



National Clothesline



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DL EXPO East looks to be a fabricare feast

This month, all focus is on the DL EXPO East show, hosted by the Mid-Atlantic Association of Cleaners and the NorthEast Fabricare Association at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center near Washington, DC.

Early signs indicated that it is going to be a heavily-attended show; so far, attendees have already filled up the initial block of room set aside, as well as the second block of rooms opened after that.

Since then, rooms have been added again and look to fill up quickly.

Those who make the trip to the Gaylord National Resort will have an up-close look at all of the latest technology available in the fabricare industry in the exhibit hall, including live demonstrations of the equip-

ment in use.

It will be open on Saturday, Oct. 17, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Sunday, Oct. 18, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Another highlight of the show will be the excellent selection of educational speakers that will deliver programs on Saturday and Sunday morning before the exhibit hall officially opens.

This year's keynote speaker is **Dr. Alex Ellis**, an internationally recognized leadership expert, award-winning author and a dynamic motivational speaker who has made appearances on CNN, *Good Morning America*, BET, Black Enterprise, and *The Steve Harvey Morning Show*.

His program on Saturday morning will be on "Building Your Best Team: Creating a

Culture of Excellence."

He will share proven strategies for building a high-performance culture where employees are engaged, accountable, and motivated to excel.

Attendees will learn how to strengthen their team, develop leaders at every level, and create an organization where excellence becomes the standard.

Also speaking on Saturday will be **Dave Coyle** of Maverick Drycleaners who will present a program called "From Operator to CEO: How to Double Your Profit in 90 Days."

Many drycleaning businesses can't grow because the owner has become its greatest constraint. I'm going to show you how to fix that — and in

Continued on page 6



Gaylord National
Resort and
Convention Center
Oct. 16 to 18, 2026

Friday, Oct. 16

Cocktail Reception 5 - 7 pm

Saturday, Oct. 17

Seminars 8 - 10 am

Exhibit Hall 10 am - 5 pm

Reception 5 - 6:30 pm

Sunday, Oct. 18

Seminars 8 - 10 am

Exhibit Hall 10 am - 3 pm



DLI's school begins 100th anniversary celebration

This month, the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) School of Drycleaning Technology is celebrating its 100th anniversary, marking a century of hands-on education that has shaped generations of drycleaners and laundry professionals around the world.

Founded in 1927, the School of Drycleaning Technology was the first institution created exclusively to teach the science, craft, and business of professional garment care.

Since welcoming its first class of 32 students nearly a century ago, the school has trained thousands of owners, managers, supervisors, and production staff — many of whom have gone on to become leaders and innovators within the industry.

"For 100 years, this school has helped people build skills, confidence, and successful businesses," said Brian Johnson, DLI's director of education and analysis. "The

methods, equipment, and chemistry have evolved, but the mission remains the same: delivering education that improves quality, reduces risk, and strengthens the future of professional garment care."

Originally a months-long program that included intensive chemistry instruction, the School of Drycleaning Technology has continuously adapted to reflect advancements in textiles, equipment,

Continued on page 6



DLI Director of Education and Analysis Brian Johnson (far left) leads an educational course at the association's School of Drycleaning, which is now entering its 100 year in existence.

Hoping to exceed expectations again



When Max I Walker launched its first Coats for Kids drive last year, they were hoping to collect 300; they ended up with 1,200. The final load of about 270 coats (see picture) went out to Project Intentional in November 2025. This year, the company's back and hoping to exceed their expectations once again as they kick off their 2nd annual Coats for Kids campaign. For the full story, go to page 8.



Sneak Peek Inside

6

DLI responds to *NY Post* article

Last month, DLI took umbrage with an article in the *New York Post* for its misleading claims on the industry.

12

Assisting an Adrian exhibition

Margaret's recently worked on garments for ASU's new exhibit on Gilbert Adrian and his impact on fashion.

20

Polyester Wars: A new hope?

Polyester began causing cleaners problems in the 1970s, but polyester does not mean what it once did.

24

Slaying the invisible enemy

What are the causes and cures for bad odors — the invisible enemy that can often sneak in.



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Learning what you didn’t know you didn’t know

It was close to a century ago, when the **Drycleaning & Laundry Institute** (DLI) first launched its School of Drycleaning in 1927. At that time, America only had 48 states and a population close to 120 million (which is close to 1/3 of what it is today). There was no television, no Social Security retirement system, no federal minimum wage. However, there was a brand new technical training school for those who wished to learn the skills and strategies necessary to properly clean garments.

Prior to the formation of a national school for fabricare specialists, many professionals relied on less consistent methods based on trial-and-error personal experiences. DLI’s school helped establish a body of shared professional knowledge about fabrics, cleaning chemistry, finishing, risk management, and garment care.

Throughout its near 100-year history, the school has graduated 390 classes of both its introductory and advanced courses, literally training thousands of individuals to be professional cleaners.

We cannot think of any institution that has helped raise the entire level of professionalism for this industry more, and we certainly would like to thank DLI for helping to enlighten so many cleaners for so long of a time. After all, it was historian and educator Daniel J. Boorstin who perhaps said it best, “Education is learning what you didn’t know you didn’t know.”

We could not agree more. So, kudos to DLI for being a beacon of information for the industry in all of that time. In that spirit, hopefully we can help many cleaners with some things they didn’t know they didn’t know... like is market share really important right now? **James Peuster** has been watching

the industry and everybody is scrambling for shrinking market share. This is not the time to sit and wait... or skimp on marketing. For the full column, see page 10.

On a lighter note — than a market share war — **George Ingram** takes us on a trip to a galaxy long ago — in the 1970s — when polyester first posed a threat to the industry. However, the **Polyester Wars** have seen many changes over the years and a new hope may be rising. See page 20 for his column.

A common problem many people have in any industry is managing time properly. This month, **Kermit Engh** will discuss a strategy that you may not know about — one designed to organize your approach to achieving your goals. For his column, see page 18.

As for the rest of our columns, they might not be as thorough as a course at DLI’s School of Drycleaning, but they offer some sound cleaning tips that you may or may not already know about.

Are your shirt collars frowning or smiling? Hopefully, it is the former. **Don Desrosiers** wants to help you achieve better shirts and it begins with proper placement on the buck. If the collar seams forms a smile, then you should frown. Why? Because, you want to see a frown. Find out why on page 22.

Sometimes, even a perfectly cleaned and finished shirt can present an invisible problem — odors. The irritating invisible enemy can be conquered, but it will require following the proper procedures outlined for you by **Dan Eisen**. For his column, see page 24. Finally, **Bruce Grossman** returns with his solvent flow series, this time focussing on checking your machine’s pump performance to make sure the solvent is moving properly. His column is on page 26.

Contents

News & Features

- 6 **DLI responds to NY Post article** DLI claps back at a NY Post article that misrepresented the industry
- 12 **Margaret’s assists ASU** The Gilbert Adrian exhibit explores the lifelong works of the fashion icon
- 14 **390 classes and counting** The DLI School of Drycleaning continues a century-long tradition
- 12 **Dateline**
- 28 **Newsmakers**
- 30 **Classifieds**

Columns

- 10 **James Peuster** Market share is more important than ever right now; it’s a time for the wittiest to thrive
- 18 **Kermit Engh** The first step to accomplishing all of your goals is to learn how to better manage your time
- 20 **George Ingram** A long time ago in this galaxy, the Polyester Wars first began. Today, a new hope emerges.
- 22 **Don Desrosiers** Here are a few more pressing mistakes that will keep your shirts from looking their best
- 24 **Dan Eisen** There are certain procedures that must be followed if you want to eradicate odor problems
- 26 **Bruce Grossman** Checking the pump performance on your cleaning machine will ensure proper solvent flow

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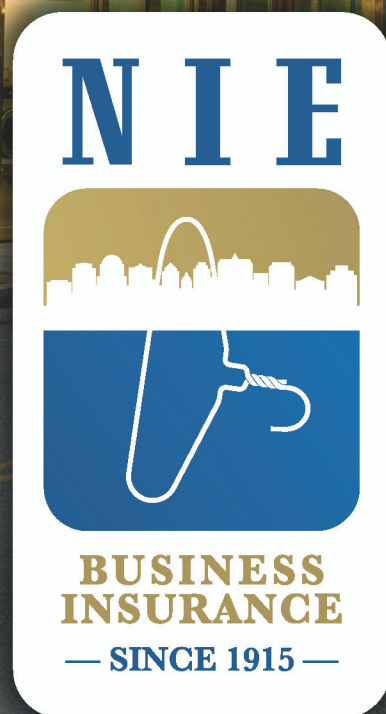
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DL EXPO East looks to be a fabricare feast

Continued from page 1
the process, dramatically increase your profits while getting your life back.

Coyle has spent the past 25 years building and scaling one of the most efficient and streamlined dry cleaning operations in the U.S.

As the founder of In The Bag Cleaners in Wichita, KS, he has led the company to generate over \$200 million in services, consistently ranking in the top 1% of the industry.

Rounding out Saturday's morning programs, DLI will take time for a Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony to recognize this year's inductees.

Following the presentation of the awards, each inductee will have an opportunity to share brief remarks reflecting on their journey and the people who helped shape their success.

There will also be a panel

of DLI Hall-of-Famers who will share their insights with the crowd.

Featured panelists will include **James Peuster**, founder of The Route Pros; **Jane Zellers**, one of the industry's most respected training experts and consultants; and **Chris Edwards**, CEO of A Cleaner World Dry Cleaners.

Sunday's Schedule

Educational sessions will resume on Sunday morning with **John Stricker**, a Fractional CFO, Business Coach, and Certified Profit First Professional of Stricker Co.

His program will cover the topic: "Profit with Purpose: Building Financial Systems that Work."

Stricker specializes in helping business owners gain greater clarity and control over their financial operations.

