

northeast carwasher

Coming out of COVID-19

Carwash CPR

COVID-19
Financing
Options

Chris Christie to
Keynote '21 NRCC

Venus & Mars
Talk COVID Volumes

Profile in Success:
Oscar Burks



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Fall 2020

Vol. 25 No. 4

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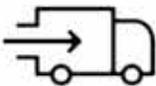


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northeastcarwasher.com

As you read though this issue, the brilliant colors of fall are beginning to take hold and the anticipation of a snowy, salty winter are almost within reach.

But as we wrap up our 25th year of publishing, never have the stakes been higher or the challenges greater for our entrepreneurial readers. No one in our industry saw 2020 coming. Yet, despite the overwhelming challenges, carwashers up and down the East Coast have found ways to adapt their models and rethink how they do business. From our Wash Volume Index numbers on page 8, and from talking to numerous operators, volumes are returning and in many cases not down nearly as much as had been anticipated. The consumer is still skittish about full-service washing, but with the use of foggers and rigid sanitization of high-touch points, they are slowly coming around. It remains to be seen if that model, however, will be able to survive and we will explore that in our winter issue. It also remains to be seen what the unemployment numbers will be in the fall, if the country can get the infection rate down and if resurgence hits, as has been predicted. Lots of unknowns and lots of trepidation, but the operators we spoke with in our cover story on page 18 are optimistic and prepared to take on whatever comes their way.

Board Cancels NRCC

As you all know, the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) board opted to cancel this year's event due to COVID-19. It was a gut-wrenching decision but one made out of caution and concern for our attendees and vendors. At the time of this writing, the state of New Jersey is not allowing gatherings of more than 25 so even if the board had pushed forward it would have been in vain.

But don't despair! The 2021 NRCC, October 4-6, has a few new tricks up its sleeve. First, the board has allocated more money for education and speakers. As a result, and thanks to generous sponsorships from Micrologic and InnovateIT, former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie is our keynote speaker. Politics aside, Governor Christie is an articulate, no holds barred kind of speaker who will be sure to entertain and educate us on the country's politics at that time. We are so excited to have him and very thankful to our sponsors!

Next, our Welcome Reception is going to become more inclusive (open to all vendors and attendees) compliments of long-time sponsor Innovative Control Systems (ICS). The event will be held in the lower level of the Atlantic City Convention Center on Tuesday, October 5, right before the show floor closes. The hour-long event, that will include light fare and beer and wine, is the perfect way to catch up with old friends and make some new ones before heading out to dinner.

And, our host hotel is going to be the recently renovated Hard Rock Hotel & Casino right on Atlantic City's iconic boardwalk. The state-of-the-art venue will not disappoint while providing a better AC experience for everyone at a great price point.

I'm more than a little excited about all of it, and welcome your feedback. Although the board tries to exceed your expectations, we need to hear from you to ensure that we are doing just that, so please reach out!



Looking ahead to 2021, let's stay positive, smart and continue to wear our masks out of concern for all those around us.

Suzanne L. Stansbury
Editor/Publisher

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*- Ray Justice,
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Positivity abounds at College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD.



WASH VOLUME INDEX

Our Wash Volume Index through July is not as ugly as you would anticipate. Much of that has to do with how "open" or "closed" the four operators were during Phase 1 and 2 of COVID-19.

Our Massachusetts operator was able to keep his operation open showing a modest 10 percent decrease in volume, while our Maryland carwasher experienced the most severe washing restrictions with a 25 percent decrease in volume year to date.

As we enter fall washing we hope Mother Nature sprinkles just the right amount of snow and precipitation for a healthy winter washing season and return to stronger volumes across the board.



Thanks to operators Dave DuGoff (MD), Doug Rieck (NJ), Steve Weekes (NY) and Dave Ellard (MA) for their numbers!

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SONNY'S PARTNERS WITH GENSTAR CAPITAL



Sonny's Enterprises, Tamarac, FL, the world's leading manufacturer of conveyorized carwash equipment, parts and supplies has partnered with Genstar Capital after a four-year run with Sentinel Capital Partners, New York, according to Sonny's CEO Paul Fazio. In an exclusive interview with Fazio, he said that the timing, despite the Pandemic, couldn't have been better for the new partnership. "It's the right timing and opportunity for us right now," he said. "We are so lucky to have worked with Sentinel, and I will miss that relationship, but we can do more and be better with Genstar."

Genstar Capital, San Francisco, CA, has been a leading private equity firm focused on investments in targeted segments of the financial services, healthcare, industrial and software industries for the last 30 years. They currently have approximately \$19 billion of assets.

The new influx of capital will enable Sonny's to accelerate product development, manufacturing, marketing and to invest more resources into its existing suite of solutions. "Our partnership with Genstar will help attract and retain the best talent in the industry, and help us to continue to develop innovative new products that simplify the operations of our customers' carwash business," said Fazio.

Key to the partnership, Fazio added, is Genstar's ability to work in true partnership with the Sonny's team. "It's not just about the products we develop, but it's about the people we service and our team at Sonny's," said Fazio. "Working with a team of five from Genstar, who really get it and

get our vision, and who understand that it's a partnership, is key to our success."

Established in 1949, Sonny's has been led by the Fazio family since inception, serving both small and independents, as well as large national carwash chains in the United States and internationally. "My team and I remain committed to being the single source for carwash equipment, vacuums, chemicals, software, education and local support," Fazio added. "We're big, yes, and it can be a challenge to stay grounded and in tune with your customers, but we do it. We work hard at it and we work hard at continually improving and being the best we can. That is where our partnership with Genstar will help."

Rob Rutledge, Managing Director of Genstar Capital, said, "Sonny's draws on over 40 years of industry leadership to drive deep relationships with over 6,000 active customers nationwide. They operate as true partners with their customers and invest in their growth, from expert guidance during site planning through construction and operations, forging a long-term relationship as they grow together." Added Rutledge, "We are very excited to work with Paul Fazio and his team to grow the business both organically and through strategic acquisitions."

Although Fazio wouldn't comment on his next acquisitions they are on the drawing board. "I am so excited about the future and feel empowered," he said. "My plan is to do more and be better for our new partners, team and customers."

The partnership with Genstar Capital was solidified on August 5.

For more information visit sonnydirect.com and gencap.com

INDUSTRY LEGEND
PASSES TOO SOON

Roy Lee Wakefield, 81, loving father, grandfather and carwash industry icon passed away on July 15, surrounded by his loving family.

Born on November 5, 1938 in Eufaula, OK, to Charles and Grace (Whatley) Wakefield, Roy graduated from Childress High School in 1957 in Arkansas. Upon graduation he moved to Memphis, TN, to live with his sister, Ethlene, where he attended classes at the University of Tennessee in Memphis while working for Tennessee Liquefied Gas Company. It was while living in Memphis that he met his wife Patricia Atkins. They were married in 1960.

The Wakefields moved to Houston, TX, where Roy worked for Mr. Pride Car Wash, owned by United Inns Incorporated, where he worked his way up to oversee operations in the Houston, Memphis and Atlanta markets. In the mid-70s he partnered with Nelson Rusche to become Operating Partner of Mister Car Wash in Houston. The partners expanded to more than 15 washes in and around Houston before selling the company in 1997.

Roy served on the board of Waterway Car Wash, based in St. Louis, MO, and received several distinguished service awards throughout his career from the International Carwash Association (ICA). He was inducted into the ICA Hall of Fame, its highest honor, in 2018.

After his retirement from carwashing he became co-owner and chairman of Largo International, Inc., a wholesale

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Newsworthy ... continued

furniture importer, with his son Glenn Wakefield, until his retirement in 2018.

Roy enjoyed hunting, fishing and spending time on his ranch with his family and friends. He is survived by his wife Patricia, daughter Melissa Lofrado, son and daughter-in-law, Glenn and Brandi Wakefield, as well as five grandchildren and brothers and sisters Ethlene Brewer, Cecil Reed, Frank Wakefield and Virginia Arnett.

In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to Basset Buddies Rescue of Texas (bbtrt.org) and/or Ridgeback Rescue of the US (rrus.org).

Editor's Note: I had the distinct pleasure of serving on the ICA board with Roy in 1999, 2000 and 2001. Although I had little carwash experience compared to him, Roy always treated me kindly and with respect. I imagine that is how he conducted his life and business. My deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

TOMMY'S EXPRESS MAKES LEADERSHIP CHANGES



Tommy's Express, Holland, MI, has promoted experienced leaders within the company who will continue to drive the company's expansion across four divisions: Tommy Car Wash Systems, Tommy's Express and the newly formed Tommy's Express Operations and Tommy's Express Real Estate, according to a company press release.

Alex Lemmen, formerly the company's chief operating officer, is now CEO and current Tommy's President and Co-Founder Ryan Essenburg has also been named Chief Innovations Officer (CIO), where he will lead the company's increased focus on innovation and new products, stated the release.

"We realize there is even more opportunity for us to grow even faster as our model continues to prove successful in many markets around the country," said Essenburg. "To best manage that growth, we've added a real estate company that funds and develops sites, as well as an operating company that operates Tommy's Express Car Wash locations."

The company currently has 45 carwash locations with more than 230 future sites in development in the US and abroad, the release stated.

For more information visit tommys-express.com

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WASHWORLD AWARDS 2019 SALES AWARD

Washworld, DePere, WI, has awarded Reliable Plus its 2019 Platinum Sales Achievement Award, according to a company press release. This award is the company's highest sales award, recognizing outstanding achievements as a distributor. The 2019 award represents the sixth consecutive year that Reliable Plus has received it.

"I personally appreciate all the hard work each and every team member has contributed to our success," said Car Wash Sales Manager Gary Wolf. "It's a testimonial of the dedication and effort our Reliable Plus team demonstrates on a daily basis."

[For more information visit Washworldinc.com](#)



For the sixth year in a row Reliable Plus wins Washworld's sales award.

Continued ...



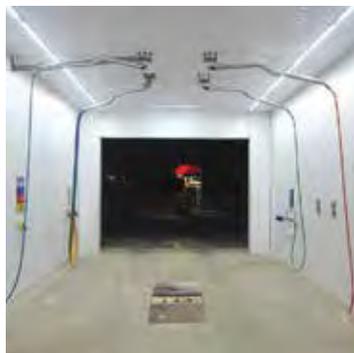
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Newsworthy ... continued

MARTIN, PAVONE FORM AMPLIFY CAR WASH ADVISORS

Amplify Car Wash Advisors, Scottsdale, AZ, a full-service carwash advisory firm is now fully operational, according to a company press release. The firm is born out of a partnership between Bill Martin, past International Carwash Association (ICA) president and founding partner of Car Wash Partners/Mister Car Wash and current owner of Metro Ex-

press, and Jeff Pavone, founding partner of CP Capital Advisory and Commercial Plus. The partners will be advising on complex transactions in the carwash industry, according to the release.

“Jeff and I agree there is an opportunity to serve carwashers as they seek to grow their brands and their enterprise more aggressively in today’s highly competitive and rapidly evolving environment, without the constraint of limited capital,” said Martin. “We can do this by

finding the right financial partner that is the best fit for the carwasher and all of the stakeholders in the company.”

He added, “Also, if the timing is right for the owner, we can find a suitable financial exit.”

For more information
visit amplifywash.com

INDUSTRY VETERAN QUAY JOINS D & S TEAM



D & S Car Wash Systems, High Ridge, MO, has added veteran Brad Quay to its senior management team as Vice President of D & S’s new Large Vehicle/Fleet Wash Division. He will be tasked with every aspect of launching and operating the division, according to a company press release.

Quay has more than 25 years of experience in the industry serving in management roles for established manufacturers of point-of-sale systems and specialty chemicals. He is a past president of the Heartland Carwash Association, as well as several other industry boards.

“I have known Brad professionally for many years, and am very pleased to have him helm this exciting new venture for our firm,” said D & S President Jon Jansky. “We believe he will be instrumental in our capitalizing on this large market segment.”

Quay will divide his time between his home office in Toledo, OH, and D & S headquarters in St. Louis, MO.

For more information
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ICA LAUNCHES CAREER CENTER

The International Carwash Association (ICA), Chicago, IL, launched the Car Wash Career Center in mid-July, to provide employers with the power of ICA's orbit to reach more than 25,000 potential candidates, according to a company press release.

The Center also provides free resources to enhance careers and find the perfect industry job, said the release. Employers can post jobs for FREE until October 1. In addition to job postings, the site also features a number of resources to help build and manage careers in the industry. There is also a reference checker, resume writing tools, and a career coaching service.

For more information visit careers.carwash.org



NACS CANCELS 2020 SHOW

NACS

The National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) has cancelled its 2020 live event, according to the association's website, nacsshow.com, and a video from NACS President and CEO Henry Armour.

Slated for October 11-14, 2020, at the Las Vegas Convention Center, the event was cancelled due to the State of Nevada virus mitigation mandate limiting the size of gatherings to 50 or fewer.

Virtual tools and online experiences have been developed, according to the website, for its members. These tools will launch in the fall and are available to NACS members year-round. Check the association's website for additional information.

The 2021 NACS event is slated for October 5-8 at McCormick Place in Chicago, IL.

For more information visit nacsshow.com

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**DESIGN SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Coming Out of COVID-19 – The Near Future for the Carwash Industry



By Alan M. Petrillo

The first quarter of the year and part of the second have been challenging for the carwash industry, disastrous in some parts of the country, and simply horrendous in terms of business in others. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid the carwashing industry low, and depending on which state you operate in, either devastated your receivables or just put a huge dent in your spring and early summer business.



Industry veteran Doug Rieck of Magic Wash on the Jersey Shore questions the future of full-service washing given the consumer's hesitation to allow employees into their vehicles and the rising minimum wage.

Doug Rieck, owner of Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ, has been in the industry since 1983. Rieck said, "April of 2020 was my worst month since I opened all those years ago. It was horrible; there were no cars on the road, no one was going to carwashes."

Rieck runs a flex-service gated entry express carwash with four self-service bays, as well as a Laundromat. "No one wanted to use the express exterior and we got a few customers for our self serves and the Laundromat," he said. "Our other two stores in the area both have inbay automatics with self-service bays, which had a reasonable May, and a good June. The Governor opened up the state more in June, which helped, and in the middle of June let full-service carwashes reopen, where before the only conveyor carwashes open were gated-entry exterior washes."

In Connecticut, Mark J. Curtis, chief executive officer of Splash Carwashes, with 17 carwashes in Connecticut and five in New York state, believes a lot of people are still afraid to use carwashes, and as of the end of July are still sheltering in place out of fear of the Coronavirus.



Splash Car Washes, Greenwich, CT, operates 17 locations in Connecticut and five in New York state.



Splash's location in Bedford, NY, was built four years ago. Mark Curtis, Splash Chief Executive Officer, is hopeful that volumes will return to relatively normal after the first of the year.

"Our move toward reopening has been a little bit later than others because of our concern for the public's safety," Curtis said. "Customers have responded to us, and seem to be convinced that our carwashes are safe. Business at our self-service locations has been consistent, our exterior no-touch volume is up in year-over-year traffic, exterior express is picking up, and full-service washes are trailing."

Curtis noted that he expects to see a number of full-service customers moving from that type of wash to express exteriors.

"Each week has changed where we see a little more full service volume, but much more exterior-only volume as the weeks go by," Curtis observed.

Curtis said that during the difficult months of the Pandemic, "We retained our managers on staff, but were forced to furlough a substantial portion of our workforce. When we were able to reopen, most employees were anxious to get back to work, but others were reluctant to come in because they were getting unemployment ben-

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Coming Out of COVID-19 ... continued

efits and the added \$600 weekly from the federal government.”

Chris Zona, owner of Fresh Auto Wash in Easton, MA, and Autowash Technologies, and a board member of the New England Carwash Association (NECA), says that his association (as did all Northeast associations) worked hard with their state government to get carwashers put on the essential list of businesses when the Massachusetts Governor ordered businesses, including all carwashes, shut down in March.

“We jumped on a task force to try to get carwashes opened as fast as possible,” Zona said. “We engaged a lobbying firm to get our message into the Legislature, and after nearly two months of being shut down, we got the exterior carwash model reopened in Phase 1. We pushed further, and got the rest of carwashes opened in Phase 2 and 3. We are now working on getting carwashes included on the essential businesses list.”

When carwashing was shut down in March, Zona had a team meeting to talk about the issues.

“Some employees wanted to continue to work with us, while others wanted to be furloughed,” he said. “We kept a lot of people on the payroll, and at Autowash Technologies, we worked straight through.”

Doug Kleeschulte, owner of Scrub-a-Dub Car Wash in the Catskill Mountains of New York, has five locations, each with a friction and touch-free inbay unit, self-service bays, and three sites with dog washes.



“On the self service side of the issue, we were initially allowed to be open with one employee at each location,” Kleeschulte said. “Because we have auto cashiers at our inbay automatics, they were able to stay open too. Then we were told we had to have 100 percent employee reduction, so we sent everyone home but still paid them, and my son Andrew and I serviced the locations and kept them running.”

Kleeschulte said New York State kept them in that form of suspended animation for several weeks, before declaring his carwashes essential businesses.

“We were then able to open up our conveyor carwash with certain restrictions, and brought back one employee who had to wear PPE (personal protective equipment) as per the state’s guidelines,” he noted. “We shut down every other vacuum, and maintained six-foot spacing where we could. That’s how we’ve been since, and we’re grateful that we’re open and have had no complaints from customers about our process.”

Jeff Gold, president of Buckman’s Car Wash with five locations in Monroe County, New York, runs exterior tunnels (one of which is a double tunnel), along with a total of eight self-service bays at two locations.



Rochester-based Buckman’s Car Wash operates five exterior tunnels (one double tunnel) and eight self-service bays in Western New York.

“The state closed our tunnels on March 22, everything except our self-service bays and vacuums,” Gold said. “When the first phase of reopening started, the Governor and attorney general allowed carwashes to reopen in a touch-free environment, which meant we could only take our unlimited customer base, but no cash or credit. So, we worked with our POS provider to take a touch-free option where the customer buys the wash on his phone and then scans the phone to get the wash. We got that done about 10 days later.”

Once the second phase of reopening hit, which allowed full tunnel use, cash, credit, and carwash tickets were okay as long as the carwash complied with state safety rules, so things started moving.

“Our employees are wearing state mandated masks and we require them to wear disposable gloves,” Gold pointed out. “We follow all clean and sanitation guidelines, cleaning any surfaces a customer would touch. We don’t see an end to that. We even

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Coming Out of COVID-19 ... continued

have cleaning logs for our employees to complete when they clean the coin acceptors on the vacuums, and in the self-service bays, the wands and mop handles, and the prep guns. And they are maintaining social distancing guidelines of six feet too.”

Glen Sheeley, a partner in Wash Co. Development in Middletown, NY, believes that sanitizing is the biggest issue in carwashes, and also in the Laundromat he owns.

“Cleaning the kiosks, hoses, and carwash equipment so customers feel comfortable using it is so important,” Sheeley said. “For carwashes, I think license plate recognition will give a big boost to the industry for touchless interactions. At our location, we will be putting hand sanitizers on our 22 free vacuum hoses.”

