



Newsletter

May, 2016

Welcome to new members

I am pleased to announce that **Lucciano Accardi of Ashford Cleaners in Toronto, Sam Abouzeeni of Master Cleaners in Windsor, and David Tartick of Sunray Electronics (Can) Ltd. in Toronto** have joined our association.

Resignation

The president of OFA, Brian Chelsky has resigned as president and member of the board as he has sold his company. The Board wishes to officially thank Brian for his contribution to the industry and our association for the past thirty years

Annual OFA Conference

If you have not yet made your reservations to attend the annual conference on June 17th and 18th, then I urge you to do so immediately. The information that you will gain from the cast of knowledgeable speakers will be worth thousands of dollars to your company and better relations with customers and employees. As well, we have a number of sponsors for the many events that we are putting on. We still have available two sponsorships, one for the light breakfast and the other for the coffee break. If you or your company would like to sponsor one of these events, please contact the Executive Director.

Green Clean*tm

We have been informed by Environment Canada that the name **Green Clean *tm** is a registered trade mark of Environment Canada and any unauthorized use of the name is not allowed and against the law. You could be fined for using the logo without permission.

Government Discussions

Included in this newsletter are two letters with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, The Honourable Glen Murray and The Honourable David Oraziotti, the Minister of Government and Consumer Affairs. Your association is working hard to work with government departments to educate and inform them of the importance of our industry and the responsibility that our association and its members take on to protect the environment, our employees, and the public. An invitation has been given to Mr. Murray to address our conference in June.

Sunray Electronics

I am pleased to announce that Sunray Electronics Ltd has become an allied trade member to our association. I have known David and his late father for many years and they have a reputation in the industry for providing long lasting, energy saving fixtures, tubes and bulbs. They also provide LED products and can advise you on how to receive substantial Utility Incentives. They are a major distributor to the hotel industry and they will have a Table Top at our conference.

Printer Cartridges Savings

I found a way of saving up to 75% off the cost of replacing toner cartridges in your printers. Take your spent cartridges to **Costco** and they will refill it for about 25% of the cost of a new one. When you place the refilled cartridge in your printer, do not be alarmed that the printer may give you a message of low ink. This is because they cannot change the manufacturers' indicator, but it will work. They told me that if it does not do the job, then bring it back for a refund.

We thank all our sponsors (**Newtex Cleaners, GreenEarth Cleaning, Fabricare Cleaning Center, Fabritec, Sparkle Solutions, and Cleaners Supply**) for their financial support of our conference. They help make it a successful event.

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Annual OFA Conference June 18, 2016

Timetable

- 9:00 p.m. -11:00 p.m. **Friday night Cocktail Party - Sponsored by Newtex Cleaners**
- 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Annual Meeting
- 9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Michael Ballard (Motivational speaker) – The Resilient Owner & Manager
- 9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Christine Jonathan (MacDonald, Sager & Manis LLP) – Employee Relations
- 10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. **Coffee Break – Sponsored by Green Earth Cleaning**
- 10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Jordan Cohen (MacDonald, Sager, Manis LLP) – Borrowing or Selling – Get a legal checkup first (What you need to know and do)
- 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Kermit Engh - Methods for Management (Benefit of Cost Groups)
- 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. **Lunch – Sponsored by Clark McDaniel and Fabricare Cleaning Center**
- 1:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Jaqueline Stevens (Willms & Shier Environmental Lawyers) – Environmental Update
- 1:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Jon Meijer (DLI) - State of the Industry
- 2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Ellen Roseman–Consumer Affairs Columnist Toronto Star
- 3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Coffee break
- 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. Stephen Flomen (Milestone Insurance) –Living with Dignity-Insuring your future
- 4:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Jason Wiesner (Wiesner Insurance) – Free Legal Insurance and Contract Dispute Resolution Explanation)
- 4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Closing Remarks – President of OFA –
Raffle of Gift Certificate from Cleaners Supply
- 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. **Cocktails – Sponsored by John Regan of Fabritec (Sanitone) + Cash bar**
- 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Gala Dinner –**Wine sponsored by Sparkle Solutions**

Changes coming to Boiler and Pressure Vessels

There will be new legislation coming soon regarding inspection of boiler pressure vessels in Ontario. The Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and the Technical Standards and Safety Authority are conducting a review of regulations through a roundtable discussion of interested parties including the Executive Director of Ontario Fabricare Association (representing the dry cleaning and laundry industry), manufacturers, insurance representatives, Ontario Government representatives, and TSSA. The TSSA was created by the Ontario Government to provide self-regulation by the industry and was to be revenue neutral.

