

# northeast carwasher

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Surge**

**Anticipation Builds  
For 31<sup>st</sup> NRCC  
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# northeast carwasher

Summer 2021

Vol. 26 No. 3

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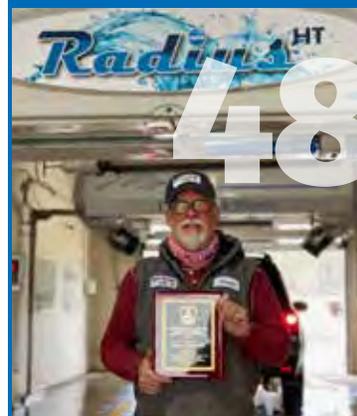
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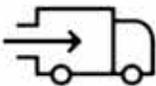
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The *Northeast Carwasher* is produced by Media Solutions, 2214 Budd Terrace, Niskayuna, NY 12309, in conjunction with the design firm Media Magic, for the New York State Car Wash Association, New England Carwash Association, the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey, Inc., Connecticut Carwash Association, Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association and Carwash Association of Pennsylvania. Neither Media Solutions nor Media Magic assumes any responsibility for claims made in advertisements, classified or otherwise, listed in this magazine. **All contents property of Media Solutions. Reproduction in whole or in part without express written permission is prohibited.**



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[northeastcarwasher.com](http://northeastcarwasher.com)

*An insightful 21-year-old recently reminded me that when you have a wedding, it should not be about the tablescape, food or the venue, but the real reason that two people stand up and pledge their love and lives to each other.*

*What does this have to do with carwashing, you ask? Well, actually, a lot. On a recent visit to a wash in western New York I had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing a long-time operator who has a great story to tell. In fact, we are going to feature him in our fall issue so you can learn all about that great story, but in conducting the interview, and walking around the wash, my daughter's wise words were reverberating in my head.*

*The wash in question is seasoned, let's say. It is an established business in a relatively small suburb of Buffalo; maybe 6,000 people. The owner's father ran the wash before he took over and throughout the 47 years they have collectively spent washing cars many friends have been made, and many community givebacks have been performed (and a few beers may even have changed hands, maybe...). In the hour or so I was there, nearly every single customer knew this owner's name, and he theirs. Nice, right? I witnessed stories exchanged and a real sense of community pass between the owner and his customers. It was refreshing and it made me smile.*

*In walking the tunnel I felt, like I often do, a sense of history. There were stories to be told and lots of blood, sweat and tears put into making this wash what it is today. But it isn't a fancy, shiny new wash with lots of sizzle and signage. It's an 82-foot conveyor that puts out a really clean and dry car with no towel drying. And I think that's just fine by his customers. In fact, when looking at his hand-written entry signage, it became clear to me that changing it up probably would be off-putting to them. This wash works where it is, just as it is, and that's ok.*

*I guess what I'm trying to say is that the most important part of your carwash is the product you put out. It has to be or your customers will go somewhere else. A consistently clean, shiny car at a fair price (with outstanding customer service as I witnessed in western New York) should be the ultimate goal. Fancy signage and sizzle is great too, it will certainly lure the customer in, but without the "steak," so to speak, it won't keep them coming back for more.*

### **31st NRCC Won't Disappoint!**

*And speaking of coming back for more... it's time to book your rooms and make your plans to attend the 31<sup>st</sup> Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), Oct. 4-6, at the Atlantic City Convention Center (ACCC). It's been more than a long year and not holding the event in 2020 was heartbreaking, but ever onward! The NRCC board has worked tirelessly to put an educational track and exhibit floor together that will impress and educate its attendees. Our Keynote Speaker, former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, will be entertaining and insightful. His no holds barred approach to politics and business will be refreshing. Breakout speaker Carey Smith, former owner of Big Ass Fans, will share his journey to mega success while imparting his insights on business. The expansive show floor with some 350 exhibits and the new host hotel, the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, will wow you and provide the perfect getaway after a long day at the show. And make sure you take advantage of the reimagined Welcome Reception sponsored by ICS. It is open to all attendees so it will be the perfect*



*networking opportunity for vendors, as well as attendees! Make the time, spend the money and come back to your business recharged, reenergized and reimagining the possibilities at your wash.*

Suzanne L. Stansbury  
Editor/Publisher

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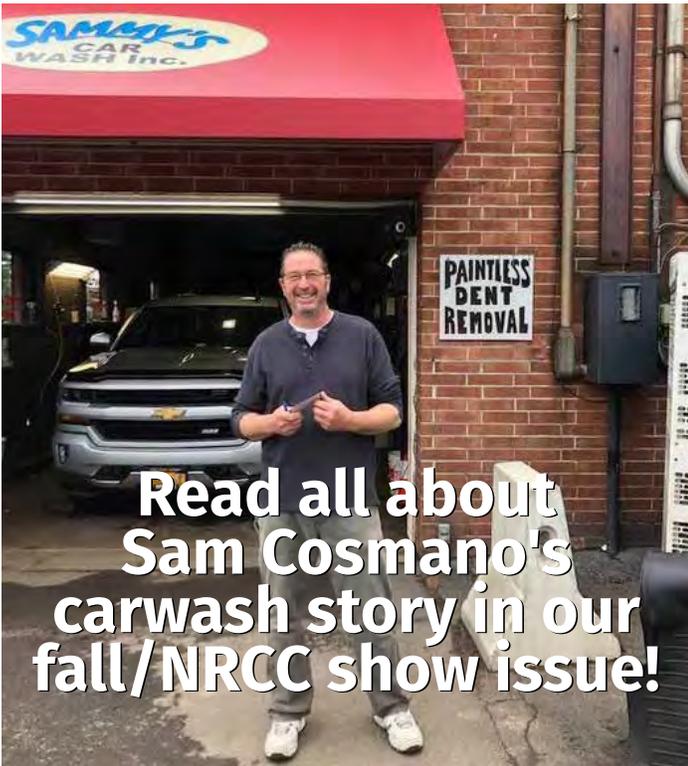
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Read all about Sam Cosmano's carwash story in our fall/NRCC show issue!

Don't miss our feature on "Hiring During a Pandemic" in our fall/NRCC show issue!



## A Bright Idea

Cloud 10 Car Wash Executive VP of Operations, Steve Sause, has cut his water and chemical use by removing high-flow sheet foamers

and instead he is using drip foamers. The result has been smaller droplets of water but a drier, shinier car in his experience.

NC



## WASH VOLUME INDEX

Our Wash Volume Index through April compares 2019 vs. 2021 numbers; omitting 2020 for obvious reasons. Again, our Boston operator is up about 10 percent but our Jersey Shore contributor is off 38 percent. The other two operators are down about 9 percent. With a healthy pollen and bug season we hope to see all four regions up and continuing on that trend for the remainder of 2021 into 2022.



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



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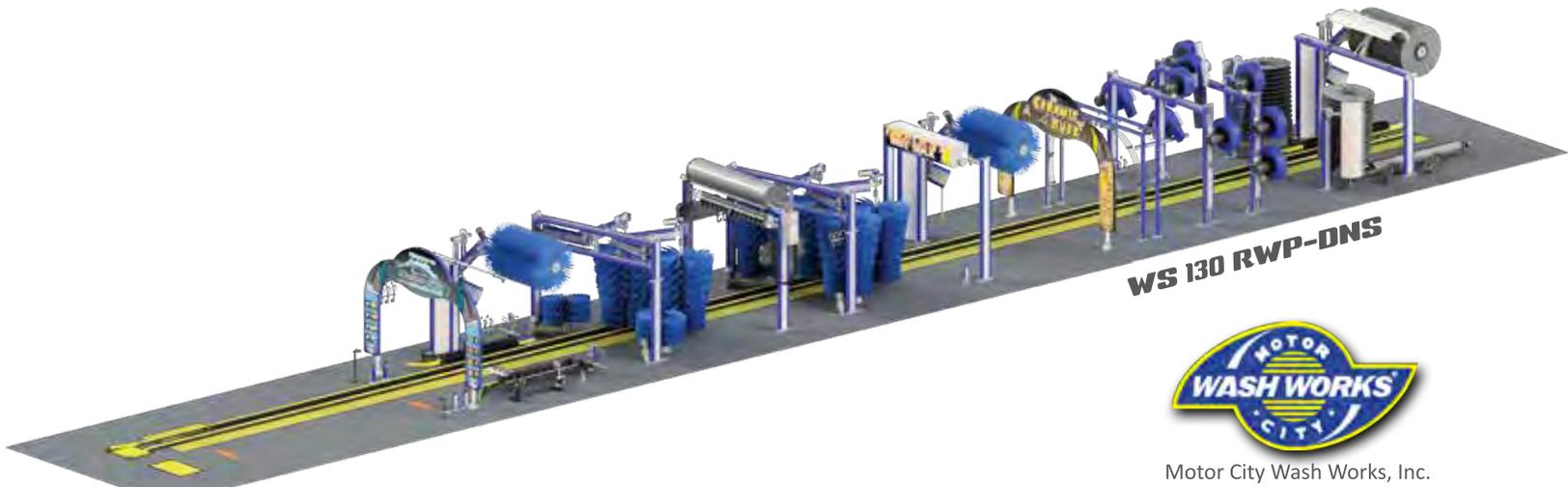
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## MOO MOO EXPRESS'S 18<sup>TH</sup> GRAND OPENING RAISES \$12,165 FOR WARM

Moo Moo Express Car Wash, Columbus, OH, raised \$12,165.69 and 1,846 pounds of non-perishable food for the Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM) to help further their mission of serving Westerville families in need, according to a company press release. The donations were collected from Moo Moo Express customers at the company's Westerville South Grand Opening/Free Wash Week held in January at the 107 Huber Village Blvd. location.

During the event, Moo Moo Express offered a free signature "Crème De La Crème VIP" car wash (\$18 value) to every customer in exchange for a monetary donation to WARM. They also offered discounted retail gift cards with all proceeds donated back to WARM. Throughout the Grand Opening period, Moo Moo Express gave away more than 3,600 free carwashes at a retail of \$64,800. "We are grateful that our Grand Opening made such a positive impact on WARM and the Westerville community — during a time when the need has never been greater," said John Roush, Moo Moo Express Car Wash Founder and Express Wash Concepts CEO. "This donation will provide thousands of meals to hundreds of Westerville families in need, and our team looks forward to continuing our relationship with



In February, Moo Moo Express Car Wash presented a check for \$12,165.69 to Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM) from monetary donations collected during the company's 18th Central Ohio Grand Opening. Pictured left to right: Johnnie Moo, Moo Moo Express Site Manager Angela Fisher, Moo Moo Express Founder & Express Wash Concepts CEO John Roush, Express Wash Concepts Partner and Vice President, Operations Dan Eisenhauer, and Moo Moo Express Area Manager Keith Lawrence.

WARM in future fundraising and volunteer efforts."

WARM provides assistance to individuals in the Westerville market who are living at or below the federal poverty guidelines. Their services provide the tools necessary to promote family stability, improved self-esteem and increased self-sufficiency.

For more information visit [moomoocarwash.com](http://moomoocarwash.com), [expresswashconcepts.com](http://expresswashconcepts.com), [warmwesterville.org](http://warmwesterville.org)



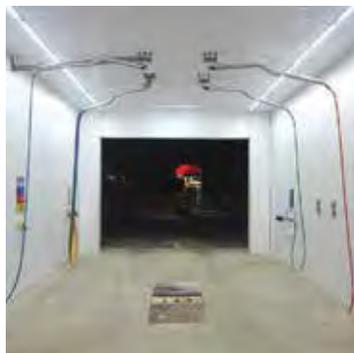
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# MOO MOO EXPRESS OPENS 19<sup>TH</sup> LOCATION, RAISES \$8,000 FOR NEIGHBORHOOD BRIDGES



On March 3, 2021, Moo Moo Express Car Wash presented a check for \$8,003.70 to Westerville's Neighborhood Bridges from monetary donations collected during the company's 19th Central Ohio Grand Opening. Pictured left to right: Moo Moo Express Site Manager Link Trimmer, Neighborhood Bridges CEO Rick Bannister, Johnnie Moo, Moo Moo Express Founder & Express Wash Concepts CEO John Roush, Neighborhood Bridges Area Director Wendy Taylor-Loeser, Express Wash Concepts Partner and Vice President, Operations Dan Eisenhauer, and Express Wash Concepts Partner and Vice President, Development Jeff Gilger.

Moo Moo Express Car Wash, Columbus, OH, donated \$8,003.70 to Westerville's Neighborhood Bridges to help further their mission of bridging the Westerville community with area schools to provide basic needs, remove barriers and seek equity for students so they can engage and succeed in school and life, said a company press release. The donations were collected from Moo Moo Express customers at the company's Westerville North Grand Opening/Free Wash Week this past winter at the 74 Polaris Parkway, Westerville, OH, location.

During the Grand Opening, Moo Moo Express offered a free

signature "Crème De La Crème VIP" carwash (\$18 value) to every customer in exchange for a monetary donation to Neighborhood Bridges. More than 2,500 free carwashes were given away. "Neighborhood Bridges serves as a vital link between local school children in need and the Westerville community," said John Roush, Moo Moo Express Car Wash Founder and Express Wash Concepts CEO. "We are grateful that our customers supported our Grand Opening and were so generous with monetary donations back to Neighborhood Bridges. This money will be used to provide a 'Personal Care' pantry for children who need access to basic personal care items, in addition to setting up a donated clothing exchange."

Since opening in 2009, Moo Moo Express has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars and carwashes to support Central Ohio organizations. To date this year, Moo Moo has already donated more than \$20,000 to Westerville, OH, nonprofits due to the company's two grand openings.

For more information visit [moomoocarwash.com](http://moomoocarwash.com), [expresswashconcepts.com](http://expresswashconcepts.com), [neighborhoodbridges.org](http://neighborhoodbridges.org)

Continued...



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## TOMMY'S EXPANDS FOOTPRINT IN DC



Tommy's Express, Holland, MI, is bringing eight new, locally owned and operated sites to the greater Washington, DC, market, according to a company press release. Michael Cianelli, Navy Veteran and co-owner, said, "We couldn't be more excited to be a part of these growing and vibrant communities near our nation's capital. We are dedicated to providing sustainable jobs to team members and reinvesting in the communities we serve. We love the Tommy's system because of the outstanding customer experience it provides and its soft impact on the environment thanks to its use of recycled water and energy-efficient buildings."

The signature 130-foot tunnels are designed to be eye-catching with corner towers, a rounded transparent roof, a prominent branding and full-size windows running down the length of the wash tunnel, according to the release. "According to Tommy's Express President, Ryan Essenburgh, "Tommy's Express represent the best the carwash industry has to offer, from our commitment to guest experience to the custom, proprietary equipment we pioneered to give you the finest carwash result possible."

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

## TOMMY'S SPONSORS NASCAR RACER LESTER



Tommy's Express, Holland, MI, sponsored NASCAR driver Bill Lester at the March 20 Atlanta Motor Speedway in the Camping World Truck Series, according to a company press release. He drove the No. 17 Ford F-150 for David Gilliland Racing. In total, the University of California Berkley engineering graduate has 143 starts in the series between 2000-2007 with

three pole awards in the NCWTS and has led 92 laps.

The African American driver has made starts in all three NASCAR national series, according to the release. "It's been more than a few years since my last race in the series, but to have strong partners like the Greater Atlanta Ford Dealers, Camping World and Tommy's Express Car Wash joining me for my return means a lot and I am honored to have them on board."

Lester finished 36th.

For more information visit [tommycarwash.com](http://tommycarwash.com) and [billester.com](http://billester.com)

## SONNY'S ACQUIRES TEXAS COMPANIES



Sonny's® The Car Wash Factory, Tamarac, FL, has acquired Lone Star Car Wash Systems, Houston, TX; Twin Distributing, Denison, TX and Scotch Plaid Chemical, Dallas, TX, according to a company press release. "We made a promise to our Texas clients that we'd scale up our ability to service them faster than ever before," said Paul Fazio, Sonny's CEO. "We kept our promise."

Lone Star and Twin Distributing will join Sonny's Car Wash Services Texas, while the purchase of Scotch Plaid Chemical allows Sonny's Car Wash Chemistry to rapidly scale production and have manufacturing and blending capabilities in Texas, said the release. "Scotch Plaid is a first-class operation," said Fazio. "Don Witt will remain in a leadership role. The Scotch Plaid brand will remain in production. And with Scotch Plaid and Diamond Shine under one umbrella of Sonny's Car Wash Chemistry, we expand upon our commitment to bring chemical management and operational efficiency to a whole new level."

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

## MANN, BARNETT JOIN AMPLIFY ADVISORS

Brad Mann and Lanese Barnett have joined Amplify Car Wash Advisors, Scottsdale, AZ, a carwash advisory firm founded by Bill Martin and Jeff Pavone. Mann will serve as vice president of mergers and Barnett as vice president of business development, according to a company press release. "We are excited to welcome Brad and Lanese to the team," said Pavone. "They bring with them decades of experience in the industry and further position Amplify as experts in the space."

"With the carwash business growing at a rapid pace, small operations are highly valuable. We want to ensure owners understand all their options when looking to sell, partner or grow. Our team is here to do that."

*Continued ...*



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Newsworthy ... continued

Mann founded The Wash Factory in Texas. He grew his business to seven locations before selling to International Car Wash Group in 2019. Mann is a former International Carwash Association board member.

Barnett's background is in brand management, marketing and corporate communications with more than a decade of experience in the industry. She is a current Southwest Car Wash Association board member.

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

DRB ACQUIRES WASHIFY



DRB Systems, LLC, Akron, OH, a provider of software and hardware solutions for the carwash industry, has acquired

Washify Services, LLC, West Roxbury, MA, a carwash point-of-sale system, according to a company press release. Washify was purchased by private equity firm Ambina Partners five years ago. DRB is owned by New Mountain Capital, a New York-based investment firm. The acquisition happened in late March.

"Today, more than ever, we have assembled the best minds in the carwash industry," said DRB CEO and President Dan Pitman. "We have not only joined two of the best carwash technology lineups, but we have also joined two of the most talented teams."

Adam Korngold, Washify's founder concurs. "Our industry is rapidly transforming. Recent consolidations warranted a change," he said. "We wanted to be aligned with a best-in-class partner that supports our growth. I wanted to work with an organization that had the best interests of our employees at heart and that would allow us to remain in the industry doing what we love. DRB is that partner."

Both companies will continue to maintain their own brand entities and industry niches. Korngold will continue to serve as President of Washify and Pittman will continue as DRB CEO.

For more information visit [drb.com](http://drb.com), [washify.com](http://washify.com), [newmountaincapital.com](http://newmountaincapital.com), [ambina.com](http://ambina.com)

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## EVERWASH IMPROVES RANK ON A16Z MARKETPLACE 100



EverWash, Philadelphia, PA, the carwash industry's leader in membership sales and subscription management, has been ranked on the a16z Marketplace 100 for the second year in a row and has moved up 20 spots since its first ranking, according to a company press release. They are ranked 45th out of 100 companies listed in the overall index, which highlights the largest and fastest-growing consumer-facing marketplace startups and private companies, said the release. The placement is a 21-spot increase following a ranking of 66 in the overall index in 2020, in addition to being named the fourth fastest growing company on the list.

The rankings are put together by Andreessen-Horowitz, a

Menlo Park, CA-based venture capital firm, and based on data from Second Measure, a firm that analyzes billions of purchases to track consumer behavior and relative sales across 5,200 merchants. "COVID-19 swept the globe only a week after the 2020 a16z Marketplace 100 results were published," said John Cassidy, EverWash CEO. "Despite the overwhelming uncertainty the Pandemic caused, our team was able to position themselves as thought leaders in our industry, and continued to grow the EverWash network to new heights."

According to Andreessen-Horowitz, the startups and private companies on the Marketplace 100 are ranked using a common industry metric, Gross Merchandise Value (GMV), which is extrapolated from the total dollars consumers are spending against each company. In 2020, a16z described EverWash as "the most surprising company of the top five fastest growers. These up-and-coming companies offer the best indication of future marketplace categories. Interestingly, these companies are emblematic of emerging categories among Millennial and Gen Z consumers." The difference in GMV among companies ranked #4-100 is less than half a percentage point, which places EverWash in the same discussion as brands like StockX, Spot Hero, MasterClass and OfferUp.

EverWash has demonstrated its resilience, said Director

*Continued ...*

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Newsworthy ... continued

of Marketing & Communications, Max Pulcini. "Despite COVID, we were able to continue growing our company, network and subscriber base," said Pulcini. "We were named on the a16z Marketplace 100 for the second straight year, which was huge for us considering the challenges presented by the Pandemic. Better yet, we came in 45th on the rankings, which is 21 places higher than last year."

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

EXPRESS WASH AIR FRESHENER CAMPAIGN RAISES \$35,000 FOR NONPROFITS

Express Wash Concepts (EWC), Columbus, OH, donated \$35,069 to 33 Ohio-based nonprofits, according to a company press release. The donations were collected as part of EWC's Q1 Air Freshener Campaign in which the company offered for sale \$1 special edition air fresheners, with 100 percent of the proceeds donated back to the local nonprofits.

Team members at each location selected the nonprofits with the only stipulation being that the nonprofit directly impact community members within that wash's location. During the month-long campaign, Moo Moo Express Car Wash, Flying Ace Express Car Wash, CLean Express Auto Wash and Meyers Auto Wash customers had the option to purchase the campaign air fresheners via an onsite Team Member or at the wash payment kiosk. As an added incentive, customers could scan a QR code on the back of the air freshener to enter for a chance to win Unlimited Washes for a year.