Curtis of Splash thinks that things will shake out after the first of the year and return to relatively normal.

“There are two components to consider,” he said. “First, people are still sheltering in place and it will take time for them to come around. About 30 percent of them are still cutting out normal activities. Also, you have to look at the unemployment numbers, where if more people are employed, they will likely be washing their cars. That’s the other hurdle we have to get over, as well as the variable about the unknown of the possibility of re-infection.”

Gold of Buckman’s said he doesn’t see the end to the Coronavirus issue until early in 2021.

“It depends on what happens in the fall and early winter,”

The three-year-young Wash Co. in Middletown, NY, is concentrating on sanitizing their wash process and Laundromat so customers feel comfortable.



The site includes free hand sanitizers at each of its 22 free vacuums.



he said. “If there’s a spike in our region or the state as a whole, it could be very difficult.”

Kleeschulte of Scrub-a-Dub said his business is not back to pre-COVID levels yet.

“We’re still down, but luckier than most businesses like gyms, restaurants, bars, and others,” he said. “While we are grateful to be open, we don’t see much good for the carwash industry until next year. We just hope that it snaps back.”

Rieck of Magic Wash said his full-service customers are happy that his wash is spray disinfecting cars and that em-

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ployees are masked and gloved.

“Every day I try to talk to one or two customers, just to keep in the loop,” Rieck said. “But I personally think that full-serve carwashes are a thing of the past. Full serves in the lower- and mid-range volumes are terribly difficult to run and staff and make money. But with the \$15 an hour wages, and reduced demand because of COVID-19, things could get interesting.”

Zona of Fresh Auto Wash thinks that most exterior carwash operators are close to being back to pre-COVID wash numbers because of their unlimited memberships.

“People are thinking about being clean now,” Zona observed. “It’s easy to run a car though a carwash. People have ‘clean’ on the brain, and a clean car is a safe car. Maybe that’s what’s helping us right now.”

NC

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



Andrew Kleeschulte, former employee John Bauer and Doug Kleeschulte at their Port Ewen, NY, Scrub-a-Dub site.

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Forget Formal Crisis-Preparedness-Response Plans...

Industry Professionals Band Together to Navigate the Unexpected Car Wash CPR

By Beth Martin

As a carwash industry professional, you likely have documented situational plans or standard operating procedures for “crises” such as equipment malfunctions, damage claims or the occasional unsavory online customer reviews. But many carwash operators found themselves in uncharted communications territory earlier this year when it came to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Seemingly overnight, our industry was faced with navigating Government-mandated shutdowns, addressing employee and customer onsite safety concerns, making sense of ever-changing unemployment and personal protective equipment (PPE) program requirements, to managing reduced customer flow and inevitable supply chain shortages.

Chances are, you didn't have a comprehensive crisis communications plan in place, and may have felt like you were being thrown into a trial by fire. Many operators had no choice but to shift to crisis communications mode immediately. There was simply no time to ponder if countless hours could have been saved, which can be critical when responding effectively to a crisis, by having a pre-existing Crisis-Preparedness-Response (CPR) plan in place.



Masks, gloves and frequent, documented disinfecting of all contact surfaces are part of Greater Dayton, OH-based, Flying Ace Express Car Wash's COVID-19 standard operating procedure.

What is CPR?

A Crisis-Preparedness-Response plan is a customized, comprehensive communication tool, whether in digital or a print manual format, that prepares a business for an emergency or unexpected event. The core of every CPR plan focuses on identifying potential crises and then proactively formulating the company's response, and mapping out communication steps to ensure information reaches all key audiences including employees, customers, stakeholders, vendors, media, partners and the general public. A solid CPR plan details steps to take when a crisis first emerges, how to communicate with pre-determined target audiences, and perhaps most importantly, guarantees a quick release of information with consistent messaging across all company platforms.

Prior to March, many carwash industry professionals remained busy focusing on day-to-day operations and providing customers with the highest quality wash and customer service

Greater Dayton, OH-based Flying Ace Express Car Wash frequently updates onsite digital menu board messaging to communicate COVID-19 procedures.



Greater Dayton, OH-based Flying Ace Express Car Wash site banners alert customers that the wash is clean, safe and open.



Central Ohio-based Moo Moo Express Car Wash site banners alert customers that the wash is clean, safe and open.



experience possible. It may have seemed daunting or unnecessary to proactively map out and prepare for potential crises such as a Pandemic, and likely wasn't even on the radar. And then COVID-19 hit.

"It is impractical to believe we could map out a plan for every potential crisis, and I'm not sure any of us would have guessed we would be facing a Pandemic," said Nicole Taranto, of Boston area-based King Triton Car Care Centers. "I believe a more practical approach is to encourage quick and creative thinking and problem solving on a daily basis and in response to daily challenges. This will then carry over when facing a more severe crisis such as COVID-19."

A Shift in Customer Service

With customer service and personal customer interactions a top priority at King Triton, Taranto says her team had to quickly become more creative in order to maintain the personal connection that has always been one of their core values. This on-the-spot shift of how to enhance non-contact, socially distanced customer touchpoints likely wasn't something they would ever have had proactively documented in a CPR manual. "Prior to the Pandemic, each customer that visited our site was greeted by a smiling cashier, who very often knew the customer's name before even approaching the vehicle," Taranto explained. "A handshake, or even an occasional hug, between our cashier and customers, was nothing out of the ordinary."

Continued...

Despite a Grand Opening followed by a Government mandated shutdown, Minnesota-based Bubble Barn Express Car Wash is thriving.



While COVID-19 has physically distanced King Triton's staff from its customers, Taranto says they continue to place extreme importance on establishing eye contact, waving, and thanking each individual customer (even if it's an exaggerated "Thank You" yell due to masking requirements). The company also immediately reached out to local police, fire and town departments to offer weekly COVID-19 disinfecting services for all first responder vehicles, and plans to continue this service into the future.

From "Now Open" to "Currently Closed"

First-time operator Jessica Zazworsky learned very quickly that even the best-laid plans can sometimes go awry. After opening Bubble Barn Express Car Wash in Burnsville, MN, this past February, a COVID-19 mandatory shutdown of nearly a month shortly followed, which dramatically impacted momentum. "We had a strong opening at the end of February and there was a lot of excitement both with our staff and community about the Bubble Barn," she explained. "I was still focused on tying up loose ends with construction, getting staff trained, and driving awareness of the business. I was completely unprepared for such an unprecedented event."

Zazworsky had to immediately pivot to full-time crisis communications mode, starting with employee and customer communication. "I did my best to over-communicate with both my staff and customers," Zazworsky said. "Employees were understandably concerned about when they could safely come back to work, but I didn't always have clear answers to give them. When operational procedures and staff levels changed, I always shared my rationale and listened to their feedback."

During the shutdown, Zazworsky shifted from "Grand Opening" mode and quickly designed and implemented new procedural site signage, as well as constantly updated the Bubble Barn's website and social media. "I also fielded a lot of phone calls and email messages from customers. Our new Club members wanted information on how we were crediting them for time the wash was closed, and once reopened customers wanted extra reassurance that we were safe to be open." Zazworsky says that working through the shutdown took time and patience, but believes that the time she took to personally return phone calls and messages made customers eager to return when the Bubble Barn was able to reopen.

Despite not having a formal CPR plan, Zazworsky remained flexible and not only successfully reopened the Bubble Barn, but went on to host an impactful Grand Opening event in July. "After the shutdown, we needed time to get our staff up to speed on new safety procedures, get new team members trained and re-trained, and most importantly, wait until customers were out and about and ready to try a new service in the area."

Since express exteriors are not common in the area, Zazworsky and her team took a lot of time educating customers that they can stay in their vehicle and have a contactless experience. She also proudly noted that their Grand Opening event brought

in more than 2,200 pounds of donated food and paper goods for a community food pantry.

Better Together

According to John Roush, CEO of Ohio-based Express Wash Concepts, the industry-wide collaboration that has taken place over the past several months will positively impact business long after the Pandemic concludes.

"Early on, Micrologic Associates Founder Miguel Gonzalez organized a virtual roundtable of some of the greatest minds in the business," said Roush. "Sharing ideas and experiences of what was working and not working, how customers were reacting, and brainstorming enhancements and improvements has been absolutely indispensable."

Roush also recognized the number of vendors who stepped up to help keep his 25 washes running as smoothly as possible, from ChemQuest providing sanitization tablets and bulk hand sanitizer when it was hard to come by, TSS building custom customer-facing hand sanitizing stations, to Elite Apparel & Promo quickly printing branded team member safety masks. In an effort to pay it forward, Express Wash Concepts donated thousands of dollars to local food banks and non-profit organizations, and gave away thousands of free carwashes through themed social media campaigns targeting first responders, care givers and retail workers.

"I look back to early this year and remember feeling like we were starting to become complacent," Roush explained. "Early in February, I tasked our team to come to our next Executive Meeting with their view of 'a nagging problem and how to solve it.' Before we had the chance to have that next meeting, we were thrown into full crisis mode with the Pandemic."

With the absence of a formal CPR plan, Roush said his team immediately shifted into crisis communications mode. "This definitely stirred us up and forced us to work together to critically look at all of our current operations and implement new, better processes."

To Plan or Not To Plan, That is the Question

Although not a fit for every business, a solid CPR plan will compliment your overall communication strategy because it ensures that all key audiences are receiving the latest information, avoids haphazard navigation through an active crisis while likely still maintaining operations, and ultimately gives you back time to focus on little details that you couldn't possibly preplan for, whether that be personal or professional.

To get started:

- Identify and assemble a crisis management team with expertise on the following core areas: Your team can be segmented into focus areas including employee communication, customer communication and vendor/partner communication. If you are a small operator without the benefit of drawing from a large team, connect with

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other operators or vendors to help round out ideas.

- Outline a list of key audiences you want to keep informed during the crisis: These can include employees, Club members, vendors, stakeholders, and could even include media, community and local government leaders and other partners. Make sure contact sheets are up-to-date and readily accessible.

With your CPR Team, identify potential crisis scenarios in advance: Examples could include natural disasters, employee injuries, negative customer interactions or damage claims, on-site theft, disruptions in normal business functions due to equipment or technology malfunctions, health pandemics, etc.

For each potential crisis scenario, identify and develop a Q&A to address the common questions you will likely be asked from your key audiences during a crisis: This doesn't have to be exhaustive – identify the Top 10 so you have a starting point that can be efficiently tweaked if/when a crisis occurs.

Map out communication frequency/flow: These will differ based on your key audiences, and may include templated standard operating procedures (SOPs), emails, text campaigns, employee flyers and social media content outlines and customer-facing video scripts.

Post Crisis Recap

Thankfully, if all good things must come to an end the same holds true for unwanted crises. Regardless of whether you had a formal CPR plan or took a more unstructured approach, it's important to gather and evaluate your team's performance, and determine if there are any improvements you can make for the future. Document any lessons you learned into future crisis management plans. Important topics to discuss can include what worked well and what didn't; roadblocks/challenges and if not solved how they can be overcome through better planning; to suggested future process changes.

While Roush intends to hold such a meeting, he plans to take a celebratory approach. "When this is said and done, we are going to focus on our team's accomplishments versus a general crisis-preparedness-response review. We got more done during this pandemic than I ever would have imagined, and it's a great feeling knowing we will emerge together, better than we were before." **NC**

Beth Martin is the Marketing Director of Express Wash Concepts, the 29-location parent company of Dayton Ohio-based Flying Ace Express Car Wash, Central Ohio-based Moo Moo Express Car Wash and Greater Cleveland Ohio-based CLEan Express Auto Wash.

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Car Wash Financing Options During COVID-19

By Michael Ford

2020 has been a unique year in the world of carwash finance. Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, our firm has seen a surge in credit applications for people looking to build, buy or remodel carwash facilities. I think part of our growth is based on the fact that so many lenders have hit the pause button on commercial lending. With banks focusing on picking up quick fees for writing Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loans, we've seen a reduction in the number of active lenders and an increase in demand.

Rest assured, loans to build, buy or remodel at great terms and rates are available if you know where to look. In the following article, I'm going to talk a bit about financing options available today even as COVID-19 is affecting the way we think and do business across America.

SBA 7(a) and 504 Loans

Leading the way are loans backed by the Small Business Administration (SBA). SBA-backed lending has become the business loan program of choice for a good portion of the carwash market. This is because of the long terms (up to 25 years) and the low down (as little as 10 percent). In addition, financial institutions like writing SBA loans due to the federally-backed guarantee that comes with these loans. For example, under the 7(a) loan program, the SBA provides a 75 percent guarantee. This assurance of limited exposure gives lenders the security they need to extend credit.

SBA-backed loans can be used to construct new carwash facilities, acquire existing sites, remodel, re-equip and refinance existing debt. Not only can existing operators take advantage of the SBA loan programs, SBA loans are also available for new carwash operators.

The maximum loan amount under the SBA 7(a) loan program is \$5,000,000. The maximum loan amount under the standard SBA 504 loan program can exceed \$13,000,000 and go over \$40,000,000 for the SBA 504 Green Loan. Please note: The SBA 504 Green Loan requires energy-saving measures such as the use of Light-Emitting Diode (LED) lights and variable frequency drives (VFD) and/or the generation of clean energy (i.e. solar or wind).

Not All SBA's Are Created Equal

One thing carwash operators should know is that all SBA loans are not created equal. That is, each financial institution has the right to use discretion as to what types of businesses they will loan money under the SBA loan program. So, while a borrower may be eligible for an SBA-backed loan, the lender may choose to not make a loan to the business simply because of the



type of business or because the borrower doesn't have experience. In fact, during this most recent crisis, many of the major banks have red-lined lending to entire industries that they may not deem essential (i.e. carwashes). Therefore, both new and experienced carwash operators may need to look for a local bank or a boutique lender that specializes in carwash lending. It's important to know, regardless of what some banks are saying, carwashes are essential and SBA Loans are still very much available!

Equipment Financing

When COVID first hit, the equipment financing market contracted. Many lenders slowed approvals by increasing credit criteria. However, over the past couple months, the initial restrictions have eased and the equipment financing and leasing has come back strong. Application-only programs are available.

Equipment lenders are looking to extend credit to those operators who have shown the ability to manage their personal and business finances in a responsible manner. To be approved for "App-Only" equipment financing, the owner of the carwash should have decent credit (i.e. 680+ FICO score). The credit report would most likely need to be free of any recent major derogatory remarks and the borrower would have relatively low credit card balances. In addition, the business bank account should show deposits and average balances at a level commensurate with the type of wash they operate. Having a low 5-figure average balance (\$10,000+) is an example of what a lender may look for in a minimum business account balance. So, if you have good credit, decent average business bank balances and have been in business for at least two to three years, you may be able to get equipment financing with a single page application.

Equipment financing for start-ups and newer businesses is also available. New operators can fund equipment by using a 10-year SBA equipment loan or a shorter term conventional loan that are usually four to five years. The typical down payment for the SBA is 10 to 20 percent. The typical down for a convention-

al loan for a start-up will be greater (20 to 40 percent) and will come with higher rates. This is because conventional loans don't have the federal guarantee that is associated with SBA loans. Start-up financing does require full financial disclosure.

Conventional Real Estate Lending and Loans to Refinance Debt?

During the first three or four months of the COVID crisis, conventional real estate lending virtually stopped. This was due to a combination of factors. The primary reason was because many financial institutions deferred payments on a large majority of existing conventional real estate loans. Therefore, they were not receiving payments on their loan portfolios. Most conventional lenders slowed or stopped funding loans because they didn't want to make additional loans to businesses that would end up on deferral.

Over the last month or two, we have seen an increase in conventional loans being written. Conventional loans can be a great way to refinance existing debt. Rates for conventional loans are at all time lows.

For those of you who have conventional mortgages and want to get a longer term, SBA refinance loans are available. As previously mentioned, SBA loans come with terms up to 25 years. The longer term can really make a difference in lowering the monthly payment especially if the existing loan has a 10- or 15-year term.

The Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), the Main Street Loan Program and USDA Business and Industry (USDA B & I) are less common low-rate options available for carwashes.

EIDLs are loans directly from the Small Business Administration. This is a great way for a small business to access inexpensive capital. The term on EIDLs is 30 years and the rate is 3.75 percent. To apply for an EIDL, go to: sba.gov

The Main Street Lending Program is tied to the CARES Act. This is a program that is available for businesses that were profitable in 2019. It is not available for start-ups or businesses that showed a negative cash flow last year. The amount of the loan is based on four to six times 2019 cash flow. This program features a low rate loan (under 3.5 percent) that has no payments the first year, interest-only the second year, principal and interest years three through five. At the end of the fifth year, the loan has a balloon payment. Main Street Loans are available through local banks. However, very few lenders are participating in the program. To find out more about The Main Street Lending Program go to: FederalReserve.gov

USDA B & I Loans can be accessed by businesses in rural areas. To be eligible, the business must be located in an area with a population of 50,000 or less. The B & I Loan program requires 20 percent down and comes with a 30-year term. Both new and existing businesses can use the B & I Loan to buy, build or remodel.

Loans of Last Resort

Two other types of loans that are quick but costly are Merchant Cash Advance Loans (MCA's) and Online FinTech Loans. MCA's and FinTech's are loans for working capital that are typically tied to a daily repayment via automatic debit to the business checking or merchant card account. MCA and FinTech Loans can come with

high fees and even higher interest rates. Interest rates for these types of loans range from 30 percent to more than 100 percent APR. The rates and payment structures on MCA and FinTech Loans can easily bankrupt a vulnerable company before they are repaid. Similar to Payday lenders, MCA and FinTech lenders thrive on the predatory practice continually renewing and increasing the loan amount. Eventually, the business can fail because virtually all the profits of the business are "owned" by the lender.

If a business has no other alternative to getting an MCA or FinTech Loan, the best advice is to pay off the loan as quickly as possible. Do not extend or increase the amount borrowed. Truthfully, with all the other options available, MCA and FinTech Loans should be the financing option of last resort.

Even as COVID-19 is impacting business across America, carwash operators still have many options for sources of business funding. SBA Loans can provide long-term, low-rate financing. Equipment loans and leases can be obtained with a simple one-page application. The conventional real estate and SBA refinance programs can give operators lower payments and great terms. In addition, for those looking for other types of low-rate funds, EIDLs, USDA B & I and The Main Street Lending Program can be good resources for those looking to build, grow or maintain in these changing times.

NC

For additional information on loan programs for small business, contact Michael Ford, Managing Director of Coast Commercial Credit at 800/400-0365 or MikeF@CoastCC.com



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Former NJ Governor, Presidential Candidate Chris Christie To Keynote 2021 NRCC

The 31st Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 4-6, is reinventing its look, feel and content, according to 2021 Show Chairman Dave DuGoff. And despite the 2020 show being cancelled due to COVID-19, he looks to the 2021 event with great optimism. “Our board has taken a close look at all aspects of our show and determined that we need to raise the bar even higher than in past years beginning with our Keynote Speaker.”

