



THE Reclaimer

SEFA Board Report: Uncle SEFA Wants You



THE SEFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS MEETING ON JULY 29 AT THE MARRIOTT MARQUIS JUST PRIOR TO THE CLEAN SHOW. THE MEETING IS FROM 11:00 AM TO 2:00 PM. THE MEETING WILL FOCUS ON PLANNING FUTURE PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.

“As we all know,” commented Peter Blake, SEFA Executive Director, Peter Blake, “all businesses have had to change the way they operate, where their focus is, and how to adapt to the ever changing business landscape -- and Associations like SEFA are no different.”

“We are looking ahead, and adapting to what opportunities and challenges we see for our members,” continued Blake, “and now is a great time to be a part of that discussion. The time commitment is not onerous and can be workable for most business owners. The Association meets only 3-4 times per year with at least 3 of those being face to face meetings, with the other potentially done via Zoom or some other platform. Quite frankly, we need your guidance and expertise to help shape the Association’s direction and to ensure programs and services are reflective of your, the member’s, needs.”

HOW WILL YOU BENEFIT

One of the greatest benefits of serving on volunteer board like SEFA’s, is the opportunity to get to know and work with your peer’s from around the region. It is through this community you will have a unique opportunity to learn valuable business tips, tricks, and ideas to help you grow your business. You will meet life long friends that are available to help you solve problems, tackle challenges, and embrace opportunities. Ask any Board member and they will tell you the benefits they receive far outweigh their investment.

WHAT LIES AHEAD

SEFA is looking ahead on developing new programs including some exciting in-plant scholarship opportunities, a potential table-top showcase & conference, and more individual outreach to our members. Building and fostering a strong community for our members remains a top goal. The Board of Directors play a critical role in developing and overseeing these efforts. Now is the time to get involved.

Contact Peter Blake at the SEFA Office to join and get involved:
peter@sefa.org/617-791-0128

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE...

Make the Most of Clean '22

I HOPE YOU HAVE MADE YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND CLEAN. I WANTED TO PROVIDE SOME INSIGHT INTO ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS AND PUTTING SOME SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL YOU HAVE SEEN AND EXPERIENCED IN ATLANTA.

If you are like me, you go to these events and you get caught up in the excitement and the positive feelings. I admit it, I get re-energized and filled with a desire to improve everything. I get that feeling I am going to come back to the home office and light the world on fire with all these great ideas. All the new programs and services I have seen. I am ready to strive forward.



*Peter Blake,
SEFA Executive Director*

Then I get back, I am hit with the same pressures issues and challenges I left. I get dragged back into the same routines and bad habits. I have all great intentions of implementing new programs and policies, but I never seem to make that jump. You know what they say, "The Road to Hell is Paved with Good Intentions"

We all do the same thing. We lose focus and lose the energy and have a trouble recapturing the momentum we started to feel. Here are some ways to keep on track, and to keep your focus.

EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS:

It is a great idea to take copious notes. Review them when you get back to the hotel. Decide what is important to you. I think for the most part we all do that. Now take it one step further, for each educational session you attend. Decide on 3 take-a-ways. Three key concepts that resonated with you and you want to take back and implement. Take those three concepts, just the headlines -- not the details, and post them on a separate list combining key concepts from each program you attend. Then when you have the list, think about a key staff person in those areas that would implement those ideas and make their name down next to it. That will remind you to discuss the program with them. Next rank the ideas on a scale so you know which are the most important, best value, and will have the greatest return.

When you get back to the plant, make it a priority to meet with those staff people you have highlighted in those areas to review the broad ideas and to get them thinking of possible implementation strategies. That way you will have a greater likelihood of staying on top of the ideas that are most important.

Don't get overwhelmed with too many great ideas and projects. Prioritize them. Look at what you feel will have the most impact. If you come back from Clean with a notebook of ideas, it can be daunting to go through and you can get paralyzed by over commitment and over analysis.

