



**NEWSLETTER**

**January 2015**

**OFA Conference 2015**

Work has already begun on putting together the conference for next June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of 2015. We have selected the Waterside Inn in Port Credit as our venue ([www.watersideinn.ca](http://www.watersideinn.ca)). It is located on the banks of the Credit River and Lake Ontario and the rooms are well appointed. Each room is a one bedroom suite including a kitchenette. The rate is \$179.00 per night and I urge you to call the hotel and reserve your room now, as the hotel fills up very quickly at this time of year. For those requiring more room, there are larger suites available. Information and registration will be sent out at a future date, but make sure you hold the date. We will be making arrangements for our annual golf tournament at a golf course nearby. Please visit our website at [www.fabricare.org](http://www.fabricare.org) to view the topics and bios of our speakers to date.

Speakers and topics that are confirmed so far are:

- David Gray of McDonald, Sager, Manis .....Franchising in Our Industry
- Lauren Sigal of McDonald, Sager, Manis.....Dealing with Small Claims Court
- Ron Kanter of McDonald, Sager, Manis.....Dealing with City Hall
- Bob Edwards of Wilson Chemicals.....Stain Removal
- Jason Wiesner of Wiesner Insurance.....How to Prepare for a Catastrophe
- Jaqueline Stevens of Willms & Shier.....Update on Environmental Law
- Ricardo Gonzales of DLI.....On-Line Marketing
- Sid Chelsky, Executive Director OFA.....Hotel Business – The Good & the Bad News

We are looking for additional sponsors for some of the events that are planned. Below is a list of events that some of you might consider sponsoring. If so, please contact the Executive Director ASAP and we will mention it in our promotions.

- Friday night cocktail party..... (\$500)
- Saturday morning breakfast.....(\$500)
- Saturday luncheon.....(\$1,000)      Sponsored by Fabricare Cleaning Centers
- Saturday dinner party.....(\$ 2,000)
- Saturday dinner party wine...../.....(\$ 400)

**President’s Dinner**

The OFA / ECLDA President’s Dinner took place at the Octagon Steak and Seafood Restaurant in Thornhill, Ontario. The feedback I got from those in attendance was that they had a great time and were looking forward to next year’s dinner. The food was superb and the camaraderie was great. All the ladies present were given a box of Purdy’s Chocolates as a season gift (an ECLDA tradition) before the evening was over.

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## **Publicity**

I have sent out Consumer Awareness Bulletins to a number of men's and ladies wear stores as well as media outlets throughout the Province and referred them to our website to find the nearest Ontario Fabricare Association member. I have advised them that our members are highly skilled and knowledgeable in handling garments and providing the environmentally safest manner in cleaning their customers' garments.

## **Memorial**

I am sad to report that Allan Wright, our long time member of both the OFA, formerly DCLI (Ont.) and the ECLDA passed away on November 22, 2014. Allan was a leading statesman of the Laundry and Dry Cleaning industry. He was described by one member as a True Gentleman and by me as a Mentor to the industry. Together with his late brother Doug, he was very successful in the drapery cleaning business as well as the laundry and dry cleaning businesses. I remember the many trips that we members of the Laundry Branch within DCLI travelled to many other laundries throughout North America to learn more about improving our own operations.

## **Dress Code**

I have had numerous discussions with Jon Meijer, the Executive Director of DLI and although he agrees with my previous ideas, he believes that we should concentrate on the current wash and wear market and offer a professional care of these garments including the pressing and ironing. I personally think that we still should not give up on the potential of the dry cleaning market. We have to change the perception that dressing down is okay. A person dressed in a suit or dress depicts a much better impression. A survey was conducted which showed that consumers put more trust in someone dressed in a suit or uniform.

## **Legal Expense Insurance**

Do not forget that your membership fees include a legal expense insurance benefit. As well, for an additional \$90.00 you are able to upgrade it to greater coverage. FYI, one of our members was faced with a dismissal law suit, and as a result of the extra coverage did not have to pay the legal fees to handle this dispute. He saved many thousands of dollars. If you have any concerns or questions, contact Jason Wiesner of Wiesner Insurance at [jwiesner@wiesnerinsurance.com](mailto:jwiesner@wiesnerinsurance.com) or call (905) 451-4205. See brochure included.

