

SUMMER 2023 | VOL. 28 NO. 3

northeast carwasher



**Leadership Expert Mark Denton
To Keynote 33rd NRCC**

**Looking for Neutral
& Conveyor Zen**

**Building a Family Plan,
Not a Business Plan**

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northeastcarwasher.com

You can see from our cover story interview on page 14 that the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) board has selected its 2023 Keynote Speaker for the 33rd NRCC, October 2-4, at the Atlantic City Convention Center. A lot of work, and consideration, goes into this decision. The board will never make every attendee happy, but we try to provide a speaker who is insightful, relatable and motivational. And I know we have found that in renowned sailor, award-winning leadership expert and celebrated presenter, Mark Denton.

Mark hails from England. He has competed in countless races and sailed more than 80,000 miles across the worlds' most hostile oceans. He is a pro at navigating turbulent water in life and business, and is incredibly skilled in bringing a team together to overcome obstacles and achieve success. His message and story will no doubt resonate with us all, while inspiring us to strive for greater accomplishments.

To get a little taste of Mark and his Keynote, visit nrccshow.com and listen to the clip we have on his presentation. And, make sure you carve out the time to attend the show. Bring some key personnel with you. I know it will be well worth your time and investment.

Grateful for the Pit Bull

But from one exceptional human to my long-time freelancer, also exceptional in his own right, Al "Pit Bull" Petrillo. Many of you have spoken to Al, or avoided his calls, over the years and for the former I thank you. For the latter, well... you missed out.

I first met Al back in my National Trade Publication/Professional Carwashing & Detailing magazine days. He was the editor of the ever-so-quirky, and ill-fated, Ground Water Age magazine (yes, there really is a trade publication for just about every industry)! Several years my senior, I wanted to soak up any publishing knowledge he had and never imagined that he would one day be my Contributing Editor. Three years into publishing (some 25 years ago) Al joined a then two-person team and hasn't looked back. He has written for several other publications and periodicals since breaking out as a freelancer, and has even published six non-fiction books and three historical mystery/thrillers, but I just know his heart has always been with carwashing! How could it not?

Al wanted to share a few words before starting the next chapter of his life as a retired former "Pit Bull." (He named himself, by the way.)

*"It's with mixed emotions that I am hanging up my pen, pencil, typewriter and computer as Contributing Editor of the *Northeast Carwasher*. I've thoroughly enjoyed writing for the mag for more than 25 years, interviewing and talking with some of the finest, smartest and funniest people in the carwashing industry. I'd like to do it for another 25 years, but that's not in the cards, so it's time to walk away.*

"I wish all of you who I've met, either personally, on the phone, over ZOOM or Microsoft Teams, the very best in all your personal and business endeavors, and hope you have continued success in all you do. Ciao, Al."

Thanks, my friend, for your dedication and ability to love, nurture and cover this unique industry with gusto and that laugh of yours that speaks volumes. You will be missed, but never forgotten.



Suzanne L. Stansbury
Editor/Publisher

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Prudente Returns to Yankee Spring Training

Madison Car Wash's Mike Prudente was a Yankee again — at least for five weeks! The long-time carwasher and Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) Treasurer has been volunteering at the New York Yankees spring training camp at the George M. Steinbrenner Field, a 31-acre complex in Tampa, FL, for the last six years. "This is the first time that the stadium has been sold out for every game," said Prudente.

Prudente, who is an A Game Customer Service Rep in charge of the fans in a section of the stadium, even got a visit from fellow CWONJ Board Member Tom Fuller and his daughter while on the job. "This is an awesome job," said Prudente. "You get to watch baseball every day and you're surrounded by people who love it as much as you do and actually think these are real games!"

It's to be noted that it's not all work, work, work for Prudente while in Florida. He gets to play golf at club's like Fox Hollow Golf Club in N. Tampa and dine at renowned Bern's Steak House, but let's face it, the gig is REALLY great!

NC

Fellow Customer Service Reps, Tom, Ed and CWONJ's Mike Prudente at the George M. Steinbrenner Field, Tampa, FL.



The newest Colonial Car Wash.

Making Progress

Although he broke ground last summer, Schenectady operator Dave Fusco hasn't opened this site just yet. He is hopeful that he can start washing cars this fall, however. We plan to feature this site in our next issue and explore the premise behind the new build and get a sample from Capital District operators about this market and the industry's overall health.

NC

Spring Lines Galore!

At College Park Car Wash in College Park, MD, this spring pollen line is literally to the street. This photograph was taken on the first day of this region's pollen season, according to operator Dave DuGoff.

Pollen season typically runs from March through June when tree pollen is most abundant. Grass pollens can be high from June through August and even into September. According to Lauren Casey, a meteorologist with Climate Central in a CNN report, allergies are heightened in 2023 due to climate change which is resulting in an earlier and longer growing season for the plants that make pollen. This is only good news, though, for the carwash industry!

NC



WASH VOLUME INDEX

The first quarter of 2023 compared to 2022 for my contributors was again, ugly, with upstate New York taking the biggest hit at -26. The Jersey Shore came in next at -21, New England at -14.8 due to not much of a winter and no salting, and then our Mid-Atlantic contributor reported -6, but with a strong start to their pollen season. Let's keep our fingers crossed that pollen is abundant, as predicted, and the season runs longer than it typically does. Ever resilient, my contributors and the industry as a whole will weather any storm (or lack thereof) and come out the other end. Of this I have no doubt.

NC

Thanks to input from Doug Rieck (NJ), Dave DuGoff (MD), Steve Weekes (NY) and Dave Ellard (MA).

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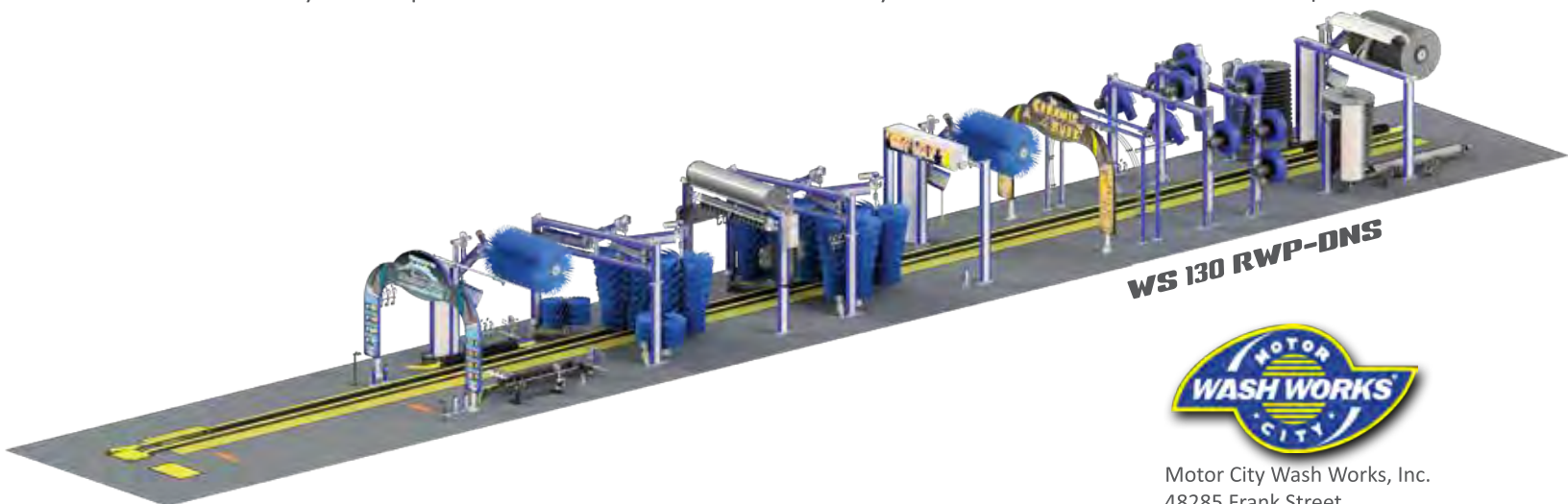
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Outstanding!!!



Congratulations to the team at Benny's of Baton Rouge, LA, long-time industry icons and friends of the *Northeast Carwasher* on being named Company of the Year by the Baton Rouge Business Report and Junior Achievement at the Baton Rouge Business Awards and Hall of Fame Gala in March. The company was acknowledged for its ability to embrace risk while overcoming challenges on the road to success.

Well deserved to their entire team!

OPW's ICS and Rinsed Join Forces

ICS, part of OPW's Vehicle Wash Solutions, Bethlehem, PA, is a non-exclusive partner with Rinsed, to create a more streamlined on-boarding process for vehicle wash customers, said a company press release.

Rinsed, a customer relationship management software company for the vehicle wash industry, pairs with ICS' point-of-sale technology to help carwash owners reduce credit card declines and customer churn, while increasing online sales with forms optimized for every device, said the release. Together, ICS and Rinsed can help deliver cost savings by eliminating API-access fees typically required by most point-of-sale vendors. "We are excited to partner with Rinsed," said General Manager of ICS Payment Solutions and Controls, Kevin Ahnert. "We're committed to providing our customers with everything they need to succeed, and this relationship with Rinsed is further proof." He added, "In addition to the Rinsed software portfolio, our marketing arm, The Agency at ICS provides an ideal way to capitalize on this robust data collection with website design, digital marketing campaigns as well as through social media and reputation management."

To learn more visit icscarwashsystems.com, opwvws.com and rinsed.com

D & S Hires Bill Linzy



D & S Car Wash Supply, High Ridge, MO, has hired industry veteran Bill Linzy as a member of its direct sales organization, according to a company press release. As National Truck & Fleet Manager he will focus on client acquisition for the company's IQ MAX large vehicle wash system that was introduced in 2021.

Linzy's career spans three decades with an emphasis on the truck/fleet segment, said the release. "Bill has a deep knowledge and is well respected within the Truck & Fleet Wash field," said Brad Quay, D & S's Vice President of Sales. "His expertise and numerous contacts in this segment will build on the initial success of our mission to establish the IQ MAX as the premier automatic truck wash solution," added Quay.

For more information visit dscarwash.com

Express Wash Concepts Makes Inc. Magazine List

Express Wash Concepts (EWC), Columbus, OH, is ranked #122 on *Inc. Magazine's* 2023 Inc. 5000 Regionals Midwest list with a two-year revenue growth of 131 percent, according to a company press release. The regional list ranks the fastest-growing private companies in 12 Midwestern states, including Ohio. EWC is the only carwash company to be recognized on this year's Midwest list, said the release. "We are honored to once again be featured alongside 11 other Central Ohio businesses as one of the Midwest's fastest growing companies," said John Roush, EWC Chief Executive Officer.

EWC currently operates 80 express carwashes across five states and five brands. It plans to open 15 additional locations in 2023. "We could not continue this level of growth without the hard work and dedication of our 850+ team members, and the support of our incredible customers."

For more information visit expresswashconcepts.com

Express Wash Concepts Promotes Van Bremen

Express Wash Concepts (EWC), Columbus, OH, has appointed Craig Van Bremen as its Chief Development Officer (CDO), according to a company press release. Van Bremen previously served as the company's Vice President of Development and Acquisitions for Green Clean Express Auto Wash, the company's Virginia and north Carolina-based express tunnel carwash brand. He will now spearhead the company's multi-brand



Craig Van Bremen

Continued ...

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Newsworthy ... continued

development strategy, including site selection, real estate development and construction, and data analysis initiatives. “We are pleased to welcome Craig to this well-deserved, expanded role,” said John Roush, Express Wash Concepts Chief Executive Officer. “Craig’s remarkable carwash industry development track record, and demonstrated commitment to excellence, will be critical to our continued success as we expand into existing and new markets.”

Van Bremen, who has his Bachelor’s degree in aviation from Ohio University and an MBA from the University of Virginia, is a U.S. Air Force Veteran having served in both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

For more information visit expresswashconcepts.com

Flying Ace Raises Money For Food Pantry



Flying Ace Express Car Wash, Mason, OH, celebrated its 14th express carwash location grand opening with 10 days of free carwashes alongside a monetary donation campaign for the Mason Food Pantry, said a company press release. Throughout the grand opening here Flying Ace gave away 3,039 washes at a retail value of more than \$54,000. It also collected \$21,628.63 in monetary donations for the Mason Food Pantry, the largest grand opening donation total in the company’s history, said the release. “Our ultimate goal with our Grand Opening donation campaigns is to make significant, positive change in each community we operate in, and we find we do that best when we support great, hyper-local nonprofit organizations such as the Mason Food Pantry,” said John Roush, Express Wash Concepts CEO and Moo Moo Express Car Wash Founder.

Mason Food Pantry was founded in 2002 with the mission of empowering individuals. The Pantry also offers healthcare products, household items and toiletries for individuals and families who have come into financial hardship and need assistance.

For more information visit
masonfoodpantry.org and flyingacecarwash.com

Splash Continues Expansion

Splash Car Wash, Milford, CT, recently held grand openings at its Brockport and Spencerport, NY, sites (formerly Buckman Car Washes), according to a company press release. As part of the re-openings, customers who made a donation to the Foodlink of Rochester received a free wash. Foodlink is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing both the root cause and effects of food insecurity throughout the Greater Rochester market and Finger Lakes region.

Both sites underwent extensive renovations before reopening.

The company is poised to open four new sites in Oswego, Le-ray and Fairport, NY, and Milford, CT. It has four more sites under construction in Massachusetts, Vermont and Connecticut.

For more information visit
splashcarwashes.com and foodlinkny.org

EverWash Acquires JetSpring, Partners with Acquire Video

Everwash, Philadelphia, PA, a leading carwash membership platform, has acquired JetSpring’s carwash customer service division, according to a company press release. JetSpring is a full-service contact center that offers digital communication and customer support solutions for the carwash and higher education sectors. This acquisition means that their team of live call center agents and brand-specific chatbots are being repackaged and offered to the carwash industry as EverWash Assist, a 24/7 customer support service.

The company’s omniX Labs, an advanced vehicle analytics and AI platform, has partnered with Acquire Video, Oklahoma City, OK, developers of TunnelMax-HD™ carwash video surveillance solution, according to another press release. Through this partnership, Acquire Video camera systems will be omniX-ready. By combining Acquire Video’s camera equipment with omniX’s patented AI solution, carwash operators can use their security camera video feeds to collect real-time and actionable sales and operational insights, said the release.

