Gardner said. "This customer decided it was a good time to go to the back seat of his SUV and start cleaning the windows."

At the end of the wash process, the vehicle exited the tunnel onto a slight downhill grade, and because it was still in neutral, began to pick up speed. The SUV traveled across the parking lot, through a stockade fence and into the building next door to the wash.

"The vehicle actually penetrated the building enough to damage the receptionist's desk, but luckily no one was hurt," Gardner said.

The driver – shaken, but unhurt – was still sitting in the SUV's third row when the vehicle came to a stop.

## The Catapult

Gardner said that one afternoon at Super Shine's North

Weymouth location, a customer got the standard instructions – neutral, hands off the wheel and foot off the brake.

"Somehow, the customer missed the neutral part and with a high idle began to drive through the carwash," Gardner noted. "Very quickly the car reached the exit end of the wash and traveled across the parking lot, through four lanes of busy traffic on Route 3A and into the U-Haul lot on the other side of the street."

The car came to a stop after it collided with a large U-Haul truck.

"When the police arrived, the driver was still in the vehicle, yelling that the carwash had 'catapulted' him from the exit into the truck," Gardner said. "The police responded, 'But sir, even pinned up against this truck, your car is still in drive.'"

## Taking a Little Dip

Gardner said that one day at the Super Shine Granite Street location in Braintree, MA, a customer was not paying attention at the exit end of the tunnel.

"She thought the exit was straight, when it was actually a sharp left," Gardner pointed out. "Her punishment was to travel through a flower bed, through a split-rail



Broad Street Car Wash in Hamilton, NJ, was the recipient of a car without a driver. Apparently, the car's owner was at the neighboring McDonald's and the car mysteriously backs out of its spot and into the wash's dry off area. Luckily, no one was hurt!

fence, and then over a three-foot drop to the roadway."

However, those maneuvers didn't stop the driver. She still crossed two lanes of traffic and drove into a retention pond on the other side of the road. The woman's car was completely in the pond, and actually floating for a few moments before she was rescued, without serious injury. The vehicle probably needed to be washed again, though.

Continued on page 16...

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### Drag City

Gardner said that years ago at the Super Shine in Weymouth, a particular customer always purchased the underbody blast and believed his car would stall if he didn't keep the gas pedal floored during the wash.

"He came in countless times with never a problem until one day at the exit end of the wash he forgot to take his foot off the gas when going from neutral to drive," Gardner said. "The result was a burn-out worthy of NASCAR. He left a straight black patch of rubber from the exit end of the carwash into the stone wall across the street in front of a Honda dealership."

Gardner pointed out that with his new car the man continued to be a Super Shine customer, but at idle speed.

### Right Customer, Wrong Car

Mike Prudente of Summit Car Wash in Summit, NJ, owner of a full-service carwash with a 127-foot conveyor and three detailing bays, once had a customer leave the premises in the wrong car.

"The guy owns an Exxon station down the street and was doing a tune-up on a gray Jeep Cherokee for a customer," Prudente said. "He came in and got it washed and jumped into a gray Jeep Cherokee that came off the line and took off. Then this woman comes over to me and tells me, 'This is not my car.'"

Prudente tracked the missing Jeep Cherokee to the Exxon station, but the owner had left with the vehicle to go to lunch.

"I gave the woman a ride home and told her I'd get her car back and bring it to her," Prudente said. "We switched cars a couple hours later and I delivered it to her, along with some free carwashes."

### Get the Tow Truck

Prudente recalls a fleet customer from a body shop who brought a car in to be washed after doing some work on it.

"While it was in the tunnel, I heard a big bang and the body shop guy turned to me and said, 'I hope that's not my car.'"

But it was. A Summit employee had stepped on the gas instead of the brake and rammed the car into an interior wall of the carwash.

"We had to get a tow truck to get it out of the tunnel," Prudente said, "No one was hurt and the insurance paid, but the body shop guy couldn't deliver the car to his customer."

### Keep the Dog

While waiting for her car to be washed one day, a Summit Car Wash customer tied her dog to a patio railing outside.

"She got in her car when it was done and left, but the dog was still tied to the railing," Prudente said. "We knew the customer, so I put the dog on the side of our building, figuring the woman would be right back."

But the woman didn't come back, so one of Prudente's employees went to a market and bought dog food, then fed and watered the animal. The customer called the carwash

late in the day and asked if she had left her dog there!

"She never realized the dog was at our carwash," Prudente said.

### Too Much Water

Paul Christian of Dr. Huggs Car Wash, an exterior wash with self-service bays in North Tonawanda, NY, said that a number of years ago he left his then 16-year-old son alone at the carwash while he ran out to get parts. Not long after, he got a frantic call from his son to get back to the wash right away.

"An older woman came into the wash and she looked like Paul Jr.'s grandma," Christian said. "She didn't want to ride through the wash, so my son let her out. Another car came up and he sent it into the wash, but the first car rolled down the ramp."

The vehicle rolled across a street and hit a truck towing a boat, which knocked off a nearby hydrant.

"When I got back, the fire department was there and water was spraying everywhere from the broken hydrant," Christian said. "I didn't leave my son alone at the carwash for a long time after that."

### Stand Closer

Christian said that what people do surprises him nearly every day.

"I had one little old lady at the entrance that I was trying to guide in," he said. "She was about 15 feet away from me and not moving forward. Then she started beeping her horn at me. I went to her to see what was wrong and she said, 'Can you stand closer to me, I can't see you.'"

Christian laughs. "That's funny, but it's actually not," he said.

### No One There

Doug Karvelas, owner of the 120-foot tunnel, full-service Broad Street Car Wash in Hamilton, NJ, has a McDonald's nearby in a spot that looks down onto his location.

"A customer goes into McDonald's, and while he's in there his car backs out of its parking spot and comes south down Broad Street into our location where it hits a couple of cars that are drying off," Karvelas said.

The Broad Street staff was mystified because there was no one in the vehicle.

"We looked at the video tape and saw what had happened and how the car came from McDonald's, running backwards, and into our carwash," Karvelas said. "But because the car was moving at a slow pace, it did very little damage to the cars, and no one was hurt." ■

*Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He's the author of the mystery novel, Full Moon, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).*

If you have a colorful carwash story, please share it with us at [mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com) or call 518/280-4767.

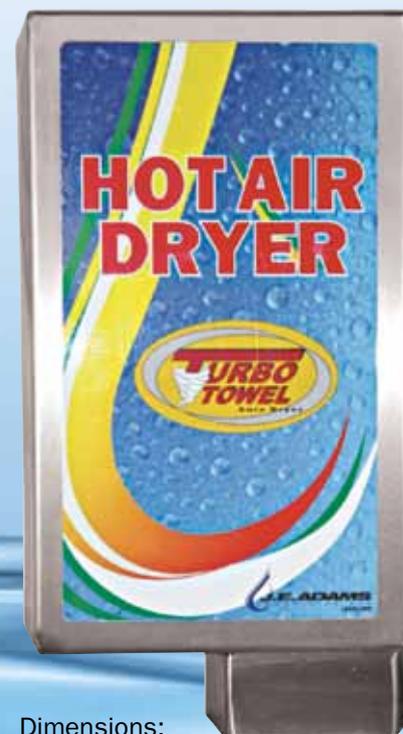
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# 21<sup>st</sup> NRCC, Largest Regional Trade Show, “Soars Again!”

The Northeast Regional Carwash Convention’s (NRCC) move to the renovated Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, Oct. 18-20, was a grand slam, according to Show Facilitator Julie Stanton. “This was our best NRCC in our 21-year history,” said Stanton. “We had a great mix of attendees and vendors and 25 new exhibitors. And with our new venue, I expect that number to grow.”

And grow the show did in 2010! Now at 251 exhibits (10 percent above last year’s number), 60,000 square feet of exhibit space and more than 1450 attendees, it is the largest regional trade show, according to Stanton. “We will continue to grow, present exceptional educational programming and listen to our vendors and their needs, she said. “Just look out for the 2011 show!”

This year’s show theme, “Soaring Again,” echoed throughout the exhibit hall and educational programs, according to Show Chairman Dave DuGoff of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association, this year’s host. “I felt a lot of optimism throughout the show,” he said. “After several difficult years, operators are ready to invest in their businesses again because they have a gut feeling that our industry is solid, the service we provide

has perceived value, and it’s only a matter of getting a few sunny weekends once in awhile.”

Perceived value is also something the NRCC show brings to its attendees, he said. “Our full convention package is \$250 and includes the Welcoming Reception, breakfast and lunch on Tuesday and breakfast on Wednesday as well as the Ritz Carlton program, the seminars, keynote and the show floor,” said DuGoff. It’s a great value, great food and a great deal!”

## We’re All High Rollers

The show was kicked off with a spectacular Welcoming Reception in the exclusive high roller Signature Suite on the 49th floor of the Taj Tower. Sponsored by ICS, this meet and greet included an array of heavy hors d’oeuvres, a bar and much mingling by a group of more than 150. The views of the Atlantic weren’t bad either!

From the show’s lead educational program put on by the Ritz Carlton on legendary customer service to the marketing program featuring examples of how social media can boost volumes, to the panel discussion and slide presentation on how operators are reinvesting in their sites, the vibe was certainly

*Continued on page 20...*



Ritz Carlton presenter, Brian Grubb, put on an outstanding program titled “Legendary Service at the Ritz Carlton.” This program was designed for leaders who want to benchmark and learn about the company’s philosophy and core values, and how to translate them into high levels of employee and customer engagement and loyalty.



Glenmont, NY, operator Dennis O’Shaughnessy, Sr. participates in one of the outstanding educational programs held during the show.

## What Is It About Heroes?

*By Dave DuGoff*

What is it about Heroes? We adore them, want to be near them and somehow share in their glory. We treat our heroes as if they were more than mortal, more than we ourselves could ever be. But that’s not really the point. Heroes are ordinary people who found themselves in extraordinary situations and did their best. Often, heroes are well trained and committed to excellence so that performing at a high level is just executing the ordinary steps that have been practiced many times over.

If we meet heroes and idolize them and feel that we could never be like them, we have missed the lesson that the hero is trying to share. Rather, we should be inspired by their heroic deeds as examples that we, each of us, can aspire to. Their message is clear, “I try to do my job to the best of my ability, and I get there because of my commitment to learning and trying to improve myself.”

The programs at the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) this year were all about doing just that. The Ritz Carlton program on excellence in customer service was a terrific introduction to the subject. Excellence in customer service is not an accident, and not just happenstance. Excellence in customer service is the result of the concerted effort of the owner and management team to set high standards and to lead by example. It is really no more complicated

than the motto, “we are ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen.” When we treat our employees with respect and courtesy, they will treat our customers with respect and courtesy. That’s the beginning of world-class service.

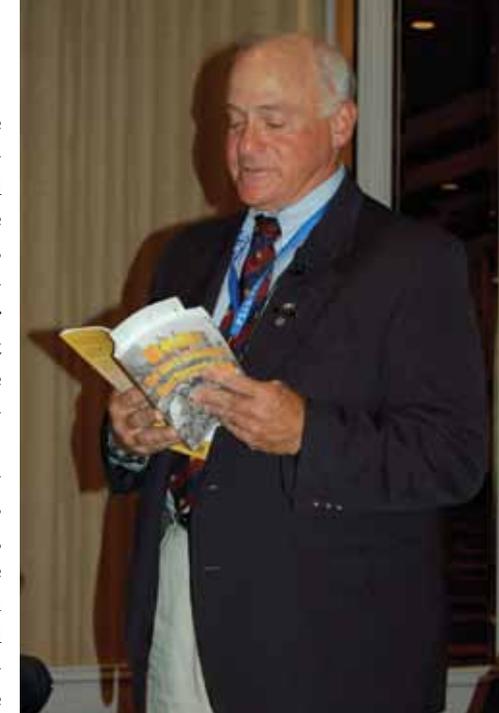
Our keynote speakers, Capt. Scott Shields and Joe Hudak, FDNY, exemplify the principle that ordinary guys (with years of training and dedication) can do extraordinary things. Joe gave up a career following his father and brothers as elevator mechanics to become a FDNY medic. Over two decades later, he is recognized as the best in the world. Scott was on the Hudson

River when a child fell in the water, and his dog, “Bear,” jumped in to rescue the child. And so began a career as a rescue dog that culminated at the World Trade Center. Joe, Scott and Bear share a commitment to service others and a commitment to excellence. We are naturally awed by their accomplishments. We should be equally inspired and moved to make our own commitment to excellence.

When we meet heroes, we can’t help but feel inadequate by comparison. We can’t help but feel that we could never do what they did. When we look at ourselves, or our businesses, we see a long list of things we would need to improve to reach for excellence. That list can be overwhelming and can make us give up before we start. One message from the Ritz Carlton program tells us how to begin. Select three things to work on and only try to work on three things at one time. As you accomplish an item, cross it off the list and bring up another item so that you always have three things to work on. Keep each item focused on a task that you can take on and complete in a reasonable period of time. I think you will find it very satisfying to realize how much change you can implement and how your business can and will improve.

To those who attended the 2010 NRCC, thank you for coming. I hope you had as much fun and learned as much as I did. To those who didn’t make it, you really want to make it next year. ■

Dave DuGoff was the 2010 NRCC Chairperson. He operates College Park Car Wash in Chevy Chase, MD, and is the vice president of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association.



Captain Scott Shields reads from his book, “Bear The Story of America’s Most Decorated Dog.” Bear responded with Shields to the tragedy at the World Trade Centers. He was responsible for finding the remains of many who were killed including beloved FDNY Chief Peter Granci. Bear died nearly a year to the date after 9/11 from injuries sustained during his weeks of rescue.



Joseph Hudak, a FDNY Paramedic Instructor, warmly interacts with Theodore, a search and rescue dog. Hudak and Captain Scott Shields were first responders to the tragedies of 9/11 and Katrina.

NRCC ... continued from page 18.

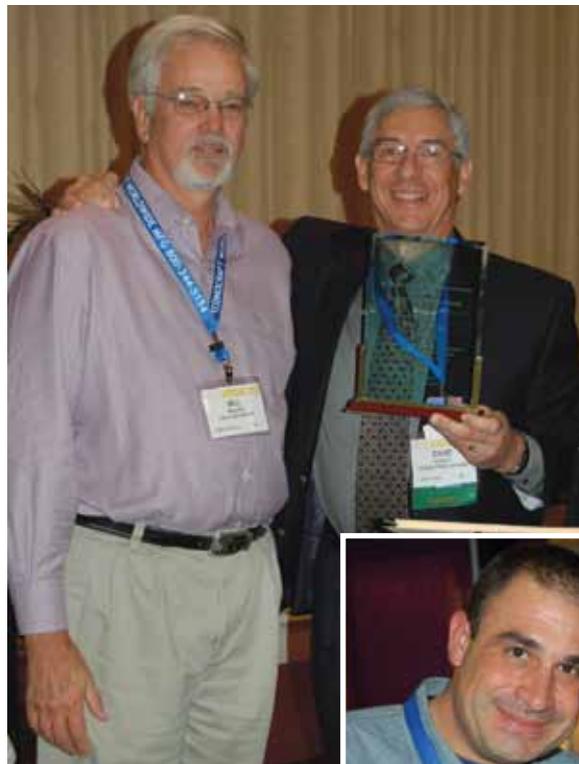
upbeat and the bar set high. "This was the best NRCC I think we've ever attended," said Karen Barbalunga of Barbalunga Enterprises in Pittsfield, MA. "The quality of the educational programming and the huge show floor was very impressive."

Another show highlight was the keynote presented by Captain Scott Shields of Bear Search and Rescue and Joseph Hudak, a FDNY Paramedic Instructor on their experiences at 9/11 and Katrina. The team brought their fearless rescue dog Theodore to the presentation. These gentlemen shared their

experiences on how to overcome adversity through teamwork and leadership; tenets we can certainly use at the wash.

Award Recipients included the MCA's Bill Bascom of Car Lovers in Charlottesville, VA, who received the 2010 Most Distinguished Person Award for his tireless efforts on behalf of the MCA and carwash industry. The show's NRCC Hall of Fame Award was presented to Doug Rieck of Manahawkin Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ. Doug has been instrumental in the evolution of the NRCC and is a true carwash pioneer.

Continued on page 22 ...



Bill Bascom (left) of Car Lovers Carwash in Charlottesville, VA, was presented with the 2010 NRCC Most Distinguished Person Award by show Chairperson Dave DuGoff.



Doug Rieck (left) of Manahawkin Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ, was inducted into the NRCC Hall of Fame by show Chairperson Dave DuGoff.



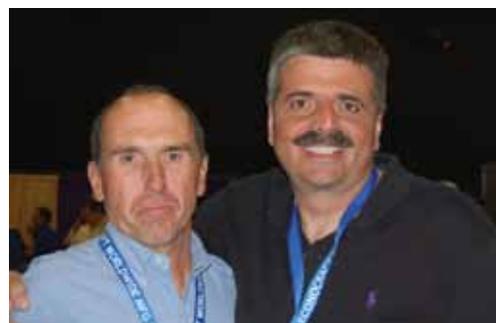
Al Villani and fiancé Karen Giuciano strike a handsome pose.



Connecticut operators Bob Rossini and Tony Setaro.



Gary Stevenson, Stu Levy and Jeff McIntyre catch up on the show floor that marks the return to the Trump Taj Mahal.



New Jersey's Gerry Barton and Amin Khalifa catch up while walking the expansive show floor.

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NRCC ... continued from page 20.

Although there was a little bit of a gamble with moving the event's venue after seven years at the Borgata, the NRCC board is thrilled with their decision. "There were a lot of factors involved in moving the show, but we wanted a more cost-effective venue for our attendees and vendors, and we wanted all of our vendors to be on the same show floor," said Suzanne Stansbury, NRCC board member. "We were able to accomplish these things by moving back to the Taj and

providing our attendees with more dining options and the ability to leave the hotel without hailing a cab. We couldn't be happier with the move and look forward to more growth, innovation and top-notch education in 2011."