VISITING EXHIBIT BOOTHS:

When you are on the show floor, you are going to see new products, services, equipment, automation devices, and more. You will see the best the industry has to offer. Everyone has a cell phone now, so use it. Take pictures with a purpose. When you see a piece of equipment that you like, an innovative service, or even some new supplies that catch your eye: document it. Take a picture of something that will remind you WHY it caught your interest. Your pictures should trigger a recollection of what

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In the same amount of time that it takes you to read this, you could have started a pickup and delivery service for your business

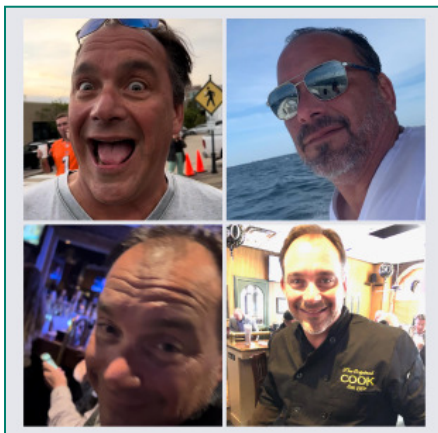
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IN MEMORIAM...

William Arthur Cook III, Past SEFA Board Member



IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT WE ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF LONGTIME SEFA MEMBER AND FORMER SEFA DIRECTOR, BILL COOK OF BIRMINGHAM, AL. BILL PASSED AWAY UNEXPECTEDLY IN A BOATING ACCIDENT ON JULY 9, 2022.

Bill was born on March 31, 1971 in Birmingham, Alabama to William A. Cook Jr. and Maria Soledad Ortiz. He graduated from Vestavia Hills High School in 1989 and attended the University of Alabama. Bill was the President of Medical Linen Service in Birmingham.

Bill's favorite hobbies included fishing in the gulf, Alabama football, and enjoying down time with friends at his favorite estab-

lishment, Oak Hill Bar & Grill in Homewood. Bill loved bringing people together through his love of cooking and entertaining. Most of all, he treasured his time traveling with his beloved daughter, Emerson.

Bill is survived by his daughter Emerson Cook (15), father William A. Cook Jr, mother Maria Soledad Ortiz, stepsister Cathy Donze, stepbrother Jay Stephens, and the mother of his daughter, Chrissi Cook. Bill is also survived by numerous other family members and close friends.

SEFA sends its deepest condolences to his family and friends. Many of the Board members who served with Bill remained life long friends. He will always be remembered for his zest for life and his full enjoyment of all those he was with.

To further honor Bill, and to learn a little more about his life a special Facebook Page has been set up to share your memories. Visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/foreverbillcook>

Feel free to share your memories, thoughts, and pictures with the people in his life.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Greater Birmingham Humane Society gbhs.org.



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Stay in Control, Connected and Informed digitally

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Adapting your Business

Continued from page 3

found special. Take a video of someone demonstrating it. Have a record you can refer to.

I bet many of you are just like me and can't remember names or people. Take a picture not only of the service or equipment, but snap a picture of the salesperson you spoke with so you can go back and continue the conversation.

If you find something you are intent on investing in, after you take the picture text it to a key manager telling them something like, "just saw a great piece of equipment to help increase efficiency. Ask me about it when I get back". That way they will also begin to get invested in the idea and will help you start implementation.

SOCIAL EVENTS:

There is so much value to be had throughout the entire Clean Show Experience including all the off-floor activity. The cocktail parties, the company dinners, etc. Make sure you go to DLI/TCATA reception on Saturday night where you can meet your peers from around the country. I have a terrible memory at times, so don't be afraid to take a few pictures of people you meet and make sure you have their name badge in the picture. That way when you are back at work a couple weeks later and you have a question for that person, you can look back and see who it was and how to contact them.

The real key to taking advantage of the opportunities you will find at Clean or any event like this is to be organized. You will return to your own operation and be ready to make all the changes you have envisioned. You will be ready to invest in your company, but all too often we lose that momentum and weeks go by before we start to implement the programs. All too often we never take the steps necessary because we either have forgotten or don't have the same drive we initially felt.

Don't let that happen to you. Document the best ideas. Work to get buy-in from your key staff. Make sure you have proper documentation and information to get the help you need to succeed. Conferences like this can be a great opportunity, but only if you act.