In the past, the trade show has looked within its ranks or spent a modest amount of money on a Keynote Speaker. Moving forward, thanks to sponsors Micrologic and InnovateIT, higher profile Keynote Speakers are now an option. “Our committee and generous sponsors think that former Governor Chris Christie will make a terrific Keynote Speaker,” said DuGoff. “His insight and political experience, as well as his ability to storytell and entertain, should be a hit.”

New Jersey’s 55th Governor is currently a senior legal and political commentator for ABC News, the managing member of the Christie Law Firm and Christie 55 Solutions, LLC, and the author of *Let Me Finish*, a no-holds-barred account of his rise to power. Previously, he also served as Chairman of the Trump Presidential Transition Committee.

Governor Christie spent his two terms in office emphasizing the issues of fiscal responsibility, pension, health benefit reform, education reform, and the opioid crisis gripping his state and the nation. He also devised the state’s groundbreaking response to Superstorm Sandy, leading the rebuilding of the state’s housing, infrastructure and public schools, and setting a bipartisan example for storm recovery.

Lauded for his trademark charisma and candor, Governor Christie provides an in-depth understanding of what is happening in the nation’s capital and



Chris Christie



The host hotel in 2021 is the completely renovated Hard Rock Hotel & Casino on the boardwalk.

what it means for our industry and its employees. “To say that I am excited about Governor Christie speaking at the 31st NRCC would be a huge understatement,” said NRCC Board Member Suzanne Stansbury. “Politics aside, I have no doubt in my mind that he will be insightful, candid, articulate and entertaining. You won’t want to miss his Keynote!”

Welcome Reception Reinvention

In addition to an exceptional keynote speaker, the board has opted to move the annual Welcome Reception from the host hotel to the Atlantic City Convention Center (ACCC) to make it more inclusive. “Our Welcome Reception is going to run for only an hour at the conclusion of the first day of the show floor, Tuesday,” said DuGoff. “It will be open to all attendees and is again generously sponsored by ICS.”

The venue change and time-frame change will enable more attendees to then go out to dinner with suppliers and fellow carwashers. “Networking is a critical part of the show and with these changes we can better facilitate that,” said ICS founder Kevin Detrick, and 2019 NRCC Hall of Fame recipient. The event will include light fare, and beer and wine compliments of ICS.

Moving to the Hard Rock

Another change with the 2021 show will be the host hotel. Since the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino purchased the former Trump Taj Mahal in 2017 and spending \$500 million to completely renovate it, the venue has added numerous restaurants and meeting places perfect for exhibitor hospitality suites and private events. The facility reopened in June of 2018. “We are all excited to be back on Atlantic City’s iconic boardwalk,” said DuGoff. “It will really add to the entire NRCC experience and the new Hard Rock is very impressive.”

Of course the iconic Hard Rock music theme is weaved throughout the hotel paying homage to the great artists of the last 75 years. The 2,000 hotel rooms offer amenities like turntables and records, special playlists and the option to get a Fender guitar delivered to your room for a jam session. “It’s going to be a whole new experience for our attendees and vendors that we are all looking forward to experiencing,” added DuGoff. “And don’t forget that the Hard Rock has a gas station, c-store and carwash on site for use by its guests.”

NC

For more information on the 2021 NRCC visit nrccshow.com or call 800/868-8590.



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Profiles In Success

An Interview with Oscar Burks

NC: Would it be accurate to say that carwashing was ingrained in you at a young age working alongside your dad at his wash?

Carwashing was ingrained in me in the early '70s in upstate New York (Utica/Cortland). I'd hangout with my dad, Oscar Burks Sr. and Uncle Mike Jimenez at MiniWash.

NC: Tell us about that time and about the wash itself.

The wash was built in a old airplane hanger, a cool looking place. Also, it had Texaco gas pumps and self-service vacuums.

NC: My sources tell me that your dad taught you well, but you may have had a few other jobs before you totally immersed yourself in the industry. Can you explain?

Yes, I worked at an optical plant for a few years making lenses for government tanks and other vehicles. And then I became a Corrections Officer for about five years until my dad passed away in late '90s.

NC: My source also tells me that when you were working at the Belmont Car Wash in Belmont, MA, you were a pioneer in express detailing. Is that correct?

Correct! I was a part of the express detailing at Belmont Car Wash. We blazed a trail for other operators to follow, and I'm VERY PROUD of that.

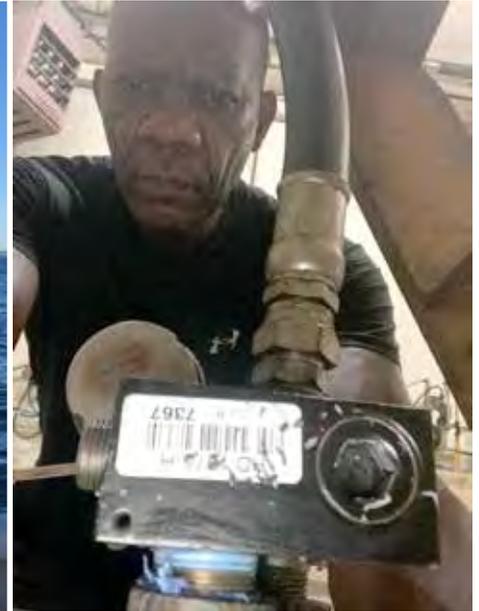
NC: Are there a few operators who you can credit with helping ignite and help sustain your carwash passion?

Yes, there are a few operators that I credit for my success and passion for the business. First is my BEST FRIEND LEO ZONA of Z-Wash Systems for pushing me and always being there for me. Also, Adam and Paul Tocci of Belmont Car Wash, Bobby Katseff, Mike Fazio, Patti Kaplin, Brian Fitzgerald and MANY MORE awesome friends I'd credit.

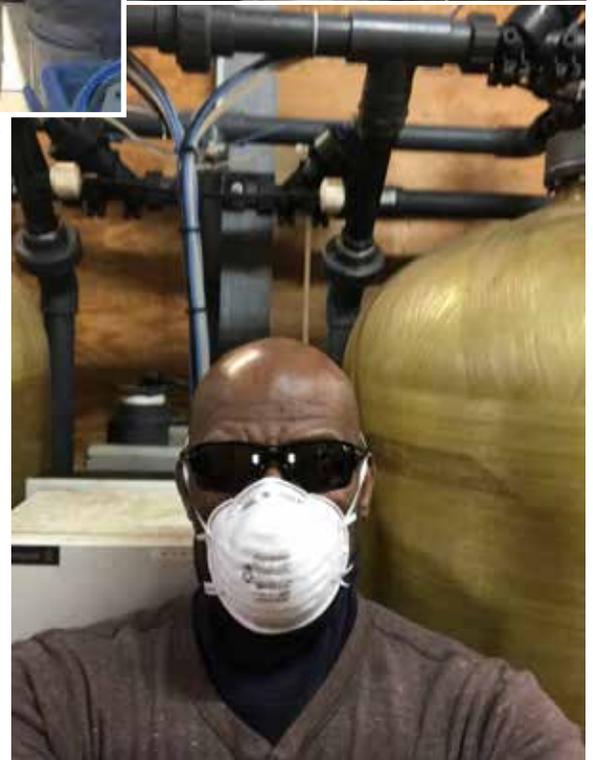
NC: If your Facebook feed is any indication, you are an extremely busy carwash technician. But you don't rep for any one manufacturer or distributor. Tell us why.

That's right. I'm a carwash technician at your service. And, no, I don't rep for any one manufacturer or distributor. Every carwash isn't the same and every owner has his or her own choices on manufacturers and distributors. I service them all.

NC: Despite COVID-19, you've been extremely busy servicing



Carwash Technician Oscar Burks works hard and plays hard.



washes in the Northeast. What have you seen and how would you describe the health of the industry today (late July)? And does this vary by the state and region in which you are working?

COVID-19 has hurt every business, not just the carwash industry. In my opinion, carwashes shouldn't have been closed at all. How can an industry that is in the "Cleaning and Disinfecting Business" be told to close?

Continued ...

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An Interview with Oscar Burks ... continued

NC: What has kept you in the industry for so many years?

To be honest, what has kept me in the business for so long is all the GREAT PEOPLE, and my customers are my friends first, then customers. And this is what I love doing and this is where I feel and miss my best friend aka my Dad.

NC: Do you have any interest in owning your own wash?

I really don't want to own my own carwash. I have seen my Dad and my Uncle Mike own washes. I like to travel to different sites and visit my friends. But never say never. I have a few friends who want me to become partners with them. Wink wink!

NC: I have always believed that the key to an efficiently run wash is a strong relationship with a reliable and talented technician, like yourself. But I also think that such a person is extremely hard to find. Do you agree?

A strong relationship with a good technician is the key to success for a carwash owner. Yes, we are hard to find but we are out there. And, if an owner has a great technician he should never let him (or her) go!

NC: What are your keys to success and repeat customers?

My key to success is that I treat my friends (customers) fair and with respect, always.

NC: Given the current challenges our country is facing, and the very real struggles African Americans have endured for centuries, can you share your thoughts on the Black Lives Matter movement.

As an African American man the struggle is REAL! And my thoughts on the Black Lives Matter movement is that it's a movement for minorities to receive the same treatment and benefits as others. Health care, education, great jobs, etc. It's not what politicians are trying to make out to be something else.

NC: Has the carwashing industry been an inclusive industry in which to work?

The carwash industry has been the only industry that I've been interested in working in.

NC: Have there been challenges you've had to overcome?

Yes, there have been challenges, but thanks to Leo Zona, I'm in a good place.

NC: What lies ahead for the talented and charming Oscar Burks because I am certain that you are just getting started!

Yes, you are right. I'm just getting started. Time only will tell. **NC**



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Are You Ready for an Epiphany?

By Chief Happiness Officer, JoAnna Brandi

Does a five-year-old have the power to change the world? You bet! A little more than 20 years ago, Nikki, the then five-year-old daughter of acclaimed psychologist Dr. Martin Seligman challenged him to stop being such a grouch.

Nikki, up until the age of five, had been a whiner. On her 5th birthday she decided she would stop whining. That was the hardest thing she'd ever done. One day while out in the garden her father yelled at her for dancing and singing while they were doing the weeding.

This day she decided to take action and talk to him about his grouchy demeanor. She reminded him about how difficult it was to stop the whining and said, "If I can stop whining you can stop being such a grouch!"

At that very moment, Dr. Seligman had an epiphany. He was in fact a grouch, and had been one for 50 years. He resolved to change and in doing so changed the world.

He went searching for information. That's when he discovered there was an "ignorance of bliss." It seems that after World War II almost all the psychological research was focused on people coming home from the war shell shocked. By the late '90s there was 20 times more research on negativity and illness than

there was on positivity and wellness.

Our finest research was focused on understanding what makes us sick but gave us very little understanding of what makes us well and what makes for a good life.

Over the next few years, Marty raised more than \$40 million for the research of positive emotion and the world of psychology flipped on its ear. Science began seeking what the benefits of positive emotions were to someone's life and they found many!

I think we've always known that from bible passages to "Think and Grow Rich" and "Anatomy of an Illness" there has always been evidence that mastering one's thoughts and seeing the world from an optimistic point of view had beneficial effects.

Now we know for sure! Positive Psychology – also known as the Science of Happiness – has been producing evidence that the experience of positive emotions makes us smarter, more productive, healthier, more socially adept and even wealthier.

When in a state of positivity we are more likely to reach the upper levels of our potential in any pursuit – sports, music, work, cooking, health, hobbies and relationships. This "evidence-based" science explains how positive emotions create a specific set of biochemicals in our body which counteract the

Did You Know That Happiness Is A Habit?

That it's ...

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A skill that can be learned and practiced

A "Work ethic" for some

A choice that changes your brain for the good

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Certified Chief Happiness Officer & Authentic Happiness Coach

JoAnna Brandi has 30 years of experience working with companies and individuals to create an "appreciating cycle" of happiness that delivers bottom line results.

She invites you to explore the many ways you can outsmart your "Happiness set point" and create the habits of happiness for yourself.

She works with CEO's and leaders in all walks of life.

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negative chemicals that come from stress, anger or negativity. Positive emotions even help build our immune systems and fight off disease.

Science has discovered that the human body actually works best when it's positive five times more than negative. Research on marriage tells us that the same 5:1 positivity to negativity ratio is necessary to keep your marriage happy. Have you discovered that yet?

While these COVID days have been trying to say the least, so many people are finding new things to appreciate and that's keeping them in a state of positivity – which helps combat the fear of uncertainty.

Perhaps you too have begun to appreciate some of what you might've called little things in life – a greater appreciation for family, for cooking at home, for baking bread or making cookies, for slower times, for board games or reading. A cornerstone practice in the field of happiness is the practice of gratitude. The more we notice, acknowledge and deeply feel our gratitude or appreciation the more our brain changes in response.

Through the magic of today's technologies we can look inside the brain and see what's going on. We now know that “neurons that fire together wire together” and the more we practice positivity and happiness the stronger our neural pathways become and the happier we will feel over time.

Despite the fact that your business may be crazy right now there are some things you can do to expand your state of well being. Perhaps your epiphany is that even when times are tough we can get through them by focusing on what you CAN do, even if the things you can do are small. Those small things have a big return by building you “Psychological Capital” in the form of hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism.

Continue your work by expanding in five areas: Pleasure (we all know what that is), Engagement (get in the “flow” with work, exercise or hobbies), Relationships (look for strengths and communicate without blame or judgement), Meaning (find your purpose and live it) and Accomplishment (set goals in alignment with your purpose).

Any one of us can outsmart our genetic happiness set point as well as the COVID blues when we stop looking for happiness and start looking within for all the many things we have to appreciate and all the many ways we can grow.

NC

JoAnna Brandi is a Certified Chief Happiness Officer working mostly in the business world to help companies keep employees and customers happy by creating more positive cultures and practices. She is the author of three books including the delightfully illustrated “54 Ways To Stay Happy in a Changing, Challenging and Sometimes Negative World.”



JoAnna Brandi

*You can find her on the web at ReturnOnHappiness.com if you are looking for her work in the business world; and PositiveEnergizer.com if you are interested in her online leadership course – *The Practice of Positive Leadership: Use the Science of Happiness to Engage Your Employees and Keep Your Customers Happy.**



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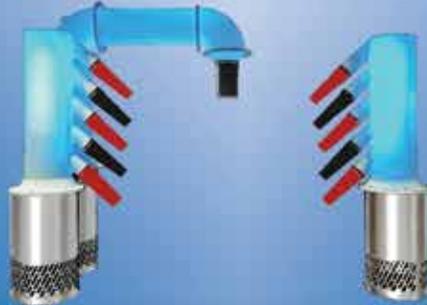


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What Is Your Course?

By Doug Rieck

We recently reached a summertime “new normal.” My kids in high school, both are working their summer jobs, wearing masks and getting out of the house with friends again, unlike during the lockdown. Their school is opening in a few weeks on a hybrid model. COVID is out and stalking while many of us are trying to avoid the tender embraces of it.

Yesterday, I had a customer tell me three times that he did not have COVID after I requested he put on a mask. We completed the interaction from a 10-foot distance. It’s part of our daily “new normal.”

I believe that a large part of what we are selling a customer now is a sense of safety and that we care enough about our customers and ourselves to have a safety protocol and follow it. I expect and demand that my employees follow our COVID protocol. As they fog cars, I remind them that I buy the sanitizer, and not to skimp.

On my summer island (Long Beach Island), more than 35 lifeguards have come down with COVID through their own silliness. I suspect quite a few more are uncounted and toughing it out with 20-year-old bravada and youth on their side (but we all know this is not always the case). It has been more than two weeks since the incident and all are now reported to be fine. Hopefully, chastened. At times, it seems that too many tourists are around and doing their best to become COVID bait, however. The people from New York State seem much more cognizant of the COVID situation than our guests from Pennsylvania.

It is funny how things can change. During April, my manager and staff would physically flinch and move away from cars with New York plates. Now, we regard them as the safe ones.

Restaurants here have embraced outside dining and use circus tents as their only option. We have visited several for dinner, the experience is fine, and we have a list of those with the best breezes. As locals, my wife and I know which ones have been closed for a few days for COVID deep cleaning and so far the count is more than 15. Yes, 15. Small island, lots of people. My heart goes out for the restaurant and bar owners. They are just honest, hard-working folks like carwash owners. Fortunately for them, it has been a very dry summer. One popular dockside restaurant had its large tent and all table settings knocked down and blown several thousand feet by a summer squall. They bought new, reset, and had the same thing happen again. Now they just have picnic tables and umbrellas, plus a large “Takeout” sign.

I know from local friends that my small year-round community has expanded a lot. My ocean to bay street has acquired

Magic Wash disinfects each full-serve wash.



at least four to five new houses. Yes, there is a migration from city and urban areas to small towns in New Jersey. My wife has a friend who normally lives in North Jersey, who took her family to their winter ski house in Windham, from March through May, and now is at her summer house on LBI until winter. This is not uncommon. Densely-populated areas seem less desirable than they once were, if you can afford to move.

In short, COVID life is acceptable, and with the new norm we are open, washing cars, exterior and now full service. My full-service customers have adjusted to life during COVID, as well. Every customer I talk with is delighted with Magic Wash sanitizing their cars. We are an express flex so our protocol is that no employee will get in a car until it has been fogged. I am rigid on that, as well as the use of masks and gloves. Customers understand why we will not get in their car until it is fogged. I think getting your car sanitized for free is on the same happiness level as a positive COVID antibody test.

What's Your Plan?

My happiness level is not that high with car counts and cash flow, however. The first half of the year was down — a lot. That was to be expected, but still difficult. All in all, we as carwashers have it better than restaurants but are not home free. The worst thing that we can do is to just hang tough until there is a vaccine. We need to plan for the after. While we are waiting, the effects of Coronavirus and the economic downturn are changing our country in so many ways. This has been a retail apocalypse for small business. To think that we as carwashers will not be affected long term is sticking your head in the sand. Demographic shifts have started that will further fuel changes. I live and work in a small town which is also a summer resort.

Continued ...