The 2011 NRCC is October 3-5 at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. The New England Carwash Association is the host. For more information visit [nrccshow.com](http://nrccshow.com) or call 800/868-8590.



The 2010 NRCC show floor included 60,000 square feet of exhibit space and 25 more vendors than the 2009 show.

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# Unions Still Pressing to Organize Washes in CA; Ramifications Will Be Felt on East Coast

By Alan M. Petrillo

**D**espite a lack of progress over a two-year period, a union coalition continues its attempts to organize workers in California carwashes.

The Carwash Workers Organizing Committee (CWOC), sponsored by the United Steelworkers and espoused by the AFL-CIO and numerous other unions, has been trying to organize carwash workers, particularly in the Los Angeles area, without success.

Ross Hutchings, executive director of the Western Carwash Association (WCA), said the group's "efforts so far have tried to go directly to the carwashes and they have not gotten anywhere," so CWOC has changed its tactics.

"This summer they went to the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), one of the largest school districts in the country, and convinced the liberal school board not to do any fleet business with any carwash that does not accept its Clean agreement," Hutchings said.

Clean stands for Community-Labor-Environmental Action Network and its agreement have at least three provisions the WCA believes are illegal, according to Hutchings.

"I spoke with Monica Garcia, the school board president, before the vote and told her about those provisions, but they passed the measure anyway," Hutchings said. "Ms. Garcia touted the measure as a good move for the working class."

Hutchings said the result of LAUSD's resolution has been that the district has stopped using several carwashes, including one that had been washing cars for the district for 40 years.

"Now those carwashes are having to lay off people because they have fewer fleets to wash," he said.

Hutchings noted that the three provisions in the CWOC's Clean agreement that the WCA's attorney believes are illegal include:

- ❖ The agreement, once signed, would obligate any future owner of the carwash to abide by it

- ❖ The agreement would allow unions to come onto a carwash's property and talk to workers whenever they wanted and

- ❖ The agreement would allow an outside party to inspect the carwash's financial records if an employee made a complaint about pay.

Sander Romick, a carwash operator and the WCA's legislative committee chair, said that while the CWOC is targeting full-service washes, all the WCA's full-service, self-service and express washes, along with vendors, will feel the backlash.

"The CWOC is trying to pick off carwashes one by one," Romick said. "So far, to the best of my knowledge, no carwash has signed the CWOC's Clean agreement."

Hutchings pointed out that the WCA believes the union is changing its focus of attention.

"We think the CWOC will begin to approach utility districts and get them to agree to take fleet business away from carwashes unless the carwash signs the Clean agreement," Hutchings said. "The other tactic they are using is they stand on the sidewalks outside the carwash and hand out water bottles with the labels printed in Spanish. The wording on the labels reads that if you're not being treated fairly, call this number and we'll help you."

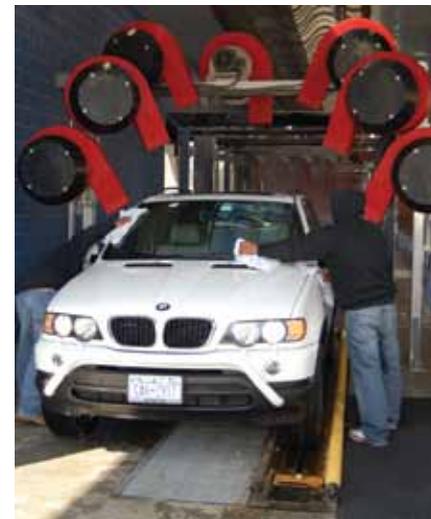
While several carwashes in the Los Angeles area and others around the state have been cited by California's Department of Labor Standards and Enforcement for violations of the state's Unfair Competition Law and

other statutes, Hutchings noted very few have been WCA members.

"The DLSE does sweeps a couple of times a year of carwashes to be sure they have the proper permits, are being inspected and aren't violating any labor rules," Hutchings said. "They check to be sure employees are paid proper wages, get proper breaks and they also check for illegal immigrants."

Hutchings pointed out that the department conducts such sweeps through all types of businesses, including restaurants and garment factories.

What would be the result of unionization of carwashes?



*It's only a matter of time before East Coast carwashes, like this beautiful VIP Wash & Lube facility on Staten Island, NY, are approached by union organizers.*

Hutchings believes prices for carwashes would increase for customers.

"In addition, I think you'd see full-service carwashes go to flex-serve or self-service (model) so they could eliminate as many employees as they can," Hutchings added. ■

*Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He's the author of the mystery novel, Full Moon, available at www.amazon.com.*



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## Let the Carwash Buyer Beware!

By Tim Youngpeter

With my many years consulting in the development, design and construction of car care industry sites, I have witnessed on many occasions projects that should never have been built. We have all heard the horror stories of families investing their retirement into a carwash and trusting so-called experts with decisions regarding site selection, building design, construction and equipment. In the end, the family ends up with a carwash that is in a bad location, poorly designed and horribly over budget.

In the 30 plus years I have been in this industry, I have never developed, nor seen the "perfect carwash" with respect to location. I believe location is everything in relation to the success of your business. So often I have received calls from owners in distress, deep into a project that should not have been conceived, let alone built. If I were to point a finger at the primary culprits it would be the untrained (or unethical) real estate agent, architect and/or equipment manufacturer's rep.

Unfortunately, many of my clients have signed on for consulting help well into their project. I have found that too often the land for the carwash was either already owned by my client, or their "friend" the local real estate agent sold them down the road with a site that had poor access, traffic flow and major zoning issues.

Site selection, being the most critical part of your success, should never be left to someone inexperienced in the carwash industry. Beyond the basic demographics, traffic counts, access, etc., you need an expert to look at the small points that may add or detract from the true viability of your site.

Another culprit is the architect. Having a degree in architecture myself, I know that a carwash is a complicated structure to design. It requires that you have experience and knowledge of the business and equipment before even attempting a design. Unless the architect has been involved with four or five successful carwash designs, I would be leery of using him/her. Believe me, it will cost you in the long run! Most mid- to large-sized cities will generally have a few architectural firms that have the experience you need.

My third area of caution is with the carwash equipment manufacturers. Although certainly not always the case, I have seen reps give the thumbs up on a bad site simply to get the sale. Again, buyers beware!

In closing, my recommendation is to take your time and check references before making any final decisions. Hire an expert in the carwash industry who is independent of all manufacturers and has no bias. This individual can help to ensure every detail is looked at before closing on your land. Remember, if things sound too good to be true, they probably are. Listen to your gut when undertaking a wash purchase but also listen to the experts!



Tim Youngpeter

Tim Youngpeter is the President of National Auto Care Consultants, a Denver, CO, based consulting group. You can reach Tim at 303/653-6939 or [tim@nationalautocar-consultants.com](mailto:tim@nationalautocar-consultants.com).

## Know the Law: Immigration Reform Is Not Going Away!

By Scott Green

Immigration reform has been a frontline political and legal issue in recent years, and we can expect it to continue to grab headlines for years to come. According to the PEW Research Report from September 1, there were an estimated 7.8 million unauthorized workers in the labor force in 2009. Though the political process is slow to take decisive action, employers in at-risk industries, such as hospitality, construction and the carwash industry, should be mindful of laws already on the books that prohibit the employment of unauthorized workers. The federal government, through the Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is currently stepping up enforcement through audits and on-site inspections. Such ICE investigations are often initiated without warning and can cause severe disruption to any employer's normal business activities.

The Immigration and Reform Act of 1986 (IRCA) is the key federal statute currently on the books that prohibits the employment of workers who are not authorized to perform work in the United States. Under IRCA, employers must complete and retain an I-9 Form (available online for download) for each individual they hire for employment in the United States, regardless of whether the worker is a US citizen or foreign national. This process requires employers to review and

record each employee's identity and employment eligibility documents. Failure to comply with I-9 requirements may result in sizeable fines and/or charges of criminal misconduct.

The increase in I-9 inspections is the result of the Obama Administration's strategy to reduce the demand for illegal immigrant employment and protect employment opportunities for the nation's lawful workforce. Under this strategy, ICE is focusing its resources on worksite audits and investigations. In the past year, ICE has leveled a record number of civil and criminal penalties against employers who violate immigration laws related to the I-9 process. Employers should ensure that their immigration compliance policies, I-9 preparation/retention processes and I-9 records, are up to date in order to make sure they are in compliance with the law and to avoid liability. In the event of an ICE audit or on-site inspection, employers should contact experienced employment counsel immediately.



Scott Green

Scott Green is an Associate in Rivkin Radler LLP's Employment & Labor and Litigation & Appeals Practice Groups. He can be reached at 516/357-3139 or [scott.green@rivkin.com](mailto:scott.green@rivkin.com).

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# Loving Harvey

By JoAnna Brandi

I'm angry at Harvey. I don't feel comfortable saying who Harvey is since I interact with him frequently and our relationship is important to the success of my business. I've tried expressing my feelings, and as good as I am at that, it doesn't seem to make a difference. You could say that Harvey is not living up to my expectations of him and that is making me angry.

In every relationship there are expectations, whether they are stated out loud or not. There are some expectations that are so basic that we shouldn't need to express them – for instance, if two people are in a relationship with each other and one calls the other and requests a return call, it's reasonable to expect the other will return a phone call.

There are other expectations that are so critical that if we don't express them, the relationship is in danger of failing.

Clear communication of expectations is one of the most underutilized skills in both business and personal relationships – and that's a pity. When we don't communicate our expectations, or take the time to learn what others expect, we're creating a framework for failure. In business, it's a framework comprised of missed opportunities, a build-up of negative feelings like disappointment, frustration and betrayal, and an abundance of assumptions as well as needless energy drains.

Over time, unmet expectations start to feel like unmet needs, magnifying the negative thoughts and feelings that prevent people from "showing up" and contributing 100 percent of themselves to a relationship. Resentment and anger – feelings that are harmful to the body in the same ways that stress is, can get bottled up and either explode in inappropriate moments or silently erode relationships.

Not surprisingly, one of the top reasons people fail on the job is that they don't know what's expected of them. When an employee "fails on the job" it affects everyone – customers and coworkers alike.

When you're open and forthright about what you expect, and when you encourage your employees and customers to be equally straightforward, you're more likely to get the results you desire.

People live up – or down to your expectations of them. When it comes to expectations, it's as important for managers to "talk the walk" as it is for them to "walk the talk." "Talking your walk" is clearly communicating to people what it is they have to do, and making sure they understand why they have to do it. It's also either giving them a clear picture of what their accomplishments and/or results will look like when they're performed with excellence, or, inviting them to co-create that vision with you.

We all know expectations change with time – we expect more from a seven year old than we do from a three year old. We expect more from a seasoned professional than from a "newbie," so it's important we become aware of what our expectations are and that we communicate what's changed.

Seven percent of communication comes from words, 38 percent comes from tone of voice and 55 percent from body language. What we don't know for sure is how much of our thoughts and feelings are communicated on a subconscious level.

Bruce Lipton, author of "Biology of Belief" tells us that our subconscious mind is over a million times more powerful than our conscious mind, and that most of the processing that goes on – 95 percent – is going on at that subconscious level. I've got to believe that we also communicate powerfully at that level.

When we expect someone to succeed they usually do. When we don't believe they can, they usually don't – and no matter what we say (7 percent) about it, it's the smallest part of the communication.

So here's my coaching challenge to you – begin to think about the people you are in a relationship with, and what you expect of them. Then ask yourself whether or not you expect them to succeed – or fail. Be honest.

Next, think about what you are projecting to them subconsciously – the positive, supportive vibrations necessary to succeed – or the negative ("you'll never amount to anything") defeating, diminishing feelings that come from disappointment, frustration and anger.

I've realized I'm very angry at Harvey and so at a subconscious level I am sending negative emotion his way – and pretty consistently. Since I'm not in a situation I can walk away from, I'm going to issue myself the same challenge I issue to you. I am going to examine my expectations, express them clearly AND I am going to think about the most positive aspects of the situation possible so I can send more positive, supportive feelings his way.

I'm going to look for things to love.

There are two kinds of emotions – positive and negative. Positive emotions are based on love, and negative emotions based on fear. Positive emotions strengthen us and negative emotions weaken us. It's pretty simple.

We are powerful transmitters of emotions – you can increase your chances of success in any relationship when you expand the capacity for the experience of positive, emotion. So today, as I think about my own situation – not dissimilar to customer situations clients tell me about all the time – I am going to find something to love. Okay, well, at least like – and project – as best I can. The "good vibes."

Meantime, you try it on your end and let me know how it works for you. And get that book – "The Biology of Belief." It will really make you look at life differently. Read more here: [www.bruce-lipton.com](http://www.bruce-lipton.com)

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](mailto:Joanna@customercarecoach.com) or visit [www.ReturnOnHappiness.com](http://www.ReturnOnHappiness.com).



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# Terry, Waffle, Suede or Non-Woven Microfiber: It's Your Choice

By Valerie Sweeney

Every once in a while I like to touch upon the most frequently asked questions by our carwash customers regarding towels and towel use. Lately, there has been an influx of questions about the difference between styles of microfibers.

**Q: I'm confused about the different styles of microfiber out there. What's the difference?**

A. Microfiber has existed for a while now, so many different styles of the cloth have emerged. The long and short of it is that you usually can't go wrong with microfiber, no matter what style you choose. In fact, as you will see below that both terry and waffle weave styles work for the same applications.

## Terry Microfiber

Terry Microfiber is the most popular type of microfiber for the carwash industry. Usually, when someone mentions microfiber they are typically referring to the terry style. It has a high, soft pile and while it is much different than a terry towel, it is the closest style to a traditional towel. Terry microfiber is versatile and can be used in all applications.

Large terry style microfiber, like 16" x 27", is often used as a body towel. Smaller microfiber such as 14" x 14" or 16" x 16", are ideal for cleaning windows, or for use in the detail shop. This type of microfiber has the most options of size, color and thickness.

## Waffle Weave Microfiber

Waffle weave microfiber has a dimpled "waffle" look. Many carwashes swear by waffle weave microfibers on glass, while others feel that they work the same as the terry style. It just depends on your personal preference. The waffle weave also can feel more bulky in the hand, which some people like. This style of microfiber can trap a lot of water because of the ridges, so it also makes a great general towel.

## Suede Microfiber

Suede is the smoothest type (lowest pile) of microfiber out there, but the least popular in the carwash industry. Suede is usually the type that you will find to clean the glass on your copier machine, your new Ray-Ban sunglasses, your flat screen television or your iPad. Like other microfiber cloths, they do work really well on windows, glass and dashboards.

## Non-Woven Microfiber

The newest type of microfiber has been marketed by some as a disposable microfiber, but can be rewashed and

reused many times. This microfiber is very inexpensive, and is just beginning to emerge in the carwash industry. Like the other styles of microfiber, it works really well on glass, mirrors, detailing, etc. It is even thinner than traditional microfiber so it can get into even tighter spaces.

Since it is so lightweight, many towels can be washed together at the same time, and can dry even that much quicker. Non-woven microfiber can also be imprinted, which makes it an affordable promotional giveaway item for either a grand opening or special event.

**Q: Aren't microfiber towels expensive?**

A: They used to be relatively expensive when compared to other towels, but that is not the case anymore. Microfibers have come way down in price over the years, making them in many instances more affordable than terry towels. The price of cotton is still on the rise, so traditional cotton terry towels are seeing price increases, while microfiber, made of polyester and nylon, remain untouched.



Valerie Sweeney

Valerie Sweeney is a towel consultant with ERC Wiping Products. You can reach her at 800/225-8473 or at [ercwipe.com](http://ercwipe.com).

If you have a towel question for Valerie, email her at: [ercwipe.com](mailto:ercwipe.com)



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*Dear Venus and Mars,  
Do you sense that the consumer is changing his/her  
spending habits at the wash?*



Linda Feriod

**Venus Says**

A few weeks ago, I attended the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) at the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, NJ, and the spending habits of the consumer was a hot topic. My father always felt that the self-service business was the best carwash business to be in during tough times. I remember watching two major companies in our area close back in the '80s. One was the Fairless Steel Mill and many small businesses went out of business because they were the largest employer in the area. Our self-service business survived and in fact grew to 17 self-service bays, and our thought was that consumers still wanted to have pride in their automobiles and for just a few quarters they could spend some time enjoying washing their car. Of course, at that time, I think a self-service cycle was 75 cents or \$1.

Talking to operators who have self-serve, exterior and full-serve locations today it seems to be a very different story. The consensus is that consumers are waiting longer in between washes, but when they are ready to put their hard-earned money up to buy a wash, they want the best. They are willing to pay for a full-service wash so both the interior and exterior are clean. I am not sure exactly why this is now occurring, but my guess is time. Even though we are all watching our pennies, we seem to be overscheduling our lives. The days of a relaxing day driving to the carwash and spending an hour washing, vacuuming and cleaning your windows doesn't exist anymore. I remember having regulars every Saturday morning coming to the self serve. I could almost set my watch by them. Now, we overschedule our lives so that even if our car is dirty and we are willing to spend the money for a carwash, we may not have the time. I know I can't remember the last time I felt I had an hour to spend to clean my car. I love the convenience of a full-service carwash. Time is money and at the current time consumers don't seem to have enough of either. ■

**Mars Says**

Over the past three or four years there is no question that the carwash industry has been affected by the state of the economy. I have heard of wash volumes that were down as much as 40 percent from were they were four years ago. That is a sure sign that consumers have changed their spending habits.

I think though, at this point our nation has been struggling for so long now that most consumers have already changed their spending habits. The customer who was washing his car once a week in 2006 has already changed to a once or twice per month customer for a couple of years now. Most people just don't have enough disposable income to commit to weekly washes anymore. Our job as business owners is to figure out new ways to get to where we used to be. Or, at least close to it.

