

Headlines & More



North East Fabricare Association
www.nefabricare.com

7th Annual Fall Fest Largest Ever!



NEFA HELD ITS 7TH ANNUAL FALL FEST PROGRAM ON NOVEMBER 16 & 17 AT THE WENTWORTH BY THE SEA RESORT & SPA. BY ALL ACCOUNTS THIS WAS ONE OF THE BEST PROGRAM EVER HELD IN THE NORTHEAST. With almost 100 people in attendance for Sundays Sessions & Breakfast Buffet, and almost 20 companies sponsoring or taking tables at the event, Fall Fest proved to be a hotbed of innovative

products, services and ideas. Drawing cleaners from as far away as Buffalo and Rochester NY, Burlington VT and Westport, CT, Fall Fest demonstrated the importance of learning new techniques, exploring new ideas, and developing business skills to make your business stronger. Those in attendance learned from some of the industries best experts and were treated to a first-class Convention experience.

CHRISTOPHER WHITE, CEO OF AMERICA'S BEST CLEANERS

The keynote speaker was Christopher White (pictured above). He drew on his years of experience with Madame Paulette Cleaners in Manhattan and his work in building the America's Best Cleaners' brand to engage the audience in a discussion of ways to increase your business and profitability. White also was the main speaker for Sunday as he gave an in depth 4-hour workshop designed to educate, motivate and train owners, managers and customer service personnel in effective ways to promote the business. Through his tutelage, attendees learned ways to increase sales, enhance the customers experience and to help foster growth of selected services. "Chris White was a great draw," commented Peter Blake NEFA's Executive Vice President, "and he delivered on that expectation. I was excited to hear the discussions after the program, and to hear the great feedback on the presentations. It is great to feel that excitement in the industry."

TIM ROBERTS, BUSINESS NETWORKING INTERNATIONAL

The second presentation of the day featured Tim Roberts who demonstrated the importance networking can have on your business. The old adage the best advertising is word of mouth advertising has never been more important than today. One of the best ways to promote your business is to go out in the community, get involved and get involved with organizations that will help you promote your brand. Tim was able to not only showcase BNI and what it has done for many drycleaners, but to go beyond that and to help those in

continued on page 3

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	2
More on Fall Fest '13!	3 & 5
Meet the Allies: Don Desrosiers.....	6
ObamaCare from the HR Chair	7
Required OSHA Training Update	8
NEFA Member Hosts Wet Cleaning Demonstration	9
Allied Trade Members	11

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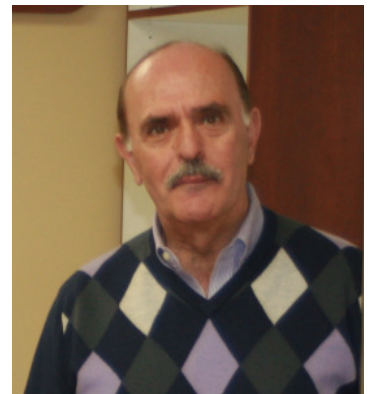
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...

An Amazing Weekend!

WELL WE WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE BEST YET -- AND WE WEREN'T DISAPPOINTED! WE ARE PROUD OF THE FALL FEST TRADITION, AND I AM PROUD TO HAVE BEEN A PART OF THIS EVENT. I can't even begin to tell you how much I learned and how much the people I brought from my plant appreciated being there. The investment of time and the investment in my employees was well worth it.

Wentworth By The Sea proved to be a perfect venue. The food was amazing, the staff accommodating, and the setting was traditional New England at its best.

I want to take a moment and thank the many companies who participated and sponsored the event. It is through their generosity and support that NEFA continues to be a leader in the industry. The support these companies give the industry -- and you our members-- goes far beyond just selling a product or service. They provide you added benefit by investing in your industry, and in your association. So please, look over the list and say thank you! When you need products or services please keep their commitment to your success in mind.



John Dallas

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continued from page 11

the audience learn ways to promote yourself, and to feel comfortable about it. “Sometimes for people that are so involved in the working of a drycleaning shop, it is hard to step outside and talk about yourself and your business”, offered Jim Desjardins, owner of Daisy Cleaners and Fall Fest veteran of all 7 events, “To have an expert trainer help you understand both the importance of the effort as well as ways to go about it is invaluable. I know networking is the one marketing effort I can point to that has been the greatest boost to my business”.



