

SDTA NEWS

SEWING DEALERS TRADE ASSOCIATION

The trade publication for the independent retailer
May 2018 | ISSUE 154

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Cover Story, page 28

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VDTA•SDTA
Show Recap, p30



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President's Corner

Did you experience the Charlotte VDTA•SDTA Convention?

March 24-26 was the Charlotte, NC VDTA•SDTA Trade Show and Convention. If you missed it, you really missed a great event. Dealers from across the country converged on Charlotte for education, product knowledge, and with more than 20 new exhibitors, to buy some new products. We saw many new faces and it was terrific to hear their thoughts as they experienced this convention.

We started out with an Awards Program that was standing only room. Congratulations to all who were inducted into the Hall of Fame: Paul LaPonte, Robert L. Hines Jr., George Moore, and posthumously inducted were Patricia "Maddie" Bushman and Barbara Perry.

The Independent Dealer of The Year Award was presented to Ron and Marilyn Gatinella of Close to Home Stores. They will have a plaque hanging in the new Dealer of the Year showcase to be displayed in Las Vegas. We also awarded the VDTA/Epstein College Scholarship to Emily Edman and Ian Proctor, worth up to \$10,000 each.

The annual industry Cocktail Reception was held at the NASCAR Hall of Fame, next door to the Convention Center. What a great facility! Attendees were able to walk around the main hall to see various race cars, from vintage to modern. Not only was the food and beverage delicious, but the networking was invaluable. It was an experience attendees won't soon forget.

We had such a great response from so many people about this event. New was THE SWEEP buying special in the exhibit hall. Sweep specials by participating exhibitors were valid only during certain hours and only at the show. The classes, many standing room only, were some of the best we've had. Dealers experienced the special events: the Powerhouse, Vacuum Dealer Roundtable and the new Success Studios small group discussions. There was also a special display, Pfaff Through the Ages, with garments made by Katrina Walker, presented by SVP.

Now to experience Vegas 2019! February 12-14, 2019 are the dates to mark on your calendar. We will bring back the events dealers expect along with some new ones. Events will be held at the Las Vegas Convention Center. The Westgate Resorts next door to the center is the host hotel, with room rates of \$75. The industry cocktail reception will be held at the Westgate for your convenience.

THE SWEEP buying specials will return in 2019. Dealers will want to attend to see what great deals are available only during the show, not before and not after.

Registration will open October 1. Watch for specials for early bird registrations.

Presenters Wanted. Class applications are due October 1. The sooner we receive class applications, the better we can plan to make everyone's experience remarkable!

You can make the VDTA•SDTA Trade Show the best event in the world for the Floorcare and Sewing Industry. Follow us on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/VDTASDTA - and Twitter: @therealVDTASDTA.

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Oklahoma Embroidery Supply & Design
2018 VDTA•SDTA
Show & Convention Gold Sponsor

September Is International Sewing Month

The Sewing Dealers Trade Association – SDTA – is pleased to announce September as International Sewing Month.

September is International Sewing Month, and during this annual event, participating independently-owned sewing centers throughout North America offer special prices on a wide range of products throughout their store.

How does this promotion work? The Association produces a marketing kit, complete with registration forms, colorful signage, and special price tags. The Association also secures prizes from industry manufacturers and distributors as giveaways to those customers who visit the store. The grand prize is a \$600 in-store shopping spree sponsored by the Association.

In September, customers who come into a SDTA member's store can register for these prizes. On October 1, the prize registrations are sent to the Association office in Des Moines, IA, where the drawings are held. Dealers are notified by October 30 if their customer has won a prize.

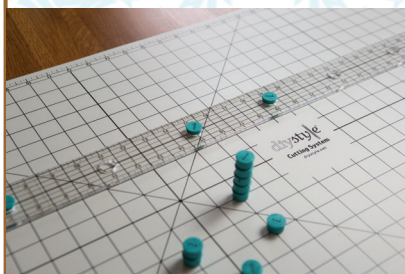
When a dealer promotes this event through their newsletters, newspaper, e-mail and store signage, this can be a very profitable promotion.

This promotion is not limited to September. Kits are scheduled to be shipped in July to those members who have requested them. Dealers can then use this promotion for other events in July and August as well. This maximizes sales potential.

The promotional kit, valued at **\$150**, is **FREE** for VDTA•SDTA members and is a Members-only benefit.

**If you are not a member, join today so you can take advantage of this promotion.
For more information on membership, this promotion, and other member-only benefits,
visit www.vdta-sdta.com or call 800-367-5651.**

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- Appliqué
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Thank You MEMBERS

The following is a list of members who recently renewed their membership or joined VDTA•SDTA

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

| | | |
|--|----------------|------------|
| Cana-Vac Systems Inc | Stratford, ON | April 2006 |
| Essco | Twinsburg, OH | March 1987 |
| Jabat Inc | Olney, IL | Nov 1996 |
| Lindsay Mfg / Vacu-Maid Central Vac | Ponca City, OK | March 1995 |
| Rexair LLC | Troy, MI | April 1994 |
| SVP Worldwide | La Vergne, TN | March 1995 |
| United Notions & Moda Fabric | Dallas, TX | March 2018 |

DEALER MEMBERS

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 5 Little Monkeys Quilt & Sew | Weaverville, NC | March 2018 |
| A & A Vacuum Mart | Mobile, AL | March 2018 |
| A Stitch In Time | Grass Valley, CA | March 2016 |
| A to Z Vac N Sew LLC | Norfolk, NE | May 2016 |
| A Vacuum Store and Service | Calgary, AB | February 2007 |
| A+ Vacuum Doctor | Venice, FL | Jan 2015 |
| A-1 Sweeper World | Brandon, FL | March 2018 |
| A-1 Vacuum Inc | Kelso, WA | Aug 1982 |
| Alexander's Sewing & Vacuum | Durham, NC | Dec 1981 |
| All About Quilting | Jacksonville, NC | March 2018 |
| All About Vacuums | Doylestown, PA | March 2018 |
| All Fixed | Nags Head, NC | Dec 2007 |
| American Folk Art & Craft Sply | Hanover, MA | May 2012 |
| Arbor Vacuum & Small Appliance Ctr | Ann Arbor, MI | May 1985 |
| Avon Vacuums LLC | Avon, CT | March 2018 |
| B & D Vacuum Sales & Service | Southgate, MI | March 1985 |
| B & J Sewing Center | Faribault, MN | Jan 2015 |
| Bagdon's Vacuum | Baltimore, MD | April 1998 |
| Bailey's Vacuum Center | Santa Paula, CA | Nov 1992 |
| Bay Vac And Pedal | Bay City, MI | May 2016 |
| Beginnings Quilt Shop | Hendersonville, NC | March 2018 |
| Bellaire Vacuum | Bellaire, TX | March 2018 |
| Best Built In Limited | Vancouver, BC | Dec 2016 |
| Best Vacuum Shop LLC | Houston, TX | April 2010 |
| Blaine's Sewing Machine Ctr | Cranston, RI | April 2006 |
| Bobbins Quilt & Sew | Buhl, ID | Jan 2017 |
| Boulevard Vacuum | Los Angeles, CA | Dec 1987 |
| Brothers Sew & Vac | Bethesda, MD | April 2012 |
| Cadillac Vacuum Sales & Srv | Cadillac, MI | Dec 1998 |
| California Sewing & Vacuum | San Jose, CA | Nov 1998 |
| Carter Sweeper Sales Inc | Columbus, IN | July 1984 |
| Charleroi Sweeper Center | Charleroi, PA | June 1983 |
| Colonial Vacuum Service Inc | Williamsburg, VA | Feb 2006 |
| Columbus Vacuum & Sewing Ctr | Columbus, MS | Jan 2017 |
| Comer's Vacuums | Decatur, GA | Jan 2017 |
| Common Threads | Apollo, PA | March 2018 |
| Contact Security Inc | Chilliwack, BC | Feb 2017 |
| Corvallis Sewing & Vacuum | Corvallis, OR | Jan 2017 |
| Country Fabric & Craft | Valentine, NE | April 2006 |
| Creative Sewing | Huntsville, AL | March 2018 |
| D & H Service Center Inc | Orange, CA | March 2007 |
| Day-Cin Vacuums | Dayton, OH | Feb 2011 |
| Dixie Vac Service Inc | Louisville, KY | June 1983 |
| E & D Distributing | Milton, WI | Feb 2009 |
| Enhancement Systems LLC | South Amboy, NJ | March 2018 |
| Friendly Stitches Sew & Vac | Downers Grove, IL | Jan 2012 |

MEMBER SINCE

| | | |
|---|-------------------|------------|
| Georgia Vacuum & Sewing | Lawrenceville, GA | Jan 2017 |
| Harbour's Sew & Vac | Cary, NC | March 2018 |
| Heartfelt Quilting & Sewing | Winter Haven, FL | March 2018 |
| Hutchin Solutions LLC | Gansevoort, NY | March 2018 |
| Jean-Marie's Fabrics & Sewing Machines | Springfield, OR | Dec 1996 |
| Larsen's Water & Air LLC | South Jordan, UT | May 2013 |
| Louisiana Sew-Vac Sales & Srv | Sulphur, LA | Aug 2002 |
| Low Country Vacuum & Sew | Charleston, SC | May 1998 |
| M & M Vacuum Company | Missouri City, TX | Jan 2017 |
| Macomb Sewing Center | Macomb, IL | Jan 2015 |
| Margie's Sew Much Fun Inc | Crestview, FL | March 2018 |
| Mid-America Vacuum Centers | Crystal Lake, IL | Feb 1999 |
| More Than Vacuums | Littleton, CO | Jan 2016 |
| National Vacuum | Gainesville, FL | Feb 2010 |
| Opelika Sewing Center | Opelika, AL | March 2018 |
| Oreck Clean Home Center | Tyler, TX | March 2018 |
| Oreck Clean Home Store | Lincoln, NE | March 2005 |
| Oreck Floor Care Center | Johnson City, TN | Dec 2016 |
| Paramount Vacuum & Sewing Ctr | Eugene, OR | Dec 1989 |
| Patches & Scraps | Midland, TX | Feb 2015 |
| Patchwork Fabrics Gifts & More | Eatonton, GA | March 2018 |
| Plug-Ins | Brooklyn, NY | March 2018 |
| Quality Sew & Vac | Escanaba, MI | March 2002 |
| Quilt N Code | Burnsville, NC | March 2018 |
| R M Thompson Enterprises | Cuba, MO | March 2018 |
| Ranft's Denville Vacuum/ Appliance | Denville, NJ | Oct 1982 |
| Ray's Sewing Machine Ctr | San Jose, CA | Feb 2000 |
| Sandhill's Sewing & Vacuum Ctr Inc | Miles City, MT | March 1991 |
| Save Stores Inc | Portland, OR | April 2007 |
| Seams Sew Right | Fayetteville, GA | Sept 2016 |
| Service All Vacuum Co | Ft Wayne, IN | Feb 2010 |
| Sew Simple of Lynchburg LLC | Lynchburg, VA | March 2018 |
| Sew What! Inc | Newark, DE | March 2018 |
| Sew-Mini Things | Mt Dora, FL | Feb 2013 |
| Sierra Sewing Center | Reno, NV | May 2014 |
| Sir Vac & Sew | Fern Park, FL | Jan 2017 |
| Southwest Sewing Machines LLC | Houston, TX | March 2018 |
| Swiftly's Vacuum Cleaners | Cary, IL | May 1982 |
| Swiss Boy Vacuum | Bountiful, UT | May 1983 |
| The Modern Quilt Guild | Los Angeles, CA | March 2018 |
| The Quilters Studio | Fairfax, VA | March 2018 |
| The Sewing Machine Shop | Walnut Creek, CA | Feb 2013 |
| The Sewing Studio Fabric SS | Maitland, FL | March 2010 |
| The Vac Shack Inc | Sioux City, IA | March 1982 |
| The Vacuum Shop | Goldsboro, NC | March 2018 |
| Tom Dodge Central Vac | Greensboro, MD | March 2015 |
| Vac Central | Houston, TX | Feb 2017 |
| Vacserv Vacuum Cleaner Repair | Spring, TX | May 2012 |
| Vacuum Cleaners of Idaho | Twin Falls, TX | May 2012 |
| Vacuums Etc | Columbia, ID | Oct 2009 |
| Viking Village Sewing Center | Virginia, SC | Dec 2014 |
| Woody Mann Company | Richardson, MN | Nov 2009 |
| York Appliance Service | Toronto, TX | July 1981 |
| Zimm's Vacuflor | Farmington, ON | March 1997 |

Dealers, want more traffic and sales?