His presentation will focus on building financial systems



that help operators better understand cash flow, improve decision-making, and create a stronger foundation for long-term growth.

Also speaking on Sunday will be **Senator Mike McKay**, a fellow drycleaner and state senator for Maryland, will present "Policy, Politics and Progress: What Every Drycleaner Needs to Know."

The future of the drycleaning and laundry industry is being shaped by legislation, regulations, workforce challenges, environmental policy, and economic change.

McKay will lead an interactive discussion exploring the issues that matter most to independent business owners.

He will be joined by fellow legislators for an open conversation on the policies, proposals, and trends impacting businesses like yours.

This engaging session is designed to encourage audience participation, giving attendees the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns, and gain firsthand insight into the legislative process.

The Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center is

located at 201 Waterfront St. in National Harbor, MD.

Rooms at a secured discount may still be available.

To make reservations, visit the official website at www.dl-expo.com (click on the DL EXPO East side), then click on the "Hotel" tab.

The exclusive group rate for those who mention attending DL EXPO East is \$279 per night for single/double occupancy.

Cleaners can also register to attend on the site by clicking on the "Attendee Registration" tab and follow the instructions.

DLI responds to *NY Post* article linking cleaners to Parkinson's

On Aug. 22, the *New York Post* ran an article with the headline "Living near dry cleaners increases your risk of devastating disease – with one of the strongest clusters in NYC: study."

It didn't take long for the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute to respond. **Jon Meijer**, director of membership for the association, answered back by detailing to the *New York Post* how the study they referenced shows merely a correlation but no causation, between Parkinson's and drycleaning plants.

The article also creates a misleading impression of the modern drycleaning industry.

The study in question appeared in *npj Parkinson's Disease* in early August under the name "Nationwide association between proximity to dry cleaners and risk of Parkinson's disease."

Authors of the study analyzed Medicare records from nearly 19 million older adults in the U.S. They discovered that those living withing approximately 500' of a drycleaners had a 14% greater risk of developing Parkinson's disease compared to those living further away.

In his letter to the *Post*,

Meijer emphasized "proximity is not the same as exposure." He continued, "The study identifies an association between living near a

could potentially influence Parkinson's risk. These limitations deserve considerably more attention before readers are led to believe that simply

living near a drycleaner puts their health at risk. Research into Parkinson's disease and environmental exposure is important and should continue. But it is equally important

that the public receive appropriate context about what a study actually demonstrates and what it does not."

The *New York Post* article also referenced "approximately 72,000 drycleaners in New York," – a number that Meijer felt was high.

"The suggestion that there are approximately 72,000 drycleaners in New York is simply not credible. There are only approximately 25,000 drycleaning establishments in the entire United States. Moreover, many businesses identified to consumers as "drycleaners" are actually pickup-and-drop-off locations where no drycleaning equipment or solvent is used. Clothing is transported elsewhere for cleaning. Failing to distinguish between an operating drycleaning plant and a retail drop store is a significant limitation when attempting to evaluate potential chemical exposure."

drycleaner and Parkinson's disease based largely on geographic proximity. But simply living near a business does not establish that an individual was exposed to a particular chemical, at what concentration, or for what duration. Distance from a drycleaner is not, by itself, a measure of chemical exposure."

"The reported increase in odds (approximately 14%) is an association, not proof that drycleaning chemicals caused Parkinson's disease," he added. "That distinction is critical. An observational study can identify a statistical relationship worth investigating, but it cannot establish causation without addressing other potential factors."

"The research also has difficulty accounting for other neighborhood characteristics, environmental exposures, occupational histories and lifestyle factors that



DLI's cleaning school celebrates 100 years

Continued from page 1
environmental practices, and business operations.

Today, the school offers a comprehensive curriculum that blends classroom instruction with extensive hands-on training using state-of-the-art drycleaning, wetcleaning, spotting, and finishing equipment.

Courses are designed to serve students at every stage of their careers — from newcomers with no prior experience to seasoned operators seeking advanced technical training.

Instruction focuses not only on how tasks are performed, but why specific techniques, chemicals, and processes are used, empowering students to make informed decisions back in their own operations.

Graduates of the School of Drycleaning Technology consistently report improvements in garment quality, stain-removal success, production efficiency, and employee confidence after returning to their plants.

Many employers view sending staff to the school as a strategic investment that reduces claims, improves customer satisfaction, and strengthens retention through professional development.

As part of the centennial celebration, DLI is launching a yearlong campaign highlighting alumni stories, historical

milestones, and the school's continuing role in preparing professionals for the challenges of today's garment care industry.

Submissions may be featured throughout the centennial year across DLI publications, digital platforms, social media, and event materials.

Stories may also be incorporated into historical retrospectives and future educational outreach efforts, as well.

DLI welcomes submissions from owners and operators; managers and supervisors; production and finishing staff; alumni from resident courses or On-the-Road programs; and past instructors and industry partners.

Stories can be submitted online at: <http://www.DLIonline.org/SDCT100>

"Whether someone attended five years ago or fifty, every story helps illustrate why education remains a cornerstone of this industry," Johnson said. "This celebration is about honoring the people who made the school what it is—and continue to shape its future."

"This anniversary isn't just about looking back," he added. "It's about reaffirming our commitment to education that helps businesses thrive today — and for the next 100 years."

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Max Walker kicks offs its annual coat drive



The photo above captures the 5th generation of Max I. Walker’s family ownership in Omaha, NE. From left to right, Chris Walker and Casey Walker stand alongside two of the Uniform Rental Division Operations Team leads – Mark Bolter and Steve Pottebaum, who oversaw the sorting, cleaning, counting, and packaging of 1,200 coats during the inaugural coat drive in 2025.

Following the success of its inaugural Coats for Kids campaign last year, Max I. Walker recently began accepting new and gently used coats in all shapes, sizes and colors at all 10 retail locations in the Omaha, NE, area through Oct. 31.

Last year, the company collected 1,200 coats, a figure that was four times more than its original goal.

Once the collection period concludes, the company will professionally clean every donated coat at no charge before the items are distributed through local non-profit Project Intentional.

“As a fifth-generation, family-owned drycleaning business, we see this as a natural extension of our service

mission,” said Casey Walker, vice president at Max I. Walker. “We have the infrastructure, the expertise, and the heart to take on this project – and we’re proud to be using our resources to continue giving back in a way that is uniquely ours.”

Project Intentional will distribute the cleaned coats through its annual “LOVE CAN Store” event in Omaha this November. The event adopts 300 single caregivers and their families each year, providing winter essentials, holiday gifts, and other donated items.

“Last year’s response exceeded anything we imagined,” said Steph Dorland, marketing director for Max I. Walker. “Collecting 1,200 coats

showed what can happen when a cleaner uses its everyday capabilities to make community giving simple. We hope to surpass that total in 2026 and continue growing the program year after year.”

“We believe that while laundry may be our business, service is our legacy,” added Walker. “This is just one more way we can demonstrate the long-standing values of care, quality, and community that define the professional drycleaning industry.”

The campaign is being supported by regional media partners WOWT First Alert 6 and Boomer Radio to raise public awareness and drive donations.

More information about Max’s Coats for Kids can be found online located at www.maxiwalker.com/maxs-coats-for-kids.

SDA hosts plant tours this month

This month, the Southwest Drycleaners Association will host a meeting and plant tours from Oct. 23 to 24 in Salt Lake City, UT.



There will be a plant tour of Red Hanger Cleaners and Faye’s Laundry & Dry Cleaning, as well as time for networking.

Red Hanger’s newly revamped production facility features upgraded equipment and processes that have improved efficiency and streamlined operations.

At Faye’s, learn how the company process routes and promise next day comforters. On the drycleaning side, you’ll see Sankosha, Columbia, soaking sinks, Metalprogetti and newly installed hotheads for cowboy starch jeans.

There will also be a panel discussion on the topic of “Less Labor — More Profit.” It will take place on Saturday morning at 8:15 a.m. The plant tours will follow.

The event will be headquartered at the DoubleTree Suites by Hilton at 110 W. 600 S. in Salt Lake City. SDA has discounted room reservations available from a link on its website.

For more information, or to register, visit them online at www.sda.org.

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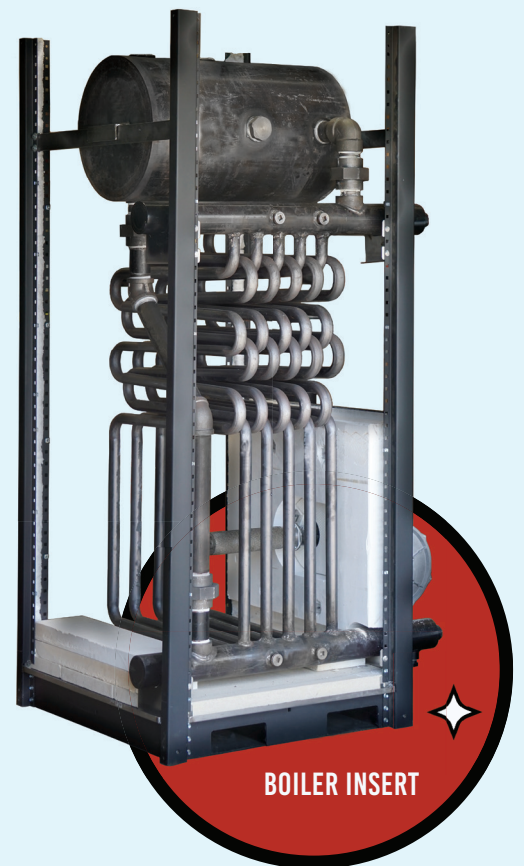
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BY JAMES PEUSTER

How important is market share right now?

As we continue to straw along a diminishing industry, we know we need to focus on getting new customers and getting more from our current ones. It's just that simple.

We are trying in our power to increase the trends and spends of our current customers, as well as providing options for new ones. With all that is going on around us, the choices and decisions we make will dictate our future — sound familiar?