Peter Blake

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Insurance 101: How to Evaluate Coverage

By: Jackie Smith, Insurance Expert formerly of Henderson Insurance, Columnist for Cleaner & Launderer



DON'T SKIP THIS ARTICLE BECAUSE YOU THINK IT WILL BE BORING OR YOU ARE INSURANCE SAVVY AND KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW. I HAVE WORKED IN THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY (AS WELL AS OWNING MY OWN DRY CLEANING PLANT) FOR TOO MANY YEARS TO COUNT.

Insurance policies are filled with too many words for the average person to understand and if you ever tried to read it, you would definitely fall asleep. I am going to try to be brief and hit the highlights of what you need to know. Some will be things you have never thought about. If you have additional questions, you need to call your Insurance Agent. There are many Insurance Agents around but the best business decision you can make is choosing an agent who knows your business. You might feel an allegiance to your brother, sister or cousin who is an Insurance agent but do they REALLY know your business and what you need? It may not seem important but in the event of a claim, this could be devastating. You can afford to pay a customer for a \$100 blouse but you need the best protection in the event of a CATASTROPHIC loss.

I dealt with dry cleaner business owners every day. Here are some of the everyday questions I received and answers to some of them so you can have some insight into what to expect of your Policy.

CUSTOMER CLOTHING (Bailee): It is a VERY important coverage that you must have on your policy. Agents who are not familiar with the dry cleaning industry frequently do not understand this coverage and only provide a minimum amount, if any. Make sure your policy has this coverage. In addition, your customer clothes need to be covered for PROCESS DAMAGE, MISSING CLOTHES, and CLOTHES IN TRANSIT (you may have routes). An Insurance agent unfamiliar with the dry cleaning business might not realize how important this coverage is. Unlimited bailee is the best possible coverage so ask for it. The Insurance industry is changing. Previously unlimited bailee coverage was easy to find. Now the Insurance Companies are setting limits on the bailee coverage. Review your inventory values to determine the amount that is adequate for you. Just make sure your policy has this important coverage.

DEDUCTIBLES: Almost every coverage has a deductible. Business personal, property, customer's clothes, money, signs, glass coverage all have deductibles. Try to live with the highest deductible you are comfortable with. Higher deductibles means money in your pocket since the Companies will give additional credits for these higher deductibles. Business income/interruption coverage also has a deductible. This deductible is measured in terms of hours. Yes, hours. Before the coverage applies, you can have anywhere from 24 hour to 72-hour delay before the coverage applies.

LIABILITY: All of the business owner's policies include liability

coverage. Your landlords are instrumental in determining how much liability coverage you must have. Landlords require a certain limit which you must maintain. It is important to discuss your liability limits with your agent. He/she is equipped to recommend the best coverage for you.

CHANGES IN YOUR BUSINESS: Being the busy business owner that you are, often you do not think of notifying your Insurance agent of any changes you have made. Did you buy new equipment? CALL YOUR AGENT. If you were to have a large fire loss, you need to have this equipment covered. Make sure your equipment values are up to date. Did you move or close your location? CALL YOUR AGENT. Policies need to be cancelled properly or you may be subject to additional premium due. Did you incorporate, or form an LLC? CALL YOUR AGENT. Did you finance a new piece of equipment or pay off an existing contract? CALL YOUR AGENT. In the event a loan is paid off, it is important to notify your agent. I had an insured who did not inform us that he paid off a finance contract. He had a major loss and that finance bank was named on his settlement check. It was taken care of but it resulted in time wasted for him. Did you sell your business or buy a new one? CALL YOUR AGENT. Again, policies need to be cancelled properly. Otherwise this could result in earned premium that you will be responsible for.