WE DIDN'T WAIT FOR THE

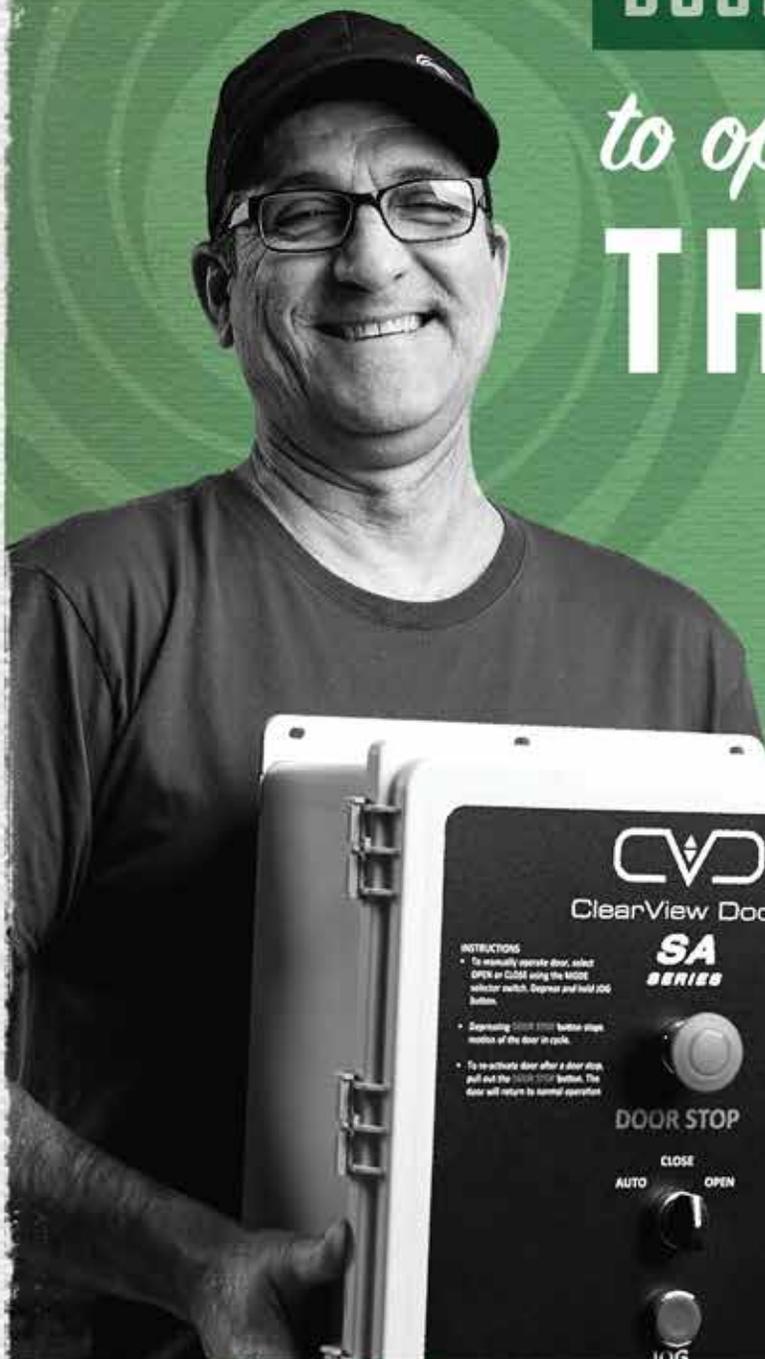
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In the past several months, I and other local merchants have benefitted in a minor way with a more affluent customer base moving here, combined with a hot summer tourist market. In my own case, I am dreading the fall and early winter doldrums when most of our summer guests will move home. That leaves us with our locals who are more parsimonious with their spending and washing habits. We as an industry need a solid winter washing season to help us bounce back. We need our country to stay open!

I cut back employees at my conveyor and as a result am spending many more hours doing guide-on than I have for many years. Several observations; some customers still love and want full service, but definitely fewer. Many new customers from out of the area have never, ever driven a car onto a conveyor. They are used to having their car washed for them, but not doing it themselves. This is indicated by some putting the car in "Park" not "Neutral," opening the door to get out and leaving their foot on the brake. The worst is when they try to drive through the tunnel! Almost every day one of these issues happens at my wash.

As an industry we have seen the rise and recently the decline of full-service carwashing. New Jersey is the birthplace of the full-service model and has also been among the holdouts with this trend. Why? The population density, many existing

space-challenged small carwash sites, an ample supply of labor, customer preference and older existing operators perpetuate the continued appeal of full-service washing, but I believe we are starting to see changes. COVID combined with \$15 an hour wages, fewer customers and a smaller labor pool are forcing operators to take a serious look at the sustainability of that model. I believe that COVID will accelerate the decline in full-service washing as well because who wants strangers in their car right now?

What I want to stress is a rethinking of your business model and operating plan. Yes, we need to think short-term survival, but we cannot forget about long-term strategies. What should your carwash look like in several years? Yes, a vaccine will come, but it may not be in January 2021 or prior. I was talking with a friend who is good friends with several restaurant owners. He was told by one restaurant owner that he was planning on staying "Take Out Only" post COVID. He said it's less aggravation for almost the same profit. We are in business not for the lifestyle, but to earn a profit.

This is the kind of thinking that we need. Perhaps out of the box, but that is planning. At my express flex service I cut back labor by more than 50 hours a week, and am staying open until 6 pm weekdays. What helped was discontinuing selling full service on Sundays, which has always been our weakest day. Sunday now has just one man on, open to close. Perhaps I'll change back if needed, but for now I'm happy and the customers are fine with it. The new retail environment does not mean you get everything all the time. My local Walmart and Home Depot have cut their hours and close at 8pm. This is short-range stuff, but it all helps. I am looking at a multitude of longer-range plans and ideas for all of my stores.

At my express location, with four self-serve bays, I replaced my primary roadside self-service vacuums. The ones I had were modern with bill acceptors and they ran nicely, but what I bought were shiny new pedestal-mount with lit overhead Vac booms. At night they look awesome. During the day they are still impressive. My customers love them. I am next to a major grocery store and pass by at 8 pm and still have vacuum customers.

Ok, everybody's question, what about the money? I doubled my vac income. The next question is if I am an express, why not free vacs? Why should I give away a service? I offer a quality wash and service with exceptional customer service at a reasonable price.

Happy beginning of fall, think snow and an early winter! And stay healthy!

NC



Doug Rieck

Doug Rieck operates Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ, and is the President of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. He was the recipient of the 2018 Northeast Regional Car Wash Convention's Most Distinguished Person Award. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS or dougriec@gmail.com

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Dear Venus and Mars,

Can you share how much your volume has been impacted by COVID-19, and what you are doing to bring it back?



Venus Says

While our revenue is down, we are so fortunate to be in a better situation than most right now. Having been a leader in the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA), and current board member of the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), I am well aware of the challenges the quarantine has brought to those in surrounding states.

In the beginning, we kept informed by weekly Zoom calls with MCA members that happened to be led by my husband, Mike Ashley. Topics included how different Governors were requiring different things, essential versus non-essential businesses, government assistance, and local requirements. We were always surprised that there was little direction for Virginia self-serve carwashes but were happy to stay open.

We have no employees so there was no contact with people. We reasoned with ourselves that there was no physical way to shut down the wash locations. We tried cones and they were often moved and because of our lot size gates or poles were not realistic.

Each time there was a new update from the Governor we listened intently. We joined a few of the International Carwash Association (ICA) calls, then would watch Virginia's Governor one time and the Maryland Governor the next and then followed by President Trump. We choose to let it go and let it be what it was until some told us otherwise. So honestly, we never shut down.

We did, however, notice a decrease in volume that has since seemed to have been alleviated once folks started coming out more during Phase 3. Without advertising, our washes picked up over the summer.

We have applied for and received Federal grant money which will help cover bills during the slow times we had. Our county has also come up with financial grants and we continue to look into whether we qualify. Our banks have worked with us on multiple occasions and we keep up with other businesses not in our industry. We learn a lot from them and



Mars Says

During these times of uncertainty, businesses of all kinds are suffering. Many will not recover, and others will, but it will be a slow journey back. Restaurants are far from capacity; malls are empty, and gyms remain shuttered. The carwash industry is lucky in that we are able to operate with few restrictions. But even so, many are still struggling as people are out of work and fears of the virus spreading have not subsided.

These are unprecedented times, and nobody has the answers. What I have been seeing in my region is full-service washes seem to be the most affected. People's fears of having employees inside their cars, I think, is the biggest deterrent. Despite taking all the precautions and employees wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) many customers are shying away from full-service interior cleaning.

I operate two flex-serve washes, so a big part of our volume is express exterior. We have actually seen an increase in volume on the express side. People have very little, if any, interaction with our staff when using this model. Customers stay in their vehicles, no employees enter or drive the vehicle and automated pay stations are used to accept payment. And self-service vacuum use has also increased. On the other hand, our interior cleaning segment has been off roughly 30 percent.

One of the best things any operation can do to bring back volume, I believe, if not already in place would be to implement an express exterior unlimited wash club. Allow customers to remain inside their cars if it is safe and feasible. If your property allows, set up some self-service vacuums that your members can use. Automated pay stations are a big investment, but the long-term benefits are worth it. The "contactless" experience and speed of operation is sure to increase your volume.

If auto pay stations are not an option, a good alternative is allowing customers to purchase services online. We have had several requests in the past months for this, so we set it up.

Venus and Mars, aka Heather Ashley and Paul Vallario, are carwash industry veterans. Heather Ashley is a past 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 East Northport, NY, and is the President of Urban Avenue Carwash Distributors and Consulting. You can reach Paul at iwashcars@optonline.net.

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

Venus ... continued

enjoy supporting all local businesses by exchanging ideas.

Next on our minds is the coin shortage. Up until now, this has not affected us. We are still finding that folks save their own quarters and bring them from home. Also, by the time we collect and replenish we are not yet needing coins from the bank for our changer, but we'll continue to monitor the situation.

I look forward to connecting with more of you and exchanging ideas as we meet on some of these Zoom calls that seem to be our new way of life. **NC**

Mars ... continued

People go to our website where they can purchase a wash or unlimited plan and they receive a barcode that can be scanned to redeem their wash. Again, this limits human interaction and unfortunately this is what a lot of people are looking for nowadays.

There are many things you can do to provide a safe carwash experience. You should promote all that you are doing because people probably don't know. Unlimited wash clubs bring customers in and if set up properly will drive your volume in the right direction. What will happen in the months ahead is unknown. But don't sit back and wait and see. What worked a year or two ago may not work today. Good luck and stay safe everyone!!! **NC**

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There is an APP for That!

By Gary Sokolowski

As we are entering our third season of this “New Normal” it is about time we did something proactive instead of reactive. All the social distancing, hand washing and masking up will get us by until we come out on the other side. One of the questions to be answered now is, “Do we want things to be the same as they were before we got here?” Some people may, but there are many who do not want to go back to the same ole same ole as we try to move forward.

For all the signage we install and all the upselling that is attempted, in the end it is the consumer's choice what service they purchase. From the beginning we have always wanted to make the customer's purchasing experience to be in their control and having them feel empowered making those decisions as much as possible. Since carwashes started automatically collecting customers payments with exact change to our current offering of accepting coins, tokens, bills, credit cards, fleet cards, fleet codes, RFID tags and license plate recognition systems, there has always been that increasing complexity, security and cost associated with all these acceptance methods. At what point is enough hardware enough?

There has been a push toward making our payment systems more user-friendly, more secure, more intuitive and more accountable. Our recent circumstances have brought us full circle back to exact change only. Many operators were forced into going cashless or at least doing exact change only to minimize the contact with this dirty money that now has to be sanitized before it can be counted. There are operators who literally spray down all their currency to be sanitized before counting it. This is even worse than spending your Friday night sitting on the living room floor rolling quarters. Surprisingly, with limited cash acceptance some operators have seen a slight increase in their average ticket per wash. But there are still the contact and cleaning issues with pressing buttons, touch screens, receipt paper and bill acceptors that make some uncomfortable.

In working with developers on new Apps for smart phones there does seem to be a light at the end of this payment-accepting tunnel. With a quick trip to the App store and then scanning a QR code that can be put on any surface, customers can now see your wash menu and make their purchase without needing to read all the signage on your lot. They can issue a wash with

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a quick scan of the QR code in the bay and never touch a thing. It puts all the information they need in the palm of their hand and on the device they are looking at all the time. Some operators are even running on-site radio commercials explaining how this works so people can just listen on the car's radio and not have to look away from their device. This might be the end all be all to our money handling issues and concerns.

There is still work that needs to be done on interfacing with some older equipment, but in time that equipment will be replaced, or the developers will find a way to interface with it. Sure, there are still some whom, "Love their cash" in the same way as old equipment not being able to keep up with today's changes, but those operators will have the same destiny.

This also makes a great way to send messaging to all those who have downloaded the App push notifications. These messages can be in the form of weekly specials, hours

“

Sometimes, it is the hurdles that are put in front of us that make us leap higher.

”

of operations, new features at your wash and so forth. Customer loyalty is one of the highest compliments a business can get. Being on your customer's device is one of the best ways to get and keep that loyalty.

Imagine a day when all your transactions are secure, when all your deposits are done automatically, your books balance everyday of the year, nothing is ever broken into or stolen. Imagine that your

printer never gets jammed or runs out of paper, and your credit card reader never fails. Imagine a bill acceptor that never needs servicing or runs out of change. These scenarios are closer than some may realize, and not as far away as others may think. Sometimes, it is

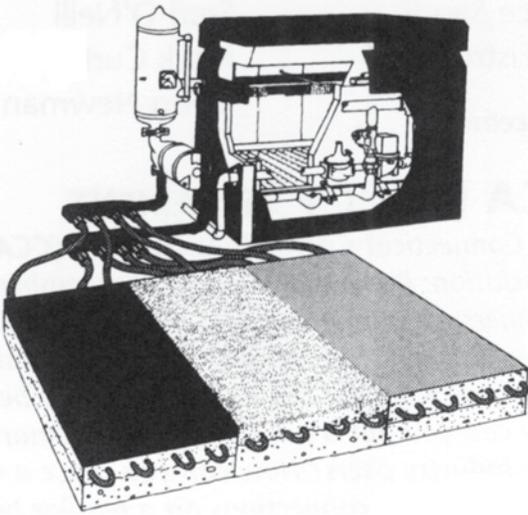
Gary Sokoloski owns Centerline Carwash Sales and Service in Wales, ME. He can be reached at gary@centerlinecarwash.com or 774/248-0171.



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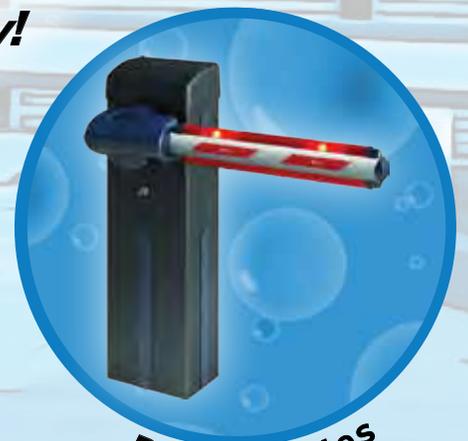


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COVID-19 Towel Safety Suggestions

By Valerie Sweeney

What a crazy year this has been! I am hoping by the time this article is published that the COVID-19 numbers are declining, and we are on our way to put this whole pandemic behind us. It's a scary time for many, both for employees who need to deal with the public on a daily basis, and your customers who are inevitably watching every move you make to make sure you are practicing good techniques that won't contaminate their vehicles. Here are some COVID-related towel tips to help ease both your employees' and customers' anxiety:

- Wash your towels more frequently. This provides piece of mind to your employees.
- Wash any towels used on the interior of the car after each vehicle.

Even if your customers can't see you grabbing a new towel, it is wise to use a fresh towel on the inside of each vehicle when cleaning the interiors. It might

“

Wash your towels more frequently. This provides piece of mind to your employees.

”

- mean more laundry for you, but it is better than taking the risk.
- Add more disposable towel options for your customers. If you normally have a bin of towels that the customer can borrow and use, you might want to consider also having a disposable wiper option for those who don't want to risk sharing any towels. I realize the used towels normally go in a separate bin to be washed, but some customers may perceive it differently.
- Consider using a color-coded system for your towels if you haven't already.

Typically, window, body, and detail towels are kept separate, but you could make a color for frequently touched surfaces such as door handles and steering wheels.

- Many carwashes used gloves before COVID, but now it's more important than ever to have your employees wear disposable gloves when washing/drying the vehicles.

They will feel more confident, and your customers will like seeing gloves on the employees as well.

- Wash your cotton towels on higher heat than normal. Remember, however, never wash/dry microfibers on high heat!!

- Consider switching to all microfiber.

There is a good reason why microfiber is used in healthcare for mopping floors and for cleaning. It doesn't harbor bacteria. I realize viruses are different than bacteria, but the premise is similar.

- COVID-19 has caused numerous supply chain and shipping issues around the world.

It might be wise to order extra towels and other supplies to have abundantly on hand when needed.

I am sure there are other towel-related COVID tips out there. As I hear more and more about what others are doing to be safe, I will continue to update you. In the meantime, stay safe, keep washing your hands, and continue to practice social distancing. **NC**



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

Valerie Sweeney

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Given everything we have faced over the last few months, as individuals and as an industry, it would be easy to let fear or frustration take our focus away from the many small victories that have taken place. In Pennsylvania, one such victory was allowing carwash businesses to reopen and operate under recommended guidelines. For our carwash owners, this was a major milestone from where we stood just a few months ago.

Then, as we turned into the summer season, the industry again came back to life with an increased demand in carwashing services. We were encouraged to hear stories of carwash businesses offering free or discounted services to those serving on the front line. What a fantastic way to give back and honor those who are helping to keep us safe!

Unfortunately, with so many restrictions and unknowns about the Major League Baseball season, we had to make the tough decision to cancel our annual baseball outing originally planned for August 20 in Pittsburgh. We will miss having the opportunity to be together, but recognize it's the smart decision. We have every hope that next summer we will be able to continue with this fun tradition, so stay tuned for future details.

While things are still far from "normal," the Carwash Association of Pennsylvania (CAP) is looking forward to hosting our annual golf outing fundraiser on September 17, at Cumberland Golf Club in Carlisle. We are looking to how other golf outings are functioning to ensure we are taking all precautions to keep our participants safe, while still having a great time on the greens. We hope you will plan to join us and (safely) celebrate being able to get together in person again. As always, we will have some outstanding prizes and giveaways for every golfer. To learn more or register, please contact executivedirector@pacarwash.org.

Until we are able to see each other in person again, I hope you all remain safe and healthy and that your businesses be met with every opportunity to thrive during these uncertain times. As always, CAP is here to support you, offer advice, and help make connections for you however we can. We welcome you to reach out to us should a need ever arise. After all, we are all in this together.

Stay well!



Keith Lutz
Carwash Association of Pennsylvania President



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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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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

These are certainly uncertain and challenging times as small businessmen and women, and as Americans. To say that the last seven months have been trying would be an understatement. We had to virtually change our way of life on a dime and adapt to new terminology like social distancing and contactless operations, but I think we have adapted. I know it hasn't been easy but it has been necessary and essential to staying afloat and keeping ourselves, and each other, healthy.

Our pollen season ended up as a great shot in the arm in Connecticut. It was just what the doctor ordered and thankfully, our self serves and exteriors were operating early on in the Pandemic. Our full serves followed quickly behind and at the time of this writing all models have seemed to adapt. In fact, volumes are up in some cases and that is good news! The key has been following the guidelines from the state and the CDC and evolving much of our operation to a contactless format where the customer has little, if any, interaction with staff thus limiting the chances of COVID-19 spread. This, coupled with the use of mobile apps that provide customers with a peace of mind, has worked well for many.