Now, more than ever, consumers are looking for the best value they can find. By best value I don't mean the cheapest, although there will always be that consumer. Consumers want bang for their buck. They want us to exceed their expectations, but at a fair price. People do not want to waste their money and now more than ever they will be reluctant to give you a second chance.

In addition, creative marketing can certainly help keep customers coming and bring in new ones. Promotions and advertisements that used to work may need to be adjusted now.

Try different things and check out what other businesses are doing. Social media seems to be a big part of some people's every day lives now.

The bottom line is that consumers have changed their spending habits. So, if you find that your business is not performing at the level you think it should, consider changing some of the business habits you have gotten used to. ■



Paul Vallario

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*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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# Frame of Mind: Supporting Your Best Salesperson, Your Customer

By Ray Justice

Know your customer – know yourself – know your support system.

A lesson I learned years ago while operating our carwash and dry cleaning business is the importance of getting to know my customers. Some of the best and most loyal customers we had started out as a problem or an upset. When the situation was taken care of and handled in a professional and courteous way, their appreciation was shown by their continued use of our business. Many even became our Secret Shoppers, helping us to become an even better business.

In the carwash business this is often more difficult than in other businesses as there often is very little face-to-face customer contact until there is a problem.

Obviously, everything at our locations has to be working up to snuff. This means a clean facility, with easy-to-read and understand signage and instructions as well as really great service. Basically, it comes down to having a good (or exceptional) experience along with the expected outcome. The service, that the customer came to spend their money on, such as a clean car, is automatically assumed to be good.

The uncertainty with each encounter is often the communication, or lack thereof, between management and the customer. This situation, even when repeated between the same people, will be somewhat different each time depending on the frame of mind, attitude or energy of each.

The wonderful book, "The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz covers this nicely.

**Here are his Four Agreements along with the description of each.**

1. **Be impeccable with your word** – meaning to speak with integrity and only say what you mean. Avoid using words to speak against yourself or others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.
2. **Don't take anything personally** – nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering.
3. **Don't make assumptions** – find the courage to ask questions and express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama. With just this one agreement you can completely transform your life.
4. **Always do your best** – your best is going to change from moment to moment, it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to when you are sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret.

The last agreement is what we are discussing here although they are all very important. Your best and the customers best will vary from day to day or actually moment to moment. Just knowing this can help with our awareness of the situation.

Everyone knows to be aware of tech support when electronics or software is involved. It is vital for companies to maintain their customer base by servicing and updating what they sell. In the carwash business, the same principles apply but we may not be as aware of how important customer support is. We have a service instead of a product meaning we have to support our equipment, our supplies, our staff and also support our customers so they not only have a good buying experience and are left with a favorable opinion of our business in general, one that lasts (reputation).

Here are four more points to go along with The Four Agreements to help you stay connected and customers feeling supported.

#### ✓ Location Resources

- Where are you meeting?
- What is the environment, noise and temperature?
- What distractions may there be – noise, odors?

#### ✓ Co-workers and Associates

- What help do you have when needed and from who?
- What level of responsibility and decision-making do you actually have?
- Who is available right now?

#### ✓ Natural Attitudes

- Are you friendly and nice?
- Are you flexible?
- What is the level of your personal energy?
- Are you really listening?

#### ✓ Interest and Connection

- Why are you and the customer where you are right now?
- What do you want to have happen? For you? For the customer?
- How soon can you make something happen?

*Continued on page 37...*

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# Time to Grab Onto Your Low-Hanging Fruit

By Doug Rieck

There was a lot happening at the 2010 Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC). At long last the return to the Trump Taj Mahal was reality and a major show floor space expansion occurred. Finally, all exhibitors were in the same room. A return to the boardwalk and an in-town location proved to be just what the doctor ordered, you might say. Staying at the Taj's world-class Chairman Tower, and the great meeting room facilities, only added to the allure. Of course, the opening night reception on the 49th floor in the high roller Signature Club overlooking the ocean was a fitting tribute to the rebirth of the largest regional trade show.

I am not in the market for any equipment at the moment, but what I am in the market for is ideas. There were plenty floating around the 2010 NRCC. The educational sessions were awesome. In fact, I was told by more than one attendee that they were the best they have ever attended. I was the moderator of the Social Media marketing seminar and was more than impressed with the content and panelists. At my conveyor wash we have used Facebook for the past year, but there is so much more than that available to market your business. The effectiveness and reach of Email marketing is impressive, and I was completely surprised at the Groupon concept. And, of course, Google Places. There is so much going on and social media marketing is where the action is. Never mind radio or cable. Don't miss out on this great media option(s).

On Wednesday, the New York State Car Wash Association put on a seminar about reinvesting in your wash. It was great and complete with actual slides of what each operator had done at his wash! Like most of us, I have been too concerned with day-to-day washing and not looking enough to the future. You can't bury your head in the sand, however. You have to start planning and doing things now.

At one of the sessions I heard one panelist refer to getting the low hanging fruit and that served as a great reminder of what we can do. Most of us are budget constrained these days and are looking for projects and other ways to improve our operations, but we don't want to spend a lot to accomplish that goal. As I said before, join the club. The good news is that now is the time to go after the low hanging fruit, the easy stuff that offers a fast reward for not much money.

Every carwash has this kind of stuff just hanging in front of us, made invisible by being so visible. One example might be your menus and signage. Getting an extra 20 cents a car adds up pretty fast. A personal example is at my conveyor wash where I cleaned up my backroom rinse plumbing, tubing and electrical. The total project cost about \$250 for 50 feet of 3/4 polybraid, fittings and parts. The most expensive part was having a local welder custom fabricate two aluminum mounting arms for my rain arch. The result is much

improved rinse pressure, better system reliability and an easy path to just drop in Dosatrons when I'm ready to spend money. Low hanging fruit.

## Give Back While Marketing Your Wash

Why not look for ways to give back to your community while promoting yourself at the same time? Every year, Magic Wash gives out more than 500 free carwashes to the LBI Striped Bass Derby. Every participant gets a free carwash ticket. Are all used? Never, but we get great public relations from the local Chamber of Commerce which runs the three-month-long Fishing contest. It started with the idea being to wash the salt off of all the Beach Buggies that are used to fish on the beach in the winter.

## Stop Procrastinating!

I admit that at times I can procrastinate with the best of them. Not all the time, but the editor of this publication can verify that sometimes I blow past the deadline. Often, it is just a case of finding the time. It's not something to be happy about, but it does happen when you run three carwashes, have two young children and a wife, and all of the normal clutter of life. How does this apply to carwashing? Simple. Look around your carwash. All of us have "stuff" that we just have not gotten around to doing. Two examples: For one wash I ordered a sign that reads "Automatic Carwash" for the entrance. This sign has been sitting since July waiting for me to install it. Dumb.

At another self-service wash, I have been having intermittent problems with a low-pressure bay service since August. I replaced the flowjet pump today and it took me just a half hour. The flowjet pump was even sitting on the shelf as a spare. Again, dumb. I know that I am not alone in having neglected things at a carwash. In simple terms, just do it and stop delaying.

The base criteria for a carwash is to deliver clean, dry shiny cars at the exit, but I believe that today's customer is much more demanding. In every retail business customers are courted and offered deals and superior customer service. We as carwashes are competing for scarce spending dollars from our customers. Customers have other priorities for their spending and if we are not doing our best, the next wash may get deferred because the wash experience was not up to par. In more normal times, we compete with other carwashes, the home driveway washer and the weather. Now, we have to compete for the dollars. It makes sense.

The wash experience now becomes even more important. I attended the Ritz Carlton seminar on customer service at the NRCC and I was surprised to learn that the number one customer criteria is appearance. We as businesses are judged daily on our appearance and that of our employees.

Does the crew have on clean uniforms, is the grass cut, and are the grounds clean? Is the entrance to the wash attractive, the list goes on and on. First impressions matter – a lot.

## Let It Snow, But Not Too Much!

Hopefully, by the time this column is read snow will have fallen over most of the Northeast. Certainly, the temperatures will be considerably lower and the outside hoses at all homes will have been turned off. I will have lowered the iceater into the bay by my dock. I have the weep systems ready by Thanksgiving and the floor heat on automatic by December 1. I finish up preventive maintenance work in the bays by then and hopefully am ready for the cold and the winter wash season. I have been wishing for a snowy winter for years here at the Jersey shore. Unfortunately, last year I got my wish. Bad mistake. Too much snow and too many storms. It wasn't really that cold, though.

The weather patterns have shifted and the long-range forecasts are calling for a La Niña winter pattern. This is considerably different from the El Niño influenced winter of last year. We will see. There is no bigger optimist than a carwasher at the start of winter. Have a great winter washing season!



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.*

## Insights with Rayj ... continued from page 34.

Think in terms of how can this be fair to all.

We are dealing with people and people are sensitive, that also includes us.

In summary, support your customers and they will support you by being your best advertisement. Face time with your customers has always been important and even more so in today's world with all of its digital connections. People telling people is the mission. They will tell the really good and the really bad things that happened to them.

Customers who you have a problem with often become very loyal in the future if you stayed with them enough to help them with the current situation. But remember, everyday is different. Do your best everyday and you will be rewarded.



Ray Justice

*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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## 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!**

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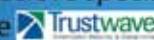
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# The Eyes Have It!

By Perry Powell

A lack of emphasis on visual issues, when designing a commercial on-premise sign, can lead to ineffective signage that costs businesses profits everyday! Signs are primarily silent communicators. They must connect with the eyes of passing motorists to impact the revenues of any business.

Few of the commercial business signs, which are designed and purchased annually, consider the basic visual issues that are addressed, by the federal highway administration, when placing signs along the interstate highway system.

Sign professionals often consider the sign to be a work of art. This perception can lead sign companies to develop signs that may be both beautiful and ineffective. Since most business owners would rather attract spending consumers than entertain the art-loving public, a different approach is necessary.

A newly-installed sign may be incorrectly evaluated, from an incorrect perspective. One may look at a nice computer-generated rendering of a proposed sign or stand across the street from a newly installed sign and think that the sign is beautiful and will be effective. This is not the way a driver traveling five miles per hour faster than the legal speed limit, while practicing conflict resolution on a cell phone, and defensive driving, sees and comprehends the sign.

The reality of the street is chaos. The sign must cut through the environment of the street, and speak to the driver. Drivers are being challenged by every distraction imaginable. Scientific research is available which demonstrates how to overcome these visual challenges.

The Federal Highway Administration is able to communicate effectively with motorists and so must every business owner. This can only be accomplished through careful and thoughtful design and planning.

An effective visual acuity device or sign is one that is designed to target the consumer's eyes in the chaotic street environment. To do this one must consider that the consumer's physical eye is the intended target of the sign. Armed with this knowledge, a sign can be developed that will target the consumer's brain through the vehicle of the eyes.

If the consumer's brain is the intended receiver of our commercial messages, and the eyes are the wireless remote to the brain, then we need to be sure that the reception at the eyes is good. In order to make this visual connection, we need to understand how the vision of the consumer impacts communication.

The Federal Highway Administration uses an 1100-page manual called the "Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices" or MUTCD. This manual governs the use of street signs in all street and highway conditions. The adoption of and compliance with the MUTCD is a must for any govern-

ment entity that wishes to take part in federal highway funds.

The MUTCD is a peer-reviewed document that is maintained by the National Academies of Sciences Transportation Research Board. It is the culmination of the contributions of research conducted by academics, scientist and highway traffic safety engineers. The purpose of this document is to make "safe way finding" the norm in highway travel.

The MUTCD is a visual-based document that makes its underlying assumptions based on the visual ability of the driver. Much can be learned from this document that translates to the on-premise or commercial sign. Other studies relate directly to the on-premise sign and show the impact of differing designs and situations on the driving public.

Factors when designing a sign to target motorists are clean, legible graphics; correct negative spacing; readable typefaces; landscape; topography; obstructions and speed of traffic.

A correctly-designed sign must be site specific. Only by looking at all the factors that impact the speaker (sign) and the hearer (motorist) can we be sure that effective communication will occur. Introducing science, to gain a competitive advantage, is not only possible but is a sound business practice regularly employed by successful chain and franchise companies.

At the end of the day one may ask, why bother? Simple. According to statistics, 25 percent of motorists, who bothered to get a reservation, will not turn around and come back to a motel if they miss it on the first pass. According to one franchise real estate consultant, 90 percent of women will not return to a missed site.

There are other reasons to bother, too. According to a survey by the University of San Diego, which studied 187 businesses and their signs, adding a pole sign will add, on average, over 15 percent to the business revenues. A correctly-designed sign should get even greater returns.

A review of your current sign program may lead to a significant increase in the revenues of your business. Business owners, wishing to maximize the effectiveness of their site and sign, need to take stock of their sign regularly to be sure the sign is continuing to represent them well with passing consumers. ■

*Perry Powell is a Commercial Sign, Marketing and Image Consultant. He 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, perry@perrypowell.com or www.perrypowell.com*



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Keith Lutz

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Carwash Association of Pennsylvania (CAP) had an active 2010. We had a great Table Top Show & Dinner at the Hollywood Casinos in May that was well attended. Most recently, we hosted our Annual Golf Outing and picnic in October that was a great time for all attendees. We've had increased activity on our website (pacarwash.org) and we recently launched a page on Facebook. I'd like to thank everyone who has been active and supported the association in 2010. The more our members see us as a resource the more beneficial we can be for the carwash industry in Pennsylvania.

At our September board meeting, we discussed a host of new ideas for the association. One of those ideas was the posting of industry resources on the association website. We have posted some of these resources and are working on document formatting to post additional ones. In the interim, we encourage you to contact our office at 717/502-1909 so additional resources can be emailed to you. Another benefit we have been working on for a while has been an association-sponsored carwash fundraising program. There are many angles a program such as this can take, and we discussed an array of different options. Dawn Keefer, our executive director, has written an article about this subject in the fall edition of the CAP newsletter, and she is asking members for feedback. Please take the time to review the article and contact the CAP office with your input.

In conclusion, the board agreed to start a "member spotlight" that will appear in each edition of our industry newsletter. If you would like to participate in this please contact the CAP office.

As a board it is our goal to provide members with a network of industry experts and resources so operators are not reinventing the wheel. Just because something is new to you and your business it doesn't mean it is for everyone else in the industry. Chances are other operators and/or vendors have the experience so why not reach out to your association for contacts and guidance? We exist for members and the betterment of the industry. When a fellow operator and business succeeds, the industry succeeds and we want to foster that as your trade association.

Keith Lutz

Keith Lutz
CAP President



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**Vice President • Todd Whitehouse**  
Connecticut Car Wash, 36 School St.  
Glastonbury, CT 06033, 860/652-8888 x114

**Treasurer • Noah Levine**  
Rapid Car Wash, 422 Coleman St.  
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**Brian Kelly, Shoreline Quick Lube & Car Wash**  
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**Ron Manning, Splash**  
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Anthony Setaro

\*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**



Joseph A. Tracy

*The Connecticut Car Wash Association (CCA) held its annual golf invitational on September 21 at Tunxis Plantation Country Club in Farmington. Although the number of players was not up to the levels of year's past, everyone who participated enjoyed themselves greatly. We were also able to honor Representative Kathleen Tallarita for her work on behalf of small business in Connecticut with the CCA Legislator of the Year Award. Both the day and the venue were wonderful, and the delicious meal capped off the event.*

*Many CCA members were also fortunate to get down to the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) in Atlantic City on October 18-20. The show was well worth it. Both the exhibits and the seminars were educational and informative.*

*As we in Connecticut prepare for what we hope will be one of the saltiest winters in recent years, the current economic climate has many of us reeling a bit. Although people have to buy groceries and other staples to live each and every day, getting the car washed is not a requirement (although I think it should be!) We the operators have to do what we can to make the carwash one of the places our customer feels he has to go. Whether it be by creative advertising, marketing or use of technology we need to work harder to draw them into our businesses.*

*When this article is in the winter Northeast Carwasher, I hope we are washing too many cars to count. But what we do, when we are not busy to create business, shows our skill as operators.*

*The CCA wants to make all operators, or vendors for that matter, aware that they are welcome and encouraged to participate in our Association and serve on our board. Whether you are a new or former member, get involved. We Want You! The time commitment is minimal and the events we have year round are fun and educational.*

*For more information on the CCA visit our website at [www.washctcars.com](http://www.washctcars.com) or give us a call at 800/287-6604.*

Joseph A. Tracy  
CCA President

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# Dino's Auto Spa: From Tacos to Bikes and Oh, Yea, a Great Wash!



By Alan M. Petrillo

Madison, CT, the home of Dino's Auto Spa, is an upscale area with an affluent clientele that are seeking full-service carwashes and related services. And that's precisely what Dino's provides them, according to operating owner Frank Paladino.

"We're the only full-service carwash in a 15-mile radius and we're here because of the demand," Paladino said. "We're 30 minutes east of Fairfield County, but right on the water, and about 75 percent of the cars we wash are imports and high-end vehicles."

Dino's Auto Spa is a large operation, taking up an 18,000-square foot building that sits on 1-1/2 acres of land. Besides the full-service/flex-serve wash with a 140-foot tunnel, Dino's also has a four-bay detailing shop, a two-lane four-car oil change operation and a large retail business.

But that's not all – Dino's got into the food business in a small way this past summer, renovating a former hot dog cart into a taco cart and positioning it out in front of the carwash from 11 am to 7 pm daily, weather permitting.

The inspiration for Dino's taco cart came from a couple of local taco trucks that made regular stops at the carwash to service the large number of Hispanic workers employed at Dino's.

Dino's taco cart began operations in June, and several weeks later a local resident who writes for *The New York Times*, published a review of the cart and its food on the Metro Page of a *Times* Sunday edition in July.

"The *Times* absolutely loved the cart," Paladino said. "They gave us a great review and we got a lot of taco business from it."

Paladino noted that Greg Sharon, the operator of the taco cart, which they christened Taco Pacifico, "couldn't keep up with the traffic after the review."

