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Item# DPKIT-6

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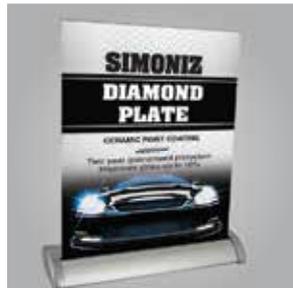


Diamond Plate Brochure

Diamond Plate Customer Brochure

This brochure provides product and coverage information.

Item# DP1105



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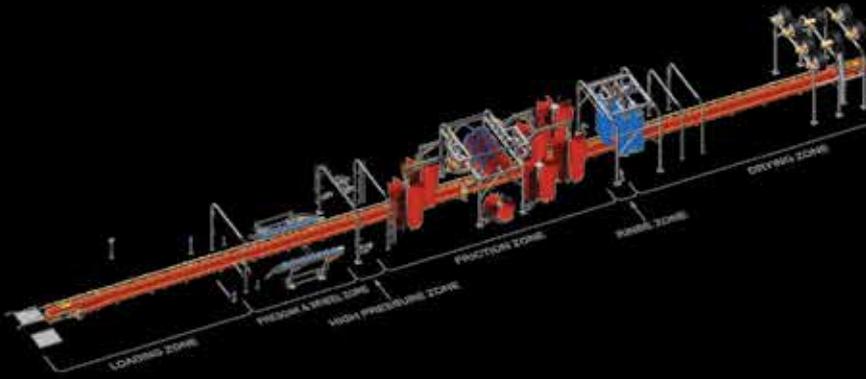
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Every so often you come across someone who impacts the road in which you travel. It could be a teacher or coworker or friend, but it's someone who no matter how frequently or infrequently your paths cross there is something you took away from that person that will always stay with you.

When I first got into this industry some 27 years ago, one of the first operators I met was Francis Xavier Downey. Now, anyone who knew Fran, or knew of Fran, is likely smiling right now and shaking their heads. What a genuinely great guy and steward of the industry. You see, Fran's larger than life personality, sprinkled with his New England demeanor and sensibility, and gift to gab, was endearing and contagious. He would champion an idea or concept and encourage you to "Jump on the Big Red Bus" and make it happen with him, even if you weren't quite sure about the desired outcome. His oil company background with Lever Brothers and Getty Oil Corporation laid the perfect mosaic for his 30 years in the carwashing industry, which began in 1970. He named his Portland, ME-based washes, "Fill It Up, Please," after all, so his background in oil was obvious, but his love for carwashing was as well.

Fran certainly inspired and motivated me to think beyond the obvious and to believe in the spirit of teamwork. But I wasn't alone. I'd like to share the thoughts of some of his biggest fans who had the pleasure of serving with him on the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), New England and/or International Carwash Association (ICA) boards, or just being his friend, over his long span in carwashing.

I am going to begin with Bobby Paisner of the ScrubADub chain, based in Natick, MA. His company purchased and rebranded Fran's sites back in 2006 when he determined that his family did not want to take them over. "We have stayed in touch with the Downey family and were always hopeful that they were pleased with how we modernized and operated the sites," said Paisner. "Occasionally, I would get a message that one of the family came through and had a good wash experience. A few years back, we remodeled the South Portland location. On the day that we reopened, Fran's wife, Brenda, was the second car in line to be washed."

Family was extremely important to Fran. Many of his children worked in the business in one form or another. "The Paisner and Downey families spent many times together discussing our family businesses. We were both involved in family business groups and often discussed how hard it was to transition from one generation to the next," said Paisner. "One of my memories of Fran was when we went to visit him at his carwashes. He seemed happiest when he was standing at the exit of his washes as the clean cars exited the tunnel.

"As ScrubADub moves into a third generation, I can only hope that Fran is looking down and smiling as he watches the cars roll through."

Long-time Massachusetts operator Bob Katseff of Turnpike Car Wash remembers Fran with humor and admiration. "Fran Downey was a "carwashers car-washer!" Although he was in the gasoline business (sold gas on his sites), he always considered carwashing his focus," said Katseff. "We had similar careers; he was a

Continued on page 8...



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carwasher

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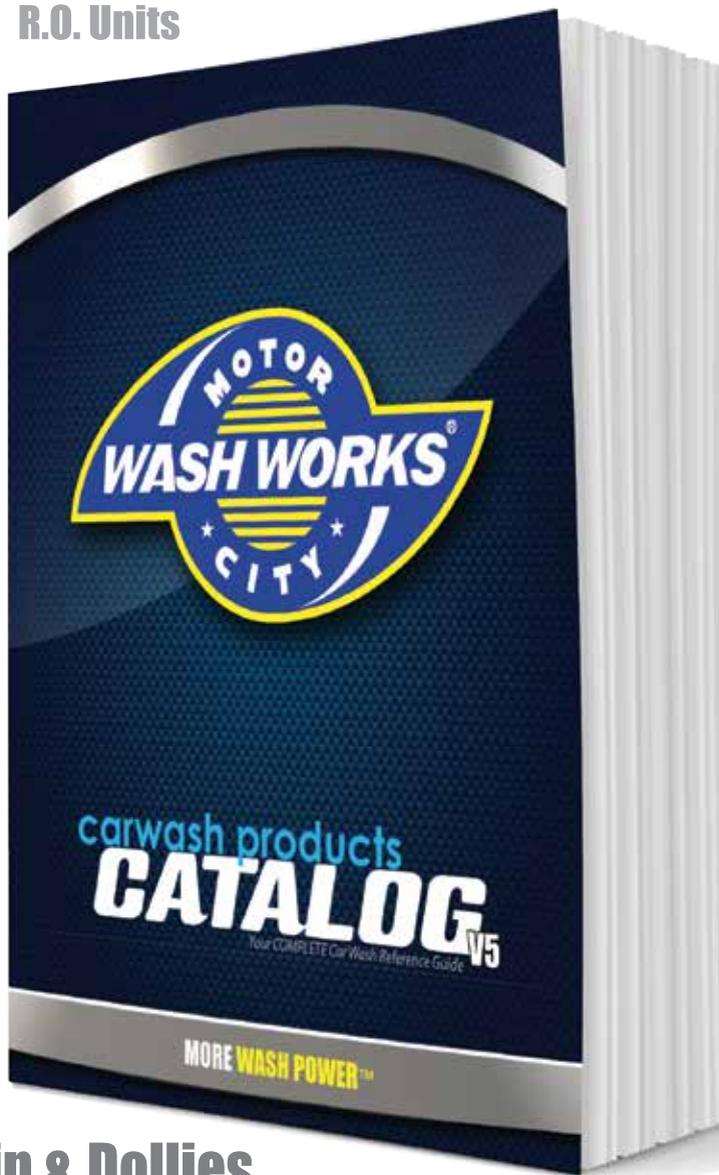
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(L to R) Alan Tracy (CCA), Dick Zodikoff (CWONJ), Doug Hancock (ICA President), Tom Hoffman, Sr. (NYSCWA), Fran Downey (NECA) and Joe Ross (Professional Carwash Association of New York). This group of industry leaders met at the first Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) in the fall of 1990 in Newport, RI. Some 500 attended the two-day event.



Sherman Industries distributor, as was I. He washed cars on the retail level, as do I. Therefore, on many occasions I would call Fran for advice. He always had time to speak with me and would get back to me to follow up on the issues at hand. I was so grateful for his friendship and the relationship we had cultivated over the years. I always learned something whenever we spoke. I think of Fran often and will miss him. I will also miss his 'Fran-isms' like, 'That guy is snifting glue.' Yes, 'snifting!'"

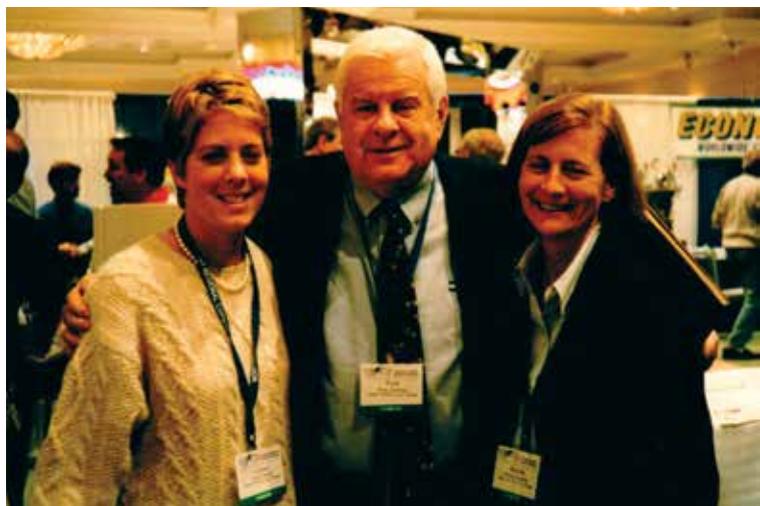
In digging out some photos of Fran I came across a letter dated November 7, 1990, that he had written to some of the Northeast Regional Presidents just after the first Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) took place in Newport, RI, earlier that fall. The objective of the meeting was clearly outlined to build on the success of the first NRCC and to see what common issues the founding associations could work on together. He ended the letter with, "These are just a few things to get us thinking..."

Thank you, Fran.

Francis Xavier Downey, 86, passed away on February 18, with his loving family by his side. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Brenda, sister Maureen Bourke, seven children and 14 grandchildren.



Fran Downey, third from left, is presented with an award from the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention. Also pictured is former ICA Executive Director Gus Trantham, Bruce Sands and Bill Martin.



Fran Downey is flanked by daughters Louisa and Brenda at an NRCC show.

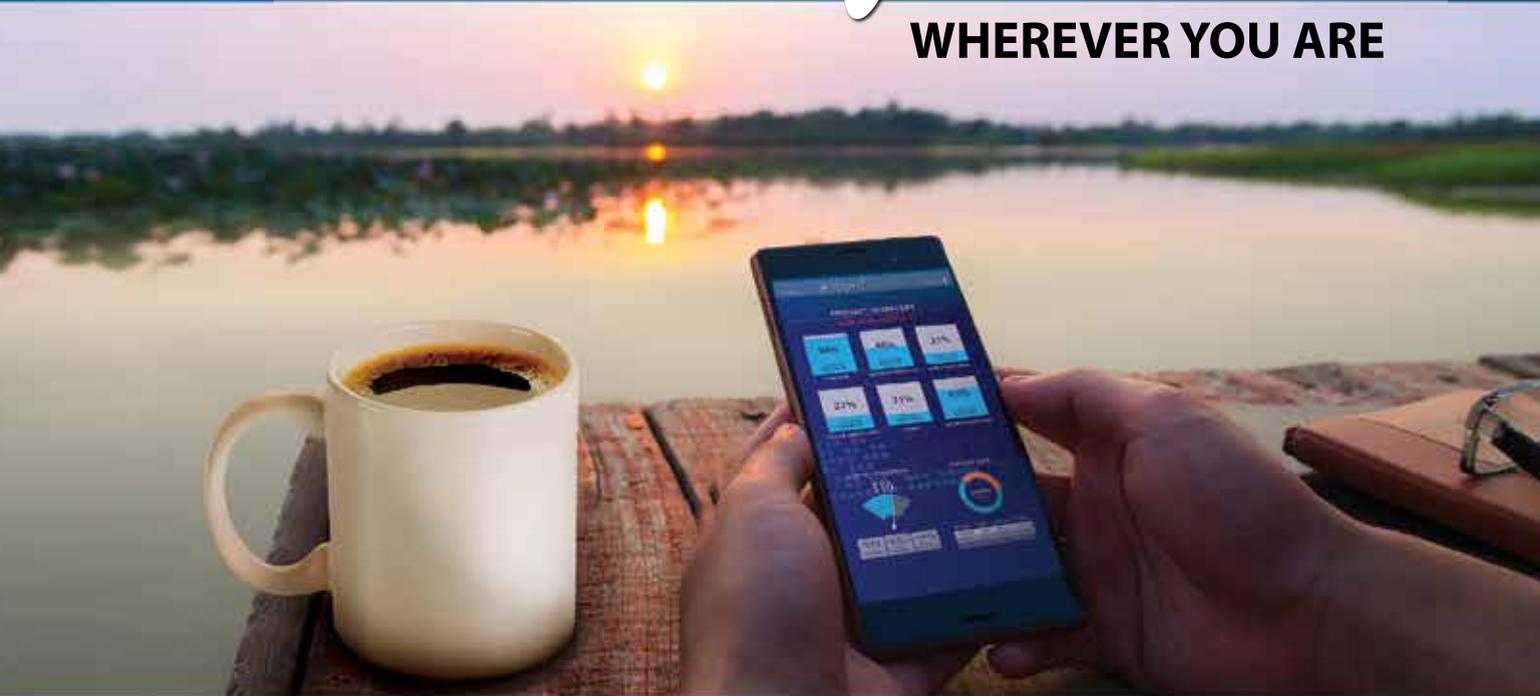


Suzanne L. Stansbury

Suzanne L. Stansbury
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Great Idea!

And The Survey Says...

At Hoffman Car Wash, headquartered in Albany, NY, customer feedback is critical to ensuring exceptional service. Hoffman Director of Customer Service, Rodney Bronson, a 28-year veteran of the company, says the survey that is available to customers online is a great tool and resource for him. "We used to provide paper comment cards but they were time consuming, costly and labor intensive," he said. "Now a customer who has any kind of comment or issue can simply go online and fill out the online form."

A tab on the company's home page, hoffmancarwash.com, titled "Rate Your Visit" is the vehicle for contacting the wash. From a few simple questions, Bronson knows exactly how his team is fairing and how well they are cleaning a vehicle. "If a customer has a complaint we address it and provide them with a free wash," said Bronson. "If a customer claims that we scratched their vehicle, I set up an appointment and meet with the customer and take them through the wash process. The majority of the time the effort results in a happy customer, and one that was surprised that we reached out to them."

According to Bronson, every single comment receives a reply from a manager or himself. The 21-location wash operation typically gets between 2-8 comments weekly. ■

For more information
visit hoffmancarwash.com



At Colonial Car Wash in Schenectady, NY, it's all about the math. Kind of seems like a no brainer!

Fall Cover Story!

Our fall cover story is going to feature this beautiful and innovative Express Exterior wash, the 21st Hoffman Car Wash in Ballston Spa, NY.

Not only is this clearly an attractive facility, it is full of some really cool features that make this a showcase and forward-thinking facility. ■



WASH VOLUME INDEX

We have taken the pulse of four East Coast operators to see where their volumes are compared to last year (YTD). Our two most southern contributors have fared better than our upstate New York and Boston operators with a high of +11 percent in the Mid-Atlantic and a low of -9 percent in Boston. May the yellow gold of pollen have blanketed all of your washes this spring.



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

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CSI® ANNOUNCES
KEY ACCOUNT PARTNERSHIP



Cleaning Systems, Inc. (CSI) of De Pere, WI, a leading manufacturer of cleaning and protection chemical products, as well as chemical application technology for the transportation industry globally has established a Key Account Partnership(KAP) chemical supply agreement with Terrible Herbst Oil, Inc. dba Terrible's Car Wash based in Las Vegas, NV.

Terrible's Car Wash operates more than 40 wash facilities throughout the southwest, with the majority being in the greater Las Vegas market. Founded in 1959, the company now operates more than 100 gas stations and convenience stores in Nevada, California and Arizona. They are in the beginning steps of an extensive carwash expansion.

"We are very proud to have been selected to fill this important role for such a great car wash operator," said Dave Krause, President/CEO of Cleaning Systems, Inc. "Terrible's carwashes are known nationwide and have a great reputation throughout our industry."