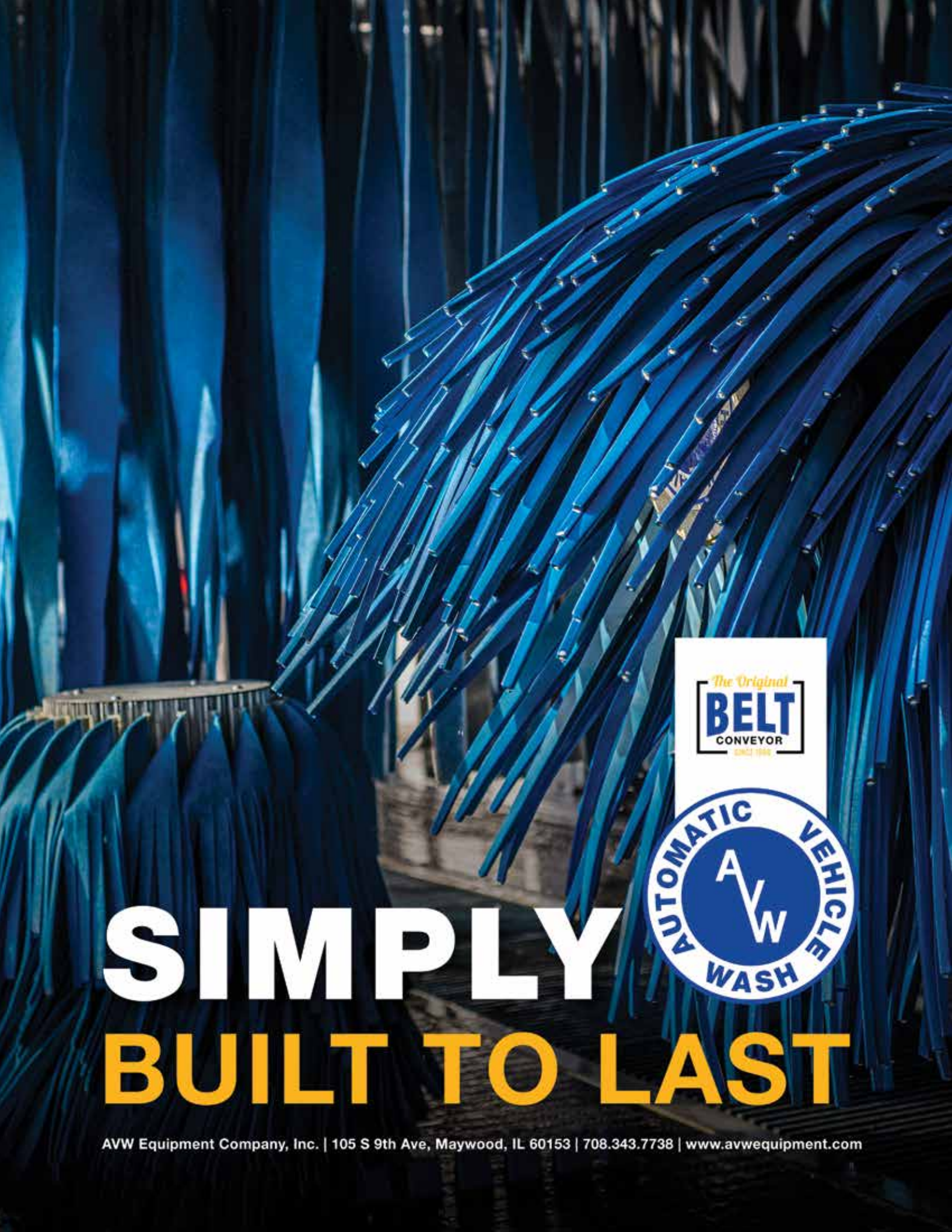
For more information visit
omnixlabs.com, everwash.com and jetspring.com

Kleen-Rite Acquires Laurel Metal Products

Kleen-Rite Corp., Columbia, PA, the largest family-owned carwash distributor in the country, has acquired Laurel Metal Products, Skokie, IL, a leading manufacturer of carwash vending machines, said a company press release. The company specializes in drop-shelf vending.

According to the release, Kleen-Rite and Laurel Metal Products have been partners for several decades. The move will streamline the process of building and stocking Laurel products, create opportunity for Kleen-Rite to use their resources to expand the Laurel brand, and be an important part of Kleen-Rite’s overall strategy of continuous improvement in the carwash industry. Laurel’s management will stay in place as will its long-term employees.

For more information visit kleenrite.com



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Leadership Expert Mark Denton To Keynote 33rd NRCC

By Suzanne L. Stansbury

Keynote Speaker Mark Denton is an authentic leader, gifted storyteller and fallible human being. He is also an accomplished sailor and skipper who began his career in sailing in his early '20s, and hasn't looked back. His keynote, "Navigate the Storm: Leadership & Teamwork" will teach us all how to be safe, happy and fast when tackling turbulent waters and challenging times just as he did when he undertook the toughest round-the-world yacht race, the BT Global Challenge.

SS: Let's start out with a little background on you, Mark.

You hail from England and obviously have an affinity for the water and sailing, but you didn't actually start sailing until you were 21 when your dad encouraged you to take up the sport after you showed interest in an article on the Tall Ships? Is that correct? Tell us more.

MD: Yes, I got into the sport pretty late compared to many, and it was my Dad who first encouraged me to sign my life away and join a team taking part in the Tall Ships Race in 1994! But



Mark Denton

I loved the adventure and the camaraderie of it all and my life changed as a result.

SS: How many hours on the water did you spend before entering your first race?

MD: Well, for that particular race hardly any! We literally joined the ship and the next day we took the start line and just learnt as we went, thankfully, under the watchful eye of some great sailors.

SS: It was 10 years before you earned your skippering credentials, correct? What is involved in earning that designation?

MD: I actually got them in 6 years, but in order to climb that ladder it's a series of training weeks, assessments and time at sea to get your ticket, similar to becoming an airline pilot. It just all happens a bit slower on the ocean!



Keynote Speaker Mark Denton was the captain of a team that participated in the BT Global 2000-2001 Challenge, the world's toughest round-the-world yacht race.

SS: Is the race you speak of in your keynote, Navigating the Storm, the BT Global 2000-2001 Challenge, the worlds' toughest round-the-world yacht race? How did you prepare mentally and physically for that race?

MD: It is the 'world's toughest' and just daunting in so many ways for everyone taking part. We as skippers get selected nine months before the start and then allocated to our newly formed teams. And from then on it's 110 percent focus trying to get your yacht and team ready to take it on. However, our teams are made up from a diverse set of amateurs, 70 percent who've never sailed before! And they are all over the world trying to earn enough money to take 10 months off to do the race! So we probably only had three weeks physically together over that time to prepare. But everyone had a vested interest to be in the best shape possible and we all had fitness plans that we were following remotely.

One of the most important factors for me was sharing the load – everyone had different aspects they were in charge of – food, clothing, equipment maintenance, sail making, navigation, etc. that they had to master before the start. So I guess it was just controlling the controllables as much as we could and we were certainly one of the more prepared teams come the start which is always good for the mindset!

SS: How does being "safe, happy and fast" factor into your success?

MD: They were our Team Values and I feel we validated their value on our culture throughout the race. And I also think they are applicable for any team or business to focus upon to help you "navigate" your own storms.

'Safe' is all about creating an environment where people are not just physically safe, but also psychologically safe; safe to speak up, make a suggestion, try something out, or ask for help, without fear of consequences.

'Happy' because happy people are more productive. Look after them and they'll look after you – and your customers. So whatever is getting in the way of that is always worth addressing. And 'Fast' is about efficiency and the importance of learning quicker than the competition – because slow boats never win.

SS: You tout teamwork as a huge part of that success. How do you get a team of entry-level employees, or a diverse group of sailors, to work together?

MD: Create an environment where they want to work together rather than just having to. And there's a number of things we as leaders need to do to achieve that – I'll share all in October!

Continued...



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Leadership Expert Mark Denton to Keynote 33rd NRCC ... continued

SS: How has the business degree you earned prior to jumping into sailing helped you “navigate the storms” you have faced in life and on the sea?

MD: It helped me think widely about how to lead this, by looking at it as a business rather than just a team taking part in a race. Yes, there was a task to be completed, but also a big sponsor to keep happy, a crew to keep motivated, the media to keep fed with good content, the organizers to keep sweet so they would service your boat first when we came in! It helped me see a bigger picture which is important.

SS: You are a “leadership expert.” What were the stepping-stones to getting you on this career path?

MD: It was organic really that I started to get involved in Leadership Development post the race. Primarily because I had learnt a lot, was fascinated about the topic, and wanted to share that learning with others through my speaking so that they too could benefit.

And that then spilled over into consulting, and over the last 20 years I’ve worked with some of the world’s greatest organizations to help them be more resilient through improved leadership,

especially in times of change. I’ve also worked with some brilliant people and providers. (There have been) many stepping stones along the way, but I feel I probably qualify for the 10,000 hours necessary in order to be considered an expert at anything!

SS: In your years of consulting and educating what are the recurring issues entrepreneurs face in achieving their goals? And, how can they be overcome?

MD: Being an entrepreneur is a big challenge, especially in this environment, so there are many potential issues. One of the biggest is not letting go, trusting others to do what you can’t or shouldn’t be doing, to free you up to be strategic. If you’re too stuck in the day to day you can miss what’s changing and get left behind.

SS: Why is it important to really care about other people in life and business?

MD: Because it’s what makes the world go round. And I don’t think you can make that happen unless you care. One of the first things we asked each team member was ‘why are you here?’ because everyone has a dream they are chasing. And I just thought if somehow I could do my bit to help them satisfy that while also delivering the “Team dream” they would be that much more motivated.

SS: You also say that winning demands creativity. Can you explain?

MD: It’s key to the competitive advantage. You have to differentiate yourself from the competition to stay relevant and ahead, and creativity creates that differentiation. We were always asking ‘what can we do to make the boat go faster’ and we always came up with new ideas that we then tried out. That’s creativity.

SS: What do you hope to impart to our attendees?

MD: I’m there to help them navigate the storm. Buckle up; it’s going to be one hell of a ride!

NC

Suzanne L. Stansbury is the Editor/Publisher of the Northeast Carwasher magazine.

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East Coast Presence at The Car Wash Show™

Not everyone from the Northeast can make the journey to Las Vegas when The Car Wash Show™ is there, but we ran into this group of characters and were very glad we did. The Car Wash Show™ was May 8-10, at the Las Vegas Convention Center. It attracted some 420+ companies and 9,000+ attendees, according to ICA CEO Eric Wulf.

Hall of Fame inductees were long-time industry friends and California operators Frank Dorsa of Classic Car Wash and Manuel “Manny” Lozano of Lozano’s Car Wash. International Carwash Association President, Justin Alford of Benny’s in Baton Rouge, LA, shared a moving tribute to their friendship and industry impact. **NC**

**The Car Wash Show™ 2024 is
May 13-15 in Nashville.**

Continued ...



*Amanda and Terri
Kubarek of K & S
Car Wash (NY).*



*Unitec Sales Manager,
Eastern US/Canada
Bob Rossini.*



*College Park's
Ben DuGoff (MD).*



*Cross Insurance's Meeghan Sheckler and
The Clean Ride's Bill Howell (NH & NJ).*

*AutoWash Technolo-
gies' Chris Zona (MA).*



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The Car Wash Show™ ... continued



The Paisner Family was out in force: (L to R) Alex, Bobby, Ian, Mathew and Danny (MA).



Tameric Car Wash Equipment's Richie Bou-dakian (NJ).

New York State Car Wash Association President Walt Hartl.



NRCC and MCA Board Member Dave DuGoff and Foam & Wash's Todd Baright (MD & NY).



Steve and Sebastian Weekes and Mackenzie Weekes Wilock (NY).

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Attracting, Cultivating & Retaining Emerging Carwash Talent

By Lanese Barnett

I have always been a clean freak. Since proudly driving my first white Ford Mustang, my car was no exception. Despite a clean proclivity, I still recall my bewildered reaction when I first heard “car wash” regarding my burgeoning career as a college graduate turned agency publicist. I audibly scoffed. And I’m not alone. If you didn’t grow up in the industry or have exposure to the depth and breadth of career opportunities in the carwash space, you may have had the same reaction I did. Thirteen years later, suffice it to say, I think differently.

As the carwash sector continues to gain private equity interest and significant financial investment, we are seeing an increasing awareness of the industry as a viable and lucrative career, attracting more top talent to the space. That said, on a local level, many operators are still on the search for entry-level employees to train and rise up into leadership positions.

I recently spoke with a colleague who owns and operates a carwash chain in the Chicagoland market, Driven Car Wash,

where he talked about their shift in hiring practices to attract qualified candidates new to the industry, while also fostering a growth mindset to encourage continued employee advancement opportunities. As they scale the brand, cultivating a promote-within program is paying off.

Attracting Talent

Here’s what Director of Talent and Training Leo Martinez at Driven Car Wash shared, “We learned about an internship program designed to expose high school kids to different jobs to help them figure out what they may want to pursue vocationally. It’s sponsored by our local school district, and though unpaid, it offers college credits. For our expanding company, hiring is a constant need. We enrolled in the program, and a light bulb went off. We realized we needed to put more emphasis on educating our potential pool of employees, as well as

Continued ...



The advertisement shows a car wash and coin laundry at night, illuminated with vibrant rainbow-colored LED lighting. The car wash has signs for "COLORWASH", "EDGE", "CAR WASH", and "COIN LAUNDRY". The coin laundry has a sign for "G&G INDUSTRIAL LIGHTING". The car wash has signs for "CLEAN CAR EXIT" and "23 \$29 ULTIMATE WASHES". The coin laundry has a sign for "G&G". The car wash has a sign for "EDGE Outdoor Perimeter Lighting & Music Synchronization". The coin laundry has a sign for "G&G". The car wash has a sign for "EDGE". The coin laundry has a sign for "G&G". The car wash has a sign for "EDGE". The coin laundry has a sign for "G&G".