Sign up for the Int'l Sewing Month Promotion!

What is it?

A month-long promotion organized by VDTA•SDTA, that targets **YOUR CUSTOMERS**. It is **FREE** for VDTA•SDTA Members, and a Members-only benefit.

Your store receives a **MARKETING KIT** advertising "Sewing Month." Your store also participates in nationwide consumer **PRIZE DRAWINGS!**

VDTA•SDTA
VACUUM & SEWING DEALERS TRADE ASSOCIATION



September is
Int'l Sewing Month.
This year's theme:
"Seams Build Dreams"

*Don't wait to make more money.
Sign up to participate today!
Visit www.vdta-sdta.com
or call 800-367-5651*

Thought for the Month:

"Don't be afraid
to give up the
good to go for
the great."

~ John D. Rockefeller

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Sisterhood
Retreats

2018 VDTA•SDTA Independent Dealer of the Month

Sew Creative Fairport, NY

VDTA•SDTA happily names Sew Creative in Fairport, New York as May's Dealer of the Month. Owned by Jeanne Byassee and daughter Lisa Swisher, the 2-generation family business has been serving the Fairport and Rochester areas since 1974. The store caters to ALL sewing enthusiasts, with education at every skill level and designer-label fabrics for garment-making, quilting, and more!



After living in Ohio for a number of years, Jeanne Byassee and her husband relocated to New York to open a *Stretch and Sew* store near Penfield. They soon built it into the No. 1 franchise in the nation, with more than 30 employees. In 1985, the Byassees decided to transform their business model and open a new store, Sew Creative, on North Main Street in Fairport. By the late 80s, Sew Creative was successfully selling two machine lines – PFAFF and Baby Lock – which they proudly carry today.

In 1991 Jeanne's daughter, Lisa, began working in the store full time, taking on many day-to-day operations. When the industry shifted from sewing for *need* to sewing for *fun*, Jeanne and Lisa embraced the transition and were poised to support whatever trends came their way. Sew Creative became members of VDTA in 1999 and in 2017 moved to a new location that supports greater product selection and classroom capabilities.

As an integral part of the Fairport community, Sew Creative understands the importance of coming together to *do good*. Once a month, the store hosts a sewing event known as "Stitch and Flick" – movies are shown on a projection screen and attendees stitch a project for the local hospital, Women's

Shelter, or Foster Care center. The store also serves as a meeting place for the "Comfort Quilters" who meet twice a month and make/donate hundreds of quilts a year.

Undoubtedly, Sew Creative's success comes from creating a unique experience and offering a welcoming atmosphere to all who enter. They advertise regularly on television and work with an agency, plus rely on weekly email marketing. As a result, Sew Creative has been a consistent winner of PFAFF'S President's Award and continues to grow with both PFAFF and Baby Lock.

Jeanne's advice to other independent retailers is: "Make it all about the customer. Customers are our best marketing tool. Listen to what they want, and offer them more." *More* for Sew Creative has come in the form of a greater social media presence, expanding the *Kid's Stitch Club*, making their store dog-friendly, and adding a toy box and changing table to the store.

A big congrats to Jeanne, Lisa, and all the hard-working employees at Sew Creative on being named VDTA•SDTA's Dealer of the Month!



VDTA•SDTA Dealer of The Month

Company Name _____ Phone _____

Owner's Name _____ Web site _____

Address _____ E-mail address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Local Newspaper _____

1. What year was your store established? _____

2. How many stores do you operate? _____

3. How many employees do you have? _____

4. What product lines do you carry? _____

5. What services do you provide? _____

6. Is your business family run? How many generations? _____

7. What is your age group: ☐ 40 - under ☐ 41 - 50 ☐ 51 - 60 ☐ 61 plus

8. Check all equipment that your business carries:

☐ Vacuum ☐ Vacuum/Central Vacuum ☐ Vacuum & Sewing ☐ Janitorial

☐ Sewing Machines ☐ Quilt Shop with Sewing Machines ☐ Longarm machines

☐ Quilt Shop without Sewing Machines ☐ Other _____

9. Do you have and maintain e-mail lists of your customers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Do you have and maintain direct mail lists of your customers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Do you have a rental program for sewing machines? ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Do you rent time on a longarm quilting machine to quilters to machine quilt? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Do you offer sewing /quilting classes in your store? ☐ Yes ☐ No

On a separate sheet of paper or email (to mail@vdt.com) please answer the following

14. How often do you offer classes and what age group do you target?

15. Community projects you participate in or support.

16. Marketing plans you have done that draw people to your store.

17. Any awards received from a manufacturer or from your community.

18. What tips of success or advice do you have for other independent retailers in the industry?

19. Share a paragraph about the history of your business and how it has grown?

20. How often do you attend the VDTA•SDTA Annual Convention? IE: Every year, every 2 yrs, etc:

21. What makes your shop stand out in your community.

23. Are you a member of the VDTA•SDTA? ☐ Yes ☐ No

24. What year did you join? _____

Fax to: 515-282-4483

Mail to: Dealer of the Month, VDTA•SDTA, 2724 2nd Ave, Des Moines, IA 50313.

E-mail to: mail@vdt.com.

You may also visit www.vdt.com, click on "Members," and fill out the form online and submit.
You must be a current member of VDTA•SDTA to be selected as the Dealer of the Month.

The Enthusiasm of Youth & the Wisdom of Age

This year Cindy and I along with two of our staff attended the VDTA•SDTA Trade Show and Convention in Charlotte. So how was it? It was nothing short of extraordinary! We thoroughly enjoyed visiting Charlotte, a city we had never been to before. As is the case at every convention, we see the newest product, had networking opportunities with other dealers, and attended some really good convention seminars. We even had time to visit friends who moved to Charlotte about 3 years ago.

The transplanted Charlotte couple we visited with are about 30 years old, much the same age as the two staff people accompanying Cindy & I. Spending time with all four of these young people was an inspiration to me. I have been in the vacuum business for about 40 years and the sewing industry for about 25 years, enjoying every day of it. I love retail! Every day is different. Some days are easy, and some days are challenging, but every day is a little different and that's something I love.

Retail can also use up a lot of our energy. Attending our annual convention and working alongside enthusiastic people, especially eager-to-learn young people, are great ways to recharge my battery.

In our store, we have a variety of ages working together. Ages range from 27 to 74 years of age. What I love more than anything else is the family we have built over the last 3 years. Our three staff who fall into the "30s" age bracket bring many smiles to the faces of the people they work with. These are responsible young adults who are full of ideas and enthusiasm, bringing laughter to the store several times each day. Those of us in the 50s, 60s, and older have been in the industry for a good number of years and add much wisdom to the mix. We seem to have attained the best of both worlds: the enthusiasm of youth and the wisdom of age. Mix in a few jokes and pranks (I think the 74-year old laughs the most), and you have a fun store to work in!

And that brings me back to this year's VDTA•SDTA Show. The classes and seminars this year were nothing short of phenomenal. This is especially true of this year's "No Progress Without Change: A Vacuum and Floorcare Panel" moderated by Josh May from Tacony. Over the years I have had the opportunity to attend many seminars of this type and in some cases be on the discussion panel. Once the presenters finish and the audience questions

“Young people are the future of the industry. If we don't take the time to get them started and mentor them, our industry doesn't have a future.”

start rolling, it can turn into a very energetic learning experience. Such was the case this year with the "No Progress Without Change" vacuum panel presentation. This particular panel included a few young people who are passionate about their business and what they are doing. They have that "fire" in their heart and are doing something about it! There was also a great sewing panel discussion featuring industry veterans who shared lots of great information. My only complaint about this year's seminars is that in a couple cases, we had to make choices between two great seminars going on at the same time!

As mentioned earlier in this article, I truly love going to work each day. That being said, everyone needs to "refill" their tank once in a while. Going to the VDTA•SDTA Show is one of the ways I fill my tank. The other way is by bringing these 20 to 30-year-old young adults into our industry. These young people are the future of the industry. If we don't take the time to get them started and mentor them, our industry doesn't have a future. If these same young people don't make the most of the wisdom that industry veterans have to offer, they are throwing away a valuable educational resource. The enthusiasm of youth and the wisdom of age.

Make a trip to the 2019 VDTA•SDTA Show! Bring an up-and-coming young person or two and see what it can do for your business. See you back in Las Vegas for the 2019 convention, February 12-14.

Thoughts and ideas from our readers are greatly appreciated. Questions? Comments? E-mail: jimbarnhardt@msn.com

~Jim



JIM BARNHARDT

J & R Vacuum and Sewing
VDTA•SDTA Board Member

Are You Properly Protected?

The **Vacuum & Sewing Dealers Trade Association** is proud to announce the availability of business and professional liability insurance through our partnership with Association Business Programs. Whether you require a standard policy or a customized solution, they provide access to the best liability protection to suit your needs today, and as your business evolves. Coverages include:

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- Umbrella

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Announcement from SVP Worldwide

We are very pleased to announce that Barbara Harvey has been named President of North America Sales for SVP Worldwide. It is very rewarding for us to promote a long-time steward of our three prestigious brands, SINGER®, Husqvarna Viking® and PFAFF®, into this key role.

Barbara brings a wealth of experience aiding our valued partners to serve the spectrum of dedicated and enthusiastic sewers. She first started in the sewing/craft industry in 1982 where she had responsibility for sewing machine sales within a division of House of Fabrics, Inc. From there she has had increasing levels of responsibility aiding and guiding the growth of the sewing machine market in the USA. She joined SVP 20 years ago, where she has held numerous roles to positively impact product development, brand management, consumer engagement and industry growth.

Barbara is thrilled by the opportunity to lead this important market for us as she noted: "This is such an exciting time for SVP with our product development and consumer engagement plans across our three iconic brands. I am enthusiastically committed to growing the North America business by partnering with our great dealers." She truly embodies the tenets of our core mission "to be the Leading Global Authority in the sewing industry using our long-respected brands to passionately inspire and delight sewers of all levels."

