



THE Messenger

MAC Develops New MasterClass Workshop Concept



AT A RECENT IN-PERSON MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP LED BY JERRY MOORE IN ALTOONA, PA, THE MAC BOARD LAID THE FRAMEWORK FOR A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS DESIGNATED FOR MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL.

The MAC Maintenance MasterClass is a series of virtual classes held at 1:00 EST on the first Thursday of every month dedicated to increasing productivity, efficiency, and profitability through effective maintenance techniques. The program is a free service for all DLI members, but is hosted and led by MAC. The programs are recorded and archived at macassociation.org/education and also have been given to DLI to include in their library of training videos. You can review the first 4 installments of the series.

The concept is very simple. The program consists of an education component, usually 30 - 45 minutes long by an expert on the monthly topic. That is followed by a 15 - 20 minute question and answer session and open forum on all things maintenance. Each month the participants are polled live via zoom with a list of potential future topics. The results of the poll dictate what topic is presented the following month. The leaders of the program vary depending on the topics chosen. We have already had programs on:

- Boiler Maintenance
- Steam Traps: How to Diagnose and fix problems
- Drycleaning Machine Maintenance
- Presses and Finishing Equipment Maintenance

The program is targeted to owners, managers and actual maintenance workers.

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JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 2025

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE...

Looking Ahead to 2025

USUALLY AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR WE LIKE TO REFLECT ON THE PAST, EVALUATE WHERE WE ARE. WE MAKE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS AND PLANS TO MAKE BIG CHANGES GOING FORWARD.

Last year I made only one resolution --to be better than I was. I think I accomplished that, but I have a very long way to go, so I am going to make the same resolution this year. I want to keep getting better, and I want to help you do the same. Wherever you and your business want to improve and be better, I want to help in any way I can.



*Peter Blake,
MAC Executive Director*

One of the keys to growing any business is effective networking. I think it is as important for me as an association executive as it is for you as an entrepreneur. One of the best programs DLI has established is the Peer-to-Peer open forum zoom calls held every Tuesday at 11:30 EST. This has been a tremendous resource for the membership, for DLI Leadership and even association executives like me. It keeps me in constant touch with the members and what questions drycleaners are looking for answers to. I find it's a great way for me to keep a handle on all the important issues facing our industry. I then can take those issues and try and help cleaners to answer those challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

One of the next steps was to go out and meet with our members and prospective members. To get out of the office, and on the road, to explore the challenges and opportunities our members were experiencing by visiting with cleaners up and down the eastern seaboard. I set a personal goal to visit at least 50 DLI members plants and 100 non-member plants in the course of 2024, and I am pleased to say I EXCEEDED that number. The information I was able to learn is invaluable. I plan to do even more in 2025. I have raised that Goal to 200 total visits. This is your chance to reach out to me if you are somewhere within my territory and let me know if you would like me to stop by at some point. I would love the chance to meet you and see how we can work together. This industry is full of great people and I would love to help aid in your success.

PLANT VISITS

My 2025 road tour will kick off in Central Florida in early March when I attend SEFA's "Training Day" and then return the end of March to visit cleaners in the Miami/Ft Lauderdale area prior to the SEFA Workshops in Tampa. I plan on visiting 15 members and another 25 prospective members putting me at 20% of my goal already. As I said before with DLI Zoom calls, this networking provides an opportunity to learn firsthand where people are struggling, and I can use that information to better develop tools and programs to help them succeed. My goal is to have at least 5 new members signed up before April 5! I will also be working in the Northeast visiting cleaners in the Boston area and CT.

In 2024, I did a number of these membership retention/recruitment trips up and down the Eastern Seaboard. I visited 70 plants for SEFA, 40 for NEFA and another 40 for MAC. I was able to recruit over 25 new members as a result of those trips to DLI and my local associations while reenforcing the benefits DLI and Affiliate Membership

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BOI Reporting Back On the Table... Again



A FEDERAL COURT RULED ON FEBRUARY 18 THAT THE BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP INFORMATION REPORT (BOIR) FROM THE US TREASURY'S FINANCIAL CRIMES ENFORCEMENT NETWORK IS RE-

QUIRED YET AGAIN. THE NEW DEADLINE IS MARCH 21, 2025.

The BOIR was introduced under the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) for businesses in the United States to ensure transparency in ownership structures and plays a significant role in combating financial crimes, such as money laundering. This report requires business owners to divulge all owner information and upload drivers licenses onto the website. The (BOI) report is a filing that provides details about the people who own or control a business in the United States.