"Shifting our nonprofit partner selection to each individual location proved to be extremely impactful, as we raised the largest total ever from a single donation campaign," said John Roush, Express Wash Concepts Chief Executive Officer. "We had each location set a projected goal, which is what we used to order inventory, and by the end of the campaign every location surpassed that goal."

Thirty-two nonprofit partners participated. One "Free Washes for a Year" winner was selected per brand.

Express Wash Concepts, the parent company of Moo Moo Express Car Wash, Flying Express Car Wash, CLean Express Auto Wash and Meyers Auto Wash, currently operates 35 Ohio-based express car washes in Central Ohio, Greater Dayton, Greater Cleveland and Greater Toledo. Three additional locations are slated to open by mid-2021, with an additional six scheduled to begin construction. To date in 2021, Express Wash Concepts had donated more than \$103,500 to local non-profit organizations.

For more information visit [express-washconcepts.com](http://express-washconcepts.com)



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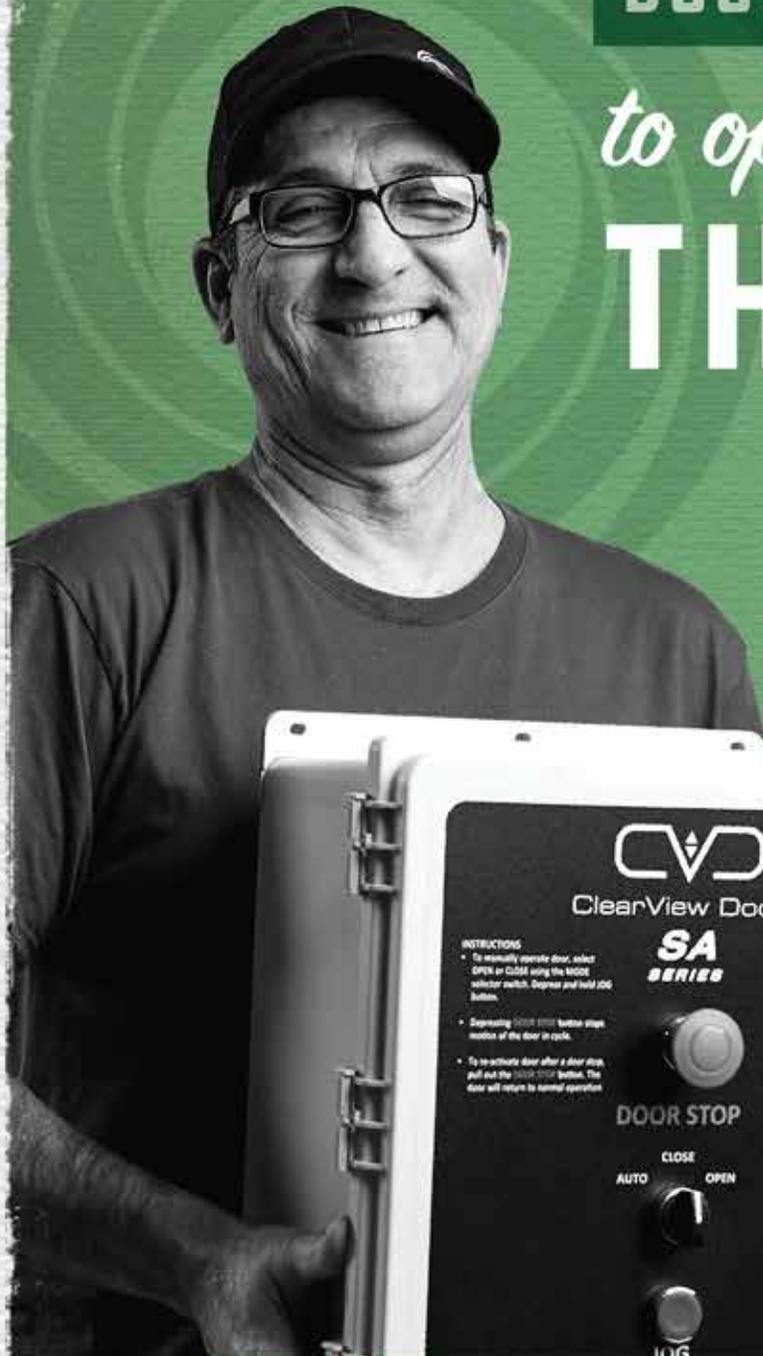
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A number of factors are contributing to the surge in inbay automatic sales including the rising cost of labor, advancements in technology and a desire for a contactless experience.

Contactlessness, improved technology, labor drive popularity

# Inbay Sales Surge

By Alan M. Petrillo

James Marshall, operations manager for Petit Auto Wash Equipment Inc. in Norton, OH, said that while inbay automatic installations have been strong for the past five years at his company, “the last couple of years have seen the market explode. The COVID-19 Pandemic has shifted the market where carwash operators could move to unmanned and completely automated systems,” he said. “With some systems, the customer can interface with an auto teller by smartphone, and sometimes don’t even have to roll down their window to accomplish that.”

Petit Auto Wash Equipment not only sells and installs inbay automatic units, but operates five carwashes. “Two of the five were tunnels, and the owner’s brother also had four short tunnel carwashes,” Marshall pointed out. “We converted those sites into long-bay inbay automatics and cut out most of the day-to-day labor costs. We now have one person

who does minor maintenance and cleanup per day, and we have been able to increase our volume at nearly every one of those sites.”

On the installation side of things, Marshall said Petit Auto Wash has a good customer, United Auto Wash with four sites in Stow, Cuyahoga Falls and New Franklin, OH, that wanted to go to the long-bay inbay automatic

*Continued on page 20...*

## Some Thoughts on Inbays...

My highest inbay automatic (IBA) sales year was 2017, with 2018 close behind. 2019 was 3 percent less and 2020 was down 17 percent.

I do think that the newer IBA’s are more time efficient and can wash more cars per hour and do a better job cleaning a car than their predecessors.

I have questions about the consumer demand for contactless payment — tap readers. Most people who I have been helping lately are not even aware that they have a “tap” card, much less how to use it. When they see it work their response is “cool,” but I rarely hear someone looking for a tap card reader.

I do think that there is a lot of value there for the carwash operator when a customer uses Apple Pay or Google Pay on their phone, and that has to do with feedback. I have yet to see a card reader that gives feedback to the customer when the card has not been read. Generally, the pay station just doesn’t respond and nothing happens. So, the customer, fuming, fumbles with the card and tries again, but fearing that they will be charged twice.

When they use the phone, the phone gives them a response when the transaction goes through, and doesn’t give that response when it doesn’t. Since it is the customer’s phone, they should know how it responds or doesn’t respond.

I helped a regular customer yesterday, who tried twice, and their phone activity showed two pending transactions, but no wash. I looked at my online website and saw only one transaction for his card that had been cancelled. I have no idea where

the other charge came from. We took care of him anyway. But the point is that the customer experience of using new technology can be frustrating and create anxiety. In addition, when these snafus occur, it’s taking longer to get that car into the bay and your car count/hour suffers.

*Dave DuGoff, College Park Car Wash, College Park, MD*

The rising trendline for inbay automatics started before the Pandemic.

There are several core reasons that were accentuated by the COVID lockdowns and restrictions of the past year. This catalyst comes from the fact that an inbay customer does not need to leave their car, or talk with anybody, to get a carwash. All they need to do is roll down their window and use a touch screen.

The changes in the image of inbays has come from several core reasons. The first is the technology used at the payment kiosk, the second being the tremendous improvements with the inbay automatic machine itself. The third being changing attitudes of customers. No longer do they want to give their car up for a full-service cleaning and lose control of it. Even before the Pandemic, the Big Box stores have been training our customers with their lack of cashiers and emphasis on touch screen self-pay kiosks.

The bottom line is customers still need and want to wash their cars, but on their own terms and inbays allow that. Yesterday, (a Saturday), one of my inbays washed five cars before 8am, and after 6pm another 21.

*Doug Rieck, Magic Wash, Manahawkin, NJ*



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## Inbay Sales Surge ... *continued*



model. "We started in 2005 with a traditional inbay automatic model using legacy equipment, and then purchased a self-service and inbay automatic wash in Stow in 2017," said Ron Carlson, co-owner of United Auto Wash with Phil Marquart. "We tore that building down and put in our first express inbay automatic model with long bays having a wash and dry room," Carlson said. "It was all Petit Auto Wash equipment, and our wash volumes were tremendous after the installation. We were exceeding 70,000 cars a year on the inbays, were open 24/7, and didn't have any staff there."

Marquart added that the partners wanted to expand, so they bought another property,

trying to build on their previous success. "We ended up with another wash in Stow and one in New Franklin, and have just purchased another wash that's a tunnel in Cuyahoga Falls, but plan on putting in another long-bay express inbay automatic there," he said.

Carlson and Marquart also revamped their unlimited wash pass program so that it's currently tied into their three long-bay inbay automatic tunnels that are within four miles of each other. "We're competing with three express tunnels within a mile of us, but think we can have success because we are giving our customers three options in four miles," Carlson said. "Each of those locations has separate and distinct traffic patterns, but with some overlap. We are going with the local density strategy, and running 24/7 so the customer can wash whenever they want."

Carlson added that United Auto Wash built a point-of-sale (POS) platform to support its unlimited pass program. "We tie our users to a profile which is their wash plan through Via Guard, a vehicle identification automation system," he said. "Our model's cost is limited to the quantity of washes used in a month and is tied to a specific vehicle. With our unlimited pass program, we are seeing an average of between 3.2 and 3.8 washes per month per vehicle."

Marquart noted that the United Auto Wash's unlimited pass program and unattended equipment were the route to success for them to compete with area express exterior tunnels. "We average two to three minutes per car to deliver a high-quality wash," he said.

Gary Sokoloski, owner of Centerline Carwash Sales and



*This United Auto Wash site on Graham Road in Stow, OH, is owned by partners Ron Carlson and Phil Marquart. It was converted to an express inbay automatic with long bays in 2017.*

Service in Wales, ME, said his company has seen a steady stream of new inbay carwash business, as well as a lot of replacement of older equipment recently. "We are busier than we've ever been, and the majority of the work we are doing is replacing a lot of older inbay automatic installations," Sokoloski pointed out. "But we're also doing quite a few new inbay automatic installations in the Northeast, too."

Sokoloski cited the improved technology in inbay automatics as a big driver in the move toward more inbay automatic installations.



*Centerline Carwash Sales and Service's Gary Sokoloski has been busy updating dated inbay equipment.*

"The technology has changed dramatically," he said. "We will be doing an inbay automatic installation in two weeks to replace 17-year-old equipment where the owner can command at most \$15 for his top wash package. With the new equipment, the top wash is \$20, but we can add hot wax and tire shine for two \$4 buy-ups to bring that top number to \$28."

Sokoloski also had an interesting observation about how customers interface with technology. "Many of them, when presented with additional options and add-ons, keep pushing the button to say 'yes' to the options, getting them a higher level carwash, but also increasing the amount the operator is getting for the wash," he added.

Another attraction of inbay automatics, Sokoloski noted, is the lack of staff at the facility. "The lack of staff has always been an attraction and one of the popular features for owners of inbay automatics," he said. "With the technological advances in equipment, where everything can reset itself and prompt the customer when necessary, you don't need staff on site."

*Continued on page 23...*

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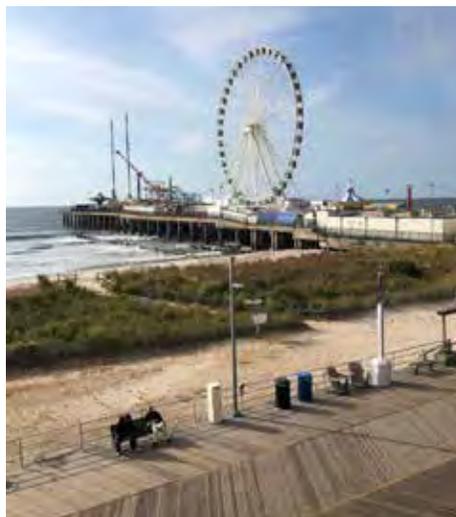
The 31st Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 4-6, at the Atlantic City Convention Center is long overdue. After a year without trade shows due to COVID-19, the NRCC board and attendees are looking forward to a welcome event to learn, interact and gather as an industry, according to Chairman Dave DuGoff of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association, this year's host. "We all need to get out and get together," said DuGoff. "We need to enjoy this fabulous facility and event that we work so hard to put together."

## Show Stoppers

In a move to create an even better "Atlantic City" experience, the NRCC board has opted to change its host hotel venue from the Borgata Hotel, Casino & Spa to the completely renovated and state-of-the-art Hard Rock Hotel & Casino on the city's iconic boardwalk. "Being right on the ocean and able to take in the sites and sounds of Atlantic City will provide our attendees with a great way to unwind after a long day on the show floor," said DuGoff. "The newly renovated hotel is full of great eating venues,



*The Hard Rock Hotel & Casino is the new host hotel for the event.*



music paraphernalia and outstanding accommodations," added DuGoff. "It will not disappoint."

In addition to a new host hotel, the traditional Welcome Reception will be moving and open to all attendees to truly make the event something everyone can enjoy. "We can't unveil all the details just yet, but our event will be all inclusive and open to everyone who attends the show, whether they buy a package or just walk the show floor," said DuGoff. "ICS has been an incredible sponsor over the years and without their efforts and support this event could not happen. As always, thank you! And I hope to see everyone there!"

More details will follow once the state of New Jersey and the CDC guidelines are finalized to ensure a safe event.

## Chris Christie Keynotes

Another standout of the 31st NRCC will be a Tuesday, October 5, Keynote by former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. Christie, a politician, political commentator, lobbyist and former federal prosecutor who served as the 55th Governor of New Jersey from 2010 to 2018, has gained national prominence as a moderate voice in the Republican Party. He sought the party's nomination for president in 2016.

Christie is noted as a unifying figure capable of transcending partisanship in times of crisis and was praised for his leadership



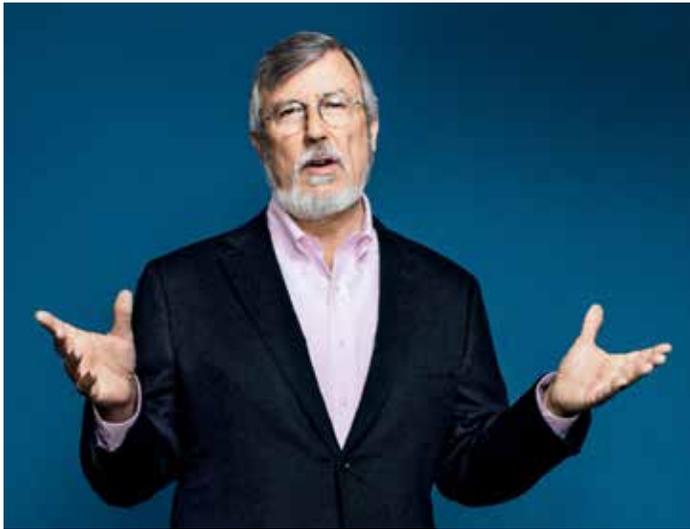
*The Atlantic City Convention Center*

after Superstorm Sandy. A graduate of the University of Delaware, Christie received his Juris Doctor degree from Seton Hall University in 1987.

“There is no doubt that former Governor Christie will be articulate, entertaining and colorful,” said Suzanne Stansbury, NRCC board member. “We are striving to elevate our educational track and offer up a broad spectrum of programming for our attendees. I think we will strike the right cord with this keynote.”

## Big Ass Fan’s Carey Smith

Another speaker at the show will be Big Ass Fan founder Carey Smith. The oldest of four children whose family lived paycheck to paycheck, Smith learned early on that he needed to contribute to the family coffers. At age nine, he was already polishing his entrepreneurial skills selling handmade crafts. Next came door-to-door Christmas card sales, selling shoes, setting type for a weekly newspaper and even changing bedpans with a cleaning



crew. All this experience gave Smith a first-hand view of generous bosses as well as Scrooges, hard workers and loafers.

After earning a degree in economics, Smith went on to graduate school at the University of Chicago but was unable to finish his degree in order to put food on the table and pay the bills. In 1981, he launched Sprinkool, a company that installed sprinklers on industrial rooftops to cool the spaces below. Over the next two decades he visited factories, made contacts and came up with a better mousetrap and sold Sprinkool to start Big Ass Fans, a manufacturer of fans, lights and controls for industrial, agricultural, commercial and residential use, headquartered in Lexington, KY. Under his guidance the company grew 30 percent annually and made the Inc. 5000 list of the fastest-growing private companies for 11 consecutive years. In less than two decades Smith took the company from 0 to \$250 million in revenue without the help of investors. In 2019, he sold Big Ass Fans for \$500 million. You’re going to want to hear how he did that and his outspoken and often provocative thoughts on how to succeed in business on Tuesday, October 5.

# NRCC Emerging Leader Award

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

#### Eligibility Criteria

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

#### Materials to Submit

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

#### Nomination Process

Nominations may be submitted via email to: [heathercourtney377@icloud.com](mailto:heathercourtney377@icloud.com)

#### Deadline for Submissions

September 3, 2021

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

## Emerging Leader Award

An award the board added a few years ago is the NRCC Emerging Leader Award. You can find the criteria for nomination at [nrccshow.com](http://nrccshow.com) or by calling 800/868-8590. This honor celebrates and encourages early-career managers who have demonstrated strong leadership and industry service. Deadline for nominations is September 3. **NC**

**For sponsorships, booth and attendee registration information visit [nrccshow.com](http://nrccshow.com) or call 800/868-8590. A full list of seminars will be available on [nrccshow.com](http://nrccshow.com) in coming weeks, and in this magazine’s fall issue.**

## Inbay Sales Surge ... *continued from p. 20.*

With the COVID-19 Pandemic chasing a lot of folks out of cities to suburban and more rural markets, Sokoloski thinks those moves benefit inbay automatic carwash owners. “People are moving to more rural areas with new ideas and new money because they want to get out of the cities,” he observed. “And in those rural areas they are finding they might have to drive 20 minutes to the grocery store, so they don’t have a problem driving that length of time to add a carwash to the trip. We’re seeing operators putting in inbay automatic sites in one rural town and pulling in customers from a half dozen smaller communities around them.”

Jim Gosnell, owner of Etowah Valley Equipment in Etowah, NC, said that his company mostly builds self-service washes, custom meter boxes and bill validators, but also does inbay automatics and pet washes. “We have seen an expansion of the installation of inbay automatics going back a few years,” Gosnell observed. “With the technical advances in carwash equipment and better chemistry, a lot of (self-serve) carwash operators are upgrading to inbay automatics.” **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](http://www.amazon.com)*

# Soft and Hard Credit Inquiries

By Michael Ford

Most people don't realize that there are two types of credit inquiries: hard credit inquiries and soft credit inquiries. When it comes to credit, it's important to know the difference.

## What is a Soft Inquiry?

A soft inquiry, sometimes called a soft pull or soft credit check, allows lenders and other interested parties to review your credit without impacting your credit score. If you've ever received a pre-approved credit card offer, it's most likely that the lender used a soft credit pull. Insurance companies use soft credit checks when you apply for insurance. Checking your own credit through a service such as Credit Karma, for example, results in a soft pull. Also, some commercial lenders use soft inquiries to pre-approve credit requests.

## What's the Impact of Soft Credit Pulls?

When our firm started using soft credit inquiries to pre-ap-



*... soft inquiries do not show up on your credit report and do NOT affect your credit score in any way.*



prove credit requests, our clients responded positively. The reason is soft inquiries do not show up on your credit report and do NOT affect your credit score in any way.

## What is a Hard Inquiry?

Generally, when you apply for credit, most lenders will pull

*Continued ...*

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## Focus on Finance ... continued

your credit report using a hard inquiry on one of the three major credit reporting agencies - Equifax, Experian or TransUnion. A hard credit inquiry will show up on your credit report. The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires credit bureaus to disclose all hard credit inquiries on your credit report for two years. A hard inquiry will impact your credit score for one year.

### How do Hard Pulls Affect Your Credit Score?

According to Experian, one hard inquiry can reduce your credit score from 3 to 10 points. FICO, which is the scoring model used to derive your credit score, says that credit inquiries can count for up to 10 percent of your score. That doesn't seem like a big impact until you realize that 10 percent of your credit score is 85 points!

Obviously, most people aren't going to have an 85 point reduction in their credit score due to inquiries. However, even if you have a 30- or 40-point reduction, it could be the difference in being approved or being approved at a preferred rate.

In addition, many lenders will look at recent hard credit pulls as an indicator of financial distress. Some lenders feel that multiple inquiries are an indicator of multiple declines. In fact, some financial institutions automatically decline credit requests if the applicant has multiple credit checks from the same type of lender in a short period. An example of this can be found in the equipment leasing industry. I know of several lenders who will auto-decline a request if it has more than three equipment leasing company inquiries within the past couple of months. So, while you may feel you are doing the right thing by super-shopping your financing request, you may actually be hurting yourself.

### How to Minimize the Impact of Credit Inquiries

The best way to minimize the impact of applying for credit is to ask your lender if they use soft credit pulls. This way, you are assured that your credit request will not negatively impact your credit score or how other lenders view your credit profile. Again, soft credit pulls do not affect your credit score in any way.