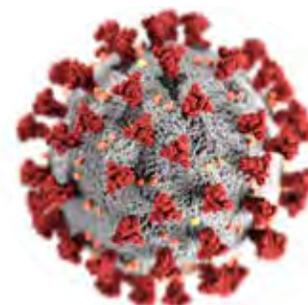
Where will we be by January 1 is anyone's guess at this point. I hope that we can begin to bring the country's COVID numbers down and instill in all Americans that wearing a mask is the right thing to do. But time alone will tell.

At the CCA, we will continue to monitor the situation and lobby on behalf of our membership in Connecticut. We might be a small state with fewer than 150 washes, but united we can tackle any issue or problem together. Keep fighting the good fight, washing your hands and wearing a mask and with any luck 2021 will be brighter and healthier for all.



Bob Rossini
 CCA President

**For the most current
 COVID-19 operating information
 visit wewashcars.com**



It's Twin Girls!



It doesn't get any cuter than Drew Amelia and Lacy Francis Shackett, does it!

CCA Treasurer Allison Shackett, and her husband Jeff of Family Car Wash and Car Wash Systems LLC, welcomed two precious girls into the world on July 24, Lacy Francis and Drew Amelia. Mom and babies are doing well. Congratulations from your board! **NC**

Author Ferruolo Sells Her Third Novel

Janine O'Malley of FSG has acquired *Stardust and Other Stuff* by lawyer turned author Jeanne Zulick Ferruolo (*Ruby in the Sky* and *A Galaxy of Sea Stars*). Her third novel explores the meeting of science and faith as two 11-year-olds set out on a journey to summit the notoriously dangerous Stardust Mountain in search of the legendary magic they believe will fix their broken families.

Author Ferruolo works with refugees through Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services in New Haven, CT. Publication is set for the winter of 2022. **NC**



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Governor Lamont Convenes July Special Session



By P.J. Cimini

Governor Ned Lamont officially called the General Assembly into Special Session in July. The Governor worked with legislative leaders to reach a consensus on four topics that were addressed in the Special Session:

- Police accountability
- No excuse absentee ballots for the November 2020 election
- Extension of telehealth services for Medicaid and private insurance through January 2021
- Capping of insulin and other insulin-related supplies costs.

Governor Expands Workers' Compensation System

Governor Lamont issued an executive order July 24 expanding the state's workers' compensation system to include a rebuttable presumption that employees with COVID-19 contracted the virus while working. Connecticut workers' compensation law currently provides for COVID-19 claims where a claimant shows that contracting the disease was related to their occupation and occurred in the course of employment.

The directive applies to essential workers, a category that covers a broad range of industries in Connecticut based on Lamont's March 20 Executive Order suspending in-person operations at all non-essential businesses, which included Connecticut carwashes.

Under the July 24 Executive Order, any carwash worker (who had been working as an essential worker) who worked in the workplace at least a day at the direction of their employer between March 10 and May 20, and tested positive or was diagnosed with COVID-19 within three weeks of those dates, is presumed to have contracted the virus in the workplace. Employers also are permitted to show, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the employee contracted the virus elsewhere.

The Executive Order also reduces any benefits awarded to claimants by the amount of any federal sick leave benefits received by the employee through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. The presumption opens the workers' compensation system to claims where claimants contracted COVID-19 under circumstances unrelated to their occupation and outside the course of their employment.

State Revises COVID-19 Operating Guidelines

- The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development issued revised COVID-19 operating guidelines for businesses July 23. The changes impact

businesses allowed to reopen as part of the state's phased reopening process that took effect May 20, June 17 and July 3. Essential employers, which includes carwashes in Connecticut, are still covered by the Connecticut Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Employers, last revised April 21.

- Non-essential businesses have the right to refuse service to anyone not wearing a mask.
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, it is recommended the business implement a 24-hour passive decontamination and follow CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting.
- For bathrooms, the posting of signage encouraging reduced capacity and reminding individuals to wash hands and wear masks is suggested.

There are also revisions to the sector rules for indoor recreation and outdoor events. The changes take immediate effect. Businesses and non-profits that have already completed the self-certification process are not required to re-register with DECD, but must comply with new sector rules.

More than \$130B Left for PPP Available

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) has been extended another month, offering collision repairers and other small businesses another shot at forgivable low-interest loans. The \$659 billion program launched April 3 and expired June 30, as envisioned in March's COVID-19 CARES Act relief package. A unanimous Senate passed Senate Bill 4116 on June 30, and a unanimous House did the same on July 1.

As of June 30, only about \$521.5 billion of the PPP funds had been disbursed in the form of nearly 4.9 million loans by 5,461 lenders. The average loan was \$107,000. S. 4116 moves the deadline from June 30 to Aug. 8.

The nearly \$660 billion PPP involves 1 percent SBA-guaranteed loans of amounts worth up to about 2.5 months of payroll, capped at \$10 million. Individual employee earnings above \$100,000 don't count as payroll when calculating this amount, and the loans are mostly restricted to companies with no more than 500 employees.

Loans granted in the initial months of the program mature in two years, but the recent PPP Flexibility Act's business-friendly changes gave lenders a choice to extend the maturity to five years. All post-PPP Flexibility Act loans mature in five years, per the bill and an SBA decision. PPP loan recipients can spend the money on items like payroll (which is also defined

to include costs like benefits), mortgage or other pre-existing debt interest, rent or utilities. Those who spend 60 percent of it on payroll and the remainder on PPP or the other eligible expenses can apply to have the loan and interest completely forgiven. (Persisting staff or salary cuts will lower the amount of forgiveness possible.) Shops can apply for PPP forgiveness using the regular form and instructions or the “EZ” form and instructions SBA has released.

Congress and the Small Business Administration’s vision was that businesses continue to keep employees on staff during a time of reduced demand.

Executive Order Mandating Quarantine

Governor Ned Lamont announced that he has signed an Executive Order strengthening his previously enacted travel advisory for anyone entering Connecticut from states with high infection and positivity rates for COVID-19. The order changes the travel advisory to mandatory and has been taken in conjunction with similar measures by the Governors of New Jersey and New York. Under the new order, failure to comply may result in a \$1,000 penalty imposed by the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH).

Travelers will now be required to complete a form upon entry into Connecticut stating their name, date of birth, state of origin, estimated length of stay and location while in Connecticut, as well as contact information. The form is required to be submitted to DPH and can be completed online by visiting ct.gov/travelform.

The tri-state, regional travel advisory applies to anyone entering Connecticut, New Jersey or New York from a state that has a new daily positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents or a state with a 10 percent or higher positivity rate over a 7-day rolling average. Currently, there are 31 states that meet this criteria and are included in the travel advisory. Full information on the travel advisory, including the list of impacted states, which is updated on a weekly basis, can be found online by visiting ct.gov/coronavirus/travel.

Costly Financial Reporting Targets Small Businesses

The U.S. Senate is considering a legislative amendment imposing onerous new financial reporting requirements on an estimated 5 million small businesses. The amendment to this year’s Defense Authorization Act mirrors the Corporate Transparency Act of 2019 that passed the U.S. House last fall.

The House earlier this week attached that legislation to the must-pass defense spending measure.

The amendment requires companies to annually report the personal information of their owners to the Financial Crimes

Enforcement Network at the Department of Treasury, or face large fines and multi-year jail sentences.

It applies only to newly-formed corporations and LLCs and existing corporations, and LLCs with \$5 million or less in revenues, 20 or fewer employees, and a physical presence in the U.S. Failure to comply would be a federal crime with civil penalties up to \$10,000 and criminal penalties of up to three years in prison. The Treasury Department must retain the information for the life of the business plus five years.

The measure would allow broad access to the data for federal, state, local, or tribal law enforcement agencies without obtaining a subpoena. A National Federation of Independent Business study found that small businesses will face \$5.7 billion in new regulatory costs and an additional 131.7 million hours of paperwork if the legislation is signed into law.

Connecticut small business leaders are urged to contact senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy and urge both to support the state’s smaller employers and vote against this costly amendment.

Federal Assistance Options

- **Paycheck Protection Program.** This federal program prioritizes millions of Americans employed by small businesses by authorizing up to \$349 billion toward job retention and certain other expenses. Small businesses and eligible nonprofit organizations, Veterans organizations, and Tribal businesses described in the Small Business Act, as well as individuals who are self-employed or are independent contractors, are eligible if they also meet program size standards.
- **SBA Assistance.** On March 16, the U.S. Small Business Administration approved Governor Lamont’s request to begin offering disaster-relief loans to Connecticut small businesses and nonprofits. Companies in the state can now apply for loans of up to \$2 million through a special page on the SBA website. SBA also has more valuable information for businesses.

Other Important Resources

- **DECD’s COVID-19 Business Emergency Response Unit.** The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) created a COVID-19 Business Emergency Response Unit dedicated to assisting businesses navigate resources and develop new resources.

A dedicated phone line is available at 860/500-2333 to provide assistance to Connecticut’s small businesses and carwashes for this purpose.

Continued...

Other State Programs

- **Unemployment Assistance.** Workers directly impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic no longer must be actively searching for work to qualify for unemployment assistance. And employers who are furloughing workers can use the Department of Labor's shared work program, which allows businesses to reduce working hours and have those wages supplemented with unemployment insurance.
- **Business Interruption Insurance.** A business interruption insurance policy should list or describe the types of events it covers. Events that are not described in the policy are typically not covered. It is important to review the policy exclusions, coverage limits, and applicable deductibles with your agent, broker or insurer.
- **Small Business Owner's Guide to the CARES Act.** On March 27, 2020, the United States Congress approved the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide the country with relief from the impact of COVID-19.
- **Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Employers.** Effective April 7, 2020, every essential workplace in the state is required to take additional protective measures to re-

duce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Executive Order No. 7V requires the commissioner of DECD to issue mandatory statewide rules prescribing such additional measures. Such rules will be mandatory throughout the state and supersede and preempt any current or contemplated municipal order. DECD published the Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Employers on its website, outlining guidance for essential workplaces.

- **Reimbursement of Medical Leave Costs for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses.** The Connecticut Department of Insurance reminds small and medium-sized employers of recent guidance from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on COVID-19 - related medical leave.

Other Federal Resources

- **COVID Loan Tracker:** www.covidloantracker.com NC



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

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Three Recipients in 2020!

Kenneth M. Gustafson, Sr. Scholarship Program Enters 17th Year

2020 Recipients

The 2020 Kenneth M. Gustafson, Sr. Scholarship winners are Autumn Reed, Cristal Reyes and Lance Thatcher.

Autumn Reed was a student council vice president, on the Homecoming Committee and a National Honor Society Historian. She was her high school's volleyball captain and a member of the choir and organized a breast cancer fundraiser. She plans to study film when she attends Florida State University this fall. She is affiliated with Flash Car Wash.



Cristal Reyes is majoring in Justice Studies and plans to become a special agent in the FBI. After completing her college degree from Rhode Island College in Providence she plans to join the Providence Police Academy. She became interested in law enforcement after participating in the Providence Policy Explorers during her sophomore year in high school. She already has her Associate's Degree from Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester. Cristal is the first in her family to attend college. She is affiliated with Flash Car Wash.



Our third recipient is **Lance Thatcher**. Lance will be attending Three Rivers Community College in Norwich and majoring in mechanical engineering. He attended the Science and Technology Magnet High School in New London where he participated in the pep and marching bands. His manager at Rapid Car Wash, Noah Levine, says Lance is a real self motivator and looks for jobs to accomplish when things get slow. "I expect him to excel at school and ultimately enjoy a successful engineering career."

About the Program

In 2004, the Connecticut Carwash Association's Kenneth M. Gustafson, Sr. Scholarship Award Program launched honoring the association's first president. Seventeen years later, it is the longest-running scholarship program in the Northeast, and one other associations have modeled their programs after. "The scholarship program is a great way for our association to provide much needed funds to the hard-working kids in this industry to help offset the incredible costs of a secondary education," said CCA President Bob Rossini. "This member benefit is a real opportunity for many to help defer the cost of college."

To date, the program has awarded \$34,000 in scholarships and has been spearheaded by Mr. Sparkle's Paul Ferruolo. In 2020 three scholarships were awarded. "If you have college-bound students, or kids already in college who work for you, let them know about this program and encourage them to take advantage of it," said Ferruolo. He suggested dropping a notice in employee paychecks and posting information on the program in your break room.

To be Eligible an Applicant Must:

- Be an employee, or direct family member of an employee, of any CCA member.
- Have been an employee, full or part time, for at least 1 year.
- Have graduated high school or the equivalent by the spring of this year.
- Be enrolled, or plan to enroll, at an accredited post-secondary educational institution full or part time.



- Not be an owner, or direct family member of an owner of a carwash facility, manufacturer or retail supplier to the carwash industry.
- Not have won a scholarship from the CCA in the last year.

Applicants will be evaluated and chosen based on their high school standing, leadership capabilities, community involvement, strength of character, personal achievement, plan of study and future goals. NC

To learn about the
2021 scholarship program
visit wewashcars.com.

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*deceased

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Supposedly, there is a Chinese curse which translates to, "May you live in interesting times." In a speech in 1966 President Kennedy referred to this saying. We may not have times as interesting as what he had, but a global Pandemic does rank pretty high.

I choose not to recite the events of the past few months as we have all lived them and our memory is fresh. Your association has tried to relay the best available information from the State of New Jersey on our website, cwonj.com, along with a link to the New Jersey COVID updates. Our problem as an association has been in getting information. It sounds simple, but it was not. There was no appeal or even a review process for what businesses were deemed "essential." At one point, we were having twice a week Zoom meetings to determine our best path forward. Through a concerted effort with past presidents, board members and our Executive Director we were able to provide what we felt was accurate information. At the onset of COVID-19 the state deemed self-service carwashes as "Essential businesses" and we were able to expand that to include no touch Exterior carwashes. Finally, in June, all washes could open under restrictions. We were fortunate in New Jersey, compared to other neighboring states, to get open as soon as we did. Of course, there were issues with some towns and counties setting their own standards and enforcing their own shut-down rules.

We Are Working with PPAG

There has to be a better way and there is. The answer is to hire a lobbyist. They know the right people and can get answers. This Pandemic is continuing and is something that we must learn to live with. Your association's board conducted a search and determined that the best fit for us, with the best resources, is the Princeton Public Affairs Group. Accordingly, they have been retained by the association. We have realistic expectations and understand that while they can help us with communication and achieving better visibility, they cannot solve all (but they will sure try).

Carwashing may seem simple to us in the industry, but it is not that clear to consumers and lawmakers. What do you mean different types of carwashes??? Marketing to consumers has traditionally been done by individual carwashes, and we are good at that. At this moment in time, we need to market to the Legislators so that we can stay open if another round of shut downs occurs. We need to stress our importance to the state economy, with the jobs and taxes we provide. We need to stress that we are a responsible industry that can socially distance and wear masks while disinfecting the interior of vehicles. We need to demonstrate that our full-service segment can follow protocols and keep customers safe. Our heritage of full-service carwashing, sometimes brings to mind the movie "Carwash." That was the '60s, not 2020. We, like the rest of the world, have changed and evolved. There is so much good and great and changing about carwashing, and we need to spread the word and educate the masses.

The other expectation is that of communication. In the midst of a Pandemic shutdown, with loosely drawn lines of control and much confusion, we as an industry need to be able to have a voice and get answers. All of us just want this Pandemic over. The reality is different, however. Virus cases can jump up and we can face another shut down this fall. Our Governor has warned the state repeatedly that our rate is increasing and he will take action. This not good news. The Jersey

Shore and partying and summer seem to be to blame. At several times in the past, the CWONJ has engaged the services and been represented by a lobbyist with success. Having Princeton Public Affairs Group representing us is a positive, smart step.

I urge that all of us get involved in our local communities, and become a positive presence. The CWONJ can represent us before the state, but all of us have our own local towns and communities where we are our own best lobbyist. There are many ways to spread the good news about what our industry provides.

Let's all try to stay safe, practice our social distancing, wear masks and wash our hands and a lot of cars. We will keep you posted on our lobbying progress and let's all hope for the best this fall.



Doug Rieck

Doug Rieck
CWONJ president

Spick & Span



Cleanliness is next to Godliness for Ocean Express' John Agosta in Point Pleasant Beach. Agosta says it takes about an hour to an hour and a half to clean the tunnel daily. On rain days he does more of a deep cleaning at the exterior wash." **NC**

Association Loses a Loyal Member



Gerard Thomas Maietta

Gerard Thomas Maietta, 82, passed away on Wednesday, July 1, at his home in Morristown. Born in Morristown to Dominick Maietta and Assunta D'Andria Maietta on February 3, 1938, Jerry attended Bayley Ellard High School where he played baseball and basketball. After graduating in 1955, he served in the National Guard.

Maietta was an owner of The New Madison and Summit Car Wash Enterprises, Inc. since 1968 where he remained active on a daily basis until his passing. He was also a long-standing and loyal member of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey for the last 52 years. "He was like a father to me," said wash partner Mike Prudente. "He hired me in 1968 and taught me the ropes. He was a really nice, helpful and kind man. He knew what the customer wanted and that's why the washes were so successful."

Jerry also enjoyed playing golf and tennis with his wife, and supported a number of charities and organizations including Alzheimer's Disease Research, American Cancer Society and St. Margaret's Church.

Jerry is survived by his wife, Theresa, children Kenneth, Daniel and Stephen; daughter-in-laws Frances, Lesli and Flavia; grandchildren Jack, Francesca, Tyler, Samantha, Kyle and Isabella; in-laws Daniel and Peggy Scrone and many nieces and nephews. **NC**

The family asks that donations be made to Alzheimer's Disease Research, 22512 Gateway Center Dr., PO Box 1950, Clarksburg, MD 20871-1950 or the American Cancer Society, PO Box 1918, Morristown, NJ 07962-1918 in lieu of flowers.



Despite Cancellation, CWONJ Continues to Support Children's Specialized Hospital

Despite canceling the 20th Annual Golf Outing, August 3, due to COVID-19, the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey stepped up to the plate and continued their annual donation to The Children's Specialized Hospital, raising the amount donated to \$83,000 since the event's inception. CWONJ Treasurer Mike Prudente and Past President Doug Karvelas played in the hospital's annual event in July in support of everything Children's does for

youth across the country. "It's an honor to support the hospital and a great event in which to participate," said Karvelas.

The Children's Specialized Hospital 20th Annual Golf Outing (2021) is slated for Monday, August 2 at Suburban Golf Club in Union. This club was established in 1896 and was designed by famed architect A.W. Tillinghast. Its present 18-hole course layout was designed in 1922. **NC**

Visit cwonj.com for registration information and sponsorship opportunities as the event draws closer.



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Children's Specialized Hospital Fourth Annual Open



CWONJ Treasurer Mike Prudente and Past President Doug Karvelas tore up the course at the July 27 Children's Specialized Hospital Fourth Annual Open at Metedeconk National Golf Club in Jackson, NJ. The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey is a patron sponsor annually.

