



# WESTERN STATES DRYCLEANERS & LAUNDERERS ASSOCIATION

TRADE ASSOCIATION OF DRYCLEANERS & LAUNDERERS IN ARIZONA AND NEVADA

1st Quarter 2017

## Happy New Year

### **2016 Holiday Social was a huge success with 60 people in attendance.**

The Holiday Social was again held at the Bluewater Grill on Camelback Road in Phoenix. Once again they offered a broad menu which this year included a Rib Eye steak. As always, the food was excellent and the service was very good. Those of you who didn't make it missed a good time.

This year Jeff Schwarz, with A.L. Wilson, was awarded the Allied Tradesman of the Year. Jeff has been a WSDLA board member for a number of years. Recently he has been filling in as Secretary and keeping the minutes for our board meetings. He has also offered articles for our newsletter and takes every opportunity to solicit new members for the association.

We also welcomed two new members at the dinner. Thank you to Lyle Agnew with Galaxy Cleaners in Surprise, AZ and Brad Keeling with OrganiCare Cleaners in Phoenix for your support.





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## **Welcome to our newest Members:**

Brad Keeling—OrganiCare Cleaners—Phoenix, AZ

Lyle Agnew—Galaxy Cleaners— Surprise, AZ

Matthew Willis— One Click Cleaners—Las Vegas, NV

## **Welcome to our newest Allied Trade Member:**

Jim Nolan—Pro Laundry— Phoenix, AZ

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome to 2017. The new year has brought with it some major changes to our country and more specifically here in Arizona. We survived a very passionate presidential election and we are all bracing for changes that are sure to come over the next few years. Small business owners here in Arizona must be prepared to deal with the state's new minimum wage and paid sick time laws starting Jan 1. I am not an expert on these issues but I have read as much as I can about the effects and requirements that are associated with proposition 206 and I suggest every business owner do the same. The bottom line is the minimum wage will increase 67% over the next four years. The biggest jump is January 1 when the minimum wage goes from \$8.05 to \$10.00 per hour. We all know that all employees are not created equal and paying an experienced long term employee close to the same as a new 'kid' off the street is no way to run a business. So the REAL costs of this new minimum wage will cost small businesses more than just the basic minimum wage increase so keep an eye on all your variable costs and make sure you are charging enough to remain profitable going forward.

Paid Sick time for all employees starts accumulating on July 1, 2017. Employees will earn 1 hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked, maxing out at 40 hours per year for employers with more than 15 employees and 24 hours for those with less than 15. There are many rules, exceptions, requirements associated with this part of the new law and I suggest you really learn as much as you can about how to implement these changes in your organization. The Association will try to help by getting an expert on this new law to speak at a seminar and help us understand how to deal with it correctly.

The simplest advice I can give is know your business. Know your processes, and understand your productive numbers that will keep you profitable as wages and products continue to rise.

Good Luck—Heath Bolin

Heath Bolin



## Member Spotlight — Pride Cleaners

Gordon Oswald has been in the drycleaning business for almost 65 years. He started in Jamestown, North Dakota in 1952. He eventually moved to Sioux City, Iowa where he ran a number of One Hour Martinizing plants. Then, in 1977, he and his wife Judy moved to Phoenix, AZ. Within days they purchased Pride Cleaners and have operated the plant ever since. This year Pride Cleaners will celebrate 40 years in the Phoenix market. **Gordon just celebrated his 80th birthday.**



Like many kids whose parents are in the drycleaning business, Gordon and Judy's children also became involved. Daughter Pam would eventually run their shirt laundry operation along with a drycleaning plant in Tempe. When the shirt laundry and plant in Tempe were closed, Pam left the business having worked for Pride for 35 years. Son Steve started on the counter at the original plant on Camelback when he was just 15. Today, Gordon has turned over the running of the plant to Steve. Gordon still comes in for a few hours a couple of days a week, but Steve runs the day to day operation.

When asked about what the future of the business looks like, both were optimistic. Although, they are also realistic by stating that they don't expect to return to the levels of business in the past. They are optimistic enough to have replaced all of their presses 2 years ago and their drycleaning machine 1 year ago.

Gordon and Judy were founding members of our association in 1983 and were active for many years. Gordon said that the associations, both WSDLA and DLI, are a wealth of information. The bulletins and publications provided by DLI helps them to stay abreast of what is going on in the industry. He added that he and Steve have learned a lot from the seminars presented by the local association. He is a strong believer in supporting trade associations.