The taco cart offers tacos, burritos and quesadillas in a choice of chicken, beef or pork, along with guacamole and salsa. It also serves soft drinks, including a coconut milk soda.

"We have a fry-o-lator and make our own taco chips," Paladino noted. "People were coming to the cart just to get the chips."

Paladino first flirted with the idea of installing a taqueria taco shop inside the carwash, adjacent to the main retail area, but didn't want the hassle of running a regular restaurant.

"We're weighing the pros and cons on whether it makes sense to our bottom line to have a restaurant inside," he said, "but in the meantime, the taco cart will be back in business in April and we'll keep it out there into October."

Paladino said he markets Dino's Auto Spa chiefly through advertising on the back of register tapes. Coupon specials promote \$3 off of a wash and up to \$10 off an oil change, depending on the time of year. Paladino said he can track how many coupons are used daily and estimates between 25 and 30 percent of his wash customers use a coupon.

Dino's basic wash runs \$9.99; adding undercarriage wash, wax, tire shine and wheel cleaning costs \$13.98; and \$18.98 gets a customer all the "bells and whistles," said Paladino. A basic wash and interior cleaning costs \$14.98.

Paladino noted he's been trying to build up Dino's oil change business recently, meaning people are using coupons liberally, especially when they are discounted on an oil change and include a free interior and exterior carwash.

"I can wash and vac someone's car to attract their attention on the other businesses," he said. "My electric bill runs \$5,000 a month, even if I'm doing an extra 20 cars for free. The cross marketing has really helped us."

Besides the free wash and vac with a lube job, Paladino also recently initiated a 48-hour rewash guarantee. He also gives 20 percent discounts when a customer reloads a gift card.

"If they put \$100 on it, we'll give them \$120, which is our way of trying to get the person who received the gift card to be loyal to our businesses," he pointed out.

Dino's retail store isn't what most people would consider a typical carwash retail store, Paladino noted, because of the unusual lines of goods he sells.

"We retail greeting cards, sweatshirts with the town name on them, reconditioned exercise equipment, and a kit motorcycle line," he said. "The shop is filled with a wide range of different items."

Paladino recently began selling a high-end line of initialized key chains, luggage tags and credit card holders, with the chains selling for \$7.99, and the tags and holders \$12 each. Business has been brisk, he said.

"We also sell a high-end line of auto deodorizers," he added. "Greenleaf in South Carolina makes sachets that we sell for \$6.99 each, compared with the \$1.99 Christmas trees others sell. People are buying lots of them, and I guess we're lucky because the higher end stuff always goes well here."

Paladino also is considering working with Electra, a Florida company, to sell its bicycles in the retail store.

"They checked out our demographics and like us, and think we'll do well with their bike line," he said. "We'll set it up as a boutique area and carry two or three of their models, stocking maybe two or three of each."

So Dino's is not a typical carwash, Paladino maintained.

"We give everyone the best in service," he said. "And our retail area is the sum of its parts. We won't get rich off any one thing, but we want to make it really cool when people walk in and attract their interest."

*Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He's the author of the mystery novel, Full Moon, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).*

# 13th Annual Golf Classic Is a Hole in One!

The Connecticut Carwash Association's 13th Annual Golf Classic, September 21, at the Tunxis Plantation Country Club in Farmington, was the background for a picture perfect day of golf and camaraderie, according to event Chairperson Todd Whitehouse. "We couldn't have asked for a more beautiful day," said Whitehouse. "It certainly was a great event and one I look forward to each year."

After an 11am shotgun start, nearly 70 golfers played 18 holes and enjoyed a hearty lunch on the course. A highlight of the event occurred during the reception when CCA Lobbyist PJ Cimini and CCA President Joe Tracy presented State Representative Kathleen Tallarita, representing the 58th Assembly District, with the association's Legislator of the Year Award for her support of small business.

Tallarita graciously accepted the award and shared some of her background and beliefs with the group.

## Stanley Street Takes Home the Trophy

The winning foursome for the day hailed from Stanley Street Car Wash including Jim Davey and Tom Sr., Jr. and Ken Keough with an -8. McVac's Bill Mahon went home with the longest drive. Splash's Brett Robinson earned the closest to the pin prize and Kay Stack, who made the trip from New Hampshire, took home the women's longest drive.

Many raffle prizes including a Callaway golf bag, R9 driver, Sony stereo, digital camera, Garmen GPS and a 22" and 32" television were also won during the event. Long-time tourney sponsor, C.A.R. Products, also provided a \$250 Home Depot gift certificate.

Event supporters included Platinum Sponsor, Micrologic; Gold Sponsors/Lunch, AVW, Mr. Sparkle, *Northeast Carwasher* and Kleen-Rite Corp.; Silver Sponsor/Prizes, ICS; Raffle Sponsor/Gift, C.A.R. Products; Bronze Sponsors/Beverage Cart Sponsor, Blendco, Mang Insurance and National Ticket; Golf Cart Sponsor, Simoniz USA; Coffee Break Sponsor, Capitol Strategies; Water Bottle Sponsor, ZWash Systems; Golf Towel Sponsor, ERC Wiping; Driving Range Sponsor, Magic Minit Car Wash and Hole-in-One Sponsor, Mitchell Auto Group. ■

The association's next invitational is slated for Tuesday, September 20, 2011.



The CCA Golf Invitational would not be what it is today without the tireless efforts of JJ Listro.



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Tunxis Plantation Country Club in Farmington never disappoints!



FOUR!!!! Just kidding, Mike Benmoschè!!! (Swing!)



Team Connecticut Carwash enjoyed the day of golf.



Jeff Arimento, Rick Moynihan, Donato DePinto and Jim Arvin strike a pose on behalf of New England Car Wash Equipment.



Joan Larkin, Sandy Miller, Kay Stack and Andrea Johnson made the trip from New Hampshire to enjoy the day at Tunxis.

More photos on next page!



Team Simoniz USA strikes a handsome pose.



Team Stanley Street took home the winning foursome accolades from the outing.



CCA Lobbyist PJ Cimini and CCA President Joe Tracy presented Representative Kathleen Tallarita with the CCA's 2010 Legislator of the Year Award for her efforts on behalf of small business.

Don't worry Doug Lutz, you weren't the only golfer who went fishing for his ball!

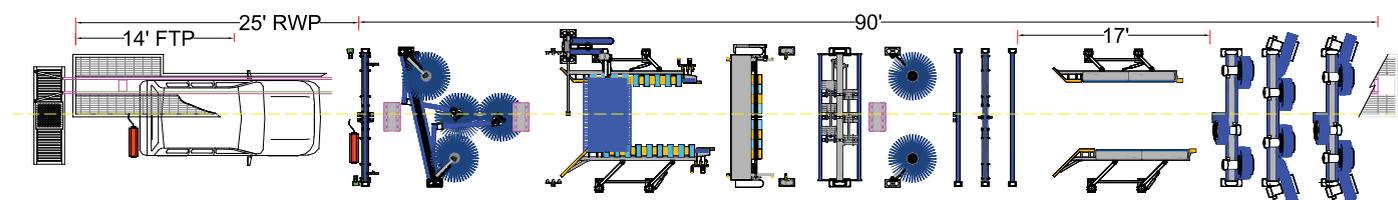


Many were winners during the extensive after-dinner raffle, but New England Car Wash Equipment's Jeff Arimento took home the big prize!

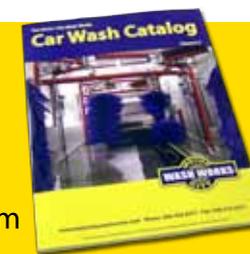


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# Dems Keep Control of General Assembly, GOP Make Gains in State House

By P.J. Cimini

Connecticut voters went to the polls on Election Day after being deluged with an unprecedented amount of campaign advertising. Led by self-financed U.S. Senate candidate Linda McMahon, who spent over \$50+ million (likely the most amount of money spent per voter in a political campaign in American history) it resulted in an unprecedented amount of political spending. It was also the first time that many candidates for statewide office used the new public financing system to run their campaigns.

In the hotly-contested Governor's race, Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz has declared Democrat Dan Malloy the winner. Republican nominee, Tom Foley, conceded the race and stated that he will not challenge the results. Foley stated in his press conference that after investigating the ballot situation and voting in Bridgeport, though there were irregularities, there was no evidence to support any voter fraud. He will not proceed with any challenges of the photocopied ballots nor the ballots cast during the extended hours of voting in Bridgeport.

As expected, control of both the Connecticut Senate and Connecticut House of Representatives remained

firmly in the hands of the Democrats. House Republicans exceeded expectations and have picked up 14 seats. Leadership in both the State Senate and State House of Representatives will remain the same in most cases. Democrats in the House have elected Representative Brendan Sharkey as their new Majority Leader to replace Denise Merrill who was elected Secretary of State.

In a big surprise, Representative Steve Fontana was defeated in his race. Having been seen as the heir apparent to the Majority Leader position, his loss initially threw the leadership race up in the air. The House Democrats maintained their firm grip on the House by a margin of 100 to 51, one vote short of a veto proof majority. A few changes in committee chairmanships are likely to take place.

The Democrats maintain their majority in the Senate at 23-13. Republicans picked up one seat by defeating a veteran Senate Democrat. One seat won by the Democrats appears to be headed for a recount. All other statewide offices were held by Democrats.

In the race for the United States Senate, Richard Blu-



mental defeated Linda McMahon, holding off a late surge by McMahon.

The state's Congressional Delegation bucked the national trend and held all five seats in the House of Representatives. Two of those races were judged toss-ups by national pundits.

The following are the results of the races:

**Governor:** Dan Malloy.

**Attorney General:** George Jepsen a Democrat, won easily over Republican Martha Dean.

**Treasurer:** Denise Nappier, Democrat was re-elected over Newington Republican Mayor Jeff Wright.

**Secretary of the State:** Democrat Denise Merrill defeated Consumer Protection Commissioner Jerry Farrell.

**United States Senate:** Democrat Richard Blumenthal cruised to a win over Linda McMahon despite McMahon's campaign spending in excess of \$50 million. Blumenthal's 20 years as Attorney General helped to carry him to victory. The contest was a lot closer than most observers anticipated when Blumenthal announced his candidacy last year.

**Congressional:** Democratic incumbents, Congressman John Larson (CT-1), Joe Courtney (CT-2) and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-3) cruised to easy victories over their challengers. In two other contests

*Continued on page 50 ...*

## CCA CALENDAR

MARCH 30

Mini Expo  
Marriott Courtyard, Cromwell

MAY 2-4

Car Care World Expo  
Las Vegas, NV  
carwash.org

SEPTEMBER 20

14th Annual Golf Invitational  
Tunxis Plantation Country Club, Farmington

OCTOBER 3-5

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

DECEMBER 1

Holiday Gathering/Annual Meeting  
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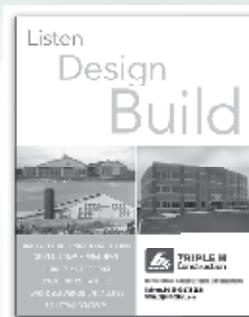
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**CCA Lobbyist ...** *continued from page 49.*

Democrats faced strong challenges from Republican candidates. But in the 4th CD, Jim Himes beat back a strong challenge from State Senator Dan DiBicella and in the 5th CD incumbent Chris Murphy defeated State Senator Sam Caligiuri.

**State Senate:** Senate Democrats remained in firm control of the upper Chamber (23-13) but Republicans have picked up one seat by defeating veteran Senator Tom Colapietro. Democrat Don Williams will remain Senate President and Senator Martin Looney will continue to hold the title of Senate Majority Leader. Republican Senator John McKinney will remain as Minority Leader.

Due to a number of open seats and an upset win, a number of new members of the State Senate were elected.

**4th Senatorial:** Democrat Steve Casano appears to have won a close race over Chip Beckett. The result may be headed for a recount.

**5th Senatorial:** State Representative Beth Bye was elected to the seat formerly held by Jonathan Harris.

**16th Senatorial:** Republican Joe Markley won the seat vacated by Sam Caligiuri.

**21st Senatorial:** Republicans held on to this open seat by electing Kevin Kelly.

**31st Senatorial:** Republican Jason Welch defeated veteran Democrat Tom Colapietro.

Due to the retirement of Senator Harris and the defeat of Senator Colapietro Chairmanships on the Public Health Committee and the General Law Committee will be open.

**House of Representatives:** The State House of Representatives remains in the hands of the Democrats. The Republicans have picked 14 seats leaving Democrats without a veto-proof majority. Current Speaker Chris Donovan, of Meriden, will hold on to the Speaker's position. State Representative Brendan Sharkey won the contest for the Democratic Majority Leader post defeating State Representative Andrew Fleischmann. Rep. Larry Cafero of Norwalk was reelected Republican Minority Leader

Republicans at the State House are celebrating significant gains in the House. Their gain of 14 seats in the House changed the balance from 114-37 to 100-51, one vote short of a veto proof majority.

The Connecticut General Assembly will convene on January 2.

*P.J. Cimini, Esq. is the CCA's lobbyist and a partner in Capitol Strategies Group, LLC, in Hartford. You can reach P.J. at 860/293-2581 or at [pj@csget.net](mailto:pj@csget.net).*



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# A Look Back in Time

By Cookie Anthony

*Issue after issue we talk about carwash locations, machinery, customers and profit centers but it is people who really make the difference. People can take an ordinary business and make it unique and worthy of return visits.*

## Blast From the Past

If carwash owners could have medals for contributing to associations, these fellows would have the rank of admirals.



Fran Downey, Elliot Ganz, George Rohlstein and Bob Katseff.

All four were International Carwash Association (ICA) directors. Bob Katseff was also president and all were New England Carwash Association (NECA) presidents.

These four retired carwash friends are pictured in Falmouth, ME, where they met for a lobster dinner.

Here are some rough but impressive statistics. Bob Katseff, Elliott Ganz, George Rohlstein and Fran Downey represent about 100 years in the carwash business and have likely washed about 10 million cars.

One individual can make a difference. Four are even more powerful.

Have you paid your dues? Have you given of yourself to make the industry stronger? Or, are you on a free ride, a tourist breezing through town letting others do all the work? (Thanks to Elliot Ganz for the photo!)

## Like Father, Like Son

Let me tell you about another great carwash leader. His son is now president of the Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA). Do you recognize Alan and Theresa Tracy?

Twenty years ago when Alan was a CCA president he helped start the first Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC). Here's a lesser-known story.

My husband Al and I were at a family gathering in Massachusetts and got a page (cell phones were expensive then and the size of suitcases!) from our wash in Connecticut.

One of our employees had punched out another of our employees in the tunnel while working, or as the sailors say – he decked him! Both men were named Ron! We were far away so I called Alan who drove to Willamantic and solved the problem. The two Rons worked peacefully together for several years afterward, and no lawsuits developed from the incident. Alan certainly knows how to resolve conflicts and make lasting peace.



Alan and Theresa Tracy

## Can You Identify These Guys?

Here's a true blast from the past photo from 1998. Can you name the first CCA president? Who organized tabletop exhibits for decades? How many past CCA presidents can you find in this photo? Why were these carwashers at a fundraiser, and who was it for?

No answers to this quiz are supplied here. Call an old friend to see if they know and catch up on the great times in this industry you may have had with them.

*Tell me who these Connecticut operators are! The first person I hear from will get a credit in the spring issue!*



## Amazing But True

Odilon Coria, the manager of US 1 Brushless Car Wash in Port Charles, NY, received a phone call from his son's French teacher. The teacher told him it was the first time in his teaching career that one of his students received a perfect score on the New York State Regents test for French. Odilon Coria's son Ricky had the perfect score! This is amazing and true but there is more to the story. At that moment, a woman pulled up in a Mercedes and asked why Odilon was so excited so he told her about Ricky's accomplishment. The woman in the Mercedes said how wonderful! It was really a big deal. She came from a poor family, had won a scholarship to state college and afterward went on to graduate from Harvard Law School.

About a month later, the lady in the Mercedes returned for another wash. She handed Odilon an envelope for his son Ricky. She didn't give her name and the wash doesn't have a customer tracking system.

When Ricky opened the envelope there were 10, \$100 bills in it.

About a month later, the lady in the Mercedes came to the wash and Odilon Coria had a "thank you" letter for her from Ricky. But this isn't the end of the amazing story. Rick received a full scholarship to Co-

lumbia University. He was one of only 272 seniors around the country who won the scholarship.

Ricky wants to study engineering. His parents are both from poor families in Mexico, but Ricky inherited their bright minds and strong work ethic.

This story is fact, but sounds like a fable, and to think it really happened at a carwash!



Dreams do come true. At least they did for the Coria family and their son Ricky!



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

Cookie Anthony

# Technology, Efficiency Help Speedy Wash & Wax Succeed

By Alan M. Petrillo

Low prices were the hallmark of Speedy Wash & Wax in New Haven, CT, for the first couple of years after new owners renovated an existing wash, but these days it's energy efficiency, technology and attention to customer service that are the driving forces in creating return customers.

Nick Magnotta, operations manager, said implementing new technology is an important element for carwash success.

"We took a full-service carwash and renovated it into an express exterior wash with a 145-foot long tunnel and 15 free self-service vacuums," he said. "We added the kind of equipment needed to clean cars thoroughly without a lot of extra employees. For example, we have a dozen 15-hp blowers in the tunnel."

Speedy Wash & Wax, at 286 Whalley Ave., is owned by Dominick Magnotta, Nick's father, and Robert Brody. During the renovation, the owners installed variable frequency drives (VFD) on the blowers to cut down on energy use, and have also changed out all the lighting in the carwash to energy-efficient lighting.



Speedy Wash & Wax in New Haven, once a full service wash, is now an express exterior with a healthy volume.

"We saw a big decrease in our electricity bills after we did that," Magnotta said. "And in our water use, we now recycle 30 percent of the water we use in the wash, with all our high pressure areas being recycled water."