If you are applying to a lender who uses hard credit pulls and you want to minimize the impact of the hard inquiries, try to avoid applying to several lenders all at once. This may lessen the potential negative perception associated with multiple credit pulls. Remember, your lender's perceptions will often dictate their actions.

The best way to avoid multiple applications is to simply talk to potential lenders. Don't just randomly apply. Find out if they have the loan products that you need and the proven industry track record that assures you they can deliver. It never hurts to ask questions.

An example of applying to the right source would be when looking to finance a large remodel. You wouldn't want to apply to a lender who primarily offers equipment leasing. In a remodel, you could have high costs related to construction and site improve-

ments. For this type of financing you would want to look for a firm that offers both equipment and construction financing.

While lenders may view multiple credit inquiries over a short period of time negatively, the credit bureaus may not. If you feel you must shop, try to condense your credit search into a short time period. The best way to minimize the impact of credit inquiries on your credit score is to apply over a short period of time, no more than 14 days. The credit bureaus will sometimes count multiple inquiries from the same category of lender as a single credit inquiry, which will do less damage to your credit score.

Again, simply communicating with the lender can help you determine if they are right for you. It can save time and frustration if you apply to a financial institution that can meet your needs. By doing this, you can manage the number of hard credit inquiries which can make a real difference in your credit score and your potential financing options. Remember, when it comes to credit, soft is better.

NC



Michael Ford

*Michael Ford is the Managing Director of Coast Commercial Credit, a firm specializing in financing for the carwash industry. You can reach him at 800/400-0365 or MikeF@CoastCC.com*

## Pro Tip - Boosting Your Credit Score

A simple way to increase your credit score is pay down credit card debt. Thirty percent of your credit score (255 points) is based on usage. If you have a high percentage of credit card usage, your credit score can be significantly lower than a person with a similar credit profile but lower credit card usage.

Example: Jay and Jane have very similar credit. They even have the same amount of credit card debt. The only difference is that Jay has one credit card with a \$10,000 limit with an \$8,000 balance. Jane also has an \$8,000 balance, but has ten credit cards with a total limit of \$100,000.

Jane's credit score is 100 points higher than Jay's credit score.

Why?

Because Jane only has an 8 percent usage (\$8,000 is only 8 percent of \$100,000) versus Jay having an 80 percent usage (\$8,000 is 80 percent of \$10,000).

Having credit card usage below 30 percent will increase your credit score. For maximum impact, keep usage to below 10 percent. According to FICO, people with 800 FICO scores have an average credit card usage of 7 percent.

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# Cruisin' for Summertime Donation Campaign Success

By Beth Martin

As we embark on the long, lazy days of summer I can't help but think of one of my favorite summertime tunes from the early 90's: DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince's iconic song, "Summertime." The lyrics, so simply stated, begin with "Summer, summer, summertime. Time to sit back and unwind." The song goes on to describe a day in the life of a couple of friends cruising around in their freshly washed and waxed car, carefree and enjoying the laid-back summer lifestyle.

While it's tempting to sit back and keep marketing initiatives on "cruise control" during the summer, it's actually a great time to step up and positively impact your local community with a well-executed donation campaign. Here are some tips to help identify a great cause, determine a viable fundraising format, utilize partnerships for strategic advertising to maximize campaign traffic, and ultimately increase overall monetary donations.

## Identify a Strong Non-Profit/Charity

There is a seemingly endless supply of great non-profit organizations and charities that you can select to partner with, so identifying a partner should take minimal effort. The hardest part will be, without a doubt, narrowing down who to work with! To get started, check in with your team members to see if they have a cause that is near and dear to them. Involve your customers! Chances are, they will have great recommendations and appreciate the opportunity to collaborate and offer feedback.

Research community organizations, such as food pantries and other organizations affiliated with local school districts that focus on assisting children in need during the summer. There is a huge need, for example, for nutritious lunches for kids during the summer who are used to relying on schools for what may be their only consistent meal of the day. Once August rolls around, it's a great time to set children up for school-year success with Back-To-School themed drives, as there is always a need for backpacks stuffed with school supplies.

Whoever you decide to partner with, involve them in the creation of your marketing collateral, encourage them to cross promote as aggressively as possible, and invite them onsite during your campaign to help evangelize their mission and put a "face" behind it. It's no secret that the most successful donation campaigns happen when all parties are actively involved throughout the campaign planning and implementation.

## Determine a Fundraising Format

Since summertime weather can be unpredictable, consider hosting a multi-day (or multi-weekend) campaign to avoid a po-

tential flop should rain decide to come in and stay for the day. As much as I hate to say it, myself and many operators have experienced summertime campaigns where two of the three weekend days were complete washouts. Have a rain date back up if you are hosting a single-day event.

Now may also be the time to try a different fundraising format than what you have done in the past. Do you offer free vacuums? Host volunteers onsite from your nonprofit organization to vacuum or wipe down cars post-wash in exchange for tips.

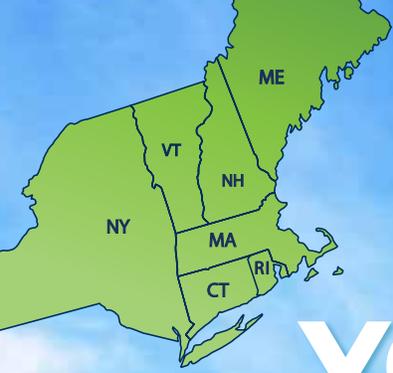
If you have a strong text or email following set up an online donation landing page and send a digital free wash coupon in exchange for a minimum monetary donation. Want to keep it simple? Give away a free wash to customers for their next visit in exchange for a monetary donation.

Another idea is to sell a limited-edition air freshener, or branded drying towel, and donate all proceeds back to your non-profit partner. At Express Wash Concepts, we piloted an air freshener campaign in December 2020 and saw great success with selling holiday-themed air fresheners for \$1, with all proceeds donated back to local nonprofits chosen by each location's team members. When we repeated a spring version of this air freshener campaign format again in March of 2021, we broke our single campaign fundraiser record and raised more than \$35,000!

Once your fundraising format has been determined, work with your team members to set a fundraising goal. For multi-location operators, put together a friendly competition and offer prizes (gift certificates, a fun group outing, traveling trophy, etc.) for the top fundraising location.



Clean Express Auto Wash Team Member Kevin Gabriel features the company's limited edition spring air freshener. One hundred percent of proceeds were donated back to local nonprofits.



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## The Power of (Media) Partnerships

When embarking on a donation campaign, there are two partners you should consider: one being the nonprofit or charity organization, and the other being a media partner.



Flying Ace Express Car Wash Area Manager Jeff Weingartner, Partner Dan Eisenhauer and K99.1 Personality Nancy Wilson present a check to Dayton Children's Hospital as part of the K99.1 Cares for Kids Radiothon.

Media partners may include television or radio stations, print or digital media outlets. They can play an extremely vital role in the overall success of your campaign. Often, media partners can provide free (or heavily discounted) promotional mentions to help propel campaign awareness. Local influencers or endorsers can make a big impact as well and expand your audience reach.

If you already have advertising campaigns running, start by reaching out to your advertising account rep and pitch your partnership idea. If you have not yet invested marketing dollars with local media outlets, reach out to establish an introductory meeting. Some media outlets may even work with you in exchange for retail products (free carwash vouchers, gift cards, etc.) that their promotions team can use, which is a win-win scenario.

## Remember the Data Capture

Donation campaigns can bring in new customers eager to support their communities — all while trying your wash for the first time. Think about ways to capture new customer information while they're onsite, so you can follow up at a later date to thank them for their donation, and pitch any special programs such as Unlimited Wash Club Memberships, coupons and ongoing offers, etc.

One example would be to create a landing page that customers can visit post-donation, which thanks them and presents an opportunity to enter to win free washes, or a grand prize of "Free Washes for a Year." You can also use this landing

page to provide quick and easy access to follow your social media accounts, or even take it a step further and ask for a Google review submission.

## Sweet Endings

When your donation campaign concludes, it's time to be loud and proud and broadcast the success of your efforts. Invite your nonprofit onsite (and your media partner!) to present a "big" check, and promote it on social media. Write a press release, package with your check presentation photo, and pitch to local and industry media outlets.



"Big check" presentations are a great way to celebrate a campaign's success with your nonprofit partner, and provide a great visual for social media.

Remember to recognize your team members for a job well done, and call attention to anyone who went "above and beyond" throughout your campaign. Make a note to regroup with your team to discuss campaign highlights, and what you can improve upon in the future.

Despite Will Smith's well-meaning advice to "...put your car on cruise and lay back 'cause this is summertime," there is no better time than to gather some team members, media partners, customers and rally behind a great nonprofit or charity. Cheers to a great summer, and to leveraging our carwashes — and the generosity of our customers — to make a huge difference in our communities! **NC**



Beth Martin

Beth Martin is the Marketing Director of Express Wash Concepts, the 35+ location parent company of Dayton, OH-based Flying Ace Express Car Wash, Central Ohio-based Moo Moo Express Car Wash, Greater Cleveland, OH-based CLEAn Express Auto Wash and Toledo, OH-based Meyers Auto Wash.



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# This is Our Defining Moment

By JoAnna Brandi

If you've ever been to one of my workshops or executive meetings, you probably remember a demonstration I do to explain how and why emotions are contagious. If you haven't, here's a short explanation.

Our bodies are electric. Every organ in our body produces electricity. Most of the time we don't think about it much. But when we feel pain in our chest, or go for a yearly "wellness" visit, an electrocardiogram (EKG) may be taken to read the electrical patterns of our heart.

The electromagnetic field generated by your heart is the strongest and most powerful in the body. It's 5,000 times greater in strength than the field generated by your brain and extends more than 12 feet out from the body carrying the vibration of emotions — positive or negative — on its waves.

If you're in a good or bad mood, your mood gets to the door just slightly before your entrance and announces your arrival. Years ago, I brought a childhood friend into my business for a short while. It was a mistake. It started well, but as the incompatibilities began to mount, the air got thick and daily life with her became more and more uncomfortable. At one

point, the negative vibes that emanated from her body were so strong that I could feel her coming a full minute or so before she blasted in the door. Every inch of her magnetic field carried her anger and discontent. Apparently, the entrepreneurial life took her too far out of her comfort zone and the fear it caused morphed into an anger she was unwilling to discuss. (I learned a lot in that relationship and its aftermath.)

Our bodies and brains, lacking an upgrade in the "hard drive" the last several hundred thousand years, are finely tuned to pick up the perception of danger and react to it. When we encounter the unfamiliar, our well-honed survival system begins asking the most basic of questions, "Can I eat it or will it eat me?" Our physical body prepares to fight, flee, freeze or faint, depending on the situation. Once in that "fight or flight" reaction our brain function narrows so we can see "what's wrong" in the environment. Many of the systems — like our immune system — that are not essential to our survival in that moment shut down to conserve our energy so we will have the strength in our muscles to fight or get the heck out of there. It's a helpful reaction to have when we are really in danger.

## Did You Know That Happiness Is A Habit?

That it's ...

- A process not a place
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When we experience this reaction too often, and a Pandemic and civil unrest have ways of doing that, it puts undue stress on the body and keeps us in the “what’s wrong, bad or awful?” state that vibrates far out from our body spreading negativity to others.

## Emotions are Contagious

Yes, emotions are contagious, and now’s the time to evaluate the quality of the emotions we are spreading. In the United States, our culture itself is breeding a negativity so pervasive, so insidious and so dangerous that it’s critically important that we stop and evaluate what we are allowing to go on in our lives and in our businesses that may even in a small way contribute to it.

Each and every one of us contributes to the vibrations — positive or negative — in the world today. I’d like to share my thinking about this with you. Since every thought becomes part of collective thoughts, and every emotion becomes part of collective emotions, what questions might we be asking ourselves now that can help turn the tide of negativity?

Where in my life do I support or gravitate toward violence? It’s a powerful question and your first response may be to say that you don’t gravitate toward violence at all. Let’s take a deeper look at where we all contribute — even a little bit — to the amount of violence that exists on our planet today.

Let’s start with our “self-talk.” The first place we can reduce the amount of violence in the world is by being gentle with how we talk to ourselves. Since your body hears everything you say, when your self-talk is negative (“You stupid idiot, where did you put the keys now?”) or violent (“I’ll shoot myself if I forgot those keys again!”), your body feels the impact of the words and reacts with the biochemistry of fear. It rapidly increases your heart rate and blood pressure and starts pumping cortisol, adrenaline and almost 50 other compounds that get your body ready for action. That emergency response is a life saver when it’s really needed, but a life stealer when it’s activated over and over again dozens of times a day. When your brain is in “what’s wrong?” mode you find lots of things that are wrong and there you are in a bad mood again.

Take a good look at how you talk to yourself and learn to speak to yourself as gently and with as much kindness and good humor as you would with a precious child. Laugh at yourself when you lose the keys and then fix the problem by hanging a big key hook near the front door. Use moments like that as an opportunity to stop, take a deep breath, and be more mindful.

When you do, you change the chemical cocktail that your body produces and start producing the chemistry of calm. In short order your body begins repairing itself and giving you

*Continued...*

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the opportunity to experience a positive emotion — one that you can then spread to others. Be kind to yourself.

## Change Your Tone

The second place we can reduce the violence in the world is by changing the way we speak to others. Pay attention to the poor communication models we have on sitcoms and talk shows. Do you practice them anywhere? Cynicism, sarcasm at someone else's expense, criticism, embarrassment, shame, blame and condemnation are low-level negative vibrations and have absolutely no place in a positive workplace or customer-caring company.

If you practice or condone these types of behaviors anywhere in your organization you are eroding the very relationships that you should be supporting and you are contributing to the violence in our culture.

If you bully, or accept bullying in your organization, it's time to take a good look at its impact — fear, negativity, disengagement, disenfranchisement, disempowerment, pain, and loss of productivity to name a few.

Human systems move in the direction of the things they talk about. When you talk about the places where you can add value, deliver happiness, build relationships and foster emotional connections and loyalty you create a force for good.

When you look for places you can be kind, generous and grateful you change your own biochemistry and that of others for good. (A kindness delivered, received or observed increases serotonin levels in all those involved.)

## Be Kind

Leaders need to be more concerned than ever about the emotional well being of their people! Pay attention in every interaction. Be kind to others.

Take a look at what you consume. The media and the entertainment industry glorify violence. When you support the gratuitous use of violence or sensationalism in any medium, you are part of the problem. Stop buying, stop looking, and stop partaking in violent television, reality shows, movies or video games. They produce them because we buy them.

We live in a culture that glorifies violence, so it's no wonder we have so much of it! We use violence as entertainment and someone profits from it. If COVID has taught us anything it's that our human bodies and human relationships need caring attention. The human brain, because of the way it's structured, is hard wired to notice things that might be dangerous, so we do gravitate toward the negative. That's biology, but it doesn't have to be destiny. Every time you experience negativity for more than five minutes you impact the power of your immune function. In the time of COVID, that's the last thing you want to do! To move away from negativity and violence requires thought, effort and commitment. To move toward positivity and peace requires taking a stand personally and professionally to use your thoughts, words and actions to deliberately create more positive energy, positive emotion and positive outcomes in our world.

What will you do to create more positivity and peace? Let us all take a stand against the violence our culture produces by creating more goodness in our own lives and businesses. The late Anita Roddick once said, "If you think you are too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito in the room."

We all make the difference. This is our defining moment. **NC**

JoAnna Brandi is a certified Chief Happiness Officer and Coach helping you keep employees and customers happy by creating more positive cultures and practices. She is the author of three books including the illustrated "54 Ways to Stay Happy in a Changing, Challenging and Sometimes Negative World." Available online. Find her at [ReturnOnHappiness.com](http://ReturnOnHappiness.com) and if you are interested in her online leadership course, "The Practice of Positive Leadership" you can sign up at [PositiveEnergizer.com](http://PositiveEnergizer.com)

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# COVID & Changes & More

*By Doug Rieck*

So much has been written about the Pandemic but not much about its effect on our profession, washing cars. Our New Jersey restrictions have loosened up, finally. The trend looks good as vaccinations continue. Since at least last summer, carwashes have been completely open for business in New Jersey. At my washes, all employees have been vaccinated and feel much safer. At the conveyor full service, we continue spray disinfecting all cars. Since we are a flex service, it is simple. Our protocol calls for all customers to move their cars into the finish area and then we spray to disinfect them. This does two things, first, it eliminates us driving a car, and the liability, then it ensures the car is safe to work on with the disinfection having been done. My intent is to continue this post-Pandemic. Customers appreciate this step and don't even mind moving their car.

Our industry has learned better how to handle customer safety during a Pandemic, as most businesses have. Also, state and local authorities have become less restrictive as they too learned how to do so. If you care to remember during the first months of COVID, many carwashes shut down vacuums and removed the hoses from their vacuums so as to not spread the infection. I never did that, but was spraying vac hoses and the claws with a Clorox solution. At the same time, I was disinfecting bay coin boxes and all the washers and dryers in the Laundromat with Quat. I was fortunate in just shutting down full service for a few months. Others had to totally shut down. It seems like a million years ago. Memory can be selective, and that was not a good period.

## Pandemic Ramifications

There are so many ramifications of the Pandemic. As I was writing this I answered a customer's phone call. He wanted to know if we were doing full service again. He has not been to any carwash since last February. Enough said.

First, you have the customer attitude changes and fears, then you have others with schedule changes or work disruptions. Then you have some customers with financial changes and challenges. The reality is that our customers are a diverse group of people. If we cannot get our fellow citizens to agree vaccination is necessary, certainly there will be a subset of previous customers and potential customers who are scared of washing.

The next set of changes is more physical and less emotional. With schools closed, and other retail slowing or altered another group of dynamics starts to come into play. Traffic flow, in other words. Trips past your location have become less frequent.

Another variable in our business equation is people relocating to the suburbs and their summer homes. My primary

carwash is just off LBI (Long Beach Island). My home area has had substantial population growth resulting from the Pandemic. Yesterday, I spent about four hours doing "Guide On" at my Express Conveyor. I noted that many customers, while obviously familiar with carwashes, had no idea how to drive a car onto a conveyor or work a payment terminal. Also noted were many cars with North Jersey dealer stickers. All is not joy because during the Pandemic I got new fresh competition, so all the new customers are not all mine.

That's a lot of variables and inputs into our business of washing cars. They seem straight forward until you add them up. The million-dollar question is not what is happening now, but how will carwashing be changed by the Pandemic. You can bet there will be changes and as life returns to the "new normal" there are going to be even more changes.

Several quick observations:

- Customers are more willing to do it themselves and many prefer it,
- Customers are much less price sensitive,
- Customers are now accepting of pay stations and the younger prefer them,
- Traffic patterns have changed, and will again (some customers still want us in their cars cleaning),
- Customers expect more and part of that is atmosphere, signage and lights.

My point is that we need to adapt and change. Certainly, such a period of change has not happened in many years, certainly not during the time I have been involved in this industry. This is bigger than the transitions from filament to cloth and from cloth to foam.

One of the many changes is the advance of the new Express washes into New Jersey. About 15 years ago, I was perhaps the first carwash in the state to shift from full service to a gated-entry Express Flex Service model. These carwashes transcend that. They are purposely built with volume in mind. They are located in "A" locations with just a conveyor and offer unlimited free vacuums. (I question at what point the free vac becomes pay.) These carwashes are not inexpensive in retail price, which is good because it raises our value as a service. Some may offer flex service or a variation but that is not their thing. They are designed for volume and minimal staffing. In other words, they eliminate the labor issues that plague our industry. The good news is that they are high quality and raise the public perception of our industry. Thoughts of the film "Car Wash" from the late '70s are obliterated for our customers now. Think of these stores as the TGI Fridays or Applebees of carwashing. Mod Wash has 12 planned for New Jersey with one open current-

ly. Cloud 10 is a multi-state operation with one open in New Jersey. New Jersey's own Valet Auto Wash has eight open with one planned and two more in neighboring states and there are likely more from other companies.

## Good Ole' Mother Nature

The one thing that we cannot change and must adapt to is the weather. I live and work in southern Jersey. Our local climate is affected directly by the Atlantic Ocean. We do not get the snow that central or northern Jersey gets but can have our moments. About six years ago, I finally bought a snow plow for my truck. I thought it made sense with three carwashes and an average plowing bill of \$4000 a year. In those six years I have used it three times. The last time in Manahawkin was prior to the Pandemic.

An answer may be that it is getting warmer. I am not getting into the climate change debate, but I understand weather cycles and the heat island effects of urbanisation. The National Weather service has a 30-year climate average for each part of

the country. The previous period was from 1981 to 2010. Effective in May, the new climate period for reference is from 1991 to 2020. Guess what, South Jersey changed — significantly. On any given day there is now more than a 33 percent chance of rain or precipitation. The prior period was 31 percent precipitation. Significant temperature changes are occurring as well. These changes do not effect most people or businesses. More rainy days and the loss of snow days do affect carwashing.

Where do we go from here? Hopefully, to the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) in Atlantic City, October 4-6. Enjoy summer washing and see you then, in person, finally!

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 Carwash Convention's Most Distinguished Person Award. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS or dougrieck@gmail.com*



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# Taking Stock & Being Prepared

By Gary Sokolowski

Have any of you tried ordering parts, supplies or equipment lately? If so, you know it can be a hit or miss venture these days. I'm not sure if the joy in finding out the part you need, or those supplies that have to be restocked, and even that new piece of equipment you want is in stock is enough to compensate for the price increase from the last time you bought the item. Supply chains and lean manufacturing are fragile systems and hopefully ours will continue to stretch — and not break.