EQUIPMENT BREAKDOWN COVERAGE: Mechanical breakdown coverage is a coverage on many dry cleaner policies. If the machine is not working because of wear and tear or rust and corrosion, THERE IS NO COVERAGE. The coverage is not meant to be a "maintenance" policy. If your equipment is old and worn, it will NOT be covered. And more importantly, if you do not maintain your boiler (water softener program), don't expect the Insurance company to pay. Scale build up or holes in the coils are generally considered wear and tear. Occasionally a claim is paid in error under this coverage. Insurance companies do make mistakes

WORKER COMPENSATION: Most States require this coverage if you have employees. The premium is based on the amount of payroll you have. These policies are auditable. This means when the policy is issued, you give your best estimate of what you expect your payroll to be for the next 12 months. At the end of the policy term, the Company will ask for your actual payroll. Some Companies only want a 1 page sheet completed. Some Companies want a questionnaire and copies of your 941 forms. Some Companies want to come out and see your payroll records. If your payroll is higher than estimated, there will be money due. If it is lower, you will get money back. DO NOT IGNORE THIS AUDIT. If you do not respond to the audit inquiry, the Company will process an "estimated" audit. This audit is approximately 15% higher than the estimated premium. You will be responsible for paying it. SO always comply with the final audit request!

This is a short summary of a complicated subject. It is imperative you deal with an experienced professional. Your personal Insurance agent may not be able to handle the coverage needed for your business. If you are unsure where to go to find an agent, contact your Dry Cleaner Association for some recommendations.

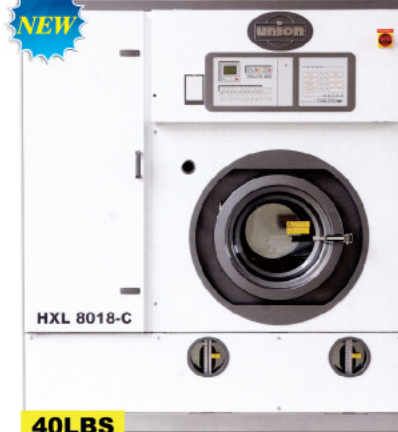
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Plan to Work -- Work the Plan

By: Bud Bakker, Sankosha & SEFA Allied Trade Member



ATTENDING CONVENTIONS AND TRADE SHOWS CAN BE FUN, TIRING AND JUST PLAIN OVERWHELMING. I WANT TO HELP YOU MAKE THE MOST OF ATTENDING CLEAN '22.

Numerous Manufacturers and other Vendors will be showing both their newest and time tested equipment or items of great benefit to the Dry Cleaning Industry. So, how does one attend

an Industry Trade Show, in this case, Clean '22 without getting overwhelmed?

PLAN TO WORK:

Planning does not need to be complicated. One priority in planning for Clean '22 is to take a look at YOUR dry cleaning plant in an organized manner.

1. FOLLOW THE ROUTE OF A GARMENT. Start at the front counter. Is the software up to date on your P.O.S. System? Could the front counter, or lobby itself use a sprucing up, or even need to be replaced or remodeled? If so, PLAN to visit a Booth on the Clean Show Floor that provides related items.
2. Next, go to the wash deck and dry cleaning machine. How old are the machines in use? Like the counters, could they be spruced up, or in this case repaired for a little less than half the cost of a new one and run relatively trouble free for a few more years? If so, great! If not, PLAN to visit related booths at Clean '22.
3. VISIT THE BOILER ROOM Inspect the Boiler and any other equipment that supports the remainder of equipment outside of the Boiler Room. Has business increased? Are additional pieces of equipment needed to keep up and stay ahead of higher volume? If so, maybe a larger Boiler, or Air Compressor etc. need to be considered. Write it down. PLAN to visit the booths of the above- mentioned machinery manufacturers.

After visiting the Boiler Room, grab a nice cool glass of water. Take a minute or two to cool down and head for the Finishing Stations. Could the existing stations benefit from a different layout? Need help assessing the best placement of Presses? Like other equipment in the plant, are the finishing machines in need of repair that will make sense to spend the money on, or would it be best to replace them with equipment that is going to keep up with existing or more volume demand. PLAN to visit related Manufacturers at their Booths.

4. TAKE A LOOK AT SUPPLIES. Hangers, Poly, Tags, Safety Pins. Consider ALL of it. PLAN to look into what is new, and

what will work to improve efficiency with regard to the presentation of the final product. Professionally Cleaned Clothing and related items.