Scott Horner, Vice President of Operations for Terrible Herbst Oil, spearheaded an extensive chemical comparison and evaluation program between national chemical manufactures, beginning in the fall of 2016, before ultimately selecting Lustra Car Care Products as their new chemical company. "We feel that we did a thorough vetting process to ensure we made the best chemical program choice for our growing fleet of washes moving forward," said Horner. "The CSI-Lustra opportunity brought the most to support our goals, they have a real

commitment to customer service and innovation for the future. We believe CSI will be a great partner for many, many years." ■

For more information
visit cleaningsystemsinc.com

NCS PARTNERS WITH
AEA INVESTORS

National Carwash Solutions (NCS), Grimes, IA, the nation's largest manufacturer of commercial carwash systems, cleaning fluid solutions and maintenance services has partnered with AEA Investors in a strategic recapitalization to accelerate the growth of the company and expand the products and services NCS provides its customers, according to a company press release. AEA Investors is a global private equity firm that focuses on industrial products, chemicals and consumer retail sectors. Previously, NCS was owned by Trivest Partners. BlackArch Partners was retained by Trivest Partners and NCS management to serve as their exclusive financial advisor. "We are excited to have partnered with AEA Investors," said Michael Gillen, CEO of National Carwash Solutions. "This transaction will allow us to continue to strengthen our leadership position within the industry and best position us for growth in the coming years." ■

For more information visit
macneilwash.com, ryko.com,
aeainvestors.com, trivest.com
and blackarchpartners.com

JACQUES JOINS
MARK VII

Mark VII Equipment Inc., Arvada, CO, the North America subsidiary of WashTec AG of Germany, the world's largest manufacturer of vehicle cleaning systems, has hired Mike Jacques as its Tunnel Sales Manager, according to a company

press release. Jacques has 19 years of sales and operations experience in the carwash industry at companies like MacNeil Wash Systems, Peco Car Wash Systems and PD McLaren. "I'm pleased to welcome Mike to the Mark VII team," said Chris Andersen, CEO of Mark VII. "With the introduction of our new SolfLine2 tunnel equipment, Mike's extensive experience in the tunnel market segment will be a great boost to our growing tunnel business." ■

For more information
visit markvii.net

PERSAUD RE-JOINS
MACNEIL TEAM



MacNeil Wash Systems, a National Carwash Solutions Company and supplier to the tunnel carwash industry, Barrie, Ontario, has named Naren Persaud as its new Customer Service and Inside Sales Manager. Persaud is responsible for guiding customer service, inside sales and order processing, working closely with the 48 members of MacNeil's international distributor network and four North American sales managers to process and track customer orders, according to a company press release.

"Naren comes to MacNeil with a tremendous amount of organizational experience and technical expertise to deliver best-in-class customer care," said Jeff Tulk, Plant Operations Manager. "This is a key role in the partnership we have with our distributors and owner-operators and I'm looking forward to having Naren lead significant growth on our key objectives in the area." ■

For more information visit
www.macneilwash.com

D & S LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

D & S Car Wash Equipment Company, St. Louis, MO, has launched its new IQ® Car Wash Systems website, according to a company press release. This site features a 3-layer system of information delivery about the IQ 2.0 In-Bay Automatic Car Wash System.

The front-facing layer of information is for consumers and the merits of the system. The new site offers today's tech-savvy and eco-friendly consumers an easy way to learn about the benefits of using a carwash outfitted with this system. The second layer of information is for prospective IQ owners. The third password-protected layer of information is for current IQ owners. ■

For more information visit
dscarwash.com or
IQCarWashSystems.com

RB SYSTEMS OPENS WEST COAST SERVICE CENTER



DRB Systems, Inc., Akron, OH, has opened a West Coast Service Center to provide sales and service support for customers throughout the western region of the United

States, according to a company press release. "Today we are thrilled to announce that customers from the Atlantic to the Pacific are completely covered by DRB and Unitec representatives who set the benchmark for industry knowledge, insight and expertise," said DRB President and CEO Bill Morgenstern. This announcement follows a September notification that the company had acquired Unitec, the Baltimore, MD-based producer of advanced hardware and software for the carwash market.

The new DRB Service Center will be located in the Los Angeles area. In addition to locations in Akron and Canton, OH, and Elkridge, MD, DRB Systems has sales and service personnel in 10 states. ■

For more information visit
drbsystems.com and
startwithunitec.com

CSI HIRES RESEARCH SCIENTIST

Cleaning Systems, Inc., De Pere, WI, has hired Dr. Sangwook Lim to fill the position of Research Scientist in its Research and Development Lab, according to a company press release. Dr. Lim has more than seven years of experience in experimental and theoretical work related to colloid surfactant science and nanotechnology. As a chemical engineer and surface scientist Sangwook has dedicated himself to the study of surface science, interfacial phenomenon and polymer chemistry.

"I'm very excited to be part of the CSI family," he said. "I firmly believe that my research experience and skill sets, as well as my hardworking and team-oriented personality, can bring value to CSI. I look forward to developing and improving our valuable products to continue making CSI an industry leader in quality products and technological innovation." ■

For more information
visit cleaningsystemsinc.com

PDQ'S LEWIS HONORED

William "Red" Lewis, the founder of PDQ Manufacturing, De Pere, WI, was honored by the Rotary Club of Green Bay recently with the club's 2017 Free Enterprise Award, according to a company press release.

The Green Bay, WI, native, is noted as being the "father of touchless carwashing" having founded a carwash component manufacturing business and cleaning solution company and creating an Automobile Gallery in downtown Green Bay.

Lewis was honored because of his stewardship of PDQ, his ability to adapt to industry trends and his philanthropy, according to Rotary Club President Mary Kay Orr. The Free Enterprise Award comes with a \$5,000 donation to the recipient's charity of choice. Lewis donated the money back to the Rotary Foundation of Green Bay for scholarships to a high school student leadership retreat that the club organizes. ■

For more information
visit www.pdqinc.com

HYDRA-FLEX'S BERRAN SEMIFINALIST

Carrie Berran, a Hydra-Flex, Inc., Burnsville, MN, team member, has been named one of eight national semifinalists for Jr. NBA Coach of the Year, according to a company press release. Berran has been recognized by the Minnesota Timberwolves/Lynx for her dedication and influence on Minnesota's youth basketball community. She is an integral part of the Eagan Athletic Association and the HR Representative at Hydra-Flex, Inc., a manufacturer of fluid handling equipment.

The program has been designed by the Jr. NBA and Positive Coaching Alliance to honor and recognize influential youth basketball coaches and the work they do for basketball around the country. ■

For more information visit
jr.nba.com/coachoftheyear

The Value of Positive Branding



By Sara Park

Radio and television are expensive mediums in which to purchase. While they may not be necessary in some markets, many operators will find that they are incredibly helpful in boosting volumes and to becoming more competitive. But buyer beware! ... In today's media market, your sales representative may offer 'value-added services' (VAS) that sound enticing, but may be costly in the long run.



One of the most important components of any successful business is its positive brand image. It's something all owners work tirelessly to achieve and protect. Keeping properties clean and bright, and staffed with polite, well-groomed employees, can all attribute to a positive brand image. "Word of mouth will always be one of the best things you have going for you. Customer service, wash quality, and lot presentation should be every owners' main focus as these three aspects will always drive volume," says Christopher Kubarek of K & S Car Wash in Auburn, NY. Christopher's family has been washing cars since 1977 so he was raised knowing how to protect their brand image.

Think about your brand name and the characteristics that come to mind when you think of the company you have built. Then, imagine that with one poorly produced radio or television spot the public's perception of your company crumbles. It doesn't take much of an imagination to know that could be damaging. We've all seen television commercials that drive us crazy with their lack of professionalism or substance, or they are just plain obnoxious. A bad commercial can drive customers away from your door and right into the door of your competitor.

Commercials must always embody your brand values. When your sales representative says, "We can run your ad

Social Media Marketing Stats on Branding

- ❖ Online adults aged 18-34 are most likely to follow a brand via social networking (95%).
Source: MarketingSherpa

Think about your audience and see where they are most likely to follow your brand.

- ❖ 71% of consumers who have had a good social media service experience with a brand are likely to recommend it to others.
Source: Ambassador

Use social media as an effective

customer service tool to increase brand engagement and win new customers.

- ❖ There are 1.65 billion active mobile social accounts globally with 1 million new active mobile social users added every day.
Source: We Are Social

Make sure to optimize your mobile social media campaigns and since mobile ads are relatively cheap and easy to produce, test multiple versions to see what works the best.

- ❖ 96% of the people who discuss

brands online do not follow those brands' owned profiles.
Source: Brandwatch

Companies need to go beyond their won channels and monitor those unbranded conversations in order to gain valuable insights and manage brand health.

- ❖ Visual content is more than 40 times more likely to get shared on social media than other types of content.
Source: HubSpot

Continued on page 16 ...

schedule for x-number of dollars and we'll throw in the commercial production for free," please stop and think long and hard about the message you are conveying and how it can be interpreted. Spending time up front to ensure a positive message will save you money in the long run.

Some television and radio studios do an excellent job, but if you aren't 100 percent confident in their creative ability, you must consider the overall cost. If a commercial isn't in your budget, you may want to find another means of advertising — and there are a lot of other options out there today.

Kubarek explains, "Just because you've found one ad successful doesn't mean you should stick with running that same old tired ad over and over. People love to see new and exciting

things; something that grabs their eye and makes them think about visiting."

If you continue to use an old commercial from the past, you may not get the response you once had. It's important to keep all of your advertising updated and fresh. An effective commercial should be no longer than 15 seconds. Yes, just 15 seconds! It should be shot in HD (high definition) so that it doesn't look as if it is an old commercial on today's flat screen televisions. Professional voice talent should be used in most cases as well.

Now, think about how you want to project your image. You don't want your commercial to look or sound like a car dealership or a law office. When creating any type of branded advertising you should strive for a clear, simple, clean message. Your brand values and

appearance should be clearly represented so that customers know they can trust their car to your care.

VAS can be valuable, but look for other options such as YouTube pre-rolls, mass email blasts, social media ads or website views of your commercial. These will go further for free than a poorly produced commercial or print ad. Pre-rolls are the commercials you must watch before you get to the online video you want to watch. While not everyone clicks on them, they are excellent branding for your company and they make a good addition to a strong ad schedule. This is especially true the last week of the year. The weather can be great for washing cars and many people watch YouTube videos on their new holiday gadgets.

Commercials can be used in so

Continued on page 16 ...

3 Tips To Make Your Yelp Page Sparkle And Shine

Did you know Yelp is integrated into the in-dash systems of BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, Porsche and Honda vehicles? Did you know it is integrated into the iPhone?

Yelp is a restaurant review site, so why would carwashes need to pay any attention to it? According to a 2014 Software Advice survey, four out of five consumers are turning to review sites when finding a local business. Yelp is the site they trust most and it's the site they use when looking for a carwash like yours.

So who is using Yelp? It turns out Yelpers are relatively affluent, educated adults. Approximately 43.7 percent of Yelp users have an income above \$100K. When they're using Yelp they're ready to buy. Some 82 percent of Yelp users are searching because they intend to spend money according to a study by Nielsen. So, if someone is looking at your Yelp page, they are a potential customer.

Making your Yelp page sparkle and shine is as easy as following these three steps:

1. Claim Your Listing For Free

Claiming your business page gives you access to a whole suite of free tools. You can claim your Yelp for Business Owners Account by visiting biz.yelp.com. Once you have completed the claiming process, you will walk through the steps to verify your hours, website, address and phone number.

One missed opportunity for many carwash operators is the categories they choose. You can be in up to three categories. While many are correctly in the Car Wash category,

if you also offer auto detailing, be sure to add that category.

From there you'll want to add your specialties. This section should be used to describe what sets you apart from your competitors, as well as the specific services you offer. This is a great place to highlight green products, eco-efficiency and hand services. This is the first place you'll highlight what makes you unique.

Keep in mind that different users search different ways. Some might search "hand wash" while others search for "car wash." Be thorough — the more details you include about your services the better.

Even better, there is a Yelp for Business Owners app that you can download via the App Store or Google Play — just search for "Yelp Biz" as this will put the power of your business user account in the palm of your hand.

2. Add Photos

Now we are ready for some suds. Adding photos to your Yelp page is the next step. There is no limit to the number of photos a business owner can upload to their page through their business user account. Photos not only help paint a more complete picture of your business but they also improve page performance. Yelp's data team found that people spend two and a half times as much time on a Yelp business page with photos as compared to one without. Further, busi-

Continued on page 18 ...



By John Carroll

The Value of Positive Branding ... *continued from page 15.*

many ways today. Share your commercials on your social media pages, web pages, YouTube pages, etc. Use clips to demonstrate different goods and services on your website. You may not care for videos on your website, but the younger buyers in the market will appreciate seeing a very short video of your location or a specific service. A superior quality ad

may cost you more up front, but you can leverage that creative and use it in many different advertising areas. Spend your advertising dollars wisely and keep your positive brand image by controlling the look, sound and message of everything you produce. This is your business and you need to protect your image in all your advertising. ■

Sara Park is the CCO and Co-Founder of National Car Wash Marketing in Illion, NY. You can reach Sara at NationalCarWashMarketing.com or Sara@nationalcarwashmarketing.com

If you've got a marketing question or want to see a specific marketing topic covered in our next issue; feel free to email Sara with your questions or suggestions.

Social Media Marketing Stats on Branding ... *continued from page 14.*

Digital has a great post on how to create an innovative content strategy on social media.

Facebook Stats

- ❖ In 2015, Facebook influenced 52% of consumers' online and offline purchases, up from 36% in 2014. *Source: The Drum*

This shows the importance for retailers to manage their social media channels, which will have a direct impact on purchase behavior.

- ❖ There are 40 million active small business pages in Facebook and 4 million of those businesses pay for social media advertising on Facebook. *Source: Forbes* The social media advertising statistics show that small-sized companies should consider paying for Facebook ads in order to gain visibility and surpass competitor relatively easily.

- ❖ There were more than 4.4 million videos uploaded directly to Facebook in February 2016, generating more than 199 billion views. *Source: ReelSEO*

Video marketing is a powerful tool that personalizes your brand and increases conversions.

- ❖ Only 20% of Facebook posts generate an emotional response while no ads did. *Source: AdEspresso*

Instead of using Facebook as an emotional medium, delivering dynamic and tailored messaging to people in specific stages and at key times can yield much better results.

- ❖ The best time to post on Face-

book is 3:00 pm on Wednesday. Other optimal times include 12:00-1:00pm on Saturday and Sunday, and 1:00-4:00 pm on Thursday and Friday. *Source: HubSpot*

Try using tools like Buffer or Time.ly to auto schedule your posts.

Twitter Stats

- ❖ Link clicks account for 92% of all user interaction with tweets. *Source: HubSpot*

Link clicks are your easiest and strongest chance of gaining views and shares for your content.

- ❖ 78% of people who complain to a brand via Twitter expect a response within an hour. *Source: Lithium*

Customers are turning to social media outlets to unleash their frustration or with questions. Make sure you are actively engaged on your social networks.

- ❖ There are a total of 1.3 billion accounts, but only 320 million are active. *Source: Business Insider*

According to Content Marketing Institute predictions for 2016, as Twitter's sign-up growth has slowed down, it will boost its stock price by making ads more prominent, so be ready to start paying for visibility.

Twitter has a serious competitor now in Reddit. Reddit has occasionally passed Twitter as the #3 social networking site in the top 10 social networking sites by market share of visits. This has also left a mark on Twitter's stock price that has been moving steadily downward.

- ❖ Latest study by Locowise found that adding hashtags had no effect on engagement rates. In fact, tweets without hashtags outperformed tweets with hashtags. *Source: Adweek*

Therefore, it is better to focus on the quality of your original content instead of overly relying on hashtags for increasing engagement.

Instagram Stats

- ❖ Top brands on Instagram are seeing a per-follower engagement rate of 4.21% which is 58 times higher than on Facebook and 120 times higher than on Twitter. *Source: Hootsuite*

Instagram has become a powerful platform for marketers and its potential cannot be overlooked any longer.