I think it's the number one broken record many of us have heard as a business owner.

towards finding the path to surviving and then, hopefully, thriving.

The pie is shrinking. Don't just sit there and wait. Some of you feel like it is survival of the fittest; it's actually thriving for the wittiest.

So, what are our options? We look at ways to increase sales, decrease costs and find the magic pill solution geared

It's so interesting that many cleaners have made decisions based on fears, hope, desperation, and advice.

As a consultant company, we have fielded many interesting calls for the past years and look for the short- and long-term solutions just like everything else. But, here is what I can share for sure.

Each market has its own unique challenges, situations and even solutions.

Depending on demographics and employment situations, your market is somewhat different than others, so you must take that into consideration before making a change.

It's why I share that what works in one place may not equally work in another.

Each market has one thing in common — go after market share.

The pie is shrinking. Don't just sit there and wait. Some of you feel like it is survival of the fittest; it's actually thriving for the wittiest.

The labor pool has improved. You can no longer state that there are no good people out there to hire. You just need to take a little extra time looking for them.

We will lose some competition. The industry limped past 2008 without losing more than 10% of the cleaners.

Covid knocked out a lot of the competitors that needed to go, but one thing has happened is there's new players entering our market and a lot of merging taking place.

The key here is to get ahead of the competition quicker.

You can make it happen. Sitting back and waiting is not your best bet.

Get creative and get going and growing. Unless you can afford to buy out your competition, the goal would be to weaken it by building your routes stronger than ever.

Don't skimp on your marketing, your customer service experience, and give the very best service your customers want and deserve.

The bottom line is that we are blessed to work with many of the best cleaners who have made the necessary adjustments the past 25 years that I've been in the industry.

Many have added additional vans since Covid and are exceeding their pre-2020 numbers. The time is now to make it happen!

James Peuster is a consultant who specializes in route development, management and maintenance. He offers onsite consulting as well as ongoing coaching across the country. He also has cost groups to monitor route efficiency. For information, call (816) 739-2066, email RouteProsJames@gmail.com, or visit www.theroutepro.com.

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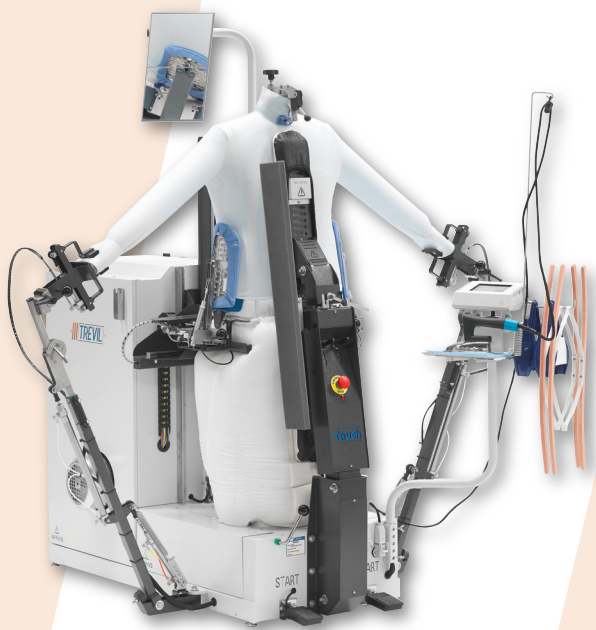


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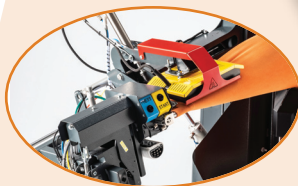
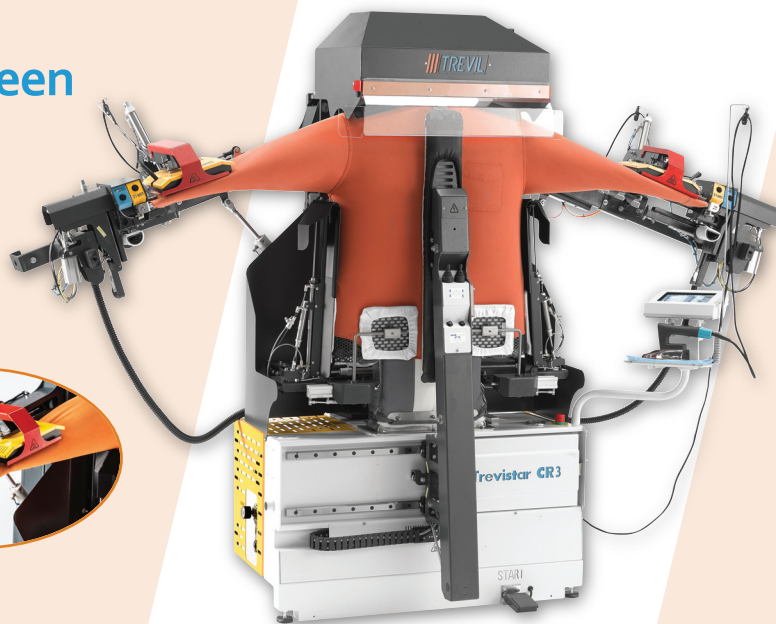
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Margaret's sponsors ASU's *Adrian* exhibit

Margaret's the Couture Cleaner was a contributing sponsor of the new exhibition *Adrian: Designing Hollywood, Dressing America*, which opened in late August at Arizona State University's Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising Museum in Los Angeles.

The exhibition explores the career and influence of **Gilbert Adrian** (1903–1959), the Hollywood costume designer and American couturier whose work helped define Golden Age glamour and later shape American fashion through his Beverly Hills couture house.

As part of its contribution, Margaret's artisans provided specialized cleaning, care and repair for eleven historic Adrian garments, including gowns, dresses, tailored suits, men's sport shirts and a coat. Each piece received an individually tailored treatment based on its age, materials, construction and design. The collaboration reflects Margaret's and ASU FIDM Museum's shared commitment to preserving significant examples of fashion and costume history for future generations.

"Historic garments tell their story through fabric, construction and age. We're proud to help ASU FIDM Museum preserve Adrian's legacy,"



noted **Chuck Horst**, president of Margaret's.

Adrian is best known for his tenure as chief costume designer at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, where he designed costumes for more than 250 films and helped shape the on-screen images of Joan Crawford, Greta Garbo, Jean Harlow and Norma Shearer.

His credits included *The Wizard of Oz*, and the phrase "Gowns by Adrian" became synonymous with Hollywood glamour.

After leaving MGM, Adrian brought his mastery of proportion, construction, color and drama to American fashion. He established a couture salon on North Beverly Drive and created collections that helped define a distinctly American design identity at a pivotal moment in fashion history.

Adrian's designs are known for technical ingenuity, from architectural shoulders

and precise draping to geometric construction and inventive fabric handling.

His modern-art influences included Cubism and artists such as Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, translated into garments with striking graphic and sculptural compositions.

The eleven garments entrusted to Margaret's reflect this range, including fluid crepe dresses, tailored suits, sculptural outerwear and graphic sport shirts. Like vintage clothing, couture, costumes, private collections and culturally significant textiles, the pieces required detailed assessment and specialized handling.

For Margaret's, supporting *Adrian: Designing Hollywood, Dressing America* also connects the company to Southern California's fashion heritage. Founded in La Jolla in 1953, Margaret's has spent more than seven decades developing specialized methods for cleaning, repair, restoration, and preservation of exceptional garments and textiles.

Today, Margaret's works with private clients, collectors, designers, luxury retailers and cultural institutions to care for garments and textiles whose significance extends beyond their material value.



Photo credit: Gilbert Adrian and Salvador Dalí, Blouse, Spring-Summer 1947, 2008.5.48

DATELINE

Send us your upcoming events to be added to our calendar of events. E-mail them to: info@nationalclothesline.com.

2026

Oct. 5-9 The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) five-day Introduction to Drycleaning course. For more information, visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct. 7 The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) Member Advantage virtual meeting at 2 p.m. EST. For more information, visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct. 8 The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) Maintenance Masterclass live online at 1 p.m. EST. For more information, visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct. 12-23 The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) ten-day Advanced Drycleaning course. For more information, visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct. 15 The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) Marketing Masterclass at 2 p.m. EST online. For more information, visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct. 16-18 2026 Drycleaning & Laundry EXPO East, National Harbor, MD. For information, visit www.dlexpo.org.

Oct. 21 The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) monthly featured webinar "How to Plan for an Exit Even if You're Not Ready to Sell Now" with Dave Coyle of

Maverick Drycleaners. For more information, visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct. 23-26 Southwest Drycleaners Association (SDA) Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT, plus plant tour of Red Hanger Cleaners. For information, visit www.sda-dryclean.com.

Oct. 23-26 EXPO Detergo International 2026 show at Fiera Milano in Italy. For more information, visit them online at www.detergo.eu.

Dec. 3 Heartland Fabricare Association Holiday Party, The Greek Islands Restaurant, Lombard, IL. Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. For information, visit online at www.heartland-fabricare.org.

2027

Feb. 10-15 The South Eastern Fabricare Association (SEFA) and the North Eastern Fabricare Association (NEFA) present Seminar at Sea, a five-night, six-day Royal Caribbean Networking Cruise. For more information, visit www.sefa.org or www.nefabricare.com.

April 25-28 Textile Care Allied Trades Association Conference, The Meritage Resort & Spa, Napa, CA. Visit www.tcata.org.

July 15-18 Clean Show 2027, Las Vegas, NV. Call (770) 984-8023 or visit online at www.cleanshow.com.

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DLI school completes 390th set of courses

Fourteen students completed the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) School of Drycleaning Technology's Introduction to Drycleaning course, which took place from July 13 to 17, and ten more graduated DLI's Advanced Drycleaning course, which ran from July 20 to 31.