Magnotta noted that the carwash intends to install more VFDs through the Connecticut Energy Fund.

"We have four other 15-hp three-phase motors and our air compressor, which is a 10-hp motor, that we want to replace with VFDs," he said. "The paperwork is in place and we're working through it. We put the money up front for the drives and get repaid over time through rebates and incentives, but once the units are in place, you immediately start seeing savings on your utility bills."

## Additional Eco-Friendly Tips

Other efforts that the owners made at the carwash include cutting back on the use of paper by keeping most of the carwash records in electronic data files, and repositioning and changing the winter heater units so they only use natural gas and keep the tunnel heated at all times to prevent freeze-ups.

Magnotta said they also installed radiant floor heating under the front entrance and the exit pads, and have tankless water heaters throughout the building.

"We're able to provide a hot wax with 100-degree water that helps dry the car at a quicker pace and also gives a gleaming shine," he noted.

Magnotta also has done extensive research on solar panels and wind turbines.

"Solar has a way to go because the cost savings mean you recoup your investment six to eight years out," he said, "but with the smaller wind turbine units, the investment is roughly the same, but there's a shorter return of three to four years."



## Employees Trained to Handle Repairs

Magnotta doesn't neglect the personnel side of the carwash either. Every employee goes through a customer service advisor program where they learn to communicate with customers and represent the wash in a friendly, helpful manner.

He also has three out of his seven staff members handle the majority of the carwash's maintenance through a weekly preventative maintenance program.

"The guys are cleaning sprockets, checking bearings and keeping on top of the equipment," Magnotta said. "With a high-volume carwash like ours, anything can happen on any day, so by getting employees involved with maintenance, you have more people who can catch things before they become a real issue. That's how you know you have a good team, when they see what you're looking for."

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He's the author of the mystery novel, Full Moon, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).



There are plenty of impulse items at the wash entrance for its vac island customers to use.



Vac islands abound at Speedy Wash & Wax and they are generally filled up!



Impulse items abound prior to the entrance of the wash.



Colorful signage outlines the wash options at Speedy.



Easy-to-read signage keeps customers educated.

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**PRESIDENT’S COLUMN**



Gerry Barton

*“What are you doing to survive during this really difficult period? I ask this question of every operator I speak to and have received some very good answers. Attempting new marketing or advertising ideas, couponing with low price offers, putting items such as wash cards on sale and selling more pre-paid items are some of the answers I have received. Some operators are adjusting staff levels to accommodate a new, lower volume model. But most are keeping a very close eye on their expense budgets. They haven’t stopped spending money, but are watching what they spend very closely. No one I speak to is standing still and waiting for better times because no one knows when those times are coming back.*

*People do business with people they like. A friend of mine shared this with me years ago, and I use it all the time. At our wash, we really try to focus on the “Friendly Factor.” That’s right, we try to be friendlier than the guy down the street. We attempt to greet each customer with a “Hi, how are you today?” and close by telling them to “Have a great day!”*

*There really is not much difference in how a car looks as it exits my tunnel compared to my competitors. We all produce a clean car. However, I think the key to retaining that customer is how he/she is treated when the service is performed. It may sound old-fashioned, but we think it works for us.*

*Just before I sat down to write this column, I was reading an e-mail regarding the Grace For Vets event that celebrates our service men and women. The number of carwashes expected to participate is up over last year. That’s great news! It is really a worthwhile cause and a great cause for our industry.*

*Finally, with all the bad news we are faced with today, there is always some good news to be found. For me, today, it is that the Giants are in first place in the NFC East and the Dallas Cowboys have only won one game so far this season.*

*Feel good in a Jersey Clean Car!*

Gerry Barton  
CWONJ President

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

# New Jersey Car Wash Looks For Facebook “Fans”

By Alan M. Petrillo

We live in an electronic world, from the way we communicate, the manner in which we get our information and even through the equipment that operates carwashes.

The owner of one New Jersey carwash – Manahawkin Magic Wash – decided not long ago to capitalize on electronic communication to handle the wash’s marketing and promotional efforts.

Carolyn Coates, co-owner of the wash with Doug Rieck, said their efforts at using the social networking website Facebook to promote Magic Wash have been very successful.

“We started with Facebook last year after I got curious about it and determined there weren’t a lot of carwashes that used it,” Coates said. “I knew it was something I wanted to use to market the Magic Wash, but that it would take time to stay on top of it and constantly change it to keep people engaged.”

Because many younger people “live on Facebook,” Coates said, she engaged Rieck’s sister-in-law to handle all the details involved with Facebook.

“We started talking about how to compensate her for the work she’d do for us with Facebook, but all she wanted were free unlimited carwashes as payment,” Coates pointed out. “That’s what we gave her and I sporadically funnel information to her about the carwash and she puts it up on Facebook.”

For example, Manahawkin Magic Wash sponsors an annual drive-through flu shot event each fall, and that event was promoted on Facebook for the entire month before it took place.

Last winter, Coates started a weekly trivia contest on the carwash’s Facebook page, posting a new question every Sunday. The trivia question winner gets a free Five Star carwash valued at \$13.

People interested in following Magic Wash on its Facebook page become “fans” and can post material on the page.

“If people become a fan and write something nice on our wall (a posting place on the page), we’ll send them a code that gets them a free express wash,” Coates said. “When we first got started with Facebook, we had that promotion going all the time in order to draw fans, which is how we attracted a lot of people.”

Coates said that she tried to relate the first trivia questions to carwashing. The answer to one of the early questions was the song, Car Wash by Rolls Royce. When baseball season came along, Manahawkin Magic Wash’s Facebook page posted a promotion that anyone who showed up at the carwash dressed in any type of Philadelphia Phillies gear would get a free carwash that day.

“Then people would go onto our Facebook page and post information about how they went to the Magic Wash and got a free wash,” Coates said, “which then attracted more attention from other people.”

A lot of the trivia questions revolve around local and regional sports teams, Coates pointed out, from the Phillies and the Philadelphia Eagles (football) and Flyers (hockey) to the New York Giants and Jets football teams.

“We have one promotion where people put guesses on our Facebook page for the score and winner of the upcoming Flyers game,” Coates said. “All guesses have to be posted by faceoff at 7 pm and the winner gets a free carwash.”

Magic Wash’s Facebook fans jumped up to 208 people after they started giving away free carwash codes.

“We put a carwash code up on our Facebook page and left it there for a couple of days, but didn’t activate it,” Coates said. “Then we would post on the page that the code would have to be used on a certain date, for instance, tomorrow. Anyone who went to our Facebook page, and saw the code and correct day, could drive up to the auto sentry, enter the coupon code on the proper day, and get a free \$11 carwash.”

As a result of that promotion, Magic Wash received some interesting feedback through its Facebook page. People wanted to know how they could go about upgrading the free \$11 wash.

“That was a very good question to ask us and now we provide information on the site on how to upgrade a free wash,” Coates said.

Magic Wash has a 90-foot express flex serve exterior tunnel, four self-service bays, a dog wash, a one-bay detail shop and a Laundromat. The partners built the facility in 1983.

Coates noted that Facebook also helps when an operator is seeking to hire someone.

“About a month ago we were looking to hire a guide-on attendant and put information about it on our Facebook page,” she said. “We got 25 applicants from that posting and never had to pay a newspaper for an ad.”

Because people use Facebook as a communication tool, Coates said it’s important to keep them engaged in the site.

“On Tuesday and Wednesday we promote our Wacky Wednesday with \$2 off any carwash,” she said, “and when we were expanding our business and putting in a dog wash, we posted pictures as construction went on and provided information about when the dog wash would open and how to use it.”

Coates even snapped a photo of a golden retriever sitting inside the dog wash, looking out the glass door with the dog wash logo directly over its head. Coates posted the photo on her Facebook site.

“I think Facebook is the greatest marketing tool out there and it costs nothing,” she said. “It’s been great for us and has really worked well.”

*Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He’s the author of the mystery novel, Full Moon, available at www.amazon.com.*

# At Waterline Auto Spa, The Customer is King!

By Alan M. Petrillo



Tyler and Jacqueline Harley believe in offering only the best for their customers at Waterline Auto Spa in Glassboro, NJ, and that quality is essential to customer satisfaction, the chief reason why they say they designed their carwash as an auto spa.

“All customers stay in the car and drive through, with all services provided at the exit of the wash,” said Tyler Harley. “Our auto spa is very customer friendly, with a lot of glass, skylights and natural light in the tunnel to assist in giving an open feeling during the wash process. We use an all-uni-formed staff that performs five-minute express washes, 15 minute full-service cleanings and hand-touch washes that offer a choice of four options.”

The Harleys bought an existing wash at 127 Delsea Dr. South in the fall of 2007 in what’s considered to be a high-end area of town.

“We took it down to the bare walls, created a tower effect on the façade with all new stone and stucco, put in a heavy amount of landscaping and used Belgian block curbing throughout the entire site,” Tyler Harley said.

Waterline Auto Spa has auto sentry pay stations to greet customers for both express and full-serve categories. After a customer selects a wash, an attendant greets the customer, verifies the wash and sends them through the tunnel.

“While going through the tunnel, there’s full glass in the office area so customers can see what’s happening there and we can see the activity in the tunnel,” Tyler Harley said. “The final third of the tunnel is full glass from floor to ceiling on both the left and right. On the left people can see the lobby, and on the right they can see where cars are being detailed in our full-detail bay.”

Once a vehicle exits the tunnel, the driver either pulls over into one of 12 full-serve spaces or moves over to the side for a towel dry and then off of the lot.

“For our full-service customers, we have a quality service inspector who checks each car before it leaves,” Tyler Harley said. “While we’re working on the car, the customer can lounge on the patio and enjoy outdoor music through our in-ground Bose speakers or stay in the lobby where there’s television and complimentary Starbucks coffee and tea, and small snacks available on the honor system.”

Jacqueline Harley said it’s extremely important for the co-owners to know the likes and dislikes of their customers.

“We run our place like a family, both for employees and customers,” she said. “We have a customer appreciation day where we give free washes, food, back massages and giveaways like a sound system and tickets to Philadelphia Eagles football games.”

Waterline Auto Spa has several large fleet accounts, having launched its fleet business during its first year of operation.

“We were able to design and provide them with a fleet card that they can insert in the pay

station, select the wash and go straight through without any hassle,” Jacqueline Harley said. “We have utility companies, state agencies, several local car dealerships, auto body shops and police departments using our fleet cards.”

When the co-owners first opened Waterline Auto Spa, Jacqueline Harley, who’s responsible for marketing, tried several promotional approaches, including billboards, co-promotions with restaurants and gas stations, and direct mail with 3 x 5-inch postcards.

“One of the strongest areas we’ve been partnering in lately is with local businesses and with community events,” she pointed out. “So far, we’ve introduced ourselves in five area townships at community events and at business meetings like the Rotary Club.”

Waterline Auto Spa also does charity events, donating carwashes to the Boys and Girls clubs of Glassboro, for instance, as well as other non-profit organizations.

For regular customers, Waterline Auto Spa offers its frequent wash card, a program launched this year. Called Club Waterline, it offers unlimited express washes for \$19.99 and unlimited full-service washes at \$39.99 monthly.

“The only way we’ll get a share of the market is by providing a service that’s second to none,” said Tyler Harley. “And that’s exactly what we do for our customers.”

*Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He’s the author of the mystery novel, Full Moon, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).*



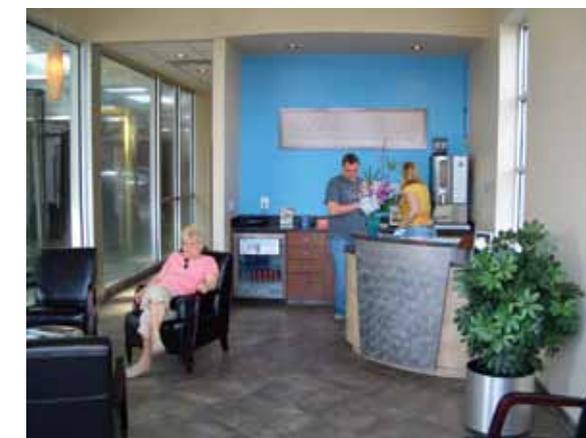
*Tyler and Jacqueline Harley bought this wash in 2007. They took it down to the bare walls and created a showcase in Waterline Auto Spa in Glassboro, NJ.*



*Waterline’s auto sentry pay stations greet customers for both express and full-serve washes.*



*The Waterline Executive Team of Steven Green, Tyler Harley, Jacqueline Harley and Bishop Keith Reed greet customers with a smile and professional attire.*



*The colorful waiting area is relaxing and accommodating to customer needs.*



*The wash frequently holds charity events and customer appreciation days to give back to the community and reward its customers. This event raised money for a local boys & girls club.*





# Going To The Dogs

By Doug Rieck



Despite a whole lot of back and forth with the town, Manahawkin Magic Wash opened its dog wash door in August.

Bad things happen when you get a group of carwashers on a bus for more than five hours. At least this gives me a good excuse! Last year on the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWO NJ) bus tour to visit Cloister Car Wash and Kleen-Rite Corp., and their flagship wash in Pennsylvania, each location included dog washes. While at the Kleen-Rite site in Columbia, I spent some time talking with Keith Lutz about their dog wash. Suddenly, dog washes started looking interesting. Then at Cloister after seeing a little bit of carwash heaven and two dog washes, they started to make sense to me. When I got home I reviewed my pictures and notes and spent a few days talking with carwash friends and doing research and dog washing looked like a pretty good idea.

I had two stores where I thought dog washes made the most sense. The easiest to retrofit was about 40 miles from my main store. It had an underused extra self-service bay, simple enough fix. I paid an architect a modest amount and was able to quickly get a building permit. I chose to delay doing this at this site, however, until after I built one at my conveyor location.

But why a dog wash? Great question. Simple answer "low hanging fruit." Like every other carwash operator and small business, I'm looking for extra revenue and additional marketing exposure. I also don't want to spend a lot of money to accomplish both. By opening a dog wash at an existing store, I get an additional less weather-sensitive revenue stream, and it is not cost prohibitive. My research indicates that a dog wash can bring in about the same revenue as a self-service bay, depending.

Dog washes are new and a unique, fun concept to introduce at your wash. They crossmarket nicely with a carwash. Cleanup and maintenance are easy in comparison to a self-service bay that can be full of mud. A lint trap of wet dog hair weighs somewhat less than a full wheelbarrow, a little more yucky though. The concept is not that far from carwashing so that the risk of running a new, different business is greatly reduced.

profit centers, and this addition would take the concept to a new personal height. Yet, the idea would allow me to use the same staffing level. The problem was that I only had four bays and did not desire to give up one for a dog wash.

The answer took a week of thought. Again, a simple elegant answer – add a 32-foot-long x 10-foot-wide addition to my conveyor building replacing a garden and flagpole. Sixteen feet of the length would be the dog wash and the 16 feet an addition to my current office. Simple in theory and very attractive, but it proved much more difficult to permit than anticipated by all including my engineer or attorney.

The professional engineer and architect both suggested just getting architectural and applying for a building permit. Good try, but they were rejected and I was told a minor site plan was required. A minor site plan is sort of OK, and while not inexpensive, not totally absurd. The engineer came out and surveyed and then he and the attorney did the work and made the submissions.

Again rejected, this time two days before the hearing. The town engineer said that a zoning hearing was required because carwashes are a prohibited use in my town. (I do exist, really). We had to file again, re-notice, change plans (which incurred a lot of additional expense) and wait four months for a zoning board hearing. The actual hearing went well, and the attitude of the board was supportive and great. Time elapsed from the submission of the first architectural prints — seven months to be exact. If I knew at the start the permitting issues I would run into and expense I would incur, I possibly would have delayed or cancelled the project.

The approval was obtained in December and we were planning to start construction in January. We all know what happened last winter, and then the spring rains started. We started excavation in April, poured footings in May, and

My primary carwash is a gated-entry flex service conveyor with four self-service bays, a Laundromat and a detail shop. Now I would be adding a dog wash. I have always believed in multiple

opened in August. This was adding a 32-foot x 10-foot wide addition using two existing walls and adding a roof. Oh well, at least it was built on budget as per contract. The total time of the project from conception in April of 2009 to completion in August of 2010, 17 long months. If this is low hanging fruit, I'd hate to see the stuff in the middle of the tree.

As I finish this article at the start of November, I have my October numbers in and the dog wash is halfway to my monthly projection in the second full month of operation. This is with no advertising other than on site windmaster signage and, of course, Facebook.

October is traditionally my worst month at the wash, and this year was no exception. Every customer has been excited about the addition, and already at least two dogs have cycled through for a second wash. I am hoping that within a few months I will be at my one-year revenue projection early. There seems to be a great word-of-mouth about the dog wash. In early October, my seven-year-old daughter's Spanish teacher called me at home around 8pm on a Friday. Her husband had let their dog out in the back yard and the dog got sprayed by a skunk. She had heard about the dog wash and wanted to know if it was still open. Of course, I explained it to her, and told her it was still open. She dispatched her husband and dog to the dog wash. (Do you think the windows were open in that car?) I heard that the de-skunking was successful and all parties involved happy.

What's involved in a dog wash? A washtub, a self-service coinbox, a back room control box with solenoids and Demas, and a dedicated nearby source of hot water. The concept is to take an underused self-service bay and convert it into a dog wash. Typically, this means to take half of an existing bay with the closed off half serving as storage and a back room. At some locations dog washes have been busy enough that the closed off half becomes a second dog wash when it gets busy enough.

One of my early equipment decisions was to split my dog wash equipment and buy the self-service coinbox from the same computer equipment supplier that I use for my gated-entry system. The motivation was that the same gift cards, fleet cards and credit card clearing and journal entries would all be from the same company. Life is too short to not standardize on one POS computer system.

