



**Newsletter**

January, 2016

**Welcome to new members**

I am pleased to announce that **Shelley Clair of Orr Cleaners in London, David Alonzi of GreenClean Fabric Care Services Inc. of Woodbridge, Amie Hingston of Green Dolphins Systems Corp. of Mississauga, Kosta Borovilos of Brite Star Cleaners in Toronto, Jeff & Maureen Lamotte of Fletcher's Cleaners in Leamington, and Bill Roniotis of Bestway Cleaners in Toronto** have joined our association.

**Let's level the playing field**

There must be a number of cleaners that you have relations with in your area that are not members of our association. Why not ask them to join OFA and reap the benefits of membership. Now, more than ever, they need someone to represent them. It is better to work with them to bring them up to the standards set up by OFA, than work against them where the playing field is not level. Send me their information (i.e. Name, Address, Phone, email, etc.), and I will do the rest.

The ironic thing is, the moment you think you know everything you realize how much there still is to learn. The greatest entrepreneurs are those who continue learning no matter how great a level of success they have achieved

OFA will be meeting with the Glen Murray, Minister of Environment of Ontario on January 26, 2016 to discuss the environmental regulations for the Province of Ontario and make recommendations to the government.

**DLI Membership, Free Legal Insurance, and Staples on Line**

If you have misplaced your I.D. # in order to log in to the DLI website at [www.dlionline.org](http://www.dlionline.org), then email me and I will send your number to you. Similarly, if you require your I.D. #s for either the Free Legal Insurance or Staples on Line, advise me by email and I will send you the numbers.

**E Mails**

If you are a new member, please email me back with the words "Yes, I would like you to continue sending me email". This is necessary according to the laws of Canada. As well, if you have changed your email address or have not submitted one, please advise me of the new one. Emails allow me to share important information immediately with you and can save you time and money.

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## **Consumer Complaints**

I have been receiving numerous complaints against cleaners. These complaints are being referred to me by the BBB, Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Ontario), and the Toronto Star, as well as from our website. Every one of these complaints has been against non-members and unfortunately, most are legitimate. They complain of damage to garments, poor treatment by the owner, manager or counter person. After advising them as best I can, I refer them to our website to select a cleaner who is a member in our association. It would be a great help to them if and when you have multiple locations, that these locations are listed in the directory, so the consumer can find a depot or plant nearer to them.

I am enclosing the application for additional web listings in this mailing. Please copy paper for extra locations and mail back to me ASAP, so they can be included on the website. The cost for the listing will help offset the cost of operating our website. For those of you who have taken advantage of this offer and have listed your additional locations, I wish you increased sales.

## **Member request**

This may seem like a lost cause BUT I have old Cook Washett 25# washing machine which I use for hand wash, and many other controlled functions BUT my door gasket is in need of replacement. Cook was manufactured in Texas years ago and now no longer in business. The gasket # is 115-8384. The gasket he requires for this machine is the new style (45 years ago) that requires a steel clamp ring to hold it in place. If you have this part, contact Neil Junop at [njunop@gmail.com](mailto:njunop@gmail.com).

## **News of our Members**

Congratulations to **Betty Skoutakis of Sketchley Cleaners** for being chosen Industry Person of the Year by Fabricare Canada Magazine.

**Clark McDaniel and Fabricare Cleaning Center** would like to thank everyone who donated to our Warm Hearts, Warm Clothes Coat Drive this year. Your generosity has impacted our community and we are proud to be involved with such a great cause. This was our fourth year with the Coat Drive, collecting donations in October with distribution dates in November.

We partnered with the District Municipality of Muskoka and The Children's Foundation of Muskoka. Gently used winter outerwear donated by the community, cleaned and distributed by our team members and volunteers. We asked our customers to help us, help our community and we received our highest amount of donations so far, this year.

Fabricare Cleaning Center was recently honored with the Outstanding Community Contributor Award presented by the District Municipality of Muskoka for our involvement in the coat drive. We have also received the Community Services Recognition Award for Volunteerism and Leadership to better our community. We are

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excited to continue with Warm Hearts, Warm Clothes next year and we look forward to seeing you in our Fabricare locations all year round.

If you have any ideas for a charitable program for OFA members, please let me know and your board of directors will discuss the idea.

### **Nebs Business Forms – Message re: EXCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP SAVINGS**

As a supporter of the Ontario Fabricare Association, we're honoured to be a preferred association partner in 2016.

Now is the time to stock up on everything you need while saving: SAVE 15% on any NEBS product\*. Be sure to use your Member Code 98238.