AFTER THE PLAN HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, IT'S TIME TO WORK THE PLAN .

Here are three easy steps to WORK THE PLAN:

Step One:

Is an appointment a good idea? In many cases, yes, absolutely! Many Booths are going to be very busy. Making an appointment with a Vendor will ensure that while meeting with them, they will be able to provide uninterrupted attention to the questions asked, which will result in realistic, and useful advice.

Step Two:

Curious about a new concept or machine that had been showcased in an industry periodical, or part of a discussion with another Dry Cleaning Business Owner or Operator?

Swing by the booth of said new concept or product. Ask questions. The new concept or Machine will be there to be seen, touched, and in many cases operated.

Step Three:

Make time to attend the Educations Seminars offered. The biggest, best and most efficient dry Cleaning plant owners have one thing in common. They attend as many Educational Seminars and Forums as possible. Especially at Clean Shows.

NOW FOR THE HIGH PRIORITY CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR CLEAN '22

Stop in at the DLI Booth. Become a member or renew your membership if you haven't already done so. The benefits of being a DLI Member are numerous! The amount of educational material available to DLI Members alone is staggering, not to mention the fact that DLI offers many services to the Dry Cleaning Industry that can make an owner operators life significantly better with regard to suggestions on everything from Insurance to how best to handle a Claim on an old Neck Tie.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER!

Take a trusted staff member along to the Clean Show. Set up a list of booths to visit for each attendee from the plant. Meet for lunch, relax and go over the details and information learned at the booths on each person's list.

Above all -- Have some fun & Smile!

If the PLAN is WORKED, attending Clean '22 will be an enjoyable, productive experience that will yield many benefits during the months afterward. See you in Atlanta!

DLI School to Host Introductory and Advance Courses in August



THERE IS STILL TIME TO REGISTER FOR UPCOMING CLASSES TO BE HELD AT THE DRYCLEANING AND LAUNDRY INSTITUTE'S SCHOOL OF DRYCLEANING TECHNOLOGY IN LAUREL, MD.

DLI is the industry leader in all fabricare training. Their combination of classroom, practical, and virtual training allows students to master lessons in an optimal environment. Lectures provide students with instruction and skill development they then apply on the latest industry equipment to develop and reinforce their new skills.

INTRODUCTION TO DRYCLEANING

Summer courses will start with the association's signature "Introductory to Drycleaning" course geared toward helping those with

only a year of industry experience or less.

Topics include: sorting drycleaning loads; operating a drycleaning machine; cleaning silk, satin and other fabrics; removing coffee, ink, grease and other stains from clothing; pressing pants, coats and skirts; and using tensioning equipment to improve finishing quality. It will take place during the week of Aug. 8 to 12.

ADVANCED DRYCLEANING

On the heels of that course, DLI will present its two week "Advanced Drycleaning" class from Aug. 15 to 26 for graduates of its introductory course or individuals with a few years of experience in the industry.

The comprehensive course will cover additional topics such as fabric identification, wetcleaning items, customer service techniques, industry regulations, plant workflow and much more.

Tuition for each course varies depending on DLI membership level. For pricing and other information, as well as registration, visit dlionline.org.

MEMBER BENEFIT...

Join the Conversation

EVERY TUESDAY MORNING AT 11:30 EST, CLEANERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY JOIN TOGETHER ON DLI/SEFA'S PEER-TO-PEER CALLS.

The calls are designed as an open forum for members to ask questions, pose thoughts or ideas, and to voice concerns over the latest happenings. On the calls, people share their ideas, problems and successes. Some of the cleaners who participate have very large operations, while others have only one location and just a couple of employees. But, they all say they gain meaningful information to help their business succeed in difficult times.

"This is one of the best new programs developed for our members," offered peter Blake, SEFA Executive Director. "It is a great way to get feedback from the people that are facing the same challenges, the same issues and are trying to accomplish very similar goals. You have this community of people ready and willing to offer their experience, and I hope you will take advantage of it. One of the best benefits membership gives you is access to a tremendous community of people who are invested in your success."