Fortunately, the company that I use makes an awesome touch screen coinbox for self-serve bays. They programmed the touch screen so that it is completely dog centric with great visuals. It is so nice that you'd think you were using an Apple I PAD. I ordered it without a coin drop, just a bill acceptor, since the startup price is high. Now, my old rotary-switched coinboxes in the self-service bays look over at the dog wash with envy.

Next decision; whose wash tub? I had fixed in my mind from the start to use what I call a traditional style dog wash tub. This is a large, open stainless steel tub which has a dog ramp at the one end and you can wash the dog from either side. When the dog ramp is down it looks like a letter "T". It's a very simple, nice unit. Its one handicap is the length required. En route to the International Carwash Association's (ICA) Car Care World Expo, at the Las Vegas airport, I met up

*Continued on page 62 ...*

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with an old carwash friend who introduced me to one of his friends on the same flight who has two dog washes. During the taxi ride we talked and we met up on the show floor. I found out about a different style of washtub that requires less space. This style of washtub looks more like a letter "T" when the ramp is down. The bottom line is that with this style of tub I can fit two washtubs into the same 10-foot deep x 16-foot wide dog wash room. It was an easy decision.

The plan is to install one washtub now, then when business builds install a second tub with a toilet stall style barrier between the washtubs. From my two months of dog wash experience, and in talking with dog wash veterans, Saturdays and Sundays are when you need the capacity of a second tub. That seems to be true so far for me as well, and one Saturday I had one dog waiting outside while the first was washing, actually a nice problem. Hopefully by next spring, I will be installing a second washtub. The utilities already exist and I installed extra electric circuits and ran a spare Cat 5 line back to the server just in case.

The dog wash room size was based on the space available. I filled in an existing garden, which backed up to the former walkway at the tunnel. This way I was able to use part of the old walkway as the backroom for the water heater and plumbing and controls. The old garden was 10-feet wide x 34-feet in length. This meant that I was able to use 16 feet of the length for a new office and the other 16 feet of length for

the dog wash. Considering that the existing office at the carwash was 10-feet deep x 8-feet wide, adding another 16 feet in length was great.

When the dog wash was built I finished it with white FRP, and heavily sealed all seams with silicone. This was fortunate because I found that some dog wash customers really make a mess. The idea was to make it as clean and bright as possible. As part of the clean and bright, I installed very large storefront glass windows. Then I added a mini split system heat pump for heat and air conditioning. I believe that the air conditioning plus an exhaust fan are needed to help control humidity and doggy odors.

In conclusion, dog washes are cool. They provide an extra profit center and they don't eat labor and are fun to market. All the customers, bar none, have loved it and feel that there is great value. When the customers compare my price to that of a groomer, they are very happy.

Another service I provide for my customers is that by washing their dog with me, all the mess stays with me. Since I designed the dog wash as a wet room, the mess is easy to clean. I still can't believe the amount of hair they leave behind, though. Just as I have learned to love dirty self-serve bays, I am learning to love wet dog hair. Pretty soon I'll start on the second location adding the dog wash. ■

*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 inducted into the 2010 NRCC Hall of Fame. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS.*

## RonJon Knows Where To Get His Ride Washed, Waxed and Shined!



Every area has its own celebrities and Long Beach Island off the Jersey shore is no different. One of the celebrities who frequent this hamlet is Ron Dimenna, AKA, RonJon, the founder and owner of the surfing store chain RonJons. He started as a surfer opening a surf shop on LBI in the mid-1960's and now has more than 11 surf shops throughout the United States. His main store is located in Cocoa Beach, FL. It is a mega store open 24 hours. His stores are spectacular, and a homage to the surfing and beach lifestyle.

RonJon lives and runs his stores from a Custom Woody themed rock-star-styled tour bus in which he travels from store to store. Magic Wash washes and waxes his Woody whenever he visits Long Beach Island. Obviously, it's a bit too big for the conveyor or self-service bay. Magic Wash washes it instead in front of their self-service bays. It's quite the sight to see! ■

## Engaged!



Congratulations to CWONJ Treasurer Al Villani of Supreme Car Wash in Newark and his lovely fiancé Karen Giuciano. Best wishes for a long, happy and healthy life together! ■



## 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 66 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](http://www.cwonj.com) to learn more about upcoming meetings, events and issues. ■

## Proactive May Be Good, But Reactive May Be Faster

In old Western movies, the good guy never shoots first. Usually, the fellow in the black hat draws his gun – and then gets cut down by a faster shot.

That's the movies. But according to a report on the MSNBC Web site, scientists think there's some validity to the notion that we react faster than we act.

In a series of experiments (set up as simulated gun-fights) testing reaction speed, volunteers tended to move about 10 percent faster – approximately 21 milliseconds – when they were reacting to a partner's movement than when they were initiating an action. Twenty-one milliseconds isn't much, but it may be enough to dodge an oncoming car or a charging lion.

Although the reactive volunteers were faster, they were less accurate than their opponents – meaning that maybe the good guy should have drawn first. ■

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Tim Weigel (left), and George Kelly  
Owners — NYACK Car Wash  
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Featuring ultra-safe NeoGlide® closed-cell wash material, the brush diameter has been increased to 12.5 inches to provide deeper penetration inside rims, while the durable NeoGlide foam stars eliminate any potential for disturbing clear coat finishes.

The new brush is modular — letting operators replace each 6 inch section separately. Entrance and exit ends of any tire-brush always wear first. With the new Ninja Brush, operators can save a significant amount of money on maintenance by replacing only the parts of the brush that are worn.



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# Christie Appoints Education Effectiveness Task Force

By Patrick Stewart

Governor Chris Christie announced the appointment of members to a newly-created Education Effectiveness Task Force. The nine-member Task Force, established by Executive Order No. 42, is charged with recommending a fair and transparent system of educator evaluations that weighs measuring student achievement using demonstrated practices of effective teachers and leaders. The Task Force shall provide the Governor with an initial report no later than March 1.

The Task Force will be chaired by Brian Zychowsky, Superintendent of Schools in North Brunswick Township, and include as members: Derrell Bradford, Executive Director and Director of Communications for Excellent Education for Everyone (E3); Jesse Rector, Clinton Hill Campus President of North Star Academy Charter School; Ross Danis, Associate Dean of Education at Drew University; Donna Chiera, an Executive of the American Federation of Teachers and Special Education Resource Teacher; Rafael Fajardo, former President of the Elizabeth Board of Education; Rev. Edwin Leahy, Headmaster of St. Benedict's Prep in Newark; Jane Cosco, retired teacher and Director of Operation Goody Bag and PeggySue Juliano, Executive Board Member of the Lacy Township High School PTA.

## Christie Creates Red Tape Review Commission

Governor Christie announced the appointment of members to a newly created Red Tape Review Commission. The nine-member Commission, created by Executive Order No. 41, will review administrative rules and regulations and solicit public input on regulatory barriers in order to analyze the impact on job creation, economic growth and investment throughout the State.

The Commission will be chaired by Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno and include Senator Steven Oroho, Senator Brian P. Stack, Assemblyman John Burzichelli, Assemblyman Scott Rumana, Mayor Brian D. Levine, Edward B. Deutsch, John Galandak and Tony Monteiro. These direct appointments by the Governor do not require Senate confirmation.

The Commission will make recommendations to the Governor for improving New Jersey's regulatory climate by providing periodic reports, and serve as an ongoing advisory resource to the Governor. The Commission succeeds the Red Tape Review Group, another bipartisan body with representatives from both the Legislative and Executive Branches of State government that was created by Executive Order No. 3.

## Christie Cancels Hudson River Tunnel Project

Governor Christie cancelled the Hudson River Tunnel Project. Formally known as Access to the Region's Core, or

ARC, the tunnel would have doubled train capacity to and from New York City by the end of 2018.

At a press conference in the State House in late fall, Christie announced that he had accepted the recommendations of the ARC Project Executive Committee to terminate the ARC Project based on a 30-day review which concluded that the project is expected to substantially exceed its current budget. Based on calculations by the Federal Transit Administration and the New Jersey Transit, the final budget is expected to top \$11 billion and could exceed as much as \$14 billion, compared to the project's current budget of \$8.7 billion. Members of the ARC Executive Steering Committee, which unanimously recommended that the project be terminated, are James Weinstein, Chairman, Executive Director, NJ Transit; Anthony Coscia, Chairman, Port Authority of New York New Jersey; Chris Ward, Executive Director, Port Authority of New York New Jersey; Bill Baroni, Deputy Executive Director, Port Authority of New York New Jersey; Paul Blanco, CFO, Port Authority of New York New Jersey; Kim Vaccari, CFO, NJ Transit; Lynn Bowersox, Assistant Executive Director, NJ Transit and Transportation Commissioner James Simpson who was recused.

The federal government earmarked \$3 billion for the project, with another \$3 billion coming from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the final \$2.7 billion coming from New Jersey. Christie said that the federal commitment is capped at \$3 billion and that any costs above the original budget estimate of \$8.7 billion would have to come from the State. According to Christie, the cost overruns are estimated to be in the range of \$2 billion to more than \$5 billion.

According to the ARC Executive Committee the actual cash spent on the project through September 30, 2010, was approximately \$478 million. The funds have been expended for engineering, property acquisition, construction, insurance and professional services. In its report to the Governor, the Committee acknowledged that terminating the project might cost the state \$3 billion in discretionary federal New Starts money.

The Governor said he had directed transportation officials to explore other approaches to modernize and expand rail capacity into New York. The Governor did not discuss the possibility of shifting the tunnel project funding to the Transportation Trust Fund, although given the Governor's vow not to increase the gas tax to pay for the fund there has been growing speculation that he will do so. ■

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.



## Flu Shot Clinic



Manahawkin Magic Wash owners Doug Rieck and Carolyn Coates again welcomed the community to partake in their annual flu shot clinic. According to Coates, about half as many shots were administered this year as last, approximately 450. She said this seems to be the norm across the state this year. The event took place over a three-and-a-half hour period at their self-serve bays. ■

Visit [cwonj.com](http://cwonj.com) for more information on our April 19 bus tour and lunch!



Patrick A. Stewart

## CWONJ CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 1

General Membership Meeting, Crowne Plaza  
"What To Know BEFORE OSHA Comes Calling!"

APRIL 19

Carwash Tour

MAY 2-4

Car Care World Expo  
Las Vegas, NV  
[carwash.org](http://carwash.org)

JUNE 13

Golf Invitational  
Suburban Golf Club, Union

OCT. 3-5

Northeast Regional Carwash Convention  
Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, NJ  
[nrccshow.com](http://nrccshow.com)  
December 6  
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

organizations 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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)

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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](mailto:mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com).

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**



Mike Ashley

*I would like to thank each of you who participated in this year's Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC). I especially want to thank Dave DuGoff for all of his diligent work and countless hours which he invested in making this show go on as well as it did. As you all know, there are many people who work hard to make the show what it is. I would never be able to fully include all of the names of those involved, but I want to say "thank you." I feel that this was by far one of the best shows ever.*

*This NRCC was hosted by our own MCA and with the change in venue we all had our worries. However, it was a success. I got to see many fellow carwashers from various associations. As always, it was a pleasure just to see each other and share our stories and plans for the future.*

*In my last column I mentioned that we had a meeting in Woodbridge, VA, on LEED certification and how it applies to the carwash industry. We took a tour of the nation's first LEED-certified carwash (Smart Wash of Dale City, VA). Many of us came away with a lot of ideas on how we could all "go green" at our washes. (See page 70 for some pictures from that meeting).*

*Our November meeting is in Shepherdstown, WV, at the Bavarian Inn. It has always been a great location. The topic is on the International Carwash Association's (ICA) Watersavers program presented by Claire Darminin, ICA Chief Operating Officer. She will fill us in on all of the new certification requirements and let us know how this program could be of benefit to all of us. After this meeting, we will have our annual board retreat where we plan for the year ahead.*

*MCA now has a new newsletter which is also posted on our website. If you are interested please go to [www.mccarwash.org](http://www.mccarwash.org).*

*If MCA can be of help to any of you, please contact me.*

Mike Ashley  
MCA President

LOOK FOR A RECAP OF OUR NOVEMBER 17 MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT THE BAVARIAN INN IN SHEPHERDSTOWN, WV, IN OUR SPRING ISSUE.

THE MEETING WILL FEATURE ICA COO CLAIRE DARMININ WHO WILL UPDATE THE GROUP ON WATERSAVERS.

*Mark Your Calendar!*  
**22nd Annual**

# Northeast Regional Carwash Convention



**October 3-5, 2011**  
**Taj Mahal Hotel**  
**Atlantic City, NJ**

*Watch for details...*

[www.nrcshow.com](http://www.nrcshow.com)

# MCA Tours Virginia Washes at Fall Membership Meeting



The Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA) toured Tackett's Mill Carwash in Woodbridge, VA, The Prestige Carwash in Manassas, VA, and The Smart Carwash (soon to become the nation's first LEED certified carwash) in Dale City, VA, at its September 29 Membership Meeting in Woodbridge, VA. Co-owner, Eric Rosencranz, along with representatives from five companies involved in the creation of the wash conducted a tour and answered attendee questions. A dinner meeting

followed at Dak's Restaurant Grill in Dale City, VA. Rosencranz did a presentation called "Behind the Scenes - Creating a LEED Certified Wash" after dinner. The tour and meeting were sponsored by WashTech, Inc. ■



Attendees enjoyed the tour of Tackett's Mill Carwash in Woodbridge, VA.



WashTech's Craig Hanson educated attendees on the LEED certified wash.

Dana and Scott Eichlin toured The Prestige Carwash in Manassas, VA.



## LISTSERV Now Available to MCA Members

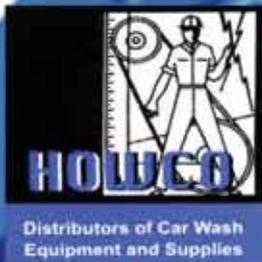
Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association members can now communicate with each other seamlessly through the use of LISTSERV, an electronic mailing list software application.

LISTSERV was the first electronic mailing list software application consisting of a set of email addresses for a group in which the sender can send one email and it will reach a variety of people. Since its launch in 1986, LISTSERV allows members to exchange information and ideas through the use of email. You simply send an email to the LISTSERV address and all of the people on LISTSERV receive your message. The recipients can choose to reply to everyone on the list or just to you.

All MCA members are automatically subscribed. You may unsubscribe by going into your member profile and unchecking "e-lists." For more information contact the MCA office at [www.mcarwash.org](http://www.mcarwash.org) or call 800/378-9209. ■



Eric Rosencranz answered questions about Smart Carwash in Dale City.



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Ron Bousquet

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

*First, I would like to personally thank Patti Kaplan for doing an outstanding job as president the last two years. God knows the last two years have not been good carwashing years.*

*With business down, Patti has led our association to work with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and had them recognize us as good stewards of water. They even put that on their website with the help of Bob Katseff and Paul Vercollone. Also under her leadership, Adam Korngold and his committee have come up with a great plan to help local charities while educating the public about the merits of professional carwashing. Another new program that will be starting this year is a Scholarship Program. Any employee or direct family member of an employee of a NECA member is eligible. You can read more about that on page 74 or visit the NECA website where you can download an application today. We encourage you to let your employees know about this new program.*

*If you didn't make it to Atlantic City for the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) you missed a great learning experience. First, the education was the best of any carwash show I have attended in a very long time. The show floor was the largest of any of the regional shows and attendance was strong with plenty of opportunities to network with other operators from around the region. For those who didn't attend the show or don't know, Sprite Airlines leaves Boston three times a day and flies to Atlantic City for a really low fare. You could fly down in the morning and fly back that night, or even stay one night at the reasonably priced Trump Taj Mahal where the show is now located (right on the boardwalk!). The 2011 NRCC is Oct. 3-5 so mark your calendar! You really cannot afford to miss this show.*

*Your board of directors will continue to work hard to keep and improve our relationships with state and local regulators, and to help you achieve your goal to be the best professional carwasher you can be.*

Ron Bousquet  
NECA President

**NECA encourages members to do business with members!**

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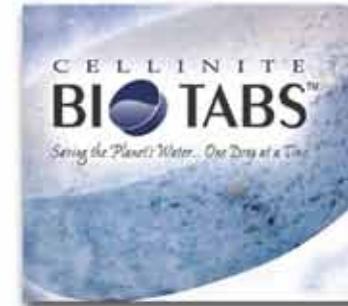
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# NECA Launches Annual Scholarship Award



The bar has been raised ever higher on the need for post secondary education. With college tuitions and other program costs on the rise, every little bit can help. That is why NECA is stepping in to offer an exclusive scholarship opportunity.



After much research and collaboration, we have developed the requirements and an application for a scholarship award for which employees or direct family members of employees of a NECA Member can apply.

## To be eligible, an applicant must:

- ❖ Be an employee, full or part time for at least 1 year, or direct family member of an employee, of any New England Carwash Association member company
- ❖ Not be an owner, or direct family member, of a NECA member company
- ❖ Have graduated high school or the equivalent
- ❖ Be enrolled, or plan to enroll, at an accredited post-secondary educational institution full or part time.

Recipients will be evaluated and chosen based on their high school/academic standing, leadership capabilities, com-

munity involvement, strength of character, personal achievement, plan of study and future goals, and financial needs.

**Applicants must complete and submit the following no later than April 30, 2011**

- ❖ A Scholarship application (available on [www.new-englandcarwash.org](http://www.new-englandcarwash.org))
- ❖ An Essay
- ❖ 2 Letters of recommendation: One from a representative of the NECA member company and one from someone in the community
- ❖ Copy of acceptance letter or proof of enrollment from the post-secondary school the applicant plans to attend, or is attending.

Recipients will be notified by mail no later than June 1, 2011. The Award will be presented at the New England Car Wash Association Annual Golf Outing on Sept. 12th, 2011.

Proceeds from the 50/50 and live auction at the 2010 Golf Outing have been allocated to fund our first scholarship award.

