



THE Reclaimer

SEFA Set Sail for its Spring Board & Annual Membership Meeting

MARCH/APRIL, 2017
VOLUME 16, NO. 2



SEFA'S BOARD AND ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING CRUISE WAS HELD ON APRIL 2, 2017 ONBOARD THE BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS. OVERALL, THE MEETING WAS A GREAT SUCCESS.

The Cruise was a 4-night, five day cruise from Tampa, Florida and had only one port of call, Cozumel Mexico. All those who could attend thought the meeting was very productive and the venue was perfect. The itinerary left a great deal of time to interact with one another, learn about the common problems and challenges facing members.

“This was really a unique setting,” observed Peter Blake, SEFA Executive Director, “and I think everyone that took advantage of the opportunity really got a lot out of it. The Board meeting itself was much like a typical meeting, but the activities surrounding the meeting led to a much greater interaction. Members were able to spend a great deal more time together over the course of the cruise and it gave people a greater chance to really get to know one another -- and in most cases their wives and families. People just don’t typically get to really spend that much time together.”

During the Board Meeting, the Board reviewed committee reports from all its standing committees including: Executive & Finance, Membership & Communications, Education, Convention & Exhibit, Allied Trades, Government Relations, Allied Trade, and of course the Nominating Committee.

The focus of the meeting centered around looking towards SEFA’s future, and developing programs and services to help members achieve success.

“The Board Meeting was very productive,” offered Russ Bullard, SEFA chairman of the Board, “and we have some great things in motion for the future. Each of the Committees are working hard on developing programs that can play a vital role in the success of our members. It is great to see that the membership is responding to these efforts. Our

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...

Thank You!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT HAS BEEN TWO YEARS ALREADY! WHEN I TOOK OVER FROM TIM MORROW, HE SAID TIME WOULD GO QUICKLY, BUT I REALLY DIDN'T BELIEVE HIM UNTIL IT HAS HIT ME -- THIS IS MY LAST ARTICLE AS PRESIDENT.



Russ Bullard

First and foremost. I want to say thank you. It has truly been an honor to work with you all. We have done some great things together and I am really proud of SEFA, what we have accomplished, and what we have planned for the future.

Hats off to Peter Blake, our Executive Director for making SEFA run so smoothly. Without Peter's help and guidance, the continual growth of SEFA would be much more difficult.

Thank you to the membership and the Board of Directors for your support and Guidance. SEFA has always boasted a very strong tradition of committed volunteer leadership, and this Board reflects that tradition.

I want to thank DLI for all the support they have given to SEFA through the years, and for embracing the partnership. DLI is constantly looking to improve programs services for our members and I am amazed by all the advances they have made in the last two years alone. I also want to thank the DLI Leadership for continuing to give its partners a voice in shaping the future. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in a summit of volunteer leaders from all the partnering associations to brainstorm ways we can work together more, and ways we can work collectively to make our industry stronger.

I want to thank DLI for keeping the communications open for DLI and its partners. Conference calls on a bi-monthly basis. Meeting like the JSA Summit and leadership meeting at Clean. These are all critical steps in keeping us all moving forward together.

I also want to express my gratitude for everyone helping to make SEFA strong. Membership numbers are up, and over the past two years we have increased membership by over 7% when most associations are shrinking. We had held some great Education Programs, had a great SDLS in Jacksonville, and have provided over \$8,000 in Scholarships.

I want to welcome Don Holecek as the new SEFA President. I know he will do a great job, and I look forward to seeing what his energy is going to do for SEFA and its members. I know he has some great ideas, and he is committed to SEFA and the industry. I know the association is in great hands.

Russ Bullard

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SEFA Sets Sail for Annual Meeting

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membership has stabilized and we have been consistently growing. Our membership hit a new high in February of this year. The membership growth is a strong testament to our hard work.”

SDLS COMMITTEE

The Southern Drycleaners and Launderers Show (SDLS) is moving to Birmingham, AL in 2018. The Board has retained the same show management we have used the past two shows, and plans are already underway to make the move a great success.

“This is a great opportunity,” offered Bullard. “After 8 years of being in Florida, we felt it was important to bring this event to another part of SEFA and afford the opportunity for new people to attend. Birmingham is a great venue and a great city. We recently had a Board meeting there and we were all impressed with the area. We are all confident it will be a great show.”