- ❖ Media brands are the most active whereas business services, financial services, and fast moving consumer goods have the lowest percentage of brands represented on Instagram. *Source: Simply Measured*

Also, the increase in business activity on Instagram the brand posting frequency is becoming more normalized and standardized to highlight the increase in a more measurable approach.

- ❖ 90% of Instagram users are younger than 35. *Source: ScienceDaily*

Instagram has become the social media network for targeting millennials.

- ❖ Products were the top content types for the top 200 global brands in terms of engage-

Continued on page 22 ...



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3 Tips To Make Your Yelp Page Sparkle And Shine ... continued from page 15.

nesses that have one to five reviews and 10 photos get 200 percent more user views than businesses with the same number of reviews and no photos.

When considering what photos to add, the more the merrier! Add photos of your team, the inside/outside of your building, special products/services you offer, and before/after photos.

3. Respond To Your Reviews

Time for the wax and polish. Responding to your reviews will really make your page shine. Responding to your reviews is easy to do in your business user account. You have two ways to respond to reviews on Yelp – Public Comment or Direct Message. Public Comments are visible on your Yelp page while Direct Messages go to the Yelper's inbox. Responding is important because it shows your commitment to customer service and improves your page performance.

In Hug Your Haters, by Jay Baer, Baer teamed up with Edison Research and found that 53 percent of customers expect a reply on review sites. What's more is that businesses experience a 16 percent boost in customer advocacy from answered complaints on reviews sites. Meanwhile, businesses that ignore complaints on review sites experience a 37 percent decline in customer advocacy.

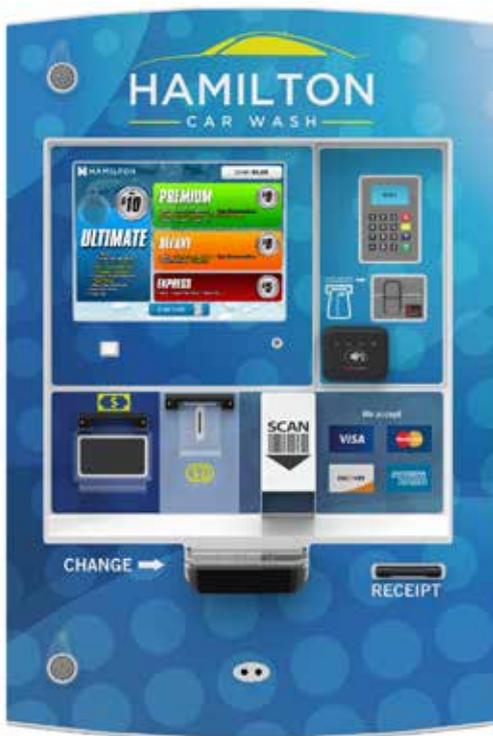
On Yelp, according to Yelp's Data Science team, Yelp us-

ers are 33 percent more likely to upgrade their review if you respond with a personalized message within a day. The same study also found that businesses that respond to reviews get a 5 percent increase in review count. Added bonus: this increase in review volume helps attract organic traffic (traffic coming from a search engine such as Google or Bing).

If you're looking for ways to encourage your reviews organically, set up a Check-in Offer! Having a Check-in Offer helps you look more appealing to mobile customers searching on Yelp. When they see a promotion (e.g., \$2 off a premium package), they are given an incentive to visit your carwash. The added benefit to you is that whenever they check into a business, users are prompted to write a review for that business the next time they use Yelp.

Car owners are turning to Yelp to find a carwash when they need one. Take control of your free Business Owner's Account and start engaging with your customers today! ■

John Carroll is a Manager of Local Business Outreach at Yelp. He hosts informational sessions with local business owners across North America to educate them on best practices for navigating the world of online reviews. He works with local business owners interested in using Yelp to help grow their business. He also hosts a series of webinars on subjects relevant to business owners and regularly contributes content to Yelp's "Blog for Business Owners." John also acts as a liaison between the small business community and different divisions within Yelp.



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Around the Country

Racer Classic Promotes Business Relationships To Attract Long-term Customers

By Alan M. Petrillo



Racer Classic Car Wash in Lubbock, TX, is aggressively promoting a fleet business plan with its local businesses in a more than half-million population area that has generated considerable monthly carwash business and potentially strong retention rates.

Andrew Zamora, president of Racer Wash Management LLC, said the company started operations in 2010 and currently runs two full-service carwashes, one flex-serve wash, and one express-exterior wash. Racer opened a second express exterior carwash in April of this year, and a second flex-service carwash by the end of the year, all in Lubbock.

“The two full-service carwash locations each have complete detailing shops,” Zamora pointed out. “With all of our locations, we are bringing customers into our locations and then giving them the best wash and service in order to retain them as customers.”

Tina McCreight, Racer’s marketing director, said when Racer began its fleet partnership program, she and Zamora “made a lot of outside sales calls to car dealerships, offering a year of free washes for their clients where we would sell the dealership the washes at 50 percent off the cost of the passes that were redeemed.”

After a lot of effort, McCreight said she landed deals with Frontier Dodge and Jeep Eagle, and Spirit Chrysler in Lubbock.

“They pay us at the half price rate of \$110, and when the clients redeem the wash, we try to gain and retain that customer,” she said. “The dealer advertises the program as the Home of the Free Carwash.”

Zamora said the users are washing their vehicles between two and 2.5 times a month.



The two full-service Racer washes feature complete detailing.

“We are getting about 200 to 250 users a month out of the program,” he said. “The actual redemption rate is much less than the amount that the dealer provides to his clients. We call the system ‘Fast Pass’ and it involves a RFID tag in the car that allows them to go through our fast lane where the barrier arm automatically comes up and allows them into the wash.”

Zamora noted that customer retention is a major goal for Racer Classic Car Wash.

“First we have to get the customer here to one of our washes,” he said. “Then we want our quality wash and excellent service to be able to retain that customer. Customers are able to use these washes at any of our locations.”

In terms of Racer Classic Car Wash expansion, Zamora said the company would have to move outside of Lubbock because its sixth location that will open at the end of the year

Continued on page 22 ...



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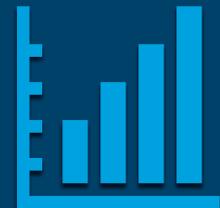
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will be enough to handle the city's expanding size.

"Our job is to actively build a chain of 15 to 20 carwashes in the next five years," Zamora said. "We have to find the right locations for those washes because we have a culture at Racer that believes we do carwashing better than anyone else."

Zamora noted that Racer Classic Car Wash, which has 120 employees, has won many awards, in-

cluding a 'Number One Car Wash' from the Southwest Carwash Association in 2014.

Giving Back Matters

McCreight added that Racer has been active in charitable causes in the Lubbock area.

"Over the last three and a half years we have donated \$101,000 to Covenant Children's Hospital," she said. "The money has gone for a Teen Town

geared for teens, and also a Racer Classic Children's Theater at the hospital. We donated \$1 for every wash on the first and third Tuesdays of the month for three and a half years, and were able to reach our goal, as well as get a lot of good media attention, and positive feedback from the community." ■

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

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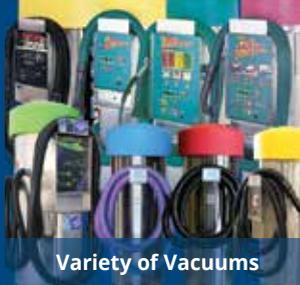
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Social Media Marketing Stats on Branding ...

continued from page 16.

ment, at 60% in 2015 beating lifestyle category by over 2%.

Source: Hootsuite

This is great news for marketers since people who follow brands on Instagram are aware and accept the fact that they're going to be exposed to products.

- ❖ Posts tagged with another user (56%) or location (79%) have significantly higher engagement rates. Source: Simply Measured

So, don't forget to add "with whom" and "where" to your Instagram posts.

Youtube Stats

- ❖ In 2015, YouTube posted the figure of 40 billion all-time views for branded content. Source: ReelSEO

That means video marketing has gone from nice-to-have to must-have, one that will set the pace for the foreseeable future.

- ❖ More than half of YouTube views come from mobile devices and the average mobile viewing session lasts more than 40 minutes. Source: YouTube

As mobile captures consumers' full attention, at home or on the go, brands now have the opportunity to reach people anywhere. ■

Source: Liis Hainla, DreamGrow.com
DreamGrow@2017



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Northeast Regional Carwash Convention

The Carwash Show's Attendance Numbers Highest in a Decade

The Carwash Show 2017, April 4-6, at the Las Vegas Convention Center had its largest attendance in a decade, according to the International Carwash Association (ICA), with some 8,100 attendees and nearly 400 exhibitors.

The three-day event featured 48 educational sessions, two comprehensive seminars, enhanced networking events

and a Keynote by the former Governor of Pennsylvania and first Secretary of U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge. His Keynote was titled "From risk to resilience: The global mission to secure cyberspace."

The Carwash Show 2018 is again slated for the Las Vegas Convention Center, April 26-28, before moving its venue to Nashville in 2019. ■

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



It's a NYCWA photo op with Buckman's Jeff Gold and Carwash Insurance Program by McNeil's Mike Benmosch and Hoffman Car Wash's Tom Hoffman, Jr. and Squeaky Clean's Gary Sloan.





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ICS debuted a new, state-of-the-art booth design as well as many new products and services.



The lower level of the show was full of serious buyers.



The Sonny's booth is always well attended and full of ideas.

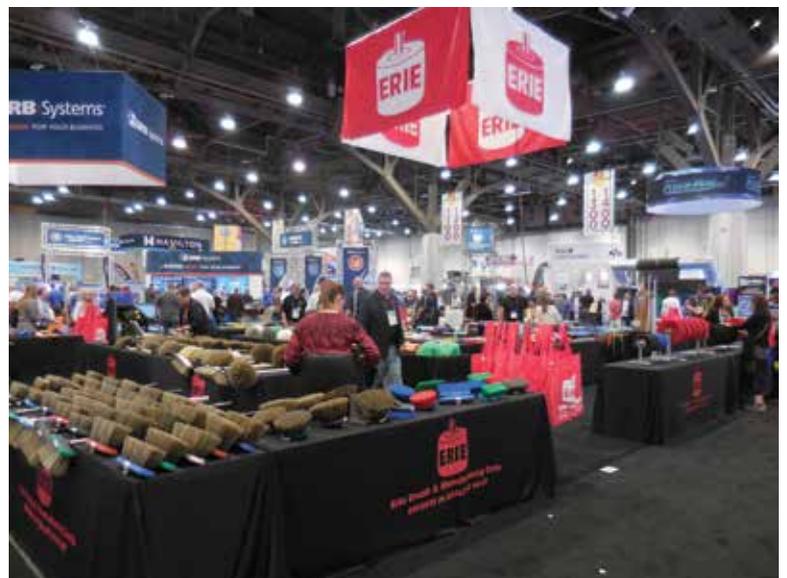


Motor City and CSI showed off their exceptional array of products and equipment.

One of the most colorful and useful exhibitors on the show floor is Erie Brush.



Mike Conte and Graziano Camastra catch up on the show floor.



2017 NRCC Adds Innovation

The 28th Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 2-4, at the Atlantic City Convention Center (ACCC) is slated to be another innovative and educational show, according to Co-Chairman Mike Benmoschë of the host Connecticut Carwash Association. "Every year we try to do a little better than the previous year," said Benmoschë. "We are always pushing the envelope and thinking out of the box. This year, we have put some additional effort into our show floor and education and we think you're going to like what you see."

Benmoschë, who is Co-Chairman with Bob Rossini, is referring to some tweaks in the show floor layout to better facilitate flow, and an exciting "Virtual" Carwash Tour to be hosted by Hoffman Car Wash's Tom Hoffman, Jr. as well as a series of "Inside Looks" hosted by exhibitors on

the show floor. "We have done a little reconfiguring to the show floor to better facilitate flow and we will continue to do more with our 2018 show," he said.

A "Virtual" Wash Tour

The "Virtual" Wash Tour is a first for the show. "We have added a seminar to the first day of the show that will be showcasing several state-of-the-art washes. You'll be able to see the innovations at each wash and hear what Tom

and other industry experts have to say about them. During this seminar representatives from each wash will also be on hand to answer questions and further explain their wash process. "It will be like we are there and able to react to what we see," said Benmoschë. "I am very excited about it."

Got Happiness?

Happy customers become loyal customers – they come back, buy more and bring friends. Happy employees are more productive, more engaged and healthier than unhappy ones. According to Gallup, the 70% of unhappy and disengaged employees in this country cause the American economy about \$600 billion a year in direct costs alone.

*A successful 'Customer Experience' is all about emotions. If a customer feels good about the value you provide – if they are happy doing business with you – they are more likely to return. If you are looking to create consistently **positive** customer experiences that differentiate you from the competition – look to your people first.*

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HAVE A ROUND TABLE TOPIC YOU'D LIKE US TO COVER AT THE 2017 NRCC?

CALL 800/868-8590!

This educational program runs on Monday afternoon, October 2.

Keynote to Talk Millenials

Ever wonder just how to attract, retain and appreciate today's Millennial workers? Denise Ryan of FireStar Speaking in Raleigh, NC, will set us all straight. Ryan, who has spoken to carwash operators in the Southeast, will do her Keynote on "Managing Millennials: Can't Live with 'Em, Can't Succeed without Them." She will address the task of rewarding, inspiring and challenging today's Millennials. Her program is designed to help leaders manage a workforce with what seems like vastly different needs and expectations. Attendees will walk away knowing how to motivate and effectively manage their younger employees. Ryan's Keynote is slated for Tuesday, October 3.

Vendor "Inside Looks"

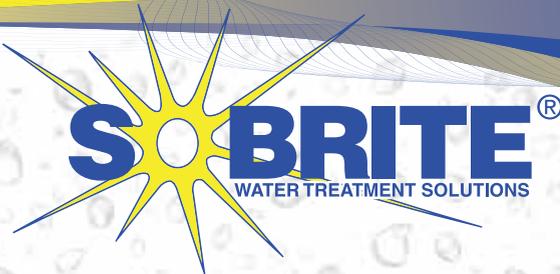
When the show floor opens on Tuesday, in addition to more than 300 exhibits, you'll be able to participate in a new feature called "Inside Looks." These 30-minute educational programs will be put on by vendors in an intimate "theatre" setting at the back of the show floor. Vendors have been given carte blanche to educate and motivate attendees. "This feature is a great vehicle for our vendors to further promote their businesses and educate our attendees," said Benmoschè. "It's been done at other shows and has been very well received. Let us know what you think."

The third day of the event, Wednesday, October 4, will see one seminar instead of two and the show starting one hour earlier to better accommodate day-trippers who can only make one day of the event. This program will be a round table discus-

sion on various topics including profitable express detailing, social media marketing, self-service innovations, securing your financial security, cyber security, the club plan, equipment maintenance, safety and the express model, to name a few. If there's a topic

you'd like to see covered, please contact Heather Courtney at the NRCC at 800/868-8590. ■

For a complete list of seminars and show floor hours, or to secure a booth, visit www.nrccshow.com or call 800/868-8590.



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**DESIGN SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Dear Venus and Mars,

What one piece of advice would you give to someone who is thinking about getting into this industry?



Heather Ashley

Venus Says

One of the best things Mike and I did when we bought into the carwash business was to buy every wash the previous owner owned. While that may seem a bit much, it actually worked out really well financially.

You see, rather than buy the one or two locations that he had for sale, we asked what else he owned and then offered a stern price for the three (shockingly, he accepted and we became overnight owners of three wash locations!).

I came up with this idea after looking over his numbers. I did not see a lot of profit and when we followed up with comparing to the water bills, we could see that they were basically only holding their own.

For some reason, those that want to sell always want to keep the one or two that produce the most revenue. But you are the one that needs it. You also would not want to be in competition with the previous owner. Well, at least we did not want to be as life is too short for the potential drama.