PEER TO PEER LUNCHEON

NEFA’s Luncheon took a different approach from past events. After feasting on Lobster Rolls and award winning Clam Chowder, NEFA turned the floor over to the membership to discuss the various ways they have been able to increase business, productivity, and quality.

Chuck Anton of John Anton’s Fabricare shared his recent market research experience. He recently undertook an in-depth analysis of his competition including quality, volume, and customer service. The results were dramatic and eye-opening. He went on to share the ways he is utilizing the information. Chuck also highlighted the work he has started doing with social media marketing, and his terrific success. This led well into the service and discussion my Peg Fitzpatrick on Sunday, as well as highlighting some of the products and services from Spot Computer, Fabricare Manager, and Compass Max who all had displays.



Clockwise from top left: Emilios Rigas learns all the new innovations from Compass Max. Attendees learning how to increase sales. Bruce Kahn of AristoCraft Supply and Michael Duchaine of Fabricare Systems enjoy the delicious buffet. Attendees enjoying the chance to meet new friends, and get reacquainted with old ones throughout the event!

Jim Desjardins shared some handy tips that he has been using in his plant, and showed some short videos of how they worked. He demonstrated easy ways to replace zipper slides right at the workstation, quick and easy ways to safely brush out coats. Jim also shared the innovative way he had “soundproofed” his machine to add to the ambiance of his front counter area.

Larry Fish of Pier Cleaners really showed the value Fall Fest has had in his business. Since coming to Fall Fest, and learning and adapting his business, he has dramatically increased his profitability. He showed the positive effects of the specific changes and programs he implemented that he learned at Fall Fest. From James Peuster and the Route Pro, to using Don Desrosiers and Tailwind services he is capitalizing on his labor force and growing his business. He also showed the effects new equipment he has purchased in the last couple years from HMC solutions and Aldrich Cleantech has had on his business. “Every year I come to this event”, expressed Larry, “and I go back, and invest in my business. I am thoroughly amazed at the transformation the business has been

making. I honestly owe it to the vendors and Conference Speakers for what they have been able to convey to me. I owe it to NEFA for bringing them all together in such a great forum.”

TOM USTANIK, LANSING CLEANERS

Tom Ustanik brought a unique perspective to energy conservation and cost control. Tom has been an innovator within the industry and he shared some of his experiences. He showed the effectiveness of LED lighting -- and the corresponding cost savings. He shared his experiences in converting his delivery vans from gasoline to natural gas, and unveiled the saving he has been enjoying. Tom also was able to show useful, practical ways all drycleaners can conserve energy and reduce their cost while increasing their efficiency.

JAMES PEUSTER, 21ST CENTURY DRYCLEANING

No stranger to NEFA’s Fall Fest, James brought his usual flair and dynamic presentation skills to cover a whole new area: measuring job performance. Diverging away from solely Route Sales, James is able to pull from his background as a management consultant and training expert to demonstrate the need to evaluate success, establish realistic goals, and to use metrics to monitor growth. While he is known for his work with Route Development, he has a wealth

continued on page 5



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FALL FEST RECAP...

continued from page 11

of knowledge in all aspects of management. NEFA is fortunate to have this resource available to our membership.

PEG FITZPATRICK, SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERT

Peg Fitzpatrick was able to bring her experience and expertise to the crowd on Sunday Morning and show people how to capitalize on the new mediums available effectively. Social media continues to be one of the best communications tools available for small business and Peg was able to led her unique perspective on how to use it to your advantage. "It can be hard to invest the time necessary in making social media work" commented Chuck Anton, "but if you are going to do it, you need to do it the right way"

JOY ONASCH, MA TURI

Joy Onasch of the Toxic Use Reduction Institute updated cleaners on the alternative assessment tools being developed by the institute and the updates to the ERP program. The tools include a color coded reference sheet comparing the commercially available cleaning methods and a fill-in the black spreadsheet designed to provide financial comparisons between the different options. Joy was also invited attendees to the TURI Wet Cleaning Demonstration at KMK Cleaners in Walpole.

Joy also highlighted some of the potential upcoming changes based on the progress the industry makes in moving away from new perc installations.

PETER BLAKE, NEFA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With all the national attention the Hazard Communications Standard updates have been receiving, Peter Blake gave those in attendance an update and a step by step compliance process to make sure companies are able to update their programs and come into compliance. Leaning heavily on the DLI tools, including the Video, OSHA Placards, Sample Labels, and DLI Bulletin now available for free in the members only section of www.dlionline.org, the audience walked out with the tools and knowledge they needed to make the necessary changes.