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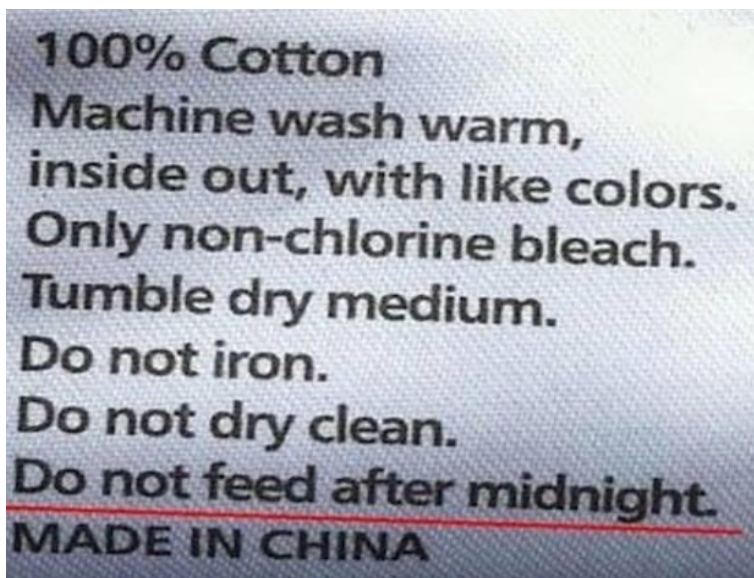
**Q: How do you clean a sweater with soft, fuzzy yarns in the fabric? What type of fiber is this?**

**A:** The sweater described is made with chenille yarns. Short fibers are inserted in the yarn to make the fuzzy texture, giving the fabric a soft and luxurious appearance. Unfortunately, the fuzzy fibers are often not secured in the yarn and can be removed with rubbing and abrasion. The yarns can also be easily snagged, especially when used in a loose-knit construction. The yarn may be made from synthetic or natural fibers. The chenille yarn is usually used in sweaters, but it is also popular in accessories and even some household items, such as furniture throws.

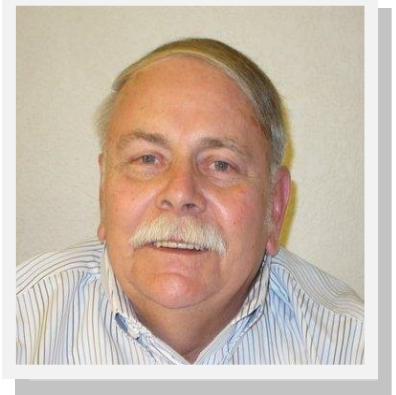
Minimize agitation. If drycleaning is recommended, place the item in a net bag and run for two to three minutes on a short cycle. Do not overload the machine. Use drying temperatures appropriate for the fiber content. If washing is recommended, hand wash to reduce the possibility of snagging. Lay flat to dry unless otherwise indicated on the care label.

Finishing is usually not needed if the item is removed from the machine immediately after cleaning. If necessary, steam lightly and avoid pressure on the fabric while it is moist with steam.

For more information on chenille fabrics, consult DLI Bulletin FF-479.



## Executive Directors Corner



If you are like me, you are wondering what 2017 will bring. The year will be full of challenges, that you can count on. We will soon be heading into the first 100 days of our new President's term of office. I am optimistic about the future leadership of the country. I believe it will be rough going, but change never comes without a cost. I'm just confident that most of that change will be in a positive direction.

Of course, the biggest challenges faced by every small business owner is the increase in the minimum wage and the paid sick time. We are working on getting someone from ADT to address these issues in a seminar we hope to have early in February. More information will be forthcoming as soon as we get the speaker nailed down.

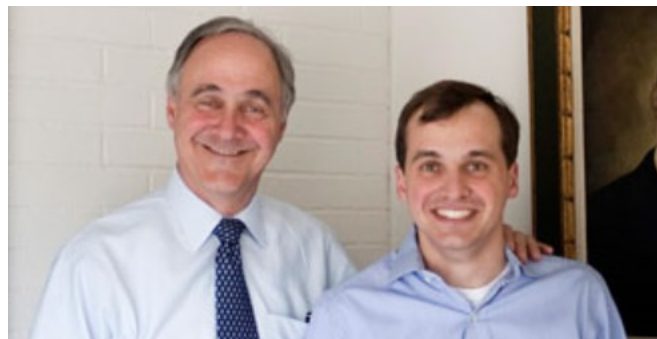
As Heath pointed out in his President's message, "The simplest advice I can give is know your business. Know your processes, and understand your productive numbers that will keep you profitable as wages and products continue to rise." Important words to heed.