It is time that we in the industry clean up our act, as I was informed that the worst violators have come from the dry cleaning and laundry industry. There are both positive and negative results that are coming out of our meetings. The primary purpose of the TSSA is to protect the safety of the public from being maimed or killed by any accidental occurrences. Recently, it was necessary to close down a dry cleaner in the GTA due to failure to maintain a safe pressure vessel. The majority of problems seem to be with small Mom and Pop businesses which do not understand the rules or deliberately flout them.

There is some confusion between BPV inspectors (which inspect only the boilers themselves, and are mostly done by insurer inspectors) and Operating Engineer (OE) inspectors (which inspect the overall plant and its operation/maintenance, which includes making sure the boilers have a current inspection certificate. These are done only by TSSA, and shall continue to be so).

In other words, you will not see any change in who does the inspections. However, you should see an improvement in how the TSSA inspections are performed.

To the credit of TSSA, they conducted a seminar recently with their inspectors and imparted the importance of showing empathy with the plant owners. The discussion was well received by the inspectors.

In order to fund the cost of these inspections, there may be a fee for each pressure vessel. These vessels include boilers, hot water cushion tanks, air tanks, etc. The amount of the fee is yet to be decided, but it appears that it will be in the range of \$20 per unit. However, we are currently considering a flat fee based on the size of the business or pressure vessels. In my input, I am doing my best to keep the fees as low as possible for our industry. **It is the responsibility of each plant owner to disclose to their insurance company and the inspectors all pressure vessel equipment in the plant. Failure to do so, could lead to loss of insurance coverage.**

Inspectors will be responsible to inspect each pressure vessel and issue a Report or Certificate of Inspection and in some cases, make recommendations to repair or replace parts of equipment. Failure to adhere to these recommendations will result in a report forwarded to TSSA directly, who will send out their own inspector and if they concur, will issue a shutdown order and red tag the boiler or pressure vessel(s). In addition, the plant operator will be responsible for all costs incurred by TSSA for the additional inspections.

Another responsibility of the plant owner is to replace any parts such as a relief valve with identical quality parts similar to those installed in the original installation. The use of inferior parts that do not meet the original standards when initially installed will be severely scrutinized. As well, the inspector will be doing a cursory inspection of your piping system and if areas of damage or improper installation of fittings is observed, it will be your responsibility to replace the areas and fittings with regulation parts.

It is also the responsibility and obligation of the plant owner and the certified mechanics that work on your pressure vessels to advise the TSSA of any incidents which effect the operation of the pressure vessels and file a report as to how the incident began and how it is to be or was rectified. And remember, If your insurance policy lapses, this will also trigger an inspection by a TSSA inspector. I will continue to keep you updated on the final form these regulations will take.

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Ministry of the Environment
and Climate Change

Ministère de l'Environnement
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MAR 08 2016

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Mr. Sidney Chelsky
Executive Director
Ontario Fabricare Association
120 Promenade Circle, Suite 910
Thornhill ON L4J 7W9

Dear Mr. Chelsky:

Thank you for your correspondence of January 26 and 27, 2016 following up on our meeting to discuss the Ontario Fabricare Association's (OFA) concerns about the dry cleaning industry.

Many good points were raised, and my staff and I found the discussion useful and informative.

The ministry is always interested in working and collaborating with industry sectors and their stakeholders, including the OFA, to find common ground for achieving compliance with environmental standards.