**Please join us in congratulating Barbara
in this key milestone for her and our company.**

SVP WORLDWIDE

SINGER® VIKING® PFAFF®

The FabricLink Network Announces Top 10 Textile Innovation Awards for 2017-18

Remarkable advances in technology, sciences and the environment

The FabricLink Network (FLN) announces their anticipated Top 10 Innovation Awards for 2017-18. The award is presented to the 10 most exceptional textile-based materials and technologies that have launched during the past year and are commercially available. The Top 10 Textile Innovations for 2017-18 range from a super lightweight fabric that NASA will use for the next Mars landing, to apparel that provides cutting-edge pathogen protection to doctors, to regenerative polyester and nylon fabrics upcycled from discarded fishing nets and bottles from the ocean.

The top 10 textile innovators are recognized for technical achievements and originality that improve or advance the finished product applications and performance.

Top 10 Innovations 2017-2018

- **Ahlstrom-Munksjö PureArmor™** is a breathable impervious fabric that combines superior protection with great comfort for bloodborne pathogen and clean room apparel protection.
- **CORDURA® Brand, DuPont Tate & Lyle's Susterra® and DuPont™ Sorona®** fuel innovation with a new three-layer eco-efficient fabric.
- **Eastman Naia™ Cellulosic yarn** is a versatile yarn that combines sustainability and performance with a natural touch and is a light, silky and soft hand with hypoallergenic nature.
- **FilSpec Inc.'s FireFil™** is a new engineered yarn containing a glass multi-filament core yarn that is flame-resistant, cut-resistant and tear-resistant, offering triple protection to firefighters and industrial workers.
- **Heathcoat Fabrics' DecelAir Superlight™** is a new range of top-quality super lightweight parachute fabrics that will be used on the next Mars Rover landing.
- **Lubrizol's fast-drying X4zol™ -J** fiber technology takes apparel comfort and fit to the next dimension by combining 360-degree stretch and support with breathability and cooling properties.
- **"From Waste to Yarn"** is PALTEX's regeneration system that collects discarded fishing nets and plastic bottles from the ocean, which are then recycled to produce regenerative polyester and nylon fabrics.
- **Safety Components' Filament Twill Technology™** is a new innovative fabric construction used to produce lighter, stronger, more flexible textiles for firefighter turnout gear.
- **Honeywell's Spectra® Centurion™ composite fabric** is a high-performance material designed to make law enforcement apparel and equipment 40 percent lighter by eliminating stitching, extra fabric and webbing on plate carriers for body armor.
- **Teijin Aramid's Twaron® ComForte™ SB3** is one of the lightest ballistic protection fabrics for body armor available. Twaron® ComForte™ SB3 is very effective against high-energy semi-jacketed projectiles like .357 MAG JSP and .44 MAG SJHP.



SOURCE: The FabricLink Network

SewingMachinesPlus.com Announces Second Southern California Store Grand Opening

Grand Opening Event Held Saturday, March 24



SewingMachinesPlus.com is pleased to announce the grand opening of their second storefront location in San Diego, California, held Saturday, March 24. The store exclusively offers state-of-the-art sewing, embroidery and quilting machines ranging from the world's premier manufacturers such as Janome, Baby Lock, Pfaff, Brother, King Quilter, HandiQuilter, and BERNINA of America. The brand new 10,000 square foot store is located at 4606 Mission Bay Drive, San Diego, California.

SewingMachinesPlus.com Mission Bay hosted events and workshops designed for sewing enthusiasts at every skill level throughout its grand opening event, including a drawing for a range of sewing items given away such as: notions, patterns, books and a trolley bag filled with sewing accessories, plus two exquisite sewing machines – a HandiQuilter Stitch 710 and a HandiQuilter Stitch 210. In addition, special pricing was available on select machines and every attendee received a free gift.

Commenting on the opening, Ron Martin, owner of SewingMachinesPlus.com said, "Sewing and quilting have always been a passion of mine and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to open our second sewing, vacuum and fabric store in San Diego County. After opening my first sewing machine store in San Marcos, California several years ago and later working with my sons, Chris and Cory, to expand our services online, we were very excited for the opportunity to open a second brick and mortar location."

SewingMachinesPlus.com is family-owned and operated and includes a staff that also shares the love for the art of crafting, quilt-making, and sewing.

The company's CEO, Rick Leukert, stated, "We are very excited to become a business partner in the city and expand our brand and services to sewing and crafting enthusiasts in San Diego. We carry the most respected brands in the industry, and I am proud to exclusively offer all of these machines, fabric, and accessories. Whether you are a beginner, an advanced sewist, or just looking to learn a craft, we offer a variety of products and classes to meet your needs."

SewingMachinesPlus.com Mission Bay offers a variety of classes at different levels that focus on quilting, embroidery, clothing construction, and home décor. All sewing classes are taught in a large classroom that is equipped with 180-inch high-definition screens and 90-inch televisions for any instruction video or lesson that is being taught. The location also has a factory-trained service technician who can repair and service all makes and models of machines, and carries numerous vacuum brands.

For more information on SewingMachinesPlus.com newest Mission Bay location, please visit www.sewingmachinesplus.com/missionbay.php.



About the Company: Founded in San Marcos, California over 14 years ago, SewingMachinesPlus.com is one of the nation's top retailers with a proven reputation for offering state-of-the-art sewing and embroidery machines, sergers, embroidery software, fabric and notions. SewingMachinesPlus.com is family-owned and operated with two storefront locations in San Diego County, California and an online shopping website that caters to customers nationwide. For questions or to learn more, visit www.sewingmachinesplus.com or call 858-225-2739.

SOURCE: SewingMachinesPlus.com



Tom Proctor



Pat Bocka



Thomas Bianco



Cliff Brady



Paul LaPonte



Randy Thomas



David Epstein



Amy Baughman



Mary Hess



Jim Barnhardt



Bob Boffoli



Trail DeGondea

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board members for their hard work in
growing our association and industry!

Look for articles by your board in
upcoming issues of *SQE Professional* &
Floorcare-Central Vac Professional.

SBA Administrator Honors Nation's Top Small Businesses

Winners to be formally recognized in Washington, D.C. on April 29-30

Administrator Linda McMahon, the head of the U.S. Small Business Administration, announced today this year's Small Business Person of the Year winners from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. All of the winners have been invited to attend ceremonies in Washington, D.C. on April 29-30 where they will be honored with their individual award along with the naming of the 2018 National Small Business Person of the Year.

"It is my honor and distinct pleasure to announce the 52 winners from across the U.S. and Puerto Rico," McMahon said. "These small business owners define entrepreneurial spirit and best represent the 30 million small businesses that are the backbone and economic engine of our economy. I look forward to welcoming the winners to Washington when they are officially honored for their achievements."

Each year since 1963, the President has issued a proclamation calling for the celebration of National Small Business Week. National Small Business Week is set as the first week in May, and this year the dates are April 29 - May 5.

After the national awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., McMahon will continue National Small Business Week with a bus road show starting in Jacksonville, FL. Each stop she will meet with small business owners, visit small businesses, and hold roundtable discussions. Additionally, virtual events, recognition and educational opportunities throughout SBA's 10 Regions and 68 Districts will be held throughout the week.

2018 STATE SMALL BUSINESS PERSONS OF THE YEAR

ALABAMA

Charles W. Underwood II, Owner
C & R Movers, LLC
Montgomery, AL

ALASKA

Lori Brewer, President
Caffe D'arte Alaska/Alaska Coffee &
Restaurant Equipment
Anchorage, AK

ARIZONA

Dirck Theodor Schou, President & CEO
Catalina China, Inc. DbA HF Coors
Tucson, AZ

ARKANSAS

Joe Saumweber, Co-Founder & CEO
Michael Paladino, Co-Founder & CTO
RevUnit LLC
Bentonville, AR

CALIFORNIA

Matthew Cohen, CEO
Off the Grid Services, LLC
San Francisco, CA

COLORADO

Margot Langstaff,
Managing Partner - Majority Owner
Elisa Jane Hamill,
Managing Partner - Co-Owner
LifeHealth
Littleton, CO

CONNECTICUT

April Marie Lukasik, President
Bright & Early Children's Learning
Centers
North Branford, CT

DELAWARE

Kim Adams, President & CEO
Mountain Consulting, Inc.
Dover, DE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Denita R. Conway, President & CEO
PROVEN Management, LLC
Washington, DC

FLORIDA

Michael Zaffaroni, Owner
Fernandina Mulch & Stone, LLC
DbA Liberty Landscape Supply
Fernandina Beach, FL

GEORGIA

Peter Andrews Dugas, President & CFO
Tonya Barr Dugas, CEO
Dusoul Company
DbA Technical Services Audio Visual
Athens, GA

HAWAII

Reginald G. Perry, Manager
Barbers Point Aviation Services, LLC
Kapolei, HI

IDAHO

September Myres, President & CEO
Sundance Consulting, Inc.
Pocatello, ID

ILLINOIS

Rebecca Fyffe, President
ABC Humane Wildlife Control &
Prevention, Inc. DbA Landmark Pest Mgmt.
Schaumburg, IL

INDIANA

Michele Durante Meyer, President & CEO
Creative Solutions Consulting, Inc.
Indianapolis, IN

IOWA

Bob Simpson, President
Big River Packaging
Clinton, IA

KANSAS

David Sasson, President & CEO
OverstockArt.com
Wichita, KS

KENTUCKY

Lesme Romero, Owner/Manager
EZ Foods, Inc./DbA Lexington Pasta/
Lexington Pasta Garage
Lexington, KY 40505

LOUISIANA

Keith Porta, Managing Member
APC Construction, LLC
Harvey, LA

MAINE

Beth Shissler, President & COO
Donald Oakes, CEO
Sea Bags, LLC
Portland, ME

MARYLAND

Tamara Michele Beideman, Owner
Elizabeth Jane, Inc.
Dba Sweet Elizabeth Jane
Ellicott City, MD

MASSACHUSETTS

Joseph Melville, Owner
Gary Melville, Owner
Melville Candy Corporation
Randolph, MA

MICHIGAN

Albert F. Zehnder, CEO
Zehnder's of Frankenmuth
Frankenmuth, MI

MINNESOTA

Brenda Kay Nolby, CEO
Jam Hops Gymnastics Factory, Inc.
Ham Lake, MN

MISSISSIPPI

Barbara Alamsha, Owner/Operator
Tim Alamsha, Owner/Operator
Ear Candie Productions, LLC
Dba Rock U 2
Ocean Springs, MS

MISSOURI

Melissa Ann Smith, DDS, Owner
Washington Smiles Complete Health
Dentistry
Washington, MO

MONTANA

Charles "Skip" King, Owner
King's Ace Hardware
Billings, MT

NEBRASKA

Mark Anthony Santo
Mark VII Enterprises, Inc.
Omaha, NE

NEVADA

Medhi Zarhloul, Founder & CEO
Crazy Pita Rotisserie & Grill
Henderson, NV

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Mark Wentworth, President & CEO
Green View Technologies, Inc.
Rollinsford, NH

NEW JERSEY

Richard C. Spanier, President & CEO
Rudolph Research Analytical
Hackettstown, NJ

NEW MEXICO

Jasper Dutch Riddle, President
Noisy Water Winery & Cellars
Ruidoso, NM

NEW YORK

Snehal (Raj) Dayanidham Thakkar
Founder & CEO
Charter School Business Mgmt, Inc.
Dba FOREsight Financial Svc. for Good
New York, NY

NORTH CAROLINA

Andrew Michael Matroni, Founder & CEO
Innovation Catering, Inc.
Dba Queen City Catering
Charlotte, NC

