



ROCKY MOUNTAIN FABRICARE ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

SERVING THE DRYCLEANERS OF COLORADO, UTAH AND WYOMING

SPRING 2004
VOL. 19, NO. 1

It's that time again...

RMFA's SPRING CONFERENCE

Sheraton, Colorado Springs ♦ May 14 & 15, 2004

Come see what we have to offer...

From Allied Trades exhibiting new and exciting products and equipment to profound speakers like Kenney Slatten and Jon Meijer!

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The room block will be released on April 14, 2004 - please make reservations before that date.

**For registration
Information refer to
insert in this
newsletter!**



Jon Meijer, is Vice President of Membership/Marketing at IFI. He is a popular industry speaker and has written numerous articles and bulletins for IFI's *Fabricare* magazine



Kenney Slatten, known to many as "*The Cowboy Cleaner*", is the founder and president of **Kenney Slatten Training Co.** based in Texas. He is an avid consultant, speaker & certified instructor/trainer for IFI. Additionally, Kenney is a monthly columnist for the *Western Cleaner & Launderer* magazine.

Mission Statement

*The purpose of the
ROCKY MOUNTAIN
FABRICARE ASSOCIATION is
to enhance the image
and viability of the
fabricare industry
through education, and
development of the
skills, talents and
professionalism of its
membership.*



PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES:

To promote, develop and protect the interests of the garment and textile maintenance industry. To improve the quality of services rendered by industry by providing an opportunity for the exchange of experiences, ideas and opinions through meetings, discussion and educational programs. To develop and encourage the practice of high standards and professional conduct and safety within the workplace among the membership.



P R E S I D E N T ' S

M E S S A G E

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**Richard Reese -
RMFA President**

With the recent changes in the depreciation laws and the improvements in our economy the outlook for our industry is good. Most people I have spoken with seem to feel that the economic storm is coming to an end. During the economic woes of the last few years, there has been a fury of cleaners trying to replace their lost revenue by diversifying their business. Diversification is certainly a good way to increase revenue, it is important not to lose focus on your core business.

With the Future looking brighter it is a good time to look at reinvesting in your current business. Improving your customers overall experience will only strengthen your business. As the old saying goes, "There is no substitute for training". For most dry cleaning customers the only experience they have is at the front counter or the drive up window. The outside appearance of your building as well as the front counter area represents your business to the public. A clean and well-organized counter area and well-trained staff will help create an atmosphere where customers will feel comfortable leaving their clothes. Uniformed or well-dressed counter personnel help to create that atmosphere.

The second part in improving your customers overall experience is quality. Make sure your equipment is clean and in good working order. Press pads should be replaced before they become hard and leave button or seam impressions. It is a good idea to write the date on the end of your pads with a magic marker, this will help keep track of the length of time the pad has been in service. The quality of garments produced is the most important factor in our industry. Maintaining your quality is key. Fluctuating quality is one main reason customers change cleaners. Training of your production staff is critical. Occasionally even the best spotters or finishers need a refresher course. The International Fabricare Institute and the Rocky Mountain Fabricare Association are dedicated to helping you to maintain a successful business. If we can be of any help through any of our educational programs please don't hesitate to call.

Richard Reese

UTAH UPDATE

The Largest, Most Complete Stock of Laundry and Dry Cleaning Supplies in the U.S.A.

Just Some of the Products and Services We Proudly Offer

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- Nylon Press Flannel
- Southern Mills Flatwork Ironer Pads & Covers
- Flatwork Ironer Aprons, Belts, Lubricants & Cleaners
- Prime Laundry Products
- Coin Vend Soaps & Dispensers
- Procter & Gamble Products
- Kaybro Laundry Products
- Textile Care Laundry Products
- Ecolab Laundry Products
- Americlean-Diversey Products
- Spotting Chemicals
- Liquid Injection Laundry Systems
- Marking Tags - Stry Lenkoff, Liberty & Pittsburgh Tag
- Safety Pins
- Staplers & Staples
- Dennison Fasteners
- Lint Removers-Bemis & Helmac
- Packaging Supplies
- Wedding Gown & Shirt Boxes
- Polywrap & PVC Film
- Sewing Supplies - Buttons, Threads, Zippers, etc.
- Poly Cotton & Nylon Pick-up Bags
- Nylon & Dacron Nets
- Racks & Baggers
- Baskets, Carts & Liners - Steele, R&B, Harloff
- Irons & Accessories
- Safety Supplies
- Janitorial & Maintenance Supplies & Equipment
- Paper Towels, Toilet Tissue & Facial Tissue
- Cotton Towels & Linens
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You've just worked umpteen hours through Nov. and Dec., two of the busiest months on a drycleaner's calendar. Your drop-off and pick-up dollar amounts are higher than ever. So, now that you have time to look at your profit/loss statement, why isn't there more money left in the bank?