EDUCATION

The Education Committee has laid the foundation for some great programs. The Committee is looking to bring Industry Expert Don Desrosiers to the area to do two “Intensive Management Bootcamps” in the area: one in Florida and one in Georgia.

The Committee is also rescheduling a Spotting and Professional Finishing Workshops in the West Palm Beach, FL area. SEFA will also bring Spotting programs to South Carolina and Georgia in the coming months.

NOT ALL WORK

As you can see from the pictures to the right, there was plenty of time for relaxing and enjoying the down time with great friends. Whether it was drawing the SEFA brand in the sand -- or having cocktails together, SEFA members were enjoying all the Cruise had to offer.

“I really think this was a terrific trip,” observed incoming SEFA President, Don Holecek, “and I think it was a great first effort for an event like this. I got the opportunity to get to know my fellow Board Members on a more personal level, and I was able to really build some strong relationships. I know I gained a lot personally -- and professionally from the investment of time. The benefit far outweighed the cost, and I really hope we can do something like this again in the future.

The next board meeting is set for the weekend of August 19, 2017 in Chattanooga, TN.



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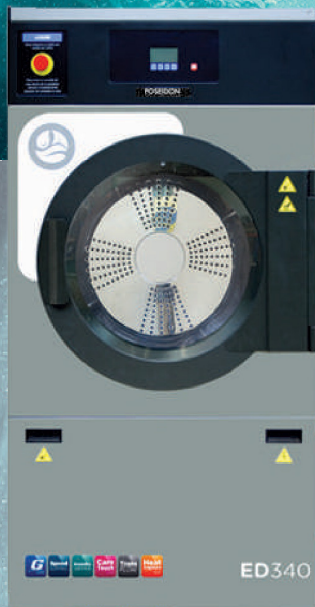
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SEFA Announces New Officer and Directors



SEFA HELD ITS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ON APRIL 2, 2017 ABOARD THE BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS.

Russ Bullard (pictured above handing the gavel over) was named Chairman of the Board as Don Holecek of Crown Cleaners in Knoxville, TN was voted in as the first SEFA President from the Volunteer State.

“This is a great honor,” stated Holecek, “and I have some big shoes to fill. Under Russ’ leadership SEFA has continually grown, and gotten stronger. I hope I can capitalize on his momentum and keep us building on his strong foundation.”

Also elected to the Board for the first time was John Neu of Enviroforensics. John has attended the past two Board of Directors Meetings and has shown a keen desire to help SEFA and its Members. Enviroforensics has been a strong SEFA supporter -- and a strong supporter of the industry.

“It is really great to see new people volunteering to help us,” added Holecek, “and I look forward to working with John and the entire Board.”

The nominating report also showed vacancies in Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Tennessee.

“As the membership grows,” concluded Holecek, “there are greater opportunities for people to get involved. We recently changed our by-laws to allow for more participation and we are now looking for people who are willing to help us and the industry.”

A full list of the Board of Directors can be found on page 2 of The Reclaimer. Anyone interested in learning more about the SEFA Board of Directors and wanting to get involved is invited to contact SEFA at 877-707-7332 or peter@sefa.org.

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The Clean Show is an Opportunity- Don't Miss Out

Written by Peter Blake, SEFA Executive Director



HAVE YOU MADE YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND THE CLEAN SHOW YET? IF NOT... STOP RIGHT NOW AND START MAKING THEM IMMEDIATELY. SIMPLY PUT, THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO LET PASS BY.

Too frequently when I talk to people about the Clean Show their first thoughts are "I am not looking at buying any new equipment", or "I am not in the market for any new services". This drives me crazy because they just don't understand the tremendous opportunity they have to invest in their business -- and I am not just talking about equipment, I am talking about the entire experience.

This is THE chance to see all the industry has to offer. This is your chance to expand your mind and learn what is out there. What potential new services you can offer, or use to enhance your business.

DLI and all the other partnering associations have incredible learn-

ing sessions. You and your key managers have the opportunity to learn from the best. Experience what other industry professionals throughout the country, even the world, are in Vegas to share.