NORTH DAKOTA

Kari Marie Weigel, Exec Dir./Owner
Sylvan Learning Center
Bismarck, ND

OHIO

David S. Nolan, President/CEO
Quality Control Services LLC
Cleveland, OH

OKLAHOMA

Tracy Lynn Evans, Owner & CEO
Woodward Wellness Center, LLC
Woodward, OK

OREGON

Matt Higgins, Owner
Coava Coffee Roasters, Inc.
Portland, OR

PENNSYLVANIA

William A. Campbell, CEO
Water Treatment Services
Dba First Defense Operations Mgmt
Monroeville, PA

PUERTO RICO

Alex Gomez, President
Tijuana's Bar & Grill Corp.
San Juan, Puerto Rico

RHODE ISLAND

Kelly Beth Mendell, President
MIKEL, Inc.
Middletown, RI

SOUTH CAROLINA

Ronald David McNeil, CEO
Hannah Solar Government Services
Charleston, SC

SOUTH DAKOTA

Kevin Nyberg, President/CEO
President/CEO
Nyberg's Ace Hardware, Inc.
Sioux Falls, SD

TENNESSEE

Joseph Powers, Owner
Green Cube Solutions
Blountville, TN

TEXAS

Von C. Washington Sr., President & CEO
IDA Technology
El Paso, TX

UTAH

Paul Casper Merrill, CEO/President
Casper's Ice Cream, Inc.
Dba Fatboy Ice Cream, Inc.
Richmond, UT

VERMONT

Sacha Mayer, CEO, Co-Founder
Christine Dodson, COO, Co-Founder
Mamava, Inc.
Burlington, VT

VIRGINIA

David S. Kyle II, President & CEO
Trademasters Service Corporation
Lorton, VA

WASHINGTON

Danny House, Owner
Dan The Sausageman
Burien, WA

WEST VIRGINIA

Douglas Tate, President & CEO
Alpha Technologies, Inc.
Hurricane, WV

WISCONSIN

Miles Harter, CEO
Curt Greeno, President
Dynamic Recycling
Onalaska, WI

WYOMING

Tyler Reed Miller, President
Earth Work Solutions
Gillette, WY

It's All in a Name

Brother dealer brings words to life with BES 4 Dream Edition Embroidery Lettering Software

Just like a pen to paper, the BES 4 Dream Edition Embroidery Lettering Software from Brother International Corporation is revolutionizing the crafting industry by bringing words to life through embroidery. Sharman and Richard Dorsey, co-owners of Sharman's Sewing Center, an Authorized Brother Dealer in Longview, Texas, have embraced this trend by unleashing the magic of Disney with the built-in designs found in Brother sewing machines.

Sharman's Sewing Center opened its doors 34 years ago after Sharman was convinced she should open her own sewing shop. She was working an office job and teaching monogramming at a fabric store when she was approached by an industry executive who suggested she go into business for herself. Her husband, Richard, who has a background in engineering, embraced the idea.

After almost 27 years in the same location, Sharman's Sewing Center relocated to a 9,500 square foot shop, where Sharman says they now have the space to make the customer experience better than ever. In 1996, Sharman and Richard expanded on their success and opened a second location in Tyler, Texas, which spans 4,500 square feet. Seven years later, they decided to up their game in the industry and joined the Brother

family of Authorized Dealers. "It was one of the best business decisions we made," said Sharman. "We were drawn to Brother for their amazing technology and the built-in Disney embroidery designs available in some of the machines. The quality of Brother machines, their ease of use, and company support made it the perfect partnership for us."

As an English major, avid sewer, and self-proclaimed Disney fan, Sharman combined her love for words and sewing to showcase the amazing Disney capabilities that are built in to some of the top selling Brother embroidery machines on the market today. "The BES 4 software is an amazing tool to enhance and expand the extensive built-in features in Brother machines," Sharman said. "I've been a Disney fan for as long as I can remember, and the technology in Brother machines allows users to bring the magic of Disney to life."

Monogramming is a centuries-old pastime where what's old becomes new again. "Everyone loves to see their name and initials in print," said Sharman. "Monogramming and embroidery are hot trends again, and we are focused on keeping the trend going by showing our customers the endless possibilities Brother machines and software have to offer."



Sharman believes offering her customers an up-close, hands-on experience is one of the best ways to demonstrate the endless design possibilities that come from using Brother sewing, quilting, and embroidery machines. She and her staff make product samples, such as tea towels and aprons, to showcase the capabilities of certain Brother machines. “Samples are an important part of our business,” Sharman explained. “It not only gives our customers a visual but fuels their inspiration to make it themselves.” Pairing samples alongside Brother machines has helped to increase sales over the years. Sharman explains that she has a gallery of samples on the walls of her shop, and she also sells kits to go along with some of the designs. “We are dedicated to sharing our passion with our customers and offering them pre-made kits is one of the best ways to sell machines and keep them inspired to make it on their own.”

Sharman’s Sewing Center is proud to sell the full line of Brother machines, software, and accessories. As part of their ongoing Disney and monogramming frenzy, Sharman says the BES 4 Dream Edition Embroidery Lettering Software, along with THE Dream Machine 2 XV8550D, the DreamWeaver XE VM6200D sewing, quilting and embroidery machine and the Innov-ís NQ3600D combination sewing and embroidery machine, have been true showstoppers when it comes to stitching out some of their most prized projects and samples.

“We are dedicated to sharing our passion with our customers...”

With over 840 embroidery designs – consisting of 101 designs and 199 pre-digitized fonts (including nine fonts) – the BES 4 Dream Edition Embroidery Lettering Software from Brother has more creative customizing and editing features than ever before. And Sharman pointed out that with the new wireless upgrade kit and BES Cloud web application, her customers now have expanded capabilities to unleash their creativity even further.

Sharman’s Sewing Center is a one-stop shop for sewing and crafting enthusiasts, featuring a fully-stocked fabric department. Sharman explains how she’s very particular when making her fabric selections. “Fabric is the palette for every design,” she explained. “It’s important to offer a selection that appeals to my customers. We have many Disney fans in our community, so I like to sell simple fabric to allow the design to speak for itself without competing with the material.”



There’s something to be said about running a successful business for over 30 years. “It’s about people,” Sharman said. She and Richard believe having a dedicated and loyal staff has been the cornerstone of their business. “We’ve been blessed with a staff that we call family,” she said. “Some of them have been with us for 25 years, and others just recently retired from our shop.” Sharman explains how her dedicated staff has brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to her business, and they continue to add value by passing that knowledge onto their younger staff. She credits Richard for being her rock throughout the years. “Richard is front and center in our business,” Sharman said. “From repair and sales to running the day-to-day operations, he is the motor that keeps our business running smoothly.”



Education and events are other vital elements that Sharman says have been instrumental in building her business over the years. Sharman's Sewing Center offers a host of classes that range from beginning sewing to exclusive classes which focus on special projects – all taught by in-house staff and outside educators. One of their lead educators and standout sales associates is Petrina Cude, a 25-year staff

“Brother has mastered the task of embracing industry trends.”

member who started her career at Sharman's Sewing Center when she was 29 years old. “Petrina is one of the most creative and productive staff members we ever had on our team,” Sharman said. “She's not only hardworking and dedicated to our business, but she's a die-hard Brother fan who has been instrumental in selling Brother machines.” Sharman explains how Petrina's love for THE Dream Machine 2 and BES 4 Dream Edition Embroidery Lettering Software is evident all around her store. “Petrina made the show-stopping Disney quilt that hangs in our shop. It's one of our prized projects that continues to spark excitement and help drive Brother sales,” Sharman said proudly.

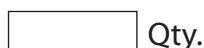
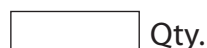
Keeping momentum and profitability up in one location is no easy task, let alone two locations. Sharman explains how they have kept up with the times by using social media outlets to promote and showcase their products and projects along with traditional mediums like radio and television advertising. “We've learned over the years that it's important to stick with what works, but it's even more important to try new things,” said Sharman. “It's all about getting the word out.”

Sharman's Sewing Center has earned its stellar business reputation in the community over the years – but it's an adorable 10-year-old Yorkie/Bichon mix named Chloe who welcomes their customers back, time after time. “Chloe is our store mascot,” Sharman said excitedly. “She makes everyone feel like family and adds another level of joy to our shop.”

Sharman and Richard look to the future with passion and excitement. “Brother has mastered the task of embracing industry trends,” Sharman said. “With Brother by our side, we are confident their commitment to cutting-edge technology will continue to grow our business.”



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400-1000 @ \$12

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2000 @ \$15

REPAIR TAGS

1000 @ \$11

It's a Win-Win with China Feiyue USA

This year, the VDTA•SDTA Show and Convention brought together many companies - new and old - under one roof to make connections and share business. One of those companies making a connection with the industry is China Feiyue USA, a sewing machine supplier stationed in Chino, California. Established in 1997, it was founded to offer after sales services to North American consumers for the corporation Feiyue in China. To date, they have enlisted hundreds of dealers nationwide to promote, distribute or service their products.



Kenneth Dong (right) with Judy Patterson, VDTA, and representatives of SVP Worldwide.

The company is run by Mr. Kenneth Dong, a man in the sewing machine business for over 20 years. "We provide great quality sewing machines for a reasonable price," says Kenneth, "nobody can beat our prices."

This year the Feiyue booth showcased all of their home sewing machine models, steam presses, dress forms, but also introduced their new industrial models.

"The basic industrial machines can help generate more sales while making a better profit," adds Kenneth. "We also offer customization to the machines you order. We can print the name of your business on the side of every machine giving your business an alternative

choice for your customers with better margins for your company." It would also deter customers from trying to price-match, because it would be a custom machine. It sounds like a great avenue for retailers who have built trust with their customers.

The sewing machines and products come from the Corporate Group Feiyue which was founded in 1986 by Mr. Jibao Qiu and is presently one of the largest non-governmental enterprises in China. Feiyue has developed a complete system of product development, mold creation, machine and spare part manufacturing, quality control, and after service. They then send the products to the warehouse in Chino, California ready to be shipped anywhere nationwide. In the field of sewing machinery, Feiyue has almost covered the whole range of sewing equipment. Currently it has a wide product line with 31 series and more than 300 products. The annual output of various sewing machines is 2 million sets, among which overlock sewing machines and stretch sewing machines account for 50% of total world production volume.

Kenneth Dong wants to get the message out that his company can help you make more profit while being able to sell to the customer for a reasonable price, making everyone happy. "We are all about the Win-Win situation." China Feiyue USA plans to be around for a long time and is looking forward to next year's VDTA. You can check out their products on their website at www.Feiyueusa.com. They also offer different products other than the sewing machines themselves, like gravity feed irons, dress forms, steam presses, sewing machine motors, and parts. For any questions or services (909) 613-1817 or email at info@feiyueusa.com.

Zero Waste Daniel Announces The Unveiling Of Exclusive Capsule Collection - Gene(cis): Why Do We Dress Like This? A Fashion Story

Pioneer in the “Zero Waste” Clothing Space Has Partnered with NYC’s First Gender Free Store for an Earth Day Pop Up

Zero Waste Daniel has announced an upcoming fashion presentation to unveil an exclusive collection—Gene(cis): Why Do We Dress Like This? A Fashion Story. The presentation was held at the newly-opened *The Phluid Project* on Thursday, April 19, 2018. The presentation served as a kickoff to a two week pop-up for Earth Day, where select pieces from the new collection were made available.