DLI's Introduction course consists of five days of in-person, hands-on instruction and the advanced course runs for ten days.

Founded in 1927, DLI's School of Drycleaning Technology has helped shape the ca-

reers of thousands of drycleaners worldwide.

Starting this month, DLI will begin work on its 391th offerings of its Introductory and Advanced Drycleaning courses.

The Introductory to Drycleaning course runs from Oct. 5 to 9 and will include hands-on training for sorting garments, cleaning delicate fabrics like silk and satin, operating drycleaning machines, removing common stains such as coffee, ink, and grease, pressing various garments, and using tensioning equip-

ment to enhance finishing quality.

Tuition for the course is \$2,295 for non-members. For members, it depends on which level: Members pay \$1,395 each, Standard pays \$1,116 each, Premier pays \$837 each, and International pays \$1,395 each.

The advanced course is scheduled to meet from Oct. 12 to 23. It will cover more advanced techniques in fabric identification, stain removal, pressing, wetcleaning, machine maintenance, customer service, and plant workflow design.

Tuition is \$3,295 for non-members. Members pay \$2,395 each; Standard pays \$1,916 each; Premier pays \$1,437 each; and International pays \$2,395 each.

DLI will also present more opportunities for drycleaning professionals to learn, grow, and connect this month online, including a DLI Member Advantage virtual meeting that takes place from 2 to 3 p.m. EST on Oct. 7.

DLI hosts a free, 45-minute webinar to help members make the most of the resources already included with their membership.

Attendees will learn how to access technical assistance, employee training, business

and technical resources, member discounts, peer networking, and other valuable tools that support business success.

On Oct. 8, the association will host a Maintenance Masterclass at 1 p.m. EST.

When the machines aren't running, you can't make money. This series helps cleaners stay ahead of equipment problems.

Each live session features short, practical presentations from supplier and manufacturer experts, followed by an open discussion where attendees can ask questions and learn what works in real-world operations.

During the following week, DLI will present its Mar-

keting Masterclass from 2 to 3 p.m. EST on Oct. 15.

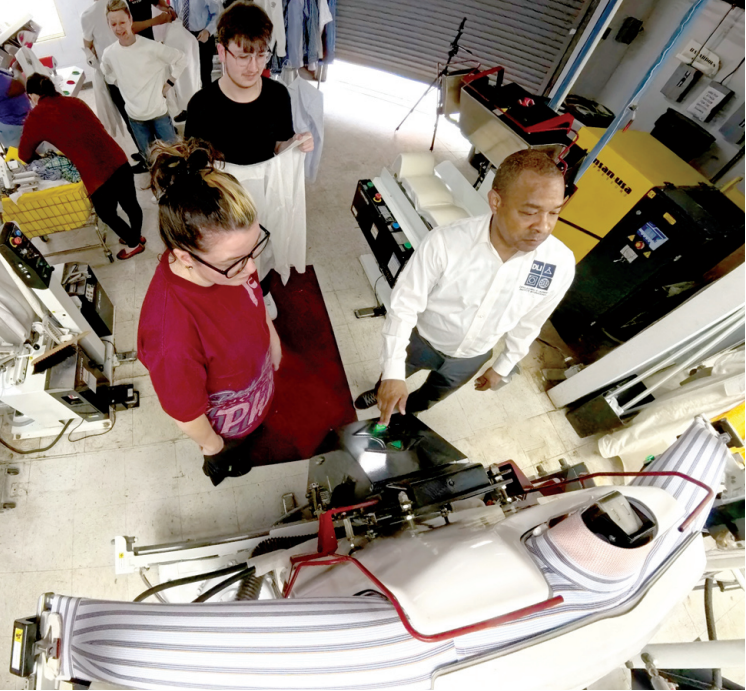
This series works as a forum for members to learn about strategies and tactics that sell drycleaning services.

Also coming up will be DLI's featured monthly webinar that will take place at 1 p.m. EST on Oct. 21.

Dave Coyle of Maverick Drycleaners will present a program on "How to Plan for an Exit Even if You're Not Ready to Sell Now."

Meanwhile, DLI will continue to host its weekly peer-to-peer meetings every Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. EST.

To learn more about any of DLI's upcoming events, visit www.DLionline.org.



DLI's Director of Education Brian Johnson (right) instructs students at the School of Drycleaning on how to properly finish a garment.



DLI's School of Drycleaning Technology Graduates of its 390th Introduction to Drycleaning course, July 13-17, 2026, included: (front row, left to right): Enrique Estrada, Martinizing Cleaners, Flower Mound, TX; Amanda Bumpus, Total Laundry Services, Destin, FL; Rosemeri Alexandre, The Tailor Company, Brookline, MA; Paighton Fellers, Don's Cleaners, Evansville, IN; Sandra Brown, Readywear Cleaners, Highland Park, IL; and Selenge Chinbaatar, Readywear Cleaners dba Winnetka Cleaners, Winnetka, IL; (middle row, l-r): Sergio Ferraz, The Tailor Company, Brookline, MA; Mariia Bernar Sosa, SB Finance LLC, New York, NY; and Shaik Mydeen, Robbinsville, NJ; (back row, l-r): Mohamed Yousef, AMWAG, Cairo, Egypt; Dakota Collins, JTK Industries Inc dba Lapels Dry Cleaning, Gilbert, AZ; Chase Brooks, King Street Cleaners, Bryan, TX; Romaine Williams and Jadon Jordan, Lavada's Laundry, Inc., St. Michael, Barbados.



DLI's School of Drycleaning Technology Graduates of its 390th Advanced Drycleaning course, July 13-17, 2026, included: (front row, left to right): Enrique Estrada, Martinizing Cleaners, Flower Mound, TX; Amanda Bumpus, Total Laundry Services, Destin, FL; Rosemeri Alexandre, The Tailor Company, Brookline, MA; Paighton Fellers, Don's Cleaners, Evansville, IN; Sandra Brown, Readywear Cleaners, Highland Park, IL; and Selenge Chinbaatar, Readywear Cleaners dba Winnetka Cleaners, Winnetka, IL; (middle row, l-r): Sergio Ferraz, The Tailor Company, Brookline, MA; Mariia Bernar Sosa, SB Finance LLC, New York, NY; and Shaik Mydeen, Robbinsville, NJ; (back row, l-r): Mohamed Yousef, AMWAG, Cairo, Egypt; Dakota Collins, JTK Industries Inc dba Lapels Dry Cleaning, Gilbert, AZ; Chase Brooks, King Street Cleaners, Bryan, TX; Romaine Williams and Jadon Jordan, Lavada's Laundry, Inc., St. Michael, Barbados.



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BUILDING VALUE

BY KERMIT ENGH

Proper time management is paramount

Many of the business owners I work with come to me exhausted, discouraged, and at the end of their ropes. “There’s not enough time in a day,” they tell me. “I’m working harder than ever just to keep my head above water. I know I need to spend more time focusing on strategic growth, but how will I ever find it?”

Fortunately, there is a simple solution — the **Silver Bullet** I

call a **Time Management Plan**. Here’s what you do:

1) **Learn the Four Quadrants of Effective Time Management.** This framework comes from Dr. Steven Covey’s classic book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. In it, he posited that there are four quadrants into which all tasks fall.

The first quadrant, **Important and Urgent**, consists of things you simply must do

now: help a crying child, put out a fire, and so on.

The second quadrant, **Important and Not Urgent**, is the *quality time* quadrant — it consists of critical tasks that can be scheduled in advance. Working on your business plan, personal recreation, and bonding with family belong here.

The third quadrant consists of **Not Important and Urgent** tasks. These are distractions and interruptions, unimportant emails, tasks, and phone calls that compete for your attention in the moment.

The fourth quadrant, **Not Important and Not Urgent**, is the *time-wasting* quadrant: on-line games, trivia, unproductive meetings, and so on.

2) **Track the Way You Spend Your Time.** Your next step is to begin tracking everything you do for at least one business week.

Write everything down, either as you do it or every hour. At the end of the day, go back and assign a quadrant to each of your tasks. If you are like most, this will be a very illuminating and embarrassing experience.

3) **Delegate.** I know, delegation is hard for independent, high-charging entrepreneurs who want to make sure everything is done right and don’t feel comfortable leaving their fate in someone else’s hands. But if you ever want to turn your business into a revenue-producing asset, you simply must master this skill.

We have discussed this in the past dealing with Hub and Spoke, where you are involved in every decision. As you may remember, this restricts your company growth and substantially reduces the value of the business.

After you’re done tracking your time for the week, go through your logs and identify every task you could have given to someone else. Then, begin the process of assigning those tasks to others.

It might require that you do some restructuring of your employees’ job descriptions (though in many cases, you can hand the tasks over without too much trouble).

Certainly, delegate those tasks you do not like to do and tasks that a \$15 per hour employee can do, unless your time is only worth \$15 per hour.

This can be a particularly challenging step, so if you’re looking for additional support and resources, learn more about Methods for Management at www.methodsformanagement.com.

4) **Fill the Staff Gaps.** You might find that you don’t have sufficient staff to cover the workload once you identify the tasks you really should be delegating. That’s when it’s time to recruit new people. Refer to number three for more help.

5) **Use a Default Calendar.** Your default calendar shows you what to do each hour of each day to be optimally effective. You block the most important things in your schedule as an appointment with yourself... so that you can hold yourself accountable and achieve lasting success.

It’s easier to understand when you see it, so create your own default calendar and put it to work. This is one of the most powerful time management tools you will ever use. This calendar may look very restricting to your schedule

and freedom, but in reality, it is liberating and productive.

These six Silver Bullets, as presented in this and several other recent issues of *National Clothesline*, are the building blocks for success in your business.

After all, even small improvements in each of these areas can mean exponential growth in your profits, cash flow, and free time.

In order to make these improvements a reality, you’ve got to do more than just read about it. You’ve got to act.