Don't make the mistake of thinking the only thing of value is the show floor. Every contact and every gathering is a chance for you to learn and grow. The educational sessions, the booths on the floor, the cocktail receptions, and fellowship with your peers in the industry -- they all provide opportunities for you to learn. Soak it in, immerse yourself in all possibilities.

If you can, bring your key staff members. They will often see things and learn things that you might not pick up on. They could provide you valuable insight into the industry by pointing out things you may not have thought of. Don't overlook the benefit your managers will gain from being involved. Don't underestimate the job satisfaction employees feel when you invest in their future and in their education.

This opportunity only comes around every two years, don't waste it. Make your plans to attend, and plan on making the most of the investment. Come by the DLI Booth and I would be glad to help you make the most of your investment.

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SEFA Mourns Loss of Industry Leader



SEFA MEMBERS ARE MOURNING THE LOSS OF A TRUE INDUSTRY LEADER AND FRIEND TO ALL, ROBBIE LAMONT FREEMAN OF FABRICLEAN SUPPLY.

After a brief illness, Robbie passed away Sunday, March 5, 2017 surrounded by his family. Robbie was born November 24, 1947, in Sandersville, Georgia. As the son of a Methodist minister, he lived in various towns throughout

South Georgia. After graduating from Georgia Southern College, Robbie served in the United States Army before moving to Atlanta, Georgia.

“This is a huge loss for the industry,” observed Peter Blake, SEFA Executive Director. “I had the great fortune of spending a day with Robbie visiting his customers in the Orlando Area and then again at the SEFA workshop in Tampa earlier this year. I can’t express

enough the positive attitude he always had, the love for his customers, and the love for the industry. He was a rare person, and his loss will be felt by many. I feel very blessed to have gotten to know him, and I am sure his SEFA Family feels the same way.”

Robbie began working for Phenix Supply Company in 1972, and served as President until 2013. During his 45 years in the dry cleaning industry, Robbie served on the TCATA Board of Directors for 12 years and as the TCATA President from 1996-1998. In 2005, he was honored as the recipient of the J Morry Friedlander Award for Outstanding Dedication and Service to TCATA.

Robbie lived his life by simple beliefs: Love your family, treat people with respect and work hard for anything you want to achieve. These beliefs were evident as he related to his beloved family, friends, co-workers, customers and anyone who came in contact with him. He was devoted to his parents and would travel a long distance to visit, and in recent years, to help care for them.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that memorial contributions be made to the American Heart Association, P.O Box 21475 St. Petersburg, FL 33742.



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A Change in Tone

Written By Raleigh F. "Sandy" Seay, Jr., PHD, Chairman of The Seay Management Consulting Firm



IN A WORLD IN WHICH EMPLOYERS ARE CONSTANTLY BOMBARDED WITH THE RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES, WE SELDOM TAKE A MOMENT TO THINK ABOUT THE FACT THAT MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS HAVE RIGHTS, TOO.

Sure, the playing field is tilted away from employers and

when it comes to making employee decisions, the burden of proof is on the employer.

TALES FROM O'SEAY'S FABLES . . .

Jonathan McSupervisor had put up with Darrell's lateness for as long as he could stand it. Darrell wasn't that bad of an employee, but he was 5-8 minutes late every day. Jonathan had talked with Darrell on numerous occasions but he had not documented any of this in Darrell's employee file and had not given Darrell a written warning. "Can I fire this guy," Jonathan asked plaintively? "Better not," said the consultant, "at least not right now. When it comes to employee matters, it's not so much what you do as the way you do it." "Good grief," said Jonathan, "don't employers have any rights at all?"

Rest assured, employers have plenty of rights in managing and directing their employee work force.

MANAGEMENT HAS THE RIGHT TO

1. Hire the candidates you feel are the most qualified for the job. Plato told us that the person who should do the job is the person most qualified to do it. Employers do not have to hire under-qualified or non-qualified candidates. It's good to remember that some of the least qualified candidates can sometimes be the most assertive and demanding. When you are interviewing a candidate for employment, you are seeing the candidate at his or her best, and if you have a reservation at this point, it will be worse after you hire the person. Someone once said that the closest a person ever comes to perfection is when he completes an employment application.
2. Establish policy and interpret policy and to change policy whenever, in the opinion of management, this is necessary. This is called "management prerogative." Management has the right to establish wages, benefits and working conditions. When it comes to interpreting policy, it's management's call. Your employment policies should be included in your em-

ployee handbook, written in a conversational manner, that makes your handbook your friend.