“Our mission at ZWD is to eradicate wasteful fashion industry norms by reimagining how to design and create clothing without any waste. We take pre-consumer trash in the form of fashion factory waste and turn it into unisex apparel using my original process, the fabric of the future which we’ve dubbed ‘ReRoll’,” explains Daniel Silverstein, Founder of ZWD. “Now in our third year, we have saved literal tons of scrap material from hitting landfills in the greater New York area. And this is just the beginning.”

ReRoll creates flat textile goods made from cutting room scraps. Scrap materials are collected from factories, production facilities, and designers. These fabric “scraps” or “waste” – a multi-million ton per year resource – are transformed into a raw material for new production. The ZWD line made from ReRoll has already saved thousands of pounds of fabric from being sent to landfills, and turned what other designers called “waste stream” into thousands of items of clothing.

In addition to Daniel’s work as a designer and retailer, he has also been an educator, working as a teacher at the Ashcan Art Studio from 2015-2016 and as a guest lecturer, keynote speaker, and critic at schools and events including the Martha Stewart American Made Summit 2015 & 2016, The Fashion Institute of Technology, The Art Institute of New York City, and George Washington University. On April 14, 2018, Daniel shared his mission and sustainable development goals for the fashion industry with more than six-hundred young students from over thirty schools at The Newark Archdiocese STEM Expo event.

“We are truly excited to be collaborating with NY-based designer, Zero Waste Daniel of ZWD. Daniel has shed an impressive light on the power and importance of both zero waste clothing and designing beyond the binary. Our companies’ missions are very much in line, as we both challenge the industry norms. We eagerly anticipate hosting such a forward-thinking designer in residency within The Phluid Project,” says Rob Smith, Founder and CEO of The Phluid Project.

About the Designer: Daniel is a New York-based clothing designer and zero waste pioneer. After graduating from The Fashion Institute of Technology in 2010, Daniel founded his namesake label, Daniel Silverstein, which appeared in boutiques and specialty stores around the world, including Oak, Fred Segal, Curve and Yoox.com. Entertainers such as Jennifer Hudson, Kristen Bell, Amber Valletta, and Ariana & The Rose have been seen at red carpet events and on magazine covers across the U.S. and England dressed in high end, zero-waste designs from this label between 2010-2015. In 2013, Daniel was a finalist on Season 2 of NBC’s *Fashion Star*. Then in 2015, Daniel embarked on a new journey with the creation of Zero Waste Daniel, or ZWD. In the Spring of 2017, Daniel co-founded PACKAGE FREE, a one-stop zero waste lifestyle shop, giving consumers the tools needed to instantly reduce their waste emissions in one place.

About the Company: Founded in 2015, ZWD is the first line of unisex zero waste clothing made from 100% scrap material [reroll]. It was created to be a closed loop option for the apparel industry to aid in ending the catastrophic pollution of the Earth. In the Summer of 2017, ZWD opened its flagship location at 369 Hooper Street, Brooklyn, New York. Learn more: www.zerowastedaniel.com

About the Project: The Phluid Project is a gender-free shopping experience; an unapologetically authentic lifestyle brand and community center. Inspired by identity and expression, The Phluid Project exists to empower individuals to be themselves and express themselves openly, without judgement or fear. In March 2018, they opened their doors at 684 Broadway New York, New York. Learn more: www.thephfluidproject.com

Source: Zero Waste Daniel

Autograph Your Quilt

Introduction by: Nikki Means

Article by: Eric Drexler, *Master of Free-Motion*

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I don't know about y'all, but I am personally NOT a fan of my handwriting (yikes!). But you know what, we should be proud of those messy, crooked letters! Eric Drexler, Sulky Educator and Master of Free-Motion, talks about how he incorporates his own handwriting in his quilts! Here's what he has to say...

The first time I even thought about "signing" my quilt was at one of my first guild lectures. When the ultra-fun trunk show of beautiful Sulky® quilts, and some of my own, was over, one of the guild members approached me and asked, "Why don't you sign your quilts?" I had never thought about it before and had always used pre-printed labels on the back. Since then I have always tried to slip my signature in there somewhere.



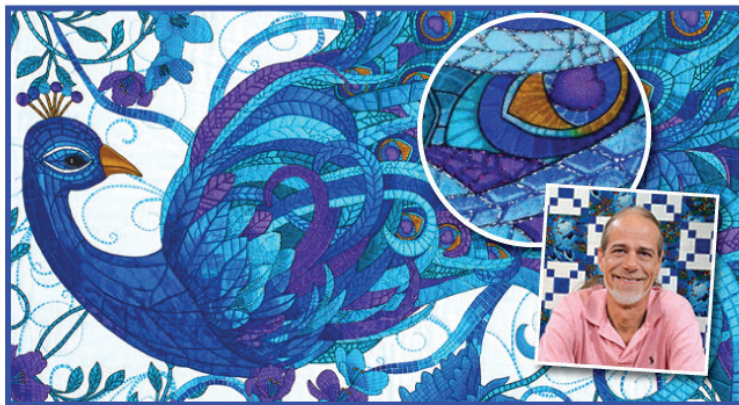
Most of the time it is visible, but if I can find a way to hide it in the quilt somewhere, it is way more fun. I have added it to the stippling which is easy to do in bubble letters with my name. I have also

hidden it in some of the artwork on my Zentangle quilts. Any way you do it is fine. Be proud of the work of art you created and sign your work like the artist that you are. Quilts last a long time and are often passed from generation to generation.

My all-time favorite way is to actually autograph on the quilt. I described a method in my Fearless Free Motion online classes. Start by writing your name on a piece of paper as large as you would like it to be on the quilt. You might have to do it a few times like I did because my (sloppy) check-signing signature is not like my (legible) autograph.

Next, lay a piece of water-soluble – such as Sulky Solvy®, Super Solvy™, Fabri-Solvy™, or Sticky Fabri-Solvy™ – over the autograph and trace it with either a water-soluble Fade-away, or FriXion™ pen.

If you are using Sticky Fabri-Solvy, simply cut it out, peel off the release sheet, and stick it where you want it. Of course, if you are using Sticky Fabri-



Solvly, you already know that you can just scan your autograph into your printer then print directly onto the 8 ½" X 11" pre-cut piece. Be frugal and make sure to write or print it in the corner so you still have plenty of space to play with later. For all the other Solvy Stabilizers, turn them over and lightly spray Sulky KK 2000™ (a non-flammable temporary spray adhesive) on the wrong side, then flip and apply.

Now you have a perfectly placed autograph without having to write directly on the quilt with the possibility of making a mistake.

Set your machine for straight stitch, feed dogs down, and free motion foot on. It is important to tie off at the beginning and end to avoid losing stitches. Trace the lines with the machine, making sure to pay attention to stitches per inch. This can also be done with zig-zag, but usually has to be larger writing to allow for the needle swing.

There you have it! I hope this helps. I hope to cover monogramming in an installment of Fearless Free Motion video, so be on the look-out!



Reprinted with permission.
Source: Sulky of America blog

New Quilting Books Brought to You by Martingale

Stash Statement - Make the Most of Your Fabrics with Easy Improv Quilts

by Kelly Young

Welcome to structured improvisation, where there's a plan in place...but still plenty of room to play!

Learn three methods for sewing together rectangles, squares, strips, and even the tiniest fabric scraps to create new yardage; then use the resulting scrappy fabrics in a dozen dazzling step-by-step quilt patterns. Start by working with just one color at a time to get the hang of improv piecing. Soon you'll progress to mixing colors and prints in scrap-packed quilts that will give a happy home to every piece of fabric you've ever saved!

Product ISBN: 9781604688818

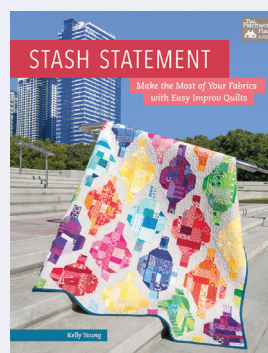
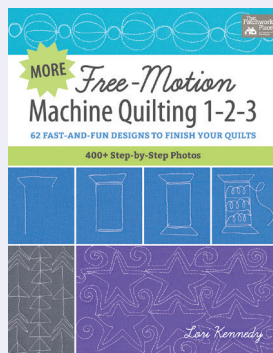
More Free-Motion Machine Quilting 1-2-3: 62 Fast-and-Fun Designs to Finish Your Quilts - 400+ Step-by-Step Photos

By Lori Kennedy

No fancy machine needed, no Ph.D. in quilting required – start free-motion quilting right now! Best-selling author Lori Kennedy is back with 60+ fun motifs and tons of tips, tricks, and techniques that can turn you into a top-notch machine quilter (yes, YOU!).

- Follow Lori's setup plan for stress-free stitching; then learn about doodling, troubleshooting, and mastering the perfect stitch.
- Put your pedal to the metal! Lori's seasonal and holiday motifs, backgrounds and fills, and "just for fun" designs will infuse your quilts with personality.
- Find advice for many machine-quilting challenges, including a section on how to quilt extra-special quilts--Lori's got loads of ideas to help you succeed!

Product ISBN: 9781604689242



Are You A Sewing Educator, Designer & Creative?

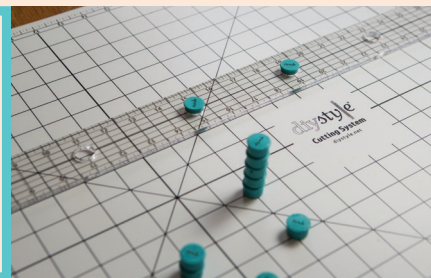
diystyle®

DIYStyle® is looking for you! Our new **DiploMAT** program will encourage your continued creativity, and help you expand your potential—while “attracting” new customers! Ask how to participate and get your own DIYStyle® Cutting System.

Designer opportunities are a large part of the DiploMAT program—earn more while promoting your classes, workshops, programs, patterns, techniques, and products.

Contact Cindy Cummins at cindy@diystyle.net or Ann Regal at ann@diystyle.net

Are You A Sewing Machine Dealer, Fabric Shop or Quilt Shop Owner?



DIYStyle® is looking for you too! Become an **Authorized Dealer** for The NEW DIYStyle® Cutting System. Our program helps you sell more with:

- MAP Pricing—Bulk Discounts—Flat Rate Shipping
- Affiliate Program—Dealer Locator
- Online Education and Product Support at DIYStyle.net—A Professional team for you and your customers!

The DIYStyle® Cutting System set MSRP is \$239. For purchasing information and to become an Authorized Dealer, contact Ann Regal, Sales Director at ann@diystyle.net, 314-800-4814.

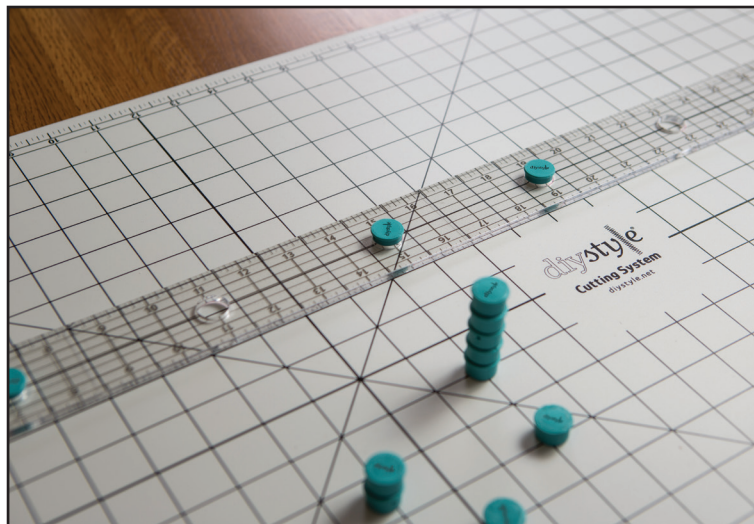
DIYStyle® Cutting System

Attracts New Customers

The team at DIYStyle® launched their new Cutting System this past March at the VDTA•SDTA Trade Show in Charlotte. This inventive cutting set-up was designed while working with hard-to-manage fabrics in the DIYStyle® studio. The “aha” moments were many at the trade show, as those watching the demo could truly feel the *attraction*!