Another thing to focus on is how you are going to add additional customers to your current base? Are you doing all that you can to make your current customers aware of the services you offer? Do you have a website? How about a Facebook page? Have you actively collected customer email addresses and are you using them to communicate with those customers? Are you a member of the association? If so, are you taking full advantage of the material they have to offer to help you build your business?

My dad had a saying, "You can't run your business with your head in a hamper." Take time to look at the big picture and act on the opportunities.

## ***Spotlight on Allied Trade Members — M&B Hangers***

The history of our company actually goes back four generations to the early 1940's when Milton M. Magnus, Sr., and Roy Brekle were working for Pepsi-Cola in Birmingham, Alabama. In 1943, they left to form their own company, using their initials, M&B, for the name. At first, they reconditioned used bottle caps to sell back to the soft-drink industry. During the company's infancy, a local drycleaner told them that, because of the war, steel hangers were in short supply. Roy built a hanger-making machine, and Milton bought the wire and sold the hangers.



To this day, M&B Hangers remains family-owned and family-operated. Milton M. Magnus, Jr. (who went by his middle name, Malcolm), joined the company after the war and stayed until he retired in the late 1980s. Milton M. Magnus, III, the current president, joined M&B Hangers in 1974. And sales representative Milton M. Magnus, IV, known as Mack, came aboard in 2007.

The wire garment hanger may be a simple thing, but both it and the industry as a whole have undergone significant changes. We've diversified our drycleaning supplies by adding cape hangers (wrapped in paper), strut hangers (with cardboard tubes), and paper goods, and we've added a line of industrial hangers as well.

In 1963, we opened our current headquarters in Leeds, Alabama, 15 miles east of Birmingham. In the 1990s, M&B was one of seven major U.S. producers of hangers. Today, we're the only full-line hanger manufacturer left in this country. In addition to the manufacturing plant in Leeds, the company operates a production facility in Piedras Negras, Mexico. Both plants use the same processes, coatings, and steel, and both adhere to the same strict environmental standards.

As a company, we try to act responsibly—with "Integrity To Hang Onto." Not only is it the right thing to do, but it's also good business. For example, when we worked with PPG Industries to design a painting system that was more environmentally friendly, we achieved greater durability and efficiency as well.

In the end, we work to create long-term relationships by making high-quality products and providing the best possible customer service.

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### ***Calendar of Events***

#### **January 13-15**

DLI & NCA Five Star Program  
Dominican Republic

#### **February Date to be Announced**

Seminar on New Minimum Wage and Paid Sick Time

#### **February 20—24**

Introduction to Drycleaning - DLI - Laurel, MD

#### **February 27— March 10**

Advanced Drycleaning— DLI— Laurel, MD

#### **March 17**

Certification Registration Deadline— DLI







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***“The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas.”***

**Linus Pauling**

## **Members and Leaders Gather at DLI to Share Insights**

Members from around the U.S. gathered at DLI's association office, laboratories, and School of Drycleaning Technology in Laurel, Maryland, to discuss future planning, October 5. The group met with DLI leadership, toured the facility, offered their insights on DLI's continued success, and shared stories about how the Institute can continue to offer the best association experience and industry information. This gathering was part of DLI's annual Joint State Association meeting of its 17 regional affiliate organizations.

**Questions Regarding SDS (Safety Data Sheets). . .try this link:**

<http://www.ilpi.com/msds/faq/partd.html#completeness>

**Link courtesy of DLI**



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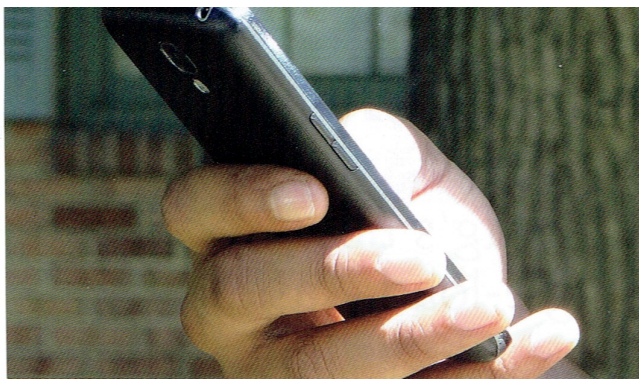
The Western States Drycleaners & Launderers Association newsletter is published quarterly.

WSDLA welcomes submission of typed articles and pictures. Larger articles submitted in WORD format will also be considered for publication.

Advertising rates are available on request. Call 877-342-1114 or email [ed@wsdla.org](mailto:ed@wsdla.org) for rates.