Having a strong location helps revenue flow through the others. This is going to give you the chance to buy in bulk from soap to vending products. Sometimes you can even share employees among your locations.

In the end, the big locations make up for the smaller ones. Without them we may have already given up on our smallest rural location. Tides have turned and with a new business coming in across the street, we see more potential for our rural carwash.

Good luck on your investment! ■

Mars Says

It's hard to give just one piece of advice for a newcomer into this industry, as there is so much to the business. Over the course of time that I've been doing this I've probably spoken to a couple of hundred people who were either looking to or recently got into the business.

Of the ones who recently got into the business I would say at least 90 percent of them tell me that it is not what they had expected. Of the ones who are looking to get in I would say the majority of them have expectations that are just not realistic. It seems that everyone wants to open a chain or start a carwash franchise. I always tell them just start with one and then reevaluate your plans in a year. Now I'm not trying to be negative or discouraging, but there is more to the business than many think.

When I was younger, I remember speaking to an older gentleman in the business about this very topic. He told me a story of a guy who was looking to buy one of his carwashes. "The guy has no clue," he told me. The prospective buyer had said, "There is nothing to this business. It's just machines and a cash register. The machines do all the work and the cash register holds all the money. All I have to do is show up at the end of the day and empty the cash register."

Well, the older gentleman decided not to sell his business to that guy and it was probably the right decision. The problem is that all too many people still have that same opinion of our business when looking at it from the outside.

That being said, my one piece of advice to a prospective buyer would be to do your homework. So many people are



Paul Vallario

Continued on next page ...

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

**If you have a question for Venus & Mars please send it to: Media Solutions,
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Mars ... continued

just focused on the numbers and the bottom line, but fail to research all the other aspects of this business.

One common complaint I hear from “newbies” is about the weather. It must be that every time someone buys a carwash we have record rainfall. “I was closed five days last month. Paul, has that ever happened before?” they ask me. What???? You just bought a weather-dependent business so you must have known that when it rains you aren’t going to do business. I guess people just don’t really notice the rain until their income is dependent on it.

The Pursuit of Perfection: Is It Counterproductive?

Creativity can be a messy, sloppy business, full of mistakes, false starts, and changes in direction. You can’t let perfectionism interfere with the process, or you may never finish. Earn to loosen up and let go with this advice:

- **Seek progress, not completion.** Instead of obsessing about getting your work just right, focus on making it a little better. You’ll always be disappointed if you strive for perfection, but you can find satisfaction in knowing you’ve improved.

- **Focus on what you can do, not what you can’t.** Do the best job possible within the limits of your resources. You’ll waste time and energy obsessing about how good it could be if only you had more money or the perfect ingredients. Sometimes settling for “good enough” is the key to success.

- **Work at what you do best.** If you know your strengths, you’ll make better decisions about what to concentrate on. Shape your projects to match your abilities instead of trying to force yourself to perform tasks at which you’re less than stellar.

- **Celebrate your accomplishments.** Take pride in what you achieve, even if it’s not absolute perfection. A positive attitude about your work will spur you on to greater things. ■

There are other things that people don’t expect when getting into this business too. One of the big shockers is the headache dealing with employees. Unless, of course, it is an express wash than that really isn’t a huge issue. But if you’re dealing with a full-serve or flex-serve wash than the pains of labor are real.

Many also lose focus that this is a service business. They come in and pay big bucks for a successful wash and right away want to cut expenses. Well, cutting expenses can be good but not if it’s taking away from the quality of the service. That carwash is probably

successful because the previous owner wasn’t stingy with certain things.

So my advice is before you get knee deep into something you weren’t expecting, do your homework, due diligence or whatever you want to call it. Go work at a carwash for a couple of months and get acquainted with the business. I’ve seen too many people get in and get out of this business too quickly because they expected something completely different. It is a great business and can be extremely profitable, but know what you are getting yourself into. ■

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Microfiber at a Glance

By Valerie Sweeney

The world of microfiber has really expanded over the years. More and more options are now available to the carwash industry, so owners and managers can really pick out the microfiber product that works best for them. The following is a summary of the various microfiber towels that are used in the carwash industry.

Terry Style Microfiber

“Terry” style microfiber is the most popular type of microfiber used in the car care industry. Typically, when someone mentions microfiber they are 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 extremely versatile and really can be used anywhere in the carwash. Larger sizes, measuring usually between 15" x 24" and 16" x 27" make great body drying and wax removal towels, while smaller sizes are ideal for detail and windows. Terry style microfiber is available in a wide variety of sizes, colors and thickness.

Waffle Weave Microfiber

The waffle weave style microfiber towel is also very popular in the carwash industry. 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 is all about personal preference. The waffle weave also can feel more bulky in the hand, which is desirable to many. This style can trap a lot of water because of the ridges, so it also makes a great general towel. Other people that use waffle weave feel that the ridged texture helps to better clean raised, dirty surfaces.

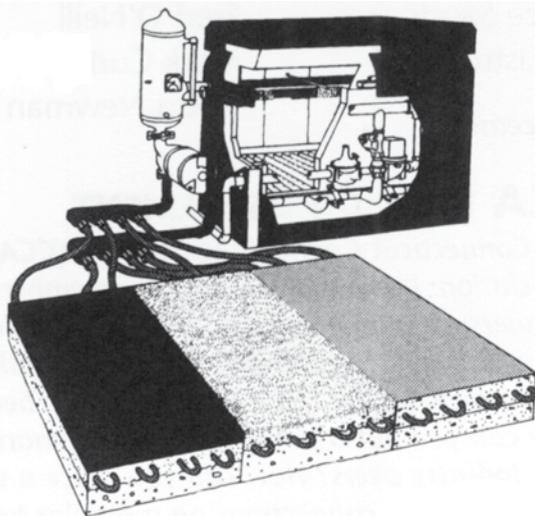
Microfiber Glass Towels

All types of microfiber can work well on glass. Many towel companies market the shiny style microfiber as glass towels. These cloths have a flat, tight texture. Like the other microfiber, they do not leave streaks when used properly and are lint free, making them ideal for window cleaning. While these cloths will work well, the terry and waffle styles are most popular.

Continued on page 32...



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Towel Tips ... continued from page 30.

Suede Microfiber

Suede is the one of the smoothest types (lowest pile) of microfiber, 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. They are also perfect for cleaning the touch screen on the console.

Economy/Limited Use Non-Woven Microfiber

Many towel vendors also carry a microfiber towel that looks different than other microfibers. This style of microfiber is very thin and can get into tight corners and spaces very easily. This towel is lint free, and works well on glass. At first glance, it looks like a thick paper, but once you feel it and use it, you will see the difference. It has many of the same attributes as regular microfiber, but is not meant to withstand many washings. In fact, most people will dispose of these cloths after using. ■



Valerie Sweeney

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

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A State of the Electronic LED Sign Market

By Perry Powell

Today's LED electronic message signs cover a broader range of quality, capability, durability and visibility than ever before. This is not good news. It is an indicator that the market has been flooded with many cheap and unreliable technologies, while the top end of the market has become more stable, more beautiful, more affordable and more reliable than ever before.

There are some clues to where each LED company stands on these issues. Some companies have almost a "we shipped it and it worked at the factory" attitude toward warranties, some only warranting their products for 90 days. The top of the industry warrants for a full seven years, parts and labor! There is an old saying, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." This is the case when looking at many cheap Chinese or Korean imports. It is not, however, true for those at the top of the food chain. Building quality in their products is what differentiates them from the cheap competitors.

An example is company A orders a cheap Chinese im-

ported sign. In many cases, they have no accurate record of which components actually make up that specific sign. Local sign companies are sent up into the signs to retrieve the information and a new part is ordered while waiting up to 90 days for that part to arrive in the US and the repair to be made.

Company B orders top-quality components from the best suppliers in China. The components are imported, cabinets built and components are installed in the US. Very specific components are documented for every sign and spare components are sitting in their US locations, ready for any repair. Most repairs for company B can be made in 14 days or less.

New orders for company A may take up to 120 days to ship from their factory supplier in China and sit in US Customs for up to three weeks.

Company B deals with these issues before a customer orders and may ship to the company making the installation, in as little as 14 days.

Continued on page 36...



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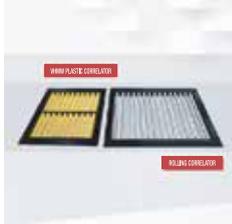
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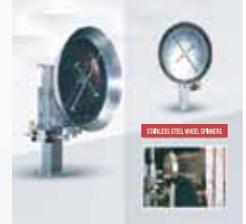


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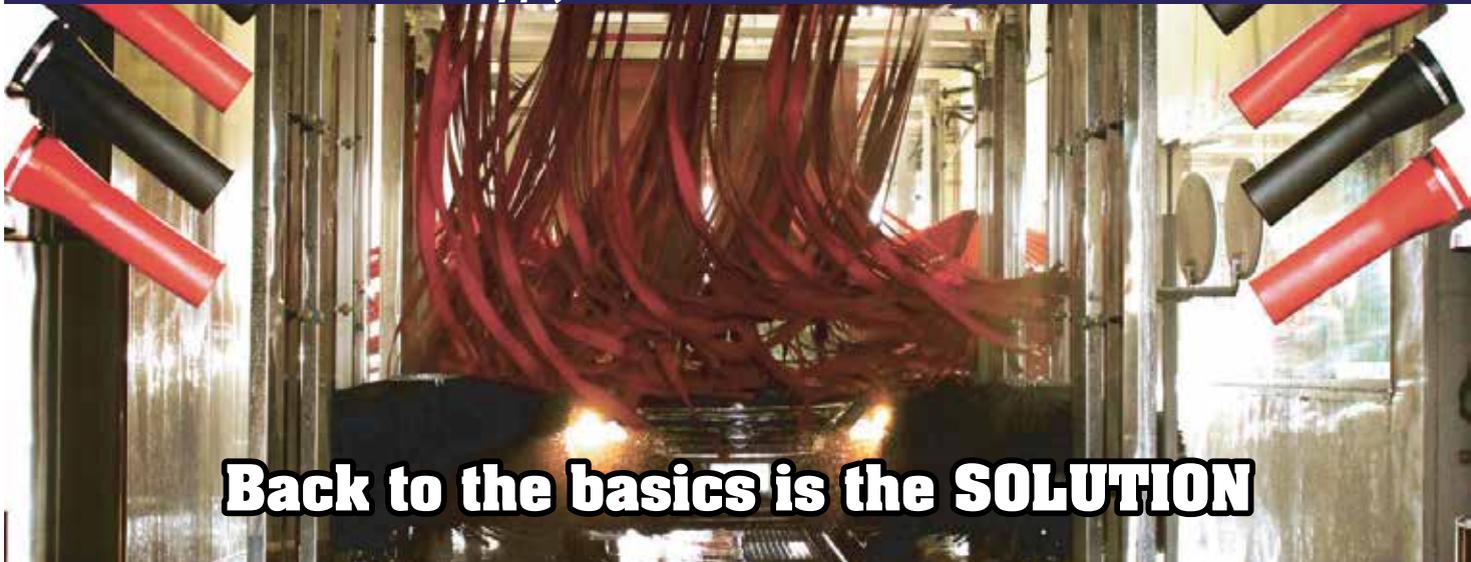
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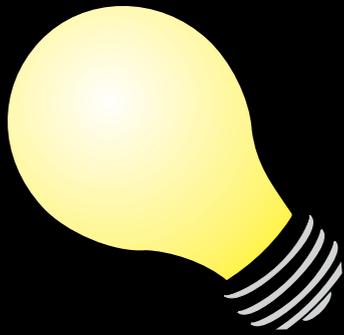
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A Sign of the Times ... continued from page 34.

Company A supplies the sign but the client is responsible to become an instant graphics expert in order to feed the new baby bird it has purchased. The care and feeding of content can be overwhelming.

Company B includes a design staff with seven years of content support!

Company A does not support the ability to upgrade the electronic sign face to new, higher resolution faces. In order to upgrade, you have to chuck the old sign and buy a whole new one.

Company B has built upgradeability and proration of new to old costs into their capabilities. You don't even have to replace the cabinet – just the face!

Now, if we look at these examples, we might expect company B to be twice as expensive as company A. Not true! There can be as little as 25-35 percent difference in price in these two experiences.

Let's not forget why we, in the carwash industry, buy these signs. We buy them to increase capture rates, car counts and ultimately, profits!

If a sign sits blank it is not producing anything but continual frustration. It is easy to get emotionally excited about a cheap import and pull the trigger. Just remember that you will keep playing for years to come.

A good electronic sign company is like a good wife, they keep their end of the bargain for a life!



Perry Powell

Perry is an expert in providing profit-producing signage for carwashers. He is also the host of WashIdeas.com, an Internet site for carwashers. He can be reached at WashIdeas.com or perry@washideas.com.

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Push the Envelope, Innovate, Educate

By Doug Rieck

In carwashing you are only as good as the number of cars you washed last month. That seems harsh but bears some thought and in the end is truthful. Cash flow is wonderful. One comforting thought has always been that we can blame weather, that ugly monkey always lurking over one's shoulder, on our volume. However, just over our other shoulder is another even bigger, uglier monkey – our own actions, or lack thereof.

I am making the assumption that our washes are all efficiently run, with a customer-friendly attitude. The other variables being newness or freshness, customer appeal (glitz), curb appeal, and that ugly word “reinvestment.” Bottom line, if we fail to keep up, our market share will be taken away.

The Carwash Show was back in Las Vegas this spring at the convention center next to the Westgate. I think the International Carwash Association (ICA) spoiled us with the Nashville show location last year, but it was nice to get back to Las Vegas and the intervening time had seen some improvements at the Westgate.

The ICA did a great job with this show, and deserves credit. One of the neat touches was being able to have your show Badge mailed to you and getting an extra early hour on the show floor for two days, for an extra charge. That extra early hour was much quieter and made it possible to talk with exhibitors. Another great idea was having Badge pickup in the lobby at the Westgate.

This show saw the largest attendance in 10 years. The Keynote Speaker was Tom Ridge and, in my opinion, he was one of the best Keynote speakers I've heard. His talk was relevant, he was articulate and all seemed to enjoy.

The early morning educational sessions were well attended with a wealth of knowledge at your fingertips. I felt that a “must see” was the ICA New Vehicle Technology report on how car technology is going to interfere with how we wash cars. The work that the ICA engineering group is doing to present our case is critical. One answer is to have a Carwash mode selection “Button” to override sensors. I don't think that is coming any time soon, but it's a great idea. Regardless of implementation, it is important to have the ICA making car engineers aware of our needs.

On a side note, I have a wash club customer whose new Mercedes has been a challenge to get RFID tags to work on. Finally I told him to contact Mercedes and find out where to locate the tag. His dealer and Mercedes came back with the answer, “No Place,” his car is equipped with bulletproof glass!

Show Floor Doesn't Disappoint

The show floor was wonderful. Of course I always think that, but this year it was true. There was no breakaway new carwash technology, but instead a culmination of the past few

years of evolution. Evolution is good, and leads to reliability.

I'm going to talk about some trends, and equipment seen. That means I am going to mention names. If I missed something you liked, my apologies, especially this year with the size of the show floor. On the last day of the show I heard about an exhibitor who had a sensational new technology for conveyor collision avoidance – Nopileups (nopileups.com). You might want to check it out.

The era of the Grand Entrance Arch is here. Let me define it: a grand entrance arch sits at the front of the wash either inside or outside and is covered with signage, LED lights and often service confirmation lights and signs. They light up, entertain and add value. They make a lot of sense, work very well with the Express model and add showmanship and flair. The primary contenders in this are: TSS, Mr. Foamer and Sonny's. I'm sure that most of the major equipment company's offer their own or have a similar version.

The trend of LED's and displays is HUGE. I talked with several operators on the show floor who were planning very large systems and displays and the concept of after-dark entertainment was raised.