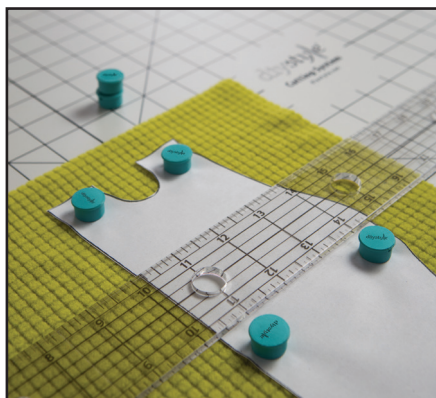
DIYStyle's unique Cutting System base set consists of a 24" x 36" two-sided, multi-use cutting mat, a set of powerful magnets, and a specially designed T-square/fabric alignment ruler. The mat features a gridded high-quality rotary cutting surface on one side, and a designer's cork surface on the reverse.

Whether your customers are cutting fabric or designing patterns, pins are a thing of the past. With the super strong, low-profile DIYStyle® magnets, your customers can cut right next to the housing. And the handy stacking design makes picking them up quick! The Professional T-Ruler is 36" long to span the widest part of the mat, and can be used to align patterns on fabric as well as cut strips and pieces. The ruler stays securely in place, as the magnets fit into holes in the ruler!



FEATURES OF THE SET:

- ~Dual Sided 24" x 36" Mat with Gridded Cutting Surface & Cork Pattern-making Surface
- ~SUPER Strength Magnets—Set of 12
- ~36" Professional T-Square & Fabric Alignment Ruler (for use with magnets)



Attract new customers, especially interested in Stretch knits

- Re-energize your serger, and coverstitch sales. Easily cut and sew the fabrics we wear today!
- Spotlight your stretch stitches. Increase focus on all your machines while creating with knit fabrics.

And don't forget about the Authorized Dealer Program

- MAP Pricing—Bulk Discounts—Flat Rate Shipping.
- Affiliate Program—Dealer Locator. Increase customer base!
- Online Product Support and projects at DIYStyle.net website. A Professional team to help grow YOUR sales!

THE NEW DIYSTYLE® CUTTING SYSTEM:

- **Reduces** cutting time by 2/3rds!
- **Increases** accuracy, Reduces frustration.
- **THE easiest** way to cut knits & hard-to-manage fabrics. No more fear cutting luxury and expensive fabrics.
- Works for **all fabric types**. Less waste, more projects.

Become an Authorized Dealer today!
Ask about the DiploMAT program for designers & educators! For purchasing info and details, contact Ann Regal, Sales Director, at ann@diystyle.net, 314-800-4814.



Increase Your Sales with Shannon Fabrics Education

We all know that successful events and classes bring in extra sales, but sometimes you need a little help to make it happen. Last year Shannon Fabrics launched an education program to do just that. Well-known for their soft and luxurious fabrics, the company now offers the opportunity to bring top-notch education into your shop.

Available to members of their Sweet Rewards program, Shannon Fabrics education programs include three options to fit you and your store's needs.

- * **Host your own class with material support from Shannon Fabrics and provide your own teacher.**
- * **Bring in a local brand ambassador, where available, to teach classes and demos.**
- * **Bring in their national educator to teach weekend workshops or special events.**

For each of these types of events, stores are encouraged to provide the kits necessary for students as well as the notions and tools recommended for their fabrics.

Shannon Fabrics provides support for these events by sending shops a variety of materials that can be used to make the classes a fun learning experience that encourages students to buy more fabric, the right notions and tools to use with it, as well as providing inspiration for new projects and patterns to try.

Teresa Coates, the company's Event & Education Coordinator, has worked with dozens of shop owners, tailoring classes to their specific inventory, classroom availability and customer base. This one-on-one effort makes all the difference in the success of workshop, positioning your shop as one with quality education. This also leads to higher Shannon Fabrics sales during and after the event.

"Just having an educator in the store has helped us boost sales and not just for the day," explains Faye Grandalen of Faye's Henhouse in Mayville, ND. "Four months later, hardly a day goes by that we aren't selling kits and yardage. It's been a long-term benefit for us."

Classes and events build community, sales and confidence! If you're interested in hosting a Shannon Fabrics workshop or bringing in a guest educator, reach out to Teresa Coates at teresa@shannonfabrics.com or give them a call at 323-234-5252.



See what materializes

A thread for every purpose.

Serging & Blind Hem

Decorative Stitching

Robison-Anton

Machine Quilting

Quilting & Applique

Signature

Perma Core®
QUILTER'S EDITION

Garment & Fashion Sewing

Intressa

Home Décor & Crafts

Gütermann
creativ

A color for every project.

A&E Gütermann
www.SeeWhatMaterializes.com

A CELEBRATION 125 YEARS IN THE MAKING



LET'S FACE IT.

It took 125 years to get here. We're going to need more than a day to celebrate. Anniversaries like this don't come around everyday. It absolutely must be celebrated and celebrated with a great deal of pomp and circumstance all year long.

And so we celebrate. Not just a quality machine. *Although it is certainly one for the ages.* Not just our passion for precision. *We are Swiss after all.* Not even our commitment to innovation. *We are ever pushing the boundaries.* No, we choose to celebrate what we believe makes BERNINA the company that so many sewists, quilters, crafters and makers have loved for generations. We celebrate you. You and the creativity that makes you a force to reckon with. We celebrate your love of the handstitched, hand-crafted, and handmade. We celebrate the fact that BERNINA has had a role to play in bringing your creativity to life.

WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT YOU.

From the first BERNINA created to help sewists execute projects perfectly to today's machines that sew, quilt and embroider with the precision and perfection BERNINA is known for, our customer is at the center of each new innovation. That hasn't changed in 125 years, and never will. So it's not surprising that the theme we've chosen for our year-long anniversary celebration is Celebrating Your Creativity! After all, creativity longs to break the boundaries. It shouldn't have to be limited by what a machine can and cannot do. So BERNINA has consistently, time and time again, developed machines, feet and all kinds of accessories to support creativity at every level. Your creativity has always been both our motivation and our inspiration.

WHAT A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY!

Being a fourth-generation family owned company is one of our greatest assets. Aside from 'quality', 'family owned' is the most mentioned trait people say they love about us. It's who we are and it's how we choose to do business, as a family. That's why from the start we've been very proud of our Dealer network. And we've always strived to make them proud to be in the BERNINA family too. Our Dealers are some of the most creative business people we've ever met! We are in awe of you. In fact, we want to give you the gold!

BERNINA GOLDEN 125TH ANNIVERSARY FOOT #1

What drives foot traffic better than an amazing BERNINA foot? A BERNINA 24-carat gold coated foot, that's what. And YES, we said 24-carat gold. The Golden 125th Anniversary Foot #1 is a shining start to our year of celebrating our customers and our Dealers! You and your customers are going to love this one-of-a-kind collector's item.

125
YEARS



BERNINA 530 LIMITED EDITION GOLD

To add to our year of golden opportunities, we've rolled out the B 530 Limited Edition Gold sewing machine. Its beautifully designed gold faceplate gleams with sales opportunities. Add that sparkle to all the benefits of this feature-packed 5 Series machine and your bottom line becomes the real winner!

SPECIAL EDITION TAKES THE GOLD

To further celebrate our 125th, we've created an exclusive Anniversary Edition line of our best machines and given them a touch of gold. But these machines are more than just another pretty faceplate, they are fully-loaded with all the top-of-the-line features PLUS spectacularly bundled with a gold package of amazing accessories—accessories that will only be available with these Special Edition machines. We can't wait to share these beauties with you. But for now, all we can say is you better get ready to experience a real BERNINA gold rush!



WHAT HAS 125 YEARS TAUGHT US? CREATIVITY RULES.

At BERNINA, we've always believed that we were all made to create. To express ourselves. To make a contribution. To make a difference. And we think it's a belief worth celebrating! So we're inviting you to join us anyway you can in celebrating your creativity. Make a quilt. Share a blog. Teach a class. But most of all, be creative!

And when you do, please don't hesitate to share it with us. We want to give your creativity its due. Send us stories, pics, memes! Show us what you and your BERNINA were made to do! #BERNINA125

We look forward to being inspired by you for another 125 years!

made to create **BERNINA**

VDTA•SDTA Show Recap

The 2018 VDTA•SDTA International Trade Show and Convention moved out of Las Vegas to beautiful Charlotte, North Carolina. While **the 2019 Show will return again to Las Vegas** – both dealers and exhibitors enjoyed the change of scenery along with the chance for new business.

Pre-show classes began Thursday, March 22, as some exhibitors offered technical trainings and seminars. On Friday, March 23, more dealers arrived for the annual Powerhouse Roundtable by Dealers for Dealers, held in the afternoon. This 3-hour event took place in the classroom wing of the Charlotte Convention Center, as six top dealers of the Vacuum and Sewing Industry presented both proven methods and new ideas on how to grow local business and strengthen the industry.



Then at 6:30 PM, a crowd gathered at the Convention Center for the Industry Awards Presentation. VDTA•SDTA President Judy Patterson led the presentation, honoring many of the industry's top individuals and stores. Honorees of the night included: the show's Seminar Instructors, 20 & 30 Year VDTA•SDTA Members, 2017 VDTA•SDTA Dealers of the Month, and 2018 VDTA/Epstein Scholarship Fund Donors. Of course, we can't forget the 2017 VDTA•SDTA Dealer of the Year – Close to Home, owned by Ron and Marilyn Gatinella; 2018 VDTA/Epstein College Scholarship Recipients – Emilee Edman and Ian Proctor; and

the 2018 Hall of Fame Inductees – Maddie Bushman, Robert L. Hines Jr., Barbara Perry, Paul LaPonte, and George Moore. For a complete list of the outstanding businessmen and businesswomen honored at the show, please visit www.vdta-sdta.com.

After the Awards Presentation, attendees took a short walk over to the NASCAR Hall of Fame where the Industry Cocktail Reception was held. From 7:30 PM on into the night, attendees were "revved up" to see famous race cars displayed on "Glory Road." With beverage stations and Southern comfort food, everyone loved the energetic atmosphere and fun experience.



Saturday, March 24 saw the first day of the show. At 9 AM, dealers listened to Dave Ferguson, the Leader's Coach, as he delivered the show's keynote address: *The Leader's Ladder: How You Climb Defines your Success*. Many additional classes were held after the keynote, and we are happy to say the classrooms were overflowing! A few of the classes offered Saturday were: The Bionic Cleaning Era with Hizero, The Embellish™ Dealer Program with Hope Yoder and Ricky Brooks, Introducing Sew Much Cosplay™ with Cheryl Sleboda, Getting the Most out of Your Staff and Your Self with Ken Bank, Bringing Your Products to Life with Travis Hickey and Chris Black, **and more!**



The Show Floor first opened at NOON on Saturday. Dealers explored a wonderful, new space, meeting with their longtime vendors as well as new companies who joined the show! Some highlights of the show floor included the New Product Showcase Gallery and the PFAFF Through the Ages Display. The show floor closed for the day at 5 PM, and dealers had the night to attend special exhibitor events, eat at the city's top-rated restaurants, and explore the night life of the "Epi-Centre" only blocks away from the show.