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existing, about the amazing career opportunities our company and the carwash space has to offer.”

Martinez went on talk about how the company continues to develop and evolve its comprehensive employee training and empowerment strategy.

Hiring Talent

An important part of the interview process is intentionally highlighting and setting the tone that the company values and seeks to provide continued career advancement opportunities for its employees. Following a multi-pronged hiring protocol takes time, but is an investment well worth it.

For Customer Service Attendants (CSA's), the company uses a three-step interview process.

- 1. Phone screen by the Director of Talent and Training** to share more about the role, the company culture, values and standards and convey encouragement of internal growth. Inquire about the candidate's career interests and long-term goals. *Also done by a manager or person in charge of hiring.
- 2. Connect with the Director of Operations** to discuss aptitude for the technical skills and day-to-day requirements of the role.

- 3. In-person interview with the Site Level Manager** for the final hiring decision. If approved, the Director of Talent and Training sends an offer letter to the candidate. *Most do not send offer letters to line workers, but why not?

Training Talent

After getting promising new employees in the door, training begins. Luckily today, there are more easy-to-use resources available to store, manage and monitor the progress of training materials. For example, Driven Car Wash uses an online platform to house training materials, including educational videos, quizzes, company guidelines, and policies as well operational checklists, incident reports, schedules, etc. Establishing standard operating procedures, clearly outlining the information, and making it accessible helps employees understand what is expected of them and provide the necessary tools for success. Supervisors can set up alerts regarding task execution and productivity.

But training isn't static. It is an ongoing process. Encouraging and rewarding continued curiosity, lifelong learning, and a practice-makes-perfect approach can help raise the bar across

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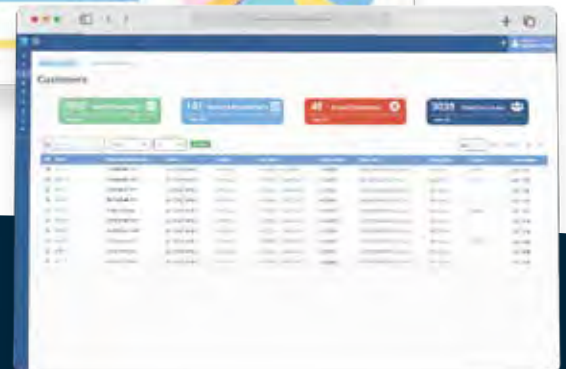
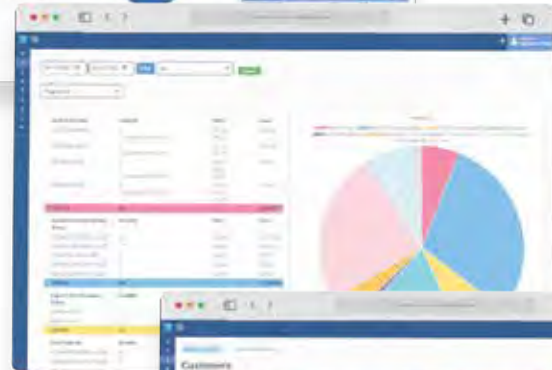
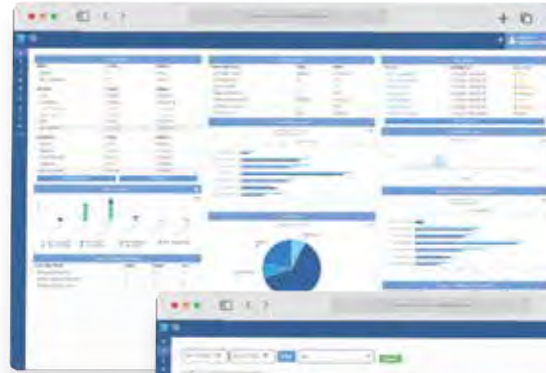
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the organization, with high standards for staff performance being the company standard. Several site managers at Driven were initially hired as a CSA or supervisor and worked their way up.

Retaining Talent

Like many carwashes, Driven experiences its share of seasonal employees, often a result of school resuming after the summer months. Drawing on inspiration from that high school internship program, Driven developed its own Internal Rotation Program designed to showcase the larger career opportunities within its company that staff may have never considered as long-term career possibilities. Staff members can apply for or be nominated to a six-month-long development program in Sales and Marketing, Accounting and Finance, or Real Estate Development, where they shadow a senior staff member once a week and are invited to sit in on weekly leadership meetings to gain exposure and valuable experience to the inner workings of other areas of the business. Additionally, the team is looking to bring on a summer engineering intern to work on "the perfect blower configuration" as a project.

As the boots on the ground, Driven asks for suggestions and tips for marketing, sales, operations, you name it, from its staff. To encourage honest feedback and provide teams with addition-

al growth and support measures they also offer an anonymous employee satisfaction form to better understand how the leadership team is doing from the employee's point of view.

Feeling seen, valued and productive at work can make a huge impact on the company culture buy-in, desire to pursue advancement within the organization, and the relationship employees have with their workplace. A leadership team that practices curiosity and authentically models respectful communication in efforts to continually improve builds trust and strengthens the relationship an employee feels with their company and, thus, their likelihood to stay. And, in my opinion, that is the most important part in how we will continue to attract new talent to the space and build up future leaders from within.

NC

Lanese Barnett is senior vice president of business development at Amplify Car Wash Advisors, a leading advisor of carwash chains nationwide. With a mission of creating wealth for clients, Amplify helps carwash owners sell, partner or grow using practical experience as operators coupled with expertise in mergers and acquisitions and capital advisory services. Keep up to date on the latest carwash M&A activity with Car Wash M&A, The Podcast Lanese hosts monthly and sign up for Car Wash M&A, The Newsletter at AmplifyWash.com. You can reach Lanese at LBarnett@AmplifyWash.com



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Rates, Approvals and Handling the Curve

By Michael Ford

One of the most powerful ways to combat inflation is to raise interest rates, which helps slow down the availability of cash to be lent. Typically, these interest rate hikes are done when the economy is performing well.

Although many experts and financial institutions claim that the market is not entering a recession, huge layoffs in the tech industry, continued out-of-control inflation, high market losses, and housing market volume drops seem to suggest otherwise.

The goal of the Fed is to stabilize inflation and execute a “soft landing,” that is, slow inflation without causing a recession. Historically, when the Fed has raised rates quickly, an economic downturn has been unavoidable. In this case, it looks like the Fed waited too long to raise rates. Now the Federal Reserve Board is having a hard time controlling themselves with rate increases because of their past missteps. The real problem is, these politicians/economists just don't have a clue as to the real impact of their reckless actions. They don't understand, or even worse, don't care about how a 5+ percent increase in interest rates can impact small business. They seem to forget that small business owners employ almost half of the nation's workforce.

The Impact of Interest Rate Hikes

Beside a recession, interest rate hikes can impact small businesses and consumers in many ways.

1. More Expensive Business Loans

Carwash owners searching for financing will notice the higher rates. Operators with Lines of Credit, variable rate SBA 7a loans and business credit cards are being impacted the most.

Lines of Credit: Variable interest rates are common with lines of credit, which means for those with large balances the rate hikes lead to noticeable increases in payments.

Business Credit Cards: Similar to lines of credit, business credit cards carry variable rates tied to the prime rate, which in turn are impacted by increases in the federal funds rate. The increase in rate will be even more dramatic for those playing the 0 percent balance transfer game. This is when business owners rely on continuing to transfer balances from one credit card to the other taking advantage low rate/0 percent introductory offers. This strategy can work for a short time. However, when the rate offers stop because of an economic slowdown, the impact of going from a 0 percent interest rate to 24.99 percent can be devastating.

SBA 7a Loans: The Small Business Administration 7a loan is a very popular loan program used by both new and experienced

carwash operators. The SBA 7a Loan offers both fixed and variable rates. In most cases, the loans are tied to the prime rate. When the prime rate is increased, the impact on payments/cash flow can be massive. On a \$5 million loan, a 5 percent increase in rate would make annual payments go up by over \$200,000. Now that hurts!

2. Consumer Buying Power Decreases

Since current interest rates are higher, consumers have lower buying power. Decreasing consumer buying power helps limit inflation, but unfortunately, consumer buying power is collateral damage when it comes to overcoming inflation. When interest rates go up, consumer debt costs increase as well. For example: When a consumer has a home equity line of credit or a credit card, those payments will go up as interest rates rise. When consumers face higher costs on their credit, it only makes sense that their spending on discretionary items will decrease.

3. Business Credit Tightens

When rate hikes occur, business lending tends to decrease. This is most prevalent with big banks and financial institutions that are unfamiliar with the industry. Recent data is indicating the restriction in credit standards has started. According to an article published by Yahoo Finance, small business loan approval percentages at big banks fell to a dismal low of 13.8 percent in the first quarter of 2023. Meanwhile, approval rates of business loan applications at small banks also dropped to 19.1 percent.*

It truly amazes me that these financial institutions can remain in business by declining over eight out of 10 credit applications. Truthfully, it's unthinkable, but it's not the first time we've seen this. If you look back to 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 you'll see the same lenders that claim to support the carwash industry now were nowhere to be found then.

How To Minimize The Impact?

1. Explore Refinancing Options

If you have outstanding debt, exploring refinancing options may be a great way to strengthen your carwash business. Refinancing can lower your interest rate, eliminate variable rate debt and reduce your monthly payments. The SBA 504 loan program now offers long-term fixed rate refinancing.

2. Identify High-Rate Debt

Review your current loans, business credit cards and lines of credit. Identifying high-rate debt can help you figure out which loans or credit cards to pay down first. Attacking these bills can help minimize the dangers of paying excessive interest.

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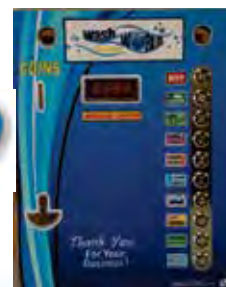
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3. Focus On Improving Cash Flow

Carwash owners should find ways to improve cash flow to help bolster against interest rate increases. It may seem obvious, but cash flow is one of the key metrics for businesses. Cash flow is critical in monthly subscription based models like the express carwash format, which rely on regular member payments to arrive every month. It's important to keep members happy by providing a quality wash while limiting excessive expenditures (the largest being labor). It may seem crazy, but investing in equipment and technology that can maintain wash quality while reducing the cost of labor can potentially increase your cash flow.

4. Get Financing Sooner Than Later

Some carwash owners may be reluctant to borrow when rates have increased. However, many operators do not know the rates for equipment financing are still very reasonable. According to Bill Baker, Senior Vice President at Coast Commercial Credit, "While prime rate has shot up at a record pace, equipment financing rates have not increased at the same speed and are very reasonable." Baker went on to say, "In fact, there is an inversion in rates. Equipment loans are currently being offered at rates lower than what is being offered for real estate based loans."

Obtaining the financing you need to set your business up for success in the future can be a wise business decision. Waiting too long to secure financing may mean settling for even higher-cost financing or potentially not qualifying at all.

Handling The Curve

Understanding how interest rate hikes impact credit markets and your business is crucial for carwash owners. If you focus on eliminating high-rate variable debt and invest in your plant and equipment, your small business will be much better off. If you follow these tips, your carwash business will be sure to handle any curveballs the economy, the Fed or even your customers might throw at you.

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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

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How Resilient are You?

By JoAnna Brandi

Resilient people are 60 percent less likely to experience burnout, 31 percent more engaged and have half the stress-related productivity loss. Resilience is one of the core capabilities of success — and we could all use more of it!

Resilience is NOT fixed — it changes over time, and now as we begin to understand that our employees' well being IS our business; we'd better be skilled at building (and teaching) and modeling resilience!

Here are some basic things to understand about resilience that I think you will find important to know:

Resilience is not fixed – it changes over time.

Underpinning resilience are three really important parts of your emotional intelligence system:

Mindfulness - the ability to observe your thinking and actions.

Self-efficacy - knowing yourself, your emotions and how effective you are in the world.

Self-compassion - the ability to kindly forgive yourself and then move on and grow.

There are many factors that contribute to psychological resilience — and one of the most important is your ability to effectively manage and regulate your own emotions. (We teach a lot about that in *The Practice of Positive Leadership E-Course*.)

We are living in a world that is just beginning to understand emotions and we still often get the message that it's not okay to feel bad and experience negative emotions — especially at work. The more we understand what we can do to make ourselves resilient, the easier our life becomes.

When we “stuff” emotions back down they can lead to us feeling isolated, anxious, depressed and for anyone like me — even physically sick.

The good news is that resilience (like happiness and your biceps) can be strengthened through practice. And over the next several issues you may find me talking a lot about resilience because I've been studying it, because I think we are ALL going to need better skills!

Resilient people thrive even in stressful environments. I recently learned, from the World Happiness Summit that took

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place in March, that according to a study by McEwen & Boyd, resilience training improves staff efficacy, optimism, job satisfaction, goal attainment and productivity. What a great finding! It just makes sense! Help make your teams more resilient and become “unstressable.”

There are several paths to becoming more resilient and I am discovering MANY of them (I’m thrilled there are so many!)

I love this topic, so you may see more of it as time goes on. Let’s start with the one I struggle with most and have been practicing, and then I will share just a few more.

Practice Self-Compassion

Treat yourself with the same kindness, care and understanding that you would extend to others. Recognize that everyone makes mistakes and that you are not alone. Forgive yourself and accept your imperfections and cherish and build on your strengths.

Get very honest with yourself. No one’s watching.

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 – 10 – How Self-Compassionate are you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(I’m still only at a 5-6 to maybe a 7, and some leaders I interviewed recently reported the same). That’s embarrassing for me and a HUGE learning opportunity at the same time!

If YOU aren’t where you’d like to be, let me know and I will help you move the needle as I move my own. (JoAnna@ReturnOnHappiness.com subject line: Self Compassion Please.)

Know thyself! What are your tendencies? Are you quick to fly off the handle? Do you remember to take a “power pause” and step back from a challenging situation? Write three things you routinely do:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If you don’t know HOW to take a “Power Pause” you can find one at my website www.ReturnOnHappiness.com/powerpause. Check it out and use it! Daily!

Cultivate Grit

Set long-term goals. Start by setting specific, challenging, and meaningful goals for yourself that will require sustained effort over a period of time.