This program was modeled after the long-running CCA Kenneth M. Gustafson, Sr. Scholarship Program. ■

## DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING?

NECA's membership year begins on January 1. Personal dues invoices were mailed to members after Thanksgiving and again after the New Year. Please be sure to return your application with any additions or corrections with your dues to the NECA office:

**By mail or fax with credit card information (MC, VISA, AMEX or Discover) to 781/245-6487**

**By mail with your check to NECA, 591 North Avenue, Ste. 3-2, Wakefield, MA 01880-1617**

**If you need another copy of your invoice call 781/245-7400.**

**Please pay your dues asap to retain your membership privileges.**



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**3. Payment by check - Fill out the form below and mail with your check, payable to NECA, to**

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Wakefield, MA 01880-1617**

**Note: Signs are shipped when payment is received in full.**

**Questions? 781/245-7400  
[neca.org@verizon.net](mailto:neca.org@verizon.net)**

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\$279.99 for the EIGHT-sign set; Individual signs \$45

**Non members:** \$339.99 for the EIGHT-sign set; Individual signs \$55

**Shipping and Handling:** Orders within New England - Please add \$30.00 S/H for signs 1-8;

\$60.00 S/H for signs 9-16 and so on. If not in the NE region (MA, NH, CT, RI, VT, lower ME), please call for shipping rates.

Note: Signs are shipped when payment is received in full. You can save the cost of S/H by picking up your signs. Please call for details.

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**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

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TOTAL SIGN COST \$ \_\_\_\_\_ PLUS \$ \_\_\_\_\_ S & H <sup>☎</sup> TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ENCLOSED

**NON MEMBERS:** # \_\_\_\_\_ SET (s) x \$339.99 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ INDIVIDUAL SIGNS x \$55 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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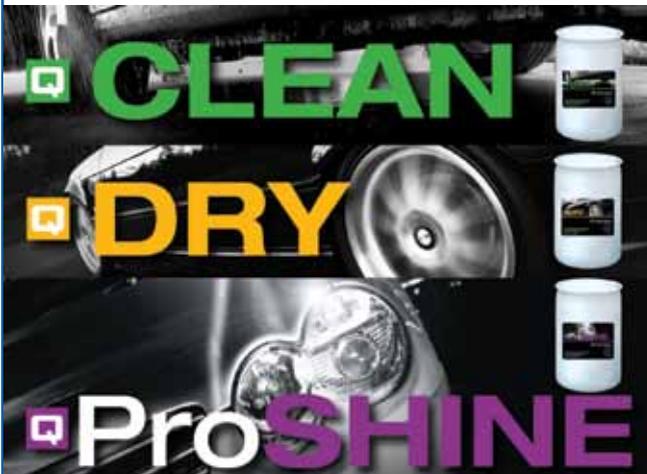
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**Treasurer's Report**

**New England Car Wash Association**

Period January 2010 - September 2010



**Income**

Interest Income.....	\$354
Meetings.....	\$43,525
Member Services.....	\$2,709
Membership.....	\$14,575
NRCC.....	\$12,823
Other.....	\$200

**Total Income ..... \$74,186**

**Expenses**

Board Expenses.....	\$1,989
Charitable Contribution.....	\$-
Insurance.....	\$1,802
Management Fee.....	\$28,503
Meetings.....	\$37,456
Member Services.....	\$3,570
Membership.....	\$1,026
Office Expense.....	\$2,420
Professional Expense.....	\$2,005

**Total Expense ..... \$78,771**

**Net Income..... \$(4,585)**

**Cash Balances**

The Cooperative Bank CD.....	\$100,000
Citizen's Bank Savings.....	\$94,473
Citizens Checking.....	\$17,674
<b>Total Checking / Savings.....</b>	<b>\$212,147</b>



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Marketing through NECA**

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

- ❖ Have you updated your member profile on the NECA website?
- ❖ 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>

**Welcome to Our Newest Members**

**Podgurski Corporation**



**Contact: Tom Constantin  
Canton, MA**

**Products/Services:** Removal of sediment/sand from recirculation and reclaim systems; analytical and legal disposal of materials, pipeline cleaning.

**InPhase Power**

**Contact: Roger Fritz  
Concord, MA**

**Products/Services:** Energy efficient motor controls, utility state, local rebate assistance; turn key energy efficient projects.

Visit the NECA web site ([www.newenglandcarwash.org](http://www.newenglandcarwash.org)) and click on the "Search Members" tab for a directory of all our members and links to their web sites.



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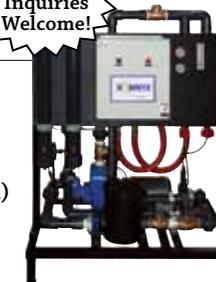


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# NECA Tackles Driveway Washing

Many carwash owners have mixed experiences with charity carwashes. While they provide a great service helping out local community groups, there are many logistical problems. Have you spent money printing wash tickets for a charity and then the charity does not sell as many as they promised? Have you waited months to get paid from the charity? Or not paid at all?

The NECA Board has voted to invest up to \$15,000, including \$3,000 for public relations, to develop a state-of-the-art social media web site to assist charities and community organizations in their fund raising efforts. The site is being developed as a convenient and environmentally friendly year-round alternative to driveway and parking lot charity washes.

The website allows charities to create a page online where they will ask for donations from their supporters. For every \$10 in donations, a free basic carwash will automatically be e-mailed to the donor who will be able to select any participating NECA member carwash in their geographic area. All transactions are completed with a credit card, and money will be dispersed monthly. If the donor does not use

the coded ticket within a specific period of time, the ticket will expire, and there is no cost to the wash.

The carwash will receive \$4.65 for every carwash coupon e-mailed, regardless of whether the customer redeems the coupon. The charity will receive \$4.65 and will be assessed a \$25 administrative set-up fee. There are no set-up fees for the carwash. The remaining 70 cents will cover the development costs, credit card fees and website hosting.

The website will allow the charity to sign up, post a picture or logo of their charity, and create a goal of funds needed. The charity will receive its own unique URL such as Natickhighfootball.newenglandcarwash.org. The charity will be responsible for promoting this website to its supporters.

From the website, the charity members can e-mail their friends and promote the offer on Facebook or Twitter to raise additional money. Also, the website will show how much money has been raised so far which should encourage its supporters to promote the website until the goal has been reached. We have contracted with www.divvydeal.com to design the website. DivvyDeal has a similar platform as Groupon or LivingSocial that will be integrated in our site.

For our members, it will build positive community relations and expand their marketing to new customers. For the New England industry as a whole, it will help to educate the public about the advantages of professional carwashing and the detrimental effects of allowing untreated water from curbside washing to enter the storm water system.

This is a complimentary service to all NECA members who opt into the program and honor the tickets. The program is designed to enhance their existing efforts since members can continue with their own programs as well as participate in this one.

This program will be a capital expense for the Association, but the program has been designed to pay for itself as well as provide a valuable member benefit. The plan is to recoup the development cost within three years. The formal launch of the site is scheduled for January 2011. ■

For more information call the NECA office at: 781/245-7400



## The Auto Care Forum Is A Huge Hit!

And now its even better. Check out the NEW FORUM, with many new features to make your surfing and belonging to the Car Wash Community even more enjoyable. Totally customizable user profile, pictures, private emailing, buddy list, see who else is on-line, which threads are HOT, New Posts, Quick Links.

[www.autocareforum.com](http://www.autocareforum.com)

There you'll find real world, 24/7 Information Exchanges and many valuable industry resources such as our comprehensive Industry Directory ("Yellow Pages" where your listing is free), and much more (3,500 pages!) for

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Mark Kubarek

Well, I don't know about you but I'm glad the elections are behind us. The political ads were over the top this year. Why would anyone who has any respect for themselves, or their country, put ads like that on television? What does it teach the next generation about our country if all you have to do is tell people this person is to blame for your lot in life? I didn't see any candidates who told us how they were going to fix the problems in our state, just what the other one had done wrong. Don't tell me what's wrong. I know what's wrong! Tell me what we're going to do to fix it.

I guess I'm just disappointed at how much things have changed. When I was a child election day was a big deal for the Kubarek family. My grandfather made it that way. He immigrated from Poland in 1911 with \$3 in his pocket. Being an American citizen was so important to him and Election Day meant that he was a member and had a voice. He used to put on his Sunday suit and take me in the voting booth with him after he showed his little card to the lady at the desk. He carried that card everywhere. I used to see it on his nightstand. My grandfather could not speak or read much English, but he knew that card meant that he was an American. He was so proud. I think if he saw what the process has turned into today he would be heart broken.

A Worthy Cause

I hope all of you participated in Grace for Vets this year, the Veteran's Day fund-raiser to honor our veterans. It is a small token that we can give to the service people who have served our country. And a belated happy Veteran's Day to my fellow carwashers who have served and to the Veterans in our K & S Carwash family - Joseph Kubarek, Army Air Corp 357th Fighter Group WWII and Jeffery Shutter, Army Airborne 1982-1986. THANK YOU!

Outstanding 2010 NRCC

The Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) was a great show! The show committee deserves a big pat on the back. The switch from The Borgata to Trump Taj Mahal was a good one as the show floor was packed with the most vendors we have ever had exhibit. If you were not there you do not know what you missed, honestly! Make plans to attend next year's show, Oct. 3-5, again at the Trump Taj Mahal. You will love it.

I think that most of the vendors at the NRCC had some type of equipment in their booth to save energy, water and product. As a result, we decided as a company to launch an intense conservation program and find equipment to reduce expenses. This came after the realization that we cannot control taxes or insurance expenses, but we can control utility and material expenses.

We have started to shop for the right tools to get this done. Some examples include LED lighting, HE boilers and heaters and solution delivery systems. Most of these projects are covered by New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) rebates or Government tax credits which calculate into less out-of-pocket expense. Try simply changing your worn nozzles and you will experience significant water saving. We will keep you posted on our findings!

Continued on page 84...

Adhere To The Zero-Loss Culture

By Mike Benmoschè

One of the worst messages a carwash owner can afford to convey is, "accidents happen." This supports the idea that nothing could have been done to prevent what happened. However, the reality is often there were other steps that could have been taken to avoid an incident.

I know operators that budget a percentage of revenue to claims paid that are not reimbursed by insurance. Once again, this sends a message that claims are an acceptable event.

Let's try a new approach - ZERO losses. The goal is to end each year without any damage to property or injury to customers or employees. But where do you begin? I would like to offer a few suggestions that may help. For instance, very often if you review past claims you will discover all efforts were concentrated toward taking care of the problem and moving on. Consider adding a few more steps to this process.

First, list everything that is reported. By reviewing this report, you may be able to observe certain patterns that may lead to a simple solution that would prevent future problems. Do not leave anything out; no matter how small.

Another step would be to develop a process to investigate each accident. This includes looking into how, where and why. Was the claim a result of employee error, equip-

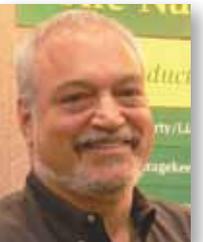
ment maintenance, conditions of the property, training, etc.?

Past experience should be a vital tool in developing a plan that can mitigate and eliminate the chances of losses at your location. To accomplish this, you must institute a formal program to maximize the results. Believe it or not, most of the time the cost for the preventive measures are minimal.

Finally, make past losses a part of your safety meetings. Discuss all aspects of what happened and what process can be designed to fix the problem. An example of how this can work is illustrated by an event at a manufacturing plant a few years ago. An employee was lifting a box and hurt her back. After the accident investigation by the safety committee it was discovered that the injury occurred while searching for a specific box that required lifting several cartons to find the one with the right size item. The simple no-cost solution - stack all the boxes by size so it will always be the first one on top. The result has been minimized lifting exposure.

Make ZERO the motto at your location!

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



Mike Benmoschè



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# Mississippi 1 Mississippi 2 Mississippi 3

Mississippi 4  
Mississippi 5

By Ray Justice

How long will you take to notice me? (Hint: 5 seconds is too long.)  
The longer you take, the smaller I feel.  
How long will I wait?  
The sooner you notice me, acknowledge me, the more important I feel.  
Do you know I'm here? Do you care?  
Just a nod, eye contact, a wave of the hand.

Aware ... are you?  
Notice ... did you?  
Acknowledge ... will you?  
Important ... am I?

Do you see me?  
Do you care?  
Will I, (your customer), come back?

1... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5



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](http://www.rayjustice.com) or email [ray@SiteBrandBuilder.com](mailto:ray@SiteBrandBuilder.com).

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President's Column ... continued from page 82.

## Great Albany Meeting

We had a great meeting in Albany in September. We went on a tour of four unique washes, had a guest speaker from the Department of Labor with some updates on labor law, and an outstanding panel discussion with operators who have reinvested in their businesses. I'd like to thank Walt Hartl, Tom Hoffman, Jr., Doug Kleeschulte, Dennis O'Shaughnessy, Sr. and Gary Baright for their expertise and time in making it a really

impressive program. The panel also presented this program at the NRCC to rave reviews.

This year our Spring Membership Meeting will focus on the latest and greatest innovations in the industry. This meeting will be in the Poughkeepsie market and will include a carwash tour. Our Fall Membership Meeting in Albany will include a carwash tour as well and focus on Energy Savings Tips with a number of energy vendors on hand to educate us on how to save money and energy. Make sure

you check our website frequently to get the latest information on our programming and issues affecting New York State operators at [nyscwa.com](http://nyscwa.com).

I wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season!

Mark Kubarek  
NYSCWA President



## The Thin Line

By Ray Justice

There is a thin line between life and death between pleasure and pain laughing and crying.

Show me the boundaries of darkness and light night and dawn of friends and lovers of faith and fear.

Always among us everywhere in everything this thin, thin line between

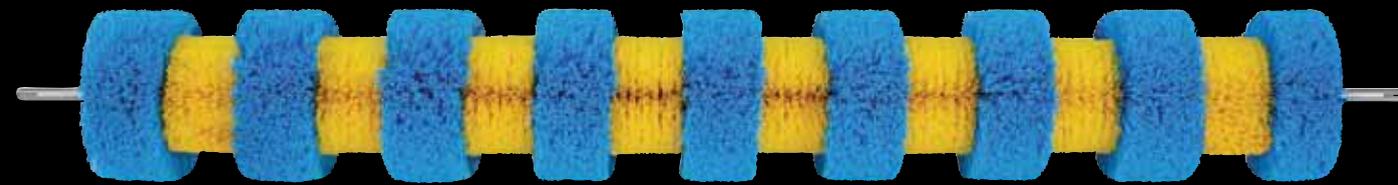
telling us quietly and powerfully appreciate what is Now.

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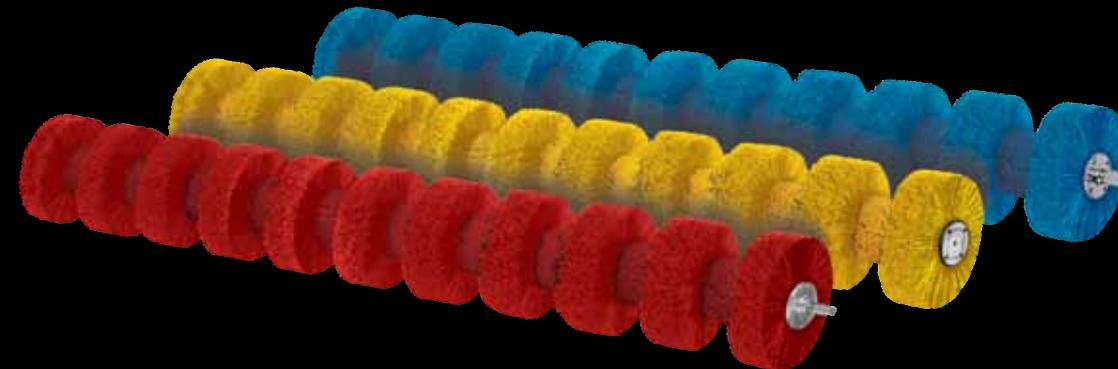
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# Albany-Area Raindancer Car Wash Gets Facelift, New Curb Appeal

By Alan M. Petrillo

An exterior tunnel carwash in Loudonville, NY, has undergone its second renovation since owner Stephen Hoffman purchased the location 25 years ago.

Raindancer Car Wash at 496 Albany-Shaker Road recently completed a renovation that began in October of 2009 and completely altered the exterior of the facility and ramped up its curb appeal.

"We had renovated the carwash after we bought it in 1985 and added four self-service bays," said Hoffman, "but in the 25 years since we did that, things had gotten tired. Our volume was going down and we had to either renovate or sell."

Hoffman said he got his inspiration for the renovation from reading "Good to Great – Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't," by Jim Collins.

"I read it again and again, and realized once you know yourself and what you want, it's very easy to build something based on your values and what you like," Hoffman said.

Raindancer Car Wash is housed in a structure that looks like a barn with a greyish-blue stain on it, so Hoffman used burgundy and white paint to splash on the building and give it the look of a weathered and peeling New England barn. He also added depictions of cars from the 1950s at the roofline

of the building that are painted over the top of each bay.

"At first we met with people saying a lot of negative things about it, but now that it's finished, it's become a retro-looking carwash and is accepted," Hoffman noted.

To improve the carwash's curb appeal, Hoffman added a pond in front with three waterfalls, galvanized steel beams and stones placed around planters.

"I used a very systematic process to the renovation, starting with the color of the building and the renovation of the bays, then putting in coin meters and stone arches in the bays," Hoffman pointed out. "Also, we have 40 feet of windows in the building so we put in a garden of trees, shrubs and flowers that are between the rinse and blowers. The garden faces East and gets the morning sun, so it takes advantage of the natural light."

Everyone does a ride-through in the carwash, so occupants of each vehicle get to enjoy a view of the garden.

Hoffman also has a Raindancer Car Wash location at 172 Freeman's Bridge Road in Glenville, NY, that has a 90-foot automatic tunnel and a 90-foot touch-free bay with drive-through blowers, five self-service bays and a detail shop.

Both Raindancer locations do fleet work, including taxis, auto dealers, body shops and police departments.