On Sunday, dealers had more opportunities to attend classes. Sewing classes offered were: SCHMETZ Needle Education, Garment Sewing with The Fit Doctor, YOU Can Create an Online School and Course, Clover Professional Series-The New Buying

Criteria, Embracing the Vintage Sewing Enthusiast, **and more!** Some floorcare classes included: Central Vac Education Track, Hide-A-Hose 101, Zone Cleaning with Central Vacuums, and the well-received panel, No Progress Without Change.

The Show Floor again opened at NOON, and dealers had their last chance to vote for their favorite New Products in the New Product Showcase. Winners of the New Product Showcase were announced late in the afternoon on Sunday, and are featured in this issue on **PAGE 38**. Along with the New Product Showcase winners, independent judges named the Best Booth Winners of the 2018 VDTA•SDTA Trade Show, also featured in this issue on **PAGE 36**.

To show our appreciation for all the dealers who made the trip to Charlotte, VDTA hosted Dealer Appreciation Social Hour from 3 - 5 PM on the Trade Show floor with beverage stations and popcorn carts. Giveaways during this event included prizes only for dealers, and a couple lucky dealers walked away with *Dinner For Two* (up to \$150) in Las Vegas during the 2019 Trade Show, and *5 Nights Stay at the Westgate* during the 2019 Trade Show.



After the show closed for the evening, all were invited to attend the VDTA/Epstein Charity Fun Night and the annual VDTA/Epstein Charity Tournament. Before the tournament kicked off, attendees could do some "Mystery Shopping." With a \$20 donation, attendees received a mystery item, wrapped in a gift bag, donated by industry manufacturers and distributors. Some of the prizes donated included a JV222 stick vac by Johnny Vac, T300 Titan Upright by Steel City, Husqvarna Viking Jade Sewing Machine by SVP Worldwide, Janome 2122 Sewing Machine by Janome, and many more! We truly can't thank our prize sponsors enough!

After the Mystery Shopping ended, the tournament kicked off. Players were seated at 1 of 10 tables sponsored by: RNK Distributing, Steel City, Janome, SVP Worldwide, Tacony Corp, Elna, and Essco. As players bluffed, called, and went all in, it came down to the final table. Congratulations to 1st place winner Rodney Kamdar of M&M Vacuum, 2nd place winner Kevin Fick of Omaha Vacuums, and 3rd place winner Robert L. Hines Jr. of Sun Sew Vac.

Then all too soon, Monday rolled around. At NOON the show closed; it was the end to a fantastic VDTA experience. We hope you all were able to meet a lot of new people, do a lot of good business, and learn a few new things for your business. The VDTA Experience in Charlotte was terrific. Like you, we are energized with ideas, especially how we as your Association can serve you better.

The 2019 VDTA•SDTA International Trade Show and Convention will be in Las Vegas, February 12-14 with specialty classes beginning February 10. If you have suggestions or ideas for next year's showexperience, including classes, please email us at mail@vdt.com. And don't forget to check out more pictures from the show online at www.vdt-sdt.com and our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/VDTASDTA/>.

Article by: Craig Dorman and Tonya Tienter

SPECIAL EVENTS

This year's VDTA•SDTA Convention was filled with special events. Here is an overview of just a few:



POWERHOUSE ROUNDTABLE

It was a can't-miss panel of dealers who discussed successes, challenges & solutions that can help your profits grow in 2018 and beyond! Panelists were Marie Walters, Paul LaPonte, Capi Saxton, Ron Goldkorn, Rhonda Lopez, and Jeff Vogel. Sponsors included Baby Lock, SVP Worldwide, OESD, Janome, Famore Cutlery, BERNINA, Brother Int'l, and RNK Distributing.



NO PROGRESS WITHOUT CHANGE: VACUUM & FLOORCARE PANEL

On Sunday, March 25 at 10 AM this panel and open forum discussed and presented answers directed at the core of our changing world. The panel provided the tools and knowledge to turn change into progress - and ultimately profit. Panelists were Jeremy Chavis, Evan Strittmatter, Christopher Blakeman, Sandy Berkshire, Denise Rairdin, Josh Sutherland, and Moderator Josh May.



KEYNOTE: THE LEADER'S LADDER HOW YOU CLIMB DEFINES YOUR SUCCESS

On Saturday, March 24 at 9 AM, speaker Dave Ferguson of the Leader's Coach shared his proven strategy for increasing leadership influence at every level!



COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Held at the
NASCAR
Hall of Fame



2017-18 AWARDS AND HONORS

Scholarship Winners



Emilee Edman
accepting scholarship
check from Joe Epstein



Ian Proctor
accepting scholarship
check from Joe Epstein



2017 Dealer of the Year Close to Home Sewing Center



Hall of Fame Inductees



Robert L. Hines Jr.



Paul LaPonte



George Moore



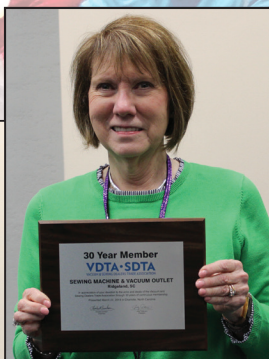
Maddie Bushman
accepted by Gazmend Gjyzezi



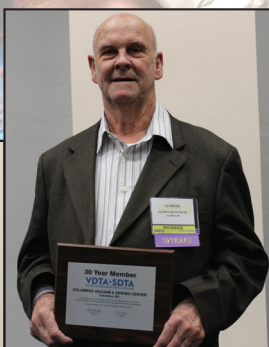
Barbara Perry
accepted by children Scott & Alyssa



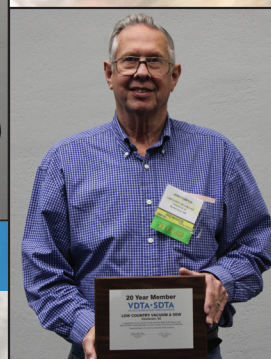
City Wide Vacuum



**Sewing Machine &
Vacuum Outlet**



**Columbus Vacuum
& Sewing Center**



**Low Country
Vacuum & Sew**



**Rich's Sewing
& Vacuum**

20 & 30 Year Members

20 & 30 Year Members who were not in attendance received their award via mail.



*Left: Cana-Vac,
Best Booth 200-300 ft²*

*Bottom: SVP Worldwide,
Best Booth 1,000+ ft²*

The Best Booth winners at the 2018 VDTA•SDTA Trade Show brought flare and futurism along with raving dealer reviews. Congratulations to:

Blank Quilting
Best Single Booth 100 ft²

Canavac
Best Booth 200-300 ft²

Riccar
Best Booth 400-700 ft²

Essco
Best Booth 800-900 ft²

SVP Worldwide
Best Booth 1000+ ft²



BEST



Upper left: Riccar,
Best Booth 400-700 ft²

Upper right: Essco,
Best Booth 800-900 ft²

Bottom: Blank Quilting,
Best Single Booth 100 ft²



Best Booth winners along with New Product Showcase winners were announced Sunday afternoon at an awards presentation in the Exhibit Hall. Winners received a Best Booth trophy along with the challenge to top their already-outstanding booth for next year's VDTA Show!

BOOTHs

NEW PRODUCT SHOWCASE



CWP Technologies



Airocide



Kimberbell



RaNae Merrill
Quilt Design

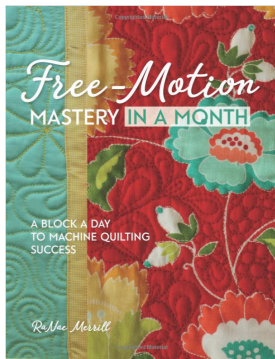


SVP Worldwide



H-P Products
Central Vacuums

With over 40 entries in the 2018 New Product Showcase, dealers had the opportunity to peruse the most visionary items in the industry's future. Exhibitors could enter a new product in one of the following six categories: Sewing, Quilting, Vacuum, Central Vacuum, Embroidery and Miscellaneous. Dealers voted for their favorites in each of these categories all day Saturday, the first day of the show, and part of Sunday. Voting ended Sunday afternoon; the ballots were tallied and winners announced at the entrance of the exhibit hall. New Product Showcase winners received a trophy and the opportunity to advertise with VDTA's special "New Product Winner" logo for the next year.



RaNae Merrill - Free Motion Mastery in a Month

Quilting

Embroidery

Dealer Exclusives - Volume 2

Wondering what to teach at Embroidery Club? Would you like to highlight fun embroidery products? Need a project for new machine owners? Dealer Exclusives Volume 2 by Kimberbell Designs provides 13 exceptional designs, complete program CD, instructions, PowerPoint presentations for teachers, digital marketing materials, and Shop Guide - plus table top display stand.



Sewing



SINGER® Featherweight™ C240

The SINGER® Featherweight™ C240 sewing machine is the first machine in the SINGER® line to feature Integrated Even Feed (IEF). This advanced technology allows you to sew any fabric, & through multiple layers of fabric, without worrying about layers shifting. This is superior sewing in a compact and portable design.

ReadiVac Eaze

Floorcare

The ReadiVac Eaze by CWP Technologies is a lightweight convertible stick vacuum with a lighted power nozzle. It easily converts to a handheld vacuum for above floorcare cleaning, and uses a rechargeable Lithium-ion battery.



Prestige Pro Electric Powerhead

Central Vac

The Prestige Pro from H-P Products is a deluxe, 14" wide, 1.8 amp electric powerhead. The Prestige Pro includes a one-piece wand and high-end features including: 6-setting height adjustment, pivoting/rotating neck, headlight, wrap-around bumper, edge-to-edge cleaning channels, 4 rubber wheels, and a jam indicator warning light. MSRP \$329 (includes wand).

Airoid

Miscellaneous

Airoid is a filterless air sanitizing device originally developed by NASA to use aboard the International Space Station. It uses catalyst technology to remove the indoor air problems too small for a filter. VOCs, mold spores, bacteria & viruses are all completely eliminated, leaving crisp, clear breathable, air. Join the Clear Air Revolution today!



Guest Writer Month for Dealers!

**Submit by
June 30th
to:
tonya@vdta.com**

The VDTA•SDTA is YOUR industry trade association, and *SQE Professional*™ and *Floorcare-Central Vac Professional*™ are YOUR trade magazines! We are proud to feature press releases, regular viewpoint columns, and the latest developments in news.