Develop a growth mindset: Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth and learning, believe that your abilities and intelligence can be developed through hard work and dedication.

Practice self-discipline: Cultivate habits and routines that support your goals. Find meaning in your work.

Embrace failure: View failure as a natural part of the learning process and an opportunity to refine your approach. Learn from your mistakes and use them to fuel your determination to succeed. Seek support.

Shine A Light on What is Right!

Ask yourself questions like, “What’s good about this?” “What’s working here?” “What’s going well and why?” Look for the goodness. When you seek it, you will find it! My newly exercised self-compassion muscle is reminding me it’s time to take a breather from writing and do something that needs physical attention — like getting the laundry in the dryer before taking a short 10 minute meditation before taking on the next assignment.

Be the best leaders you can be. It starts with taking good care of YOU!

NC

*JoAnna Brandi is a certified Chief Happiness Officer working mostly in the business world to help companies keep employees and customers happy by creating more positive cultures and practices. She is the author of three books including the delightfully illustrated “54 Ways to Stay Happy in a Changing, Challenging and Sometimes Negative World.” You can find her on the web at ReturnOnHappiness.com if you are looking for her work in the business world; and PositiveEnergizer.com if you are interested in her online leadership course — *The Practice of Positive Leadership: Use the Science of Happiness to Engage Your Employees and Keep Your Customers Happy*.*

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If you want a copy of my **BE Attitudes (for Positive Leaders in Difficult Times)** send me an email, “Be Attitudes” in subject line, and I’ll get it to you! JoAnna@ReturnOnHappiness.com



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Dear Venus and Mars,
What is the one piece of advice you have received since your start in this industry that you consider invaluable?



Venus Says

When Michael and I bought our three carwash locations, the outgoing owner mentioned that we should join the “carwash association.” Entering the carwash industry with no prior history was a daunting task. Not knowing what to do first, we accepted the advice and were well on our way to becoming a member of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA) within days of purchasing the wash locations.

Becoming a member of the MCA provided us with a network of individuals who were also passionate about the carwash industry. Through this membership, we were able to attend informative seminars and conferences, connect with experts in the field, and gain access to resources that helped grow our businesses. We also made lifelong friends in the industry. It was a comradery of individuals who shared the same passion and goals.

Being part of a community of like-minded individuals who were passionate about the same thing made us feel that we were not alone. It gave us the opportunity to learn from others who had more experience in the industry and to share our own knowledge with those who were just starting out. The membership in an association not only gave us access to valuable information, but it also created a sense of belonging that helped us feel more confident. There were even a few times when we called each other for parts or sold equipment to each other.

Association membership gave us the chance to participate in the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) and hold leadership roles. Yearly attendance in the convention has helped our business grow with new ideas and equipment choices. While all business, I have grown fond of getting away for a few days and seeing old friends. Since becoming members

Continued on page 38 ...

Mars Says

Starting a business is never easy, and the carwash industry is no exception. Carwash owners face many challenges, from staffing to marketing to equipment maintenance. To be successful, it is important to have a solid business plan and be open to advice from experienced professionals.

Since my start in the carwash business, the one piece of advice that I consider invaluable is prioritizing customer service above all else, and it was my father who taught me this. He emphasized the importance of treating customers with respect and ensuring that their needs are met. This lesson has stuck with me throughout my career in the carwash industry and has helped me build a loyal customer base.

The carwash business is all about providing a convenient and high-quality service to customers, and this starts with greeting customers with a smile and treating them with respect. Carwash owners should train their employees to be friendly and helpful, and to take the time to listen to customers’ needs and concerns.

Another important aspect of customer service is to be responsive to customer feedback. Carwash owners should encourage customers to leave feedback, both positive and negative, and use this feedback to improve their services. Responding to negative feedback with empathy and a willingness to make things right can turn a dissatisfied customer into a loyal one.

One instance I remember from when I was just starting out in this business had to do with an obsessive customer. I was complaining to my dad about this customer who came in weekly and was obsessive about his car. No matter what we would do or how much time we spent cleaning the car, he always found something that wasn’t done correctly. I expressed my frustration over this customer to my dad and told him that I considered asking him not to come back.



Paul Vallario

Continued on page 38 ...

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 owns LI Car Wash Consultants. He is also a New York State Car Wash Association board member. You can reach him at iwashcars@optonline.net or 631/484-5829.

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Looking for Neutral and the Zen of a Conveyor

By Doug Rieck

I have been thinking recently about how we as carwashers get our customers through the entrance pay stations and onto the carwash. This seems like a simple task, but it is not. But this is not just about pay stations and gates and a few signs. It

is an integrated customer-friendly sales process. I know there are a lot of ways to do this, and I have for years been wrong in a lot of my assumptions. Today's customers are sophisticated and rightfully expect more. It's up to us to give that to them.

Every single one of us uses a kiosk or pay station of some sort several times a day. These thoughts have coalesced because of some field trips and way too much time spent guiding customers onto the conveyor this past spring. I have been making staff and procedural changes and removed some key people at my main wash. As a result, I have been spending most days at the entrance and helping customers at the pay stations. It is time I don't have, but has been a learning experience on many fronts. Hopefully, the wash, the customers and I have all benefitted. This position does not require a rocket scientist, but you need the right people/person and procedures, as well as marketing ideas, to educate your customers and give them a little extra help when needed.

The Zen of a Conveyor

Let's begin somewhere in the middle of this mess. A favorite subject that every carwash operator has strong opinions on is his/her conveyor. These paragons of mechanical virtue and strength come in many variations to achieve the same purpose; to drag a car through the carwash safely and reliably 365 days a year. To set the stage, my carwash opened in 1983 and the first 20 feet of conveyor are outside and exposed to the elements, not under cover. This is horrible for the conveyor and just as bad for the entrance attendant. Never, ever would I do it again. I would love to cover the entrance, but my town wants a full site plan not just a building permit. That is not happening. The Auto Sentries are well located, it is just that the guide-on attendant and the conveyor take a winter weather beating and summer roast with no coverage.

My very first carwash conveyor was a Sherman 1086. This simple steel behemoth had special big chain links and massive steel wheels that could be on a weightlifter's bench. I learned about



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conveyors by working on the take-up end freezing at 11pm mid-winter so I could wash cars the next day. The steel on this was so solid it lasted more than 13 years. Despite the love-hate relationship, I replaced it with a generic Hanna RCV-clone using D-88 chain. Probably the purchase was an overreaction from working with those massive steel wheels and chain links for far too many years, but this newer beast was easier to service, but wore out the chain, wheels and track quickly.

After the five-year mark, I fell in love with the Belanger Duratrans conveyor using the X458 chain. This was a case of the Goldilocks Syndrome. The chain was just the right size and it was a modern design with a Heco gear box. The whole machine is a workhorse. But like every carwasher, I overworked it until all the goodness left. Starting last summer, I have made up for all the neglect. This fall I changed the sprockets and bearings for the third time and the chain for the first time in more than 10 years. Yes, 10 years on the chain. I love it again. Hopefully, it will be good for many more years.

I have been told by the sales reps that the hot ticket today are the log chain conveyors. All the virtues of X458 and more. I guess. I have been delighted with the X458 chain format. My freshly-refurbished conveyor should be good for many more years. If I was doing a new carwash though, I would take a few looks at the belt conveyors. Why? Customer convenience and new car technologies might be good reasons. New cars and neutral do not seem a toxic combination, but it is for carwashing. Over the

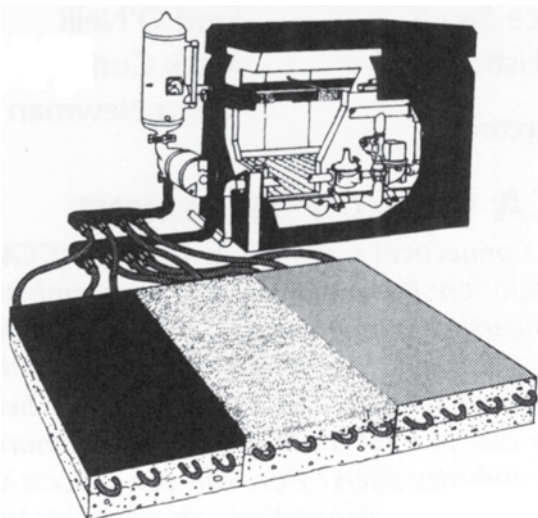
years, we have wrestled with drivers who are not familiar with the shift mechanisms on their new Mercedes. (Ok, usually they can figure it out within a few minutes.) And there are not that many Mercedes on the road in comparison to Fords, Nissans, Toyotas, and so forth. Now, every new car is using its own different shifter ranging from stalks to dashboard pushbuttons to rotary dials. The engineering minds have further added to the complexity with auto braking when you shift into neutral. Then, add the crash avoidance technology which also enables auto braking. What is the driver of a new car going to do? This past week I saw many cars that had a big N on the drivers dash display. One particular car still sat there as roller after roller passed under the wheels and the driver yelled to me, "It is in neutral." My answer was to disable the auto braking. Then the customer said, "What?" The poor customer was frazzled.

At least three times in the past three days the proud owner of a dirty new car after 30 tries in 10 minutes to shift into neutral gave up. Each time I had five or more cars backed up and cars lined up before the pay stations. My answer in each case was to drive the car through a dry, dead conveyor so the customer could try in private with no pressure and read the owner's manual. Each time the customer came back in 10 to 15 minutes to wash and sometimes could now find neutral. One woman froze again and took 5 minutes, again. My only wish is that I had some free wash passes to hand out to these customers. Now that I have trained them to find neutral, I want to keep them as customers.

Continued ...



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Doug's Perspective ... continued

This amount of neutral seekers may seem high but there are a lot of mitigating events. This past week we started washing pollen-laden cars (this column was written in April). Also, we never had a winter salt rush so there are many new, untrained customers on the road driving their new cars. I also have been marketing and attracting new customers, some who moved from North Jersey, the full-service capital of the world. (They never drive their car on a conveyor). This event combination resulted in many new customers with dirty new cars who could not find neutral. Carwashing is supposed to be a happy, fun event with suds and colored lights and no stress. The mom driving the car does not need her kids looking at her with strange faces, or worse her husband taking over the driving.

Mainstream cars are adding more technology and features too that their drivers may not understand. We as carwash owners are often car geeks. I am. But our customers do not have to be. My only requirement for a customer is a dirty car.

The first electric Mustang I washed was brought over by a salesman. I looked at the car, talked with him for 30 seconds and then said, "Neutral." His answer was "What?" He finally had to Google it on his phone. Is this any indication of our electric car future? Regardless of any personal thoughts there are going to be many more electric vehicles with proud new owners perhaps not understanding all the complexities of their environmentally-friendly new ride. I know that Tesla does have a carwash mode, thank you Elon. I just want to wash the car and make a fun, pleasant wash experience for the owner. No trauma at the entrance, please. Customers experience enough trauma paying for the wash!

Weigh the Pros & Cons

I own a middle-aged well maintained carwash conveyor. I have never owned or run a carwash with a belt conveyor. I'm delighted with my conveyor. Until the past year, I thought belt conveyors were silly, maintenance hogs solving a problem that does not exist. Not anymore. I have seen the problem.

The past few weeks indicate that perhaps there is a problem, which could be growing. Neutral is not really used in newer cars. Stick shifts are long gone. Most drivers are just driving and parking cars. Certainly, the sales rep will never explain neutral when you pick up your new car. As far as carwashing goes, my understanding is that the carwash belt conveyors have come a long way. Supposedly, they have fixed their issues. I just don't know. I do believe that carwash chain conveyors are at their evolutionary peak. They are awesome. If I was building a new site, I would think seriously about a belt and compare the two, though. Customer experience rules and cars are changing. NC

Doug Rieck operates Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ. He is the Immediate Past President of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS or dougrieck@gmail.com



Doug Rieck

*The content and opinions in this column are solely that of the contributor.

Venus ... continued from page 34

of the MCA, Mike and I have had our turns at leadership roles and gained more in-depth knowledge of the industry. I can honestly say that we would not have had such opportunities had we not joined as members.

Looking back, the first item I noticed in the carwash were the stickers representing Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association and the International Carwash Association. Each represented a year and was placed in order on the change machine. They remain there today, but we quickly ran out of room for the ones that would follow.

I cannot imagine our carwash life without the associations, the NRCC, and the friendships that continue nearly 20 years later. My advice to you is to become not just a member on paper, but an active member in any carwash association. NC

Mars ... continued from page 34

My dad's response was that we should be flattered that this obsessive-compulsive customer is choosing our carwash over all the competition. He comes in every single week so we must be doing something right, and a customer like this will only make us better. In addition, when this guy's friends and family, who know him well, will ask him where he washes his car, he is going to tell them that it is our place. This taught me that there is something to be learned from every customer and to appreciate them all.

In addition to prioritizing customer service, carwash owners should also focus on efficiency and safety. Investing in high-quality equipment and maintaining it regularly can help ensure that cars are cleaned quickly and safely. Providing a safe and efficient service can help customers feel confident in the quality of the service, and they are more likely to return in the future.

In conclusion, the carwash business can be challenging, but with the right approach, it can also be highly rewarding. Prioritizing customer service, efficiency, and safety can help carwash owners build a loyal customer base and set their business up for long-term success. So, if you are looking to start a carwash business or are already running one, remember to prioritize excellent customer service above all else. NC

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SCAN ME

Creating a Brand For (Almost) Nothing

By Kacy Erdelyi

Here's something easy: make people love your brand when you have millions of dollars. Apple, possibly the most powerful brand of the past 25 years, started its journey to dominance with its Think Different campaign. Without featuring any product, Steve Jobs spent millions on images of celebrities, billboards and television ads that communicated brilliantly what kind of company Apple was and who should engage with it.

If your carwash can afford the rights to use a picture of John Lennon and Yoko Ono on a billboard in Times Square and pay for a 60-second commercial voiced over by Richard Dreyfuss, I bet you would find it pretty easy to get people to know what your brand stands for too. If not, you face a harder challenge: creating a brand that customers feel an emotional attachment to without spending precious dollars.