We have just what you need to run and grow your business:

- Cheques and forms that help you manage your day-to-day business
- Promotional products and print marketing that help get you noticed
- Personalized, quality apparel to outfit your team
- And much more!

**To order, call 1.800.461.7572 or shop online at nebs.ca.**

**\*Offer does not include website services, payroll and other business services, EZShield, McAfee, shipping and handling, tax and other order fees. Not valid in combination with any other offers. Not valid on previously placed orders. Limited time offer.**

### **Importance of Networking**

In November, I received an email asking for help and advice on a common problem which happens in the dry cleaning machine. The operator experienced an ink load, probably due to a pen left in a pocket. He was successful in removing the ink from every garment except a very expensive jacket. He reached out for help. I forwarded his dilemma to a number of individuals and within hours, he received a number of offers to help and advice. This is what OFA is all about. We are there to help each other in times of need.

As many of you will remember, I followed up on an email from DLI outlining a problem with a Canada Goose\* TM jacket. I found this surprising, as this company has a track record of producing a quality product, although very expensive. As a result of my circulating the email, I received a number of emails from our members who recalled similar problems with the garment. In almost every case, it was determined that the garment turned out to be a "counterfeit knock off" and not able to stand up to dry cleaning.

What I am proud of is that our members joined together to let other members know about their experience and inform them on how to handle the problem. This interaction is what makes our association so great. We are all there to help each other when needed. I congratulate each and every one of our members that shared their stories with me to forward on to the rest of the membership.

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## Cost Groups

I cannot express how important belonging to a cost group is. During the days that I operated my business, I belonged to a great cost group headed by the late Ken Endrizal. Our group met every three months and visited each other's plants and made observations and recommendations on how to improve the operation of the plant. As well, we reviewed our income and costs and strived to improve the bottom line.

You have a chance this June when we will have a speaker from Methods for Management who will be talking about what a cost group is all about and you will have a chance to join a cost group in the making for Ontario. Make sure you reserve the date of June 18<sup>th</sup> for the conference and plan to attend.

## Conference June 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> at Waterside Inn in Port Credit

Watch our website for continuous upgrades in the list of speakers and topics, as well as all the events that will be taking place that weekend. As of today, we have the following agenda and speakers:

Breakfast (no sponsor yet)

Annual Meeting

Kermit Engh – Methods for Management (setting up a cost group)

Christine Jonathan – McDonald, Sager, Manis (Employee Relations)

Coffee Break – **sponsored by Green Earth Cleaning**

Jordan Cohen – McDonald, Sager, Manis (topic TBA)

Michael Ballard – Motivational Speaker (Motivating yourself and your employees)

Lunch – **sponsored by Fabricare Cleaning Centers (Clark McDaniel)**

Jaqueline Stevens – Environmental update

Jon Meijer – Membership Director DLI (State of the Industry)

Ellen Roseman – Toronto Star (Consumer Affairs Editor)

Coffee Break – (no sponsor yet)

Stephen Flomen – My Dignity (Preparing for Catastrophic Family Illness)

Jason Wiesner – Report on Free Legal Insurance

**Cleaners Supply – Draw for a \$200 Gift Certificate**

Cocktails (no sponsor yet)

Gala Dinner (**wine supplied by Sparkle Solutions**)

**Make sure you attend this important conference.**

## Better Inspection

There seems to be an increase in claims in our industry when the economy is not great. It is important that you inform your counter staff of the importance of proper inspection of garments when they are marked in. Noting the colour of the garment, the manufacture label and gender of the garment will help identify the garment if the invoice tag falls off. In addition, it is important that the counter personnel check for fraying in the collar and cuffs, and look for any staining or colour damage, especially in the collar area (caused usually by hair spray).

When seeing any of the above problems, these should be noted on the invoice at the time the garment is marked in, and if possible call the customer and let them know before you proceed with cleaning. You should also mark on the invoice the date and time that you called and left a message or spoke to the customer, especially if you proceed to clean the garment.

A proper inspection will reduce your claims and improve your image with your customers in that you are letting them know that you are truly inspecting their garments.

### **Environmental Defense Fund**

In light of the latest report that is being circulated on the web criticizing the use of any solvent other than wetcleaning, your executive committee is being proactive to counter the negative publicity that has and continues to arise as a result of this report. This report can be found at [www.environmentaldefence.ca/drycleaning](http://www.environmentaldefence.ca/drycleaning) . In it, the writer fails to include the comments that I and your president made at the meeting, namely the following:

The Executive Director reported on his meeting with the Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA) which was held on Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Deer Park Library. A number of items were brought up by Brian Chelsky, president of OFA, including incentives for dry cleaners to convert to alternative solvents, lower renewal fees for recertification, lower participation of renewals due to lack of inspection, a level playing field for all dry cleaners, public identification and recognition of members of Ontario Fabricare Association and Certified Drycleaners in compliance with regulation 323/94. As well, we discussed what the OFA is doing to inform and educate its membership. Among the items discussed were the educational programs provided by the OFA, which includes conferences, workshops, printed material, newsletters, awareness of current and new legislation, etc.