CWONJ Teams up with PPAG



In an effort to get ahead of any possible new operating restrictions as a result of COVID-19, the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) has teamed up with the lobbying firm of Princeton Public Affairs Group (PPAG), New Jersey's premier governmental relations firm, based in Trenton. Lobbyist Alfred "Al" Gaburo and the team at PPAG are educating key legislators and getting ahead of any possible future shut downs so all models of washes across the state stay open and operational. "This is what we need to do and what makes sense," said CWONJ President Doug Rieck. "We have teamed up with a powerful and successful firm with a wide reach and if anyone can ensure that we keep washing cars, it's PPAG."

Gaburo, a seasoned lobbyist and principal in the firm, will take the lead for the CWONJ, although tackling issues is done with a bi-partisan, team-based approach at PPAG. Over his

two decades as a lobbyist, Gaburo has earned a reputation as one of the state capitol's most knowledgeable and respected advocates. His client roster is diverse and far reaching including companies in the pharmaceutical, insurance, hospital and maritime industries. "We look forward to working with the CWONJ," said Gaburo. "It makes sense that your industry stay open and operational and that's what we will work to accomplish."



Lobbyist Al Gaburo
of PPAG

NC

For more information on PPAG visit ppag.com

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CWONJ Awards 2020 Scholarships

The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) has awarded two 2020 scholarships.

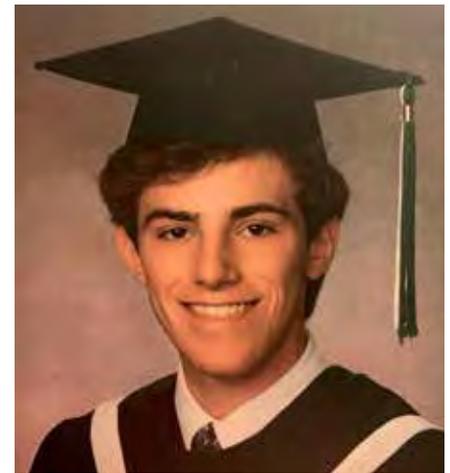
The first recipient, Kyra Parks, is a Best Buddies Club Member, made the Dean's List in 2019 and is a member of the Delta Phi Epsilon sorority at Widener University in Chester, PA. She is an Early Childhood and Special Education major who does philanthropic work for anorexia nervosa and associated disorders. She is associated with Cork Industries.

James McDonnell, an incoming freshman at Drexel University in Philadelphia, is involved in his school's Mini-Thon event that raises money for pediatric cancer. He was named captain of his cross country/track team for two years in a row as a result of his leadership skills. He also boasts perfect attendance throughout his high school career. At Drexel, James plans to major in Public Health where he can combine his love of helping other and math. James is associated with Cork Industries as well.

One of two \$1,000 CWONJ Scholarships are awarded annually to CWONJ-member employees. **NC**



2020 CWONJ Scholarship recipients Kyra Parks and James McDonnell.



2021 CWONJ Scholarship Applications will be available after January 1.

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Monthly Member Billing	✓	✓	✗
Credit Card Issue Resolution	✓	✗	✗
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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Like many of you, association wise it has been rather slow. Personal and business wise, we have all been busy trying to survive and adapt to the new life we are in. Mask mandates, Government loan applications, social distancing, and the fear the public has are just some of the challenges that I suspect we will be dealing with for some time to come. The team here at the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA) has been reaching out to each other and trying to stay on top of new mandates. We have been doing Wednesday Zoom calls, as well as a few personal calls, to accomplish this. We are still working on the wording of "essential" business versus "non essential" in case of a future shut down so that carwashes can remain open as essential.

I want to give a huge thank you to my team and members that have helped and supported me with this task. Here at MCA, I feel very lucky to be surrounded by excellent members that are always willing to step up and go the extra mile. That is what I have always loved about the carwash industry. We help each other like a family. Some days are good, and some days are bad but in the end, we always work it out.

I do want to say if anyone, anywhere needs advice or support, we are here for you. We have successfully jumped through a lot of hoops and have been pushed back from some, but every one of them has taught us something. We all need to learn that in working together and not tripping over the same stone, we can go a lot further.

You can email me directly at mhashleyjr@gmail.com or call/text 540/975-3354.



Stay safe and best wishes.

M.H. Ashley

Mike Ashley

Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association President

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Wash 'n Roll Gives Youth, Adults a Second Chance



By Alan M. Petrillo

Young people in Richmond, VA, who are in trouble with the law, have substance abuse problems, or a combination of both, are being given a second chance at making a clean life by working at Wash 'n Roll Carwash, operated by a non-profit organization, New Life for Adults and Youth.

"We are a 501(c)(3) organization, and kids can live with us for a year," said Rosalinda Rivera, executive director of New Life for Adults and Youth. "We house, clothe, feed, and train them about working in and running a carwash. Without job opportunities, these kids would end up back on the streets and addicted again," she added.

Rivera pointed out that New Life for Adults and Youth has 100 beds in 10 homes where the young people live.

The carwash where they work and train, Wash 'n Roll Carwash at 2501 Turner Road in Richmond, is a full-service 73-foot tunnel. "It's in a 12-acre commercial park, and the kids also work in the detailing shop, the auto repair shop, and a thrift store," she said. "When we built the carwash 14 years ago, we partnered with local trade groups to build it. Those construction groups saw working with us on building the wash as a local training event, so everyone benefited."

Wash 'n Roll offers a Wash-N-Roll (including towel dry) for \$9.95, an Exterior wash and tire shine for \$13.95, Full Service wash for \$16.95, Blue Suede Shoes wash for \$22.95, and a Manager's Special for \$35.95. Full detailing starts at \$175 for cars, and \$200 for SUVs and trucks, while interior detailing for cars is \$125. A variety of extra services are available at additional cost.

Dominick Serago, operations manager of the carwash, is a graduate of the New Life for Adults and Youth program.

"I had a good career in a high-end retail industry, went through a horrible divorce, fell into substance abuse issues, and found myself incarcerated because of that," Serago said. "That was the lowest point in my life, but because of this Christian recovery program, I owe my life to it. It taught me skills for life experience, and also mentorship, which allows me to use my business skills to give back to the organization through the carwash."

Serago pointed out that a big component of the program is to get the young people to be successful in life by helping them become part of society again.

"Vocational training is a big part of being successful in life," he said. "It helps them get their confidence back, as does interacting with customers and conducting themselves as professionals."

Serago said the carwash has a crew of 12 to 18 young folks working shifts Monday through Saturday. Male workers rotate through the carwash, detailing shop, and automotive shop, while the thrift shop is staffed by female employees.



The full service 14-year-old wash boasts a 73-foot tunnel in a 12-acre commercial park.

"When they are in the carwash, they are going to work every single job possible," Serago noted. "We want to train everyone how to handle all the jobs in a carwash, and how to manage a carwash so they can become management at a carwash when they complete the program, which takes about a year. Once they finish the program, we encourage them to do an internship with us, but we are very selective in who we offer that to."

An Impactful History

The history of New Life for Adults and Youth goes back to its founding in 1971 by Victor and Carmen Torres, Rivera's parents.

"My dad grew up in New York City, joined a gang at age 12, and was a heroin addict at 14," Rivera said. "His mom was told



Youth who have experienced trouble with the law and/or substance abuse problems are given a second chance by working at Wash 'N Roll Carwash in Richmond, VA. The non-profit is operated by New Life for Adults and Youth.

Wash 'N Roll has a crew of 12-18 young adults working shifts Monday through Saturday. The men learn all aspects of the wash process while the women staff the thrift shop.



Fleet accounts are also a part of the Wash 'N Roll operation as is evidenced by these buses being washed. Although they don't fit in the tunnel, the wash water used with buses and 18-wheelers is captured and reclaimed.

there was no hope for him, but she was able to get him into a recovery home, where he met my mom. They came to Richmond in 1971 and began taking young men and women off the streets and into their home to help them start a new life.”

Rivera pointed out that all the money made at the carwash goes to keeping New Life for Adults and Youth’s homes open and for staff support.

“There is no payroll for the carwash, other than for our carwash mentors,” she said. “Every carwash that we do provides a meal for a family of five. We took more than 300,000 meals into our local community in one year’s time.”

Serago added that the program partners with new businesses and new people in the Richmond community to get its young people into a position where they can be set up for success.

“We make our vocational training program carwash specific,” he observed. “We want people who exit our program to be able to operate, maintain, and troubleshoot a carwash. Our statistics show that for those who complete our program, there’s an 86 percent success rate for more than five years in recovery.” **NC**

For more information about New Life Enterprises visit newlife.center

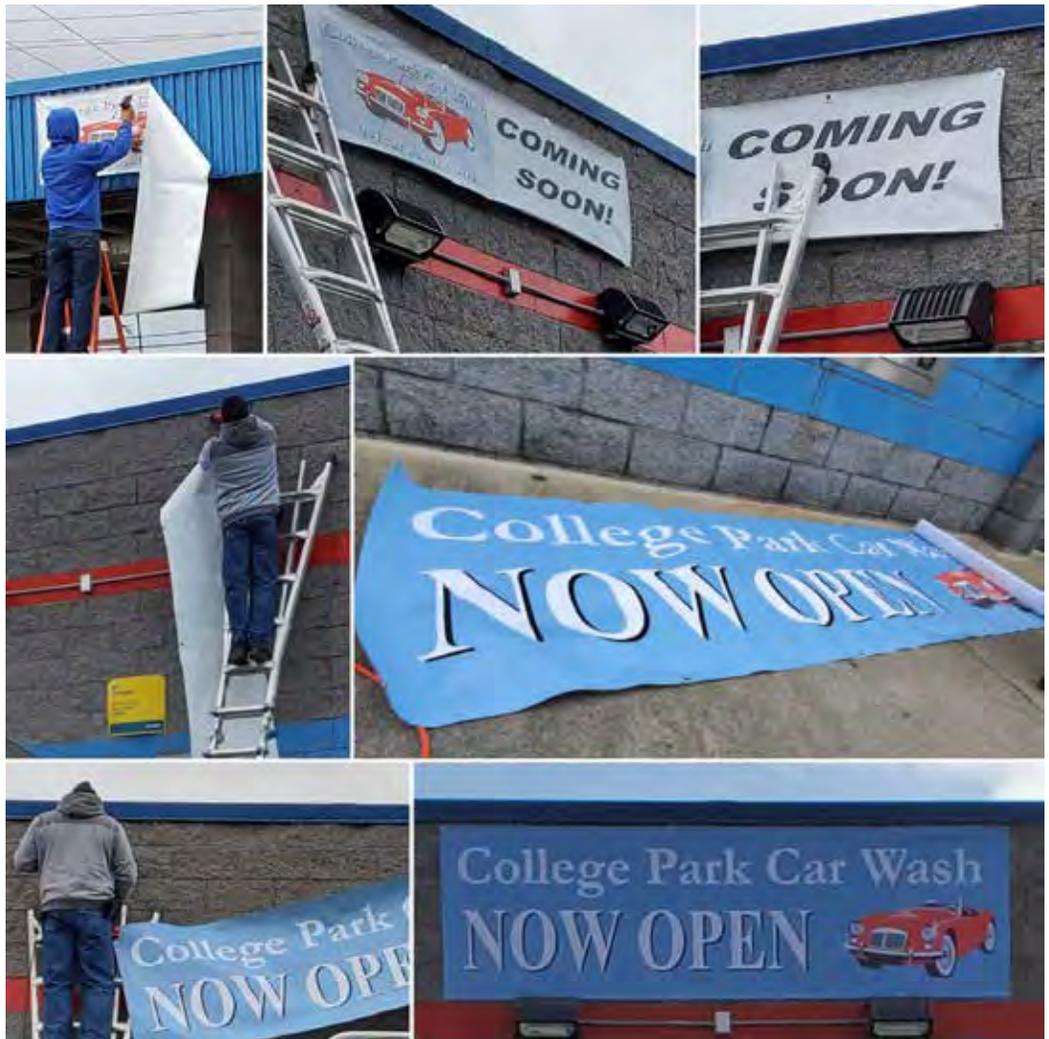
Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ-based journalist, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He’s the author of the historical mysteries, Full Moon and Asylum Lane, and his latest historical thriller, A Case of Dom Perignon, all available at www.amazon.com

It's Open!

The second College Park location is officially open for business.

It's been a challenging road and operators Dave and Ben Du-Goff are going to share the good, bad and ugly of rehabbing a site during a pandemic.

Trust me, it will be a great read! Stay tuned and look for the piece in our winter 2021 issue! **NC**



Valley Carwash Goes Solar

Valley Carwash owner Ned Browning partnered with Mountain View Solar headquartered in West Virginia to boast the largest commercial solar installation in Frederick County, VA, through a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant.

Senator Jill Vogel (R-Winchester) spoke at an event to celebrate the installation in July. The installation was operational in April. The 71-kilowatt roof-mounted solar array is expected to pay for itself within five years, according to a company press release. "Solar is green technology that our customers can see," said Browning. "We have integrated green technology for years, but our customers rarely see these improvements that lie behind closed doors. With water and energy conservation, pollution prevention and biodegradable soap options already in place, we decided that clean solar energy was the way to take our facility to the next level." **NC**



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Autobell Grows in VA, SC Markets

Autobell Car Wash, Charlotte, NC, has added a trio of stores in established and growing markets for the company, according to a company press release. These additions bring the company's tally to 87 washes in five states.

The family-owned business opened a site in Yorktown, VA, led by Store Manager Spencer Criner, to reach 15 locations in that market since 2003. Their other locations there include Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg.

The company also opened two stores in greater Charleston, SC; one in Summerville and one in Johns Island. Store Managers Alec Woodside and team member Michael Troy Swayney run the Summerville and Johns Island locations respectively.

NC

For more information visit autobell.com



Autobell Awards Scholarships

Autobell Car Wash Inc., Charlotte, NC, has awarded 118 of its team members in the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia and Maryland with scholarships toward the college or university of their choice, according to a company press release. The gifts total \$104,750.

Since its inception in 2000, the Autobell Car Wash Scholarship Program has awarded more than 1,700 qualifying applicants more than \$1.7 million in scholarships.

"Reading through scholarship applications is an exciting way to learn more about our talented and hard-working team members and their hopes and plans," said Autobell Human Resources Manager Katie Sens. "For many attending school within our geographic footprint, we offer a flexible schedule allowing them to work while completing their education. As our scholarship winners go on to impressive accomplishments after graduation, we are delighted and humbled that Autobell was able to play a role in making their dreams come true," she added.



Charlotte, NC-based Autobell Car Wash has awarded 118 scholarships to team members in the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia and Maryland totaling \$104,750.

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The program is open to current Autobell members employed with the company for a continuous 12 months and considers each student's academic diligence and accomplishments, productive extracurricular activities, civic engagement and letters from references. The application also requires an essay that explores an education or creative aspect of their employment experience.

NC

For more information about the Autobell Car Wash Scholarship Program visit autobell.com

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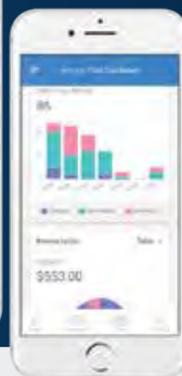


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info@newenglandcarwash.org • www.newenglandcarwash.org

By the time you read this message, I hope you and your family are safe and business has returned to some sense of normalcy. We are all trying to stay optimistic that a COVID-19 vaccine is on the horizon. As I write this letter, in late July (prior to fall publication), we are blessed that the New England region has had great success mitigating the spread of the virus and reducing the percent of positive cases and deaths relative to the rest of the nation. However, many states in the south and west of the country are still surging and during the summer, people are traveling more. Many members have shared with me their anxiety about a potential resurgence. With that in mind, the New England Carwash Association (NECA) continues to work weekly with our lobbying firm to get carwashes reclassified with "essential-status." Our Association's goal is to prevent future shutdown of carwashes if a resurgence takes place in the fall or winter.

Under my guidance, NECA Board Members and our past presidents have written more than 50 pages of documentation, letters and presentations for Legislators and elected officials. We successfully helped the carwash industry open in all our member states by Phase 1 (for exteriors) or sooner. Full services were open in Phase 2. I am honored to give special thanks to NECA Vice President Patrick Mosesso of Auto Brite Car Wash, past president Bob Katseff and Treasurer Jeff Katseff of Turnpike Car Wash, and Board member Chris Zona of Fresh Car Wash/AutoWash Technologies. All volunteered their time to join me on nearly 50 hours of conference calls with the Governor's cabinets, municipalities, Legislators and our lobbying firm. Special thanks to Board member John Shalbey, who donated his legal expertise to review our documentation, and Richard Smith from Golden Nozzle who helped lead our Maine advocacy efforts. I am grateful for the support of supplier members like Al West and Bill Gorra from Simoniz USA who drafted documentation to support our entire industry, as well as Adam Korngold from Washify who donated his programmer's time to help us build our new advocacy website, CarWashSafe.com. Finally, a BIG thanks to all New England operators and suppliers who donated funds to our 12-month lobbying strategy. NECA has presented a united and strong message across the entire Northeast as we aligned efforts with other Northeast association leaders like Tom Hoffman Jr. and Suzanne Stansbury.

In addition to lobbying for industry "essential status," we have been working hard on our three-month marketing campaign to better educate the motoring public. The campaign teaches consumers the importance of cleaning their vehicles to mitigate the spread of viruses like COVID-19, and to help to keep drivers and passengers safe. Our new website, CarWashSafe.com, recently launched to showcase new educational materials and videos while helping the motoring public easily locate a NECA-member carwash near them, across New England, to professionally clean their car. We encourage operators and suppliers to share the curated content from CarWashSafe.com on their social media pages to help us reach a larger audience as we broadcast a simple message: "a professionally cleaned car, is a safer car."

Moving forward, it remains crucial that our industry consistently follow their state safety guidelines such as masks for employees where required, social distancing, hand washing and using other personal protective gear. We need to work together to

avoid negative reports of the public reporting that operators are not being safe so professional carwashes are viewed as part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Lastly, we must all try to speak with one voice through our Association to ensure consistent messaging and avoid municipalities making decisions about our industry because a single operator did not share accurate details. In the famous words of Vince Lombardi, who is recognized as one of the greatest coaches and leaders in the history of American sports, "Individual commitment to a group effort — that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."



Mathew Paisner

Mathew Paisner
New England Car Wash Association President

COVID-19 Brochure Supplies for the Car Wash Industry

Compiled by



All enclosed material have been provided by
Supplier members of NECA

www.newenglandcarwash.org/custom/downloads/NECS-COVID-19-BROCHURE-May-2020-v2.pdf



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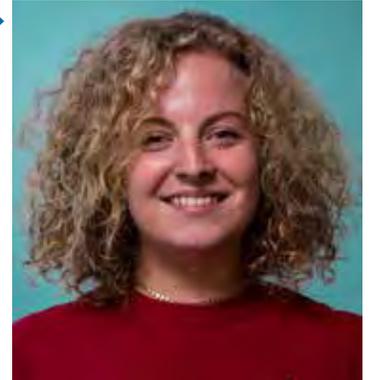


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The NECA's 2020 Scholarship Recipients are ...