The calls start at 11:30 a.m. EST. To join, go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84063392764>
Dial by your location: 929 205 6099
Meeting ID: 840 6339 2764

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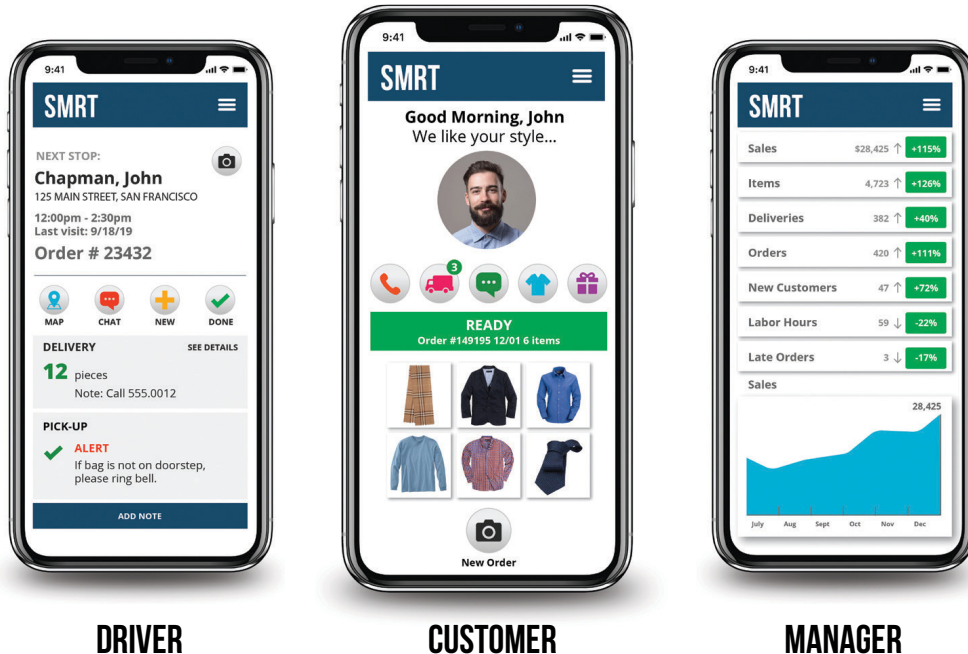
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Inspect What You Expect



HAVE YOU TOLD YOUR EMPLOYEES WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM? ARE YOU MAXIMIZING THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR STAFF?

Many owners and managers never tell their employees what level of production is expected of them. Put yourself in your employee's place. How much would you do if you did not know what was expected? Without a standard to meet, many employees will not be fully productive, and instead the likelihood is they will make the hours fit the workload.

"This is one question we are continually asked," commented SEFA Executive Director Peter Blake, "and it continues to be an important topic. On average, what production level can you reasonably expect. One of the keys I find is that anything measured seems to grow. If you aren't inspecting the production levels -- or count-

ing and evaluating, the minute you start, production will likely increase. When you stop inspecting and counting, over time you tend to revert back and counts will go down. In order to keep people mindful, and aware -- you have to Inspect what you expect. You have to measure the results you want to achieve. It is just human nature to strive to hit a target, but only when the target is being measured."

DLI has produced some great information on production standards including averages that you can use as a rule of thumb. The information on how to measure production, and how to set standards is covered in Technical Operating Information No. 674. It is available on the DLI's "Encyclopedia of Drycleaning" of you can get a copy by contacting Peter Blake (617-791-0128, peter@sefa.org).

"Understanding your current production and your potential production can be critical to your success. Keeping in mind the adage: INSPECT what you EXPECT can really help you maximize your resources. If you need advice or help, call Peter Blake at 617-791-0128.

Do you have an idea you would like to share? E-mail it to peter@sefa.org

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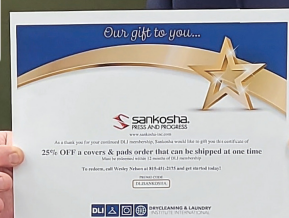
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