Luckily, here in the carwash industry we have an ace up our sleeve — physical spaces where customers spend quite a bit of time. In marketing, we call that a “captive audience.” But, it's up to us to make good use of that time and communicate with our captives wisely. We have to find small ways that we can tell them who we are and what we stand for during the natural course of their visit. We have to think of every inch of our site, and every customer interaction, as an opportunity to surprise and delight our customers. How can we make them feel special? How can we communicate something about who we are? How can we make this carwash experience feel different than the one down the street?

Maximizing Small Moments

Deciding how to add more branding into your carwash site can be a really fun exercise. A good place to start is driving through your wash as if you were a customer and you'd never seen it before. Think about what information a new customer is receiving about who you are. Could they tell you anything about your brand once they're through? What do they know about your company and its personality? How would they explain to a friend why they chose your wash instead of another?

Next, make a list of all of the spaces and moments you could possibly make special for your customers. What did you see when you went through? Who did you talk to? What did you touch? What decisions did you make? These are all places where you can add some pizzazz.

Finally, get a few employees or friends together and brainstorm some ideas. Think about which ones require the least amount of effort on your part, but have the best chance to be noticed and communicate something about you to your customer.

Inspiration for Thought

Here's how other amazing brands — both in our industry and out - have used little gestures and moments at their retail locations to show customers who they are and what they stand for.

Gregory's Coffee, a NY-based coffee chain expanding rapidly, does an amazing job making their everyday pieces of collateral and in-store signs surprise and delight at every visit. This costs them almost nothing, but it makes me want to spend more time there.



At **Spark Car Wash**, we use our gates to add a little bit of fun and remind customers of our brand.








Maximizing On-Site Design Elements

Disney chose long ago to make every “Employees Only” sign read “Cast Members Only,” which takes a standard design element that all businesses need and adds branded fun. (What could your Employees Only sign say?)

Flying Ace Car Wash in Dayton, OH, has a design that reflects the area’s designation as the “Birthplace of Aviation.” Beth Martin, VP, Marketing of Express Wash Concepts, says, “While the wash tunnel itself is an ‘airplane hangar,’ we also have a large banner that runs alongside the building that reinforces our branding. Customers love this feature, and many use it as a photo backdrop after washing with us.”



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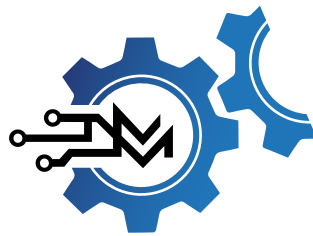
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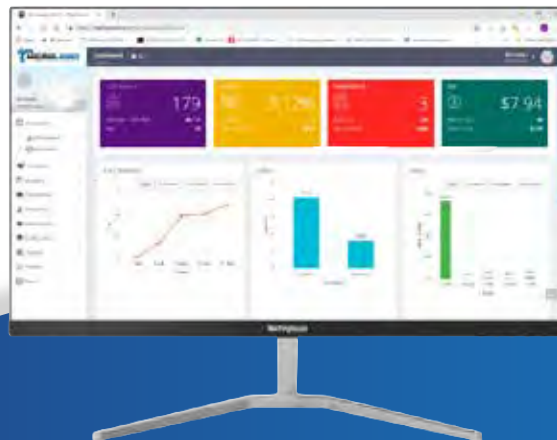
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Having Fun with Customer Collateral

At **Spark**, we make sure our air fresheners do more than just smell good and show off our logo (which is a good start!). We add a fun message with a membership offer.



Every May, **The Bubble Bath Car Wash** in San Antonio, TX, makes custom Star Wars stickers. “The staff loves them and we have gotten a small band of folk that look for them each year,” says Nick Lopez, President.



Using Employees as Brand Megaphones

When you ask someone at **Whole Foods** where something is, they don't say “Aisle 7” and go back to what they were doing. They stop what they're doing and physically walk you there, a small gesture that supports their premium brand. It communicates that you will get better service at Whole Foods than you will elsewhere.

Wade Keith, Brand Manager at **Breeze Thru Car Wash** in Colorado, trains his employees to say, “Thank you for being part of the Breeze Thru family” to wash pass members when they enter the wash. This simple idea manages to both remind people of the Breeze Thru brand and reinforce one of their core brand tenets, friendliness.

Now It's Your Turn

My challenge to you is to find five small places on your site where you can add some brand personality without investing too much time or money. When you're considering what to do, ask yourself, “Could the carwash down the street do this? Does it make me seem different from them?” Challenge yourself to be distinctive and reflect who you are and who your company is, while making the experience more fun for your customers. We'd love to hear what you come up with. **NC**

Kacy Erdelyi is VP, Marketing for Spark Car Wash, a fast-growing Northeast chain based in New Jersey. Curious about anything marketing? Let us know at kacy.erdelyi@sparkcarwash.com and we'll build our next article around your questions.



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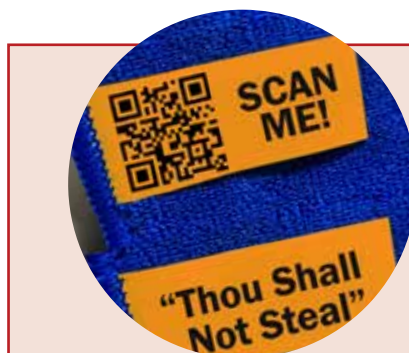
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Building a family plan, not just a business plan

It's All In The Family

By Gary Sokoloski

From time to time, we get the opportunity to meet and work with customers who have a family plan and not just a business plan. These operators have a family member who helps them get started in the business and then gets out of the way and lets them make their own plans, and mistakes, to help them learn and succeed through hard work and perseverance. There are also many legacy family businesses where one generation leaves a successful business to the next generation and guides them on how to keep the business running and growing. They are two completely different approaches to the same idea, growing a family business.

In one recent project, we worked for an operator we had installed many systems for over the last few decades. Instead of having his daughter join the family business, however, he decided to help her build her own site. It was a dilapidated four-bay inbay automatic location that was built back in the 1960's. The dad was able to purchase it for less than the cost of the land back in 2018. After much thought, it was determined that this four-bay would be converted to a one and three. While disappointed we were not able to sell them a new system, he was able to find a used one including an auto cashier, wash and drying equipment from a quality manufacturer. The equipment just needed some TLC and would provide years of service for this site. Instead of going out and buying brand new backroom equipment, he also was able to find a carwash that was closing and purchased their six bays of self-serve equipment for half the price of a single bay. Granted, there were many hours of work to rebuild the pump stations and update all the low-pressure panels, but it was a cost-effective route to take. All the customer-facing equipment was new but at the end of the day this operator was able to make three bays for the price of one. He was also able to get used heating equipment to heat the water and floors (you know, those old faithful green boilers). All that was needed was to convert them to natural gas from propane and turn them on. At the end of the project, which did take five years, he was able to give his daughter a beautiful new building with equipment that will last as long as buying new for a fraction of the price. This will help put her on the path to success in this industry while providing some valuable lessons in being cost effective.

Carwash Camaraderie

The other recent family affair that caught our attention was from an operator who reached out to me after reading my articles for years. He knew I installed the same equipment they had and wanted to meet to discuss, "All things carwashing." All I can say is, what a breath of fresh air to meet someone with so much passion and dedication to providing a quality product for his customers over concerns about the profit in his pocket,

“

The amount of detail in what piece of equipment was put in when and the last time that pump was rebuilt or when this pump will need rebuilding was truly heartwarming to listen to, being a maintenance guy at my core.”

”

someone who understands and accepts the concept and execution of sweat equity. This operator was able to acquire an aging site that was basically at the end of its equipment life cycle and just needed some help in achieving his vision. With a loan from his family, he was able to start his journey as a carwash operator. After spending years literally touching, fixing or replacing every piece of equipment and infrastructure, this site has one of the nicest looking and more importantly best operating infrastructures I have had the pleasure to see. This wash has everything you could want in a carwash — a friction tunnel, multiple self-serve bays, an inbay automatic plus self-service vacuums. The amount of detail in what piece of equipment was put in when and the last time that pump was rebuilt or when this pump will need rebuilding was truly heartwarming to listen to, being a maintenance guy at my core. While we haven't worked together, I can understand and appreciate all the hard work, late nights, and lost weekends he puts in to making his business all it can be while understanding the value of providing a quality service at a competitive price.

While there are many more stories like this, I am sure I don't get the opportunity to hear; these I felt were worth sharing. In this age of hedge funds, consolidation, cookie-cutter business plans and businesses throwing around terms like "Our family of brands," I found these two families notable and significant. It is nice to go back to basics and see how a love for a business and a little help from family getting started can propel these people into the next generation of carwash operators. We wish them all the success they deserve for their hard work and look forward to hearing more success stories like these.

NC

Gary Sokoloski owns Centerline Carwash Sales and Service in Wales, ME. You can reach him at 207/375-4593 Office, 774/248-0171 cell or gary@centerlinecarwash.com.



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When to Seek More Towel Advice

By Valerie Sweeney

After speaking to several of the experts in the laundry industry, I have found that properly washing your towels comes down to four main factors: time, temperature, agitation and chemical formulation. While we have given a lot of towel advice over the years, there are some washing questions that are best left to the laundry experts.

Since washing conditions vary from location to location, finding the right way to wash your towels could take some trial and error. When you are having a tough time, it is best to contact your laundry advisor, such as a laundry chemical supplier.

Knowing that time, temperature, agitation, and chemical formulation all play a significant role in the care of your towels, it is important to also know that once you adjust one of these, then you will need to compensate somewhere else. (It's a lot like formulating your wash chemical).

Time: Time refers to the length of your wash, soak, rinse and spin cycles. The amount of time will depend on the type and age of the laundry machine, the kind of towels you are washing, the quantity of towels placed in the wash, the detergents used, the temperature, the alkalinity of the water (hard or soft), the types of waxes used (paste or spray), etc.

Temperature: Temperature also plays a major role in the washing of your towels. To properly break in towels, it is best to wash them in hot water (but not for microfiber). These higher temperatures help to break the towel in quicker by opening up the fibers. All towels should be washed in hot water during the breaking-in process. Not all carwashes have access to hot water, so once again, it might require you to change either the time, agitation, chemicals, etc.

The lower the temperature of the water, usually the more detergent you will need to get a clean wash. If you do not have access to hot/warm water, then work with your chemical supplier to find the right detergent combination. A heated dryer is usually good for terry towels, but the kiss of death for microfiber. The high heat will burn the fibers. Microfiber is best washed in cool temperatures.

Agitation: Agitation is dependent on the type of laundry equipment that is used. The model and the age of your equipment plays a role in your whole washing process. Also, the amount of towels you load into the washer can affect the outcome. I've heard from many operators that microfiber wash well when you put a lot of them in together. On the other hand, too many terry towels at once can sometimes be an issue. If you overload, you prevent the towels from getting fully clean, and they might have that musty smell. How many towels do you need to wash together at a time? Are you getting the results you need? If not, you may have to look closer at water fill levels, wash times, updated machinery, etc.

Chemical Formulation: The chemicals you use at the wash, the types of waxes, and the detergents all affect the laundry procedure. When figuring out the best way to wash your towels, you will need to consider how you are using them. If you are solely using your towels to dry the car, then washing is fairly simple. However, once you introduce towels with wax or other products, then you may need to change what you're doing.

Even the type of wax, like spray or paste, will affect the manner in which you need to wash your towels. The substances that are on the towels may require a different set of washing instructions than the ones printed on the label of the towel. Once again, it is best to check with your chemical supplier. The towels might require a different temperature setting, or may need to be washed longer/shorter.

I would love to come up with a set of instructions that applies to all carwashes, but truthfully, what works for one wash may not work for another. The temperature of your water, the alkalinity of your water, the amount of time you use to wash your towels, the type of washing machinery you have to wash your towels, the many different chemicals you use, and the types of detergents you have all play a role in finding the right wash combination in which to wash your towels. You will need to start with the basic washing instructions for your towels, then tweak them as you see fit to work with your location. For more specific washing instructions, contact your chemical wash supplier or the person who supplies your detergents. **NC**



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

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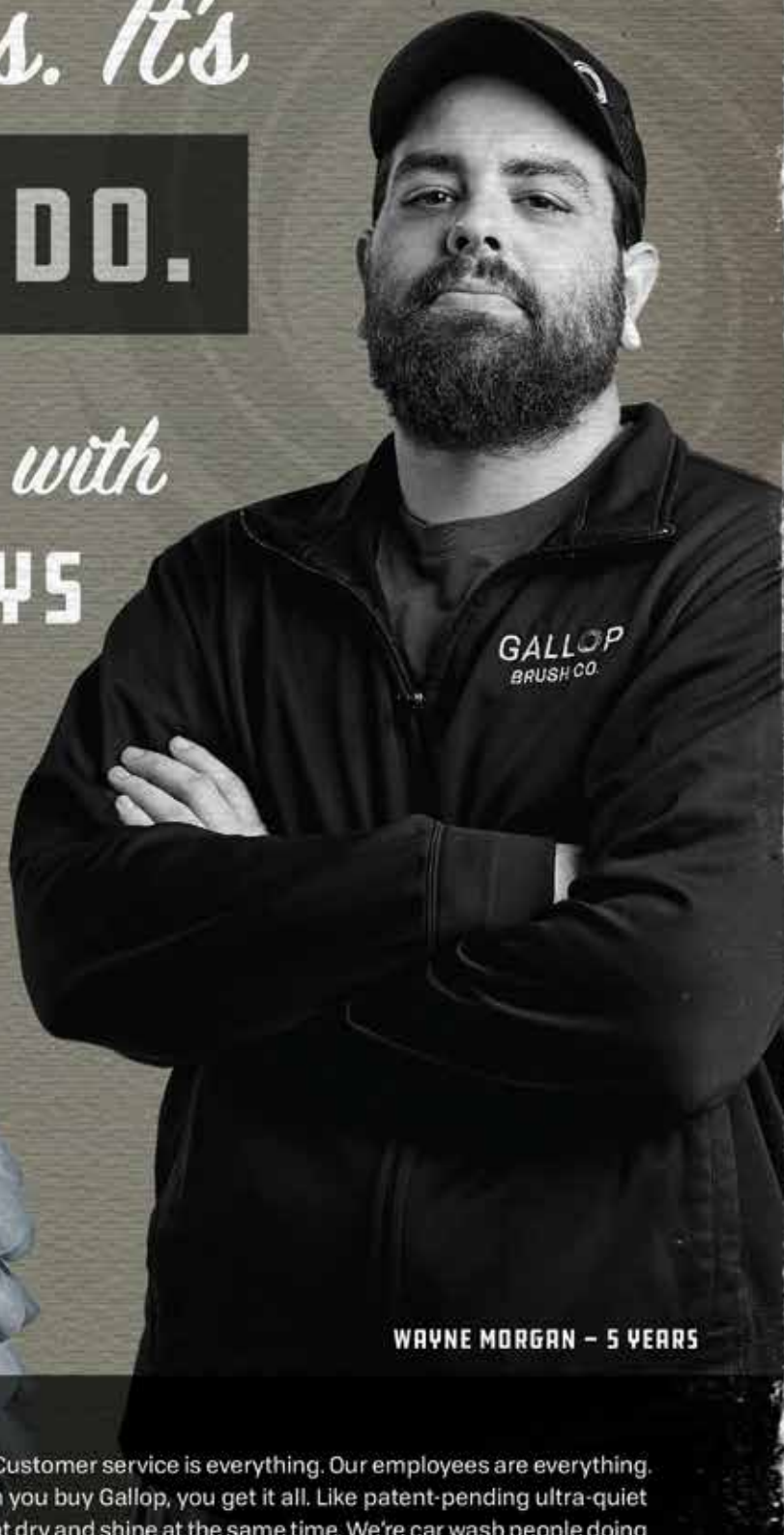
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Member Category (please circle one)

\$195 Single location operator

\$395 Multiple location operator
(two or more) or vendor

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings carwashers within and beyond Pennsylvania!