## **Market Place**

I have out of original box wet cleaning set of units I wish to unload. One set available, first come first serve. Washer is a WS5101, Miele Wet Cleaning Washer, 30 lbs. per hour. Also have standard laundry programs, fully programmable. The dryer is a PT7186, moisture sensing dryer. Both are 3 phase electric heating. Price is \$6,695 for the set including full training and support. Contact Scott Wallis Tel: 1.800.643.5381 x228

I have included the story about the next item, because I think it is pertinent.

“We purchased a Freeloader water saver system from Langstaff Equipment in Oct/11 and then in May, 2014 we opened our wet cleaning plant so the water saver system is sitting idle after only being used for two years. The system was working fine and our utility costs had dropped off so I would definitely recommend it to another cleaner with a dry cleaning machine. I would like to advertise it for sale as is through the OFA newsletter. The description is Freeloader LF23OD, including 1 ½ HP pump module with 300 Imp. Gallon storage tank. The original purchase price was \$6595.00 + installation. We would like to get 60% of the original price \$3960.00 + tax.”

Call Shirley Timpano Fabricare Cleaning Center 705-645-2237

## **Vehicle Survey**

I sent out an email with a vehicle survey attached in order to assess the number of vehicles that our members purchase or lease to operate their businesses. I have approached some companies in order to get their sponsorship of our association and to acquire any additional financial benefits for our members. I will report the results when I have vetted the replies. If you have not sent your reply in, do so now.

## **Survey**

The results of the survey of prices which I sent out previously are now available. I have separated the small communities and the larger cities and have provided the average for each population size.

I will not comment on any of the prices as this may be construed as price fixing, which is against the law. For those of you that are struggling to make a profit, it is time for you to analyze your costs of production. Do not forget to include your overhead, such as rent, utilities, realty taxes, a salary for yourself, etc.

If you are at the low end, then you have to ask yourself if you are making a profit, and if so, is it a fair return on investment (ROI)? You should probably consider joining a cost group in order to share your findings and learn from others. For those of you at the high end of the scale, what are you doing that allows you to charge the price that you do? It is obvious, that you are providing value added to your product and if so, let your customers know it.

ITEM	Population 2,000 - 211,000			population 477,000 - 2,750,000			
	Population	LOW	HIGH	Average	LOW	HIGH	Average
Pants, plain		5.31	10.25	7.85	8.45	19.00	11.18
2 Piece Suit		13.27	22.65	17.05	18.00	46.00	24.03
Suit Jacket		6.90	13.25	9.27	9.55	27.00	13.72
Down Jacket		13.80	30.00	21.93	18.70	55.00	34.12
Canada Goose Jacket		13.85	35.00	24.91	21.20	60.00	44.38
Canada Goose Coat		13.85	45.00	29.48	26.65	75.00	54.24
Blouse, cotton		2.90	8.85	6.02	4.70	13.00	8.87
Blouse, silk		3.80	12.25	8.05	7.65	20.00	12.41
Dress, plain		11.50	20.00	15.24	17.50	32.00	20.64
Dress, silk		11.55	25.00	18.56	21.00	40.00	27.63
Skirt, plain		5.31	9.95	7.81	8.75	19.00	11.23
Shirt, dry cleaned		2.90	8.60	5.30	5.80	13.00	8.91
Shirt, laundered on hanger		2.53	4.30	3.28	3.20	6.50	4.26
Shirt, laundered folded		2.34	5.75	3.88	3.70	6.75	4.71
Shirt, golf		2.09	6.35	4.33	4.65	11.00	6.73
Scarf		3.05	7.50	5.15	6.10	13.00	7.95
Sweater (up)		3.90	10.00	7.38	9.00	18.00	11.02
Overcoat		10.65	24.50	17.62	19.35	38.00	26.85
Sweater (bulky, cashmere)		5.31	11.89	8.35	4.60	18.00	11.05
Tie (up)		3.45	7.50	4.96	4.60	14.00	7.83
Trench Coat		12.20	25.00	19.16	19.35	38.00	23.79
Wedding gown (up)		84.30	250.00	144.46	175.00	250.00	217.79
Comforter, Queen Size		21.00	40.00	28.00	22.15	45.00	29.87
Down Duvet, Queen Size		24.05	44.55	35.56	31.85	45.00	37.26
Duvet Cover, Queen Size		12.95	30.15	22.07	22.00	40.00	27.10
Sheet Fitted, Queen Size		2.09	12.00	5.56	3.30	12.75	8.38
Sheet Flat Queen Size		2.09	12.00	5.56	3.10	10.50	7.98
Pillow Case		0.70	5.00	2.15	1.70	4.50	3.28
Table Cloth Plain 6'		6.00	18.90	11.48	11.70	36.00	19.63
Table Cloth Lace		6.00	25.00	13.57	18.00	40.00	25.23
Napkin		0.50	3.25	1.79	1.00	4.50	2.47
Napkin lace							