I encourage you to continue to work directly with Mr. Tom Kaszas, Director of the ministry's Environmental Innovations Branch, to explore further opportunities for the ministry and the OFA to work together. Mr. Kaszas can be reached by email at Tom.Kaszas@ontario.ca or by telephone at 416-325-8068.

Thank you, again, for meeting with me and ministry staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glen Murray".

Glen Murray
Minister

c: Mr. Tom Kaszas, Director, Environmental Innovations Branch, MOECC

**Ministry of Government and
Consumer Services**

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MAR 09 2016

Mr. Sidney Chelsky
Executive Director
Ontario Fabricare Association
Suite 910 – 120 Promenade Circle
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Dear Mr. Chelsky:

Thank you for letter on behalf of the Ontario Fabricare Association (OFA) requesting that the government consider introducing a mandatory requirement for dry cleaners or launderers to join an association.

I would like to commend your association's commitment to providing excellent dry cleaning services and protection to consumers. I appreciate your high regard for the needs of consumers, especially in the area of addressing complaints.

I understand that not all dry cleaners and launderers have chosen to join your association and may not adhere to high standards for handling and responding to consumer complaints. I would like to thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Please be assured that my ministry welcomes your input and I will keep these concerns in mind when considering possible improvements to enhancing consumer protection in Ontario. Should you wish to meet with staff from my ministry to discuss this issue, please contact Nicholas Robins, Manager of the Consumer and Business Policy Unit, by telephone at 416-212-5727 or by email at Nicholas.Robins@ontario.ca.

Thank you again for writing and please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Oraziotti".

David Oraziotti
Minister

Suggested Procedure for Changing Cartridges

Today, the cost of proper disposal of spent cartridges can cost more than the cartridges when new. As a result, it makes sense to try to prolong the life of the cartridges after they have been changed.

One of the ways to accomplish this is to clean up all of the solvent in the system before changing the cartridges. If this step isn't taken, then the new cartridges will have to clean up all of the dye left in the system. Depending on the size of the solvent tanks and filter (s) in your system, that could be a considerable amount of solvent. Asking the new cartridges to take on this job will seriously decrease the usable life of the carbon in the cartridges.

Start the process by distilling all of the solvent in the work tank. Once the still is empty, transfer clean solvent into the work tank and then spin the filter (if your system utilizes a spin filter in addition to the cartridge filter). That way, when the spin filter is refilled, it will also contain clean solvent.

Once the still is empty, drain the cartridge housing for at least 24 hours and then change the cartridges. Remember to replace the felt gaskets at the rear of the filter housing, between each cartridge and the end of the final cartridge before the metal plate and wing nut. The old felt gaskets can be cleaned in a net bag with a dark load. Once they have been cleaned, place them on the buck of a press and apply bottom steam to the felt gaskets. The steam will soften up the felt so it will do a better job of sealing the cartridges the next time they are used on a cartridge change.

Make sure to place the spent cartridges in the appropriate waste container for pick up by a licensed waste hauler. The cartridge filter should then be refilled with clean solvent from the work tank. Allow the solvent to run through the filter for at least 5 to 10 minutes before cleaning the next load. This will insure that any carbon dust on the cartridges will be flushed away and deposited on the filter and not your first load of cleaning. Using this procedure will insure longer cartridge life and cleaner solvent.

The Importance of Preventative Maintenance

Well, another winter bites the dust. Time to prepare for the summer heat. Now is the time to service those swamp coolers along with the water tower. Don't wait for the temperatures to hit triple digits before you decide to insure that your roof mounted equipment is running smoothly. Your employees will thank you and your cleaning machine will need all the cool water it can get.

Speaking of your cleaning machine, you may want to schedule an acid wash on your refrigeration coil, solvent cooling coil and still condenser coil (if your machine is equipped with a still) if you haven't done so in a couple of years. Water in Arizona and Nevada are full of minerals that build up over time and restrict the flow of water through the coils. In heat. When this happens the machine may go into alarm mode and prevent you from completing the load. Depending on where you are in the cycle or whether the still is on, the alarms will read FRIG UNIT WATER or LACK OF STILL WATER. Once the alarms sound you will have to leave the machine off until the probes cool down before you can addition, the mineral deposits insulate the coils and decrease their ability to exchange the finish the load. That will kill production and end up costing you more money in labor. There is nothing worse than having your pressers standing around waiting for something to press.

