



ROCKY MOUNTAIN FABRICARE ASSOCIATION  
**NEWSLETTER**

SERVING THE DRYCLEANERS OF COLORADO, UTAH AND WYOMING

July/August 2004

Vol. 19, No. 1

## 2004 Spring Show & Conference

By: Joe Blaha



We had a Show and it didn't snow. Two years in a row without a blizzard - of course we seem to keep moving the date of the Spring Show closer to summer so any further movement in that direction will require a name change. We were all very pleased with the quality and scope of the content of this year's seminar presentations. For those of you who were able to attend all the sessions this year, we hope that the profitability theme was apparent and it will help everyone to reach for and attain their financial goals. We certainly wish to thank Jon Meijer of the IFI, Kenny Slatten, "The Cowboy Cleaner", Bob Blacker of R.R. Streets, Jeff Schwarz of A.L. Wilson, Mark Jones of Westgate Software, Joni Canterbury of SBAP, Kathryn Stewart of GAP, Jeff Lavelle of Summit Cleaners and the local talent recruited from your board for their involvement. Congratulations are in order for Jim Patterson of Your Valet Cleaners in Ogden Utah receiving the RMFA Dry Cleaner of the Year 2004 and to Bob Blacker (recruited away from the RMFA education committee to become Manager Technical Services for R.R. Street & Co.) as Allied Tradesperson of the Year 2004.

Next year we will tempt the weather gods and move back into April for our conference since national's "Big Show" is scheduled to be held in Orlando, June 2005 and it doesn't seem polite to crowd up against their date. Also it would appear that our consensus is to lighten up a bit next year and hold our conference in a user friendly destination such as Grand Junction, where the seminars will still educate but also include golf and wine tasting. This is actually a continuation of

the profitability seminar of this year where you get to spend some of your loot wisely with us next year after you have earned it. We will keep you posted as this all develops this summer.

Spotting classes are back in September for Denver and Salt Lake City -don't miss out as these are the only opportunities you will have this year to upgrade those "skills" that our customers are the most concerned about. October this year will hold our first "Members Only Celebration" event. Not only will we do our best to help our members make sure they have all the tools necessary to succeed, we think a little food and refreshments are in order as well. More info on this will be forthcoming also.

Only through the support of our vendors was our Spring Show possible. We thank you and trust that all our members will understand that their support of these businesses enable us all to succeed. Good show! See you next spring ... Joe

### WHAT'S INSIDE:

President's Message

High Flash Hydrocarbon Solvent & Stain Removal

Utah Update

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**September 11, 2004 - Spotting Class**  
Mountain High Cleaners - Denver

**September 18, 2004 - Advanced Spotting Class**  
Brigham Young University - Salt Lake City

**October 14, 2004 - Members Celebration**  
Location to be announced - Denver



# President's Message

Year 2004-2005  
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**Richard Reese**

Vice President:  
**Paul Mandeville**

Secretary:  
**Sharon Dutcher, CED**

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**Brad Ewing - Greeley, CO**

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**Joe Blaha - Denver, CO**  
**Bob Stine-Highlands Ranch, CO**  
**Roland Dobbins-Littleton, CO**

Executive Director:  
**Melissa Hopkins**

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**Visit our Website:**  
[www.rmfa.org](http://www.rmfa.org)

*Rocky Mountain Fabricare  
Association is an affiliate of the  
International Fabricare Institute*



## IS IT TIME TO MODERNIZE?

For those of you who attended RMFA's Spring Conference, I hope you enjoyed "The plant of the future", presentation as much as I did. For those of you who did not attend you missed a great conference. Mark Jones with Westgate Software and Jeff Lavelle with Summit Cleaners gave a wonderful presentation of an advanced store design. A video of Summit Cleaners second facility in Colorado Springs accompanied the presentation. Westgate Software's "Spot" point of sale system is the core of Summits operation. Metal Progetti-Smart Selecting, sorting and delivery conveyor systems and 24/7 customer access are just a few of the innovations Summit Cleaners has incorporated in building a modern facility.