Both Domestic companies, including those created by filing with a secretary of state, and Foreign companies that are registered to do business in the United States. The report can be filed by an employee, owner, or third-party service provider who is authorized by the reporting company.

Large operating companies are exempt from BOI reporting requirements. To qualify, a business must meet the following criteria:

- Have at least 21 full-time employees in the United States
- Have a physical office in the United States
- Report more than \$5 million in revenue on the previous year's tax return

BOI Reports can be filed online and the process is very straightforward.

Groups are still fighting against this requirement. MAC and DLI will keep you apprised if the status changes again. In the meantime, DLI is developing further guidance and a potential webinar to walk companies through the reporting process. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, members are invited to contact Peter Blake at the MAC Office.

One Allied Trade Dues for All Associations



For years the Allied Trades that so generously support DLI and its affiliated local and regional associations have supported each association separately.

Starting in 2025, that will no longer be the case. Vendors in our industry (also known as Allied

Trades) can make the choice to pay one dues and have membership in DLI and all seven affiliated US. Associations at a discounted rate, including the MAC, SEFA and NEFA.

In addition to a substantial discount for bundling the dues, these vendors will receive discounts on sponsorships, preferred advertising pricing, and other unique opportunities to get in front of DLI members.

“We all realize that without the support of the Allied Trades, neither DLI or the regional associations could provide the education or networking opportunities that our members have come to ex-

pect and value,” said Mary Scalco, DLI’s CEO. “This is just a little way of saying thank you for their support and that we appreciate everything the Allied Trades do for the industry.”

The new voluntary dues structure started on January 1, and will mostly affect national and large regional allied trades. Local allied trades may still find it advantageous to join at the local levels where they do business.

“We appreciate the support these companies provide our members and the industry,” added Peter Blake, MAC Executive Director, “and we believe they should be rewarded with some significant discounts. We also feel by making this program easy and affordable, we will actually see a growth in our allied membership. This is already evident in some of the new companies joining the national level.”

When choosing companies to use for products and services we urge our members to support those companies that provide the added value by supporting the associations and the industry.

For more information on the program or to explore some of the added savings -- contact Peter Blake at the MAC Office.

Learn from Your Peers and Share Your Expertise



EVERY TUESDAY MORNING AT 11:30 EST, CLEANERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY JOIN TOGETHER ON DLI/NEFA'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.

The open forum design allows for a very diverse and wide range of topics. Members are free to ask anything and to offer their opinions. DLI is on the call to facilitate discussion and to help bring up newsworthy topics if needed. Recent conversations have included discussions on:

- Insurance Coverages and Policies
- Anticipated Affects of Tariffs on Hangers and Machinery
- Education Programs hosted around the country
- Business Building tips: Marketing ideas
- Use of Automated messaging platforms for communications
- Questions regarding paid leave and mandatory time off
- Marketing best practices and the viability of some methods
- Lead generation & follow-up including incentives

“This is one of the best programs developed for our members,” offered Peter Blake, MAC 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 tis 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 Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83922500100?pwd=1UsPqnV2rMh611WwJgilN0eXjPr6FV.1>

Meeting ID: 839 2250 0100
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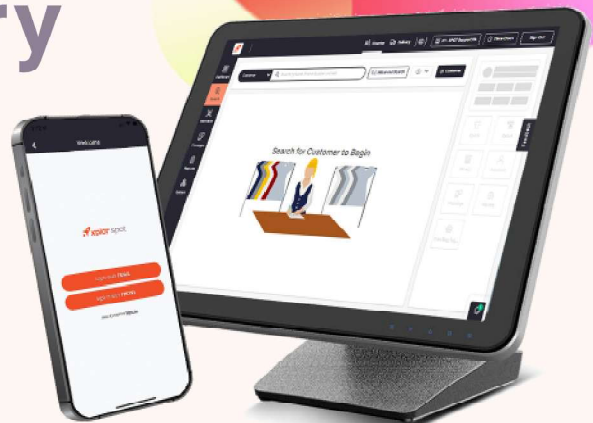


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A Look back at 2024

From dynamic educational sessions to great networking events ... MAC had it all in 2024.