Having your mechanic acid wash the inside of your coils will remove all of the mineral deposits. NEVER put the acid in your tower as it will destroy the tower pump. Your mechanic will bypass the tower and circulate the special acid through the coils. Then, he will completely flush out the coils with water before reconnecting the tower. Performing this acid wash every couple of years will keep your machine running at peak performance. What is that old saying? "You can pay me now or pay me later." Said another way, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Another thing to put on your list of preventative maintenance is the removal and cleaning of the exterior Still Condenser and Solvent Cooling coils. Over time these coils will trap lint and dirt on the exterior of the coils. That debris will not allow the coils to condense the still vapors or cool the solvent. If the solvent cooling coil becomes packed with lint, solvent flow will be reduced causing poor cleaning and re-deposition. I have seen occasions where the solvent flow was reduced to a trickle. When that happens, the

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clothes themselves becomes the filter. Anyone who has dealt with redeposition knows that it normally involves your writing checks to customers for garments that have turned gray and can't be fixed. I could be wrong, but I don't think most cleaners look forward to paying claims when the cause of those claims was so easy to avoid through preventative maintenance. However, the choice is up to you.

Thank you to my good friend Bill Hay who is Executive Director of the Western States Dry Cleaners and Launderers Association for sharing this information.

Lessons in Communication Learned from Irate Customers
By: Joe Curcillo

Boss Deborah is sitting in her office reviewing monthly reports as she listens to routine bustling of her staff. Suddenly, she hears a single voice amidst the regular noise. It is Mary, her secretary, attempting to get a word in as she deals with a rather stubborn and authoritative customer. The call is placed on hold and is transferred into her office. Mary announces "*Mr. Money is on the phone; he is angry and is demanding your help.*"

As Deborah reaches for her phone, she recognizes that how she handles the next few seconds will determine whether Mr. Money will raise or lower the bottom line on the next monthly report.

In the time it takes to reach for the phone and say "Hello," you must have the focus and knowledge necessary to take control and lead the caller back into your corner.

Preparedness comes by having the structure in mind that will allow your persuasive and reassuring abilities to control the situation. Maybe it was your staff, your management team or a salesman, but the buck stops with you. As you listen to the complaint, pay attention to how the caller became disgruntled, and match their words to the organizational structure and discipline that you have in place. Many times the caller has reached your desk because someone in the chain of command failed to listen and address their concerns.

Let's begin with the approach; how you manage the window between the "ring" and the "answer" will define the experience as educational, confrontational or successful.

In the seconds before answering the call or meeting, keep in mind that the best way to initiate control is to take the high ground. Not just the high road of virtue and doing the right thing, but the high ground as a vantage point to observe the situation as a whole. Prepare to remove yourself from the fray and look at the big picture. The best means of accomplishing this is to remember 4 rules.

1. Do not speak until you have truly listened.

The opposite of speaking is not listening—it is waiting to speak. Listening is a separate task, and in fact is an art. If you're waiting to speak, you are preparing to address the other person with words.

The easiest of all customers to deal with in the world of irate customers *is the one that just wants to be heard*. Everyone has dealt with someone who expressed every detail of their complaint to every person in their organization. They have begun to tell their story to the parking lot attendant as they parked their car, and each person they encountered en route to the manager's office.

Their repeated rehearsal of the story should be your first indication that all they need is understanding and reassurance. They want someone to listen; step up and make that person you.

2. Do not defend, until you have heard the attack.

Step back, and allow the speaker to talk. As you listen, do not formulate your responses, but follow the speaker with an eye towards understanding the nature of their accusations and allegations. The ability to effectively challenge someone's argument hinges upon your understanding of their argument, not on the merits of your own.