This is the time to be prepared and possibly overstocked on the parts and supplies you need at your wash. As new models are introduced and older ones retired there can become a greater wait time to get some items and almost assuredly a price increase will follow. The older the equipment, the more parts you should have on hand. This is not only because of the obvious age and use the equipment has had, but it also has to do with the rising cost of parts that may not be manufactured anymore, or not purchased as often, so the price naturally increases.

There are too many examples to list but recently we needed a motor that one year ago, before the equipment was retired, cost around \$600. We were lucky to find one that only took a

week to get to us but it cost more than \$900. Imagine, a piece of equipment down for over a week and the replacement part cost difference verse having that motor on the shelf. I'm just glad it wasn't on a free vacuum system!

## Make a Plan

First, you need to evaluate how long you want to keep a piece of equipment in service. Then, try to find out how long it will still be in production. After that, make a list and place an order for the parts that will be most often replaced. Some rough guidelines to use might be equipment new to 5 years old should only need nuisance/customer damage replacement parts and should be readily available. Five- to 10-year-old equipment (depending on its estimated lifecycle) should have all the major drive, mechanical, fluid application and electrical parts on hand. Ten to 15 years is a touchy place to be these days. The equipment is probably out of its manufacturing lifecycle and new models have been introduced to replace all or most of the version you have. Hopefully at this point, parts have been getting acquired on a regular basis and there should be a good

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supply of everything already on hand. For 15-year and older equipment, you are just buying time at this point so be glad you have what parts you do and just wait for that piece that has never been replaced to fail and deal with it at that point.

## Increase Your Inventory

Increasing your inventory on your normal consumables is recommended as well. While these items will most likely not have similar price increases as some of your other parts, the availability of these items might become interrupted. Instead of keeping a month's supply on hand maybe keep three months on hand. In some cases, it is worth talking to your vendor to see if you can get a volume discount and stock up to a year's worth if the items will keep and the price is right. There is no sense in adding the stress of waiting for it to show up when it could be on your shelf.

Congratulations if you are getting new equipment! Get a spare-parts kit and enjoy it. Now, just make sure you understand how long it might take to get that new piece to your wash. While supply chains have kept up so far, most manufacturers are receiving orders at an almost record rate which is making build times longer than we have ever seen before. Then, depending on how far you are from where the equipment is coming from, get

ready to wait for it to get to you. We have seen transit times get extended by weeks. Until this year, for example, we shipped from the Midwest to New England and it was typically a three- to four-day transit time. On a recent shipment we were actually told by the trucking company that they had no idea when we would receive our order. With the wash closed, contractors, and heavy lifting equipment standing by to install this equipment we were forced after two weeks of waiting to pay for a FTL (Full Truck Load). This was an additional \$2,000 and a loss of two weeks of business. Now, we are forced to have to include these added costs or have equipment shipped months in advance to get it to the job site on time. Hopefully, neither of these situations will become the norm and are just bumps in the road.

Having the items you need available is getting more and more important as we go through these supply chain issues and shipping industry challenges. Take stock, place that order and know you have done all you can to be ready for the day those parts are needed.

NC

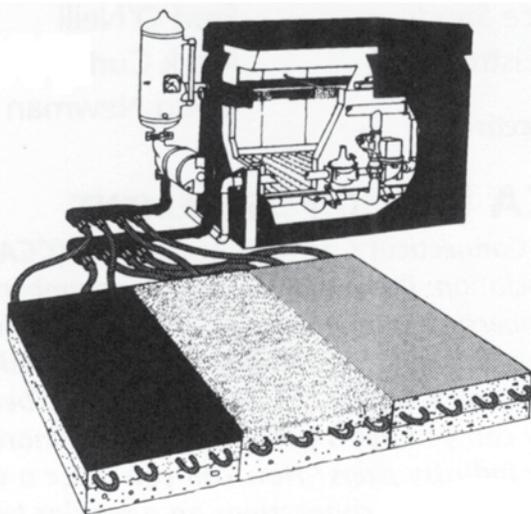


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Gary Sokoloski



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*Dear Venus and Mars,*

*What is the best and worst idea you've ever had at the wash?*



**Heather Ashley**

### Venus Says

The best thing we ever did was to invest in the carwash industry, but we did not always feel that way. The industry as a whole is very receptive to new folks. You will likely make lifelong friends here. And the continuing education with publications and shows really helps to boost your sales.

Mike and I were happy owners of self-serve coin operated Laundromats when he was approached about a single carwash for sale. I remember him trying to convince me that the business model was sort of similar. He was right in that they were coin driven and water based. Not fully convinced, however, we went to meet the owner and take a tour of his wash.

Mike was just noticing he was not feeling well with what eventually would be the flu. I remember starting to take the lead in the conversation as we asked the owner to show his financials. Realizing we could do math, the owner was quick to mention there was another wash. It was obvious that buying the saddest, loneliest one he had was not going to be a valuable option. He quickly added the second to the deal.

As I recall, I caught wind of him mentioning a third wash but he quickly said it was not for sale. He would later say it was his best one. Wait a minute, he has three? We should have started there. Why would I want to buy the worst one, possibly two and be in competition with him?

Mike's story would differ at this point as he was sweating and obviously feverish. We were sitting on the upper level of a diner looking over the wash. I was looking at numbers but was only "allowed" to see totals. The totals looked good, but I needed to see all the math. Now that guy was looking feverish too.

What came about was something I would regret in the months ahead. I started saying we would only consider buying them all. I think the owner was shocked and saddened. I was pretty sure we

### Mars Says

The second part of this question is the hard part. I've had so many bad ideas over the years, it's hard to pinpoint the worst one. They say you should learn from your mistakes so at this point I guess I should be a carwash genius. There are no regrets though as it's only made us better and that's the benefit of having so many years of experience.

Since I am being asked to pick the worst idea I've ever had I would have to say back in the late '90s converting our mechanical carwashes to hand washes might be right up there. Although I have no regrets because at the time it seemed like the right thing to do, and it was for a short time, it was a great marketing tool and customers loved it for the most part, but it was an operational nightmare. The amount of labor that was needed was beyond manageable for a small-scale operator. To get the cars clean, especially being in the Northeast, required a small army.

We were very successful, but it got more and more difficult to operate as the years went on. The cost of labor just kept going up, as it still is today. The industry was changing and the technology getting much better. We were limited in the number of cars we could wash and couldn't take advantage of all this great technology. Looking to expand seemed near impossible as managing one or two locations was extremely difficult as it was.

Now that you've heard what my worst ever idea was you can probably anticipate the best one. Well, of course, it was to ditch the hand wash and fully automate. But we didn't stop there. With the presumption that labor costs were going to continue to rise we converted from full service to an express/flex-wash model. This was by far the best decision we've ever made. Not only did our labor costs drop drastically, it opened up other opportunities. We were now able to wash a lot more cars with fewer people. And, we can stay open longer not having to worry about who is



**Paul Vallario**

*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. He is also a New York State Car Wash Association board member. You can reach Paul at iwashcars@optonline.net.*

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

could not afford them all but he threw out a price. We countered right there with a much lower offer and went home.

The next day or two, the owner called to say he accepted our offer and our lives changed forever. We were shocked.

Our daily schedules changed as well as our lifestyle and not for the better. Laundromats had been easier and now with three new washes, this was as close to having triplets as we would ever get. Finding the balance and not being able to keep up at first was beyond tough.

That being said, buying three washes at once was a leap of faith. But we would do it again. Buying several at a time gives you the chance to corner the market in your area and buy soap and vending products with larger bulk pricing.

We have made some of our best friends by being in this industry. It is not a cut throat place, but more of a brotherhood (and sometimes a sisterhood) of helpful folks. We look forward to the shows and the funny, awkward moments that make good fodder for stories like the time I first met another husband/wife wash owner, I told them I liked them and asked if they would like to come see our room. I think it was possibly 2 am — only in Atlantic City!

The worst thing we ever did (and continue to do) is to get caught up in the latest technology. For example, one of us bought new technology that does not yet have all of the bugs worked out, other high-tech add ons are not profit makers, they are just cool. Learning the difference between what you want and what you really need is hard. In many cases like ours, you have to learn to be “ok” with your old low-tech ways if that is what works best in your market.

This industry is life changing! Both Mike and I highly recommend being carwash owners. We hope to meet you one day soon! **NC**

---

## Mars ... continued

going to show up to work. Of course, we still have a decent size staff, but it's a fraction of what it used to be.

With the automation our cars come out cleaner and our customers don't have to wait as long. People can stay in their vehicles as opposed to having someone else drive their car on and off the conveyer. Our customers can choose if they want to vacuum their own cars or pay a little more and have our staff do a full interior cleaning. Most people choose the express and vacuum themselves, or don't vacuum at all. But there is a small percentage who still want the full treatment. The great thing is that we are now able to offer it all and without the burden of an exorbitant payroll.

Like I said earlier, I've had many ideas over the years, both good and bad. It's difficult to remember all of them after 30+years in carwashing, but these are certainly two that are the most memorable. **NC**

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# Microfiber at a Glance

By Valerie Sweeney

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

## Terry-Style Microfiber

Terry-style microfiber is the most popular type of microfiber used in the car care industry. Typically, when someone mentions microfiber, they are referring to the terry style. This style has a high, soft pile, and while it is different than a terry towel, it is the closest style to a traditional towel.

Terry microfiber is extremely versatile, and really can be used anywhere in the carwash. Larger sizes, typically measuring between 15" x 24" and 16" x 27", make great body drying and wax removal towels, while smaller sizes are ideal for detail and windows. Terry-style

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“

*Terry-style microfiber is the most popular type of microfiber used in the car care industry.*

”

microfiber is available in a variety of sizes, colors and thickness.

## Waffle-Weave Microfiber

The waffle-weave microfiber towel is also very popular in the carwash industry. Waffle-weave microfiber has a dimpled “waffle” look, thus the name. Many carwashes swear by waffle weave microfibers on glass, while others feel that they work the same as the terry style. Bottom line, it is all about personal preference.

The waffle weave also sometimes feels more bulky in the hand, which some operators like. This style can trap a lot of water because of the ridges, so it also makes a great general towel. Others believe the waffle weave feel, with the ridged texture, helps to better clean raised, dirty surfaces such as bird droppings.

## Microfiber Glass Towels

All types of microfiber work well on glass. Many towel companies market the shiny-style microfiber as glass towels. This cloth has a flat, tight texture. Like the other microfiber, it does not leave streaks when used properly and is lint free, making it ideal for use on windows. While these towels will work well, the terry and waffle styles are most popular.

## Suede Microfiber

Suede is the one of the smoothest types (lowest pile) of microfiber, but the least popular in the carwash industry. Suede is typically used to clean the glass on your copier machine, your new Ray-Ban sunglasses, your flat screen television or your iPad. Like other microfiber cloth, they do work really well on windows, glass and dashboards. They are also perfect for cleaning the touch screen on the console.

## Economy/Limited Use Non-Woven Microfiber

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

NC

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



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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*There is so much to celebrate this summer, particularly compared to where we were just a year ago. It's been a long and tumultuous year for carwash businesses as we navigated the unknowns of closures, loss of business and layoffs. So it should come with great relief that those who wish to be vaccinated have access to this medicine, businesses are continuing to reopen at greater capacity, and we're entering into a season that makes many people think about visiting their local carwash.*

*Additionally, the Carwash Association of Pennsylvania (CAP) is excited to announce the return of its Annual Tabletop Dinner. This will look different this year, but it is going to happen! We have decided to move it to Wednesday, September 15. This is the day before our Annual Golf Outing that will take place on Thursday, September 16, at the Cumberland Golf Club in Carlisle. The location of the dinner is still to be determined, but it will be near the golf outing for easy access to those who wish to attend both events and make it two days' worth of powerful networking. I hope you will mark your calendars and plan to join us. More details about these events will be added to our website at [www.pacarwash.org](http://www.pacarwash.org).*

### Let's Play Ball!

*I would be remiss if I did not also promote our Annual Baseball Outing. This did not take place in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, which makes us all the more excited to invite you back to the ballpark for a Pittsburgh Pirates game in August. The exact date is still to be determined, but good networking and fun times are guaranteed.*

*If you are not a 2021 CAP member, we invite you to join our growing network of operators and vendors from across the Commonwealth. We have hit the ground running with plans to invest additional resources into our membership this year, resources that will help all carwash businesses, both operators and vendors, better connect, collaborate and contribute to our industry. Here is just a sampling of the many new ideas we're bringing to the table this year.*

### \*NEW\* CAP Scholarship

*A new \$500 annual scholarship fund has been established to support the carwash community. Any student in or entering higher education and who is either employed by or the relative of a carwash professional may apply! Visit [www.pacarwash.org](http://www.pacarwash.org) today to see our new extended deadline and to apply!*

### \*NEW\* Pennsylvania Carwasher of the Year Award

*This new award is presented to the Pennsylvania carwash professional who has demonstrated passion for the industry, and who has helped to improve and uplift carwash businesses within the Commonwealth. The 2021 application process will open later this year, but we are proud to recognize our first winner for the 2020 year, CAP Treasurer Dave Edwards!*

*Continued on page 47 ...*



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President's Letter ... continued from page 44.

Dave wishes to share this message upon accepting his award...

"I, along with Barbara, are flattered to be recognized for our efforts by receipt of this award, now in our sixth year as carwash owner/operators. We enjoy the comradery of the carwash community. We only wish to share with others what we've learned along the way: awareness, maintenance, robustness, convenience and the total guest experience. For those of you in the Northeast PA (NEPA) market, you may have noticed that during the weather forecast on WBRE/WYOU, WNEP and Fox56 news, there is the "Car Wash Forecast." As an operator, and a CAP member, I have been instrumental in getting this mention "on air" frequently. It's safe to say each operator in NEPA has benefited from such mentions from our local meteorologists."

—Dave Edwards, Owner/Operator of The Carwash on Hamlin Highway and 2020 Recipient of the Pennsylvania Carwasher of the Year Award

As we emerge out of a global Pandemic, I cannot overemphasize how proud I am of the carwash industry. As we look to the future, some of us will enter the industry while others will exit, some of us will grow or expand, while others may look to downsize or sell. The common denominator is our passion for serving others in whatever form that may follow. Thank you all for serving our industry well and being a part of this very special community.

Wishing you great business this season with many "perfect" carwash days in your future!



Keith Lutz  
President, Carwash Association of Pennsylvania



**SEPTEMBER 15**  
**Annual Tabletop Dinner**  
**Location: TBD**

**SEPTEMBER 16**  
**Golf Outing**  
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# Catching Up With CAP “Car Washer of the Year,” Dave Edwards



We first profiled Dave Edwards and the CAR WASH on Hamlin Highway in 2018, three years after he purchased a run-down wash in Lake Ariel, PA. Now in his sixth year as a carwasher, his drive and determination to blaze a trail has not waned.

**NECW: Are you still serving as a project director for a small luxury builder in Manhattan during the week, and returning to the wash in the Poconos, near Lake Wallenpaupack, on weekends?**

DE: Yes, I'm still holding my Manhattan day job. Yet, like many, have spent the past year during the Pandemic working from our home in

Pennsylvania. So, this has allowed us to be closer to the cash sites.

**NECW: Have you added anything to the site since converting the wash to a 60-foot frictionless inbay, three self-serve bays, dog wash, and a self-service detailing bay?**

DE: In November 2020, we knocked down the classic vacuum concrete island, installed new arch vac's from IVS (Industrial Vacuum Systems). These three-motor vacs are extremely powerful, and along with the convenient overhead boom which allows flexible access into multiple area of the vehicle, our customers are responding well to this modern convenience.

We have also consolidated our equipment footprint and added additional overhead lot lighting, civic-style trash receptacles from Uline and we added a towel drop vending dispenser with outriggers from the center column. Plus, we now offer crevasse and claw nozzles which easily change out at the cuff providing our guest/consumer the opportunity to “clean better.”

**NC: In 2017, you said you washed 500 dogs. What is that number now? And, are you still loving that additional profit center?**

DE: In 2019/2020 we saw 850 to 900 dog-wash transactions. Now in 2021, we have seen an uptick of over 200 percent, that will put us on track for 1300 to 1500 dog washes in 2021. This increase is partially due to the loss of the Pet Valu retail chain, which had dog wash facilities in their retail model. The Dog Wash venue is just one of many conveniences on the Hamlin site. “Convenience is Capital.”

**NC: Does a caretaker still oversee daily operations?**

DE: We now employ three part-time attendants. We also have a second site, The CAR WASH on Rt. 6 in Hawley, PA, 13 miles east of Hamlin on the other end of the lake.

**NC: Is there still a two-bay detail shop run by a subcontractor on site?**

DE: Yes, (Bennett's Detailing) is going strong, and a mutual benefit to our retail platform.

## It's a Good Day to Wash Your Car!

CAR WASH on Hamlin Highway operator Dave Edwards has accomplished a goal that will not only benefit his locations but those of other Pocono-area operators, but it's taken some effort. “I have been on a quest to encourage each of the three network news station meteorologists to include (good day for a) “car wash” in their daily and/or weekly forecast segments here in Northeast Pennsylvania.

“These small mentions plant a big seed to the viewing audience, which I trust turns into positive results for each CAP (Carwash Association of Pennsylvania) member and

Northeast PA carwash operator,” said Edwards.

He is currently seeing regular mentions and a graphic back drop (seen here) on WNEP, WBRE/WYOU and Fox56/WOLF. “Each broadcast out of the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre market with a coverage area of 13+ counties in Northeast PA (which is approximately 20 percent of the Commonwealth), along with social media “push” and “follow” from each station and the news personality.

“My next quest is helping others in their market work with their local news stations to include these “mentions.” **NC**

**NECW: You said you were happy with washing 18,000 cars your first year and then 23,000 your second. Where are you now?**

DE: We have been growing in transactions each year. 2020 saw more than 30,000 transactions, and CWRT6 saw more than 29,000 in its first full year of operations under our ownership.

**NECW: Any future plans for the site?**

DE: There's always something. We're thinking about introducing hand-held air dryers to the self-serve bays at Hamlin. We installed them during the renovation at CWRT6. They are frequently used, and definitely another minute or two added to the coin box is good.

**NECW: What are your thoughts on receiving this award?**

DE: This came as a total surprise. We are flattered and humbled. We have done nothing more than to be helpful in the industry. Sharing creative ideas and miscellaneous finds as we continue to learn the business.



**CAP Annual Golf Outing  
Thursday, September 16  
Cumberland Golf Club, Carlisle  
[pacarwash.org](http://pacarwash.org)**

| CAR WASH |  |    |
|----------|--|----|
| 8 AM     |  | 60 |
| 12 PM    |  | 74 |
| 5 PM     |  | 82 |

Meteorologist Stefano DiPietro

One biggie in the local Northeast PA market that benefits all operators in this region is the CAR WASH FORECAST. During the past two to three years, I have been working with local television networks (4) to include a “Good Day For A Car Wash” during the weather segment. During April 2020, we were able to get all the legal nuances worked out: that this is not a commercialized mention. Now, and since April 2020, the CAR WASH FORECAST comes up frequently by many of the Meteorologists on four networks out of Scranton/Wilkes Barre covering more than 12,000 square miles of a viewing audience. So, on the nice weather days, there’s encouragement to “get the car washed!” **NC**



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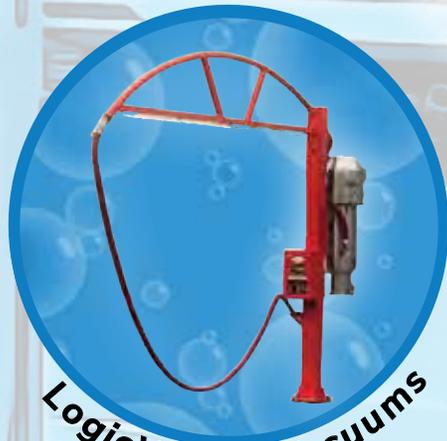


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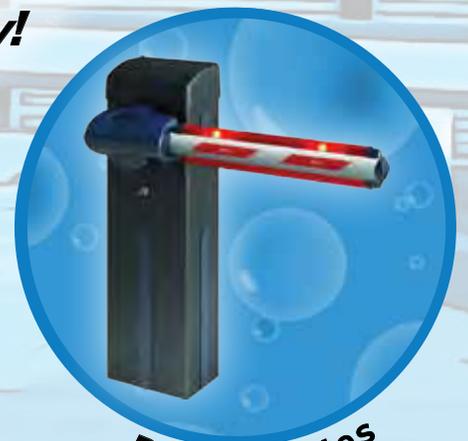
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### CCA MISSION STATEMENT

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 LETTER

*If you know me, you know that I am an outgoing kind of guy. I like to engage and see true value in participation and getting involved in the industry I love. Part of this engagement comes from a genuine love of people, but an even bigger part of it comes from knowing that getting involved, participating and educating myself will be paid back in spades.*

*A perfect example of this is my tenure as President of the Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA). I have held this position for several years now and prior to that I served as a board member. I see the value in meeting quarterly with my board and in planning events and programs that will be beneficial to our membership. When COVID hit, our association, its lobbyist and board worked tirelessly to keep us open and washing cars. Priceless, I think, and a totally valid reason to join our association.*

*We are always looking to provide our membership with value. We will again go after the unfair tax on our self-service segment of the industry in the next year. Thanks to our lobbyist, P.J. Cimini, and his contacts in Hartford, we will position ourselves to get in front of the legislators who make the decisions at the capitol. Yet another reason to join our association and get involved.*

*In addition to my role as President, I sit on the board of the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC). This is a group of representatives from each of the five East Coast carwash associations who coordinate the annual show in Atlantic City (October 4-6, 2021). Over the last year, due to COVID, we have met virtually to ensure that when the time is right (and it is in 2021!) we can put on the best possible trade show and educational track for you.*

*To me, attending the NRCC is a no-brainer. It's two days away from your wash where you can connect with fellow operators, touch and feel equipment on a trade show floor that is welcoming and approachable and learn, though educational programming, how to be a better carwasher. The price to attend is peanuts. The drive is easy and the accommodations this year will be at the newly-renovated Hard Rock Hotel & Casino on Atlantic City's iconic boardwalk. All precautions will be taken to meet CDC and New Jersey COVID guidelines. You will be safe. You will learn. You will grow and you will have some fun. And we all need that after enduring the past 15 months!*

*Bottom line, please consider getting involved in your state association. Please consider attending the 31st NRCC. In fact, put it on your calendar now and make it happen.*

*Trust me, you will be glad you did! See you in AC! (nrccshow.com)*



Bob Rossini, CCA President

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# Splash Opens New Wash Co. Express Wash

CCA

Splash Car Wash, headquartered in Milford, CT, has announced the opening of its latest express wash in Greenburg, NY (Tarrytown), becoming Splash's seventh New York operation, according to a company press release.