There was one surprising technology present and that was of water-resistant large screen displays. Again, this was developed for the Express market and makes a lot of sense. There were several versions and sizes on the floor. The most common one was a vertically-oriented floor pedestal that featured a stainless steel-encased LED screen. Another version was a wall-mounted horizontally mount. In each case you access the screen through a programmer or computer and set the display. The screen display can be a static price and service, similar to fast food menu display, or it can be variable. The model from Sonny's comes with a programming subscription service. The vendors with these were TSS, Mr. Foamer and Sonny's. I was talking with the sales rep at Mr. Foamer and their model is derived from the restaurant industry and has an easy-to-program interface.

The other application of this technology was from ICS. They offer a vertically-oriented touch screen model at the tunnel entrance. Normally it gives guide-on directions, but the attendant can just touch it and use it as a POS entry terminal. Really neat.

As usual, Sonny's had a host of innovations and ideas. I liked their Barber Pole spiral wraparound. There is a spiral pattern so when the brush revolves, you get a spiral. Their redesigned adjustable wheel and tire brush units better fit larger SUV's and trucks.

Next, I liked a heavier microplush material for mitters. They further improved their rotating brush tire shiner. They also had a redesigned elephant ear blower with rubber tubes

Continued on page 40...

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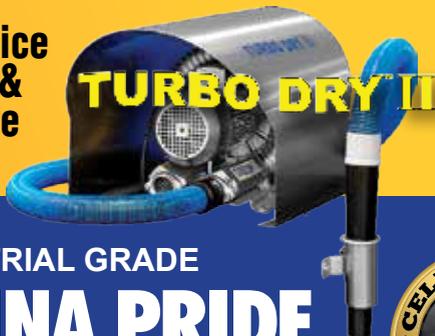


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instead of cloth to allow for wider vehicles. I am just picking my favorites, they had more.

McNeil/Ryko had a redone booth with a very cute CSI game to find the dirt on a car. Obviously, their intent was to prove that their equipment would not have left the dirt. I enjoyed playing it. One of the things that they are now doing is offering carwash manager/owner training. They call it the College of Clean.

Belanger showcased their SpinLite® Car Wash System again. Even though it has been out for two years it is still a revolution in washing cars offering great consumer appeal.

ICS looked great with their redesigned booth. It was larger, open and more spacious. The displays in the booth showcased the innovations and firsts that this company has done. On display was a set of new wraparounds of their own design. One of their many nice features is their triple main boom bearings. Since there are three bearings, you can just change them out without lost time and aggravation. ICS had a wealth of new equipment on display as well. One of the more interesting items was a Chip Card system for self-service bays. Their system is based on a central terminal by your changer and then entering codes in PIN pads in the bay. It retrofits to any bay equipment and is easy.

Express washes have been offering consumers free vacuums that have elaborate central vac systems with giant turbine producers and acres of steel piping. ICS has developed and tested extensively an Express Vacuum that is a stand-alone single 4.5 hp Vac. It has a stop/start push button. This is emphatically not a self-service vacuum. The concept being to save on electric and install costs and deliver better suction for the customer.

Kevin Detrick did a presentation one morning on what ICS calls WASHNETICS which means the science of automating the carwash process. This is more than just turning on and off equipment but looking at the whole wash process and the vehicle size and contours being washed. It makes sense. It is a whole process. This is one more step into the future.

Good washing and enjoy the summer! See you at the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention, October 2-4. ■

Doug Rieck operates Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ, and is a past president of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. He also sits on the CWONJ and NRCC boards of directors. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS or dougriek@gmail.com.



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PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

Warmer weather is finally here! With the beautiful spring we’re having in Pennsylvania, I hope your carwash businesses are booming as people wash off the residue of winter. Spring also means the Carwash Association of Pennsylvania’s (CAP) 2017 Annual Dinner & Table-Top Show is right around the corner. Make sure your calendars are marked for Thursday, June 8, at the Hollywood Casino At Penn National Race Course in Grantville!

Our 2017 Annual Spring Dinner & Table Top Show is one of the best networking and business development opportunities we offer our membership. A mix of vendors and operators come out each year to stay on top of the latest trends and changes in the carwash industry. This year, we are excited to welcome Harry Campbell of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (cbf.org) as our featured speaker. He will educate us on clean water initiatives and how carwash businesses should prepare to remain in compliance, while overcoming the challenges these may bring.

As always, our 2017 Annual Dinner & Table-Top Show is free to current CAP members, so we highly encourage you to join us on June 8 and take advantage of this great member benefit! Non-CAP members are also welcome to attend. More information can be found at www.pacarwash.org or by emailing executivedirector@pacarwash.org.

Speaking of CAP member benefits, we are excited to be adding to this list, especially to help our operators grow their businesses. As a CAP member, you can now list classified ads on our website and in our newsletters to help you easily buy and sell equipment. Our network of industry experts are also available to you to offer advice, troubleshoot issues and overcome challenges in addition to many more benefits! There’s never been a better time to become a CAP member – and remember, the membership essentially pays for itself with FREE admission to our 2017 Annual Dinner & Table-Top Show on June 8.

From my experience, I can say that the carwash industry is a great community of helpful and generous people. We share in some pretty unique challenges to which other types of businesses cannot relate. This is all the more reason for us to band together and call upon one another in a time of need. I am proud of the progress we are making through the Carwash Association of Pennsylvania and look forward to helping grow the industry through our efforts in 2017 and beyond.



Keith Lutz, President
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Reliance Oil Learns Carwash Business, Considers Expanding Operations

By Alan M. Petrillo



Reliance Oil LLC has embraced the three washes it acquired a year ago with open arms thanks to the oversight by John Everett, now general manager. More may be in their future.

Reliance Oil LLC purchased another oil company/carwash business in August of 2015 in central Pennsylvania, along with other associated businesses, and thought long and hard about what to do about the carwash portion of the business. In the end, Reliance Oil vice president Ash Patel said the company decided to keep the carwashes operating and learn the business through its general manager, who moved over to Reliance Oil.

Patel said that when Reliance Oil purchased Scullin Oil, the Reliance folks didn't have any carwash experience or knowledge.

"Three carwashes were associated with gas stations as part of Scullin Oil, which were operated by those leasing the sites," Patel said. "But with the purchase also came three stand-alone carwash sites, each with one touchless automatic carwash bay and four self-service bays. They were called Flood Zone Car Wash and are located in Sunbury, Milton, and Selingsgrove, PA."

Patel noted that the reason Reliance Oil owners decided to keep the Flood Zone Car Wash locations in operation was because of John Everett, now general manager for Reliance Oil.

"John worked for Scullin Oil, and he was extremely helpful when we purchased the business because he was so familiar with the carwash side of the business," Patel pointed out. "We looked at the carwash operations model and found it was very similar to parts of our oil business in terms of

customer service, interactions with customers, and management of merchandise and sales."

Bennett said he has been involved in the convenience store business for 30 years, and had worked for Scullin Oil for 15 years before Reliance Oil bought them.

"We were a Sunoco and CITGO distributor for our dealer locations," Bennett pointed out, "and the three carwashes attached to gas stations leased to location owners were handled by them. But the three stand-alone Flood Zone Car Wash locations had to be operated by Reliance Oil."

Bennett said that Reliance Oil has an answering service on 24-hour call for when a customer in one of their automatic or self-service bays has an issue.

"We get very few calls because we learned very quickly that it's important to maintain the sites to keep them operating so you don't have any customer issues," Bennett noted. "We have an employee at each of the sites every day, cleaning bays, emptying trash, and making sure that things are running properly."

Bennett said that running the carwash locations provided a learning curve for him about how the public treats other people's property.

"Especially with the self-service bays, we have had people break something, then call us and leave a false name," he said. "One time we had two women come into a self-service bay with paint on their car that they washed off and splashed over the walls of the bay."



A 24-hour answering service is an option for any customer with an issue.

Bennett added that often “things get broken in the bays, and trash cans get filled up quickly with people dropping off their personal trash in the bays. We’ve had four-wheeler vehicles come in covered in mud and leaving the mud laying in the bays for us to clean up.”

Bennett noted that Flood Zone has a number of fleet carwash customers for its in-bay automatics.

“We have local police departments, universities, and businesses as fleet customers,” he said. “And while we recently ran a newspaper ad to promote the business locally, word

of mouth has been very good for us because we have been maintaining quality washes and people are talking about how good the service is when they come into our carwashes.”

Patel pointed out that on the financial side of things, the three Flood Zone Car Wash locations do well financially.

“We always make sure we are running with little downtime,” he said. “When we look at carwashing overall, it’s a profitable business, which is one of the reasons why we would like to grow in our carwashing operations. I really enjoy it and am glad we held onto it and are able to run it profitably.”

Patel pointed out that Reliance Oil would consider either building a new carwash in Pennsylvania or buying an existing operation and renovating it.

“We would look at turnkey operations, or even those facilities that we could refurbish or renovate to bring up to the standard at which we operate,” he said. “We’ve begun to understand the economics, weather patterns, clientele and their wants in the carwash industry, and after a year under our belt, we are starting to look for other opportunities, although nothing is in the pipeline yet.” ■

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

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PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

We have another winter under our belt in Connecticut. So many of us were praying for a lot of snow – not just so that we can wash a lot of cars – but so that our reservoirs can fill up and any impending drought subside.

Thankfully, the state is in much better shape with regard to the drought, yet if I drive by the Colebrook Reservoir it appears to be dangerously low.

But in our state we have many other issues to address from the sales tax that we should not be paying, to just trying to do business in a state that is losing ground in every category.

Your board has been working tirelessly to win the repeal of this unfair tax. We have met with Legislators in Hartford and even been successful in winning their support in its repeal, but the state of Connecticut has such a gigantic deficit that the fight is certainly uphill. We won't give up, though. We will continue to reach out to the decision makers at the Capitol on your behalf.

So, with all of my negativity (and I'm usually not a negative guy) what can we focus on that is positive? Well, it's summer and I am hoping for a nice semi-dry hot one, or the best conditions in which to encourage washing. I also encourage you all to focus on more positive things like baseball or golf. Yes, it can help with the negative that surrounds us!

But of course, there always seems to be a pending issue that seems to get in the way of watching a great ballgame or hitting a ball into the woods! But, I'm looking forward to the New York State Car Wash Association event at Citifield in June, as well as the September 12 CCA golf outing at Fairview Farm in Harwinton - giddy up!!! It's a great event whether you are a great golfer, try to play golf or just come to the dinner and meeting. It's a great way to catch up with fellow operators and suppliers in a low-key setting.

I'm a firm believer that everyone needs a break and mental health vacation, yet just be careful who you ask - close friends will always point out that you have mental issues - LOL.

Well, happy hitting and enjoy the 7th inning stretch!!



Bob J. Rossini

*Bob Rossini
CCA President*

INTERESTED IN GETTING MORE INVOLVED?

The CCA Board is always looking for new board members and/or Committee Members. To learn about both opportunities call Suzanne at 800/287-6604. We also welcome you to attend a board meeting to see what we are working on!

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CCA MISSION STATEMENT

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

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Sales Tax Repeal Effort Continues

By P.J. Cimini

The 2017 General Assembly session is rushing toward its constitutional deadline of June 7 and there are many large issues that remain to be decided. The focus of the Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA) this session will be on repealing the recently enacted sales tax on carwash services and there has been significant progress since the last column.

2017 Session Priority

As you all know, in the waning moments of the 2015 session, the Connecticut General Assembly imposed a new sales tax on Car Wash Services. Without any notice or public hearing, and following a frantic effort to raise additional revenue from as many sources as possible, the tax was added at the last minute in an all-night session on the last day of the session.

Last year, members spent much of the year testifying and lobbying in support of legislation to repeal the tax. This year we were successful in having several bills introduced by both Republicans and Democrats to the Finance Committee.

Sales Tax Exemption Bills Introduced

This year there were three repeal bills introduced:

- HB 5885 AN ACT EXCLUDING COIN-OPERATED CAR WASHES FROM THE SALES TAX, introduced by Rep. Kelly Luxenberg (D-Manchester), Rep. Jason Rojas (D-East Hartford) and Rep. Jeff Currey (D-East Hartford)
- HB 6134 AN ACT EXCLUDING COIN-OPERATED CAR WASHES FROM THE SALES TAX, introduced by Rep. Fred Camillo (R-Greenwich), Rep. Mike Bocchino (R-Greenwich), Sen. Scott Frantz (D-Greenwich) and Rep. Livvy Floren (D-Greenwich)
- SB 187 AN ACT REPEALING THE SALES TAX ON CAR WASH SERVICES AND COIN-OPERATED CAR WASHES, introduced by Senator Bob Duff (D-Norwalk)

Sales Tax Exemption Public Hearing

Early in the 2017 General Assembly session, the Board and leadership from the CCA met with the bipartisan Chairs and Ranking Members of the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee of the State Legislature to seek their support of the repeal legislation. The Committee oversees all tax and fiscal policy and is the key committee for taxing policy. They agreed to raise one of the bills for a public hearing.

That public hearing was held on February 24 in Hartford. Attending the hearing were the following members of the Connecticut Carwash Association's (CCA) Legislative Committee: Mark Curtis, Splash; Paul Ferruolo, Mr. Sparkle Car Wash; Bob Rossini, Torrington Car Wash and Todd Whitehouse, Connecticut Car Wash. The members were invited to speak before the Committee as a panel and did an outstanding job.

On April 27 the Finance Committee finished its commit-

tee work for the session. The committee took the Governor's proposed tax bill (SB 787) substituted their own language and inserted a number of new provisions. One was our proposed bill language to repeal the sales tax on coin-operated car washes.

Section 26 of the bill (SB 787) exempted coin-operated carwashes from the sales and use tax. As under existing law, all other carwash services are subject to the tax.

The Fiscal Note attached to the bill details a loss in revenue to the State of Connecticut of \$500,000 in 2018 and \$500,000 in 2019. Given the current state of the fiscal uncertainty that the state is facing, this is an unprecedented achievement and a great first step. But given the state of the current Connecticut budget, we'll need all your help to build support and try and get this measure repealed.

A number of other important issues will be debated this year that the CCA will be monitoring and working on.

Governor's Proposed Budget

Connecticut's budget picture remains murky, with Governor Dannel Malloy and legislative leaders postponing new proposals for addressing a near \$5 billion, two-year deficit. The Governor reportedly will now release a revised budget proposal in mid-May, with proposals also expected from legislative Democrats and Republicans.

He did release a plan for resolving a \$393 million deficit for this year, the result of an unprecedented drop in income tax revenues. That plan includes withholding \$19 million in casino revenues promised to cities and towns, while draining most of the \$235 million Rainy Day Fund. He would also use about \$48 million set aside to bring the state in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, \$14 million from a legal settlement the state reached with Volkswagen, and about \$10 million in tobacco settlement funds to close the deficit. However, the biggest challenge is the deficit facing Connecticut in the next two-year budget cycle and beyond.

Senate Democrats on May 11 proposed limiting the amount of state income tax receipts that could be applied toward the spending side of the budget. The move to cap income tax revenue at \$3.1 billion is designed to avoid issues like the current revenue shortfall attributed to overestimating income tax receipts. Any funds that come in above \$3.1 billion go to the Rainy-Day Fund, to reduce pension and other retirement obligations, or toward capital projects to reduce borrowing.

Union Concessions

The Malloy administration continues to negotiate a \$1.5 billion concessions package with state employee unions. Those concessions, first proposed by the Governor in February and assumed by both legislative Democrats and Republicans in their initial budget proposals, is key to restoring fiscal stability.

Tolls

House Speaker Joe Aresimowicz (D-Berlin), said another possible revenue source – implementing tolls on state highways – was “inevitable.”

Drought Status for Connecticut

Thanks to two months of above-normal precipitation in Connecticut, the drought watch that was issued last October has been lifted. But officials warn that groundwater and streamflow in the state “remain vulnerable.”