Finally, the warm weather is upon us. And for those in the carwash industry that's a good thing! Here in Pennsylvania, we are seeing a heavy influx of pollen due to the mild winter season at the time of this writing. While this is bad for those who suffer from allergies, it's good for driving more and more cars to carwashes. In fact, many of us have found that pollen season is better for sales than snow season!

Our nearly 800 carwash operators in Pennsylvania continue to sustain well in this every-changing world and economic fluctuating times. Many are reporting a return and leveling back to their pre-2021 sales records, yet continuing to attract new customers while providing continued engagement with long-term faithful patrons. Each, while keeping up with the quality wash delivery within their community.

The Carwash Association of Pennsylvania (CAP) remains strong and active, continuing to attract new members. As we settle into 2023, the CAP Board has been working to bring the following CAP Events in 2023:

- ❖ *Central PA Baseball Outing @ the Harrisburg Senators. Late summer date to be announced.*
- ❖ *SW PA Baseball Outing — @ the Altoona Curve. Mid-summer date to be announced.*
- ❖ *Investor Seminar — @ AACA Museum in Hershey on Wednesday, Sept. 13.*
- ❖ *Annual Tabletop/Reception Hour & Dinner — @ AACA Museum in Hershey on Wednesday, Sept. 13.*
- ❖ *Golf Outing & Picnic — @ Cumberland Golf Club in Carlisle on Thursday, Sept. 14.*

These events are open to all. Please visit www.pacarwasher.org for more information and to sign up!

In closing, a very experienced carwash owner recently shared this with me, "Take a look at your customers as they are leaving your carwash. They're smiling. They're feeling good. They have that feeling of satisfaction." The takeaway here is that we have the opportunity to make someone's day. Keep up the smiles! Strive to provide opportunities and wash experiences to be "better than the driveway (at home)."



Dave Edwards, CAP President

SAVE THE DATE: Sept. 13 – CAP Dinner & Tabletop Show 5-8pm, AACA Museum, Hershey, PA

EVENT THEME:

Salute to Service featuring
Major General Mark Schindler,
Splash Founder and Grace for Vets
Organizer Mark Curtis.

Register by sending an email to:
executivedirector@pacarwash.org

\$65/ticket

pacarwash.org

CAP DINNER

& Tabletop Show

**SEPTEMBER 13
5:00-8:00PM**

AACA MUSEUM
161 MUSEUM DRIVE
HERSHEY, PA 17033



2023 THEME

Salute to Service



SPECIAL GUEST

Major General Mark Schindler,
Adjutant General of Pennsylvania



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Mark Curtis, CEO/Founding
Member Splash Car Wash &
Organizer of GRACE for VET's



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- Top recognition in all materials, brief remarks, 8 dinner tickets

Raffle Sponsor - \$750

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Table Sponsor - \$500

- Recognition in program, 8 dinner tickets

EMAIL TO REGISTER

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Contact: Suzanne L. Stansbury, Executive Director

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Dwight T. Winter	Joe Tracy
Fred O'Neill	Todd Whitehouse
Mark Curtis	*Deceased

CCA MISSION STATEMENT

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

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

It's summer time – at last! I hope pollen was plentiful and bugs abundant. Both are the shot in the arm many of us need after a less than fruitful winter (at least in Connecticut).

Recently, one of our members reached out wondering if it was time to go after the self-serve sales tax issue — again. This issue is one we have pursued a number of times over the years on your behalf. As you know, legislators don't like to give money back after taking it away, however.

Most recently, in 2015, the unfair double tax was imposed late at night with no public notice or opportunity for a public hearing. Your association aggressively went after the repeal of that unfair tax for the next several years until it became clear that our efforts would not be rewarded due to fiscal challenges in Hartford. But, it wasn't due to inaction from our group. In fact, I'd like to thank Paul Ferruolo, Todd Whitehouse, Tony Setaro and Mark Curtis for working tirelessly on our behalf. I'd also like to thank the operators who first fought the repeal of this double tax, Al and Cookie Anthony, Alan Tracy, Jay Listro and others who won its repeal many years ago. For those who may be unaware, the double taxation results from carwash operators already paying sales tax on many of the products that they purchase for their business and having to build those costs into their fixed price cost to their customers. Adding another tax, like the 6.35 percent added in 2015, on top of it would be in effect a "double taxation."

But just because we haven't won the repeal of the unfair double tax, we have done some educating and, thanks to the hard work and tireless efforts of these loyal members, we have been able to heighten the awareness of this issue. The legislators on both sides know us in Hartford thanks to these operators and our long-time Lobbyist PJ Cimini. But tackling a legislative issue takes money and it takes effort. Is the time right for that again? Let us know. Give me a call and we can discuss it. Our board is here for you and we value your input and comments. As I have always said, together we can do great things.



Bob Rossini, CCA President

CCA to Host 2023 NRCC!
October 2-4
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Doug Rieck	Doug Rieck

*deceased

CWONJ.COM

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

With Summer upon us, exciting things are happening with the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ). First, during one of our bi-monthly conference calls with Princeton Public Affairs Group (PPAG) our representative, Sam Weinstein, said he was very optimistic that the, "Make Car Washes Essential" Bill, A3703, will pass sometime at the end of June and move to the next stage.

Second, The CWONJ is teaming up with the Children's Miracle Network (CMN) hospitals, including the Children's Specialized Hospital, to raise money over the 2023 Labor Day weekend holiday, September 1-4.

The weekend event will see participating operators contribute a percentage of their proceeds to the effort. There are varying amounts that can be selected, or you can contact our CMN partner with a straight donation. You will receive more information on collateral marketing materials when you sign up to participate. Please visit www.cwonj.com for more information.

By the time you read this column we will have completed our annual Carwash Tour that was May 22. You can read all about it in the fall issue of this magazine. Thanks to the participating washes, Rich Bokman of Pelican Car Wash & Lube and Erion Lenas of Soaring Car Wash of Pompton Lakes for opening up their facilities to us. I'd also like to thank Micrologic founder, Miguel Gonzalez, for the impressive tour of his new facility in Parsippany and for his warm welcome to our members. And, another special thanks to Erion Lenas for the fun lunch we had at his family's restaurant, Pop's Place, in Rockaway Township.

And finally, don't forget to register for our CMN event over Labor Day Weekend and our August 7 Children's Specialized Hospital Golf Outing at Suburban Golf Club in Union. You can register online at cwonj.com

Have a safe and happy summer!



Dino Nicoletta, CWONJ President

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Atlantic City Convention Center

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Sept. 1-4: Carwash Weekend to Raise \$\$ For Children's Miracle Network Hospitals

The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) is teaming up with the Chil-

dren's Miracle Network (CMN) hospitals, including the Children's Specialized Hos-

pital, to raise money over the 2023 Labor Day weekend holiday, September 1-4.

"Our association has been raising money for Children's Specialized Hospital for 17 years and contributed nearly \$90,000 to that effort," said CWONJ Event Chairman, Doug Karvelas. "The opportunity to work with a larger footprint across the state through the work of Children's Miracle Network, which also supports Children's Hospital, is a perfect opportunity for us to continue our support. Our members are very generous and this will no doubt be evident over the Labor Day weekend."

The weekend event will see participating operators contribute a percentage of their proceeds to the effort. There are varying amounts that can be selected, or you can contact our CMN partner with a straight donation.

Participants in the program will be provided with signage for the register, a Miracle Child poster and signage for the drive-up menu. For a nominal fee you can also purchase feather flags and WindMaster inserts. You will receive more information on this when you sign up to participate.

The deadline to register for participation is July 1. **NC**

To learn more about Children's Specialized Hospital and Children's Miracle Network visit childrens-specialized.org and childrensmiraclenetworkhospitals.org or for any questions please call the CWONJ office at 518/280-4767.



MEET ISAAC

A tragic accident changed his life, but Isaac found HOPE at Children's Specialized Hospital

Isaac fell at cheer practice, landing on his head, and suffered a C4 incomplete spinal cord injury, leaving him paralyzed below his neck. **The doctors told his parents he would never walk again.**

After two weeks in an acute care hospital, Isaac was transferred to Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH). **He began to shut down emotionally, trying to process the severity of his injury.** Needing help with even the most basic tasks—like using the bathroom and brushing his teeth—was just too much for him to bear.

But Isaac found hope at CSH.

His care team gave him the strength to try. He began to push himself in his therapy sessions and upon release from CSH, Isaac could raise his arms, brush his hair, wash his face, brush his teeth, and use his phone!

Isaac's outlook on life has improved and he has set new goals for the future. His advice to other kids facing special health challenges is: "There is always a mountain that's higher than the other—just know it gets better."

As the **CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK HOSPITALS (CMN) 2023 NEW JERSEY CHAMPION CHILD** Isaac will represent CSH by spending the year advocating for the charitable needs of CSH and the 170 CMN hospitals in North America.



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Cop Turned Carwasher



That's correct, you are looking at a photo from Officer Doug Rieck taken around 1974 at Brant Beach on Long Beach Island. Rieck, the immediate past president of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey and owner/operator of Magic Wash in Manahawkin served as a summer officer through college and then after graduation he worked full-time for three years. Thankfully, though, his path led him to eventually own his own carwashes, serve as the President of the CWONJ twice and receive the Most Distinguished Person and Hall of Fame awards from the NRCC for his dedication to the show and its evolution. We're glad you switched gears, Doug!

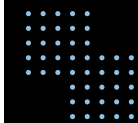
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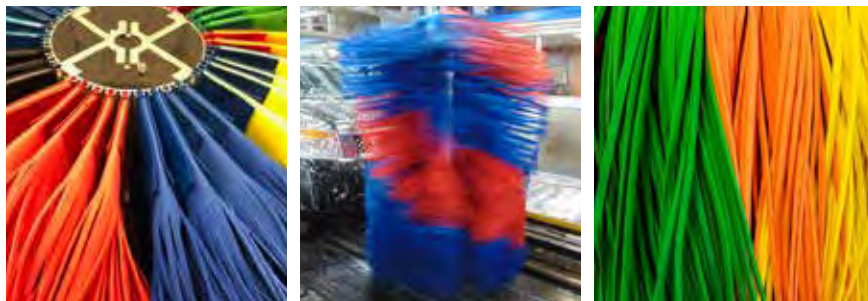
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A Look at the Governor's \$53.1 Billion Budget

By Sam Weinstein

On Tuesday, February 28, Governor Phil Murphy (D) delivered his Fiscal Year 2024 (FY2024) Budget Address where he presented his record \$53.1 billion sending plan to fund New Jersey from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. The FY2024 Budget includes investments in education and continues to fund New Jersey's pension system and school funding formula.

Governor Murphy's FY2024 budget includes another full pension payment of \$7.1 billion, contributes an additional \$2.35 billion to the Debt Defeasance and Prevention Fund (the fund was established in 2021 for the purpose of retiring and defeasing state debt), and a record \$10 billion contribution to the state's surplus. The proposed FY2024 Budget attempts to bolster the state's emergence from the COVID-19 Pandemic by expanding upon the 14 tax cuts the Murphy administration has delivered for working families by dramatically increasing direct property tax relief, while continuing the Governor's historic funding of pre-K and K-12 education and brings down the costs of higher education and housing.

The Governor's Budget Address marks the beginning of the

three-month budget negotiation process amongst legislative leaders. New Jersey's fiscal year ends on June 30, and the Legislature is required to pass a budget prior to avoid a state shut-down. Given that the Governor can line-item veto spending, it is conceivable that a budget will be adopted on time — unless the Legislature does not want to give the Governor the spending and revenue mechanisms that he wants.

The FY2024 Budget includes:

- No new taxes or fees; and
- \$14 million in additional funding for the Cover All Kids initiative to ensure health care for children regardless of immigration status.

The Legislature will resume their regular legislative activity on May 8, 2023. Princeton Public Affairs Group, along with our Sponsors, continues to advocate for the passage of our legislation, A3703 (Dunn R-25), which permits carwash businesses to operate during a state of emergency or public health emergency. It is our hope that the Governor will pass this bill in June.

NC

Sam Weinstein is a lobbyist/strategic advisor/government affairs for Princeton Public Affairs Group (PPAG) in Trenton, NJ, the association's lobbying firm. You can reach Sam at sam@ppag.com



Sam Weinstein

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PPAG NJ's Top Lobbying Firm

The Princeton Public Affairs Group (PPAG) based in Trenton, NJ, has been recognized as the market leader, according to the official Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC) Lobbying results of 2022, said a company press release. The firm boasts a diverse, bi-partisan collection of professionals that serve as the center of the Winning Circle of Companies, a unique group of talented professionals comprising Winning Strategies Washington (WSW), and Princeton Strategic Communications (PSC), an award-winning communications team specializing in marketing and crisis communication.