The carwash was formerly operated as a full serve before Splash purchased the site in late 2019. The company has spent the past six months renovating the tunnel with all new equipment, pay gates, and 20 self-service vacuums which will be free for carwash customers. The site will be operated under Splash's "Wash Co." brand, joining the first Wash Co. in Middletown.

Glen and Wayne Sheeley, the originators of Wash Co., designed and handled the renovation of the wash in partnership with Splash. "We are so excited about this wash," added Glen Sheeley. "We packed huge washing power into this 120-foot tunnel, including the Petit high-pressure wash system. Customers can also view the 'backroom' operations through the glass originally used for full-service customers to watch the wash process. It's really a neat feature."



Mark Curtis, Splash CEO, echoes Sheeley's enthusiasm. "We are so excited to partner with Wayne and Glen. They are true artisans when it comes to carwashes, and they just seem to get better with each new site they do," added Curtis. This is the first exterior express wash to open in New York's Westchester County.

The Sheeley's will be developing two new ground-up locations slated to start in June. Locations and target opening dates will be announced at a later date.

NC

For more information contact [mcurtis@splashcarwashes.com](mailto:mcurtis@splashcarwashes.com) or 203/324-5400.

## Splash's Greenwich Site Reveal

We featured this Splash site, purchased in 1981 by former banker and investment banker, respectively, Mark Curtis and Chris Fisher, in our spring issue before its renovation reveal. Well, here's a peek at the final transformation. Great job, operators!

### About Splash

This site in Greenwich was the partner's first acquisition. Since that time, Curtis and Fisher have developed more than 30 locations, and currently operate 27 carwash tunnels in Connecticut, Vermont and New York. Many sites include detailing operations and six locations provide oil change services, and one has a Laundromat.

Splash has been named "Best Carwash" by numerous publications more than 35 times and has been recognized as "Top 10 Workplace" five times by Hearst Publications. Four General Managers employed by Splash have been recognized as the "Most Valuable Carwasher" by *Professional Carwashing & Detailing* magazine. The company has also been awarded the US Chambers of Commerce prestigious "Blue Chip Enterprise Award" and has been inducted into the Connecticut Business Hall of Fame.



Splash Car Wash partnered with the private equity firm Paladin Consumer Retail Partners, Boston, MA, in 2018.

NC

# Kleen-Rite's Deeg Wins CCA's 2021 Kenneth M. Gustafson, Sr. Scholarship



Eleanor Deeg

Eleanor Deeg, a part-time Kleen-Rite, Columbia, PA, employee, has been presented with the 2021 Kenneth M. Gustafson, Sr. Scholarship Award, named after the association's first president. Hailing from Landisville, PA, Deeg plans to attend Penn State University in the fall and will major in Communications Sciences and Disorders with a minor in Spanish. She said that she has always wanted to help special education students have the ability to communicate with their community.

In addition to her exceptional GPA, Deeg was the captain of her field hockey team, played basketball and was on the varsity club, a class representative, student council member and involved in dance theater and choir in addition to being a member of the National Honor Society. She also served as the event coordinator for her school's Anchor Club where she helps serve her local and global communities. The group's biggest event in 2021 was collecting groceries, clothes, toys, cleaning supplies and gift cards for more than 40 families in her district. Her gift of caring also extends to the senior population where she has been writing letters to those in retirement and nursing homes during the Pandemic to help them feel less cut off from the community. "I use my weekly

pen pal conversations as a way to brighten up their week."

The Kenneth M. Gustafson, Sr. Scholarship Award began in 2004 and is the longest running scholarship program in the Northeast. "This member benefit is so needed right now and something to give back to your employees through your membership. It is available to operators as well as vendor members."

## 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 are 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

**2022 applications will be available after January 1, 2022.**

## Simoniz Gives Back

Simoniz USA, Bolton, CT, recently supported the efforts of 11 nonprofits in the Hartford market, according to an internal company memo. Bill Gorra, Simoniz USA President, said that \$50,000 worth of household cleaning supplies such as laundry detergent, hand soap and carpet cleaning products, for example, were distributed at a walk-up center at The Hartford Yard Goats Stadium (Double A affiliate of the Colorado Rockies), in Hartford in April. "During the Pandemic we have been highly active in this community, and others, donating everything from socks to food to money," said Gorra. "And, hopefully, more than anything ... hope! But it is all made possible through your (employees') efforts," he said, in the memo. "Christine (Gorra) and I are forever grateful for all that you do on a day-to-day basis. We are proud to be able to make even the smallest difference for people and families in need."

NC

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



Christine Brunette (Gorra) with Simoniz USA, Cristina De Araujo with the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), Simoniz USA's President Bill Gorra and Eric Crawford with CREC pose after \$50,000 in cleaning supplies were donated to 11 nonprofits in the Hartford market by Simoniz USA. CREC, established in 1966, works with and for its member districts and has developed an array of cost-effective, high-quality programs and services to meet the educational needs of children and adults in the greater Hartford market.

To learn more visit [crec.org](http://crec.org)

# CT General Assembly 2021 Session Progresses



By P.J. Cimini & Nicole Tomassetti

The Connecticut General Assembly, which convened January 6, 2021, has begun to wrap up the committee process and will now move to “Session Days” where both chambers will meet to hold final votes on legislation. As committees wrap up and refer bills to the full chambers, bills will be added to the House and Senate Calendar. Bills on the House and Senate Calendar are bills that are ready for a chamber vote, however, placement on the calendar does not mean a bill will pass — or even be called for a vote.

As previously reported, legislators in both chambers will watch the debate from their offices. Legislators wishing to speak on a bill will be allowed into the chamber to ask their questions of the proponent(s) and provide their thoughts. When they have finished speaking, legislators will return to their offices to watch the remainder of the discussion. When discussion of legislation has concluded, legislators will vote on legislation remotely from their offices.

## Labor Bills Meet Mixed Fate

The state House and Senate are meeting with increased frequency and acting on a number of bills originating from the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Fortunately, our carwash message and that of the general business community regarding doing no harm to protect the state’s economic recovery seems to be resonating with lawmakers — at least for now.

Advocacy efforts have resulted in a few victories, including the death of a number of harmful bills. These items could be revived through amendments and many bills remain that will cause more than enough trouble for employers. On April 29, the state Senate followed the House’s earlier example and unanimously approved HB 5377, which shields employers from COVID-19 related unemployment experience rating changes. That bill now waits on the Governor’s signature.

## Layoffs, Shift Scheduling Still Alive

The Judiciary Committee has passed out harmful legislation that we continue to oppose and fight:

- **SB 658:** Requires employers to recall laid off employees in order of seniority, ignoring things like productivity, skill level, attendance and disciplinary history. The bill now returns to the Senate.



- **SB 668:** Requires employers to ask employees about their desired number of hours and shift locations and provide a weekly estimate of hours. Any scheduling changes with-

out 14 days notice will result in financial penalties for the employer. Employers also need to see if they are meeting employee scheduling requests before they can hire new employees. The bill now returns to the Senate.

## Remote Work Expenses

On May 3, the Legislature’s Appropriations Committee opted to take no action on the following Labor Committee approved bills that were referred to their committee:

- **HB 6536:** Imposes significant financial penalties on employers who fail to reimburse employees for all expenditures they believe were needed to work from home. There are no caps on what the employee can spend, and there is no neutral party designated to determine qualifying expenses — creating unnecessary conflicts between employers and employees. The bill is now dead.
- **HB 6475:** Outsources the power of the Attorney General and allows third parties to bring public enforcement actions against businesses while financial penalties grow exponentially. This scheme is so thoroughly abused in California that businesses are often forced to settle even when they are not in the wrong. Multi-year studies show that 75 percent of the settlements did not protect aggrieved employees, but were used to enrich the state and third parties. The bill is now dead.
- **HB 6537:** Expands the state’s existing sick leave law that applies to businesses with 50 or more employees to all employees at every employer in the state. Connecticut’s smallest businesses are already struggling to keep up with their larger competitors and cannot take on the cost of new workplace mandates. The bill is now dead.



## Workers’ Compensation

The Appropriations Committee did, however, take favorable action on the following Labor Committee bills:

**HB 6595** and **SB 1002:** These identical bills increase costs in a variety of ways, including creating a presumption that an employee who contracts COVID-19 did so in the workplace regardless of where transmission occurred, requires employers to recall employees based on seniority (despite skill level or productivity), and requires the provision of 80 hours of sick leave, the cost of which will be borne by employers of any size, that can be used retroactively. The bills now return to their respective chambers.



## Concerns Over Proposed DEEP Regs

The state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) issued a notice of intent in March for regulations covering the reporting of spills and releases — commonly referred to as the Release Reporting Regulations. The draft regulations propose thresholds for the reporting of certain releases and specify when, how, and what to report. Under current regulations, the release of substances such as oil, chemical liquids and hazardous materials must be reported to DEEP, regardless of the quantity. DEEP wants to set minimum thresholds to reduce the number of reportable releases, allowing the agency to focus on spills that pose the greatest threat to human health and the environment.

The carwash industry appreciates the intent to add increased clarity and decreased reporting, however, it is still very concerned about a number of issues, including:

- The one-hour response time frame which is unrealistic for many entities
- The inconsistent use of the term “properly trained personnel” and their role regarding spills
- The treatment and definition of secondary containment units especially as it relates to a spill into a secondary containment unit or impervious structure such as a building
- The 30% threshold for Appendix A materials.

Visit [wewashcars.com](http://wewashcars.com) for more information.

## Unemployment Insurance Rating Changes

State lawmakers unanimously approved legislation shielding Connecticut employers from the costly impact of Pandemic-related layoffs on their unemployment experience rating accounts. The state Senate passed HB 5377 April 28, two days after it cleared the House without opposition. The bill now waits for Gov. Ned Lamont’s signature. The bill’s quick passage means welcome relief for employers, who faced significant unemployment tax rate hikes.

Connecticut’s Unemployment Trust Fund, which has paid out billions of dollars in state and federal benefits in the past 14 months, is funded exclusively by employers. Under state law, when workers become unemployed and file for benefits, their former employers’ experience rate increases to reflect fund use.

Employers that have low turnover rates are usually rewarded with a lower experience rate. The bill’s quick passage means welcome relief for employers, who faced significant unemployment tax rate hikes. However, the hundreds of thousands of layoffs from last spring were driven by the state’s Pandemic response, not business actions.

The state Department of Labor has received more than 1.4 million unemployment claims since last March. As of April, weekly claims were averaging 200,000, about five times the pre-Pandemic volume. Connecticut has recovered 60% of all COVID-19 job losses. The state’s unemployment rate is 8.3 percent, the highest in New England and well above the national rate of 6 percent.

## Executive Order Expires

Lamont signed an executive order last April partially shielding employers from increased unemployment taxes based on Coronavirus-linked benefit claims. The Governor’s emergency executive powers expire May 20, making legislative action critical to protect employers from experience rate increases. HB 5377 is one of three short- and long-term actions needed to fix the state’s unemployment system. Under HB 5377, unemployment benefits paid to former employees from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2021, will not affect an employer’s experience rate for tax years beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2002.

In addition, the bill’s language disregards statewide benefits and taxable wages for calendar years 2020 and 2021 when calculating the unemployment tax rate that applies to new employers from Jan. 1, 2022.

HB 5377 is one of three short- and long-term actions CBIA has pushed as critical steps needed to fix the state’s unemployment system and dismantle barriers to job recovery and rebuilding Connecticut’s economy.

## Unemployment Fixes

### Those steps:

- Freeze unemployment experience rates so businesses are not hit by the impact of COVID-19 related layoffs in the short term.
- Use federal relief funds to reduce the federal loan debt balance. Otherwise, money that could be used to rehire employees will be diverted to debt payments.
- Implement long-overdue reforms to the state’s unemployment system to prevent future borrowing (HB 6633).

**HB 5377** addresses an immediate need. In the near term, CBIA and other organizations are calling for the state to use federal COVID-19 funds to relieve some or all of the unemployment federal loan debt faced by employers.

The Lamont administration’s proposal for spending \$2.6 billion in federal funds includes \$50 million for the unemployment trust fund. Connecticut will likely borrow more than \$1 billion from the federal government to pay unemployment claims. The state borrowed a similar amount after the 2008-2010 Recession, with employers burdened by six years of higher taxes and special assessments. At one point, Connecticut businesses were paying four times the unemployment taxes of their peers in neighboring states. The Lamont administration’s proposal for spending \$2.6 billion in federal funds includes \$50 million for the unemployment trust fund.

## Long-Term Reforms

In the long term, the state’s unemployment system needs long overdue reforms to both the taxes paid by employers and the benefits paid out to claimants. The business com-

*Continued...*

## Lobbyist Update ... *continued*

munity, organized labor, and a bipartisan group of lawmakers announced a comprehensive, historic reform package agreement April 21.

Addressed in HB 6633, those reforms are designed to restore solvency to the unemployment trust fund, insolvent for 48 of the past 50 years, burdening businesses with federal loan debt. Lamont has noted that if the reforms were in place after the 2008-2010 recession, Connecticut would have started the Pandemic with a solvent trust fund, alleviating the need for massive federal borrowing.

The legislature's Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee unanimously approved HB 6633 April 22. The bill is currently being reviewed by the General Assembly's nonpartisan Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis.

## Status of Carwash High Priority Bills

**SB 1031-** An Act Concerning The Use Of Sodium Chloride To Mitigate Ice And Snow Accumulations.

- The bill's file copy currently sits on Senate Calendar awaiting a vote by the full Senate chamber
  - › **Description:** This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and Department of Transportation (DOT) commissioners to work with UConn's Tech Transfer (T2) Center

to conduct training for roadside salt applicators that relies on existing municipal guidelines. It requires the commissioners, within one year after implementing the training program, to report to the Environment and Transportation committees on it. The report must include any legislative recommendations to reduce the effect of sodium chloride on private wells and public drinking water supplies (§ 1). The bill also establishes a salt applicator certification program within DEEP, which the commissioner must administer and enforce within available resources. It requires the commissioner to adopt implementing regulations (§ 2). The bill generally exempts a commercial applicator that completes the certification program, and an owner, operator, or lessee of property maintained by the applicator, from liability for damages related to the property maintenance if the applicator used DEEP's and DOT's published best practices and kept certain records (§ 3).

- HB 5515: An Act Concerning Deicing Alternatives
  - › Dead
- HB 6497-An Act Concerning Stormwater Authorities
  - › Dead

*Continued...*

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**SB 733-** An Act Concerning Sales Tax On Truck Wash Services

- Dead (Isn't technically dead yet, but has not had a hearing/FRB JF deadline is May 7.)

**Status of Other Important Bills**

**SB 668-** An Act Concerning A Fair Work Week Schedule.

- The bill's file copy currently sits on Senate Calendar awaiting a vote by the full Senate chamber.
  - › Description: This bill generally requires employers with at least 250 employees to pay certain types of employees (i.e., those in wholesale, retail, or restaurant occupations, and certain occupations in hotels or residential care facilities) half of their regular pay rate for any scheduled hours that the employer cancels or reduces (1) after the employee reports to work for the scheduled hours or (2) less than 14 days in advance. The bill also applies to (1) a franchisee if the network of franchises employs 250 employees in total and (2) nursing homes that employ at least 100 or are operated by a management company that employs at least 100. The bill applies to employees who are paid by the hour and are not exempt from minimum wage or overtime rules. **\*Also noted on pg. 56.**

**SB 941-** An Act Concerning The Assignment Of Certain Property, Tax, Water And Sewer Liens.

- The bill's file copy currently sits on Senate Calendar awaiting a vote by the full Senate chamber.
  - › Description: This bill imposes new restrictions on entities that acquire the right to enforce real property liens securing specified delinquent tax, sewer, and water charges (i.e., lien assignees). The bill applies to liens for delinquent:
    1. Real property taxes (§ 1) and any other liens that by law may be enforced using the same procedure as applies to these taxes (e.g., statutory special taxing district assessments, see CGS § 7-328);
    2. Sewer benefit assessments or sewer use and connection charges imposed by municipal water pollution control authorities or regional sewer authorities (§§ 2, 3 & 6); and
    3. Water charges imposed by municipal water companies and regional water authorities (§§ 4 & 5). The bill makes any lien assignment executed on or after July 1, 2022, unenforceable unless memorialized in a written contract between the assignee and municipality or authority. The contract must include the disclosure and other provisions the bill specifies.

**SB 842-** An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Health Care in Connecticut.

- The bill was referred out of the Public Health Commit-

tee. The bill currently awaits referral to the Senate by the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee.

- › Description: This bill would establish a public healthcare option for residents, small businesses, nonprofits, and unions in the state of Connecticut. The Comptroller would be authorized to offer health coverage under a multiemployer plan with similar benefits to the current coverage offered to state employees. This bill would also raise the eligibility for some government-run Medicaid and Husky insurance.

**Unemployment Insurance Funds Returns**

On April 20, Governor Ned Lamont, State Representative Sean Scanlon (D-Branford, Guilford), State Representative Holly Cheeseman (R-East Lyme, Salem), legislative leaders, the Connecticut AFL-CIO, and the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA) announced details of a bipartisan proposal to restore the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and reduce taxes on the majority of Connecticut businesses. The bipartisan proposal restores trust fund solvency and reduces taxes on at least 73 percent of businesses by broadening the taxable wage base, reducing tax rates and reforming benefits.

**Specifically, starting in 2024, the proposal:**

- Increases the taxable wage base from \$15,000 to \$25,000, then indexes it to inflation;
- Reduces the maximum solvency tax rate from 1.4 percent to 1 percent;
- Reduces the minimum and expands the maximum experience tax rate, from 0.5-5.4 percent to 0.1-10 percent;
- Increases the minimum base period earnings required to qualify for unemployment benefits from \$600 to \$1600, then indexes it to inflation, except when the federal government is providing additional benefits to UI claimants;
- Delays four annual \$18 increases in the maximum weekly benefit amount; and
- Defers UI benefits until the end of any severance payments for all employees.

NC



P.J. Cimini

*P.J. Cimini, Esq. is the CCA's Lobbyist and a partner in Capitol Strategies Group, LLC, in Hartford. Nicole Tomassetti is Associate at Capitol Strategies Group. You can reach P.J. at 860/983-2581 or [pj@csgct.com](mailto:pj@csgct.com). You can reach Nicole at 203/213-2602 or [Nicole@csgct.com](mailto:Nicole@csgct.com)*



Nicole Tomassetti



# Rapid Car Wash Celebrates 60 Years!

This express site, now in its 60th year, is located in New London, but serves customers in neighboring Groton and Waterford. A third-generation facility operated by Noah and Linda Levine, Rapid Car Wash will be featured in our fall/NRCC show issue. We'll share with you their secrets for success, adaption and giving back to their community. **NC**



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\*deceased

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*April this year has a different feel about it than it did last year. Today there is hope and the promise of vaccinations. Carwashes are open with restrictions, and customers come out when the weather encourages them to do so. My full-service customers love the spray sanitizing we have incorporated into our service and it adds value. Life is starting to return to normal.*

*The Car Wash Operators Of New Jersey (CWONJ) traditionally has a Carwash Bus Tour in the spring and a Golf Outing in the summer. Last year, all events were canceled because of the Pandemic. At our next Board meeting, the Directors will discuss plans for the balance of the year. The spring Carwash Bus Tour will not be run in 2021, however.*

### **Make Your NRCC Plans!**

*I can talk about the upcoming Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 4-6, in Atlantic City as it is going to be a breath of fresh air! The show is again at the state-of-the-art Atlantic City Convention Center (ACCC). Our Host Hotel is now the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino right on the Boardwalk with shuttles to and from the ACCC. The Hard Rock site is the old TAJ MAHAL, but when Hard Rock bought the property a few years ago they gutted it and redid the whole place. The transformation is incredible. Hard Rock even has a carwash on-site next to its own "Rocktane" gas station. I understand they operate a carwash and gas station at each of their Casinos.*

*The NRCC's 2021 Keynote Speaker is New Jersey's own Chris Christie. This will not be an NRCC to miss! Politics aside, he will be entertaining and frank. The company of fellow carwashers, education, and a big show floor full of all the equipment and everything we have missed seeing for more than a year and a half is reason enough to make the trip to AC. October in Atlantic City is still warm and welcoming, and now with the Boardwalk right outside of our hotel doors, make a plan and make the trip.*

### **In Your Best Interests**

*Despite no recent face-to-face meetings or events, your board has been active during the past year on your behalf. We do not ever want to again be in the position of our industry being shut down. If it is not a Pandemic then there could be other issues such as a drought that could shutter our operations. Carwashes are often misunderstood, and we are trying to clear up any misconceptions. One of our projects has been educating our state legislators about our value and the employee's carwashes bring to their local towns and community. This has been done with the guidance of Princeton Public Affairs Group (PPAG) who now represents us and lobbys for us in Trenton. Legislators have been touring select local carwashes the last eight months and meeting owners and staff. This way, they can see and understand our worth to our towns and the state of New Jersey. We are positioning ourselves to be included in legislation that will deem us "essential" moving forward. We are doing this for our members across the state of*

*New Jersey. We'll keep you posted.*

*See you in Atlantic City in October!*



*Doug Rieck, CWONJ President*



# Butler, Deeg Awarded 2021 CWONJ Scholarships

Aidan Butler and Eleanor Deeg are the recipients of the two 2021 Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) Scholarships, according to Scholarship Chair Dan Saidel.