The drought watch was issued last autumn at a point when most of the state was suffering from nearly two years of below-average precipitation. By December, nearly 70 percent of the state was listed in extreme or severe drought.

The Connecticut Interagency Drought Workgroup, made up of officials from five state departments, decided last week to keep a “drought advisory” in effect for all eight counties in the state. Nearly all Connecticut drinking water reservoirs have returned to normal capacity as a result of recent rains. But members of the group noted that “streamflow and groundwater levels have demonstrated some volatility and remain vulnerable” this spring. Recently, U.S. Drought Monitor experts noted that “groundwater levels remained unfavorably low” in areas of New England like Connecticut that suffered from the extended lack of precipitation. The U.S. Drought Monitor, a collaboration between the federal government and the University of Nebraska-

Lincoln, tracks drought conditions across the country. Federal climate scientists in their May 2 report listed more than 24 percent of Connecticut, primarily in the central part of the state, as in “moderate drought,” with another 48.4 percent as “abnormally dry.” A large swath of eastern Connecticut and the shoreline are now considered entirely free of drought.

October 2016 was the first time the state interagency group had ever issued a drought watch. Lower-level drought advisories had been issued in 2002, 2007, 2010 and earlier in 2016. National Weather Service meteorologists say April was the second month in a row that total precipitation exceeded normal levels at the NWS monitoring station at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks. Since Jan. 1, snow and rainfall have totaled 13.68 inches, just slightly above average for the period. But the two-year drought used up much of the below-surface groundwater in Connecticut and experts say it will take many more weeks of normal rainfall to fully restore those aquifers and wells. April was the first month since August of last year that sections of this state were classified as entirely drought-free by federal climate scientists. ■

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



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CCA Legislative Committee Participates in Hearing on Sales Tax

A number of our Legislative Committee members, as well as general members, met in Hartford on February 24 to plead our case for the removal of the sales tax on self-service washes that was imposed in 2015. The group spoke in front of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee in support of S.B. 187, proposed by Senator Majority Leader Bob Duff, D-Norwalk, to repeal the tax.

The CCA received a lot of support from the bill's sponsor as well as Committee Member Fred Camillo, R-Greenwich and Scott Frantz, R-Greenwich.

This is one example of how your board is working for your best interests as a Connecticut carwash operator. If you haven't renewed your dues, please visit wewashcars.com and click on "Join the CCA." ■



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For Sparkle Car Wash Owner Bouchard, Carwashing is in His Blood

By Alan M. Petrillo

Twenty-eight years is a long time to do anything, but Michael Bouchard doesn't regret any of those years as the owner of Sparkle Car Wash in Glastonbury, CT, nor his total of 47 years of experience working in the carwash industry.

Sparkle Car Wash is an automatic exterior carwash with a 65-foot tunnel, one 24-hour frictionless in-bay automatic, and two self-service bays. Bouchard had been involved in detailing operations for 40 years, he said, but gave it up last year at Sparkle.

"Detailing simply got too labor intensive and too expensive," Bouchard observed.

Bouchard said he got his start in carwashing at 14.

"I got my first carwash job on my birthday in a carwash owned by Dan Kancler, which was part of McClain Trucking that built 20 or 30 carwashes over the years," Bouchard said. "I went there on a Sunday morning, and Dan gave me a job, then spent 45 minutes showing me various jobs to do around the carwash. Then he said he had to go to church and left me there at the carwash to work."

When Bouchard got his first paycheck, he said he asked his father, "Who is this FICA guy and why is he taking money from my paycheck?"

Bouchard said he worked for McClain Trucking for a number of years, traveling to different carwashes, fixing equipment and helping out.

"McClain then built Sparkle Car Wash in Glastonbury, and I was assigned to troubleshoot the carwash, cash it out and pick up cash to go back to headquarters," Bouchard said. "They also had me traveling to their carwashes all over southern Connecticut."

Bouchard noted that Bill Judson bought Sparkle Car Wash from McClain Trucking around 1985, and that he bought the wash from Judson in 1988 or 1989.

"We put an addition on the building for the tunnel," he said, "put in a new touchless inbay automatic, and made some changes to the vacuums," he pointed out. "The location is on one and a half acres on Main Street in Glastonbury, which is a very busy street in a town with a population of about 32,000 people, about eight miles from Hartford."

Bouchard admitted that he has a love-hate relationship with carwashing.

"It's hard work, but I like the paycheck that it gives me," he said. "I grew up in a family that if you wanted something, you had to work for it, so I got used to getting a regular paycheck. And while the work is hard, I always liked working with customers and working outside."

While Sparkle Car Wash doesn't offer any interior services, its tunnel prices are \$10 for a basic wash, \$13 for a winner's special, and \$17 for the top of the line carwash.

Bouchard said in the 1980s he started offering Ladies and

Senior Day specials on washes, as well as a free carwash on a customer's birthday, and continues them today.

"We did a lot of promotions to bring in customers," he said. "Now we sell a lot of discount ticket books, where a lot of people buy several of them in advance. The books have eight tickets for the basic wash, and at Christmas we offer a 'buy three books and get the fourth one free.'"

Sparkle Car Wash operates with 10 employees,

Bouchard noted, five full time and five part time.

"We have always paid more than minimum wage because our employees are working outside where it's wet and cold," he said. "We give our people raises every year, and some are getting two to three weeks paid vacation. Rising pay is costing businesses, especially when you factor in the cost of benefits, but our folks get paid well, have vacations, and 401(k) plans."

Bouchard said that new technology in vehicles have proven to be a challenge for his carwash.

"We had eight cars shut down on a Saturday in our tunnel," he said, "when they went under the soap arch shaker. The cars locked up and shut down. Then we have to explain it to the customer in the tunnel with the water dripping down their open window. Of course, it slows down production and affects the carwash's bottom line."

Bouchard said he and his crew are trying to figure out which vehicles have the anti-collision technology, and whether or not they might have a method of turning it off before the vehicle enters the tunnel.

"Many customers don't even know they have the technology until they get shut down in a carwash tunnel," he pointed out.

But even with the drawbacks to carwashing, weather included, Bouchard said he's always had a carwash to work in.

"I have friends with multiple carwashes, and I have other friends who do full service," Bouchard said, "but for me, one carwash is fine, because if I'm going to spend 60 hours a week working, it's better to do it at one carwash." ■



Sparkle Car Wash Owner Mike Bouchard dipped his toe into carwashing at the ripe old age of 14. Forty-seven years later he still loves what he does!



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Our Annual Carwash Tour, June 13, promises to feature some pretty spectacular washes in Central Jersey. It's not every day that you get to tour a wash with a 245-foot tunnel (reported to be the longest in the country) that also has two 135-foot belt conveyors and a wash concept modeled after European washes. We'll also be visiting three other stand-out locations that feature a base-ment equipment room, substantial club plans and one wash that has a lube, detailing, self service as well as tunnel washing. Talk about covering all your bases and then some! This event, which is in its 18th year, is worth your dues money alone. It's a great opportunity to learn what other operators are doing and possibly implement some of it at your wash. After all, guys, we don't know it all and can always learn more and try new things.

During my run as president of this association even this old dog has learned some new tricks and taken them back to his washes. You are never too old or too smart to learn something new. If you walk away from this tour with even one new idea, in my mind it is worth your registration fee. It is always a day well spent!

And that's what being part of an association is all about – learning and growing. Our volunteer board works very hard to come up with great washes to tour and meeting content from which to learn and grow as a New Jersey carwasher. We also welcome your feedback and input. We are welcome to new meeting ideas and concepts and ask that you all put your thinking caps on and come up with ideas for us. Just give Suzanne a call at the office at 800/287-6604 and share them.

I hope to see many of you on June 13 as I know it will be money and time well spent! Have a great summer of washing.



Mike Conte,
CWONJ President

**Want to be a
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**Look for pictures from our
Annual Carwash Tour
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The CWONJ Asked, “What’s Your Exit Plan?” at It’s Winter Meeting

The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) met at the Westin Mount Laurel in Mount Laurel on March 21 for its Winter Membership Meeting. After hors d’oeuvres and a buffet dinner the group listened to a presentation by Lou and John Rendemonti on successful exit strategy planning and securing a lucrative financial future. The long-time carwashers have extensive backgrounds in the business as they both worked at their father’s wash though their college years. As a result of witnessing the struggles of a family business that was not prepared for his father’s health issues, Lou pursued a career in financial planning, John went into the law. Both had interesting perspectives and insight on the topic of exit planning and wealth management. ■

CWONJ President Mike Conte presides over the meeting.



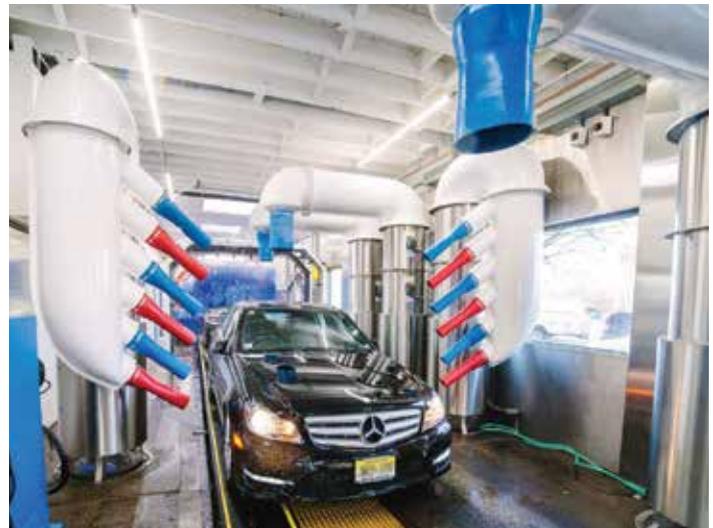
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Hazleton Car Wash and Detail Center Opens Amid Four Auto Dealerships

By Alan M. Petrillo

The owners of Hamilton Car Wash and Detail Center in Hamilton, NJ, have seemingly recreated their New Jersey facility in Pennsylvania.

Hazleton Car Wash and Detail Center is a 150-foot flex serve tunnel with eight detailing bays and 20 Vacutec vacuum stations in Hazleton Township, PA. It is a duplicate of the New Jersey facility, but serving four auto dealerships and the public – Honda, Kia, Hyundai and Nissan – instead of a single dealership as is the case with the New Jersey location.

Victor Thomas, owner of Wash Sense LLC, a consulting company that helps automobile dealerships build carwashes, is a partner and general manager of both the Hazleton and Hamilton locations. Other owners include former National Football League players Jessie Armstead and Tony Pierce, and auto dealership entrepreneur Mike Saporito.

Thomas said he's been in the carwash industry for 45 years, working for carwash equipment manufacturers, as a carwash operator and builder.

"At both Hazleton and Hamilton, if you purchase a vehicle from one of the dealerships, you get a free oil change and carwash for the life of the vehicle," Thomas said. "Our

basic flex-serve carwash is \$13, with \$16 and \$19 as the price points for various upgrades. But if you are a VIP customer, you would pay only \$3 for the upgrade to the \$16 wash, and \$6 to the \$19 carwash."

Thomas said that about two-thirds of the business from the Hazleton carwash comes from VIP customers.

"Even with a free oil change, a dealer still averages \$80 a car when the customer brings the vehicle in for service," he said. "Likewise, when they use the VIP carwash feature, they usually choose the add-ons, like undercarriage wash, clear coat and wheel-bright."

Thomas noted that the basic unlimited carwash on the VIP program costs \$29 a month, which has an automatic monthly renewal until the customer tells the carwash to stop. Upgrading to the Unlimited Plus VIP program, which adds wheel-bright, clear coat and an undercarriage wash, is \$35 a month.

Hazleton Car Wash and Detail Center (and the Hamilton location too) offers express detailing services for customers – express super clean interior, express carpet cleaning, and express washing at \$49 each. It also has express detailing of vehicles for \$125, and full detailing for \$199.

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“We like to take care of our regular customers first,” Thomas pointed out, “so VIP customers, new car prep, used car prep, and auction car prep are done in our carwashes. A lot of the public doesn’t realize we are open for them, so we plan on an advertising program that will launch in June of this year, using some radio commercials, website promotions, direct mailing campaigns, and couponing for our express and full detailing.”

Thomas says that the ownership team likes the flex-service concept as opposed to full service.

“We have pay stations at the carwashes where one employee guides the cars onto the track and the customer rides through, then moves to detailing if that’s what he wants,” Thomas noted. “We have three carwash employees at each location, and 11 detailers.”

Thomas added that the locations are open the same hours as the auto dealerships. That means they are open from 7am to 9pm, Monday through Friday; from 7am to 6pm on Saturday; and 9am to 4pm on Sunday.

Hazelton isn’t the end of the expansion program for the partners, according to Thomas.

“We have plans for other similar carwashes and dealerships in another state,” he said, “and are talking about a location where we have dual carwash tunnels.” ■

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

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

We totally enjoyed Chris Brown's presentation on "Maximizing Frontline Sales for Higher Profit." He has years of experience in the carwash industry, and if you ever have a chance to hear him, you have to take that opportunity. He brings a high level of enthusiasm to the room that gets you energized to improve your operation. Whether you're in the full-serve or self-serve business, how we talk to our staff and our customers makes a difference.

Our May 10 event at Dominion Raceway, near Fredericksburg, VA, will be reported on in the fall issue. While there we'll drive Go Karts, socialize, and hear a Subaru engineer talk about some of the new features in cars that "see" moving things and automatically react. And, we will stay to enjoy a Grammy-Award-Winning Reckless Kelly concert.

We need you to participate in the 5th Annual Wash to Save the Bay on June 3. This fundraiser for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has grown every year. In 2016, we raised more than \$10,000 from 17 carwash companies at 53 carwash locations and from generous vendor and distributor donations. This is a great way for you to let your customers know that you care about water and the environment. If you never tell them, how can you expect them to know? Next year, we can smash through the \$50,000 mark for total contributions, but only with your help! The MCA Crab in the Hat needs you!

As always, check our website for details and to register at www.mca-carwash.org



Dave DuGoff

Dave DuGoff
MCA President



Congratulations!!!

Congratulations go out to Dave and Vickie DuGoff on the birth of their first grandchild on March 9. Robert Behr DuGoff weighed in at 10 lbs. 4 ounces and was 22.5 inches long. ■



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Lights, Camera, Action!

By Dave DuGoff

Since the invention of Kodachrome, we have been captivated by color, brilliant color that makes your eyes pop. So, it should not be a surprise that carwash operators want colors to excite the customer and add value to the customer's experience. And the equipment manufacturers have certainly been leading the way. But, I have to ask

whether the lighting packages commonly available are really intended to excite our customers, the retail customers, or us as the wholesale purchasers of the equipment?

Like you, I have jumped at the opportunities as they come along, and more often than not, the retail customer's response has been, "Meh." Why?

The first reason why our retail customers don't notice much is because of the smart phone. They never look up, and when they do, they feel as if their privacy has been violated. I know you have seen this. And, there's very little we can do about it. Twitter, or event Facebook, is just more scintillating than our light show.

But, there are other reasons that we can address. When we see flashy new equipment at a trade show, we are standing up and standing still. Our customer is sitting in a car, with a very different angle of view. When they go through a tunnel with a lighted Carnauba wax system, the customer might see it for only a few seconds. When the front windshield emerges from the wraps, mitters and rinse arch, there is a wonderful view of the golden honey dripping down. But, the light is typically pointed near the top of the arch, not down on the car, and this view disappears once the windshield passes under that arch. Is it even visible for more than a few seconds?

Inbay automatic (IBA) manufacturers are offering the same things: lights and dripping wax. The bridge is moving instead of the car, but it only lights up the windshield for a fraction of a second. In the time it takes the mind to notice the color effect, it's past. Everything just moves too fast for the intended effect to be noticed.