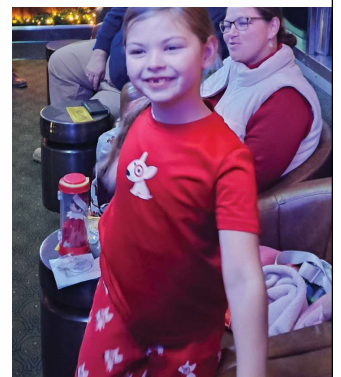
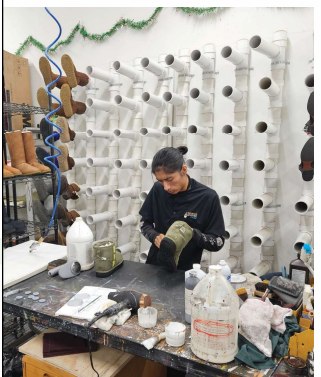
MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF CLEANERS



Thank you to all the Members, Allied Trade Partners, Speakers, Sponsors and Board Members for helping make the year one to remember!



Keep an eye out for even more innovative programs and events in 2025! Get involved and help make it an even better year. Contact the MAC Office to help plan this years events!



Looking Ahead to 2025

Continued from page 2

provide members. There is no question -- our members are better positioned to succeed.

I was really amazed at some of the things I saw and some of the things I learned. Keep in mind – I am approaching each of these through the front door, so my initial impressions are as a consumer would see the plant. I always take a few moments to look around the call office and make mental notes of what I see and how I am greeted. It helps to see how that particular company is positioning their business.

I think our industry is facing some serious challenges, but there are also some incredible opportunities ahead. We are faced with a changing consumer mind set and a lack of understanding of the services we provide. Do your customers know what you do? Do your potential customers know the services you can provide?

Even if you don't realize it, there is a growing majority of people that have never used a drycleaner or professional laundry. They don't even understand the service. Many of the younger adults don't know they can give you their sweaters, their coats, their casual attire. They think "drycleaning" is for formal wear only. We need to work to change that. We need to stop relying on the term drycleaning and use fabric care or textile care. We need to educate the potential consumer what it is we can do for them.

We are selling time, convenience, ease of doing a chore. The younger generation is not shy about spending money on things to make their life easier. They will gladly pay door dash \$16 for an \$8 drink just so they don't have to go out. What if they understood that for that same \$8 you can do a load of laundry for them -- picked up, cleaned, folded and returned! We need to educate our potential consumers as to our value. If they understand it -- they will invest in their wardrobe. They want to make life easier, and that is the crux of what we can offer.

I am a firm believer that branding matters. Drycleaning and laundry may be seen as a luxury service, but it is a valuable, needed and desired service when done right. You need to ask yourself what makes you different and why you are different from the other cleaners in your area. Once you can answer those two basic questions then you can begin to focus attention on your brand.

FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

Dry cleaning is important. It prolongs the life of your wardrobe. It keeps people looking their best and helps build confidence. We often fear the younger generation won't appreciate the service, but I think there is great potential to expand your services. The younger generation is more apt to spend money to save time. They value their time a great deal more than our generation does. Trust me, there is a place for drycleaning, and the future is brighter than you think. I am just starting to learn about the effect of the secondary market for apparel. Whether it is high-end re-sellers like Poshmark and TheRealReal, or vintage clothing stores, there is a growing used clothing market with some very highly fashionable

and very difficult to clean garments. I have even heard that people are trading clothing like I used to trade baseball cards. At least with baseball cards, I didn't have to clean and sanitize them, lol.

Another observation was the lack of professional training for the Customer Service personnel. I was amazed at how I was greeted in a few shops. Counter people were unable to identify the name of the manager or even the owner. I firmly believe that some counter personnel didn't even know the owner's name – or what cleaners they were working for. They were just punching the clock at "The Cleaners".

Am I wrong? Secret shop some of your competition or just drive down the main streets in towns nearby and share your observations. There is a very wide discrepancy between cleaners out there, and some very big differences. My suggestion to you is to look at your front counter with a fresh set of eyes. Really look at the image you and your staff are projecting and make sure it is the message you want to convey.

I would love to hear your thoughts... or bring you a cup of coffee and talk about the industry. If you are in my service areas, let me know and I will try and make it happen in 2025! As for me, I sincerely hope I can just be better than I used to be and keep moving forward. I would love to play a part in you also meeting that simple goal in the coming year.