After all, until you convert your knowledge to targeted, specific action, the time we’ve spent together is in vain.

So, what can you do to ensure that you get real results you can see and hold in your hands?

Create a specific, itemized action plan. Make sure it’s detailed. Implement the Silver Bullets we’ve discussed here.

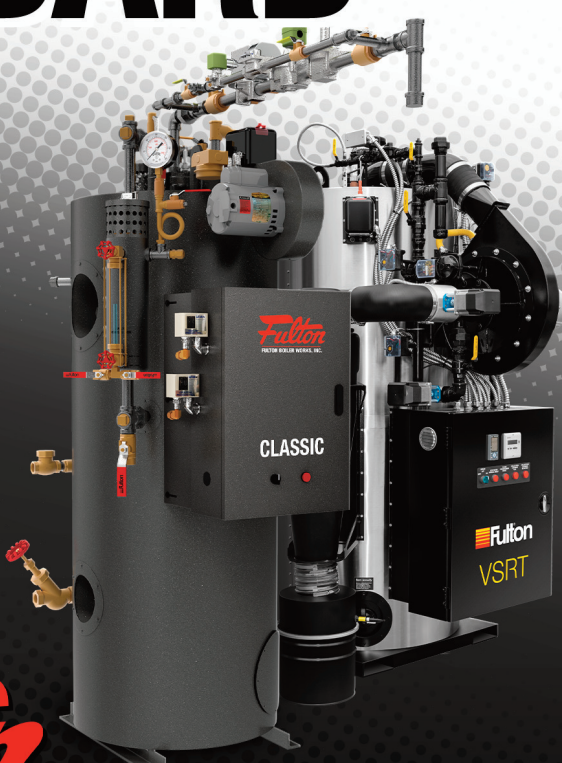
The choice is yours. You can continue struggling away in prison week after week, month after month, year after year... Or, you can finally take charge of your business and begin to reap the financial and emotional rewards you became an entrepreneur to enjoy.

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Things you simply must do right now.	These are critical tasks that can be scheduled in advance.
Not Important	These are distractions and interruptions, unimportant emails, tasks and phone calls that compete for your attention in the moment.	These are time-wasting activities that should be completely eliminated or minimized.

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Polyester Wars: New hope for fabricare’s future

In a galaxy not so long ago... The 1970s. Fashion turmoil has engulfed the garment care industry. Armed with low cost, bold colors and wash-and-wear convenience, the polyester leisure suit was winning victories across America.

Traditional fabrics were under attack, and an unsuspecting dry-cleaning industry was about to face a powerful new force... polyester.

At the time, I was a young lad, sporting a 1976 Liberty Bell Bicentennial t-shirt made of 100% cotton and heading to see *Rocky*. I remember it well because the shirt barely fit me after my first attempt at laundering clothes, or perhaps an unexpected growth spurt. Polyester was as foreign to me as Darth Vader. That was about to change.

The 1970s brought polyester into the American wardrobe in a big way. It was durable, inexpensive, wrinkle-resistant and, perhaps most importantly, easy to care for at home. Polyester and other wash-and-wear fabrics represented a significant change from a wardrobe filled with wool suits, dresses and other garments that routinely required professional care.

Then came the leisure suit. If

you are old enough to remember one, perhaps you remember the colors, too. Powder blue, avocado green, burnt orange, brown — and combinations that perhaps should have remained in a galaxy far, far away.

Still, the leisure suit offered something consumers wanted. It was affordable. It held its color. It resisted wrinkles. And you didn’t necessarily have to take it to the drycleaner.

For the professional garment-care industry, polyester landed something of a sucker punch, but the industry stayed on its feet.

The leisure suit eventually went down for the count. Polyester didn’t. It found sequels. Today, polyester is everywhere, including throughout the world of fast fashion. It is used in inexpensive clothing, expensive clothing, performance wear, dresses, jackets, uniforms and countless blends. Professional cleaners handle polyester garments every day. But now something unexpected has happened.

Episode II: Gen Z — A New Hope?

Fast-forward 50 years and polyester is back in the ring. Only this time, Gen Z isn’t celebrating its wash-and-wear convenience. They’re using *polyester* as an insult.

A recent *USA Today* article, “‘Polyester’ is Gen Z’s newest viral insult. Here’s what it means,” by Rachel Hale and Owen Carry, explored how the word has become social-media shorthand for something perceived as low-quality or cheap, with a broader connection to Gen Z’s concerns about authenticity. “Bruh, that’s polyester.”

And the insult isn’t limited to clothing. **Polyester** has migrated into internet culture, where the word can be applied to videos, aesthetics and things that have absolutely nothing to do with fabric. There are even “polyester edits” on social media, including viral Spider-Man fan edits. Sequels, apparently, are everywhere.

Fifty years after polyester helped change the American wardrobe, young people are using the name of a textile fiber to insult things that aren’t even textiles. Those of us in garment care can take some solace in the wonderful irony.

Return of the Polyester

Gen Z may be ready to count polyester out, but professional cleaners should take a standing count. After all, polyester has taken a few punches over the years, but it’s still standing.

Polyester isn’t inherently cheap or poor quality. It is a remarkably useful fiber. It is strong, resilient, wrinkle-resistant and versatile. It can be found in everything from inexpensive shirts to expensive de-

signer garments.

It is also frequently blended with wool, cotton and other fibers to achieve particular characteristics.

The fact that a garment contains polyester doesn’t necessarily tell you how that garment should be cleaned. Fiber content is only part of the equation. There may be linings, dyes, trims, finishes, adhesives, embellishments, pleats, and construction issues to consider. That’s where our industry has a significant advantage in this conversation.

Gen Z knows how to make polyester memes. Professional cleaners know how to make polyester clean.

Quality Awakens

When someone uses **polyester** as an insult, they’re really making a statement about quality, authenticity and disposability. For decades, we’ve watched clothing become less expensive and increasingly disposable. Fast fashion allows consumers to buy something cheaply, wear it a handful of times and move on to the next trend.

That’s not exactly a business model designed to benefit professional garment care. But younger consumers are also showing considerable interest in vintage clothing, thrift stores, resale and sustainability. An interesting contradiction is found here.

The same generation surrounded by inexpensive, disposable clothing is also

discovering the appeal of older, better-made garments. And when a garment is worth keeping, caring for it becomes more important.

A vintage wool coat found in a resale shop may cost considerably less than buying a comparable garment new. But once someone loves that coat, suddenly cleaning it correctly matters. That’s our territory.

The Rise of Sustainability

One more important part of the Gen Z conversation fits with professional garment care particularly well: sustainability. We can make sustainability complicated, but one of its simplest principles is remarkably straightforward: Wear your clothes longer.

If professional care helps someone keep a favorite coat, suit, dress or blouse looking good for another five years, that’s sustainability in practice — which brings me back to that Bicentennial t-shirt.

Had someone told that young lad heading off to see *Rocky* that 50 years later young people would be using “polyester” as an insult, I wouldn’t have understood what they were talking about.

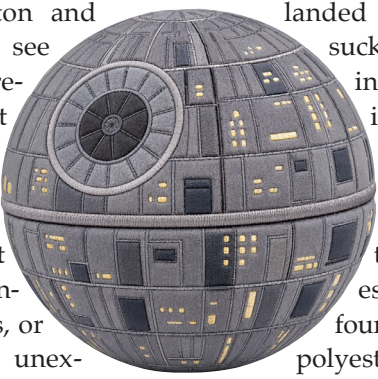
A lot has changed since 1976. The leisure suit was knocked out. Rocky continues to go the distance. Darth Vader redeemed himself in the end. And, polyester continues to blend with them all. Now it has entered another round—this time as Gen Z slang.

Through all those changes, one thing remains remarkably familiar. People still have clothes they care about, and, they need someone who knows how to care for them.

May the Force — as well as care labels — be with you.

Cue the *Rocky* theme.

George E. Ingram is vice president of marketing & sales for National Fire & Indemnity Exchange (NIE), an insurer specializing in the fabricare industry. In November, George will participate in Philadelphia’s Rocky Run, part of the celebration marking the 50th anniversary of Rocky. Apparently, polyester isn’t the only thing from 1976 hoping to stay on its feet for the full eight count.