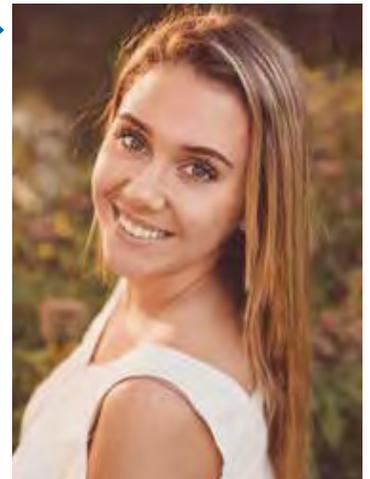


Lindsey Messina, daughter of Brian Messina of Royal T Car Wash, is our 2020 Thomas Rando Scholarship recipient. Lindsey will be attending Southern New Hampshire University this fall, with a major in psychology. She worked for several years after high school, including at the carwash, and is currently employed by a national non-profit that supports and provides education on substance misuse and suicide prevention. Previously, she was the Communications Director for Austin17House in Brentwood, NH, a local non-profit that provides services to support the health and wellbeing of youth and families. In that role, she obtained grant funding and built the volunteer base. She continues to volunteer 20 hours a week at that community center while taking online courses and working full time. Having seen the devastation of drug and alcohol abuse, her goal is to become a Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselor in New Hampshire. **To learn more about Austin17House visit austin17house.org**



Dante Barbati, a Briteway Car Wash employee, will be attending Loyola University (MD) this fall, majoring in finance with a minor in computer science. While in high school, Dante worked two days a week at the carwash while balancing his studies and participating in two varsity sports teams, student government, the National Honors Society, and Norwell School's Peer Education program.

Grace Flanagan, daughter of ScrubaDub employee Jay Flanagan, will be attending Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT. While challenging herself academically through high school, Grace built a well-rounded resumé which includes music, athletics, charity work, care of autistic children, and part-time employment in the food service industry.



Billie Prescott, whose mother works for ScrubaDub, has been working as a medical assistant for Atrius Health since completing a Medical Assistant Certificate at Massasoit Community College. During the pandemic, she has been working in the Urgent Care department. Billie will be entering Massasoit's nursing program this fall.

Alexandra Sanft, whose father works for Global Partners LLC, will be a senior at American International College, majoring in criminal justice and psychology. She plays on the women's soccer team, volunteers to mentor and coach children, and has two internships, one with Global Partners and the other with the probation's department. Alexandra's goal is to earn a Masters Degree in Forensic Psychology.



NECA's Scholarship Program

Since the program's inception in 2011, the NECA has awarded \$27,000 in scholarships. In 2018, the NECA Board voted to award one annual scholarship in the memory of Tom Rando, a founding member of NECA and industry innovator. The Scholarship Program is funded by donations.

Anyone who works for a NECA member company, or is an immediate relation of someone who works for a NECA member company, may apply for a scholarship. 2021 applications will be available in January.



A Strong Response

To NECA's strong response

The NECA would like to thank the following companies for their generous support (at time of publication) with the association's lobbying efforts on behalf of the membership.

- \$3 Car Wash/Fazio Enterprises
- Auto Bright Auto Wash
- Fitzzy's Car Wash
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- Global Partners
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- Starlite Car Wash
- Triple Play Car Wash
- Triton Car Wash
- Turnpike Car Wash
- Verc Enterprises
- Wash Depot Holdings
- Waves Car Wash
- White Water Car Wash and Detailing

Donations in support of NECA's lobbying efforts on behalf of the New England carwash industry are appreciated in any amount. To make a pledge visit newenglandcarwash.org **NC**



Raising the Flag at Crystal Clean Car Wash

Several years back, Chris Tyll acquired a carwash in South Portland, ME, that required substantial renovation and upgrades. Crystal Clean Car Wash (www.crystalcleanme.com) is now complete. It consists of two, D&S IQ in-bay automatics, four bays of D&S self service, eight Coleman-Hanna vacuum islands, and a full-service detail bay.



Over July 4th weekend, they were able to dedicate their favorite part of the project ... a 100-foot American-made steel flagpole topped with a 1,500-square-foot American flag.

Chris sent along the following inspiring video and news coverage to share with our industry during these challenging times. You can view the video at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=A94cr19m-lk

NC

We hope to feature more about this wash in our winter 2021 issue!

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Zona Renovates and Rebrands Easton Wash as Fresh Auto Wash

By Alan M. Petrillo

Chris Zona, the owner of Autowash Technologies in Norwell, MA, has purchased, renovated and rebranded the former Wash N Depot at 105 Easton St. in Easton as Fresh Auto Wash, an express exterior carwash.

Zona said that Autowash Technologies grew so fast that it needed more office and warehouse space, and the Easton location just happened to have a carwash on site. The perfect marriage!

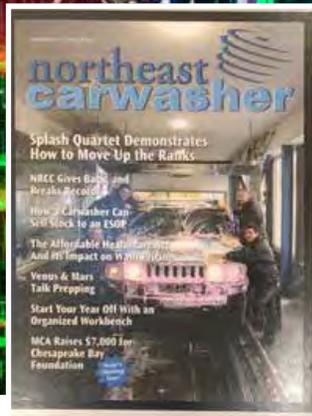
“The opportunity of this office building and warehouse with a carwash on the property presented itself to us last year,” he said, “plus I missed operating a carwash and wanted to get back into that side of the industry.”

Autowash Technologies took over the warehouse and office



Work on the former Wash “N” Depot, rebranded to Fresh Auto Wash, began in 2019 and included an extensive renovation of the 85-foot tunnel site.

The Former Wash “N” Depot was profiled in 2014 in the Northeast Carwasher.





building, which has six tenants including an attorney's office, financial consultant, engineer, and home remodeling firm. Zona also leases space to a pet groomer in the carwash building.

"The first thing we did at the end of 2019 as phase one of our renovation on our 85-foot tunnel was to rebrand the carwash to Fresh Auto Wash, and immediately switched chemicals to Qual Chem,* and to Gallop Brush Co. foam and cloth," Zona pointed out. "We did those things to eliminate prepping and increase production time, which made the system faster."

Next, Zona upgraded his point-of-sale system so he would be able to sell unlimited club memberships.

"We had an ICS system installed," he said, "where we upgraded to their latest version of WashConnect® 2020. We got all those things accomplished during our first three months of operations, and didn't shut down for a day to get them done."

Zona said that phase two of the renovation is planned for the fall of 2020 before the winter season sets in.

"We will be replacing all the equipment in the tunnel with Motor City equipment," he noted, "and installing a Vacutech central vacuum system. Doing all that renovation will require us to shut down to accomplish it since it's such a major amount of work."

Zona added that he intends for the Vacutech system to be free for all customers.

"In general, I believe in free vacuums for unlimited members only, but this site needs a jump start, so the vacuums will be free for everyone," he said.

Zona's wash options include a \$12 Classic wash, a \$15 Fresh Clean wash, a \$20 Fresh Shine wash, and a \$25 Fresh Protect wash. Unlimited prices are \$20, \$25.99, \$39.99, and \$49.99 per month for the four wash types. **NC**

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

Stepdaughter Adrianna and Valentina and Chris Zona at his new site, Fresh Auto Wash, in Easton.



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INNOVATIVE CAR WASH SOLUTIONS...SINCE 1976

Custom Car Wash Owner Outdistancing the Competition

By Alan M. Petrillo

Custom Car Wash is only 15 miles away from the Canadian border's province of New Brunswick, and three hours north of Maine's city of Bangor, and its owner, John Morrill, believes in providing the wash's customers with the best carwash possible.

Custom Car Wash at 28 Corri Veau St., in Caribou, has a Washworld RAZOR touchless in-bay automatic in an 80-foot tunnel, where Morrill said, "in the colder months it allows us the space to get a vehicle in and warmed up before it goes through the wash." The carwash also has four self-service bays, and four vacuum stations.

Morrill pointed out that he's had the carwash for 30 years, starting out with a Mark VII rollover as the inbay equipment, then moving to a PDQ Laser 4000, and finally to the Washworld touch free RAZOR.

"Our entire facility is credit card acceptable through the CryptoPay Carwash Credit Card System, including our vending machines, and the CryptoPay Fleet card is accepted in our self-service bays," he noted. "A lot of our clientele consists of muddy pickup trucks, and many of them are commercial customers."

In the RAZOR, Custom Car Wash offers four washes: an \$8 Basic with soap and rinse only; a \$12 Ultra, a \$14 Ultimate wash, and a \$17 Super wash that involves a two-step presoak, wash, rinse, three sealants, undercarriage wash, wheel blast and dryer cycle. In the self-service bays, Custom Car Wash features Southern Pride equipment.

Morrill said that he had tried to do more in the way of fleet services, considering the WEX® Fleet Card system, which he called "the largest fleet system in the country that handles municipalities, and large trucking and shipping companies, but WEX needs special equipment to run it, and our CryptoPay system doesn't recognize the WEX Fleet Card."

Constantly Upgrading the Site

Continued improvement of the carwash location has been a constant for Morrill, with upgrades being performed yearly. "We do major upgrades every year," he said. "Last year we changed all our lighting and signage, and the year before, all our overhead doors."

He also cited help from a carwash industry veteran, Gary Sokoloski of Centerline Carwash Sales and Service, on getting Custom Car Wash through a couple of its equipment replacement projects.

"Gary was the one who helped us in replacing equipment, when we took out the Mark VII rollover and installed the Laser 4000, and then years later, when we removed the Laser and installed the Washworld RAZOR," Morrill said. "Gary is a six-hour



drive away from us, but he came up and helped us install those units. On the RAZOR, we pulled it off in four days with Gary's help, getting the old machine out and the new one installed and up and running."

The competition for Custom Car Wash, Morrill observed, "is a petroleum company that has a rollover wash at four locations, and a 100-foot exterior tunnel. But we make sure we do a great carwash and do it right for our customers, and support the community, because word of mouth is the best advertising that you can have."

Community First

Morrill also takes pride in being involved in a lot of community activities. "We have done everything from donations of free carwashes to school graduations, families in need, and raffles for schools and non-profit organizations," he said. "We did a fundraiser for kids stuck at home and came up with a \$1,000 donation, and on September 11, we give free carwashes to emergency responders, and free carwashes for Veterans on Veterans Day. We like to be a part of the community and to help out where we can."

Morrill said he had considered putting in another in-bay automatic and self-service bays at a location farther north of Caribou, but admitted, "That's on hold right now because of the COVID-19 situation. With COVID, people up here only go to the grocery store, but then they wash their car while they are out."

NC

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



To John Morrill, owner of Custom Car Wash, providing exceptional customer service is essential.

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NC

An Untimely Passing



Eric A. Hartnett

Eric A. Hartnett, 61, passed away after an unexpected accident on Sunday, July 12, at his home in Wenham.

Eric was born in Salem, April 29, 1959, the son of the late Ronald A. and Joan A. (Eon) Hartnett. He attended Essex Agricultural High School, Danvers/Middleton.

He was the fourth child of six children. Eric was predeceased by his parents. He was employed by several landscaping firms over the years and later joined the "family" business, Hartnett Auto Body and Car Wash where he worked for many years. He was well known in the carwash equipment sales and service industry having been employed at Sonny's Enterprises in Florida for several years.

Eric is survived by his loving sister, Joan M. Hartnett of Nashville, TN, four brothers: R. Alan Hartnett and his partner, Steven Brigandi of Hampton, NH; Dana F. Hartnett and his wife, Virginia of Beverly; Joel T. Hartnett and his wife Patricia of Danvers; Dean K. Hartnett and his wife Christie of Seabrook, NH. He was a loving uncle to Adam N. Hartnett of Beverly; Jonathan Hartnett and his wife Jean of Danvers; Meghan and her husband Drew Hester of California; Katelyn and her husband Eric Kiel of Boston; Dean T. Hartnett and Drew M. Hartnett of Seabrook, NH; and two grandnephews, Wesley G. Hartnett of Danvers and Camden K. Hester of California. Eric is also survived many friends and business associates throughout the Northeast and Florida. **NC**

**If you wish to make a donation in his memory,
please send it to the
Danvers People-to-People Food Pantry,
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Ron Burton*	Don Scordo
Raymond Justice	Ken Knightes*
Steve Voll	Walt Hartl
Mark Kubarek	Dennis O'Shaughnessy, Sr.
Tom Hoffman Jr.	Steve Knightes
	Mark Kubarek

*Deceased

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I think we all can agree that 2020 has certainly been more challenging than anyone could have predicted. As I write this column, there are 151 days left until the end of 2020, but who is counting. The Pandemic has touched everyone directly or indirectly. It has exposed weaknesses in our economy, our dependence on other nations, inequity in our health care systems, and simultaneously it has revealed the great strength of the public and industry to step up, do what's right and help our neighbors. The protest against racial injustice has begun to more broadly shed light to the real struggles minorities face. Regardless of your position (and your politics) we all can agree we are not perfect, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to be better.

These are very serious and heavy societal issues. Coupled with personal challenges, especially regarding the future of our kids getting back to school, and the uncertainty of how our businesses will need to adapt to this new normal, it's easy to be overwhelmed and stressed out.

There have been numerous articles and reports of the physiological effects of stress on our health, and during a time when we are facing a real threat to our health from COVID-19, it is more important than ever to learn to cope with stress. Walking, jogging, exercising, reading, meditating – whatever you do to settle your mind, even if it's for a short time, don't stop. The stress we face is real and dangerous if allowed to consume us. In 2020 especially it may be difficult for some of us to see the light at the end of the tunnel and not think it's another train coming at us on the same track. I heard a quote that I think sums up 2020, "The road won't always be smooth, there will be rough patches along the way, stay the course and it will pass."

Stay focused on the important things. If 2020 has taught us anything, it has shown us the unpredictability of life. How we deal with these challenges is the key. With this in mind, I'd like to invite you to spend a "virtual" hour with the New York State Carwash Association (NYSCWA) and Ray Justice, former NYSCWA President, carwash owner, contributor to the Northeast Carwasher, motivational speaker and so much more for an afternoon focusing on what stress is, how it affects us personally, professionally and to learn how to cope with what life throws at us. Keep an eye out for more details on this session that hopefully teaches us all how to cope with what life throws at us.



Here's to a great 2021!

Walter Hartl
NYSCWA president

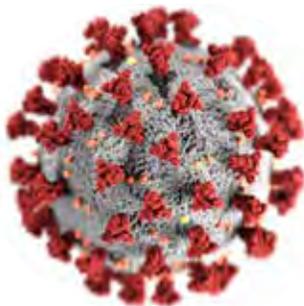
Fall Zoom on Handling Stress

Led by Ray Justice



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New York State Car Wash Association Profit and Loss



January - July, 2020

Income	
Meetings Income	660.00
Membership Dues	14,520.00
Northeast Convention Income	51,334.21
Promotional Fees	390.00
Uncategorized Income	250.00
Vendor Sponsorships	375.00
Total Income	\$67,529.21
Gross Profit	\$67,529.21
Expenses	
Advertising/Promotional	97.20
Credit Card Fees	399.00
Director Fees	14,606.74
Entertainment Expense	50.00
Insurance Expense	1,495.00
Legislative Fees	10,500.00
Office Expenses	92.08
Postage Expense	429.36
Printing/Graphics	494.15
QuickBooks Payments Fees	372.48
Telephone	125.04
Website Maintenance	122.50
Total Expenses	\$28,783.55
Net Operating Income	\$38,745.66
Net Income	\$38,745.66
Checking Account	\$65,281.56
Money Market	\$65,347.05
NYSCWA CASH ON HAND	\$130,628.61
NYSCWA PAC CASH ON HAND	\$12,481.75

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Short Stories From My Early Life And What They Mean Now



By Ray Justice

Story Number One: The Inspiring Message on my Bedroom Ceiling

I had many happy moments as a child and teenager, but I also was bullied, in a major house fire, my younger brother passed away, and I was a new kid at school, often left out and on my own most of the time.

With that short overview in mind, as I moved into my adult years, I learned to read, imagine and create more positive moments to help me deal with it all and stay balanced. One of those has been a collection of inspirational quotes to help replace my fear-based thoughts. Many of them seemed to be just the right thing in the moments of coping and growing.

One of my favorites from many years ago is:

“Be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love and work and play and to look at the stars.”

- Henry Van Dyke

I liked it and used it so often that I had it taped to my bedroom ceiling for almost 30 years. I still have it, the paper is fragile, but the words are still strong.

It was the first thing I saw every morning and the last thing I read at night. It had become a part of me, a reminder of who I am and how I want to be.

The message of repetition showed up because after a while I did not need to read the words. I looked up and knew, when I saw that circle of paper, that was how I wanted to be appreciating and “glad of life.”

Affirmations are still a strong part of my life. When I have an off moment, reading the words of others I connected with, and often my own written words, have had a strong positive impact on my adult life. Affirmative, inspirational readings are not a cure all, but they do help set the stage.

Many rewards show up for being focused on where you are, who you are with and what you are thinking. Now awareness moments also help to replace blaming, complaining or doubtful thoughts.

I am mostly glad and appreciative of my life. Appreciation is an energy that is powerful beyond our day-to-day understand-

ing. Practice feeling Grateful and Appreciative as often as you can, and you will notice how your personal energy shifts and possibilities show up almost on their own.

In today’s world I write my own inspirational, thought-provoking expressions. (IdeasToWonder.com)

Story Number Two: Who’s in Charge? How My Mind Changes the Subject Without my Awareness

In February of 2003 I took a three-week vacation to Florida visiting friends. It had been two months since I had sold my business, Buckman’s Car Washes, and I was treating myself to a breath of freedom, a little golf and connecting with friends. I added an interesting piece to the trip. Being an engrossed reader

I travel with several books to read. For this trip I was challenged, by a friend, to leave my obsession to know, my books, at home. Instead, I took a note pad and a few pens. I ended up writing numerous spiritual poetic verses, but that is another story.

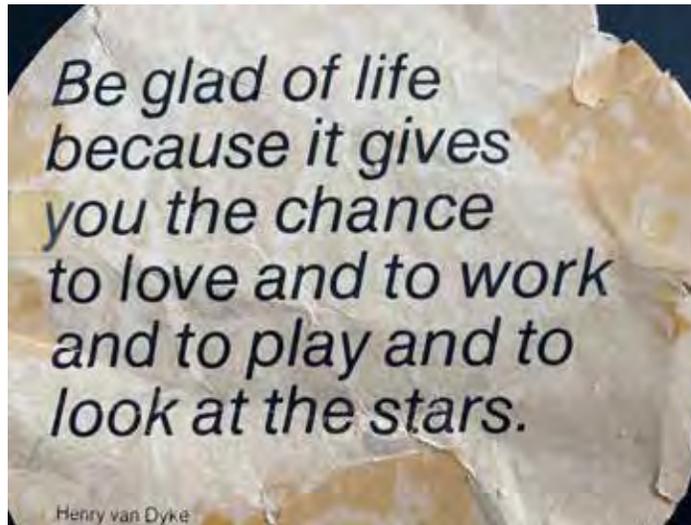
Besides my visits, I also took a side-step and attended a two-day workshop on the importance of being aware of the present moment, of being in the Now. It was interesting and something I had not put much time into having it be part of who I am.