Butler has been an employee of Butch's Lube N' Wash in Red Bank since 2018. General Manager Chuck Siebert in his recommendation letter wrote, "Aidan has a prompt work ethic and many of our customers look forward to his personal service. He is very much liked by the staff and his friendly nature and professional attitude have proved him to be an asset to our company for almost three years."



Aidan Butler

Butler is currently attending Fordham University in the Gabelli School of Business and is in their ROTC program where he plans to commission as a second lieutenant in the US Army upon graduation. He is majoring in Finance with a minor in Philosophy. He said he wants to work in investment banking and have a broad perspective in different ways of thinking.

He graduated high school with a 4.0 and was a member of the National Honor Society, Dean's List, and was the Varsity Wrestling Captain.

Deeg, a part-time Kleen-Rite, Columbia, PA, employee, hails from Landisville, PA. She plans to attend Penn State University in the fall and will major in Communications Sciences and Disorders with a minor in Spanish. She said that she has always wanted to help special education students have the ability to communicate with their community.

In addition to her exceptional GPA, Deeg was the captain of her field hockey team, played basketball and was on the varsity club, a class representative, student council member and involved in dance theater and choir in addition to being a member of the National Honor Society. Eleanor also served as the event coordinator for her school's Anchor Club where she helps serve her local and global communities. The group's biggest event in 2021 was collecting groceries, clothes, toys, cleaning supplies and gift cards for more than 40 families in



Eleanor Deeg

her district. Her gift of caring also extends to the senior population where she has been writing letters to those in retirement and nursing homes during the Pandemic to help them feel less cut off from the community. "I use my weekly pen pal conversations as a way to brighten up their week."

The CWONJ scholarship began in 2013. To be eligible an applicant must:

- Be an employee or direct family member of an employee of any CWONJ member
- Have been an employee, full or part time, for at least 1 year
- Have graduated high school or the equivalent
- Be enrolled or plan to enroll at an accredited two- or four-year college or university
- Not be an owner, or direct family member of an owner of a carwash facility, manufacturer or retail supplier to the carwash industry.

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**2022 CWONJ Scholarship Applications will be available after January 1.**



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# Legislators Tour Wash Hounds, Auto Valet Locations



New Jersey Senators Joseph Cryan and Anthony Bucco toured two Wash Hounds locations while Senator Troy Singleton toured an Auto Valet in Burlington, led by Princeton Public Affairs Group's (PPAG) Sam Weinstein (the CWONJ's lobbying firm), to learn more about professional carwashes.

A number of other tours are slated for the coming weeks. The tours provide key state legislators the opportunity to learn more about the industry and how its entrepreneurs are critical backbones of the state's economy. It is also an attempt to show them that if/when the state starts to close down again, the carwashing industry should stay open. "These tours are critical in showcasing the safe and necessary businesses we operate in New Jersey to legislators who make the decisions in Trenton," said CWONJ President Doug Rieck. "The board has made a significant commitment to keeping our businesses open for our membership by employing the efforts of this well-respected and influential firm." **NC**



*Senator Troy Singleton toured the Auto Valet location in Burlington to better understand the industry's impact on business in the state.*



*WashHounds owner (center) Brad Levie, at his site in Union, with Senator Joseph Cryan (right).*

## It's a Boy, It's a Girl!

Congratulations to new grandparents and CWONJ Board Member Scott Freund and his wife Sally. Their daughter Kasey and her husband James Griffiths had twins on March 19. Luke Scott (left) weighed in at 6lb. 10 oz. and Kayla Ann was 6lb. and 3 oz. Babies and parents are doing great, albeit wishing for some sleep! **NC**



*WashHounds owner Brad Levie (left) with his manager, Senator Anthony Bucco and CWONJ board member Scott Freund.*

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# Family-owned Frankie's Car Wash Grows to Three Locations



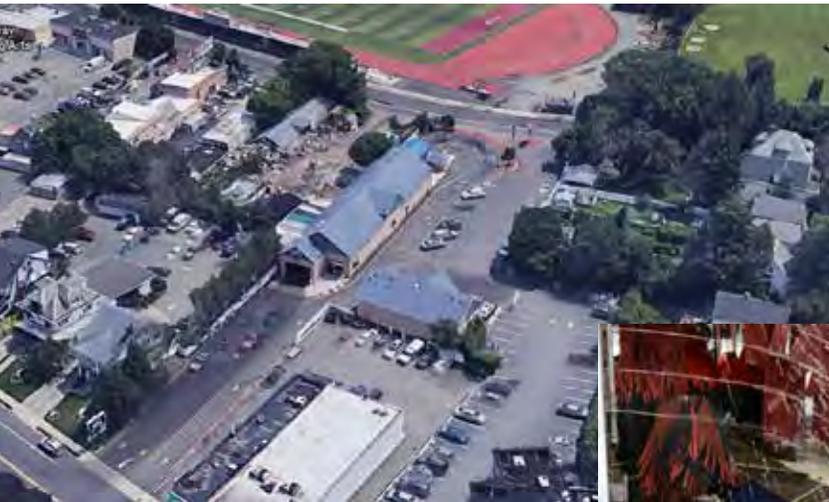
By Alan M. Petrillo

Frankie's Car Wash, a family-owned 150-foot full service carwash, detail center and oil change facility established in 1957 in Bloomfield, NJ, has expanded in a 13-month period to three locations, adding a 70-foot full-service wash in Belleville, and a 75-foot tunnel express exterior wash in Rockaway.

Joe Perrone, Frankie's managing partner, said Frankie's pur-

Contractors. "The conveyor extends 35 feet outside the building to allow us to vacuum and prep cars online and process each vehicle easier and quicker," he said. "We have a 40-plus car stack for customers to line up before entering the carwash, and at the exit end we can stack up to 12 cars for drying, with a flex-serve area as well."

He added that during below freezing temperatures, the car-



*The 150-foot full serve in Bloomfield features a detail center and oil change.*



*The wash in Bloomfield washes more than 100,000 vehicles annually.*



chased the Rockaway location in December of 2020 and had the facility totally renovated by Karl and Jake Klige of Advance Commercial Contractors with Sonny's and MacNeil carwash equipment and Micrologic controls. He noted that all the electrical work in the renovation was handled by Richie Pentamone and Alex Vargas of R & T Electric. The wash opened in the spring and is being operated as an express exterior with free unlimited vacuums for all customers, and a flex wash on the exit side of the site.

Perrone said that the Frankie's Belleville location, situated one mile from its Bloomfield carwash facility, was purchased in December of 2019.

"It's a 70-foot full service carwash with a front wheel pull conveyor that was converted from a hand wash to automatic in 2015," he said. "The Belleville wash has Belanger equipment and a Micrologic POS that is serviced by Dan and Jeff Bell of ZipoShine Car Wash Systems."

The Frankie's Car Wash location in Bloomfield, which Perrone dubbed "the mother ship," washes more than 100,000 vehicles a year and has nearly 2,000 carwash club members.

Perrone said the tunnel is packed with MacNeil and Sonny's equipment and a Micrologic POS serviced by Advance Commercial

wash has enough drying space inside the tunnel exit to finish off the vehicles.

Perrone's partners in Frankie's are Glen Paladino, who also owns All-Express Car Wash in Fairfield, NJ, and Byram Car Wash in Stanhope, NJ, and Frank Boffa, who also owns Greenway Car Wash in White House, NJ.

Frankie's Car Wash was established at the Bloomfield location in 1957 by Frankie Scalera, whom Perrone called "a pioneer in the industry. In 1980, my late father, Joe Perrone, took over and built the name and reputation of the carwash."

Perrone said he got into carwashing at age 11 when his dad took over Frankie's. "I now have more than 40 years in the industry, and managed a few carwashes for a few years before returning to the Bloomfield location to rebuild the business," he pointed out.

Both Bloomfield and Belleville locations offer full service and exterior washes ranging from \$8.95 to \$39.95 for a flex wash, Perrone noted.

"All our vehicles are finished off with a technology using high pressure air to blow out all the crevices and prevent drips," he said. "We also offer express services that start at \$12.95, and recently added an oil change at Bloomfield that offers a wide range of services."

*Continued...*

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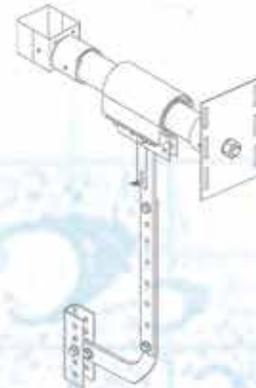
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## Frankie's Car Wash ... continued

Perrone said that the Frankie's unlimited wash plans range from \$16.95 to \$49.95 a month, and that 90-day wash passes are offered for those customers who don't like the recurring plan, with passes ranging from \$50.85 to \$149.85 for three months.

Frankie's also offers fleet services for all local businesses, Perrone said. "We also service our municipalities, the county of Essex fleet vehicles, and state of New Jersey fleets, as well," he added.

## Charitable Efforts

On the charitable side of things, Frankie's Car Wash works with Toys for Tots, and has begun



The sites promote its club plans in the tunnel as is evidenced in this photo of the Rockaway wash.



The Rockaway express exterior boasts a 75-foot tunnel.

working with a local councilwoman about starting a local drop-off for personal care items for the homeless. "We also work very closely with all the athletic and non-athletic organizations and schools in town to raise money to benefit them," Perrone said. "We even do a drive for Project Graduation where we donate a percentage of the proceeds for that day, getting the students

involved as well. We try to help and give back to the community as much as we can." **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](http://www.amazon.com)*

## Prudente Ushers at Spring Training in Tampa

Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) Treasurer, and long-time carwasher, Mike Prudente returned for his third year as an usher at the New York Yankees spring training camp at the



Rich Politi and Mike Prudente were two of 40 ushers at spring training this year at George M. Steinbrenner Field.

George M. Steinbrenner Field in Tampa, FL. The diehard Yankee fan arrived on February 26 and headed home on March 28.

Although there were fewer spectators, Prudente was still able to meet-and-greet in the open suite he was working with his signature charm. "Florida was 100 percent open, but Major League Baseball only allowed

25 percent capacity at the games which meant a total of 2,600 people in the stadium," he said. "Typically, there are 100 ushers but this year only 40 were allowed to work. I was one of the lucky ones."

In 2020, six fewer spring training games were played. This year, all games were played but players were not allowed to go outside of the dugout or locker rooms to meet/interact with fans. "Facemasks were required and the ushers' temperatures were taken daily," he added.

It's certainly a good gig if you can get it, according to Prudente. "The experience has been very good and I definitely hope to do it next year." **NC**



Madison Car Wash's Mike Prudente enjoyed his third year of ushering at Yankee spring training camp in Tampa, FL.

The Belleville location was acquired recently and boasts a 70-foot full-service tunnel.



Frankie's signage is easy to read and eye-catching.

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Welcome from the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA). A lot of you already know me, but I am Mike Ashley, MCA President. I have been looking forward to 2021 and so far have not been disappointed. We are having a great year so far here in Virginia.

The MCA Board has been busy coming up with some awesome events for the year ahead. Of course, we all know we have to be cautious knowing what we just came through in 2020. However, we are optimistic that this year will bring some normalcy to our lives once more.

We have a lot of exciting things we are looking forward to doing. We are not sure when our next face-to-face meeting is happening but look forward to starting more Zoom meetings to offset things until we can meet in person. We are also talking about a family picnic this summer and all are welcome to attend. I will let everyone know when we set a date for this event. We have been talking about July (if it is possible to meet in person by then) in Maryland per the COVID and CDC guidelines.

I feel we all have a really good time when we meet in person as it always brings new ideas and energy to the table. A lot of our members are veterans of this industry and run very successful wash locations, so getting to meet up with them and share ideas is always a wonderful and educational time.

As always, if you will be in our area and want to join us, please come to any of our events or washes. You are always welcome.

More information can be found about our meetings at [mccarwash.org](http://mccarwash.org). You can also email me at [mhashleyjr@gmail.com](mailto:mhashleyjr@gmail.com)



*M.H. Ashley*

Mike Ashley, MCA President

KEEP AN EYE ON OUR WEBSITE  
FOR MORE INFORMATION TO COME  
ON THIS MCA INITIATIVE.



Wash to  
Save the Bay

# #CarWashFinds

By Ben DuGoff

Assembled at the proscenium to the deities of vehicle cleansing, grateful for our bloop and the pollen season <achoo!> I'm reminded of these words of wisdom by Elbert Hubbard, "Don't take life too seriously. You'll never get out of it alive."

While working at our self-serve washes, my father taught me, "We can't choose who washes. But we can choose how we react to our washers." So, when we get to the wash and there's a mess about, I get excited. This means two things: "When there's trash, there's cash!" and our receipts should be nice, and #CarWashFinds pics!!!

It's a fun way to show our washers that we are there! We're there cleaning up (after them!). We're there paying attention. We're there to help.

What's left at your washes? Here's what we've found at ours.

- Betty Boop
- Stemware
- Hub Caps
- A Star Wars Game
- A Frozen Turkey

I started as a full-time employee at College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD, in 2017. Part of what he wanted to do when I started working at the wash was to increase our brand's social media presence and nothing was funnier than the "stuff" left behind by our customers. So, I started taking pictures, lots of pictures, and then posting them. Honestly, I have kept several of the matchbox cars and given them to my nephew. I kept (and ate) a ham. Sometimes, we'll leave the nicer items,

*Continued...*



Betty Boop made an appearance at College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD, along with some stemware and a Star Wars board game.



It's hard to believe some of the "treasures" that get left behind when a customer cleans out their car before a vacuum. Yes, these shiny hub caps and even a frozen turkey! Yikes!



## #CarWashFinds ... continued

like shoes, on the curb near the dumpster. They do seem to disappear. Everything else goes in the trash. I'd say that most of the items are found near and around the vacuums. They are probably taken out and just not put back.

But a turkey, you may ask? Yes. REALLY! Still frozen, if I recall. And it was around Thanksgiving. Yes, whenever I can post something fun or funny, it goes up on social media (Facebook and/or Instagram). I got a big kick out of the four-foot tall Rastafarian banana! What weird stuff has been left at your wash? **NC**

*Ben DuGoff is a manager at College Park and Beltsville Car Washes in Maryland. He also maintains the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention's (NRCC) Facebook page. You can reach Ben at [ben@us1carwash.com](mailto:ben@us1carwash.com)*



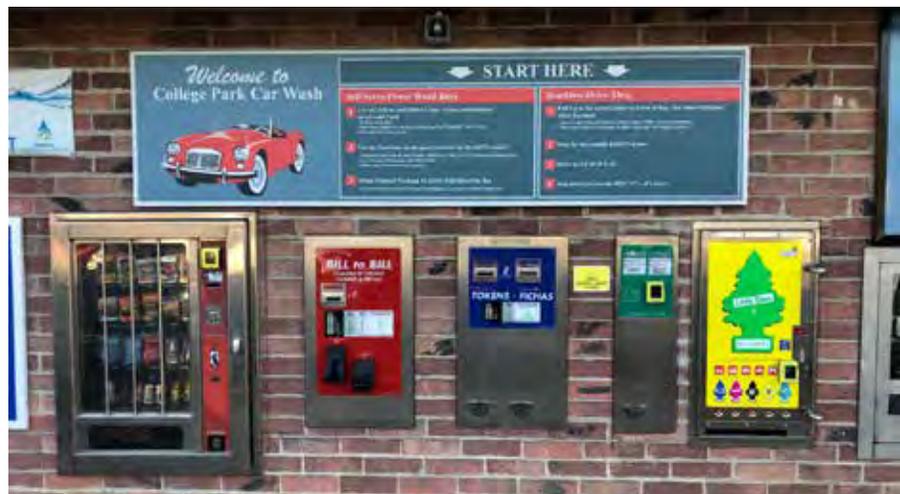
*College Park operator Ben DuGoff puts some humor in the items he finds hanging out at the wash and posts them to social media.*



# Clean, Concise Vending

This wall vending at the College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD, features custom Hamilton panels with red used on the Bill to Bill, blue on the Token only and green for the Nayax card reader to tokens. The Ginsan vendor and Laurel metal vendors are also custom. Similar vending is used at the Beltsville site as well.

The vending at both sites include signage in Spanish and feature clear COVID instructions. **NC**





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### Who We've Helped Shine



# The Characters Inside the Collage

(Pages 76 and 77, left to right by row)

## Page 1, Row 1

- Dave West, former MCA board member, now marketing manager with Dominion Raceway, a frequent host of MCA events.
- Car Lovers Car Wash in Charlottesville, owned by Matt Bascom
- River Cruise in Wilmington, DE
- Anil Verma, MCA board member, with Autobell
- John Bascom, Clean Machine
- Jordan Rosner, MCA Board Treasurer, Liberty 24/7 Carwash

## Row 2

- Ben DuGoff, College Park Carwash
- NRCC promotional banner; MCA helps put on the show
- Grace for Vets – MCA members participate in Grace for Vets (free washes on Veterans Day)
- Bus – From time to time, MCA members take bus tours of washes

## Row 3

- John Rodenhausen, MCA contact with Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Sean Larkin, MCA board member and owner of Westminster Carwash and Detailing
- MCA Best Practices for COVID-19 Operations – developed by MCA to help members deal with COVID; MCA also hosted a series of 13 interactive calls for members to share information and solution.
- Bob Stair, former long-time MCA board member, Mine Road Carwash
- Jonathan Braun, MCA board member; with Harrell's Carwash Systems

## Row 4

- Richard Meddings and Larry Bakley, former MCA board member, Flagship Carwash
- Bob Heid, long-time MCA board member and carwash consultant
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation; recipient of MCA's Wash to Save the Bay program

## Row 5

- Welcome to MCA sign at Dominion Raceway; barbecue dinners for MCA members always popular family events.
- John Forrest, Carwash Solutions
- Tom Deputy, Mine Road Carwash
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation- beneficiary of Wash To Save the Bay

## Row 5

- Anthony Shifflet, MCA board member, Sonny's
- Mike Benmoschè, longtime MCA member, now retired from McNeil Insurance
- Dan Callihan, former MCA board member and treasurer, Glen Burnie Carwash
- Bob Boardman, Water Works Carwash and Bill Bascom with Clean Machine Carwash. Both are long-time MCA members

## Page 2, Row 1

- Last live MCA meeting since before COVID, Bavarian Inn, Shepherdstown, WV;
- Matt Bascom, owner of Car Lover Carwash in Charlottesville, MCA board member
- Vincent Giangrant with Westside Carwash in Dover, DE

## Row 2

- Stuart Hammerschmidt, Shore Corporation, board member
- Dave DuGoff showing off a shirt promoting College Park Carwash on US 1
- Mike Ashley, current MCA board president, Virginia Carwash Industries
- Heather Ashley, also with Virginia Carwash Industries, past MCA president
- Dave DuGoff and Benson Rice talking about the early days of MCA

## Row 3

- Pam Piro, formerly with Unitec/DRB, former MCA board member
- Tim Price, member, a regular attendee from WashTech (now Harrell's)
- Check presentation to CBF
- Driver's view inside Dan Callihan's Glen Burnie Carwash
- Tom Morris, MCA board Vice President, Chesapeake Carwash, Annapolis
- Maryssa Tate, with Autobell; one of dozens of Autobell employees who are supported in their attendance at MCA meetings

## Row 4

- Wayne Shepherd, retired from Shepherd's Carwash in Annapolis
- Wash to Save the Bay logo; design concept developed by Matt Bascom; now referred to as the "Crab in the Hat"
- Through Wash to Save the Bay, MCA members have donated more the \$79,000 to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- MCA's 20th birthday celebration at Dominion Raceway in 2017
- Craig Hanson, long-time MCA supporter and owner of WashTech now retired
- John Lynch, MCA board member, owner of Dolly's Carwash and others in Baltimore
- MCA founded in 1997 serves Maryland, Virginia, DC, Delaware and West Virginia.
- Equipment room – often part of carwash tours