As well, the Executive Director advised the chairperson of the meeting of the enormous cost to the industry to force operators to change to wetcleaning only. Tens of millions of dollars of investment in equipment and the potential loss of thousands of jobs and family businesses would result in going in this direction. The Executive Director reminded her that he was attending this meeting representing all of the different types of operations that were currently in use. Also, he said that all of the members of OFA were responsible operators and followed the rules which protect the environment, the public and its employees.

Your Executive Committee is working very hard to counter the negative publicity that may come out of this report.

**Remember that this potential legislation could come to your town or city.**

## **Ontario Passes Legislation For Injured Workers**

- Prohibit employers from trying to prevent workers reporting workplace injury or illness to the WSIB by making it an offence to do so
- Increase maximum corporate penalties from \$100,000 to \$500,000 for conviction of an offence under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act such as knowingly providing a false or misleading statement to the Board or willfully failing to inform the Board of a material change in circumstance in connection with an obligation of the employer under the Act within 10 days of the change

An employee who is injured outside of work -- i.e. Breaking a leg on the ski hill -- must not be fired and must be accommodated to the point of undue hardship on the business upon their return to work. This is under human rights legislation.

### **Customers are hard to come by – try sending these letters out**

Dear «MrMsMrs»«FirstName» «LastName»,

In looking over our records, I've noticed that we haven't heard from you in a while.

We pride ourselves on maintaining long-term, happy relationships with customers. I am concerned that we may have disappointed you in some way, and I would like to encourage you to bring any issues you may have with our company to my attention.

Please let me know if there is something I can do to bring you back as regular customer. I do hope we hear from you.

Sincerely,

«Signature»

Dear «MrMsMrs» «FirstName» «LastName»,

Thank you for your recent business. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and look forward to serving you again.

Satisfied customers are our best advertisement, so we encourage you to give us feedback on how we're doing. If we ever disappoint you, I hope you'll let us know; we'll do everything we can to rectify the situation. If you are pleased with our product, please tell a friend!

In the meantime, if you have any questions or require assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

«Signature»

## **Out of the Mouths of Customers**

"You have a great product. It was delivered quickly and in perfect shape. I'll be sure to tell my friends."

Statements like this can boost your company's sales as much as 250 per cent. Even better, when you get a testimonial from a consumer, that person is likely to become a more loyal customer and help spread the word about your company's products.

If your company is a small or medium sized enterprise, it probably doesn't have the built-in credibility of a national brand. But even on a tight advertising budget, you can build credibility with the help of satisfied customers.

Testimonials increase the comfort zones of potential buyers and help them overcome their concerns about trying new products. So consider a campaign to snag customer testimonials. Among the benefits:

Feedback - Customer testimonials provide valuable insight into what your company is doing right.

Increased loyalty - People who are willing to attach their names to your product are likely to become repeat buyers. These devoted customers also tend to develop a vested interest in your company and believe they have a hand in helping it grow.

Free advertising - Satisfied customers who put their names and reputations at stake for your company's products or services become a source of free, viral advertising.

The first step in gathering testimonials, of course, is to provide top-notch products or services and to support them with consistently high customer service. Then, start the testimonial collection process by taking these steps:

File away positive customer comments that come in. These comments might come from casual conversations with your employees on the phone or in person. Ask employees to write down complimentary comments they hear from customers and submit them to someone in the company who is assigned to manage the file. And ask customers to write down their opinions in a letter or e-mail after you hear a flattering comment.

Actively solicit testimonials by sending out postcards or e-mail messages. Ask buyers what they like the most about your products or services.

Act fast. The best comments come shortly after a purchase when customers are satisfied. That is when they are the most likely to take the time and write something positive.

Once you receive complimentary comments, get permission to use them. Ask the customers if you can use their names, titles, and locations. A positive testimonial from a respected customer in your field goes a long way toward boosting your company's credibility. Depending on your company's marketing strategy, you may even want to get a picture with customers using your product or service.

What about surveys? Avoid asking for testimonials in the course of conducting them. Surveys are generally meant to be anonymous and customers need to feel free to make negative comments that can help your company improve.

Customer testimonials are among the best promotional copy around. In the end, let the customers speak for themselves so that the comments reflect their excitement and satisfaction. Edit them only when they need a little polish and get permission for the final version.