The firm's Al Gaburo, CWONJ lobbyist, was also recently named to the NJ Globe Power List.

PPAG was founded in 1987 and has received this honor for the last 20 years.

NC



For more information visit
ppag.com, wsdc.com and princetonpsc.com

Look for photos from our Annual Carwash Tour in the Fall Issue!



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If you have an MCA story idea or wash you think we should feature, drop us an email at:
Suzanne.Stansbury@icloud.com

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I am writing to you as the new president of the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Association (MCA). I am extremely excited to grow this association over my term as president. I will keep this brief, as I know you all have dirty cars to clean and customers to attend to.

I started my wash, Chesapeake Car Wash and Detail Center, in 2016. With a background in youth hockey as a coach for more than 20 years and managing the Washington Capitals practice facility while coaching and now working my 20th year in the TV booth with the team, I consider myself a great leader in teamwork and have unmatched determination for goals that I set. This determination has been the spark in Chesapeake Car Wash and Detail Center and I plan to continue that with my involvement in the MCA.

There are three main goals that I have for the MCA:

- ❖ *Grow its membership and meeting attendance. A network is the most important aspect of any business and I believe that a united carwash industry throughout the Mid-Atlantic will be very beneficial for all owners and suppliers. It was the network that I formed early in my carwash career that allowed me to have the confidence to start Chesapeake Car Wash and Detail Center. This is something that I want to foster for our group.*
- ❖ *Plan enjoyable events that everyone is excited to attend and doesn't want to miss. I know that after a long day with customers and dirty cars it is hard to motivate yourself to come to an event or meeting, so, we want to make these meetings/events enjoyable and information packed for everyone!*
- ❖ *To provide opportunities for us to learn and grow as operators. As I have said before at meetings, the knowledge that the MCA can provide to other owners and suppliers is endless. We all should be learning from each other. At each meeting/event I plan to provide at least one new guest speaker who can help us improve our business. We all take something different away from our meetings whether it be the way we wash cars, the way we train our employees, the latest and greatest chemicals, etc. But most of all, we all take away friendships. The MCA is not just focused on the latest business venture, but with each others' lives and families.*

I am excited to see everyone at our next meeting. Your attendance is a great way to add knowledge through hearing about the experiences and ideas of others, being able to network, and so much more! I will be reaching out to everyone soon to start planning our next event.



Tom Morris, MCA President

MCA Meeting July 12

For more information visit
mcacarwash.org

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SAVE THE DATE!

MCA Meeting July 12

*The Crab Deck, Grasonville, MD
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For more information visit mcacarwash.org



One Fine Sign

To create some brand identification this Beltsville, MD, site needed owner Dave DuGoff to make a significant investment in its branding. The result speaks for itself — one fine sign!



The wash, purchased by DuGoff in 2019, his second location, had no signage — for 20 years prior to his ownership. And despite a struggle finding a company that would install the sign, DuGoff is pleased with the finished product, and even the significant investment he made in the electronic LED message board sign (approximately 100K). “At the end of the day, I am happy with my investment,” said DuGoff. “A business should be brand identified and consumers should know where they are going.” **NC**

**Sign design, Perry Powell, National Manager of Channel Sales for Sure Fire Signs.*

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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NEWENGLANDCARWASH.ORG

Happy summer from the New England Carwash Association (NECA)! I hope your days have been full of dirty cars, great times and lots of sunshine. If you ask me, there may not be anything better than a warm summer day at the carwash when everything's going all right.

I love being with a motivated team of employees working hard, having fun, serving lots of happy customers, and having all the equipment and software functioning properly. I know, I know, I should quit talking before I push my luck and jinx it, but I am extremely grateful for these high-performing moments!

It is not always easy to achieve this optimum environment, especially when running a fast-paced business, which involves dealing with the motoring public, maintaining hard-working equipment, keeping up with ever-changing technology, and supporting a team of employees who get it all done. That is why it is important to surround yourself with smart, competent people, and work with other companies and suppliers who are compatible with your business. "Be the same, yet different." – Adam Kulliver, HR Workplace Services

We are part of a vibrant and dynamic community, comprised of carwash operators, suppliers and professionals who are dedicated to advancing the carwash industry. It is important to work together and learn from one another. I heard an interesting quote from the online show, "Car Wash Confessions with the Wash Boys — Episode 5: Creating a great workplace culture," coming from the guest of the show, Adam Kulliver, Executive VP of HR Workplace Services. He said, "Be the same, yet different." Adam had a great explanation of the seemingly contradictory statement. I encourage you to listen to the full episode and hear it for yourself. My takeaway from the quote was how do I blend in, but also stand out? Of course, we want to provide the expected services of our client base, including providing a clean car, but how can we go above and beyond? I don't just think about what the offered amenities are, but are they working properly? Is the lot and landscaping organized to provide a clean, welcoming and safe environment? We always try to provide a great product and top-notch customer service. There are so many little things that build the big picture and help create these high-performance moments!

The NECA encourages you to be an active participant in this industry. Working together and learning from each other makes us all better. The NECA aims to provide networking and educational opportunities, business services and representation to enhance the professionalism of the carwashing industry. The whole Northeast region has so much to offer regarding carwashing, no matter in which state you live and work. I hope you read the messages from my fellow Association Presidents, along with the other articles from industry experts in this great publication. I think we are lucky to be surrounded by such smart, competent people, and have many options for great industry suppliers. I hope to see you at the annual event in Atlantic City, the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 2-4.

The next NECA event is our charity Golf Outing, October 16, at the Marlborough Country Club in Marlborough, MA. This year's featured charity is Angel Flight NE, a non-profit

organization that arranges free air and ground medical transportation for patients with limited financial resources who require frequent trips to life-saving medical care. All are welcome to the event, and we invite you to join! Last year we were fortunate and grateful to provide a \$7,500 donation to Cradles to Crayons along with \$2,000 in educational scholarships. The tournament is held on a beautiful course, has great prizes, and is played by even better people. It's always fun and I'm already looking forward to the event. Please feel free to learn more about membership and our other upcoming events at our website, www.newenglandcarwash.org



Jeffrey Katseff

Jeffrey Katseff, NECA President

WELCOME NEW NECA MEMBER

Washville

James Waterman
Washville Car Wash

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Call For 2024 NECA Board Nominations

It's not too early to nominate yourself, or a colleague, for a leadership position in the New England Carwash Association (NECA). The 2024 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, 2023, please nominate yourself or a colleague by contacting Patrick Mosesso, Immediate Past President, at 508/879-3585 or email at pamosesso@gmail.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 take office on January 1. Non-profit governance training is provided during the fall transition period and at a new Board orientation lunch.

Additional Opportunities

One or a few people cannot do alone what can be done 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 or 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

NC

A large blue rectangular advertisement for Autowash Technologies. At the top, the text "AUTOWASH TECHNOLOGIES" is in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below it is a stylized white graphic of a car's front end, with the words "SINCE" and "1992" on either side. The main body of the ad features a quote in white text: "We exist at the intersection of innovation and experience." Below the quote is the attribution "- Christopher Zona | Founder". At the bottom, there are four logos: "PETIT AUTO WASH EQUIPMENT" (a blue and white logo), "Qual Chem JOIN THE GREEN TEAM" (a green and white logo), "VACUTECH" (a blue and white logo), and "WASH WORKS MOTOR CITY" (a yellow and blue logo). At the very bottom, the website "www.AUTOWASH.net" and the phone number "(888) SOS-WASH" are displayed in white text.



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This attractive site on West Housatonic St. in Pittsfield boasts two inbay automatics (one frictionless and one friction), as well as two self-service bays.

Comalli Adds Sixth Location to Diversified Patriot Car Wash

By Alan M. Petrillo

Dave Comalli, the owner of six Patriot Car Wash locations in several Massachusetts towns, believes in diversification, not only in the types of carwashes he owns, but also in the ancillary business ventures on some of the carwash sites.

Comalli's mix of businesses at his carwashes include his flagship location at 560 Tyler St. in Pittsfield that features a 120-foot express tunnel, two inbay touchless automatics, seven self-service bays, and a residential apartment building; a Pittsfield loca-

tion at 103 Elm St. where there's a 90-foot express tunnel, eight self-service bays, a Laundromat, and a commercial real estate building; and a smaller location at 315 W. Housatonic St. in Pittsfield with two inbay automatics (one touchless and one friction), and two self-service bays.

The three other Patriot Car Wash locations are at 40 Consolati Way in Lee, where there's one inbay touchless automatic and five self-service bays; at 76 Columbia St. in Adams where there are two



The 76 Columbia St. site in Adams features two inbay automatics (friction and frictionless) and five self-service bays.



This site at 560 Tyler St. in Pittsfield is Comalli's flagship location boasting a 120-foot express tunnel, two inbay touchless automatics, seven self-service bays and a residential apartment building, as well as solar heating.



inbay automatics (one touchless and one friction) and five self-service bays; and Comalli's newest site, at 213 State Road in North Adams, which has one touchless inbay automatic, five self-service bays and 100 self storage units.

Comalli noted that the diversification of the types of carwashes he offers, but more importantly, the other businesses on the carwash location sites, make a big difference in the business's bottom line. "Sometimes, when the carwashes are quiet, the other businesses help out by keeping a cash flow streaming," he said.


Comalli's primary business is commercial and residential


electrical contracting, from which he recently retired, but his involvement in carwashes goes back 35 years. "Back then I bought property in Lee's downtown and was going to put up an electrical contracting shop and attach a carwash, but learned that we couldn't do both on the property," Comalli pointed out. "A friend bought the property and put in five self-service bays and one clunker inbay automatic. Five years later, I bought it back from him and replaced the inbay with a PDQ LaserWash, which was my start in carwashing. So instead of golf, my leisure is carwashing."

Continued ...



This expansive site on Elm Street in Pittsfield boasts solar panels, a 90-foot express tunnel, eight self-service bays, a Laundromat and a commercial real estate building.



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The North Adams site at 213 State Road is Comalli's newest site. It includes a touchless inbay, five self-service bays and 100 self-storage units.

Industry Growing Pains

Comalli believes the industry is facing a number of challenges, from large private equity firms buying up carwashes, to water resource issues, to analyzing customer data to identify the kinds of washes customers want most. "There's a lot of money out there where groups are swallowing up carwashes and the smaller vendors," he observed. "Also, there are issues where Private Equity (PE) groups are building carwashes without doing the research about locations, the neighborhoods, and the customer experience that's expected. If they did those things, the dollar would follow, but in a lot of cases, they are overbuilding for the neighborhood."

Water Conservation

Comalli says Patriot Car Wash is starting to plan on what his businesses can do to save water. "We think the next big thing in carwashing will be water because it has become a scarce resource," he said. "When it's harder to get and more expensive, carwash operators will have to determine what they can do to save water, like put in water recovery systems. You can probably recover 50 to 60 percent* with water recovery systems today, but they are difficult to retrofit, so it's better to build a system in a newly-constructed carwash where you can plan for the location of two or three large underground tanks and the piping into and out of the carwash."

**The percentage noted will vary depending by wash type and site.*

Customer relations also has gotten much more important to carwash operators, Comalli said.

"We all have gotten much better at that," he pointed out. "We currently use an ICS system that has helped us bring our six locations together so we can analyze the customer use data

from each of them," Comalli said. "We've found that there's a trend where self-service sales are still good, but getting fewer each year, but when that happens, we'll turn a self-service bay into an inbay automatic."

Comalli added that his inbay automatics are very popular with customers. "Our two locations that have only inbay automatics are almost equal to the amount of cars they wash to our tunnels, which can do 100 cars an hour and put out a quality carwash," he said. "But sometimes, the wait at our inbays is six deep. Plus, a customer can't do touchless all the time; they have to do a friction wash from time to time to get the car really clean."

Comalli praised his employees and staff for making Patriot Car Wash a success. "Dave Cuddihy is our operations manager for all locations, and my son-in-law, Alain Hernandez, is specializing in marketing and inside operations like handling social media, Google and Facebook," Comalli said. "We have 22 full-time employees, including two technicians, spread over our six locations, and they are the ones who keep these carwashes humming. I'm very proud of them."

NC

Alan M. Petrillo is a Tucson, AZ-based journalist, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He writes for a number of national and regional publications, and is the author of six nonfiction books, and three historical mystery/thrillers.



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Autowash Maintenance Mourns The Loss of its Matriarch

The Campagna and Autowash Maintenance family is mourning the loss of its matriarch, Linda Mary Campagna, who died on April 22 at the age of 78. Raised in Medford, MA, she was the daughter of the late William and Mary Regan. A graduate of Medford High School, Linda met her future husband, Ronald J. Campagna, in its hallowed halls. After dating for six years, they married in 1967.

Linda and Ron shared a passion for adventure and fun be it with their corvettes, power boats or Harley's. They enjoyed many unscripted adventures together and cherished their family and friends in Massachusetts, at their vacation home on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire or in Florida.

For most of its 53-year history, Linda worked in the of-



Linda Mary Campagna

fice at the family business, Autowash Maintenance Corporation in Malden. She was also a co-owner of Camp's Car Washes and Laundromat in Nashua, NH. Most recently, she volunteered her time at the New England Rehabilitation center in Woburn.

She is survived by her husband, Ronald, her son Ronald Jr. and his wife Sherri-Anne, her son Michael and his wife Tara and her daughter Christine Keane and her husband Bob. Linda was also the proud grandmother of Joseph, Nicholas, Daniel, Michael, Grace, Timothy, Tyler and Emily Campagna, and Alyssa, Alex and Jake Keane, and the great grandmother of Anthony Campagna. **NC**

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Make-A-Wish Foundation at www.wish.org



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Annual Golf Donation Recipient: Angel Flight NE

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More than 450 volunteer pilots generously donate their private planes and time to make it possible for patients to access the vital healthcare they need, for as long as they need assistance. Fifty percent of the patients are children, often suffering from severe burns, cancer or rare diseases.

The organization also provides humanitarian efforts such as flying medical supplies during times of crisis, flying organs or donors to specific medical facilities, patients to specialty medical camps or retreats and family members to loved ones requiring medical care.