WHAT LIES AHEAD

Plans are already under way for next year's conference. Wentworth By The Sea lived up to its 5-star rating, and everyone was impressed with all aspects of the Resort. NEFA is exploring potential dates to return in 2014.

NEFA is already hunting for new speakers and topics to bring to the Convention. Members are invited to email Peter Blake at peteblke@aol.com or call the office at 800-442-6848 to offer suggestions and ideas!



Drycleaning Jeopardy hosted by James Peuster was the highlight of NEFA's Silent Auction and Cocktail reception. Don Fawcett proved his drycleaning prowess by taking home the top prize! Everyone enjoyed kicking back and having some laughs with new friends and old acquaintances!

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Don Desrosiers of Tailwind Systems

DON DESROSIERS HAS BEEN IN THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1978, AS A WORK-FLOW SYSTEMS ENGINEER AND EFFICIENCY EXPERT, HE HAS CREATED THE HIGHLY ACCLAIMED TAILWIND SHIRT SYSTEMS, THE TAILWIND SYSTEM FOR DRYCLEANING, FIRESTORM FOR RESTORATION DRYCLEANING, THE TAILWIND SYSTEMS FOR AUTOMATED ASSEMBLY, AND TAILWIND FOR HOTEL VALET. Tailwind is a tagging, assembly, work-flow, management and labor saving system that, can drastically reduce labor cost. Desrosiers is a monthly columnist for The National Clothesline, Korean Cleaners Monthly, The Golomb Group Newsletter, and Australia's The National Drycleaner and Launderer. He is also a contributor for DLI's Fabricare Magazine was the 2001 winner of DLI's Commitment to Professionalism Award.

Most everyone already knows this about Don, but what you may not know is he has the same passion for his numerous hobbies as he does for the industry.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE...

Don considers himself a serious amateur gourmet chef. He single handedly recreated the last meal on the Titanic for 12 people, complete with period dress, authentic 13-course menu and wine pairings. The meal lasted 4 ½ hours, and he admitted that the hardest part was keeping up with the dishes! He has also done a tour-of-the-world dinner; 16 courses from 13 countries.

In 1994, Don achieved a decades-old dream of learning to fly an airplane and a year later, updated his skills to earn an instrument rating, allowing him to fly in clouds, bad weather, and perform instrument landings. He has amassed over 600 hours of flight time!

Another passion is woodworking and furniture making. Building on lessons and techniques taught to him by his paternal grandfather as a pre-teen, he has been honing his craft for over 40 years. He has built everything from small art pieces made of exotic wood to an authentic Windsor chair made entirely by hand with hand tools, and no electricity. It was made in the age-old tradition and will easily last 200 years.

"I'm not afraid to try anything," offered Don. "I believe that if I can imagine it, I can build it. When I was younger, I'd want to build big and fast. Now I enjoy most building small art pieces out



At home in the kitchen preparing Thanksgiving Dinner for his entire family, creating projects in his woodworking shop, or behind the controls of a small Cessna -- Don is truly a "renaissance man"!

of rare exotic hardwoods. I love making things like the wood padlocks and coasters pictured above. They are fully functional and all of the internal workings are wood. No cheating! I have made a few working combination locks too with tiny wooden tumblers that work just like the real ones."

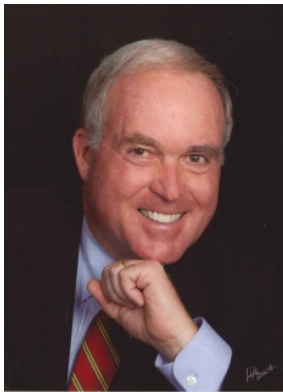
BACK TO BUSINESS...

Professionally, few realize that Desrosiers has invented over fifty products that drycleaners use everyday. He's pretty humble about them and doesn't really talk about them. He is a self-taught Excel programmer and, with that knowledge has written dozens of programs that help his clients run their businesses better than they ever have before.

He is an occasional teacher at DLI, and a frequent speaker at industry gatherings where he lectures on Management Philosophy, Shirt Laundering, Business Management and Labor savings. He has written a business management book entitled **Labor Pains & Profit Drains**. (available on Amazon.com and the Tailwind Systems website). His latest project is on-line seminars, workshops and training in a virtual classroom setting. He has a corporate website at www.tailwindsystems.com and can be reached by telephone at 508.965.3163 and via email at tailwind.don@me.com.