## **Executive Director's Report (as presented to the Board of Directors)**

Since our last meeting, we have had a very successful President's Dinner at the Octagon Steak and Seafood Restaurant. All the feedback from those that attended was positive and they were looking forward to next year's event. As well, I have been busy trying to increase our membership. In anticipation of the upcoming Clean 2015, I attained a list of the exhibitors and selected those companies that supplied the Ontario market. An email letter went out to these companies inviting them to join OFA and the benefits of exposure to our membership. I am hoping that I will receive some replies to this letter, and at the least, I have opened the door for conversation when I visit these booths at the show. We put on an annual conference last June at the Holiday Inn Yorkdale in Toronto which was a great success and on the plus side, broke even.

In addition, I have gone through previous years records that I could find and singled out those dry cleaners that were members in years before and sent out invitations to rejoin OFA and the benefits of membership. As well, I have sent out invitations to join OFA to a number of allied trades companies that I have singled out for possible membership and the benefits of exposure to our members.

I have been able to secure commitments from both Wiesner and Marsh Insurance companies to provide a 10% premium discount to members of OFA. They will be sending out letters explaining this to their clients on renewal dates.

I have spent numerous hours on OFA business (a copy of my time is available to the board) seeking out information that will help our members and have sent out numerous emails with this information to the membership. As well, I have met with a few of our allied trades to cement our relationship with them and make sure they are aware of the benefits of providing special promotions for our membership. To date, there has been only one advertisement supplied to me, which was included in the last mailing. However, I have been promised further ones from other allied trades members.

We now have a corporate lawyer to oversee the proper operation of our association according to the laws of Ontario. As well, we have an auditor on board to make sure our accounting is done according to Ontario law. Due to lack of funds in the past, we have been remiss in the proper corporate reporting of our association. Since I am responsible for many of the finances, I welcome this oversight.

As far as the upcoming Conference 2015, I have secured the location of the event and as a result of my co-operation and negotiation with The Waterside Inn, I have been able to reduce some of the costs and requirements that would have been charged to us. We have our program all prepared and speakers all arranged. Advertising and promotion of this event has started and will continue up until the actual event on June 5th and 6th. Carlos Fernandes has agreed again to arrange the golf tournament on the Friday prior to the cocktail party and Saturday seminars.

I am very pleased to report that I have received many emails with positive feedback on our events and content of the newsletters. Although I was asked to only prepare three newsletters, I have willingly written and will continue to write bi-monthly newsletters to be included with the DLI mailings.

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Up till now, Brad Maxwell has graciously processed our credit card receipts through his own company SuedeMaster and has absorbed the discount fee and not charged this amount to the association for this privilege. I have secured a three year contract with Elavon to process our credit cards at a favourable rate. As well, they have agreed that if for any reason that we are not satisfied with their service, we can cancel the contract without penalty.

During the past six months, I have created Consumer Awareness Bulletins, which I email out to a list of media, men's and ladies wear stores and manufacturers. Included in this list is Harry Rosen Men's Wear and I have gotten positive feedback from them and asked to continue sending this information. I am constantly searching for meaningful information to include in my bulletins. As well, I end each report with the recommendation that the consumer take their garments to an experienced and knowledgeable member of the OFA to solve their garment problems.

I have also sent out many emails to our members on various important matters that could not wait for the next newsletter. Items such as credit card fraud, new and immediate legislation, and other important matters make up the content of these emails. I am in the process of compiling my own list of dry and wet cleaners throughout the Province of Ontario and am trying to find an economical way of reaching them in order to encourage them to join OFA. There are thousands out there and I know that we will not convince them all, but I can try to convince as many as possible to consider the merits of OFA.

Green Earth Canada has graciously agreed to sponsor a contest that would pay for the cost of one membership for any new member who was not a member in 2014 to join OFA. This information will be appearing in the January issue of Fabricare Canada Magazine.