3. Expect employees to perform at a high level of excellence and to counsel and discipline employees when they do not. Sam Walton once wrote that most employees will perform up to expectation, and you can raise performance simply by raising expectations. Employers have the right to expect the best from their employees.
4. Assign duties and responsibilities to employees, even if they are "not in my job description" and even if the employee does not like it. Every job description should include these words – "This job description may not be all inclusive and employees are expected to perform all other duties as assigned and/or directed by management. Job descriptions and duties may be modified when deemed appropriate by management." The only time an employee may refuse to do a job is when there is a safety or health risk involved.
5. Require employees to work whatever hours the company requires, including overtime hours. This is another example of "management prerogative." Management has the right to establish working schedules and employees are required to work those schedules, even if it's overtime and even if it's more hours than normal. There are some minor exceptions in the health care industry in some states.
6. Dismiss employees who are poor performers or who violate company policy. Most employers I know are doing the best they can to create a good place to work for employers. Most employers I know are good hearted and want the best for their employees. I have often said that you can get in just as much trouble being too good to employees as you can the other way. Being "too good" can mean overlooking lateness and absenteeism for employees who are otherwise doing a good job, giving one employee a raise because "she needs it," or keeping a poor employee because he or she has been with you a long time. If you're going to dismiss an employee, you usually need 3 written warnings first.

A CHANGE IN TONE AT THE DOL

Although the Trump Administration has been in office for just a few weeks, the change in tone at the Department of Labor is extraordinary. The Department of Labor website is www.dol.gov. We visit the site frequently to check on new or changed regulations and we're also on their email alert mailing list. The previous Department of Labor presented employers, on the web site and in other places, in a very negative light, in that employers were constantly taking advantage of employees and the Department of Labor was constantly uncovering employer wrong doing and forcing the recalcitrant employer to pay back wages and fines.

continued on page 12

Deadline for Clean 2017 Host Hotels Drawing Near



THE CLEAN SHOW WILL BE HERE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, AND YOU NEED TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS ASAP TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF

THE SPECIAL INDUSTRY DISCOUNTS.

DLI members save \$30 on the price of registration to the Clean Show and get a special rate at the Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas, a premier destination hotel. Members who register for the show before May 31 pay only \$119 for Clean Show admission and receive a special rate on the hotel through the Clean Housing Bureau as long as rooms are available at the time. Some of the discounted hotels are already full, and some of the rates are set to expire on May 1. The Convention & Exhibit runs June 5-8 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

A few things the Clean Show wants you to know:

- Per-night room rates offered through Connections Housing are single or double occupancy rate. A rate will be slightly

higher for three or more people in one room. Suite rates are available by contacting the housing provider.

- Hotel rates do not include local taxes and resort fees.
- Deposit via credit card of one room night plus applicable taxes is needed to guarantee a room. Deposits are refundable unless you fail to cancel your reservation within 72 hours of your arrival date, or fail to check in on your scheduled arrival date.
- If you are unable to provide a credit card, you can secure a room by mailing in a check; contact Connections Housing for detailed instructions.
- Complimentary shuttle buses to and from the Las Vegas Convention Center will be provided except for those hotels next door to the facility. This service is for participants staying at one of the official hotels.

The Clean Show warns of false and fraudulent housing claims surrounding the event; there are fraudulent companies and organizations that will try to present themselves as official partners of Clean and offer a potential room that might not be guaranteed or available staff are staying in order to make the most of your Clean Show experience.”

Learn more about The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas and the Clean Show online: www.dlionline.org/clean-show.

SEAY MANAGEMENT REPORT...

continued from page 11

The new Department of Labor website is completely different with a remarkable change in tone. Now, the web site seems to present employees, employers and the Department of Labor as cooperating partners, helping to make the workplace better. This is a refreshing and welcome change of tone. Most employers I know are not trying to take advantage of employees. To the contrary, most employers I know are doing their best to comply with regulations and to treat employees equally and fairly and with respect and dignity. My sense is that this new tone from the Department of Labor will result in greater satisfaction and cooperation on the part of both employees and employers, and will definitely ease the tension between employers and the Department of Labor.