ObamaCare From The HR Chair

Written By Raleigh F. "Sandy" Seay, Jr., PHD, Chairman of The Seay Management Consulting Firm



TALES FROM O'SEAY'S FABLES... THE YOUNG MAN DECIDED TO JOIN THE ARMY. AFTER 6 WEEKS OF BOOT CAMP, HE DECIDED HE WANTED ALL THE EXCITEMENT THE ARMY COULD OFFER SO HE ENROLLED IN JUMP SCHOOL. *The cadre put him through 3 more weeks of tough jump training and on the day for his first jump, the cadre loaded the trainees into the plane and off they*

went. When the plane got over the jump zone, the Jump Master stood up and barked out his instructions. "Men," he said, "line up and hook up. When the man in front of you jumps, you follow him out the door. Count to 3 and your parachute will open automatically and you'll float safely back to the ground. If the parachute doesn't open, then reach over with your right hand and pull your rip cord, and your parachute will open and you'll float safely to the ground. Now men, if the parachute doesn't open then, reach over with your left hand and pull your emergency rip cord, your parachute will open and you'll float safely to the ground. When you get to the ground, fold up your parachutes and there'll be some trucks waiting for you. Load up in those trucks and they'll take you back to camp."

Skeptical and scared, the young man took his place in line, looked down and jumped . . . but his parachute didn't open. So he didn't wait to count to 3, he just grabbed his rip cord and pulled. And nothing happened. Then he reached over and grabbed his emergency rip cord and pulled. And still nothing happened. And as he was slithering on down to the ground, one of his buddies heard him say, "Yeah, and I bet them trucks ain't down there, either."

THE MOVING TARGET

One of my good friends for many years is Father Rick Lobs, an Episcopal priest who had a lot to do with my journey across the Tiber some 6 years ago. Rick once said that in most situations in life, we have a role to play and it's important for us to play that role. I thought about Rick's advice as I was thinking about ObamaCare and all of the uncertainty that is swirling around it. If we've ever seen a moving target in employment issues, it is ObamaCare. Like the young soldier mentioned above, what we were told would happen is turning out to be a lot different that what is actually happening on the ground and there is a good deal of skepticism by responsible observers as to whether ObamaCare is ultimately sustainable.

From an employment standpoint, we see three key elements of ObamaCare and note that each element has a role — there is (1) an insurance role, (2) a tax/accounting role, and (3) an HR role. Our advice is to stay close to your insurance representatives and your tax/accounting consultants so that they can play their important role and give you their very best and latest advice. Your insurance representative will be your principle advisor on ObamaCare. From the HR chair, here's the role we play. We know that, beginning in 2015, the "Business Mandate" becomes effective and here's what we know so far, as of today:

"Stay Close to your insurance representatives and your tax/accounting consultants so they can play their important role..."

THE BUSINESS MANDATE

1. Effective January 1, 2015, all businesses over 50 employees are designated Large Employers and must provide health insurance, or pay a fine. The fine is \$2000-\$3000, excluding the first 30 employees.
2. Therefore, the two primary questions you have to ask are (1) how many employees do you have, and (2) how many hours per week do your employees work? The answers to these questions will determine where you stand in relation to ObamaCare.
3. You determine the number of employees you have by counting (1) salaried employees, (2) hourly employees who work more than 30 hours per week, and (3) Full Time Equivalents for part time employees, based on a formula (Total hours for part time workers in one month divided by 120). If this number totals 50 employees or more, you are designated as a Large Employer.
4. Employees of a Large Employer who work 30 hours or more per week are considered full time and must be provided insurance. Paid benefit time like vacation and sick leave are included.
5. If you have less than 50 employees, you do not fall under the Business Mandate and are not required to provide health insurance to your employees.

continued on page 8

Required OSHA Training Update

DECEMBER 1 IS THE DEADLINE FOR RE-TRAINING AND UPDATING YOUR HAZARD COMMUNICATIONS PLAN TO REFLECT THE NEW GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM (GHS). The purpose of the new training is to inform employees in your plant who interact with chemicals of the changes in labeling and the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). The MSDS are now becoming Safety Data Sheets (SDS). These sheets provide the users of the chemicals with all the data and information needed to safely handle the chemical. The changes are being made to make the sheets more standardized and uniform worldwide. The labeling systems and requirements are also being changed. Gone are the color-coded hazards with the numerical ratings. They are being replaced by pictograms designating any known hazards. These changes will begin showing up as soon as December, 2013, but will not be fully in effect until June, 2016.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

You will need to keep your MSDS files updated, and replace them with SDS as they become available. Your Hazard Communications Program will need to be updated to reflect the new training and

labeling procedures. You must train all employees in the changes including the new labels, the hazard pictograms, and SDS sheets, and keep a record of the training in each employee's personnel file.