Our Allied Trade members support allows us to provide this newsletter to all drycleaners and launderers in Arizona and Nevada regardless of their membership status.





by Becca Anderson

# Helloooooo?

## THE EPIDEMIC OF NON-RESPONSIVITIS

We spend more time than ever trying to communicate, but seemingly less time actually connecting. It's easy, after all, to shoot off an email, a tweet, a Facebook post, or leave a voicemail message (how archaic!) or a text. But if you were to survey people across the country, you'd find there's a perception that a black hole has developed somewhere over the planet that is sucking up all those communications, since no one ever gets back to them.

Is your business suffering from non-responsivitis? If it is, it's easily fixed and your customers will be thrilled and impressed – and more likely to stick around. These are the symptoms of the disease:

- Unreturned phone calls
- Texts that don't generate any action
- Voicemail boxes that are full... all the time
- Emails that never get read

There are simple ways to make sure your company is inoculated against non-responsivitis, but like any good health initiative, it takes some work to make good habits stick.

### SCENARIO 1

I recently had reason to call a company and ask for a specific yes-or-no answer. I called repeatedly over a period of three weeks. Each time, I was shunted into the automated voicemail system that either said everybody was too busy to talk to me (and put me in a general mailbox), asked me to input a name I didn't have for a specific person, or dumped me into the marketing person's box.

None of my calls were returned. When I finally broke through the automated system and got an actual person, I was told the marketing person was on maternity leave, and everyone else was away at a meeting. While this explained the problem, it certainly didn't solve it.

### HOW ARE YOU DOING?

Who answers the phone for your company? Are they trained to solve problems, or just take messages? And if they take messages, are they trained to immediately give them to someone with the power to get something done?

If you use voicemail, who is overseeing the regular (i.e., several times a day) emptying of that box and relaying the requests as needed? And if that designated person is ill, on leave or quits, who have you designated to automatically step up and take on that role? If you can't answer those questions satisfactorily, there's your first assignment.

And about those voicemail boxes, are your employees required to regularly respond to everything in them? If someone is on leave, is it your policy that they must record a message to that effect and direct calls to someone else until they return?

Your customers can't see through the phone and know who is on leave, who has left the company, or who is out of town. They expect an answer. And they expect it faster today than ever before. Personally, I hate it when I get an automated message that says my call will be returned 'within 24 hours'. If I had that kind of time to wait, I never would have called. Your customers feel the same. What is your policy for returning calls quickly?

### SCENARIO 2

Needing to ask about an order, I consulted a company's website looking for a quick way to get the information. I examined the Home Page carefully and could not find a phone number. Anywhere. I clicked on the Contact tab (which was small and also hard to find) only to be routed to an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) page, as if they couldn't believe they hadn't already answered every question I could come up with. When I clicked on the 'I still need to contact' link, I was sent to a form that would be emailed in, and a statement that they might take two to three business days to reply. I just wanted to know where my order was!

Companies are actively working to make it harder for customers to contact them directly. Many have removed phone numbers from their websites, or buried them so completely that it takes real detective work to find them. While there may be a 'contact' button, it may not really facilitate contact at all, but stiff-arms the customer to keep them at a distance so the company isn't interrupted by their calls or emails. It's no wonder that customers no longer complain – they can't find a way to do it. They just go to someone else who is more responsive.

### HOW ARE YOU DOING?

For the sake of argument, we're going to assume you have a website. If you don't, you need to understand that you are being left in the dust. Some communities no longer even issue phone books. Without an internet presence,

people can't find you, and they won't waste time looking.

So, since you have a website, let's look at it from the customer's point of view. Go to your Home Page, or even have someone not connected with your company do it and give you comments about what they see.

Is the page clear and easy to understand? Is the address, phone number and other important information right there, or a Contact button that contains that information? Do you force them to use a form, or can they just email you?

Now, what about responsiveness? Who in your company is designated to receive and respond to the emails that come in? What is the turnaround time? If that person is out for the day, or longer, who takes over the chore and handles it properly? When is the last time you personally checked the email box? Do you even know how to get into it?

When email first came along, people were thrilled to be able to send mail electronically, but they treated it like regular mail in the beginning. They didn't expect instant response. However, in today's constantly texting world, people have been trained to think that as soon as they hit the Send button a reply should be on its way. How are you changing your processes in the office to meet that expectation?

### IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

Your communications system is not for your convenience. Let me say that again: it is not about you. The reason you have communication avenues is to make it possible for your customers – those people who keep you in business and pay your salary – to get through quickly and get responses immediately. Yes, it will break up your work flow to deal with them. But the work flow is for the customers. They are not interruptions; they are your primary concern. Evaluate your current communications plans and adjust them any way that can benefit the customers without preventing you from serving them at the same time. Non-responsivitis is rampant. Stand out to your customers as a company that doesn't have it. ■



## Free Webpage Offers Invaluable Benefit to DLI Members



Somewhere a customer is searching for a drycleaner in her city. The yellow pages have been recycled long ago, the newspaper subscriptions have been cancelled. She's searching Google on her smartphone for the information she wants. If you're not on the web, she won't find you, but she'll probably find another cleaner nearby.

Websites can be expensive, confusing, and time-consuming to create. Many drycleaners lack an online presence even though more than two thirds of all Americans are now using the World Wide Web on a regular basis. The Yellow Pages are rapidly fading into antiquity along with rotary dial phones and even landlines. In response to this continuing trend, the Drycleaning & Laundry Institute is offering free website creation and hosting to all members. This service gives all members a web presence customers can find easily when they search for drycleaners in their city. The service offers a free domain, page creation, and implementation, all of which can rack up great expenses quickly.

"It's very important for all small businesses to be on the web in this day and age," said DLI CEO Mary Scalco. "This program is an ambitious attempt to help those companies who haven't been able to make themselves available to the general public online. All members are entitled to a site of their own through this program and we are sure it will drive traffic to these stores. Best of all, we're able to offer this service for free to members. We want members to have every edge available and this program allows us to promote their services to the general public in an entirely new way."

To provide the service, DLI will create websites for participating DLI member drycleaners free of charge. The service grants cleaners a free domain and free hosting for the duration of membership in DLI. A lapse in membership could result in the loss of the site from DLI's server.

DLI's Membership Department will provide the information necessary to get started with the creation of member sites. Members are invited to contact the Institute at 800-638-2627 to discuss the creation of their web presence. Members choose the design, provide some basic information and in a very short time will have a fully-functioning website.

To sign up or for more information on DLI membership, call DLI at 800-638-2627.

DLI Blog Post By Harry Kimmel



### Acid Free Tissue Paper

**Q:** What is the difference between acid-free and acid-free buffered tissue paper used in packaging wedding gowns?

**A:** Acid-free is a general term for a tissue paper that is free of acid or has a pH of approximately 7. Textile conservators recommend that this be used for silk and wool fabrics or whenever the fiber content is mixed or unknown.

Acid-free buffered tissue paper has an alkaline buffer such as calcium carbonate that helps neutralize any acids and retards the evolution of acid in the future. Conservators recommend this type of tissue paper for storing cellulose fabrics such as cotton, linen, and, ramie to protect them from deteriorating.

Unbuffered tissue should be used when storing silk or wool because protein fibers are known to be sensitive to alkalis.

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## WSDLA Mission Statement

Western States Drycleaners & Launderers Association, an affiliate of the Drycleaning & Laundry Institute, is the trade association of professional drycleaners and launderers in Arizona and Nevada.

The not-for-profit organization provides value through education, research, legislative representation and industry specific informational programs, products and services.

Western States Drycleaners & Launderers Association is dedicated to the highest standards of business ethics and professionalism, environmental responsibility, textile serviceability and a positive public image.

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## Color Loss on Khaki Pants

**Q:** My spotter is having a terrible time with color loss on the natural and khaki color fabrics. She uses oily type paint remover and flushes it out before drycleaning, but a faint color loss appears. If I can't figure this problem out soon, I will have to consider refusing these items for stain removal.

**A:** The khaki colored cottons are presenting some problems during stain removal procedures. Examination in the International Textile Analysis Laboratory usually reveals this type of color loss is due to flushing the oily type paint remover with steam prior to drycleaning. There are risks associated with mixing dryside agents (oily type paint remover, volatile dry solvent, amyl acetate) with wetside agents (steam, neutral synthetic detergents, protein or tannin formulas, etc.). Chafing of the surface fibers can occur due to rubbing the fabric while it is wet or using the steam-air gun too close to the fabric, resulting in a light area. Also, remember that steam can accelerate the action of oily type paint removers causing color loss. Another risk that can result in a color loss is drycleaning a fabric that retains moisture from a stain removal procedure.

**Suggested Reading**—DLI Silver, Gold, and Premier members may access more information on this topic in the following bulletin, and many more, available in DLI's Encyclopedia of Drycleaning Online: Wetcleaning No. 4: Khaki Pants (also available in Spanish)

Posted By Harry Kimmel DLI Blog

### When it is Time to Sell



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