Is it time to modernize your facility? Technology has been increasing by leaps and bounds over the last decade. Modern computerization has opened doors only dreamed of twenty years ago. From the point of sale computer systems to the microprocessor controlled cleaning machines, computers can revolutionize the way we approach business. Modernizing a dry-cleaning facility can help get the advantages needed to succeed in our highly competitive industry. Better cleaning, lower production and energy costs are just a few ways modernization can help.

It's hard to keep up with all of the technological advances our industry has seen in the last few years. This is where your national and regional associations can help. Attending conferences, clean shows and other industry functions gives you a great opportunity to see and hear about the latest processes and gadgets. Networking opportunities with other cleaners to see just how they have incorporated technology into their operations.

I think everyone would like to have a more efficient business. Maybe its time to ask yourself "Is it time for me to modernize?"

Richard Reese

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# High Flash Hydrocarbon Solvent and Stain Removal

By: Bob Stine, R.R. Street & Co., Inc., Area Sales Manager

First of all, let's clear up the confusion surrounding the term Hydrocarbon Solvent. Hydrocarbon and petroleum are synonymous terms. In other words, hydrocarbon solvents and petroleum solvents are the same thing, and the idea of using petroleum solvents in drycleaning is certainly not a new one. Hydrocarbons have been used for drycleaning as far back as the 1860's. Prior to 1960, large central plants using petroleum solvent dominated the industry. Perc later became the preferred solvent as regulations related to fire and explosion safety prevented the use of petroleum in many locations. In addition, perc offered easier distillation and recovery among other benefits related to the establishment of smaller "package plant" operations. However, even today, hydrocarbon (petroleum) solvent continues to be used by about 20% of the industry, and that number is growing steadily. Relatively recent petroleum product and equipment developments, coupled with the in-creased regulation of perc have focused new attention on hydrocarbon solvents.

Hydrocarbon (petroleum) solvents have traditionally been classified into four categories. The first is Stoddard solvent, having a flash point between 100°F and 139°F. Quick Dry, Odorless mineral spirits, and 140°F are the other three. The newer synthetic hydrocarbons have flash points typically in the 142°F and above range. These hydrocarbon solvents are derived from a significantly finer cut of crude oil and are of very high purity with most of the aromatic

components normally associated with petroleum solvents removed. This means that these solvents are essentially odorless and leave no residual odor on the processed garments.

Now we can clear up the misconceptions surrounding stain removal agents and their use with high flash hydrocarbon solvents. The perception in the marketplace today is that if you switch to a high flash hydrocarbon solvent, then you must change your stain removal agents and procedures. This perception is false. First of all, many of these "specially formulated for use with hydrocarbon" stain removal agents were designed to flush out in hydrocarbon solvent to promote ease of use. This ease of use however, comes with a price in the form of less effective stain removal and possible detrimental effects to the purity and overall cleaning ability of the solvent even after distillation. Proper spotting procedures require that stain removal agents be flushed from the garment and dried prior to drycleaning. This is particularly true of all "dry-side" agents as well as protein and tannin formulas.

The practice of applying stain removal agents to garments and simply throwing them into the wheel as a shortcut to proper procedure has grown exponentially over the last 15 to 20 years. This is the result of misinformation and lack of proper training in the drycleaning and stain removal areas of our business. The practice of flushing your stain removal agents in the machine also increases the risk of garment damage not only to the garment with which the stain removal agent was applied, but potentially to other garments in the load as well. This is evidenced by the fact that color loss/damage due to improper spotting ranks second in the list of damages attributed to cleaners from garments analyzed by IFI's International Textile Analysis Laboratory. Regardless of the solvent in use, proper stain removal procedures remain the same and need to be adhered to for safe removal of stains, proper care for your customers garments, longevity of your equipment, and ultimately the success of your business.