DLI WEBSITE PROVIDES **FREE COMPLIANCE TOOLS**

DLI has posted all the tools you need to comply **FREE** for all members. Visit www.dlionline.org and log-in with your membership number. Then go to the "Members Only" section and select HazMat Update 2013. There you will find everything you need to update your Hazard Communications Program. There is a short two minute video detailing the changes and your responsibilities for you to review and share with your employees. DLI has also posted downloads of a OSHA Pictogram Chart, OSHA Labeling Card, Training Verification Form, and a copy of the Bulletin that was issued detailing the changes. The OSHA Chart and Card are in both English and Spanish.

For more information on OSHA Compliance issues or questions, contact Peter at the NEFA Office 800-442-6848



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NEFA Member Hosts Wet Cleaning Demo



KMK CLEANERS OF WALPOLE HAS MADE THE CONVERSION TO 100% WETCLEANING. Taking advantage of a grant from the Toxic Use Reduction Institute, Michael Flaherty and his daughter Kristy recently

took out their perc drycleaning system and replaced it with professional wetcleaning, and they couldn't be happier.

They recently hosted a TURI Wet Cleaning Demonstration at their plant and welcomed a dozen peers interested in learning about their conversion. Kristy did most of the demonstration showing the various types of garments they have been able to process. She did caution people that in order to be successful in wetcleaning you have to really know your fibers and fabrics and understand the chemistry. She recounted how when she first made the switch, she went to Salvation Army stores and bought armfuls of clothes on which she could practice. She has developed a great deal of

skill and both Michael and her are thoroughly happy with what they have been able to accomplish. Rather than championing the environmental benefits of the new system, they have chosen to keep it relatively quiet for the first year. The feeling is that after a year when they make the announcement, they can tell their customers they do not have to worry -- they have been wetcleaning their garments for the past year.

With the new system, they have been able to continue to offer same day service as well as feed three additional stores from their main plant. In addition to the new wetcleaning machines and dryers, they also had to invest in new tensioning equipment. During the demonstration they showed how they were able to bring the garments back to the correct shape and size.

For more information on wetcleaning, on wetcleaning grants, or any of the alternative cleaning systems now available, contact NEFA.



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continued from page 7

6. You are not required to provide health insurance to employees who work less than 30 hours per week, even in a Large Employer.
7. The cost to the employee may not be more than 9.5% of his or her income.

Care from the HR Chair” or any other Human Resources question. Thanks to all my insurance friends for their advice and insight and thanks to you for being a valued friend and partner of our firm. For more information, contact:

Seay Management Consultants, Inc.
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WHAT MANAGEMENT MUST DO NOW

1. All employers, no matter what size, must send the ObamaCare notification to employees, either electronically or hard copy. This should have been sent as of October 1, 2013. If you haven't sent this notice yet, contact Seay Management and we'll get it for you.
2. Determine if you are a Large Employer and, thus, are required to offer insurance to your employees as of January 1, 2015.
3. Identify your employees are working 30 hours per week or more and, if you are a Large Employer, these are the employees to whom you must offer insurance.
4. If you have less than 50 employees, work with your insurance representative about health care insurance for your employees. (Notice – the date for the SHOP exchange has just been delayed.)
5. Talk with your insurance representative about ObamaCare and the plans that will meet the ObamaCare standards.
6. Talk with your accountant about the tax implications of ObamaCare for your business.

These are the main points of ObamaCare, from a Human Resources Management standpoint. The rest of the information about it falls under the purview of your insurance representative, who will be your primary advisor on ObamaCare, and your tax accountant. We emphasize in the strongest terms that ObamaCare is a moving target, the administration is making frequent changes, and there is a great deal of uncertainty about what the final ObamaCare product will look like or whether it will be sustainable at all in its current model.

As the old time radio commentator used to say, “Stay tuned.” In the meantime, please let us know if you have any questions about “Obama-



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