Well, first there were the expenses associated with Christmas: gifts, bonuses and the company party. And did I mention all of those worthy causes that use the Christmas spirit to enhance their fund raising efforts? Then there were property taxes, personal property taxes, quarter end taxes, state sales tax remittance and the accountant's bill for ensuring you paid the right amount of taxes. Then you got January's gas bill!

Do not feel alone. The subject of this year's RMFA annual meeting is "PROFITABILITY", a subject of enormous interest to most drycleaners. How do we balance our customer's desire for a "deal" with our need to have more income than out-go? Do we need to be as business-efficient as Walmart with their lower prices guarantee or will we do better emulating Nordstrums' prestige branding? Is it hard work or just plain luck? Is it something that can be learned? Is there a formula?

The RMFA annual meeting will be held in Colorado Springs May 14-15, 2004. The RMFA education committee is lining up experts and successful dry-cleaner panels to help provide answers to your questions about how to run a profitable business. Not only are the seminars and panels geared toward the "PROFITABILITY" theme, there will be plenty of time for one-on-one conversations with sales reps and other drycleaners. Casual conversation is sometimes the best way to find solutions to common problems.

So take a long weekend and meet us in Colorado Springs. You are sure to come back home with new and PROFITABLE ideas for your business.

See You There,
Sharon

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BRAD EWING - to run for IFI Director



Brad Ewing, CED has announced that he will be a candidate for the District 7 IFI Director's position. The current director, Gary Campbell, will complete his term in July, 2004. The nomination process ended on February 15th, and the ballots will be mailed soon. Ballots must be returned to IFI by April 15th.

Brad and his wife Mary Marta and her father Jim Nixon operate Nu-Way Cleaners and Foothills Cleaners in Northern Colorado. The company consists of one central production facility with eight dry stores.

Brad has served on the RMFA board since the early 1990's and his three year term as President of the Board ended in April 2002. Brad also served a two year term as the IFI District Committee Member for District 7. District Committee members attend IFI board meetings as representatives of the industry.

Brad has also worked closely with the Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP) which provides compliance assistance for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's air division. He served on the task force that created "Pressing Concerns" a one stop compliance guide for dry cleaners in Colorado. He also volunteers his time to local community organizations and is currently serving his final year on the board of directors of the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra. Brad and Mary Marta are the parents of two boys, Brandon and Mason.

For more information on Brad's views on the industry and our Online Endorsement Form, go to <http://www.imaginecleanersonline.net/BradEwing.htm> and feel free to forward this information to anyone you think could help Brad in his campaign.

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FROM THE DESKTOP OF THE WEB MASTER



Some of you probably have already noticed, but I would like to announce a new look for the RMFA website. When I took it over last January, I did some maintenance and gave it a different layout and called it good. However it was in need of stepping into the 21st century, so

I've been playing with it for the last 6 months and finally came up with a new look. This one has room to grow and should serve us comfortably for some years to come.

All of the previous information is still on it, just hopefully in an easier to find format. Each page is now set up to be printable. So if you want to print something, you won't have to print all the graphics and navigation columns just the Content of the page will print. This saves time, paper and printer ink!

Some of the features you may have forgotten about:

- ❖ Events page to keep up on upcoming classes and events.
- ❖ FREE Classified advertisement section - hire an employee, sell equipment, buy equipment, sell a service, find a service.
- ❖ Translate this Page - Each page is now translatable into a number of languages Just click on the button in the Right Column

Looking for something with the RMFA Logo on it? Visit our store, just click on the Café Press logo from the right column on any page. There are Coffee Mugs, Mouse pads, Membership Stickers, Calendars, Lunchboxes, Golf Shirts, baseball Caps and many more items. I've recently re-done all the graphics so everything now has the RMFA Logo on it. These items make great gifts or giveaways to employees. In the process it offsets the costs associated with the website.

Get a presence on the web; you can have your own one page website at the RMFA for \$25.00 a year. For example: <http://www.rmfa.org/NewMethodCleaners> This is a fantastic way to get started with a website without spending a fortune. You can submit your information online from the Services page. Want to keep your personal email separate from your business email? We also offer web mail accounts at RMFA.org. For example the cleaners@rmfa.org then you have a place to handle your business email from customers. This can be accessed from any computer with an internet account so your business manager can have access to it as well.

I try to keep the news page updated on a regular basis with tidbits from IFI or other articles. If you have ideas for the site or something you'd like to see please feel free to contact me.