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New maintenance topic each month
-  **Peer-To-Peer Interaction**
Each session includes an open forum to discuss questions & tips

The fifth installment of the series is March 6th, at 1:00 EST and will focus on Vacuum issues and air compressor maintenance. Key concepts include productivity and efficiency concerns, routine maintenance, and troubleshooting. Join us and **SAVE MONEY!**



Contact us

 617-791-0128

 peter@macassociation.org

Ron Herson: Industry Leader



IT IS WITH DEEP SORROW THAT WE ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF RONALD GENE HERSON.

A beloved father, dedicated businessman, and passionate individual, he will be missed by

all that had the privilege of knowing him. Ron left us at the age of 72 on February 20th, 2025. Born on April 30th, 1952, he lived a life full of purpose, love, and ambition.

“Ron was an icon in the industry,” offered Peter Blake, MAC Executive Director, and I know we will all miss him. He was always looking ahead and pushing people to embrace new thoughts and ideas. Sadly, one of the last times we really got together was at a big industry dinner held in MAD. He led the forum on what the industry will look like in 5 years... and he opened many people eyes and minds. He was a true leader. I am proud to have gotten to know him and honored to call him a friend.”

Ron was the proud father of five children Scott, Emily, Michael, Bradley, and Dana with their mothers Martha & Anne, and six

grandchildren, Juliana, Sebastian, Lucas, Landon, Stevie, and Logan, who were his greatest pride and joy. His love for them knew no bounds, and his dedication to their well-being and future was unwavering. As a father, he imparted valuable lessons in hard work, integrity, and the importance of family.

A successful businessman, Ron built a life through sheer determination and passion. He was known for his exceptional work ethic and keen sense of opportunity, always striving to make a positive impact on the world around him. His professional legacy will continue to inspire those who had the privilege of working alongside him.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Ron had a deep love for life’s simple pleasures. He was an avid cook, and his culinary creations brought people together. Whether it was preparing a Sunday meal for his family or hosting friends with a new Caribbean-inspired dish, he approached cooking with the same love and care that he did everything else in life. His passion for the flavors of the Caribbean was especially close to his heart, and his meals were a celebration of culture, warmth, and generosity.

Cycling was another of his great passions, and he found peace and joy on long rides, whether exploring new landscapes or simply enjoying the open road. His love for cycling not only kept him physically active but also gave allowed him to connect with nature.

In lieu of flowers, please direct any gifts of love to JSSA (Jewish Social Service Agency), a hospice organization that took care of our father during his final months.

New MasterClass Educational Series

Continued from page 1

“The basic premise of the series is to provide targeted training, “of-fered peter Blake, MAC Executive Director, “to a different area of the business. We want to engage a different level of team member, not just owners and key managers. By specifically targeting a different audience, the MAC/DLI Membership has an even greater value. Training is a core principle of our membership service and we feel the more we can offer different layers of your team, the more value the member will receive.”

The program has been a huge success and is being attended y 30 - 40 people every month., We have over 100 people registered over the first four months and we have more visiting the recordings on the website. This has proven to be a huge success.

NEW MASTERCLASS PROGRAMS IN DEVELOPMENT

Based on the success of the MAC Maintenance MasterClass, DLI has changed its Marketing Lab to a “Marketing MasterClass” following the same concept, except it is targeting people performing

the marketing tasks of the business. The Marketing MasterClass is held on the third Thursday of every month at 2:00 EST.

The first session of the Marketing MasterClass was held recently and it focussed on AI for content creation. DLI’s Rebecca Ferguson led the discussion demonstrating how she uses AI platforms to create social media posts and to develop DLI brochures. MAC’s Peter Blake also assisted in the program showing how you can use platforms like ChatGPT to write business letters and marketing letters. He also showed practical ways to use the program in understanding the business and exploring what customers are looking for.

Also in the works are potential new MasterClasses from SEFA and NEFA on Customer Service and Business Management.

“I think MAC proved the concept works,” concluded Blake, “and there is a need for more specialized training. We are excited to have helped usher in a new series of learning opportunities for our members and their team members.”



Jim Groshans, Sales Manager for Unipress Corp. redeems Rhonda Eysel's DLI Membership Voucher for a \$200 Freight Credit off her purchase of a new Unipress Steam Cabinet. Rhonda owns Master Kleen Dry Cleaners in Columbus, Georgia.

"We love how our new Unipress Steam Cabinet helps us save on labor costs. DLI Membership is a tremendous asset. We love DLI and will always be a member!"

Rhonda Eysel, CEO
Master Kleen Dry Cleaners
Columbus, Georgia

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