The stone treatment was another feature Hoffman developed in his bays to make it feel more like a barn than a wash.



Hoffman said he doesn't do much advertising, preferring to market through word-of-mouth.

"We have a very good and loyal base of customers," Hoffman said. "People talk us up and friends tell others about us. That's how it works."

Hoffman, who also owns a real estate company, said he has no plans for expansion of either wash at the present time, and new carwash sites don't interest him.

"With the two carwashes and the current housing market, I have enough on my plate right now," he said.

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ, freelance writer and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He's the author of the mystery novel, Full Moon, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).



Attractive signage throughout the wash is easy to read.



Wash packages are clearly stated in this attractive sign, again with a barn theme feel.



Even Hoffman's storage shed is clad with the burgundy and white paint.



More photos on next page!



Raindancer Car Wash in Loudonville, NY, underwent a serious makeover last year that cost approximately \$125,000 including some equipment upgrades. Owner Stephen Hoffman said it was time to upgrade or sell.



Owner Stephen Hoffman stands next to the bird bath he built out of field stone for about \$1,000.



The innovative bird bath is sure to please its feathered friends and customers alike.



Yet another added charm of the wash is the drift wood scattered throughout the wash. Hoffman has found these pieces at various locks throughout the Capital District.



Inside the bays there is a 50's car theme. When a customer activates the bay the tail lights on the car turn on. The front of the car is evident on the facade of the wash.

## 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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## Treasurer's Report

**Profit & Loss – January-October, 2010**

Income	
Meetings Income .....	14,305.60
Membership Dues.....	16,780.00
NRCC.....	19,947.63
Promotional Fees .....	1,915.81
Services.....	450.00
Vendor Sponsorships .....	1,450.00
<b>Total Income .....</b>	<b>54,849.04</b>
Expense	
Credit Card Fees.....	574.46
Director Fees.....	12,000.00
Entertainment Expense .....	105.95
Insurance Expense .....	1,513.00
Legislative Expense.....	202.73
Legislative Fees.....	9,000.00
Meeting Expenses .....	17,855.53
Office Expenses.....	250.27
Postage Expense .....	533.08
Printing/Graphics.....	102.00
Professional Services fees .....	700.00
Telephone/Conference Calls .....	243.06
Travel.....	216.21
Website Host.....	230.00
Website Maintenance .....	1,612.50
<b>Total Expense .....</b>	<b>45,138.79</b>
<b>Net Income .....</b>	<b>9,710.25</b>
Checking Acct.....	26,746.65
Money Market Acct. ....	39,022.88
<b>Total Account .....</b>	<b>65,769.53</b>

Submitted by Mike Bensmochè, NYSCWA treasurer. Mike will provide an accounting of the association's finances in each newsletter. If you have any questions, please call him at 800/891-9274.



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# NYSCWA Fall Meeting a Huge Success Despite Rain!



The New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) weathered the rain on September 28 to host a car-wash tour and Fall General Membership Meeting in Latham that attracted nearly 60, according to President Mark Kubarek. "The rain didn't keep us from visiting five outstanding washes," he said. "Even in the rain you can learn from your fellow operators."

The washes on the tour included Glenmont Car Wash in Glenmont, Hoffman Car Wash in Wynantskill, Broadway Auto Clinic in Menands, Colonial Car Wash in Guilderland and Wet Willy's in Latham. "Each location has a lot of per-

sonality and a variety of different profit centers," said Kubarek. "There was a lot of take-home value from seeing each one."

After heavy hors d'oeuvres and a buffet dinner the group was updated on recent changes in the state labor law by NYS Department of Labor Chief Labor Standards Investigator Michael Burkard.

The group then was treated to a panel discussion and slide presentation on "Investing in the Future of Carwashing." Hoffman Car Wash's Walt Hartl moderated the panel that consisted of Tom Hoffman, Jr., Dennis O'Shaughnessy, Sr. of Glenmont Car

Wash, Gary Baright of Foam 'N Wash and Doug Kleeschulte of K & W Car Wash. The panelists shared their belief in reinvesting in the industry and how they decided to do what they did to improve upon their operations. This seminar was also featured at for the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 20.

Meeting sponsors included Empire Chemical Sales, ICS, Mang, Micrologic, *Northeast Carwasher* magazine and PDQ/New England Car Wash Equipment. Simoniz USA was the tour bus sponsor.

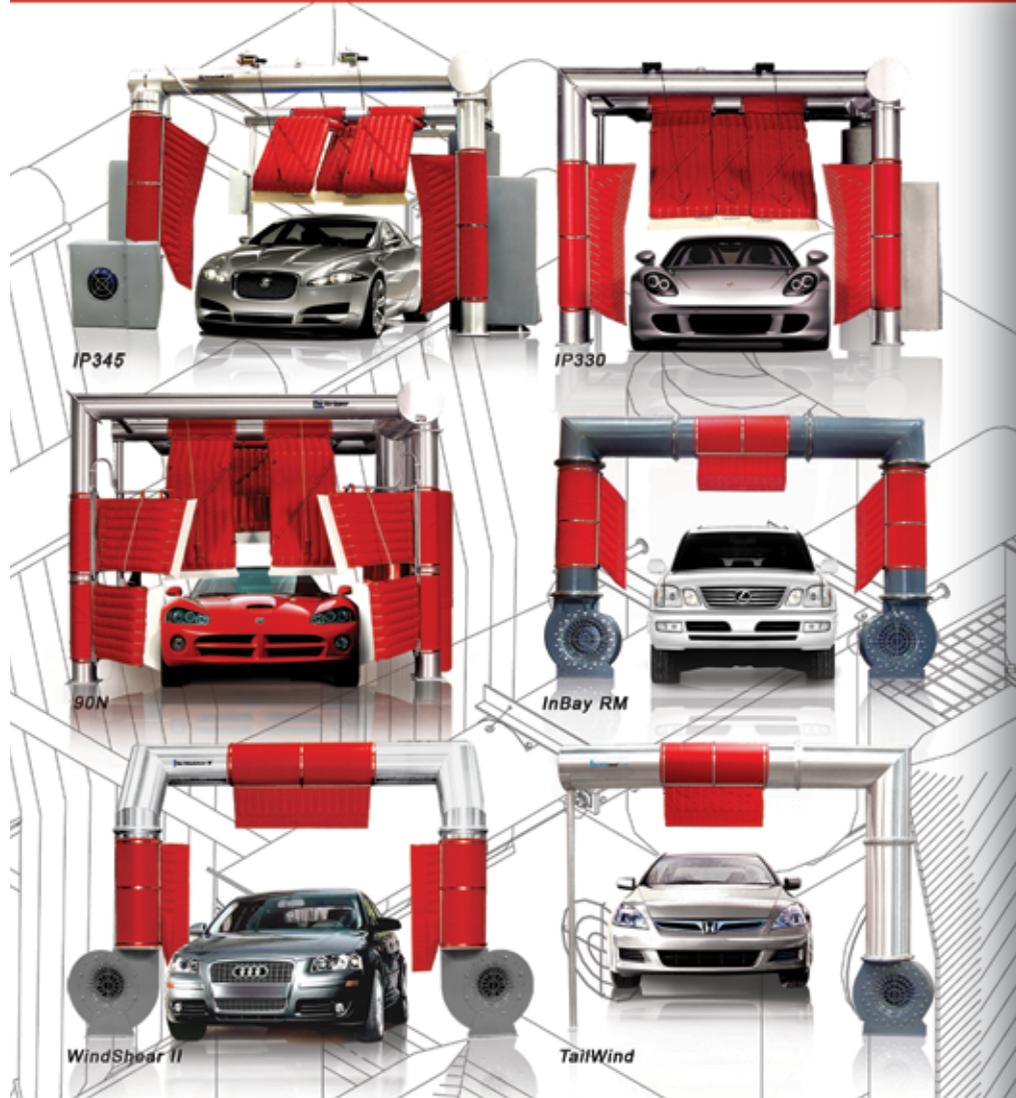
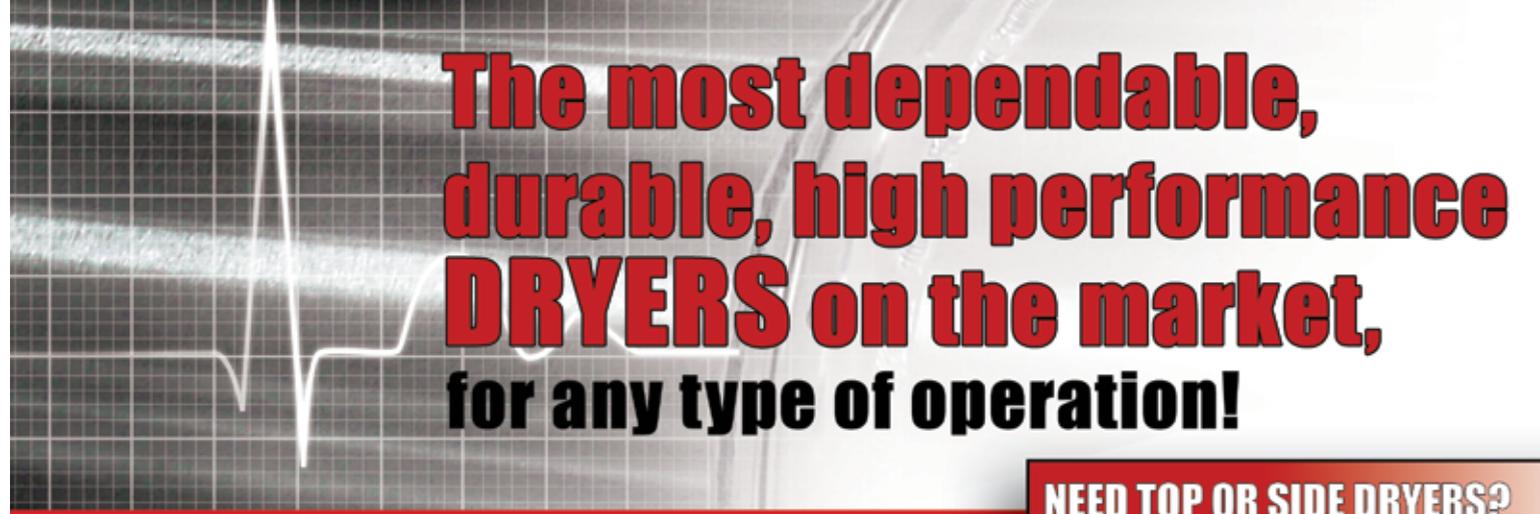
*Continued on page 92 ...*



*Glenmont Car Wash in Glenmont boasts numerous profit centers including an exterior-only tunnel, inbays and onsite full detailing services.*



*The Hoffman Car Wash in Wynantskill showed off its new inbay automatics.*



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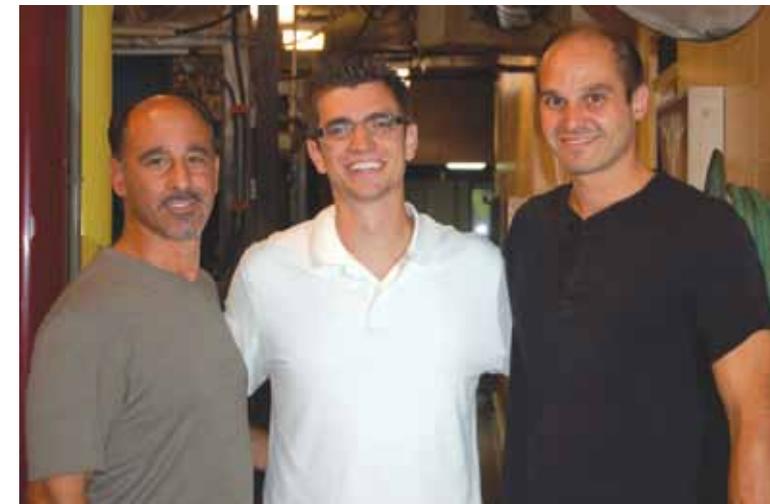
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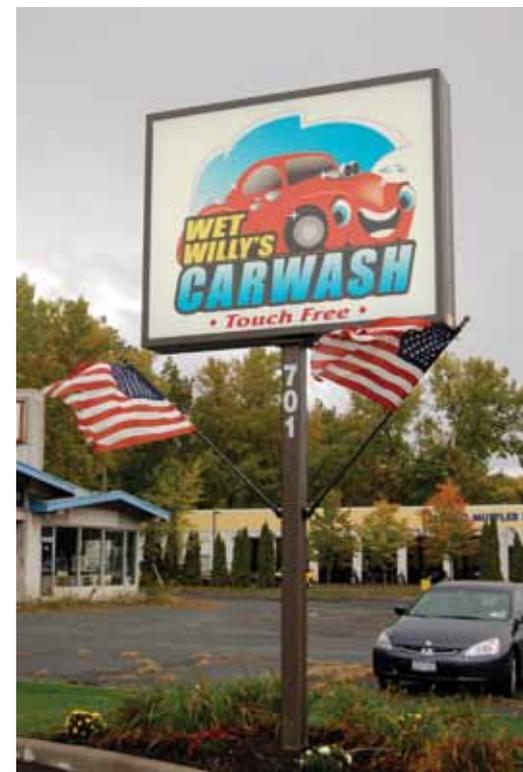
*Colonial Car Wash in Guilderland features a tunnel and self-serve bays on highly traveled Rt. 20.*



*Long Island operators Steve Benfante, Mark Margiore and Paul Vallario made the trip for the tour.*



*Team O'Shaughnessy (Dennis Jr. and Sr.) were able to show off their first-rate facility.*



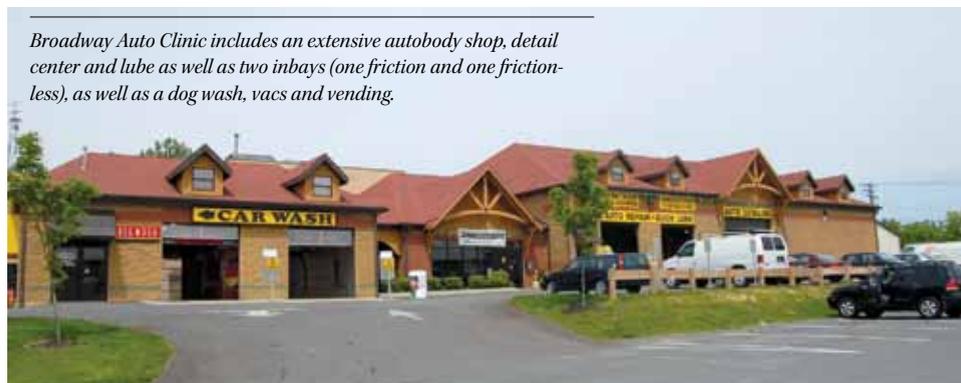
*Wet Willy's was the newest wash on the tour with a handsome facade and state-of-the-art equipment in Latham.*



*NYS Department of Labor Chief Labor Standards Investigator Michael F. Burkard updated the group on labor laws.*



*The event's panel presentation, "Investing in the Future of Carwashing," included operators Tom Hoffman, Jr., Dennis O'Shaughnessy, Sr., Gary Baright and Doug Kleeschulte.*



*Broadway Auto Clinic includes an extensive autobody shop, detail center and lube as well as two inbays (one friction and one frictionless), as well as a dog wash, vacs and vending.*

*Hoffman Car Wash's Walt Hartl moderated the lively and informative panel complete with an extensive slide show.*



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# Broadway Bridge Labor Violations Carry Huge Black Eye for Industry

By William Y. Crowell, III

In the second week of October, the New York State Department of Labor (DOL) announced a \$1.9 million settlement with the operators of the Broadway Bridge Carwash, located at 5134 Broadway in Manhattan. The Department of Labor investigation covered the period of June 1, 2003, through August 23, 2008. Broadway Bridge Carwash failed to pay \$1,273,664 in minimum wages, overtime wages and earned tips to employees, according to the DOL. This non-payment applied not only to employees who were on payroll records, but also to a number of unidentified employees who were paid in cash.

The Department of Labor also assessed the following: interest on the unpaid wages in the amount of \$345,000, liquidated damages of \$127,366, and civil penalties of \$214,581. The Department of Labor originally sought \$4.6 million but settled for \$1.9 million. This case was investigated based on an employee complaint.

An article in *Crain's New York Business* stated that "... investigators found that nearly 80 percent of carwash operators in New York City are guilty of wage and hour violations. State-wide investigators have uncovered nearly \$10 million in unpaid wages in an industry where workers earn just \$16,570 per year."

The Department of Labor reports that it has investigated at least 150 carwashes since 2008, which represents approximately 20 percent of the total number of carwashes.

These labor law violations by Broadway Bridge Carwash result in a huge black eye for the entire carwash industry in New York State. Despite the fact that this involves only one carwash, it creates a negative impression for all operators – the overwhelming majority of whom are small businessmen who are compliant with all the laws and regulations impacting their business.

California was the first state attracting significant publicity for labor violations at carwash operations. In fact, California may be instructive in terms of possible responses to carwash labor violations. Under a recently enacted statute, California carwash operators are required to register annually and to pay

a \$250 registration fee, along with a \$50 restitution fund assessment, and to provide a \$15,000 surety bond. The restitution fund and surety bond provide assets for payment of wage judgments when the employer is either unable or unwilling to pay a wage judgment. There is also a provision in California's statute extending liability for unpaid wages to operators who take over an operation with a wage judgment.

Another outgrowth of the carwash labor violations in California is a campaign by the United Steelworkers Union to organize carwash workers and to bargain collectively on their behalf.

The carwash industry in New York State should make every effort to be proactive on labor issues to avoid a legislative and regulatory over-reaction directed at the bad operators.



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



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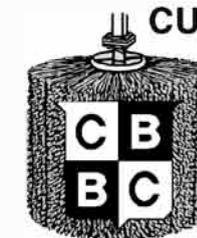
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