Taking control of a situation requires you to pay attention to what is being said so that you may take all you've heard and use it collectively as you map out your proposed solution. Adopting the other person's arguments in your solution will make it much more difficult for a person to logically rebuff your offer of resolution.

3. Identify the true nature of the complaint and the complainant.

There are many reasons why a person will complain. Dissatisfaction with a product or service is obvious, but some complaints are born and nurtured in environments outside of your control. Taking control of these types of complaints require you to listen and explore with questions the circumstances leading the customer to your door.

Some people are simply disappointed with your entire industry. Lawyers and mechanics will identify with this. It is necessary to set yourself apart from the herd and let the speaker know that you care.

Some complaints are born from a lack of clear expectations. Explore their concerns and guide them back to a more realistic path.

The most difficult of all complaints is the person who, due to their own shortcomings, has an inability to understand that the reason your products or service is failing, is their inability to follow instructions or guidance. It is essential that you speak to these people as you would to a friend. There is no need to use industry jargon or million-dollar words. Make sure that your vocabulary and speech is simple enough that they can follow your directions to the letter. But do not allow yourself to come across condescending. This can be avoided by remaining social and human as you address your customer.

4. Focus on areas in which you and your company can improve.

Learn. Even the most irrational or self-absorbed customers can teach you valuable tools to improve service. As you listen, pigeonhole some of their thoughts and complaints into the recesses of your mind. By looking for areas of improvement in each and every conversation, you will not only actively listen, but you will enjoy the opportunity to grow and become better.

Consider the following checklist as a starting point. Obviously, your industry may have specific questions or concerns that you should include. Allow these thoughts to operate as a springboard dive into your next irate customer moment.

- ☹ With whom have they spoken?
- ☹ What remedies have failed?
- ☹ Is the problem real or imagined?
- ☹ Is it related to a personality conflict with the representative with whom they have been working?
- ☹ What are their expectations?
- ☹ Are the expectations something you can address?
- ☹ Are their expectations reasonable?
- ☹ How many people have they spoken with at your company?
- ☹ Has everyone given them sound advice or bad advice?
- ☹ Is the disappointment with your company and you?
- ☹ Have they allowed their anger with the industry to fester?
- ☹ Have they been given sound advice but the problem rests with their inability to understand and listen?
- ☹ What can I learn from the situation to improve my bottom line?

Joe Curcillo, The Mindshark, is a speaker, entertainer, lawyer and communications expert. As an Adjunct Professor at Widener University School of Law, Mr. Curcillo developed a hands-on course, based on the use of storytelling as a persuasive weapon. He has been a professional entertainer helping corporations and associations improve their communication techniques since 1979.

Keeping it in the Family

BY HARVEY GERSHENSON (from National Clothesline)

O.A. Bautista, passed away in 1995, but his words live on. Mr. Bautista who was a chemist and author said the following, “The best inheritance a parent can give his children is a few minutes of his time each day.” That statement reminded me of the song, Watching Scotty Grow. If you are not familiar with the lyrics, you can hear it on YouTube.

I mentioned this quote and song because of a plant I visited. The man inherited the plant when his father suddenly passed away. His father never spent any time with him, and he never learned anything about the dry cleaning business. However, the son knew if he kept the business, he would earn a lot more than he was making in his current field of endeavor.

Needless to say, the young man wanted a short course in dry cleaning because the company was no longer as profitable as it had been, and there was a drop in sales. There were a number of issues in this place of business. The first issue was teaching this young man how to be a business owner, and not his employees’ best friend.

The company did absolutely no marketing. They did not collect customer information, other than name and telephone number. This astounded me because they used one of the best POS systems available to the industry.

Employees could go into the computer system, change their punch in, and punch out times. I have never seen any business owner allow this to happen. I almost fell through the floor on that mistake.

There were cameras monitoring the place, but for some reason they would stop working a couple of weeks after being repaired. I wondered which employees were playing games with the monitoring system.