During the previous six months, I and other provincial associations were approached to provide material for a new trade publication aimed at our industry. There was to be no cost to the associations. However, in discussions with my counterparts across Canada, we decided that it was unfair to do so, as it would harm Fabricare Canada Magazine and the allied trades as well. They could not afford to spread their advertising dollars to both magazines, and if Fabricare Canada Magazine lost revenue, it could shut it down. Marcia Todd and Becca Anderson have been strong supporters of OFA and the other associations, and we felt a debt of gratitude to them to support them only. Their gratitude was conveyed to us and as a plus; they have agreed to provide OFA with a column in the magazine that I will write on behalf of OFA, as well as give us much reduced rates for advertising.

Lastly, I have completed the results of the price survey I sent out in November and will publish the results in the next newsletter. I have enjoyed the work I have done and will continue to do so as long as this board wishes me to do so.

Respectfully submitted by Sidney Chelsky, Executive Director

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## **Smart Tips for Handling Employee Salaries**

### **Make Every Payroll Dollar Count**

Salaries are a major, and sometimes difficult, expense to control. You want to keep them down without reining them in so tightly that you risk losing good employees to the competition and paying a bundle to replace them.

Remember that most people work not only because they need to earn money, but because they take satisfaction from making a contribution. Although you don't want to be condescending or phony, be generous with encouragement and praise - it doesn't cost anything. So, to make every dollar count, here are eight ideas to get the most from your payroll budget and your employees:

Do research. Make sure your salaries are in the average range. If you pay too little, your recruitment and training costs will be out of line because you won't be able to hold onto people. It doesn't pay to constantly lose people because they can make \$2,000 more down the street.

There are some online search engines that allow employers and employees to research compensation information compiled from various industry surveys. Trade organizations are other good resources. Give bonuses, not large increases. That way, the base salary stays the same, but the total package is competitive. If your company does well, the staff does well too - a concept that seems fair to employees.

Be flexible. Big corporations may not be able to write their policies around their employees' needs, but smaller firms can afford to accommodate special situations. Don't worry too much about setting precedents. Employees will understand when you cut a special deal as long as a similar deal is available if they need it. In return for flexibility, many employees may be willing to accept cash compensation that is less than they could get at another company.

Be willing to hire smart, less experienced people who need some training, even if you think they won't stay around long. It's better to have passing brilliance than permanent mediocrity. Get rid of caps in commission-based jobs. Everybody wins if you set up a system so that the more people sell, the more money they make. Consider outsourcing. But remember that outsourcing can reduce commitment, consistency and control. Make sure you're not giving up more than you should.

Move things around. Allocate resources to ensure that every employee's talents and abilities are being used to the maximum. Many people are mission driven. If they feel they are indispensable, they'll behave that way.

Share the risk. Talk to employees often and honestly. Let them know when the company is doing well and when things are going badly. Employees who understand the risks are more likely to share their ideas for solutions. They'll be willing to ride out the bad times because they feel part of the operation.

\*Information gathered from Segal Insider.

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## **Tips for Handling Telemarketers**

Three Little Words That Work!!

**(1)**The three little words are: '**Hold On, Please...**'

Saying this, while putting down your phone and walking off (instead of hanging-up immediately) would make each telemarketing call so much more time-consuming that boiler room sales would grind to a halt.

Then when you eventually hear the phone company's 'beep-beep-beep' tone, you know it's time to go back and hang up your handset, which has efficiently completed its task. These three little words will help eliminate telephone soliciting..

**(2)** Do you ever get those annoying phone calls with no one on the other end?

This is a telemarketing technique where a machine makes phone calls and records the time of day when a person answers the phone. This technique is used to determine the best time of day for a 'real' sales person to call back and get someone at home.

What you can do after answering, if you notice there is no one here, is to immediately start hitting your # button on the phone, 6 or 7 times as quickly as possible. This confuses the machine that dialed the call, and it kicks your number out of their system. Gosh, what a shame not to have your name in their system any longer!!!

**(3)** Junk Mail Help:

When you get ads enclosed with your phone or utility bill, return these ads with your payment. Let the sending companies throw their own junk mail away. When you get those 'pre-approved' letters in the mail for everything from credit cards to 2nd mortgages and similar type junk, do not throw away the return envelope. Most of these come with postage-paid return envelopes, right? It costs them more than the regular postage, 'IF' and when they receive them back. It costs them nothing if you throw them away! The postage was around 50 cents before the last increase and it is according to the weight. In that case, why not get rid of some of your other junk mail and put it in these cool little, postage-paid return envelopes.

Submitted by:

Sidney Chelsky,  
Executive Director.