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To learn more visit angelflightne.org

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Members of the New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) board have spent much of the last few months closely following and listening to Governor Hochul and NYS Legislators discuss the ever-changing list of items to be included in the NYS budget. Which, as of today, is 27 days late. I encourage you to read NYS Lobbyist Bill Crowell's column regarding the banning of natural gas connections in new construction, as well as the "electrification" of New York state. We are working with Bill and operators from across the state to collect data to use to educate Legislators and building council departments as to the logistics and cost of building, installing, converting and supplying our locations with heat and hot water produced by electricity.

We are also closely watching the negotiations that are underway with regards to a minimum wage increase. Bill shares more about that in his column on page 75.

Reflections on Family

I took a break from the "budget watch" and enjoyed some time over spring break with my family. All of our children were home for a few days, one is married (the truth is she lives next door and we see her quite a bit, which I am thankful for) but my two sons are continuing their educations, one in NYC and one in Connecticut, so we don't see them as much. Although we hear from them often, it's not the same as seeing them in person. We are still busy, but the house is quiet these days with just the sound of two dogs chasing each other around until they crash on the floor exhausted before laying in the sun under the living room window.

This past week was different. There was a different energy, and noise in the house. Guitars were being played, there were spirited discussions on all types of topics, along with exciting speculation of what's next for each of them. The refrigerator seemed to be empty minutes after we came home from shopping. Sound familiar?

Our digital photo frame on the shelf randomly scrolls through a slide show of pictures from years ago, as well as recently added ones, the way that it has done every day for years. Recently, I've taken the time to watch the photos as they rotate through the slide show. One photo in particular caught my attention. The photo I'm speaking of is of my wife, Paige, and myself along with our three kids at a Christmas tree farm many years ago. And randomly, the next photo was of us at the same Christmas tree farm this past year. I know I've written about how the industry has changed over the years, but that picture had me thinking about how much we have changed. Many times, you don't even notice the change because it happens gradually and we are so busy with life that we miss those changes. Seeing my kids who were so small riding on the back of the wagon to go and pick the perfect tree, and then seeing the next photo where they are all grown up and barely fit on the wagon, yet still searching for the perfect tree, gives me pause.

The interesting thing about the photos is that even though we have all changed, we haven't really changed that much. I think about how I have changed since I started in the carwash industry. The experiences I've had that have helped shape me, the friends that have helped encourage me, the challenges that have helped teach me. I may have changed a bit

Continued on page 77...

Fossil Fuel Ban, Minimum Wage Increase Delayed – For Now

By William Y. Crowell, III



This article is being submitted as New York State enters its 27th day past the April 1 budget adoption deadline with no budget yet approved by the Legislature. Bail reform and housing issues surfaced as important issues for Governor Hochul. The consideration of these contentious issues delayed focus on other budget items including a ban on fossil fuels for new construction and an increase in the minimum wage.

The ban on fossil fuels in new construction is according to press reports now targeted to commence for buildings seven stories or less with an exemption for commercial buildings under 100,000 square feet in 2026. In 2028 buildings over seven stories would be subject to the ban. No budget bill is filed at this point to confirm this report. Carwash operations would be covered in 2028 under this scenario so new carwashes would be required to operate using heat pumps. This ban would require deployment of multiple heat pump units to provide the BTUs necessary to provide the high temperatures that are needed for the carwash operations to not only heat the water used to wash the cars, but to operate blowers to generate heat to strip residual water from the vehicle and to heat the floor areas to prevent icing as a safety measure for employees. Carwash operations require a significant amount of heat during the winter. Heat pumps unlike a natural gas heating system would be required to operate on a full-time basis to produce the large volume of heat, which is needed to generate heat quickly and continuously to enable the wash process to be effective. The amount of electricity needed to support a carwash operation would be significant enough to potentially require an electric substation to support the increased electric usage. In contrast to the use of a heat pump for residential construction where usage is generally balanced, a carwash has some extremely high demand periods. Carwashes often have space limitations that would make it difficult to incorporate the number of heat pumps required to provide the heat necessary to effectively operate.

The budget bill submissions by the Legislature and the Governor provide for specific exemptions for specific uses such as hospitals, crematoriums and Laundromats. There are no generalized metrics or criteria in the legislation as a qualification for an exemption. The most similar exempt activity to a carwash given an exemption is a Laundromat. There does not appear to be a measurable difference between a Laundromat versus a carwash operation in terms of usage of warm water in significant quantities.

The New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) has provided some technical information to support asser-

tions as to feasibility issues with heat pump usage. An additional exemption for carwash operations has been requested based on the heat pump's inability to effectively replace the unique qualities of natural gas.

Ultimately, the ban on natural gas may be impacted by a recent decision of the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in the California Restaurant Association vs. City of Berkeley. The City of Berkeley established a regulation, which prohibited the installation of natural gas piping within newly constructed buildings. The court decision held that a federal statute, the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, preempts the Berkeley ordinance. The Energy Policy and Conservation Act preempts state and local regulations concerning the energy use of natural gas appliances. This case will not dissuade the Governor and the Legislature from acting. It may, however, have possible consequences for implementation of whatever gas ban is included in the final budget.

The NYSCWA has urged that New York take a practical approach to the natural gas ban examining the feasibility of replacement of natural gas in carwash operations and examining the feasibility of other options like dual fuel or hybrid approaches.

Minimum Wage Increases Looming

The Governor's budget proposed increasing the minimum wage based on inflation increases with a cap on annual increases at 3 percent. The progressive wing of the Democratic Party in New York State is seeking a higher minimum wage at \$21.25 before applying indexing. The press is reporting that an agreement was reached that would raise the minimum wage from \$15 to \$17 by 2026, and thereafter the indexing would be applied. This tentative deal is under attack by the progressives as not enough of an increase. It remains to be seen what the final agreement will be. It is, however, certain that the budget will include an increase in the minimum wage. The New York State Car Wash Association will report on the changes to the minimum wage, when ultimately enacted. Carwash operators should, however, be prepared to deal with increases in the future.

NC



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

William Y. Crowell, III

How Does Having a Choice Affect our Decisions?

By Ray Justice

There are three replies to this question.

1. Human story from history
2. Reply from A.I. (Artificial Intelligence)
3. Current viewpoint from a live human (Ray Justice).

Human Stories From a Past Interview

Karen Galvin, owner of The Training Scene and Author of “Get Creative! Get the Sale” offered, in her book, an interview with Ray Justice. This is an edited partial version of that story from several years ago.

In earlier years, Buckman’s Car Wash offered a five-day, and a 10-day guarantee called The Works. The challenge they had was that people wouldn’t really keep track. If it was a five- or 10-day offer, they were not sure what the date was, and although the receipt was on their dash, they would still come in a day or two late. The staff would have to back them out of the line. Fortunately, that only lasted for a day.

Ray quickly shifted his mindset, “What can we do so people won’t feel uncomfortable?” Customers were embarrassed, and Ray didn’t want them to be backed out of the line. So, he came up with simply giving them a choice. “We’re sorry, but your guarantee ran out yesterday.”

“Oh, I thought it was today.”

“Here’s what I can do. I can knock \$2 off, if you just want a regular carwash, or if you want The Works again, I can do it for half price. Which would you like to do?”

As soon as he gave people a choice, they said, “Oh, okay.” Ray ended up selling them the same thing for half the price, which was fine.

Ray’s other business was a Laundromat that featured new front-loading washing machines called Super 20s. He noticed another business that had a promotion with soup, calling it a Souper Deal. He went to the public market and bought several cases of Tomato Soup. He put a coupon in the newspaper, “If you try our Super 20s, you get a can of tomato soup. It’s a Souper Deal!” Two people brought in coupons, so, he did away with the promo.

Then he realized he had bought too much soup, and took the soup to one of his other carwashes. He had the staff offer soup if people bought the next level of wash. At both businesses, it was not going well so he decided to offer a choice again. He bought tomato soup and mushroom soup. Then, he had the carwash attendant hold up two cans of soup, and say, “Today, when you buy The Works, you get your choice of Tomato or Mushroom soup.” It was so powerful when he just gave them a choice that the soup sold.

He went back to the Laundromat and did the same thing in offering two different types of soup, and sales went up significantly.

Here’s another story. Ray’s Dad was a florist, and he got the

idea of offering flowers at the wash. Their new choice was created, and they offered petunias or marigolds, in those individual square plastic containers. With this choice option, they were edging 50 percent. The power was in giving people a choice. And, yes, you guessed it, the coin-op Laundry also did well with flowers as it also included a level of fun.

Reply From AI

Having a choice can definitely help us make better decisions in many cases. When we have options to choose from, we can weigh the pros and cons of each choice and consider which one is most aligned with our values, goals and preferences. Having a choice can also give us a sense of control and ownership over the decision-making process. When we feel like we have agency in our choices, we’re more likely to take responsibility for the outcomes and feel more satisfied with the results.

However, having too many choices can sometimes be overwhelming and lead to decision fatigue. In these cases, it may be helpful to narrow down the options or seek guidance from others to make a more informed decision. But ultimately, whether having a choice helps us make better decisions depends on the situation, the number of options available, and our own decision-making skills and preferences.

Ray Justice with a Human Summary

Having a choice helps to open our mind to wonder about additional possibilities. Be Curious. Pause, breathe and be aware of the present moment with a calmer thought and decision.

Life is moving at an increasingly swift rate so be prepared for rapid change coming faster and faster. Compare the words with how does it feel or sense to you?

The past is past, meaning it is done. What’s next? It is not 30 years ago, so let it go. Be aware of the present moment while looking toward the future. Think about what really matters now. And, be ready for change and choice.

Going with your gut is only one aspect of body intuition. Clues and knowledge, that we need to understand how and why, are also needed to stay in tune with trust and what is going on.

This statement is strongly suggesting a study and practice of awareness, instinct, intuition, feelings and senses so our intentions head in the right direction. A new rapidly-paced environment is on the move. Stay peaceful with ever-curious thoughts.

NC



Ray Justice

Ray Justice is an Entrepreneur, Poet & Creativity Explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the NYSCWA. Visit him at RayJustice.com where he offers inspiring and useful tools to grow.

Another Little Kubo!



Congratulations to Christopher Kubarek and his fiancé Christine DeSocio, of K & S Car Wash in Auburn, on the birth of their second child, Michael David Kubarek. Michael was born on April 17 at 8pm and weighed in at 7lb. 8 oz and was 20 inches long. According to New York State Car Wash Association Board Member Christopher, "Everyone is healthy, happy and doing fantastic." Big brother Nicholas Joseph was born on November 24, 2021. **NC**

President's Letter ... continued from page 74

physically, but I still have the passion for this industry and the people in it as I did when I started. I enjoy the challenges and opportunities that are part being a "carwasher." "Every experience in your life has brought you to this moment — the challenges, triumphs, laughter, tears. You now must choose what you'll do in the next moment."

I choose to keep doing what I enjoy with the people I am lucky enough to call friends and looking forward to this year's trip on the back of the Christmas tree wagon and adding another photo to the frame.

I hope to see you at our fall NYSCWA event and the NRCC, October 2-4, in Atlantic City.



Walter Hartl, NYSCWA President

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Chemical Safety 101

By Meeghan Sheckler



Do your employees know how to properly handle your carwash chemical?

What can you do as an owner/operator to ensure that your employees are handling chemicals properly? First, you can start by educating your team on the chemicals used at your wash. Not only is it important for them to understand what each chemical does in respect to cleaning cars, but also what are some of their potential hazards.

Did you know that every time a new hazard is introduced to the work area, employers are required to provide information and training to their employees? That's right, The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS), 29 CFR 1910.1200 (h), requires all employers to provide information and training to their employees about the hazardous chemicals to which they may be exposed at the time of their initial assignment, and whenever a new hazard is introduced into their work area.

Every time you receive a chemical delivery the container should be labeled with general information on potential hazards, as well as how to handle or use the product. This label is generally supplied from the manufacturer directly,

or the supplier. Make sure that all containers include the following information: Name and address of the manufacturer, and any physical and health hazards that may be associated with the product.

Every carwash should have a binder with Safety Data Sheets (SDS) or formerly known as Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). In the event of accidental exposure, be sure to bring a copy with you to the emergency room to help expedite the proper treatment for that chemical.

Anytime your distributor brings you a new chemical, be sure to have them review it with you. You can then share that information with your team and have them sign off on that as training.

Does your chemical room have an eyewash station and a first aid kit? This is something that every carwash should have easily accessible.

Chemical Storage Important

Does it matter where you store chemicals? Yes, it absolutely does! Some chemicals can cause a reaction and combust if they



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are near each other. The chemical room should also be off limits to customers and anyone who has not been properly trained. For those carwashes in colder climates, make sure that your chemical does not freeze. Some chemicals may not be able to be stored on the ground for that reason.

Another potential hazard is not from the chemical itself, but rather the container it's in. Is it in a drum or another large container? Trying to move these containers can cause back injuries, as well as other injuries from lifting.

Lastly, how do you dispose of chemicals or old containers? Be sure to check with your distributor on proper disposal, as well as empty containers. As an owner/operator it is in your hands to ensure you and your employees are trained properly when handling chemicals. You may obtain a copy of the Hazard Communication Standard on OSHA's hazard communication webpage at www.osha.gov/hazcom

NC

Meeghan Sheckler runs the Cross Insurance Car Wash Solutions Program and works with carwash owner/operators to help ensure that their washes are safe for employees and customers. If you are interested in speaking with Meeghan about your wash or would like help with training or a safety checklist, you can reach her at meeghan.sheckler@crossagency.com or 207/347-1903.



Meeghan Sheckler



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- Fusion wheel scrub
- Carwash Pay Station (Guardian XP-BX pay station by Standard)

All equipment was installed in May 2019.

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Look For Photos and a Recap From Our Spring Tour & Meeting In the Fall Issue!

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Skip Weisman, author of "Overcoming the 7 Deadliest Communication Sins."



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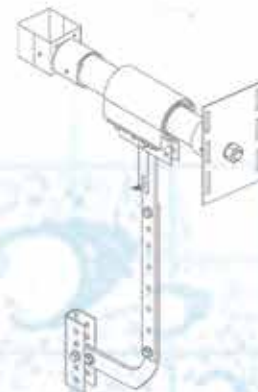
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