In addition to those problems, there were other issues. The next big problem was lack of space. There was no room for storage. There was no room for anything other than the existing equipment and counters. There was no office, only a small break area. Apparently, the business outgrew its existing square footage, but dad did nothing to change the interior design of the plant.

I inquired about inventory monitoring. Yes, orders that were supposed to be on the conveyors were missing. I bet you already know what was happening. The cash drawer was always even or short. It was never over.

The next item of importance was the lack of a defined inspection station. Finally yet most importantly, the operational costs were not being measured as a percentage of gross sales. As has been said many times, if you do not measure it, you cannot manage it.

Repairing this broken situation will be a time consuming job for the young man who inherited the business, but he will become a businessperson who will learn to work on his business. My suggestions started with dealing with the cost of labor. This meant denying access to the time records for all employees, even the manager, as the manager was instrumental in the changing of hours.

My next suggestion was the installation of hidden cameras when no employees were on the premises. This meant an evening or weekend installation. The cameras would serve a couple of purposes. The owner would be able to monitor when employees come in and go home. Employees currently tell the owner, “I forgot to punch in”, or “I forgot to punch out”. The second objective is to monitor the conveyors for the pick-up of orders. The video of what is going on would go directly to the owner’s home for monitoring.

It will be enlightening for the owner to learn who is handing out orders without ringing them up. It will also be interesting to see the actual arrival and departure times of the employees who make up excuses about the number of hours they work. Both the hours and inventory situations, when operated correctly, will produce savings that will go directly to the bottom line. There will be an immediate return on investment with camera installation.

Another expense I suggested was retaining an interior design architect who has dealt with commercial design. Once the redesign goes into effect, the entire operation will be cleaned up. This means that a possible redesign of the speed rails and creation of an inspection station can take place. I am certain that a real, honest to goodness dressing room for customers, would be a moneymaker.

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I explained to the young man that his second most valuable asset is the database with his customer's information. I suggested he contact the software manufacturer and consider having a trainer visit the plant. Another possibility would be to contact another cleaner or cleaners who use the software, visit their locations, and learn how they use the software. The marketing tools are crucial to the growth of business and keeping the current customers.

Control of operating costs was next on the agenda. He had QuickBooks at home but he was not using it to its full potential. The CPA, on an annual basis, produced the only P & L. Here was a duplication of the lack of knowledge just like the POS system. I recommended he learn how to create his own P & L on a monthly basis. Furthermore, I suggested he measure his costs as a percentage of the company's gross sales. He could use Excel to a limited extent so this might be a way of handling this project while learning QuickBooks.

Then I pushed into the HR department. The actual time the current handbook was created was totally unknown. I suggested contacting an HR attorney to obtain a new handbook. In addition, he should learn about written warnings for employees who fail to clock in or clock out. The more I dug into the operation the more I found that needed fixing.

In the production department, the amount of pieces being produced by the laundry and dry cleaning finishers was not being measured. There was no dedicated inspection station. I do not know who installed the plant, or who taught the father the business, but somebody was totally lacking knowledge on how to produce a good product. I prefer that garments area inspected prior to assembly but the garments were semi-inspected in the bagging station.

By this time, the young fellow was overwhelmed. I did not mention automatic piece counters or automatic assembly and bagging. That will be waiting in the wings along with using a bar coded marking system.

What I did add to his workload was look at the current marking system. The markers were losing money for the business. One marker averaged about 4% upcharges and the other person who was marking was at less than 1%. Was it a lack of care on the part of the employees or poor supervision and poor training? I set a goal of 5% for both markers and once that was reached up the goal to 10%. My company averaged 20%.

I will be returning to this place of business in three months to learn what has been accomplished. In order to get the ball rolling I created an action plan listing all the areas that needed correcting along with a column for completion dates. I hope that a few of the suggestions that I made will have been implemented.

In the event you need a question or questions answered, do not hesitate to send me an email, Consultme@msn.com or call my cell phone, 310-261-2623. As you have read, I will respond to most questions, no matter the subject matter.

It is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves, that will make them successful human beings.

Ann Landers



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