NC



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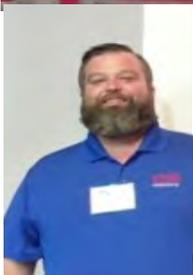
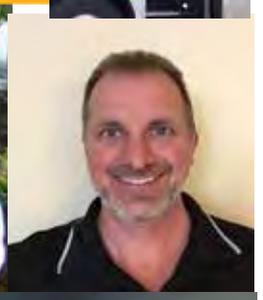
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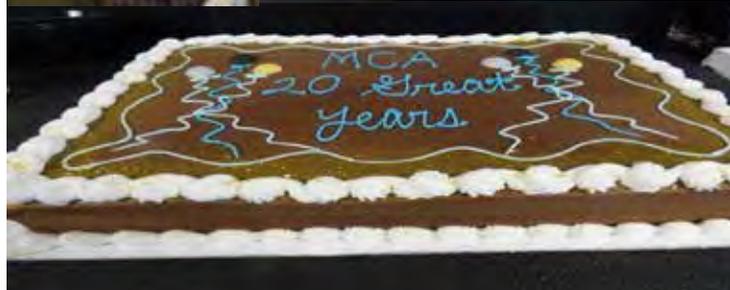


Looking forward to resuming our activities post-COVID

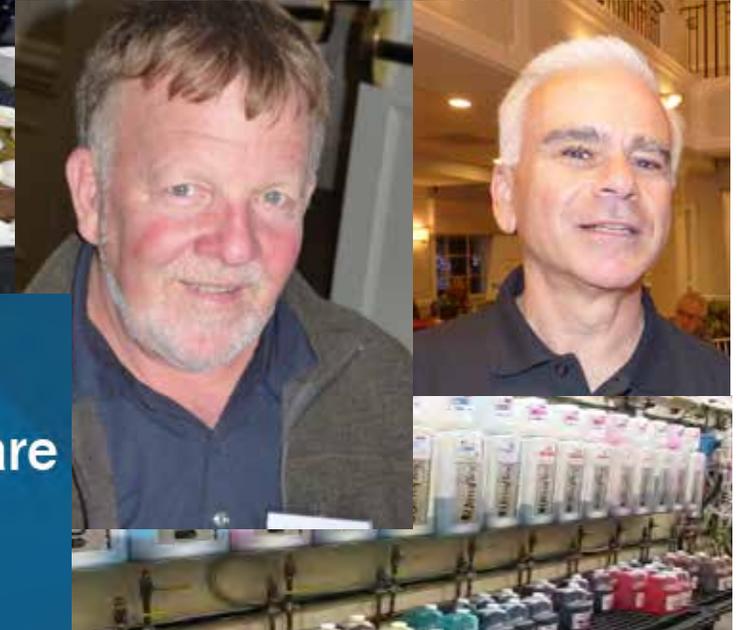




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## NECA NEWS

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*I hope this message finds you well. My thoughts and prayers continue to go out to those affected by this Pandemic. Our industry has fared very well compared to the challenges faced by other industries, and it is sad to think of those whose businesses were not able to continue and the people who are no longer with us.*

*The New England Carwash Association (NECA) has remained positive and hopeful as we plan some activities this year. Our Annual Spring Bus Tour on June 2 was different because of Pandemic restrictions. It was virtual, streamed live, and gave our members the opportunity to ask questions of our presenting sponsors in real time. This format allowed us to span three states, with no in-person participation due to COVID restrictions. This may develop for some interesting bus tours in the future, with a hybrid model of in-person and virtual.*

*I know that many of us are looking to having some in-person activities, catching up with friends and collaborating with industry professionals this year. We are planning, with some cautious optimism, for our annual golf outing on September 14 at the Marlborough Country Club. We also are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to hold our annual fall dinner meeting in person, and offer live streaming of the program to those who cannot attend in person.*

*The NECA is also busy building upon our reputation management efforts. More videos and blogs are being developed that will be advertised via Facebook and on our new landing page, carwashsafe.com. On that site, consumers can find the nearest NECA member carwash with a zip code locator tool. We have found this media can equitably direct our advertising dollars and target each NECA member carwash site since we use the latitude and longitude of every site to deploy ads.*

*In the meantime, stay safe and healthy until we can be together, in person, again.*



Patrick Mosesso, NECA President

## RECAP COMING IN OUR FALL ISSUE!

Virtual Wash  
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# NECA Advocacy: We Watch Your Back

It was hard not to notice the New England Carwash Association's (NECA) proactive advocacy in 2020-2021. NECA invested tens of thousands of dollars to secure professional representation that helped us address Pandemic restrictions on our industry. We were fortunate to receive considerable financial donations from members to help offset the expense of these initiatives.

Less visible, but no less important, is what we do on a regular basis. Since 2009, NECA has contracted with a legislative monitor. Our current monitor is a Doctoral Student at Boston University's Department of Health Law, Policy, and Management. She is tasked with researching online regulatory and legislative activity in each of the states that NECA represents plus monitoring environmental protection agency sites which results in

monthly reports. The number of entries for each state varies with the level of activity and time of year.

The NECA Legislative Committee reviews all reports to determine if anything requires the attention of the Board of Directors. Our Monitor also alerts the Legislative Committee if she has found anything particularly time sensitive that may need to be addressed. The reports are posted on the NECA website. **NC**



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



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# NECA Connects with...

# Virtual Wash Tour



For more than a year, we've missed getting together. In particular, our industry partners, without trade shows and other events, have been looking for an opportunity to show off their latest products and services, and interact with carwash colleagues. On June 2, the New England Carwash Association (NECA) made that happen with a virtual full "bus" (or two!) for live-streamed tours of carwash sites throughout New England, similar to what the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) has done for several years. Unlike traditional bus tours, geography was no barrier. The Association traveled seamlessly, in seconds, from Casco Bay Car Wash in Freeport, ME, to Westerly Car Wash in Westerly, RI, to Balise Riverdale Car Wash in Springfield, MA. The tours were hosted by equipment manufacturers showcasing their systems at each wash. Tour participants were able to interact and ask questions by calling designated onsite volunteers using their cell phones.

## Highlights of the Tour

*\*Sites subject to change after deadline*

- Casco Bay Car Wash, Freeport, ME, is a ground-up, new in-bay facility, designed by Maintenance Tech., Inc., that opened in May. The complex features a D&S IQ Touch Free Machine and a D&S IQ Soft Touch unit. A 3rd bay has been prepared for an automatic expansion, but will currently serve as an express detail center. Other features and products include Unitec Portal TIs; Diamond Shine chemistry including ceramics; Con-Serv Manufacturing water recovery and reverse osmosis equipment; Motor City tire shine; VFD (variable frequency drive) motor control centers; RFID (radio frequency identification) readers; and Premier blowers.
- Westerly Car Wash has an 80-ft tunnel equipped by MacNeil Wash Systems. Other features and products include Simoniz USA Prime pack chemicals and Washify POS pay stations. It is a no prep/towel dry, flex serve, and offers detailing services by appointment.
- Balise Riverdale Car Wash was completely renovated this spring by AutoWash Technologies with all new equipment. It features Motor City, DRB, Hydra-Flex and Petit equip-

ment. They offer express and complete detailing. Balise is recognized as a leader in environmentally-friendly wash technology. Approximately 70 percent of the water used at the carwash is reclaimed, retreated and reused. **NC**

**(Please Note: This article was written at the April publication deadline before we finalized all the details and presented the tour. For more tour details, a recap of the tour and the full list of sponsors, please visit [newenglandcarwash.org](http://newenglandcarwash.org))**

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# The Three Bills at The Barn

By Cookie Anthony

If you quizzed professionals in the carwash business and asked what factors are important for a successful business you would get a myriad of answers. Location, good equipment, effective soap and chemicals, reliable computerization, successful sales programs, efficient vacuums, cost-effective insurance, and of course, good weather would all be mentioned.

## Employees First

But the key ingredient is good employees. You need people who are customer-service oriented, honest, dependable, hard working and knowledgeable. You need people who you can rely upon to greet customers with a consistent, genuine smile and who can access the needs of each vehicle and convey that to your customers.

Well, The Barn Car Wash on Frank Bennett Highway in Saugus has the Donahues. Ten years ago, Billy went to work there. On his first day he found a pigeon with an injured leg. Since then he has worked his way up to being their detail man. But be careful if you visit the wash and ask for Bill Donahue, as Bill's father also works there so there is Bill Sr., Bill Jr. and now Bill the 3rd who is learning the trade. It's all in the family! **NC**

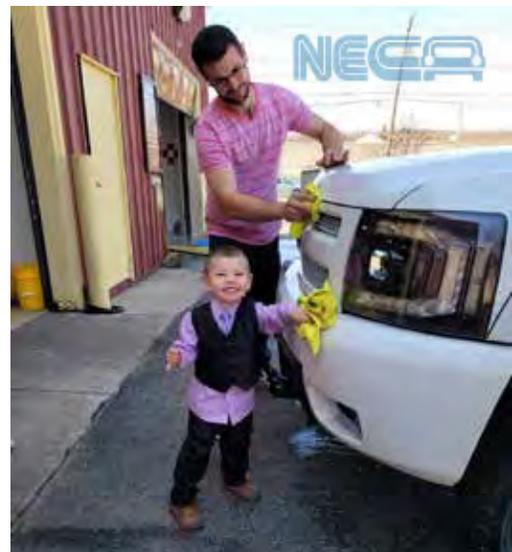
*Cookie Anthony is a former columnist and carwasher. She is credited with authoring the lively column, Tidbits from Cookie. She and her husband Al reside in Massachusetts.*

*\*The Barn Car Washes in Saugus and Revere, MA, are owned by Joseph Copolla.*

*On Bill Donahue Jr's first day working at The Barn Car Wash in Saugus, MA, he rescued a fallen pigeon.*



*He might be a tad overdressed, but that's for sure a carwasher in the making (Bill Jr. and Bill 3rd Donahue).*



*Three generations of William Donahues with the birth of Bill Donahue 3rd.*



*Father and son Donahue proudly stand next to a company truck.*

## WELCOME NEW NECA MEMBERS

### Berkshire Partners

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

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Contact: Nii Ofosu-Amaah

617/227-0050 • [nofosu-amaah@berkshirepartners.com](mailto:nofosu-amaah@berkshirepartners.com)

### EZ Express Car Wash

186 Mast Road, Goffstown, NH 03045

Services: Exterior wash

Contact: Andrew Ezequelle

603/497-8786 • [ezexpresscarwash@gmail.com](mailto:ezexpresscarwash@gmail.com)

### Welcome Back!



### Infinity Car Wash

763 Second Street, Manchester, NH 03102

[www.infinitycarwash.net](http://www.infinitycarwash.net)

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Contact: Michael Balboni, Jr.

603/669-3235 • [mbalboni24@gmail.com](mailto:mbalboni24@gmail.com)

NC

*You all know her.*

*You all admire her.*

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**Let's honor former Starlite Car Wash owner Patti Kaplan in our fall issue.**

*She's a true trailblazer.*



## A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

It's not too early to nominate yourself, or a colleague, for a leadership position in the New England Carwash Association (NECA). The 2022 NECA Board will have openings for Operator Directors. These are one-year terms, renewable by mutual agreement, for a maximum of three consecutive terms. By August 3, 2021, please nominate yourself or a colleague by contacting Mat Paisner, Immediate Past President, at 508/650-1155 x241 or [mat@scrubadub.com](mailto:mat@scrubadub.com)

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

### Board of Directors Eligibility

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



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

### Additional Involvement Opportunities

One or a few people cannot do alone what we can do together! Become an active and engaged member to reap the full benefits of membership. Even if you only have an hour or two to spare, there are opportunities throughout the year to get involved and to get to know (and learn from) other NECA members. Make some phone calls, research a possible member service, help out at the special event, share a best practice, identify a speaker for a program, take photos at a meeting. The possibilities are limitless. Contact the NECA office about these micro opportunities at 781/245-7400 or [info@newenglandcarwash.org](mailto:info@newenglandcarwash.org)

NC

*Automation, consolidation can change misperceptions...*

# Rojo's Shalbey Bullish on Carwashing

By Alan M. Petrillo

John Shalbey, the owner of three Rojo Car Wash locations in Norwood and Walpole, MA, believes that automation and consolidation are the future for the carwash industry, and he's bullish on its prospects for attracting and retaining new customers, especially through unlimited wash plans.

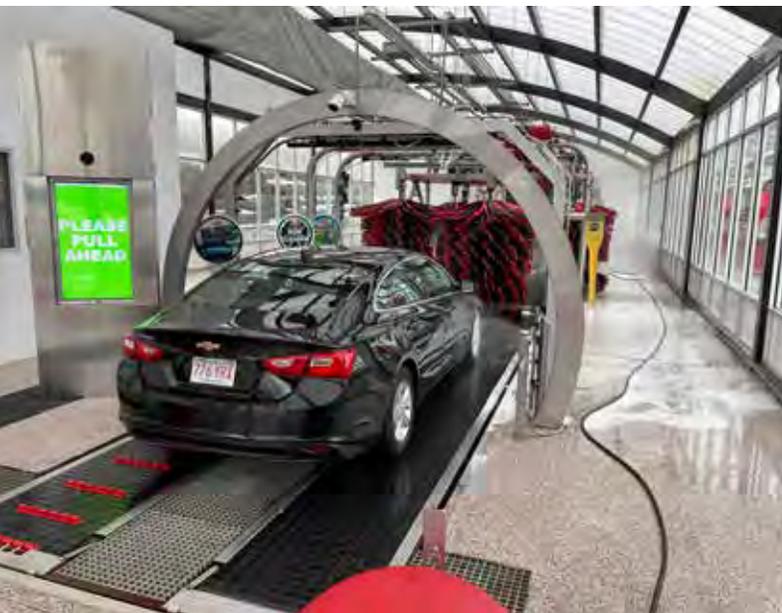
Shalbey's newest carwash site is at 2180 Providence Hwy. in Walpole, a state-of-the-art soft cloth express exterior tunnel

that features a new conveyor belt system, jet heated dryers and Simoniz chemical, including its new Ceramic Sealant. The location has 21 AutoVac vacuums that are free for paying customers, PECO Car Wash Systems equipment in the 140-foot tunnel, and a DRB point of sale (POS) system.

The other two Rojo Car Wash locations are both in Norwood. The carwash at 69 Providence Hwy., has an express exterior tunnel, two inbay automatics, five self-service bays, a gasoline station and a recently-added convenience store.

The 199 Dean Street Rojo site is a full-service carwash that also offers exterior-only cleaning and detailing services.

He noted that at both the Norwood and Walpole express exterior locations, the Rojo Unlimited Diamond Wash Plan includes ultra conditioner,



*The newest Rojo site is in Walpole, MA. Operator John Shalbey believes that automation and consolidation are the industry's future. His newest site took nine months to build and features a Peco rack, Auto Vac vacuum, Simoniz chemical and DRB controls.*

Carnauba Wax and 30-day shine, tire shine, vision clear, underbody wash, rim cleaner, and an all soft cloth wash. At the Rojo Dean Street location, it adds a towel dry, while the Unlimited Platinum Wash Plan at Dean Street includes vision clear, underbody wash, rim cleaner, all soft cloth wash and towel dry.

## Automation Forward

Shalbey maintained that the future in carwashing is in automation and tying that technology into unlimited carwash plans. “The technology is evolving,” he observed. “We (will be) seeing better ways to identify cars for unlimited washing instead of RFID (radio-frequency identification) tags and LPR (license plate recognition). I feel that new technology will be coming out to do this. I (also) believe that we will move to a point where cameras along with AI will be able to identify a car based on unique characteristics. Also, there is talk that the carwash industry may be able to tap into a unique identifier that is built into the vehicle.”

Shalbey thinks the carwash industry needs to do more to change customer perception about carwashes and what they do for the environment. “We need to be more proactive in educating customers and potential customers about the value of using carwashes because they use so much less water than washing a vehicle in the driveway, and reduce contaminants getting into the wastewater system,” he said. “That information needs to be reinforced with them, and we need to alter the customer impression that carwashes scratch and otherwise damage vehicles going through the tunnel. That’s simply not accurate, and we should do a better job in educating people about that fact.”

## Bullish on the Future

The latest Rojo Car Wash at 2180 Providence Highway started being planned in 2018, Shalbey pointed out, and then took a year to obtain approvals from the zoning and planning authorities. “Then there was a lot of site work that we had to do on the 2-1/2 acres,” he said, “and overall construction of the carwash took nine months. We finished up with three pay lanes, and a fourth pay lane at the vacuums for wash customers to enter, or for someone off the street to come in and pay \$5 to use the vacuums.”

There are several schools of thought about free vacs at express exteriors. Shalbey has opted for the middle ground, he said. “Over the years I have heard that one must have free vacs while also hearing how much trash comes with them. I also heard that free vacs cause the vacs to be full so that paying customers cannot access them.

“My strategy also adds value to the wash. If a non-paying customer can get a free vacuum, the paying customer does not associate the free vac as a value add.”

Shalbey is enthusiastic about the possibilities for expansion of Rojo Car Wash. “I’m bullish on a site by site basis,” he said. “We see a lot of people buying vacant land and paying way too much for acreage that is less than an ‘A’ site for carwashing.

“We plan to expand, but will be cautious about where and when, although it likely will be somewhere in New England.” **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](http://www.amazon.com)*

# NECA’S 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

*for fun and charity*

**Tuesday, September 14, 2021**

**Information: [newenglandcarwash.org](http://newenglandcarwash.org)**



# Arlen, Auto Wash Maintenance Transform Raccoon Express Into Modern Facility

By Alan M. Petrillo

Matt Traffie, the owner and general manager of Arlen Company in New Ipswich, NH, is proud of the more than 50 carwashes that he's built or renovated during his career, but said that with each one, he's still learning something new.

Traffie's company is a general contractor that works in a diversity of fields, from residential remodeling to commercial building, but has built up a niche specialty in renovating and building carwashes. "All of our products used are of the highest quality," Traffie said. "We use NUFORM Building Technologies Systems™ wall structures for new carwashes, and the NUFORM Renu System for retrofitted carwashes. We always strive to go above and beyond all of our clients' expectations, and when it comes to carwashes, we realize we not only have to do so for the client, but also for the community."

One of Traffie's recent carwash renovations took what he called, "A nondescript carwash building and transformed it into a vibrant, contemporary structure that has proven to be very attractive to customers."

The renovated carwash was Raccoon Express Car Wash at

495 Lafayette Rd., in Seabrook, NH, Traffie pointed out. Planning for the site renovation began in December of 2015 and in September of 2016 it was completed. "We kept the footprint of the 5,360-square foot building, added decorative roofs on top of the structure, and relined the interior and exterior with PVC liner panel," Traffie noted. "For the equipment in the express exterior tunnel, we went to Auto Wash Maintenance in Malden, MA."

Bob Keane, sales manager at Auto Wash Maintenance, said Auto Wash Maintenance's founder, Ron Campagna Sr., got a call from Paul Fazio, the president of Sonny's, that he had an investor who wanted to purchase a carwash in New Hampshire that could be rehabbed. "Ron asked me to get a builder involved, so I contacted Matt at Arlen Company, while I worked on the layout and the equipment package," Keane said. "The original building had a very square, blocky look to it, but Matt put together some round peaks at the roof level to give the structure a different look, without ripping the original building down."

The old carwash had Hanna-Sherman equipment, Keane pointed out, which his company replaced with Sonny's equip-



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*The Seabrook, NH, site was nondescript and dated, but with the help of Arlen Company and Auto Wash Maintenance the site got a well-needed renovation that is eye catching and unique.*

ment. The conveyor in the tunnel is 109 feet long, he added.

James Fazio, the owner of Raccoon Express Car Wash, said when he bought the carwash, it had washed 16,000 cars a year. "After renovating the building and installing the Sonny's wash equipment, we started washing close to that number a month," Fazio said. "People are showing up just to see the site because it looks great and is very welcoming. It's making such a good first impression that they're stopping in and getting their cars washed."



Fazio said Raccoon Express offers a \$3 basic ride-through wash, and moves all the way up to his top-of-the-line wash, Riley's The Works. "It's a premium wash package that starts with our Radiant Shield 4-Step Paint Sealant Process," he said. "Step one is radiant foam, then radiant shine, radiant seal, and waterfall rinse. Also, tires and wheels are cleaned, and our synthetic hot wax bonds with the car's paint clear coat to improve shine, and our exclusive Vision Max body and glass protectant protects

and our exclusive Vision Max body and glass protectant protects painted surfaces from the destructive effects of the sun and other pollutants, while windshield visibility is improved."

Keane noted that the Raccoon Express Auto Wash building had a narrow equipment room, so Sonny's manufactured custom platforms to store hydraulic units. "The units were 10 feet in the air, with the hydraulic lines coming straight out of the wall," he said. "The high hydraulic units freed up floor space to allow Raccoon Express to store spare chemical drums underneath them," Keane said.

Keane said that there were no big surprises when installing the Sonny's equipment, "because when we work with Arlen Company, we always work well together. We've done dozens of projects with them over the past 20-plus years, and always first figure out how to put the project together efficiently."