I want to refer to one particular exercise we did to experience what we had been talking about.

To get some hands-on experience we, about 12 students, were told to walk outside and one at a time choose two different objects to focus on without having our mind drift to other distracting thoughts.

My first object was a no parking sign. I looked at it intently for a minute, or so, noticing its red and white color and it’s rusty metal post. After a couple minutes, of feeling bored, I started walking around the parking lot looking for a second subject of observation focus. That’s when something caught my eye.

In the shrubbery, partly hidden, was a dark green pump used to feed the sprinkler system to water the foliage. It got my attention



because it was connected to two large white PVC pipes. That was my first thought, how they had hidden the pump in the shrubbery, but the white plastic piping stood out like waving a flag.

I stood there and did my noticing, one thing at a time without being distracted. This was present moment, taking charge, I was in control of my thoughts for this lesson.

For several seconds I studied this green pump with white pipes. I was focused in the moment, or so I thought.

That was when that partly hidden dark green pump reminded me of my father-in-law's lawn and his sprinkler system that he was always having problems with.

We had a very competitive and often strained relationship that I was stuck with and had many complaining moments.

My focus was gone for the remainder of our 20 minutes of Now time. I mentally went over, for probably the hundredth time, stories and grumbles of "why me" with my thoughts.

It wasn't until later, at our group discussion, that I realized what a gift I just had received. Now I had a real-life sense of what present moment is about and what we miss by jumping around in our mind with many of the same self-doubting thoughts and stories.

Almost 20 years later, I still let my scattered and repeated thoughts take me out of the current moment, away from what is now. I more often recognize and am aware to bring myself back to Now. Being able to be present, in the moment, is extremely beneficial especially with conversations. There is a power to it all by learning to maintain our focus. It allows us to pay deeper attention to what is before us, keeping our scattered thoughts at bay for a while and therefore being less distracted.

Story Number Three: A Major Life-Changing Message in Two Hidden Words

Many years ago, I became fascinated by hypnosis and its wonders. I became a certified Hypnotherapist but had no intention of making that a career. What I wanted to learn was the impressive capabilities of the subconscious mind and the Power of Suggestion. That is what Hypnosis is, allowing someone else to talk to, and give suggestions to, your subconscious mind.

Each and every thought we think, especially if we believe them, is a suggestion to our body, our mind and our world.

I have done some amazing things with suggestion, and again, that's another story.

In Detroit on the very last day of an advanced class on hypnotherapy, the instructor said he wanted to leave us with a message. He pointed to a piece of paper he had taped on the board. He had written two words and covered them so they could not be seen. He continued talking for several minutes, stalling us while building our anticipation. He said that of all the things we had learned during instruction, the words he had written, and covered, were by far the most important. We had spent five full

days and evenings of study, and practice, yet this was the most important thing to remember. He removed the paper stating that if we could learn to look at life through this lens it would be one of the most important things we could learn.

The lens, he wanted us to view the world through, was written with these two words, "Non-Judgmental Curiosity." Wonder about things instead of having a habit of criticizing and finding fault.

A Short Summary

Story One: Appreciation and how we can adjust, or practice, our own thoughts and beliefs to make it part of who we are. Enjoying the energy that arrives with Appreciation.

"When you are feeling great, about yourself, you won't feel the urge to blame." – Raymond Justice

Story Two: The importance of being aware of the current moment, Now. How much have we missed in life by our own mental distractions?

"You can't change your past
You can alter your future
by adjusting your NOW!" – Raymond Justice

Story Three: Non-Judgmental Curiosity speaks for itself. By viewing everything we encounter with a curious nature instead of judging. We will be well aware of the insights that open to us. The opposite of this is needing to be right, which seems to drive many of our conversations and decisions and shuts down possibility.

"Get serious about being Curious.
It opens your Imagination
& that can get amazing."
– Raymond Justice

NC



Ray Justice

Ray Justice is an entrepreneur, poet and creativity explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the NYSCWA. Visit him at ThoughtCompass.com where he offers two Free courses, *Ponder Moments* and *A Good Night's Sleep*.





Bill Could Regulate Automatic Renewal Service Offers

By William Y. Crowell, III

Carwashes across New York State have reopened for business with safety protocols and operating restrictions in response to COVID-19. The industry worked collectively to restart with the safety of customers and employers as the paramount objective. The carwash industry has to ensure a safe environment to assist in preventing a reversion back to a strict interpretation of essential business.

The state Legislature has also returned to work using Zoom technology to enable Legislators to participate virtually in committee meetings and sessions. Since their departure on April 2, after passing the state budget, the Legislature has returned virtually to conduct three mini-sessions. During the most recent session on July 22, it passed Senate Bill 1475A, which regulates automatic renewal of service offers. This bill has not yet been delivered to the Governor for action.

This legislation impacts wash club subscriptions with automatic renewal provisions. Wash clubs have become a staple offering of many carwashes located throughout the state. There is no comprehensive approach to automatic renewals currently in statute. General Obligations Law section 5-903 provides a contract cannot state the term is renewable for a specified additional period unless the entity furnishing the service provides written notice within a specified time and manner calling attention to the existence of the renewal provision in the contract. This limitation does not apply to a contract with an automatic renewal period of a month or less.

Senate Bill 1475A, based on its legislative intent, is directed at eliminating the ability of an entity to charge a consumer credit or debit card without explicit consent by the consumer for ongoing services. This legislation defines automatic renewal as a plan in which a paid subscription agreement is automatically renewed. It is unlawful for a business to make an automatic renewal unless it meets the following requirements:

1. The offer for the automatic renewal must be clear and conspicuous and if a gift or trial is included the amount charged after the gift or trial must be delineated
2. The consumer must provide affirmative consent for charging the credit or debit and for the automatic renewal and
3. Provide an acknowledgment that includes the automatic renewal offer terms, cancellation policy and information on cancellation that the consumer can retain. If the offer has a free gift or trial it also must include how to cancel before the consumer pays for the services.

This bill requires a business making an automatic renewal offer to provide a toll free telephone number, email or other

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Senate Bill 1475A, based on its legislative intent, is directed at eliminating the ability of an entity to charge a consumer credit or debit card without explicit consent by the consumer for ongoing services.

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cost-effective, timely and easy-to-use mechanism to implement a cancellation. When a consumer accepts an automatic renewal online, the consumer must be permitted to cancel online.

In the event that there is a material change in the terms of the automatic renewal, the consumer must be furnished with a clear and conspicuous notice of the material changes. The consumer must also be provided with information on how to cancel the automatic renewal.

A violation of this proposed statute is enforceable by the Attorney General. There is a civil penalty of \$100 for a single violation and not more than \$500 for multiple violations resulting from a single act. A knowing violation carries a civil penalty of \$500 for a single violation and \$1,000 for multiple violations resulting from a single act. A business is deemed not to have violated the proposed statute if by a preponderance of the evidence, it demonstrates that the violation was not intentional and resulted from a bona fide error notwithstanding procedures to avoid such error.

The virtual legislative session format makes it difficult to provide timely information on bill impacts to legislators and staff since in-person access to them is not currently available. There are some potential differences in the mechanics of the operation of various member carwash club subscriptions.

If any member recognizes any problems with this legislation and its implementation, please advise the New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA). If there are actionable comments, there should be an opportunity to provide information to the Governor when he reviews the bill.

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William Y. Crowell, III, Esq. is a partner with Dickinson, Avella & Vidal in Albany. You can reach him at 518/369-7961 or wcrowell@dickinsonavella.com

William Y. Crowell, III

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Where Tragedy Strikes Every Wash Has This Exposure!

By Dave Snyder

In this segment I am going to talk about a topic that relates to every type of carwash operation. Almost every brick and mortar business has the same exposure that can be deadly or can cause serious injury, one that you may not have total control over but can still cause you to have a liability if not managed properly. Do you have an idea of what I am steering you to think about yet? I am taking you to your wash's parking lots, driveways, entrances and exits.

For me, what brought this topic to light was watching a video a year ago of a young child darting from the back seat of a car as Mom parked. The child was struck by a pickup truck towing a trailer through the wash lot. In this case, the child had thick clothing on and was merely knocked to the ground, and the truck and trailer were high enough to pass over as he lay stunned. This one had a happy ending as the child was fine, but it could have ended differently.

Late this spring I read about another tragedy in which a child perished in a carwash parking lot after being backed over. Now these accidents were out of the control of the wash owner, manager or staff, but there are a lot of things that can be done to help reduce the chances of a fatal or severe accident on site in one of your parking lots.

Here are some shocking numbers from the National Safety Council (NSC) to get you thinking. More than 50,000 crashes occur in parking lots each year causing more than 60,000 injuries and more than 500 deaths. As the numbers of businesses grow and the numbers of cars on the road increases, I would venture to guess that any new data would support higher numbers. These are some of the reasons why site plans go through so much scrutiny with municipalities and cities when you are looking to build and open a new location.

Let's take a quick look at another study published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that looked at a period from 2008 to 2011. This was based on non-occupant crashes involving children who were injured or killed. The totals for these accidents resulted in 221 children 14 and under being killed. Eighty-four percent of those were under four years of age. There were also 5,000 kids who were

injured. The last thing any of us want to have engrained into our memory is the site of one of these serious or fatal accidents happening in front of us. There are a lot of steps that can be taken daily to ensure our parking lots are safe, not only from vehicle accidents, but from customers or others falling and getting hurt. When was the last time you really stepped back and looked around your parking lot from different angles and started thinking about it from a safety frame of mind, running "what if" scenarios through your mind? Good, solid risk management should take this thought process through all parts of your operations on a regular basis to see what might need to be changed in your process at any given time.

Evaluate Your Site's Flow

Parking lot safety begins with evaluating the site for both vehicle and pedestrian flow. An effective way to help this process is to use striping and directional arrows to guide traffic where you want it to go as vehicles enter your site. Create crosswalks or pedestrian lanes to help anyone on foot know where you want them to go. Is it possible to keep traffic flowing one way? What is the topography like on your site? While most locations have a very level, flat parking lot, there are always exceptions where you must get creative on an optimal location that may not be level.

Look around. Are there grades where a vehicle will have to increase acceleration to get from the property entrance to the wash? This could become a hazard point. If there are grades and you have foot traffic in these areas, it could create a point where "slips and falls" can take place due to weather or the soapy transfer, which could be left behind from the wash process. Look for ways to reduce the amount of movement customers need to make to accomplish their tasks. Look at where you are placing vending machines and trash cans so they are close to

the points where customers would want to access them for the final cleanup of their vehicles, or to get that air freshener.

Consider using cones as a tool to either help guide both types of traffic where you want them or to close off areas you need customers to avoid. Just be careful when using traffic cones so they do not become a trip hazard.

Consider using signage to show where you want pedestrians to cross or to remind drivers that people are moving around the site. Consider posting a speed limit sign of 5 MPH to help raise awareness. If your employees take custody of customer

“One way to identify where your potential problem areas can be for transfer build up is to go online and look up your site address on Google Earth, for example, and look at the satellite image of it.”

vehicles to move them around the property, train them to drive no faster than they can walk. Also, make sure you are checking their driving records (MVR's) before they even get behind the wheel of a client's car for the first time.

Always keep in mind ways you can eliminate the need for vehicles to back up. We see far too many preventable claims because people simply can't back up or are just not paying attention as they back up. If you have staff doing detail work and the site is not set up to drive through, are they spotting each other as they back vehicles out or spotting the customer if they are backing the vehicles on their own?

Check Your Lighting

There are many additional factors to look at around the parking lot. Evaluate the site at dusk and after dark. Do you have proper lighting and is it fully functioning? Are there shadows or places not lit at all that could hide a pedestrian who is dressed in dark clothing as a vehicle maneuvers the lot? Do you have proper drainage and are the drains in adequate condition to prevent someone walking over them from getting hurt? Do you monitor the key areas of the lot where soap residue transfers to either the concrete or blacktop, which becomes slick when it rains? Be sure these areas are maintained by pressure washing them regularly as a "slip and fall" in these areas could result in a lawsuit.

One way to identify where your potential problem areas can be for transfer build up is to go online and look up your site address on Google Earth, for example, and look at the satellite image of it. You can generally see the darkened areas coming out of the exit and around the vacuum areas where the soapy residue is deposited. Be sure you also check points where cars exiting the property go over sidewalks as these can create hazardous points on the property as well. Be sure to also watch for potholes and areas where concrete and blacktop heave in the spring as frost comes out of the ground. All these issues need to be addressed when noted to reduce liability.

Evaluate Your Landscaping

Be sure to also evaluate your landscaping. Does it create any blind spots where moving traffic is not going to get a clear view as they enter or exit the property?

I have mentioned signs a couple of times so far in this article. Signs are very necessary to help manage the flow of traffic on site while also providing pricing and upselling of wash packages so you can profit from your endeavors. There is both an art to how they look and grab the attention of the passerby, and a science to placing signage. As you evaluate your site, keep in mind drivers have a limited amount of time to process all the messages they are seeing. Too many signs will create confusion and can lead to accidents from unexpected braking on site or will slow down the flow of traffic too much which at the end of the day will reduce your car counts. Place signs in a reasonable line of sight and avoid sign clutter from having too many signs



in a short distance. People will stop looking at signs and start ignoring the messages you are trying to get across to them. They will decide how they are going to proceed through the property, and this is the last thing you want.

The flow control needs to be directed from your messaging. Sign clutter can also lead to a lower ticket price as some folks when they get stressed will go with a lower package to just get out of there. If you evaluate your clientele and see a lot of foot traffic on site, maybe you will want to add signage to warn, "Slow, watch for pedestrians" or "Notice, reduce speed when entering parking lot," as a couple of examples.

If you have vacuum areas children tend to get out of the car with Mom or Dad so consider adding a sign in the area, "Please, children must be supervised at all times" or "Children prohibited from playing in parking lot."

If you have any audio recordings playing on site, consider adding in some safety messages for the patrons to hear. It never hurts to stress safety in any format you can. People will pick up on, if even subliminally, that this is a safe place to frequent. They will note a clean site and how you carry your messages. People these days need to feel safe and secure in every activity they endeavor. Consider some messages such as, "Safety is our top priority, please drive slow while entering and exiting all areas of the property" or "Please use caution while navigating the property as traffic flow can be high at times." It never hurts to pull out all the stops and use the resources you currently have.

Train Your Staff!

An additional component to parking lot safety is staff training or if you are the only one tending to a wash property, reminding yourself of the dangers that can come from traffic flow on site. It may sound silly, but staff should always be trained to be on "high alert" just like first responders working a highway emergency scene. Teach them to always be watching their surroundings and listening for anything out of the ordinary that could put them in harm's way. Teach them to be on alert for those who are potentially under the influence, someone possibly experiencing a medical emergency, clients with mobility

Continued...

Safety First ... continued

issues moving around the property, domestic disputes that might erupt, people on cell phones or parents not supervising children properly. These are just a few issues that can lead to a parking lot accident in one form or another. Train your staff on how to deal with these situations. These are the times everyone needs to be a leader and step up as a preventative measure, and it starts with training and written procedures in place outlining what to do up front.

We should also be looking at staff placement, avoid placing workstations directly in line of the tunnel exits or any area where a car could lose control and pin an employee against something. Be sure to have some frequent “tailgate talks” or “huddle discussions” reminding staff to keep from getting directly in front of or behind vehicles. Remind them not to dart in and out of lines of traffic when the day gets busy. If they must move between cars periodically, remind them to make eye contact with the driver they are passing in front of and to use a hand signal directing them to stop or hold their position. Discuss areas where vehicles have blind spots and to avoid those areas where vehicles may be maneuvering. Your employees should treat the parking lot like they are crossing a busy street and there should always be zero tolerance for using cell phones or playing music through earbuds unless they are on a dedicated break.

Now for the last few items dealing with staff safety and accident prevention in parking lots. Have staff wear bright colored shirts so they can be seen. Look at adding reflective vests for any night operations or if working in high flow areas or areas in close proximity of the street. Ensure employees have proper footwear to keep them from slipping and falling where a vehicle could then strike them. Look at the time of year and monitor for heat stress or deterioration from the cold. Lowered mental functions brought on from being stressed by the elements can also be a recipe for the next unwanted accident.

The same goes for sick employees, if they are not on their “A” game it could be your next claim waiting to happen. Don’t become another statistic for parking lot accidents and remember parking lot safety is everyone’s job. A great way to help evaluate your site’s parking lot is to have a team meeting and walk around the property looking for input from those working the property every day. Many great ideas come from collaboration within your team. Use some of your best assets and empower them with a safety mind in all they do daily.

Of course, as this is the fall issue, I would not be a diligent risk manager if I did not remind all to be prepared for the next few months of cold, snow and ice here in the Northeast. Be sure to have all your snow removal equipment ready to go or contracts in place with reliable contractors who will meet the needs of your operation. Make sure you have plenty of shovels and ice melt products on hand to clean up any snow in areas the plows can’t reach, and to keep customers and staff from slipping and falling. This is also another time to evaluate the lot with staff to identify areas by the time of day that are prone to freeze first and to constantly be monitoring and addressing

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the needs of the site. Be sure to keep a running log of snow and ice removal to show times of day these tasks were completed and by whom, as well as amounts of ice melt product used as this documentation can be used as evidence should someone submit a claim for a winter fall.

As I close, I cannot stress enough that anytime there is an accident on your property, first call 911 and get the appropriate help for whatever situation you have at the time. After that, begin the accident review process by getting a completed incident report filled out and collecting any witness statements. Do not rely on the police or emergency services for this. They must do this for their documentation, but you need your own to support and protect you and your business. Then, make sure you secure any video you have showing what happened. All this evidence can be crucial when fighting a potential claim.

Let’s all work together and do what we can to reduce the parking lot accident and fatality figures moving forward. **NC**



Dave Snyder

Dave Snyder is a Rick Management Program Specialist with Carwash Insurance Program by McNeil in Cortland, NY. You can reach Dave at dsnyder@mcneilandcompany.com or 607/428-2147.



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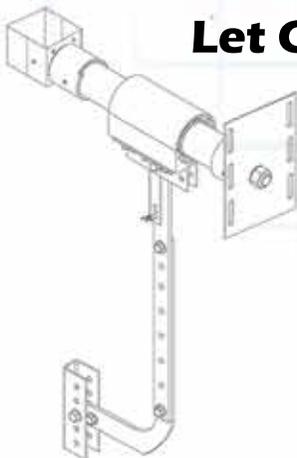
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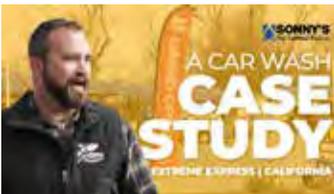
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