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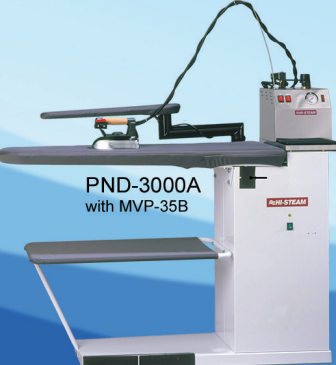
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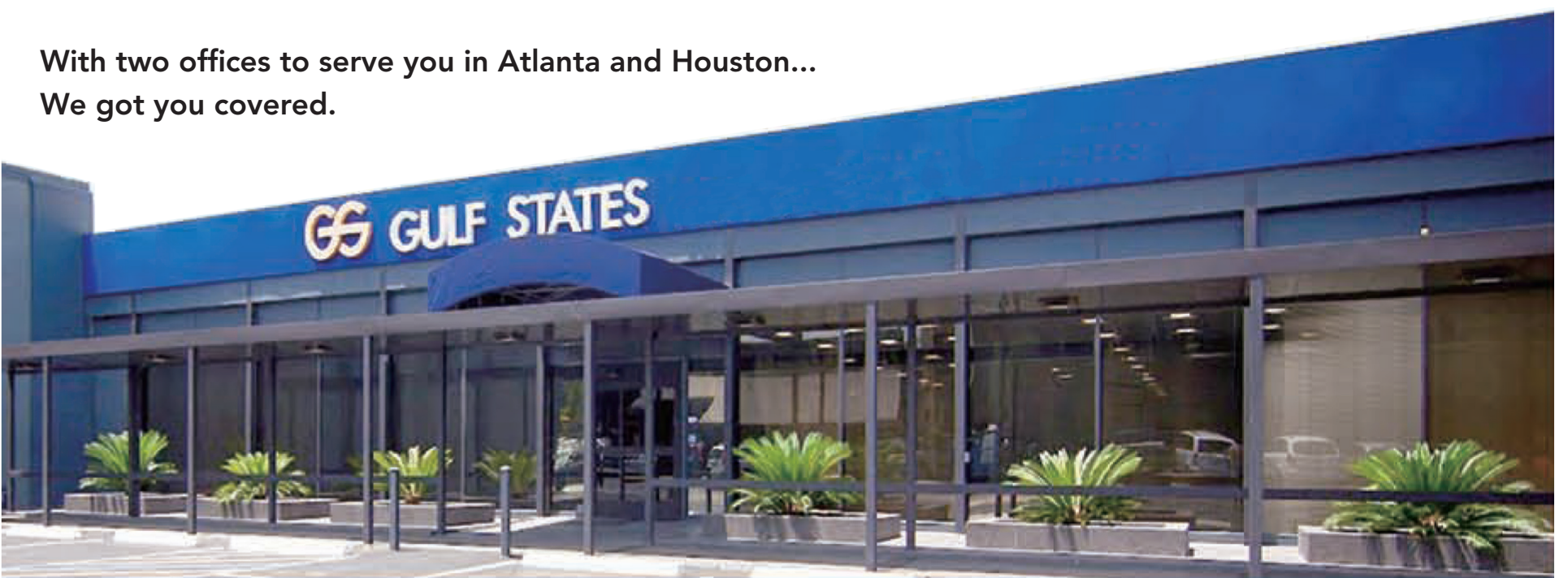
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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

Simple pointers for achieving better shirts

You've probably heard this one before, but still I bet your presser is doing it wrong right now. I'm talking about the **collar frown**.

When a presser is about to press a collar, the seam that is formed when the collar is sewn to the collar band needs to be curled a bit in the shape of a *frown*, that is, an arc pointing downward. This is either really easy to do or rather difficult. I'll tell you why in a minute. For now, look at **Figure 1** (photo on top left).

This collar is improperly placed on the buck. The collar band — the part of the shirt the collar is sewn to — curves upward, away from the operator.

This is bad for two reasons. First, notice the extreme left of the shirt in **Figure 1**. A little too much of the shirt is on the buck. This surely will cause an errant pressed-in crease. This will either be touched up or it won't be. You decide which is worse.

Secondly, the shirt won't hang on the hanger properly. Have you ever seen such a shirt?

It is properly pressed; nothing really seems obviously wrong but something about it doesn't look right. It just might be that the collar was pressed incorrectly. There is irony in this particular tip, unfortunately.

There are some shirts that will come to your presser with a somewhat exaggerated *smile* arc and you won't be able to fix it. Too bad, because it really needs it.

The shirt has a "fused" collar that has shrunk. The customer doesn't notice the shrinking because the collar band hasn't shrunk.

A fused collar is a collar that is manufactured to always look like it has heavy starch. This effect is achieved by fusing the fabric to interfacing and resin, resulting in a stiff-as-cardboard collar.

In **Figure 2** (pictured on the right), the collar is placed slightly differently on the buck. The collar band is placed essentially parallel to the front line of the buck and then curl back a little bit to create a *frown*.

As I said, some shirts won't allow you to do this, but if you can, don't skip this step.

Fiddling with the backs of

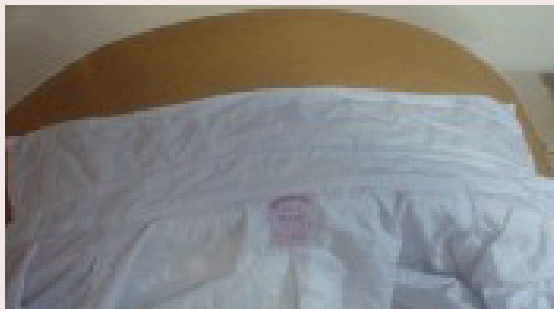


Figure 1 — This shirt is improperly dressed. The tips of the collar are too high. The collar seam forms a "smile" rather than a "frown."

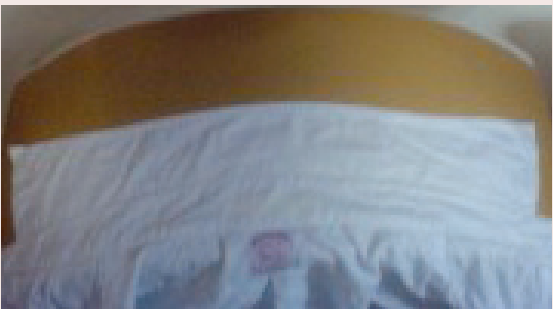


Figure 2 — There is a subtle but important difference here. The button and the buttonhole are lower — or closer to the operator — than the center part. This results in a "frown" shape.

the shirts not only affects the quality, but it also wreaks havoc on productivity.

Often a presser will pull on the sides and down the middle of the back while dressing the shirt. Often, one pull undoes the other. On most presses, pull on the sides of shirts that have side pleats on the back — and don't pull on the middle — it will undo what good you just did by pulling on the sides.

The result is never pretty. Why does this happen and how do prevent it, you ask?

There are four things that will cause this and for three of the causes, the fix is easy. The fourth is something that we need to live with.

The measuring device on the sleeve press allows the machine to adjust itself to different lengths of sleeves. This is usually done by lifting or low-

doesn't, see your owner's manual for instructions on how to adjust it. This is not a big deal. Get it done. Don't ask your presser to compensate for the machine's malfunction by saying something like "just shine the light beam an inch below the seam and it will work fine."

If you want them to try to do perfect work, try to make the machines work perfectly. You

Many pressers choreograph an inexplicable series of tucks and pulls that are completely unnecessary and often lead to poor quality results. This has become habit for your presser, which is most unfortunate, because breaking that habit can be a bear.

Conversely, when there is a center box pleat, don't fiddle with the sides. You will need to ease out the air bubble that often forms under the pleat by passing your hand downward from the top of the pleat.

Many pressers choreograph an inexplicable series of tucks and pulls that are completely unnecessary and often lead to poorer quality results. This has become habit for your presser, which is most unfortunate, because breaking that habit can be a bear.

Improper placement of the sleeves on a sleeve press, if you have one.

Sometimes a shirt that was just pressed has ugly, sharply pressed-in wrinkles that extend inboard from the seam that connects the sleeve to the body of the shirt. These are caused because the sleever pressed too much of the shirt.

Rather than just pressing the sleeve and nothing more, this front part of the body of the shirt was also pressed by the steam chests in the sleever.

ering a measuring arm. Most presses have a light that will shine their beam onto the shirt.

The idea is to move the measuring arm so that the beam of light shines directly on the seam that is formed when the sleeve is sewn to the rest of the shirt. When the machine is properly adjusted, the press heads will press only the part of the shirt that is above the light beam. Note the phrase "when the machine is properly adjusted." This suggests that you can do something about this if it is out of adjustment.

To see if your machine is out of adjustment or not, follow this simple procedure: With the measuring device at any level, place a piece of masking tape on the sleeve buck and draw a dot exactly where the light beam shines. Now, without moving the measuring arm, send the buck into the pressing position.

Draw a line directly underneath the press head. It should intersect the dot that you drew in the previous step. If it

won't accept excuses, don't give any.

Sometimes the sleeves on a particular shirt will be shorter than the shortest setting on the press. The result will be the same ugly wrinkles that we are talking about. This is the cause that you can't do anything about.

We have to suck it up and remember that this is the reason that we have a touch-up department.

The department does not exist so that the pressers can do a lousy job and touch-up gets to do the shirt over again, by hand. It exists to do the parts of a shirt that the equipment is incapable of doing.

The third way to get those wrinkles is to simply not bother using the measuring device, reasoning that, "I can press faster if I don't use it."

Silly. The body of the shirt needs to be sprayed with water to have any chance that the wrinkles will be pressed out while the body is pressed. When this is done, the same

wrinkles on the back of the shirt are rarely, if ever, sprayed. The result, of course, is inferior quality.

Management needs to be certain that the equipment is running properly and that proper pressing procedures are followed. That's what management is for.

Still, there is a way that we can get these wrinkles with properly adjusted equipment run by a properly trained employee.

If one sleeve is lower on the buck than the other sleeve, one of the sleeves will be over-pressed, or one will be under-pressed.

If the light beam shined on the seam that is lower on the buck, the other sleeve — higher up on the adjacent buck — will get those ugly wrinkles.

It's easy to fix this. Train your pressers to use the cuff button as a gauge to indicate how high or low to place the sleeve on the buck.

The cuff clip should be directly underneath the cuff button on both sleeves. This will assure that when the measuring device is aimed at the one seam, that seam speaks for both.

The sleeve press won't be around for much longer. If you still have one, be aware that more than half of your touch-up is caused by this machine. It's time to say goodbye. Just saying.

"If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you always got."

Don Desrosiers has been in the drycleaning and shirt laundering business since 1978. He is a work-flow engineer and a management consultant who provides services to shirt launderers and drycleaners through Tailwind Systems. He is a member of the Society of Professional Consultants and winner of DLI's Commitment to Professionalism award. He can be reached by cell phone (508) 965-3163, or email to: tailwind.don@me.com.



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2:00 PM - GEORGE INGRAM
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*Call of the Insurance Wild:
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3:30 PM - DAVE COYLE
Topic:
*From Operator to CEO:
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Saturday, October 17:
Cocktail Reception • 5:00 - 6:30 PM

Sunday, October 18



8:00 AM - JOHN STRICKLER
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
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BY DAN EISEN

Causes and cures for odor — the invisible enemy

A clean garment is one that is free of stains and soil and **has no odor**. Bad odors can occur for several reasons, including staining, smoke, the breakdown of finishing agents used in manufacturing, mildew and solvent conditions.