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# Highlights of the RMFA Spring Conference



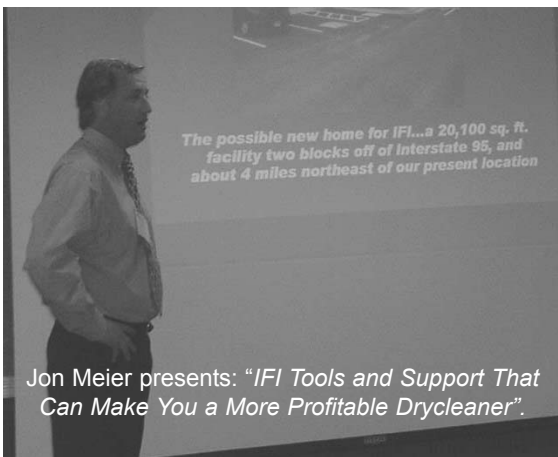
Bob Blacker,  
"Allied Trade Member of the Year"



Brad Ewing, Jim Nixon and Richard Reese enjoy some time for networking.



Jim Nixon presents Jim Patterson the "Drycleaner of the Year" award.



Jon Meier presents: "IFI Tools and Support That Can Make You a More Profitable Drycleaner".



Kenney Slatten, "The Cowboy Cleaner"

## Thanks to all the 2004 RMFA Spring Show and Conference Sponsors:

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Attendees enjoying the Panel Discussion.



## Utah Update

By: Sharon Dutcher

Congratulations to Utah drycleaner Jim Patterson of the *Your Valet* chain of drycleaning plants. He was the recipient of the 2004 *Drycleaner of the Year* award at the RMFA Annual Conference held in Colorado Springs on May 14 and 15, 2004.

This award is based on outstanding service to the industry. Jim's long history of service to this industry made him the unanimous choice of the RMFA board of directors.

Jim has been a drycleaner since 1961 (when he tired of using his geology degree in the oil fields of Wyoming) upon the purchase a One Hour Martinizing franchise in Roy, Utah. By 1984 he had been elected to the IFI board as the director of district 7 and he remained on the board until 1990. He served as IFI president from 1988-1989. In 1990, he and his wife, Suzy, hosted the national convention in Salt Lake City.

During his tenure on the IFI board, he was approached by Jim Nixon of *Nu-Way Cleaners* in Greeley, Colorado to aid in forming a joint states organization

including Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. At that time, there were no local organizations to represent small cleaners and launderers. The purpose of Rocky Mountain Fabricare Association was (and remains) to provide educational programs locally, enhance the image of drycleaners, resolve our common problems and increase membership in the IFI.

Jim continues to be involved in local and national drycleaning events. He keeps up-to-date on new technologies and methods and is a leader in dealing with environmental issues and alternative solvents. And, best of all, Jim is generous in sharing his knowledge and experience with other drycleaners.

I asked Jim his opinion about the future of drycleaning. His reply was "Drycleaning is still a viable and necessary profession. If you provide both quality and good service to your customer, you will succeed". A positive attitude from a man who is a real-life role model!

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# Introducing . . .

Hi everyone! I would like to take a moment of your time and introduce myself to you. I am Melissa Hopkins, and I will be your new contact for RMFA. Don't worry, for those of you that know Gary Leeper, he is still here. I will be taking over the daily functions for RMFA and working more actively with the membership.

I have been with Interactive Management Inc, the association management company for RMFA, since January of 2003. I am currently finishing my degree at the University of Denver. Over the last seven years, I have been involved in non-profit associations in one aspect or another. I have worked extensively in membership retention and promotion, event planning and government relations.

I look forward to the opportunity of working with the RMFA board and membership, as well as the unique opportunity to learn more about the industry.

If you have any questions or have something I might be able to assist you on, please don't hesitate to call me at 303-433-4446.

Melissa Hopkins



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