Leslie Kettenhofen
webmaster@rmfa.org
(541)999-1493

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE

by: Joe Blaha

THE RMFA 2004 SPRING SHOW AND CONFERENCE FRIDAY MAY 14 AND SATURDAY MAY 15 , 2004 SHERATON HOTEL , COLORADO SPRINGS

Can you be in business and ignore profitability. Can't imagine why.

The RMFA has an offer.. You give us a part of your Friday and Saturday and we will give you a chance to share the intellect, knowledge, and experience of industry leaders and your peers. Come to this years Spring Show and explore with us the challenge of stimulating revenue growth and controlling costs all in the interest of generating profits. Kenny Slatten sponsored by R.R.Streets will be with us again this year and will kick off the conference with a seminar on effective pricing. Jeff Schwarz of A.L.Wilson will share with us another installment of Jeff's "Who Are the Successful Dry Cleaners?" "Where the Rubber Meets The Road " an enlightened trip into the realities of success in our business. The IFI will present a program on their role in providing the tools and support essential to your success. Joni Canterbury of the Small Business Assistance Program will get us up to date on our regulatory relationship with the state. Her efforts in support of our members in dealing with these issues are always welcomed.

A special program to cast the spotlight on Summit Cleaners in Colorado Springs will give everyone a chance to see some advanced store designs in computer application, smart selecting ,sorting and 24/7 delivery conveyors. Jeff Lavelle and his partner Ryan Hettich have installed a new plant since being awarded The RMFA Dry Cleaners of the Year 2003 which incorporates many leading edge applications.This store received an American Drycleaner 2004 " Merit Award" for plant design. Their third store should be open by the time of the Spring Show. We appreciate the opportunity to make a "spectacle" of Summit Cleaners this year. The people from Westgate Software whose Spot computer system is core to Summits operations have agreed to participate in demonstrating the features and benefits possible in this store and other future possibilities.. A video is being prepared to show the store in action and we have an invite to visit the award winning plant over the weekend at our convenience. It is always fun to peek over the neighbor's fence. You will find this interesting.

Several panel discussions are scheduled for Saturday. "Profitability Through Diversification" will present an assortment of experienced and well informed panel members who will explore diversification. The closing panel discussion will help to pull all the pieces together as we massage all the elements of revenue, cost, and profitability. We will present methods for cost containment ,discuss how cost groups work, explore options to increase revenue and contain labor costs. In general everything a person in business should have at his fingertips to develop management strategies. These are the components of understanding vitally important to all business people who wish to survive and more importantly to succeed .

Wrapped around the conference there will be ample time to visit industry representatives demonstrating their latest wares in the exhibit hall and enjoy the quality refreshments and company of other dry cleaners also out to grow their businesses. Join us at the luncheon for the "Drycleaner of the Year" award presentation. This is an overview of our show package. We know you need it . You know you need it. The setting is in place. The Sheraton is great property at super good rates. Spend Friday night and benefit from a big dose of focusing on the bottom line.

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QUESTIONS TO PONDER

“Where the Rubber Meets the Road”

By: Jeff Schwartz of A.L. Wilson

Why did you get into drycleaning business in the first place? (Hint: Was it to make money?)

What do your customers want from you in return for their money?

Are you willing to give them what they want in order to make your financial goals a reality?

How do the best drycleaners keep raising their prices and keep getting more business?

* * * * *

The Greater Los Angeles Dry Cleaner Association (GLADCA) recently offered a seminar on marketing. The fee for the seminar was \$30. Prior to the seminar, I guaranteed to several drycleaners that if they showed up at the seminar, and implemented just one new idea learned there, they would grow their business by 20%... or I would refund them their \$30 fee. Twenty-five cleaners told me they would take me up on my offer. Of those twenty-five cleaners that promised to attend, can you guess how many showed up? Take a guess... lower... lower... lower... ZERO! Not one of the twenty-five! Eight of those shops are gone today. Several more are at death's door.

Those cleaners made a common, shortsighted mistake. They chose to work **IN** their businesses, while the better choice would have been to spend a few hours working **ON** their businesses.

* * * * *

Over 13,000 U.S. businesses go out of business every year... mostly due to bad management. People continue to do what they have always done, without realizing that the rest of the world is passing them by. If you're a day dreamer, that's fine. You'll live a long, stress-free life. But to succeed in business takes more than a dream.

* * * * *

What do your customers want from you, and what are you giving them in return for their money?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeff Schwarz represents the A. L. Wilson Chemical Co. in twelve western states and in western Canada. He started working in our industry 13 years ago with Covers Etc, has served extensively with the California Cleaners Association as well as with several local California associations.



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