Sometimes, an odor is not noticeable when the garment is dry. It may become more noticeable on a humid or damp day or when the garment is worn. The following is a list of odor problems I have encountered during on-site consultations, along with some of the effective methods we use to correct them.

Perspiration

Perspiration can be a very difficult odor problem due to several factors. Perspiration contains many body acids. It also tends to become set in the fabric because of its salt content and the alcohol contained in many deodorants.

The following procedure should be used first to remove the staining and then the perspiration odor:

- A) Flush
- B) Apply neutral lubricant

- C) Apply protein formula
- D) Flush
- E) Apply a cationic detergent plus acetic acid
- F) Apply mechanical action
- G) Flush
- H) Apply hydrogen peroxide

dure is to treat the garment with ozone first and then dryclean it. This helps prevent the heat of drycleaning from setting the odor and also prevents the solvent from becoming contaminated.

Wetcleaning with oxygen bleaches can also be effective in

Drycleaning does not usually correct problems caused by fabric finishes. The only solution may be wetcleaning. Wetclean the garment with detergent and oxygen bleach if the color and fabric permit. The garment may also be wetcleaned with detergent and

must be completely removed or properly neutralized before an acetic acid bath is used.

Never mix sodium hypochlorite with acetic acid, as this can release toxic chlorine gas.

After the chlorine has been completely removed, use one or two ounces of acetic acid per gallon of water. Rinse thoroughly.

Drycleaning Odor

When fatty acids and pre-spotting chemicals build up in the solvent, odor problems can occur. Many odor problems are caused by the overuse of solvent-based paint removers and certain solvent-based two-in-one prespotters.

Contamination of the solvent tank by sludge and bacteria can also be a factor. If the still is not operating properly, a boil-over can contaminate the solvent and cause odor.

Removing Drycleaning Odor

- 1) Use sweetener powder
- 2) Maintain proper distillation
- 3) Clean out the solvent tank
- 4) Eliminate or reduce the use of solvent-based pre-spotters.

Sometimes, an odor is not noticeable when the garment is dry. It may become more noticeable on a humid or damp day or when the garment is worn.

Spray

One very effective odor remover is unscented Lysol. Hold the spray can about eight inches from the fabric and apply a quick spray. Do not allow the spray to contact the fabric directly; apply only a fine mist.

Smoke Odor

Ozone machines and chambers are very effective for removing smoke odor. These machines generate ozone, which oxidizes and neutralizes many odor-causing substances.

I believe the best procedure

removing smoke odor. These include hydrogen peroxide, sodium perborate and sodium percarbonate.

Some drycleaners have found it effective, when possible, to hang the garments outside the store and expose them to fresh air.

Fabric Finish

Manufacturers may apply finishes that give fabrics such characteristics as wrinkle resistance, hand, luster, body and feel. Some finishes contain resins or formaldehyde that can break down and cause a fishy or otherwise unpleasant odor.

acetic acid. Rinse thoroughly.

Acetic acid has proven to be a very effective agent for smoke odor removal.

Mildew

Mildew and mildew odor can be difficult to correct. The heat of drycleaning may destroy mildew spores but may not remove the staining or odor. Perchloroethylene is the best drycleaning solvent for destroying mildew spores.

Garments may have to be treated with oxygen bleach for further stain and odor removal. Suitable oxygen bleaches include sodium perborate and sodium percarbonate.

If the fabric can withstand sodium hypochlorite, it is the best bleach for mildew removal. When using sodium hypochlorite, remember that it must first be diluted to one percent. Even household bleach contains approximately 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. Use one or two ounces of the diluted solution per gallon of water.

After treatment, the garment must be thoroughly rinsed. Any remaining chlorine

Dan Eisen is the former chief garment analyst for the National Cleaners Association and also an inductee of the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's Hall of Fame, the highest honor the association can bestow on an individual. For questions and concerns, he can be reached at (772) 579-5044, or by e-mail at dan-nyeisen39@gmail.com or through his website at www.garmentanalysis.com.



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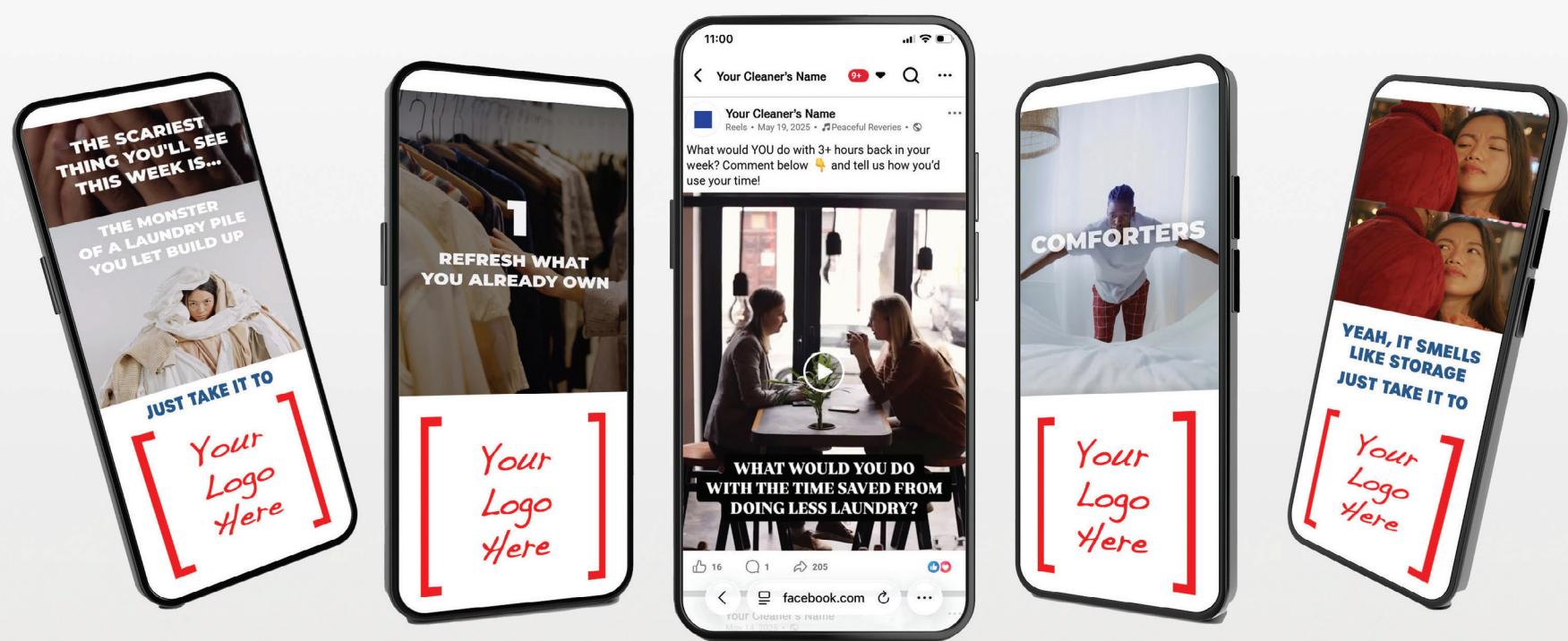
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PRIEST CLEANERS of Concord, MA, recently purchased and installed a new Union HLM-8018 soft mount 40lb alternative solvent machine. Pictured at the start-up are M&R Machinery President Bob Carozza with plant manager Jay Son.

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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

Solvent flow: What is it all about? Part II

This month, I'll continue on solvent flow by discussing the heart of the solvent flow system, the solvent pump. {Editor's Note: See September 2026 issue for Part I of this series.}

The solvent pump on most drycleaning machines is a centrifugal-type pump. It is a mechanical device designed to move solvent using a motor that rotates a disk-like device called an impeller with vanes on its surface. Fluid enters the rapidly rotating impeller at its center and is cast out by centrifugal force along its circumference through the impeller's vane tips.

As we all are painfully aware, there is no end to the list of junk that solvent washes through the drycleaning machine: buttons, lint, pens, pencils, credit cards, collar stays, pins, coins, and the list goes on and on. Hopefully, the button trap strainer will catch most of these objects.

As we all know, nothing is 100%, and some debris will get through, and when it does, in most cases, the pump's impeller will chop it up and pass

it through to eventually be trapped in the filter or still. However, when the pump can't chew it up and spit it out, the debris often slowly accumulates in the area between the vanes on the pump's impeller. This accumulation is a cascading process (like a snowball rolling downhill); once it begins, it rapidly degrades the pump's performance.

The following are the most common symptoms when debris is fouling the solvent pump's impeller, and they fall into two basic categories: electrical and drycleaning quality.

Electrical

CASE 1: When an object locks up the impeller, preventing it from rotating, the pump motor's excess current draw almost immediately leads to overload tripping. This causes the machine to shut down and display an error message on most dry cleaning machines.

CASE 2: When there is a significant debris build-up in the impeller vanes, which drags on the motor. After a few minutes of operation, the motor overload trips, causing

CHECKING PUMP PERFORMANCE

SETTING UP SOLVENT FLOW PATH

FROM TANK 1 TO TANK 1

TANK SIGHT GLASS

LAZY NARROW SPRAY PATTERN

FULL POWERFUL SPRAY PATTERN

HERE'S WHAT THE PUMP INTERNALS LOOK LIKE

PUMP IMPELLER AND RACEWAY CLOGGED WITH DEBRIS

RACEWAY

IMPELLER

DEBRIS

IMPELLER VANES COMPLETELY CLOGGED WITH LINT AND DEBRIS

IMPELLER VANES CLEARED OF LINT AND DEBRIS

the machine to shut down and display an error message.