There's another discrepancy between what we see from the outside and what customers see from inside their vehicle. Colored soaps and waxes look gray. There may be a hint of color, but predominately, it's gray. So, in the self-serve bay, the customer is outside of the car and sees exactly what we want them to see, even if they are distracted by talking on the phone, or texting, as the time runs. (We're OK with that, right?). But, in the tunnel and IBA, unless there's additional light shining on the car, it just looks gray.

Some people are never satisfied to let well enough alone, though. I admit guilt. Since the advent of the wax arches, I've wanted to do something in my IBAs. This is my



DuGoff's red foaming wax appears gray to a customer. The Carnauba wax goes around the car from back to front. Since the lights are activated when the valve opens, they are on before the arch circles the car. The overall effect of lighting up the car works!

current effort, and it's still not perfect, and could certainly be improved with greater sophistication but it basically works, and wasn't very expensive.

We changed the way the product goes on the car to slow it down and give the customer time to see the effect. A typical equipment package includes pods on each side of the bridge that spray a "super sealant" solution on one pass, moving from front to back on the car in about 10 seconds. It does a pretty good job of covering the windows, hood and rear of the trunk, and a pretty poor job of covering the lower half of the sides and barely does anything to the back of the car. Since the customer can't really see that, it must be OK, right?

Of course, if the next customer in line is awake and looking they might notice. No one has ever complained, but it bothers me. So, we slow it down, and apply the Carnauba wax through the main arch, which takes 20 to 30 seconds to go around the car. This gives excellent coverage of the whole vehicle. If you want the customer to pay a premium price for real wax, you gotta deliver the goods. In my book, that means a premium application of a high-quality product. This way, we can deliver an excellent service while the customer has time to enjoy the show.

The next step is to add a colored LED strip light on each of the sidewalls, set horizontally just below the bridge, angled slightly to light up the car's windows. You could set it even lower, but there is a basic principle of lighting that you don't want to be looking directly at the bulb. We set it just below the bottom of the bridge so that the bridge does not create a shadow as it moves up and down.

The lights are tied in with a relay that is activated when the Carnauba wax solenoid is energized. Not too complicated, though I have no idea what it does to the warranty on a new machine. You can figure out the next version – time delays for left and right, and so on.

How have customers reacted? Well, it's been a couple of months, no one has mentioned it, and sales of our top wash package are about the same. Sure wish I could say there has been a bump, but naww. ■

Dave DuGoff owns College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD. He is also the President of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association and the recipient of the NRCC's Hall of Fame Award in 2016.



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

As I write, it is early spring. The winter season was okay, similar to 2016 but not as exciting as 2015. As I look into the crystal ball and try to forecast the late spring and summer seasons, I hope the amount of snow and rain that fell, which has helped pull us from looming drought conditions, will produce that glorious green and yellow pollen. There really is no better partner than Mother Nature when she is on our side.

With the beginning of spring came the The Carwash Show in Las Vegas followed by NECA's "The Road to Prosperity," our annual bus tour and Table Top Show. I would like to thank all of the vendors who participated, as well as our generous sponsors (see page 66). This year we added a new value-added feature to the Show: "Tips of the Trade" mini-workshops. A Special thanks to:

- ❖ *Todd Glover of Diamond Shine who discussed how important it is to understand how to do the volumetrics and to properly calculate the cost per car of chemicals, especially with the onslaught of "Unlimiteds" and \$3 carwashes.*
- ❖ *Walter Sullivan of Money Systems who provided proper preventative maintenance of various bill changers, the dos and don'ts of do-it-yourself repairs, and when is it time to call a professional to avoid any down time?*
- ❖ *Adam Korngold of Washify who evaluated the pros and cons of gated systems, and the latest features for different wash configurations. With labor costs continuing to grow and good help becoming more and more limited, gates (or additional gates) may be a good option at your carwash.*

These presentations helped the NECA get closer to one of our strategic goals of improving educational opportunities for members. Stay tuned for the details of our November program and dinner.

As I said in my winter column, the NECA continues to work toward our mission and vision. The "Tips of the Trade" workshop was a direct result of it. Our goals set the road map, as we continue to develop initiatives and fine tune as needed. Hopefully, I finally will have the best possible answer to a frequent question, a question for which everyone seems to have a different answer, not because they are right or wrong but because the answer is more of an opinion. What is that question? Why should I join the New England Carwash Association? Well, there are a lot of reasons to join: networking opportunities, support of your industry organization, marketing tools and opportunities, educational and charitable events, legislative monitoring provided. In addition to these reasons and much more, I would like to say the NECA drives more consumers to use professional carwashes.

A different perspective for joining NECA came from The Carwash Show's 2017 Keynote Speaker. I unfortunately was unable to see the address from Tom Ridge, the first Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, former

Continued on next page ...



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NECA's Fall Membership Meeting To Focus on Mitigating Risk

Save the Date!

The New England Carwash Association's (NECA) Program Committee and Board of Directors have been hard at work planning the association's Fall Membership Meeting, **Tuesday, November 14** at the Crowne Plaza in Woburn, that will provide valuable information for both owners and managers. In addition to a reception and dinner, an interactive panel will share best practices on avoiding and handling a variety of risks.

Coverage will include:

- ❖ Operator's rights
- ❖ Assessing an incident and whether to file a claim
- ❖ Training staff to effectively respond to an incident
- ❖ Cyber risks and how can we protect ourselves

By limiting risk, members will be able to use their resources to provide the best possible service for their customers and build a reputation of excellence. This program aligns with NECA's mission to connect carwash professionals, and to promote and protect our industry. ■

For more information visit newenglandcarwash.org

NECA President's Column ... continued

Governor of Pennsylvania and the Chairman of Ridge Global, but he made a very empowering statement that demonstrates why being part of an association is so very important.

"Your associations have a very important role to play," confirmed Ridge. "The fact that you all come together as a group of associations to promote special interests (that impact your industry) is very much a part of the political process. So, I encourage you to stay involved with the associations and understand what they are doing on your behalf. And, if your association calls on you to pay a visit to a local Legislator, take them up on it. There's nothing more important than your elected official to

see you in person, advancing your cause." This was reported by Professional Carwashing and Detailing magazine on carwash.com. So, if you are not a NECA member, now is the time to join!

Remember, the NECA works hard for the benefit of all!



Dom Previte III
NECA President

NECA Table Top Show Recap Coming In Fall Issue

Note: At this publication's deadline, the event had not yet been held. We'll feature photos and announce the winners of the Best Exhibit Awards in the next issue. Also, visit the photo gallery on the NECA website.

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-Louis Armstrong

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NECA Moves Golf Outing to Canton



The 2017 New England Carwash Association (NECA) Charity Golf Outing will be held at Brookmeadow Country Club in Canton, MA, conveniently located just 30 minutes from Boston on Tuesday, September 19. A south shore favorite, Brookmeadow is a full, 72 Par course ensuring a fair and fun round of golf for all skill levels. This year the club has invested in a new irrigation system, new carts, and a new patio with tow fire pits for all to enjoy.

Also new this year is a Golf Ball Cannon that will surely add excitement to the event and lots of photo ops! Powered by compressed air, the golf ball cannon can shoot a golf ball 325 yards with no recoil. Each golfer will have the opportunity to fire a golf ball on to the green of a Par 4 hole. If all four players hit the green on their cannon shots, the team scores an automatic hole in one. Wow!

Our charity will once again be NEADS, providing the wonderful gift of a service dog to those in need, including children, Veterans and the deaf. Last year, the association was able to sponsor training for two pups, named Snowy and Storm, from the very generous support of our sponsors and golfers. In addition, a portion of this year's funds will be awarded to deserving recipients of the NECA scholarships.

Congratulations to everyone who has so generously participated in past golf outings. Since 2003, NECA has donated \$67,835.00 to various charities including Boston Children's Hospital, the Make-A-Wish® Foundation and the Worcester YMCA. Proceeds from the outing has also helped us award 10, \$1,000 NECA scholarships since 2011.

Please mark your calendars now for Tuesday, September 19. If you are interested in sponsoring or signing up your foursome today, visit www.necagolf.com, our new website, where you will find all the necessary information to do so.

If you have any questions or need further information, please reach out to any of our golf committee members. Have a wonderful summer and practice, practice, practice.

See you in September!

Committee Members: Patti Kaplan (starlitecw107@aol.com), Paul Vercollone (pvercollone@vercenterprises.com), Donato DePinto (ddepinto@necwe.com) and Mark Delaney (mark@allstoncarwash.com). ■



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TREASURER'S REPORT New England Carwash Association, Inc.

January - March 2017

Income

Interest Income.....	\$163.73
Meetings.....	\$7,725.00
Member Services.....	\$1,598.51
Membership.....	\$11,285.00
NRCC.....	\$45,520.00
Scholarship.....	\$860.00

Total Income..... \$67,152.24

Expenses

Advertising and Promotions.....	\$-
Board Expenses.....	\$784.96
Charitable Contribution.....	\$-
Insurance	
Management Services.....	\$9,921.04
Meetings.....	\$9,670.37
Member Services.....	\$607.00
Membership.....	\$355.95
Office Expense.....	\$1,059.04
Professional Expense.....	\$450.00
Scholarship	
Tax.....	\$-

Total Expenses..... \$22,848.36

Net Income..... \$44,303.88

OTHER Wash for a Cause

distributions to car washes	
Wash for a Cause - other exp	
Wash for a Cause Income	
Website.....	[89.97]

Total Wash for a Cause..... [89.97]

Cash Balances

Citizen's Bank Savings.....	\$88,638.96
Citizens Checking.....	\$79,808.20
EverBank CDs.....	\$102,000.00

Total Checking / Savings..... \$270,447.16

A Call for Nominations!

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

A Call for Nominations

There are openings for both Operator and Supplier Directors on the 2017 NECA Board. These are one-year terms, renewable by mutual agreement, for a maximum of three consecutive terms. By August 1, 2017, please nominate yourself or a colleague by contacting David Ellard, Immediate Past President, at 508/277-0955.

Eligibility

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

Hire Safe: Make Sure Employees are Careful About Being Careful

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



The Board of Directors meets in person six times a year. Dates are set in advance so that Board members can plan ahead.

New Board members are inducted in the fall and officially take office on January 1. Non-profit governance training is provided during the fall transition period and at a new Board orientation lunch.

More Opportunities to Get Involved (without the Board commitment)

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

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

For more information contact the NECA office at 781/245-7400.

SAVE THE DATES!

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

**NECA Golf Outing
Brookmeadow Country Club, Canton, MA**

OCTOBER 2 - 4

**NRCC
Atlantic City, NJ**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

**NECA Fall Dinner and Program
Crowne Plaza, Woburn, MA**



PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

Happy summer! I hope you all are enjoying a relaxing time and great car-washing conditions. The board of the New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) is working hard when most people are spending some time “relaxing from the daily grind.” The NYSCWA understands that as small business owners you don’t have the luxury of taking a break. Every day you are challenged with keeping your business going, making improvements to your facilities, training employees to deliver the best service and trying to keep up with the continual changes that impact your business.

The NYSCWA was founded 37 years ago to help the carwashing industry in New York state grow, prosper and have a voice. Over the years, countless board members have given their time and shared their expertise to offer educational programs, advice and counsel to members of the association. In an effort to continue to develop resources for the professional carwash operator to draw upon, the NYSCWA membership committee recently circulated a survey to carwash operators around the state to get a sense of what operators feel are valuable benefits the association can offer. Currently, the association offers access to a highly competitive insurance program, safety blogs and training information, access to payroll support, an energy purchasing program as well as a lobbyist to maintain watch for any legislative issues that may impact our industry. When we reviewed the results of the survey, and thank you to those who responded, it was no surprise to anyone on the committee that “networking with other operators” was a common reoccurring theme. Based on the information we have gained from this survey the committee will be meeting to discuss ways to deliver on the suggestions of the survey.

One of the most overlooked benefits of the association is the legislative oversight we have with our lobbyist William Crowell. Recently, Bill has notified the board with regards to legislation geared toward the “tip credit” that many operators legally use when calculating employee wages. We have been in contact with operators statewide and at the time of this printing we would have had several meetings and conference calls as well as drafting a memo in opposition of this legislation to explain the negative impact this legislation will have on our industry. There is more information found in Bill’s column, take a moment to read it on page 75. We also gathered in Albany to discuss the topic at our Spring General Membership Meeting, May 24, (which will be reported on in the Fall issue).

But being part of this association gives you access too many benefits that as a small business operator may be out of your reach. Even if you do not use the tip credit, some of you may not even know it exists. You need to become educated and we can help you! As an association it is important to make sure that we are monitoring all issues that affect our membership.

Continued on page 74 ...

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NYSCWA President's Column ... continued from page 72.

Inevitable changes to the minimum wage, the restrictions of the affordable care act and other state and federal regulations make it increasingly difficult to manage our businesses. The employee wage changes have sent operators looking for ways to automate and eliminate the entry-level positions once held by young employees, many of whom had their first jobs with our carwashes. Many of these employees got their start prepping cars, greeting customers or cleaning windows. Many of the regulations, including the elimination of the "Tip Credit" will ensure that more operators look for ways to automate and eliminate these positions once held by employees. Let's talk about this and many more issues that affect your operations. If you haven't joined the NYSCWA, I would ask that you consider it. The resources and experiences of other members available to you as a member are valuable tools to help you improve your operations. Even if you are not directly impacted by the removal of the "Tip Credit," the implications of the removal of this policy,

in my opinion, will have an impact on your operations in some way in the future.

For more information on the Tip Credit issue or to become member of the NYSCWA and to donate to our PAC (political action campaign) please visit our website at nyscwa.com. Together we can accomplish great things!



Walter Hartl
NYSCWA President



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Tip Credit Bill Carries Big Impact for Industry

By William Y. Crowell, III

The New York State Legislature has a legislative proposal of significant concern to carwash owners, which would eliminate the tip credit for carwash workers. This legislation is introduced in the Senate as Senate Bill 2664 by Senator Jesse Hamilton and in the Assembly as Assembly Bill 2967 by Assemblyman Francisco Moya. This legislation is currently in the Labor Committee in the respective houses.

This bill targets only carwash workers. It does not apply to any of the other workers receiving tip credits in the restaurant or other miscellaneous occupations. A carwash worker is defined in this bill as a carwash employee primarily engaged in washing, vacuuming or general cleaning of motor vehicles.

The proponents of this bill argue that the elimination of the tip credit is positive because the tip credit has aided wage theft. The tip credit is allegedly responsible for the systemic underpayment of carwash workers. The payment

of the minimum wage without the application of the tip credit would alleviate the opportunity to take advantage of carwash workers under this reasoning.

The argument detailed above ignores the fact that the majority of carwash owners appropriately use the tip credit and ensure that their workers receive the minimum wage to which they are entitled. In fact, many carwash workers with tips exceed the minimum wage. The failure of some carwashes, which were penalized, to lawfully administer the tip credit should not be the basis for negatively impacting the carwash owners and operators who comply with the law. The New York State Labor Department together with the Attorney General enforces the wage laws, including the tip laws with regular audits. The wage laws should be vigorously enforced against carwash owners or other employers who do not pay the required minimum wage. Enforcement of the wage laws, which come with significant penalties, provides the answer to wage theft, not elimination of the tip credit.

Pursuant to a wage order dated February 24, 2015, the acting Commissioner of Labor accepted a recommendation from a wage board to review whether to eliminate the system of cash wages and tip credits. To date, the Department of Labor has not released any recommendation on the tip credit. Action on this bill should await a recommendation from the Department of Labor's review of the tip credit as applied not only to carwash workers but across the board to other covered employees.

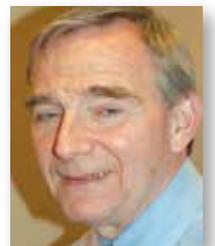
The elimination of the tip credit would result in many carwash owners and operators reviewing their business plans. The options would all be directed at achieving operational savings to cover the loss of the tip credit.