### **What Makes a Good Testimonial?**

Not all testimonials are created equal. To ensure yours have an impact, keep them:

**Real** -- Testimonials have to be honest and believable. Otherwise, your company won't gain credibility and it could lose some.

**Specific** -- Customers should say exactly what they like. Whether it's fast delivery, great customer service, or excellent quality, the more specific the details, the more believable and powerful the testimonial.

**Comparative** -- Ask customers to discuss how your product or service has made life easier for them. Potential customers are likely to identify with those same problems.

**Varied** -- Testimonials should reflect different aspects of your products and services so they appeal to different customers. The more benefits described, the more business will be generated.

### **Highlight Your Company's USP - Don't Let Your Business Get Knocked Out**

Every company has its good and bad points, yet some business owners spend so much time trying to eliminate weaknesses that they never capitalize on their strengths.

Take the time to identify your company's **unique selling proposition** -- what makes it different from the competition. Your business's competitive edge might be something as complex as developing a state-of-the-art computer system or as simple as having warm, friendly employees.

Failing to communicate the attributes that make your business special is like entering a boxing ring with one hand tied behind your back. You might come out a winner but the odds are against it.

Involve employees from every level in your company and hold some brainstorming sessions to come up with your **USP**. It should be a powerful, concise statement that prospective customers understand. Ask the following four questions:

1. What elements make our products or services unique?
2. Which elements are most important to our growth?



3. Which elements are the most difficult for our competitors to copy?

4. What is the No.1 Reason customers should buy from us?

### **Parlay Strength into Success**

An office equipment retailer appeared to be doing everything right. It offered 24-hour service on all business machines sold or leased, free loaners when equipment was being repaired, and renewal of maintenance contracts for as long as customers owned the machines.

No other retailer in the area matched these perks, yet the company was being hit hard by rivals. Long-time customers took the service policies for granted and potential customers never learned about them. Even some of the company's employees didn't know the policies were special.

Eventually, the CEO recognized the problem and took steps to communicate the company's strong points. Today, prospective customers are given detailed brochures outlining the unmatched services. The process turned out to be a real morale builder for employees too.

### **Changes to WHMIS**

The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is changing. Since 1988, WHMIS has been Canada's hazard communication system for workplace chemicals. It is a national system implemented through interlocking federal, provincial and territorial legislation and regulations.

WHMIS is changing to adopt new international standards for classifying hazardous chemicals and providing information on labels and safety data sheets. These new international standards are part of the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and are being phased in across Canada between February 2015 and December 2018. In Ontario, proposed amendments to the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) (OHSA) to implement WHMIS 2015 were introduced on April 2, 2015 in Bill 85. When these amendments are passed, the WHMIS Regulation would be amended.

### **WHMIS - What's Different?**

WHMIS 2015 includes new harmonized criteria for hazard classification and requirements for labels and safety data sheets (SDS).

Under WHMIS 2015, "controlled products" are called "hazardous products" and there are:

- new rules for classifying hazardous workplace chemicals;
- two main hazard classes – physical hazards and health hazards;

- new label requirements, including pictograms instead of symbols that correspond to hazard classes; and,
- a different format for safety data sheets

The key responsibilities of suppliers, employers and workers are the same under WHMIS 2015.

## Training

During the transition, employers must ensure that workers are trained on:

- products with WHMIS 1988 labels and material safety data sheets for as long as they are still used in the workplace; and,
- products with WHMIS 2015 labels and safety data sheets, as soon as practicable after these products enter the workplace and, in some cases, before they are used.

For more information about the new federal WHMIS requirements, please visit the Health Canada website. For information on the transition to WHMIS 2015 in Ontario, please see the [FAQs on the Ministry of Labour's website](#). General information for suppliers, employers and workers is available at Canada's National WHMIS Portal. You can also visit the [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#) (CCOHS) website for free online training on WHMIS 2015 for Workers. This is for a limited time only.

## Airplane Food - True Story

Airborne approximately thirty minutes on an outbound evening flight from Glasgow, the lead flight attendant for the cabin crew nervously made the following painful announcement.: "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm so very sorry but it appears that there has been a terrible mix-up one minute prior to takeoff, by our airport catering service... I don't know how this has happened but we have 103 passengers on board and, unfortunately, only 40 dinner meals... I truly apologize for this mistake and inconvenience."

When passengers' muttering had died down, she continued.. , "Anyone who is kind enough to give up their meal so that someone else can eat will receive free, unlimited drinks for the duration of our 5 hour flight."

Her next announcement came 90 minutes later... "If anyone would like to change their minds, we still have 40 dinners available."

**Written by:**  
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