CASE 3: When debris builds up in the impeller vanes, a reduced flow rate during the drain period results in

the solvent level not dropping below the dry-cleaning machine basket. Then, when the extract motor turns on, it attempts to spin the basket through the solvent; the extra drag causes the extract motor overload to trip. This debris buildup in the impeller may affect only one or two impeller vanes, leading to intermittent tripping of the extract motor overload.

Cleaning Quality

When debris clogs the impeller, there is a marked decrease in the volume of solvent being moved by the pump. This reduced flow rate can cause any or all of these undesirable effects.

Greying (Redeposition). With less solvent flushing through the garments, particulates that would normally remain suspended and be carried to the filter or still can settle back onto the garments, causing greying. If the basket rotates through solvent left in the wheel, it can agitate the solvent, splash it against the tub sides, and wash accumulated debris onto the garments.

Poor Filtration

Another symptom of pump problems is poor filtration. Flow rate through the filters is paramount to good cleaning quality. The solvent pump must overcome the filters' resistance to the solvent flow. This resistance is called filter pressure.

When the vanes of the solvent pump become fouled, there is a marked reduction in the pump's ability to force solvent through the filter, thereby reducing that vital flow rate with the attendant effects outlined in the preceding paragraph on greying.

Checking Pump Performance

A method I've always found handy to check pump performance is to set up the flow path, so solvent is pumped from a tank back to the same tank while watching the spray pattern across the tank sight glass.

The area where the spray fans out over the sight glass is a good barometer of the solvent pump performance. The accompanying illustrations show the valve setup for the spray pattern check and the pump's internals.

Bruce Grossman is the Chief of R&D for EZtimers Manufacturing. EZtimers manufactures machines that make your machines run better. For those needing to replace Zero-Waste or Galaxy misters, see our SA-HARA 2 model. For those with boiler problems, check out our EZ-Level and EZ-Dose machines. For more information on EZtimers products, visit www.eztimers.com. Please address any questions or comments for Bruce to bruce@eztimers.com or call (702) 376-6693.

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SEFA and NEFA will host Seminar at Sea this February

The previous Seminar at Sea event held earlier this year brought together over three dozen drycleaners for an unforgettable blend of education, networking, personal growth and relaxation.

The next time out, the event is scheduled to set sail from Feb. 10 to 15, 2027, departing from Port Canaveral in Orlando, FL, with scheduled stops taking place at CoCoKay, Bahamas and Cozumel, Mexico.



The five-night, six-day Royal Caribbean Networking Cruise has limited capacity so early registrations are highly recommended.

The event planning committee is still working to finalize the guest speaker and topic, they have informed attendees to expect: fresh ideas and outside perspectives; a motivating high-level professional presentation; meaningful networking and relationship building; and a relaxed, fun atmosphere unlike traditional events.

At this time, additional cabins are already being requested, and the organizers expect the event to sell out quickly.

The cost will be \$784 per person (double occupancy), which includes outside cabin with balcony, taxes and fees. Drink packages and gratuities are not included.

The rate is subject to change, and registration is on a first come, first served basis.

For more information or to register, contact peter@sefa.org call (671) 791-0128, or visit www.nefabri-care.com or www.sefa.org.



NewsMAKERS

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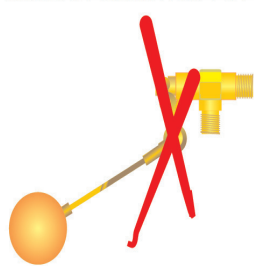
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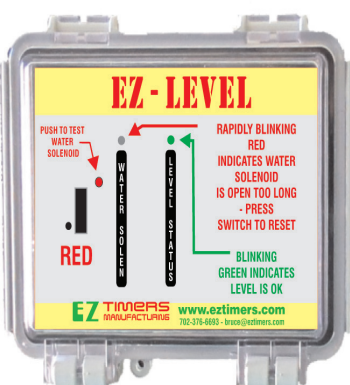


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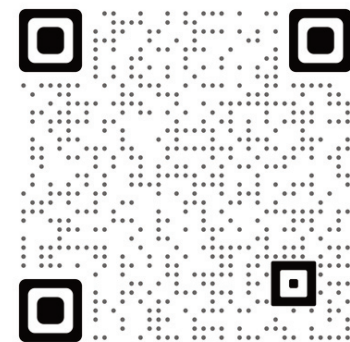
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9/26

Index of Advertisers

OCTOBER 2026

A.L. Wilson.....8	Iowa Techniques12
AquaMax.....10	Methods for
BeCreative 36031	Management.....26
Clean Show.....29	Mosena Enterprises30
Cleaners Business	Newhouse Specialty
System.....3	Company.....30
Cleaner's Supply.....30	NIE Insurance5
Colmac.....27	Parker Boiler9
DL EXPO East23	Patriot Business
DLI25	Advisors30
Ehrenreich &	ProsParts30
Associates30	Route Pros24
European Finishing....20, 32	Sankosha USA2, 19
EZ Timers.....28	Tailwind14
EZProducts28	Trevil America.....11
Forenta.....7	Unipress Corporation15
Fulton18	Western State Design,
Gulf Coast.....13	Inc.....27
Gulf States21	Xplor Spot16, 17

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NCL Profile
Life goes on

For the Bodin family, starting a
cleaning business in Yonkers,
NY, was an opportunity for a
clean slate. Before that, 12-
year-old Paul Bodin and his
father, David, had been forced to flee their
native country during the Russian Revolution
(during which the family business in Kiev was
confiscated). An old article from the Herald
Examiner mentions the family's move to
[Read More](#)

**Industry balancing act to
continue in 2022**

As cleaners prepare to close
the door on 2021 (and perhaps
throw away the key), the last 11
months have proven to be
another arduous challenge,
harshly punctuated by shortages of every
imaginable kind: hangers, plastic, computer
chips, steel and other metals, lumber,
packaging materials, zippers and
[Read More](#)

**FallFest EXPO pushes date
back**

Even though interest for
FallFest EXPO remains
high, many cleaners are
too short-staffed and
overburdened to spend
three days devoted to it in early December. As
a result, the North East Fabricare Association,
the South Eastern Fabricare Association and
the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners
Association have agreed to cancel FallFest
[Read More](#)

Light always follows darkness
by Peter Blake

It has been a long, interesting
and challenging 18 months, to
say the least. I know I have
never worked harder or more
hours than I have during the
past year and a half. I also
know I am not alone, and

**Don's wishlist to St. Nick: 2021
edition**
by Don Derosiers

BH appy December! It is that
time once again for my annual
Christmas Wishlist. Every year,
I send a plea to the great St.
Nick for products that do not
exist yet, but I believe they

A Tribute to James Peuster
by Mark Albrecht and Jennifer
Whitmarsh

As we round out 2021, let's
recognize an achievement of a
familiar personality in our
industry. James Peuster, JP (as
many know him) begins his
20th year consulting teams

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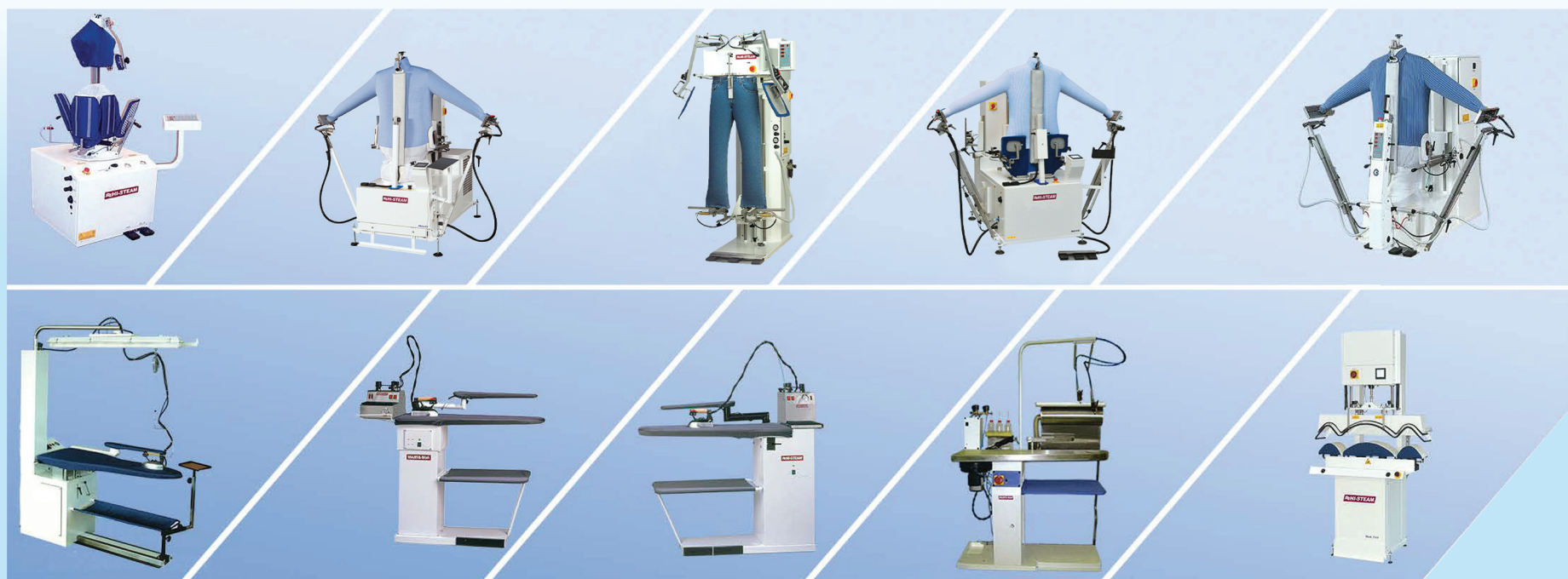
SAM-451 for Laundry

- 30-40 shirts per hour
- Oversized (3XL) or undersized shirts
- All fabric, including microfiber and tuxedo shirts

SAM-451 for Dry Cleaning

- Shirts
- Blouses
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