The options include laying off employees, establishing a no tip policy to coincide with price increases for a carwash or conversion to an automated carwash with driers and other equipment replacing employees. The carwash industry is uniquely positioned to implement job replacing technology. Each carwash owner would evaluate the economic consequences of the loss of the tip credit taken together with the future increases in the minimum wage to determine what adjustments to make to their business plan. None of these changes are positive for the employees or customers. It would, however, be a necessary and prudent response to a government-initiated change in the business model for the carwash industry.

The New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) has worked with the Department of Labor to educate its members about the tip credit and minimum wage requirements to ensure compliance. Failure to pay carwash or other employees the minimum wage is clearly not acceptable. Enforcement impacts the bad actors; however, elimination of the tip credit has negative repercussions on the entire industry.

Carwash owners, operators and suppliers need to reach out to their individual Senators and Assemblymen to educate them on the consequences of this legislation. It is important to explain the consequences of this legislation on your business, employees and customers. Legislators want to hear from their constituents, particularly on issues that impact small business owners. Please make the effort to reach out to them, you are the most effective voice on this issue. The NYSCWA has issued a memorandum in opposition to this legislation. Please contact the NYSCWA office at 800/287-6604 for a copy or visit nyscwa.com. ■

William Y. Crowell, III, is a partner with Cozen O'Connor. You can reach him at 212/883-4944 or wcrowell@cozen.com.



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**PHOTOS FROM THE
METS VS. CUBS
EVENT IN THE FALL ISSUE!**

Look for a recap from the Spring Membership Meeting in the fall issue.



New York State Car Wash Association

Profit and Loss



January - March, 2017

Income	
Membership Dues	13,800.00
Northeast Convention Income	29,262.84
PAC Contributions	75.00
Promotional Fees	78.73
Vendor Sponsorships.....	350.00
Total Income.....	\$43,566.57
Gross Profit.....\$43,566.57	
Expenses	
Advertising/Promotional	28.80
Director Fees	3,500.00
Insurance Expense.....	662.00
Legislative Expense.....	250.00
Legislative Fees	4,000.00
Office Expenses	377.37
Postage Expense.....	32.09
Printing/Graphics	13.00
QuickBooks Payments Fees.....	172.29
Telephone	43.07
Total Expenses.....	\$9,078.62
Net Operating Income.....	\$34,487.95
Net Income.....	\$34,487.95
Checking Account.....	\$74,210.49
Money Market Account	\$53,313.52
Total Cash On Hand	\$127,524.01

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What Happens in The Tunnel, Stays in The Tunnel



By Mike Benmoschè

A few months ago, I wrote a blog outlining the tremendous benefits of embracing the technology available at the exit of the wash commonly known as an anti-collision device. As I reported in the blog, this is designed to automatically disengage the conveyor when sensors are activated as a result of an impending vehicle collision. (cwinsurance.blogspot.com/2015/12/anti-collision-equipment-for-tunnel.html)

I recently attended The Carwash Show in Las Vegas where I learned about a new company that has been able to advance this technology to include the same protection for cars that jump the rail or become immobile causing a pile up to occur in the tunnel. By adding this product to your safety protocols, along with the anti-collision device, you might possibly save your business from a costly incident.

As an insurance company specializing in the carwash industry, it made sense to investigate how these incidents affected our loss history. After a rudimentary research project into our insurance company's claims activity relating to pile up losses in the tunnel, we were able to estimate our out-of-pocket insurance costs to be just under \$200,000. This does not include the additional expenses operators incur due to indirect costs which could inflate this figure to much higher levels. I estimate that this involved about 30 or so individual accidents.

Many readers may be thinking that this type of loss has more to do with the customers' own insurance. However, what you should keep in mind is that those charges do not reimburse the business for the indirect expenses that I mentioned. Examples of those are the lost time by employees moving the damaged cars from the tunnel, time spent discussing the elements of who is ultimately responsible, taking witness statements, lost business from other customers that have been shocked by the claim and afraid it may happen to them, potentially higher insurance premiums due to the cost of the investigation conducted by your insurance company, along with many other unseen issues. A negative experience almost always eats into your profits!

Operators who rely completely on human reflex and judgment to shut down the conveyor in certain emergencies, I believe, will be sacrificing a more effective option available to preserve the safety of customers at their washes. This is one of those situations where it makes more sense to trust in technology that can deliver a much faster response time.

As I write this article, I am aware of at least one large operation that has chosen to invest in this new optional safety product and is installing the equipment in several of its locations.

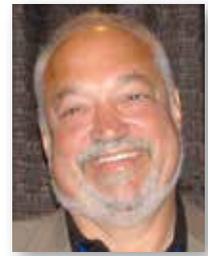
A current example of how this might have helped avoid a situation can be seen in the following video in this link: www.whec.com/news/delta-sonic-car-wash-crash/4439699/

I would urge all operators who own tunnels to seriously consider looking into the merits of installing one of these systems. The company that I was introduced to is Nopileups and their website address is www.nopileups.com. This does not mean that we are endorsing this specific product, but rather encouraging operators to explore whatever options are available that can perform these functions.

Another application where this product might be applicable is when some of the newer model vehicles anti-braking systems engage by accident in the tunnel. As many of you are aware, this is a problem that can arise when the proximity of the mitter erroneously activates the automatic breaking system when it believes it senses an impending collision. Consequently, the result may cause a multi-car pileup as the vehicles behind the stopped car advance forward. This too would be averted with the installation of this type of product.

Taking a proactive approach to safety is always the best approach when it comes to keeping the environment at the wash safe for customers and employees. It not only makes good sense from a moral perspective but it can often lead to substantial savings as well! Make the first move and learn more about how this might be a cost-saving solution to add at your wash. In my opinion, it isn't about whether you can afford to do it but more importantly can you afford not to?

Remember... A Safe Wash Protects People and Profits! ■



Mike Benmoschè

Mike Benmoschè is with Carwash Insurance Program by McNeil, based in Cortland, NY. You can reach him at mbenmosche@mcneilandcompany.com or 6007/220-6344.

In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life:

It goes on.

-Robert Frost

“Oh, the healthy things you can do!”

Dr. Seuss

By Ray Justice

If you read the previous nine issues, I had been asked by Editor Suzanne Stansbury to “Push the Envelope” and write about general health issues that everyone encounters.

In the first issue we started out with an overview and zeroed in on “Nutrition.” In the second issue we covered Motion, Movement & Stretching. Third was on Sleep, Rest & Recreation. Fourth was about Health Focused Reminders. Fifth was on Personal Habits, including Movement and then the importance of Water. Sixth, was focused on General Health and Longevity. Seventh was on Head Stuff – Typing in your mind, thoughts, beliefs, etc. Session Eight – More Head Stuff – letting go of fear-based thoughts through the power of self-suggestion. Nine – Mindfulness, the natural way.

Our thoughts drift on their own if you do not give them direction.

Our general theme is to encourage you to get to know yourself through personal observation. Your body will tell you a great deal. How are your energies, your thoughts, what you eat and drink, and your movement and exercise habits? Awareness & Mindfulness come into play here, which means paying attention.

A few important words that relate to health, fitness and energy.

Diet, Nutrition, Water, Stillness, Resting, Sleep, Recreation, Movement, Stretching, Mindfulness, Focus, Freedom, Reminders, Purpose, Intention, Mind-Body Connection, Emotional Well Being, Thoughts, Fears, Beliefs, Passion, Possibilities, Habits, Appreciation, Gratitude, Energy, Beliefs, Beauty, Present Moment and Now.

“The doctor of the future will give no medicines, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease.”

– Thomas Edison

Session 10: Personal Energy Awareness

Healthy is about feeling good, actually great, when we are free from illness and injury. Health is feeling the way we naturally should, being able to adapt and function at high levels of energy.

Are you having a good energy day today?

If yes you are, or no you are not then: (Oh! The healthy things you can do.)

Why are you having a good energy day? (Or why not?)

Are you happy with your energy and your life?

The mission of these questions, and of this regular series of articles is to help you pay attention, learn and care more about yourself. Paying attention is key for being aware of the natural signals and energies of your body and surrounding environment.

Think of it as a connected progression: The more you know about yourself, the more you can accept and understand who you are and how you function. This alone can lead to better

health. When we feel healthy and understand our energies, that helps us feel and be more confident.

Other people tune into our energies and can feel or sense that confidence, self trust or lack of it.

You can be more prepared and willing to focus on your life purpose and to help others.

We feed off, exchange and pick up energy from each other.

Besides our general health, what we eat, drink and how we slept, what else would you think is often the major factor on our energy levels? If you thought emotions, you are 100 percent correct.

This, personal energy awareness article, of the total series, is the deepest and most important so far. You probably won't believe that but this is so powerful, for each of you individually, that I hope I can get it across.

I would like to be able to hand you a real sense of the energy of this but it can only be experienced yourself.

“Feel the Love” (Appreciation, Gratitude)

When you feel the love, things start to flow.

Now what the heck does that really mean?

The Answer: When you get out of your negative, doubtful, blaming, complaining, fear-based thoughts “something” shifts. This becomes Phase 1.

Phase 2 is when you can let go of the above and actually, really feel, appreciative, grateful and happy.

That's when things start to flow. Almost on their own, coincidences start to happen, people show up, things fall in place. You start to feel even more grateful and then even more comes along.

You cannot fake it. No one else can do it for you. It has to be you. It is an inner believing, feeling reality. How do you really feel about yourself and others? Not what you say or think, but how you feel.

When our energy is “off” or not quite up to par, and assuming you have had decent nutrition, water, and a good night's sleep, then that is the time to consider where your emotions are.

Focusing on Beauty or Beautiful things has a different impact on your body energy than focusing on unpleasant or repulsive sights, sounds, odors, etc.

Sleep, drinking enough water, quiet time, a healthy diet, recreation, exercise, getting away from it all and your focus and interest level all have an impact on your body energy. Your emotions even more so and it always is amazing how much our personal energy is effected by our beliefs.

More detailed information on the actual chemical changes in your body connected to emotions can be found at the following: scientificamerican.com/article/feeling-our-emotions/chemistryislife.com/the-chemistry-of-emotions

A Presentation

At a talk I gave on personal energy and how it affects yourself and others, I did an exercise that had some interesting results. It was for a group of about 70 health care professionals.

Here is how the exercise went.

I asked, on a scale of one of 10, to focus on how they felt, in their body, as they heard a certain word, and to respond quickly, and out loud all at once as a group, without thinking. “1” being low energy, or negative, in some form and “10” being high energy, feels really good.

For the first word “Discipline,” most said “2,” for the next word “Adore” most said “10.” I repeated this a couple more times with different words.

I had done the same exercise with a different group at an earlier date and they said the exact same numbers – “2” and “10.”

Interesting on its own and a reminder for us all to become more and more aware of our thoughts and words and to practice changing some of them if they do not feel good. Awareness is the first step. If we are not paying attention inwardly we will not even know what is there.

Think about practicing with your thoughts and words just as we practice with improving our physical abilities with sports and games. Our personal energy and awareness improve in the same way by being interested to do so, having the intention and practicing to change our habit.

Having written a fair amount of intimate poetry, I am interested in finding a way to mix poetic thinking with our daily lives and even with business situations.

Poetic thinking, or writing, is somewhat more about what you feel and are aware of with your senses, than just what you are thinking about.

It is a deeper, more present, more in tune, more compassionate, and more about life, way of thinking, writing, speaking and being. It is a means of expressing yourself in a deeper way than your day-to-day conversations.

Poetic writing and thinking style might be an interesting exercise to relate to some event in your life. If you do it a few times, you might just surprise yourself.

Remember getting started, taking the first step, is the difficult part. Once you start, your pen, or keyboard, will take over almost on its own. Here is a question to ponder and use as a starter. What choice could you make today that would enhance your personal environment? And why could or would that happen?

Enjoy this moment, as it is constantly changing, and a good time to change your thoughts.

If you want a good reminder of how important personal energy is, read these comments sent to me by a nurse I was coaching.

When talking with another friend

this afternoon, I shared with her what you said about how the most important part of any interaction is the way you feel about yourself, and it was a very useful insight for her. I will definitely be reflecting on and drawing upon that for years to come.”

How you feel about yourself, on any given day, any moment, is picked up and felt by others around you and that is very useful information.

“Oh, the healthy things you can do.” ■

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



Ray Justice

The Image Maker

By Ray Justice

I am the Image Maker

The Creator of ideas and happiness.

What is the image you desire,

The life you rally want?

Let's take your daily thoughts,

The ones you repeat over and over,

Let's erase most and change them

Into possibilities and fulfillment.

Give me some thoughts and desires to work on

Don't confuse me with what you don't want.

I am forever with you

All you need to do is
feel appreciative, pause
and listen,

I am always on call

Free and available.

Let's get started

Are you ready?

Together,

We make it happen. ■



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northeast carwasher



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Aurora Design.....	74	Kleen-Rite Corp.....	3
Autowash Maintenance Corporations	82	MacNeil Wash Systems.....	33
Autowash Online.....	47	Mang Insurance Agency (NBT-Mang).....	76
Blendco Systems / C.A.R. Products, Inc.	31	Mirologic Associates.....	41, 69
JoAnna Brandi & Co.	26	Motor City Wash Works.....	7
Car Wash Systems, LLC.....	70	My Car Wash Guy.....	75
Carolina Pride.....	39	National Car Wash Marketing.....	34
Coast Commercial Credit.....	45	NRCC.....	23, 63
Coleman Hanna Carwash Systems.....	22	PDQ Mfg., Inc.....	37
CSI.....	67	Panaram/Carwashworld.com.....	29
DRB Systems, Inc.....	21	Peco Car Wash Systems.....	5
ERC Wiping Products.....	32	Perry Powell Consulting/WashIdeas.com	36
Erie Brush & Mfg. Corp.....	19	Ross Brothers, Inc.....	59
Etowah Valley Equipment.....	17	SK Advertising & Design Small Business.....	45
Extrutech Plastics.....	51	Simoniz USA.....	2
Fragramatics Mfg. Co., Inc.....	81	Sobrite Technologies.....	27
G & G LED.....	57	Sonny's The Car Wash Factory.....	83
G & M New England LLC.....	66	Vacutech.....	55
General Pump.....	40	WashCard Systems.....	32
Grace for Vets.....	43	Washify.....	49
Hamilton Manufacturing Corp.....	18	Washtech.....	61
Huron Valley Sales.....	30	Wipe On/Wipe Off.....	52
Innovative Control Systems.....	84	ZEP Vehicle Care.....	9
J & M Car Wash Builders.....	24		

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Total CarWash

Offering >>

SONNY'S is the only manufacturer with **FOUR** complete solutions. We're a one-stop shop for all the equipment, software, parts, and education to keep your business growing.

Hands-on

Expertise >>

SONNY'S has been washing cars since 1949 and has over 850 years of operations experience in our network. We use this knowledge and unique experience to deliver a total solution to help drive your business forward.

Step 1

Hands-on Training to plan, manage, and grow your business.

Step 2

World's Largest Manufacturer of conveyerized car wash equipment and tunnel systems.

Step 3

Affordable Controls to deliver efficiency and profitability across your locations.

Step 4

12,000 Parts with \$12 million in inventory to keep your business running.

Industry Firsts as The Market Leader

■ First POS & management system with integrated tunnel controller.

1988

1994

■ First MS Windows POS & networked management system.

■ First gated Express car wash with Benny's.

■ First payment terminal with streaming video.

2001

2004

■ First to develop cash management solution for Express model.

■ First payment terminal with bill dispensing.

■ First web-based controller with 192 outputs.

2008

2007

■ First to develop 3rd generation pay station with dual bill dispensing.

■ First controller with Ethernet based outputs.

■ First to develop automated wrap positioning system.

■ First to apply targeted chemistry and pressure.

2014

2017

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THE SCIENCE OF AUTOMATING
THE CAR WASH PROCESS

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