Traffie added that he, as well as others, "Think that the end result at Raccoon Express was fabulous. It's really out of this world, very welcoming and a pleasant experience for customers. It was a very enjoyable and a fun job to do from planning to finish." 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](http://www.amazon.com)*



*Auto Wash Maintenance's Bob Keane noted that some innovation was required when making an equipment room work at Raccoon Express.*





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| Mark Kubarek    | Dennis O'Shaughnessy, Sr. |
| Tom Hoffman Jr. | Steve Knightes            |
|                 | Mark Kubarek              |

\*Deceased

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*As New York residents continue to get vaccinations and the state begins the process of opening back up and returning to "normal," I wonder what the "new normal" will look like? During the past year business across the state, the nation and globally struggled to figure out the merry-go-round of changing rules, and regulations from everything from mask wearing to the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) financial support program. I wonder what will go back to the pre-Pandemic normal and what changes that took a foothold will remain.*

*The Pandemic exposed weaknesses in our national response and preparedness to the virus and similarly it exposed potential holes in business readiness to stay informed of changing rules and regulations and be able to adapt quickly. There is definitely a lesson to be learned here for us, as well. There were supply chain issues with suppliers, manufacturers and vendors, some of those are still issues today. Auto manufacturers continue to struggle with procuring computer chips for their vehicle manufacturing, for example. There were, and still are, questions about unemployment insurance and pay for employees out on COVID leave and the rules around paying employees for receiving the COVID vaccinations. The legal environment has never been more complicated and potentially costly for operators.*

*New laws surrounding paid sick leave, COVID vaccination pay, the notification to unlimited customers when you want to make changes as well as the new recreational use marijuana law are hot topics. The new administration has promised revisions to tax laws not only to personal and corporate taxes, but also to capital gains, all of which can have a major impact to small business owners.*

*There are simply too many moving targets to keep an eye on, you need help. The NYSCWA is the resource that can help you find ways to navigate this "new normal." We work with professionals to help our members navigate the ever-changing legal and financial environment. I encourage you to read our lobbyist William Crowell's column and reach out to see how our new relationship with BST financial services can help you find what you're missing that might put more money back in your pocket or save you from costly mistakes. Whether you need simple bookkeeping or a financial deep dive with a CFO, BST can help. See what they offer on page 93.*

*The NYSCWA has been hard at work looking for ways to help support our members. We look forward to seeing you in person, and telling you all about it when we see you at the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) in Atlantic City, October 4-6. I know I am excited to see my fellow carwash friends at the newly-renovated Hard Rock Hotel & Casino right on the boardwalk. It's going to be a great show, so make sure you register at [nrccshow.com](http://nrccshow.com)*

*For some of you, however, we met in late May for the first face-to-face meeting of operators since the start of the Pandemic at Citi Field when the Mets took on the Braves. What a great event and opportunity to connect and enjoy each other again. We were socially*

*distanced, yet close enough to enjoy each other's company. Here's to much more of that in the remainder of 2021 and beyond!*



Walter Hartl, NYSCWA President

Look for a  
 recap on the  
 Zoom event,  
 Hiring During  
 a Pandemic  
 in our fall issue!



zoom

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New York State Car Wash Association  
**Profit and Loss**



January - March, 2021

|                                   |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Income</b>                     |                     |
| Membership Dues.....              | 13,500.00           |
| Promotional Fees.....             | 90.00               |
| <b>Total Income</b> .....         | <b>\$13,590.00</b>  |
| <b>Gross Profit</b> .....         | <b>\$13,590.00</b>  |
| <b>Expenses</b>                   |                     |
| Advertising/Promotional.....      | 48.60               |
| Director Fees.....                | 5,250.00            |
| Legislative Fees.....             | 5,250.00            |
| Office Expenses .....             | 511.42              |
| Postage Expense .....             | 6.60                |
| Printing/Graphics.....            | 45.80               |
| QuickBooks Payments Fees .....    | 509.79              |
| Telephone.....                    | 32.45               |
| <b>Total Expenses</b> .....       | <b>\$11,654.66</b>  |
| <b>Net Operating Income</b> ..... | <b>\$1,935.34</b>   |
| <b>Net Income</b> .....           | <b>\$1,935.34</b>   |
| <b>PAC</b> .....                  | <b>12481.75</b>     |
| <b>NBT Checking</b> .....         | <b>48459.90</b>     |
| <b>Money Market</b> .....         | <b>79232.03</b>     |
| <b>TOTAL CASH ON HAND</b> .....   | <b>\$140,173.68</b> |

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Look for photos and  
 a recap from the  
 First Face-to-Face  
 Carwash Event on the  
 East Coast in 2021  
 in our Fall issue!



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# Understand the New Cannabis Act

By William Y. Crowell, III

On March 31, 2021, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law Chapter 92 of the laws of 2021 Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act which legalized the adult (over 21) use of cannabis. This law was embodied in a 128-page bill that created a comprehensive regulatory and tax framework for medical, adult use and cannabinoid hemp. This legislation includes an amendment to Labor Law section 201-d, which protects employees who use cannabis outside of the workplace from discrimination. Every employer's workplace will at some point be impacted by this new law.

Labor Law section 201-d protects an employee's legal use of cannabis, "... prior to the beginning or after the conclusion of the employees work hours and off the employer's premises and without the use of the employer's equipment or other property." The use, possession, sale or distribution of cannabis at the workplace is still subject to prohibition by the employer.

Labor Law section 201-d makes it unlawful, among other things, for an employer to refuse to hire, to discharge or otherwise discriminate against an individual with regards to compensation, promotion or terms of employment against

an employee 21 years or older for using cannabis outside the workplace and outside of work hours. Work hours include paid and unpaid breaks and meal periods.

Despite the employee's right to use cannabis outside the workplace and work hours, the employer may take action against an employee impaired by the use of cannabis, which requires the employer to demonstrate that the employee "... manifests specific articulable symptoms, while working that decrease or lessen the employer's performance of duties or tasks of the employee's job position or such specific articulable symptoms interfere with an employer's obligation to provide safe and healthy workplace, free from recognized hazards, as required by state and federal occupational safety and health laws." There is no specific definition of articulable symptoms in the statute.

There are issues surrounding cannabis testing which apparently impact its effectiveness. It remains to be seen if a reliable test may be developed as a tool to assist in maintaining a drug-free workplace. Without the availability of a reliable test, employer judgment as to impairment is key. New York City enacted a local law to prohibit employers from pre-employment drug testing.

Carwash owners and operators should review their employment policies and rules for both the workplace and hiring. Cannabis in the workplace will continue to evolve based on court decisions. Employers should be aware of developments and contact their attorney if any issues arise.

## IT TAKES MORE THAN POLICIES TO KNOW



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## NY Forward Loan Fund

Shifting gears to another issue, the 2021-2022 New York State budget included a loan program for small businesses called the New York Forward Loan Fund. This program is available to small businesses with fewer than 50 employees for working capital loans to enable businesses to reopen. The loans are available to businesses that did not receive an SBA Paycheck Protection Loan greater than \$500,000. The loans are repayable within five years with interest. Applications for the New York Forward Loan Fund are available along with further information on the program at the Empire State Development webpage at [esd.ny.gov](http://esd.ny.gov)



William Y. Crowell, III

*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](mailto:wcrowell@dickinsonavella.com)*





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# Don't Gamble Your Wash Away, Stick with Bets You Can't Lose!



By Dave Snyder

Too many people think they are high rollers when they hit the casino, however bad decisions lead to big losses. Since the first time a bet was placed centuries ago, many people have lost everything they own trying to strike it rich. They feel luck is on their side and this next gamble is the one to pay out big — working for a living will be a thing of the past; easy street is just one roll of the dice away.

Every time you skip maintenance and kick the can down the road, because you are “too busy to deal with it right now” or say, “it’s running great,” you gamble with big numbers and stand to lose everything. Summer time is a great time of year in the Northeast to be looking at all the systems behind your wash operations. For many operators, this time of year is a bit slower as road grime on cars from the winter has past just like pollen season. Many operators focus on the main wash equipment for frequent scheduled maintenance yet overlook other crucial systems supporting the wash equipment which could shut the operation down for days if it fails.

When was the last time you looked at your heating system? Do you have it on an annual inspection and service plan with a certified HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) contractor? I ask these questions as I watched claim after claim come in this spring from operators in Texas and other southwestern states who were hit hard with an unexpected deep freeze. In their case, many did not have proper heating systems to protect their tunnels as this type of freeze was of historic levels and coupled with power grid failures. Think about how much it would cost to fix if most of the lines moving water and chemicals through your operation burst from a deep freeze here in the Northeast. Now, add the lost business income to the equation. I can tell you many washers in that region have seen claims with six-digit figures.

In our region, where we can guarantee the thermometer is going to drop below freezing for weeks on end, I strongly recommend setting up an annual maintenance contract with a certified HVAC contractor. I can’t stress this enough, especially if you run the system on natural gas, liquid propane or fuel oil. An annual inspection can save a life should there be a malfunction and the system starts emitting carbon monoxide (CO) in the air which can prove to be deadly. Remember, CO is colorless and odorless. If you are running these systems and have enclosed workspaces or common areas for employees or customers, please install carbon monoxide detectors if they are not currently in place. Lack of maintenance to your heating systems can also lead to unwanted fires shutting you down.

I would be willing to place a large bet on the fact that probably 95 percent of you have never put in any type of backup plan for a heating system failure in the winter. I can hear you saying right now, “Yes, we would get out some salamanders, also known as bullet

heaters, and place them in the tunnel and equipment room.” That’s a good start, but I am still winning the bet as I guarantee you don’t have a formal written plan outlining all of the details of when and why this is done, who is to place them and specifically where. This should all be spelled out prior to this emergency so all staff know what to do. It sounds crazy that it needs to be this formal, but we see one- to two-wash fires across the country annually because of these heaters being placed wrong and not supervised. Inevitably overnight a call comes in for a working structure fire at that location, which generally turns into a total or near total loss.

Unfortunately, most washes also do not put in monitored fire alarm systems to protect their investment. What is your plan to protect from freezing up should there be a prolonged power outage due to a winter storm? In my travels to tour wash operations, I have not seen very many set up with generators. You may not need to run the whole wash, but have you ever thought about putting in a transfer switch and hook up to run at least your heating system and lights? You can get a portable generator just big enough to protect the property from the headaches of burst pipes and more closed days beyond the outage should it happen. Part of sound risk management and great business practices are having formal written Emergency Action Plans in place before a crisis hits.

One other area that can lead to big trouble when neglected is your electrical system. We all know carwashes use a lot of power and have many electronics involved which can be expensive to replace. How often do you bring in a certified electrician to test your panels and systems? When meeting with operators to do safety audits we ask questions such as, “What is the age of your electrical system?” and follow it up with, “When was the last time you had an electrical inspection?”

For a vast majority it has been many years since a true electrical inspection has been done to make sure systems are performing well and as expected. This does not mean you have to go and replace the whole entrance to the building and panels to the system. It means just that, an electrical inspection. It’s best to not roll the dice and just assume your system is in top shape as many things can go wrong over time. An annual inspection can help isolate issues before they become devastating losses.

## Lighting, Surge Protection

Lighting and surge protection for your electrical and computer systems should also be evaluated while you have an electrician onsite. Make sure you have the most up-to-date systems in place that are available to protect these integral systems to keep the doors open and cash flowing in. I see too many claims a year

*Continued on p. 95 ...*



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# The Amazing Super-Power of “The Pause”



By Ray Justice

Learning how to use the simple tool of “pause” can have a major impact on your life. My father-in-law along with many other successful business friends often used the phrase, “**Sleep on it**” when a different thought, or idea, had been put forth. When we “**Sleep on it**” we get a chance to get out of our thoughts for the time being. The next morning, when we wake up, things often feel clearer and sharper. “**Sleep on it**” gives us a long pause allowing clarity to arrive.

In this article I am presenting you the powerful, influential concept of learning how to create a habit of “**Sleep on it**,” but this is the “**Mini Version**.” That would be called, “**The Pause**.”

## The Influential Power of the Pause

By understanding its simplicity, value and the importance of practicing, you can make it an automatic part of who you are.

- *Pause & Breathe*
- *Pause to Respond*
- *Pause to Reflect*
- *Even better, Pause, Breathe and add a smile or a Kind Thought*

(shifting energy in a positive way)

## Questions

- Have you ever interrupted someone and wished you had not?
- Do you have trouble remembering some details of a previous conversation?
- Have you made a quick comment and it turned out to not fit in or make sense?

I have, many, many times. I missed a lot, because of that. Most of the time I was **Reacting**, without pausing or thinking. Often, we are thinking about what we will say next instead of focusing our listening. First, recognize that this is a habit that you can change with intention and practice of creating a new habit. Gaining awareness of our automatic reactions by noticing our conversation habits can be helpful in the long run.

If we choose to, we can practice ahead of time and be instinctively ready. The first few times we do anything new we feel clumsy until we try it and practice it until it feels comfortable and natural. Experiment with writing, or brushing your teeth, while using your opposite hand.

**This is where you begin ...** with a Pause, a Breath, Letting Go and Listening.

- Pause, Breathe, Listen

- Pause, Breathe, Slow and Relaxed, letting go of having to be right or adding what you are thinking in the exact moment.

## Is it Decision Time?

Sometimes, a simple pause while taking a slow, deep, breath is all we need.

Calmness leads to sharp and clearer thinking. And, as you are practicing, say something nice to yourself.

*Be curious, don't judge and criticize, others or yourself*

**Reacting** is a normal part of our life. It is built into us for protection from danger and for times when a quick, beneficial decision needs to be made.

Mainly, to get us out of the way of a danger a reaction can be lifesaving. When the moment is **Imagined**, not a life threat, is when we want to learn to **Pause**, wait for a few seconds, then **Respond**.

## Respond vs. React

A few seconds gives us time to catch our breath so we can respond instead of react. **Reacting is for our personal safety protection.**

Ask yourself, “Does this event fit that description?” “Do you really feel threatened?”

## Benefits of an Automatic Pause

Our body will relax, not be as tight, and irritations will fade away when we use an automatic pause. That energy will be felt by the other person and that is a very good thing. Our imagination sends strong messages to our mind and to our body. With that in mind, practice by imaging yourself having a conversation and respectably pausing, just for a few seconds, instead of mentally practicing the worst case, which can be stirred by **our Imagination**.

## Establish a Pause Practice

A good day-to-day example, when using pause practice, is answering your phone. Just **before saying, “Hello,” pause, take a breath**, letting your mind and body know you are **Calm** while more focused on the present moment. **Add a Smile** as a subtle addition of energy transference.

Just before you start your car, or open the door to go out, or take a drink of water, work on creating a **habit of the Pause**. Just for a couple seconds.

**Confidence** grows with each short moment of **Pause**. Famous words from thousands of years ago, **“Know Thyself:”** You will have less false conclusions by listening better and will quickly learn more. Also, you might not need to defend yourself or apologize as often.

Create a list of reminders for where and when to **Practice**.

**By Doing So, You will increase your:**

- Present Moment Awareness (the Power of Now?)
- Mind-Body Connection
- Curiosity, Interest, Imagination, Intuition & Creativity.

Pause, breathe and be aware of where your body is in this moment.

**The HeartMath Institute**, heartmath.org, teaches the importance of connecting the brain's thoughts with the heart's feelings while getting them in sync. Heart and Mind energy vs. thoughts only.

A **Pause is really a Mini Meditation** and sets the inner stage for listening.

Meditation is learning to focus on one thing, thought or awareness at a time. (The opposite of multi-tasking)

Inner Listening sets the stage for sharper Communication and Connection.

We are more aware by getting us out of our head.

You will begin to recognize your own **Calm, Peaceful Center** and realize it is a comfortable place to go. Add in a **“Thank You”** to yourself because you practiced and have learned to be more tuned in and aware.

Side benefits include, Present Moment Awareness, Better Listening Skills, A Sense of Calm, Less Stressed Thoughts, and an increase in Personal Confidence.

Learning to Pause and Breathe, with a still mind, can be very powerful as to what will show up for you. All you need to do is practice creating a habit.

- **Often a short Pause and a Slow, Relaxing Breath can be enough.**
- **Our Imagination sends messages to our mind, body, and our personal energy.**
- **Allow time to not react, unless in danger, instead to pause, breathe, reflect and respond.** All you need is a few seconds.
- **BE CURIOUS**, don't judge and criticize, that includes yourself.
- **Calmness leads to clearer thinking.**

**“We react to things we don't understand”**

– quote from *Si Fi TV series “Expanse” 350 years into the future*  
*a bunch of people killing each other for something they don't understand.*

## **Pause, Breathe, Respond**

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](http://ThoughtCompass.com) where he offers two Free courses, *Ideas to Wonder* and *A Good Night's Sleep*.



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## **Safety First ...** *continued from page 92.*

from operations being shut down due to lightning strikes and not having the proper protections in place. Once again, is the gamble worth it in the end for such a high loss potential? Is it worth the frustration of potentially days chasing internally just what got fried from all that stray voltage burning up your systems? How long will it take to get the needed parts if they are available?

Even with the best formal maintenance plans in place equipment can fail due to many factors which you may not have control over. There is an additional layer of protection hopefully every operator reading this has in place as part of their insurance package. I can't stress enough the importance of having an Equipment Breakdown Policy in place as part of your insurance package. This coverage is vital to supporting your operations. It will cover things like boilers and pressure vessels, air compressors and hot water heaters depending on their size. Additionally, it may cover carwash equipment, computer systems and phone systems. One thing to note is that most states require boilers and pressure vessels be inspected by commissioned inspectors at set intervals and not doing so can result in fines. Many Equipment Breakdown Policies will cover those inspections as part of the premium. Not only will this type of policy coverage pay to repair or replace the equipment when damage results from a covered loss, it can also cover lost revenue for down time. This added coverage is the bet you can't lose by having it in place should you have a catastrophic failure of your equipment. This would also be a great time of year to review exactly what you have for coverages on your current insurance policy now that I have the gears turning in your head.

My final words of advice are don't be a high roller and risk it all. You have worked far too hard to lose big on a gamble not worth taking. Be sure you leave the gambling for the casinos when you go to the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 4-6 in Atlantic City. While you are there stick to the penny slots as a safer bet to have some great fun with everyone you missed last year when the Pandemic had the world upside down.

NC



Dave Snyder

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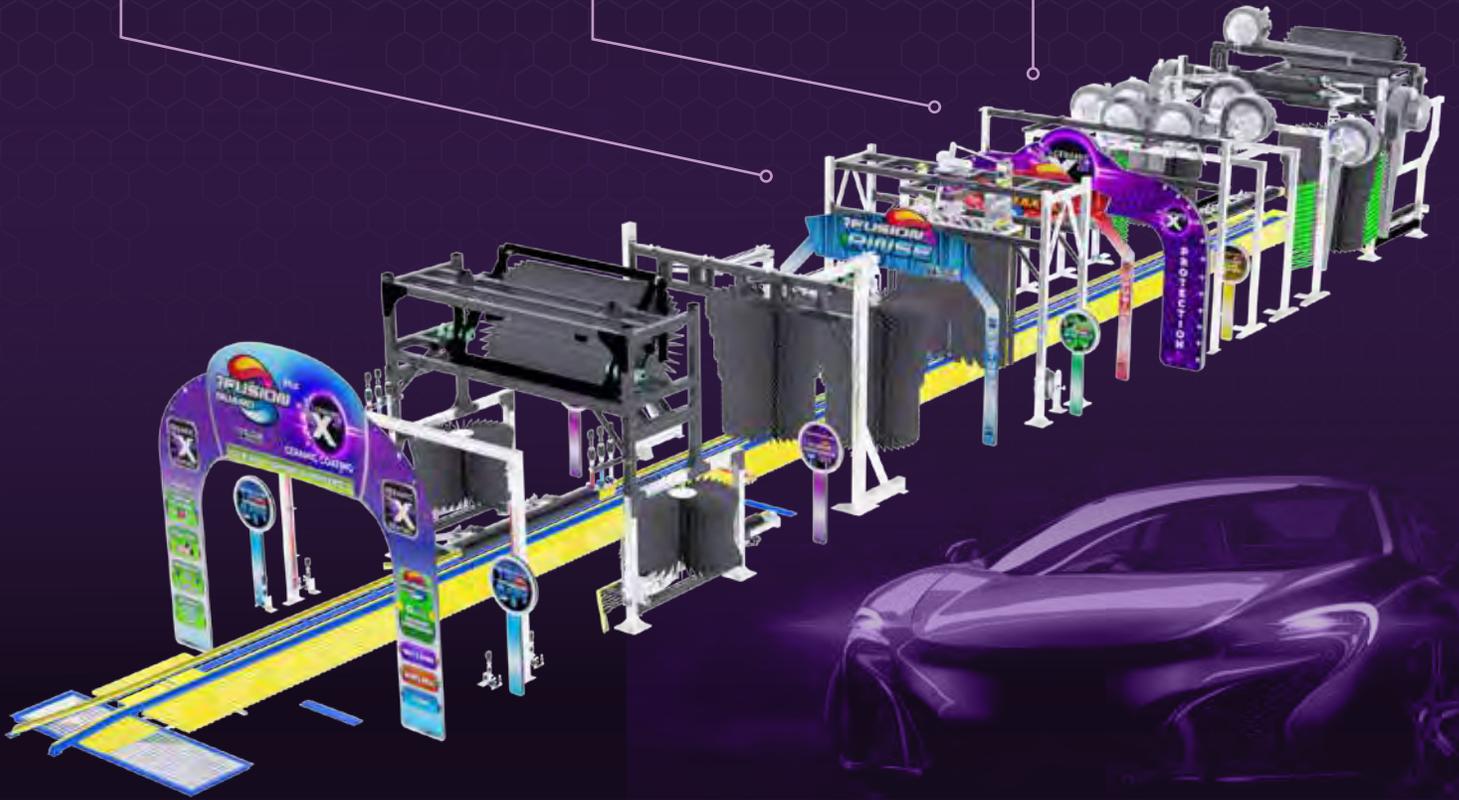
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