For example, the previous Department of Labor had issued a rule that would more than double the required minimum salary level for exempt employees, but a Texas judge came along at the midnight hour and issued a preliminary injunction, effectively blocking the regulation. The previous DOL website had a good deal of information, articles and essays about this increase, mostly making the point that “employees had been denied overtime” and this new

rule would get it for them. That’s not true, of course, but that’s how the DOL presented its case.

On the new DOL website, the question of an exempt salary level is nowhere to be found. Whether the minimum salary level for exempt employees ought to be raised is a question worthy of debate, but presenting the employers as conniving manipulators seems to me to be a poor messaging practice. The new website has lots of helpful information, presented in a positive and encouraging way. I particularly like the sections that include “Popular Topics” and the “Top 20 Most Requested Questions.”

So, in our view, a previously provocative and antagonistic website has been changed into a cooperative and helpful one and in response I would say, “Well done, DOL.”

So, if you have a question about management rights, the Department of Labor, or any other Human Resources Management issue, please call or email your Seay Management Consultant. We are always very glad to talk with you.

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Milliken Celebrates 150 Years of Innovation

Written By Daniel Gross of the Spartanburg Herald Journal, and Submitted by Buster Bell, SEFA Board Member



INNOVATION AT MILLIKEN & CO. BEGAN WITH A LAUNDRY BASKET. THE PATENT NUMBER 1,642,643 FROM 1927 IS SEEN ON TILE ONE OF HUNDREDS OF WHITE TILES THAT LINE A BRIGHT BLUE HALLWAY KNOWN AS THE HALL OF INNOVATIONS.

It's one of many highlights within the company's corporate office on 600 acres of a former peach orchard between Highway 9 and North Pine Street that define the company's vision, mission and purpose now 150 years in the making.

"Operational Excellence secures the present. Innovation excellence secures the future," reads a quote from Roger Milliken, who would have turned 100 this year, on a pillar within the Hall of Innovations.

Perfecting the present while committing to the future is a common theme throughout the campus, which boasts an arboretum of mature trees and a fountain that serves as an energy-efficient cooling system for the buildings.

The company has formed an ever-expanding portfolio of solutions found in everyday life, innovating while still holding onto its textile roots, both in Spartanburg and beyond.

Milliken & Co. boasts a rich history of patents, acquisitions, mergers and product development. Textiles, carpets and colorants have been central areas of innovation. But the products go beyond the basics. More than 5,000 Milliken & Co. patents exist worldwide today.

Milliken & Co. spokeswoman Barbara Haaksma explained the applications of products such as the Concrete Cloth, state-of-the-art fire-resistant fabrics and wound dressings with Active Fluid Management technology.

Consumers would be surprised to know that Milliken & Co. is behind some of the many common items used in everyday life. Airbag fabric to help save lives, washable colorants, floor coverings like carpet for the workplace designed using patented printing technology are some of the few areas of development and innovation.

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

No matter the endeavor, the company has stood on innovations that "Do Good" for others to add value through their lives, Haaksma said. A statement on a wall inside the Hall of Innovations that's regarded as the company's touchstone document describes the com-

mitment to "Do Good" through "purposeful play."

"Our approach to innovation is shaped by a compelling sense of purpose and animated by a spirit of creative play," the charge reads. "The spirit of play invigorates the curiosity to discover, the liveliness to imagine, and the will to take initiative."

The quality practices have earned the company recognition as one of the world's most ethical companies by the Ethisphere Institute for nine consecutive years, an honor held with several other companies including Microsoft, Google, eBay and Starbucks, something Haaksma said Milliken holds in the highest regard.

About 1,000 employees fill the buildings of Milliken's headquarters in Spartanburg. About 7,000 people are employed by Milliken & Co. at 42 facilities worldwide, Haaksma said.

"While we take pride in demonstrating excellence in everything we do, we find even deeper gratification in establishing expectations of quality never before achieved," Joe Salley, president and CEO of Milliken & Co., stated in a written response to Herald-Journal questions. "We are proud of our company's first 150 years and we can't wait for the innovations that will come in the next 150."

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