We'd like to expand this selection even further and encourage you - the dealers - to take up the pen and submit articles for publication. If you're feeling anxious about this opportunity and have questions, here is what you need to know:

- **Don't worry about re-inventing the wheel:** Afraid you don't have anything "new" or "exciting" to say? Don't worry! Some of the best articles we publish serve as reminders of best business practices. Just write about what you see, know, and do.
- **...But don't be afraid to offer something new:** If you have a contrary opinion or novel idea, definitely write about it! We aim for our magazines to be the place of critical and innovative thinking.
- **So you're not wordsmith? That's OK!** New writers - or people who want to be writers - fear they aren't good enough. They are afraid they'll make spelling mistakes and grammar errors, that their writing isn't "polished." THAT'S OK! My job as an editor is to do the "polishing" and "correcting." Your job as a writer is to put an idea on the page.
- **No commitment required:** If you submit one article, that's great! If you submit two, that's great. If you submit them monthly, that's great too.
- **Common topics:** If you don't know where to start, consider one of these topics.
 - Customer Service (good or poor)
 - Training Employees
 - Motivating Employees
 - Advertising and Marketing
 - Sales (big-ticket items and gateway items)



Our July and August issues will feature "Dealer Guest Authors" - dealers who are interested in writing but may not have submitted articles before or have not submitted them consistently. **First-time and experienced writers wanted.** A half-page requires about 250 words. A full-page article requires around 500 words. No photographs are necessary, though they are welcomed.

Be a Writer! Send in articles by June 30th or earlier to managing editor Tonya Tienter at tonya@vdta.com

Recognizing Our *Associate Members*

A & E GUTERMANN'S
A E CARTER DISTRIBUTING
ALUTRON MODULES LTD
AMETEK FLOOR CARE & SPECIALTY MOTORS
AMERICAN & EFIRD
APC FILTRATION INC
ARROW COMPANIES LLC
ARTISTIC
AVNAN ELECTRO INC
BABY LOCK USA
BERNINA OF AMERICA
BISSELL HOMECARE INC
BRANOFILTER GMBH
BROTHER INTERNATIONAL
CANA-VAC SYSTEMS
CANPLAS INDUSTRIES LTD
CLOVER NEEDLECRAFT INC
COATS & CLARK INC
CWP TECHNOLOGIES
CYCLOVAC - TROVAC INDUSTRIES LTD
DESCO VACUUM CLEANER SUPPLY
DOMEL
DULWICH HILL SEWING CENTRE
DYSON INC
ELECTRO MOTOR LLC
ELECTROLUX CENTRAL VACUUMS - BEAM
ELECTROLUX SMALL APPLIANCE GROUP
ELNA INC
EMERSON COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL SOLUTIONS
ENVIROCARE TECHNOLOGIES LLC
ESSCO
EURO-NOTIONS INC
FAMORE CUTLERY / SPECIALTY PRODUCT SALES
FLEXAUST-TUEC
FLEXIBLE TECHNOLOGIES
FLOOR CARE EQUIPMENT LTD
GRAND RIVER RUBBER & PLASTIC
GROZ-BECKERT
HIDE-A-HOSE INC
HOME CARE PRODUCTS LLC/ DVC ZHAO HUI FILTER
HOOPSISTERS
HOOVER VACUUMS
HORN OF AMERICA INC
HOST / RACINE INDUSTRIES
H-P PRODUCTS INC
HUSQVARNA VIKING SEWING MACHINES
IROBOT CORPORATION

JANOME AMERICA
JKL GLOBAL SALES INC
JOHNNY VAC
JOYA DISTRIBUTING CO
KENT INVESTMENT / CARPET EXPRESS
KIRBY COMPANY
LINDHAUS USA
LINDSAY MANUFACTURING
M D MANUFACTURING INC
MIELE INC
MODA FABRIC
MYRATON INDUSTRIES
NADAIR INTERNATIONAL
NORTHPOINT COMMERCIAL FINANCE
NUERA AIR / DUO VAC
ORECK VACUUMS
PACVAC PTY LTD
PFAFF SEWING MACHINES
PLASTIFLEX GROUP NORTH CAROLINA
PRO-LINE DISTRIBUTING
PROTEAM
PRYM CONSUMER USA
QUALTEX GLOBAL LTD
REXAIR LLC
RICCAR AMERICA
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SHARKNINJA
SIMPLICITY VACUUM
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SIRENA INC
STEEL CITY VACUUM CO INC
SUZHOU MINKANG FILTER CO LTD
SVP WORLDWIDE
SYNCRONY FINANCIAL
TACONY CORPORATION
TACONY SEWING CENTRAL
THORNE ELECTRIC CO
TIP TOP PARTS
TRANSNATIONAL
TRI-TECHNICAL SYSTEMS INC
TTI FLOOR CARE NORTH AMERICA
UNITED NOTIONS
VAC PRO'S
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The Small Business Climate

Vastly Improved, New Economic & Workforce Report

The National Small Business Association (NSBA) and ZipRecruiter released the NSBA 2017 Year-End Economic Report, which shows decade-highs in small-business outlook. For the first time since 1997, the majority of small firms – 53% – reported increases in revenues, and the overwhelming majority – 84% – are confident in the future of their business.



“In the past two years, the number of small-business owners who say they expect to see an economic expansion in the next year has more than doubled,” stated NSBA President Todd McCracken. “Unfortunately, the ever-rising cost of healthcare remains the biggest challenge small businesses face.”

Featured in the report is a section on workforce and hiring, which zeroes-in on hiring practices, wages, and automation issues as well as recruitment and retention trends. Although 37% of small business owners have increased part-time employees in the past five years, the majority were new part-time employees, whereas just 17% reduced current full-time employees to part-time.

And while one-third of small businesses expect to implement some kind of automation in the next year, of those, only 9% say it will result in fewer employees. In fact, many more (24%) say it will result in needing more employees.

“We tend to think of corporate America when we think of career ladders, however small businesses have ample opportunities for career growth,” stated Cathy Barrera, chief economist at online employment marketplace ZipRecruiter. “Sixty-six percent of all small businesses offer opportunities for promotion, and at companies with more than five employees, that number rises to 85%.”

37% of small business owners have increased part-time employees in the past five years; the majority were new part-time employees.

There were few surprises when it comes to policy, particularly the fact that “end the partisan gridlock and work together” is the number one thing small businesses want policymakers to do.

Please follow this link to download the full report:
<http://nsba.biz/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Year-End-Economic-Report-2017.pdf>

About the Organization: Celebrating 80 years in operation, NSBA is a staunchly nonpartisan organization advocating on behalf of America’s entrepreneurs. NSBA’s 65,000 members represent every state and every industry in the U.S. Please visit www.nsba.biz or follow us at @NSBAAdvocate.

About the Company: ZipRecruiter is the fastest-growing online employment marketplace. Powered by industry-leading artificial intelligence matching technology, it connects millions of SMBs and job seekers through innovative mobile, web, and email services. Founded in 2010, Santa Monica-based ZipRecruiter now has close to 1000 employees in two states and three countries.

SOURCE: *National Small Business Association*

5 Keys to a Winning Website Content Strategy

By: Susan Friesen

Getting qualified visitors to your website is like the holy grail of online marketing. And once they are there you want to keep them there. Having content that is relevant, engaging and compelling is key to keeping visitors on your website. But how do you do that?

Here are five ways to crafting attention-grabbing content your visitors can't resist.

1. Less is More

On your home page, visitors want to know immediately who you are, what you do, how you help them, and why they should choose you.

Choosing the right words for this really matters. You want emotionally engaging text and images that are benefit rich, command attention, stirs curiosity, and leads them to action.

Craft powerful headlines.
Write in short sentences.
Keep it simple.

Professional copywriters can help you express your message in a powerful way so your visitors will immediately know they are in the right place.

2. Keyword Rich

Write for your audience but also keep search engines in mind. Do research to see what top keyword phrases your target market audience uses to find the kinds of services or products you offer.

Without "stuffing", incorporate these keywords in the text of your website copy. Not only will you be speaking the language of your audience, but you will rank better in the search results as well.

3. Build Trust

People want to do business with those who are professional, reliable, and get proven results. Don't give them a reason to doubt you.

Ensure you have these bases covered:

- Carefully proofread your website for spelling and grammar errors
- Check all links to ensure they all function properly
- Add testimonials from happy clients
- Reveal the results you have created for others
- Demonstrate your thought leadership and competitive advantages.

4. Easy to Scan

Busy visitors won't read your website word for word. It's really important to make sure the highlights of your message can be gleaned from a quick glance down the page.

This means using brand-coordinated colour headings that are bolded with a larger font as well as a different font face to help guide your visitor's eyes down the page.

Use bullet points (but not too many) and call-out boxes to call attention to key points. Add relevant photos and graphics to draw the eye in and add interest. Also make use of white space.

5. Calls to Action

Every page should be designed and written with a logical call to action you'd like them to take. Aside from having a link or button at the bottom of each page that directs the reader to their next step, here's some other suggestions:

- Offer a relevant free giveaway that can capture their contact information that will enable you to build the know, like and trust factor with your audience
- Display your phone number in a prominent place to further enhance the trust factor
- Offer a free consultation
- Feature a coupon or special offer.

If your website isn't converting visitors into leads or sales, incorporate these tips to help you leverage your website as a powerful way to connect with prospects. Simple tweaks can make a big difference in the results you achieve and with conversion.

And if you do have many of these tips in place but your website is still performing poorly, then it's time to talk to a website professional who can do a site analysis and uncover other problems you may not be aware are happening.

About the Author: Susan Friesen, founder of the award-winning web development and digital marketing firm eVision Media. If you are new to Social Media and online marketing or find it overwhelming and confusing, my monthly group coaching program, AMPLIFY! Business Academy <http://amplifybusinessacademy.com/> is a perfect way for you to incrementally learn the best strategies and tactics to help you grow your business online.

Article Source:


<http://www.articlebiz.com/article/1051643988-1-5-keys-to-a-winning-website-content-strategy/>

Are You Worth More Than 6 - 12 Minutes of Training Every Six Months?

The U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics found that companies with fewer than 100 employees gave only 12 minutes of manager training every six months. Organizations with 100-500 employees provided just 6 minutes. And if this holds true for managers, how much training do front-line employees get?

A long-term research project commissioned by Middlesex University for Work-Based Learning found that from a 4,300 workers sample, 74% felt that they weren't achieving their full potential at work due to lack of development opportunities.

The lesson here: invest in retaining and constant training of your present employees. After all, the cost of retaining present employees is much less than the cost of replacing them. Help employees expand their knowledge by offering more training options. I have always recommended that organizations train and re-train all employees to carry out their roles to the highest standards, and deliver high quality services to customer. Customer Service is the bedrock of all companies whether they believe it or not. So it only makes sense to constantly train and raise the standards of employees.



Jack Canfield tells us in his book *The Success Principles* to "Learn more to earn more."
Good advice.

Why Invest in Continuous Employee Training and Development?

Some organizations ignore continuous training session for employees as they feel (1) they are expensive; (2) employees miss out on their work time while attending these sessions or; (3) their employees will leave. What they fail to understand are the benefits of these continuous training sessions and how they contribute to the organization in the greater scheme of things. Benefits of conducting these programs are far greater and long-lasting. Let's take a look:

- **TAKES CARE OF WEAK LINKS:** Helps to reduce weak links and ensure the same mistakes are not repeated.
- **INCREASES EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION:** Shows employees that they are valued. They will know the training they do can take them into other positions within the organization – positions with better growth opportunities and/or better pay.
- **BOOSTS EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE:** Continuous training empowers employees. It gives them confidence and keeps them up-to-date on new developments. This confidence pushes them to perform better.
- **TRAINING ON YOUR TIME:** Because employees are being trained on your time, they see that you value them enough to invest in them. You offer them an opportunity to be an integral part of the company with opportunities and successes.
- **STAY AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION:** Make sure your staff is constantly advancing and you will continue to move forward and be more competitive in the marketplace. Standing still can kill your business.

Increasingly, high performing organizations today are recognizing the need to use Customer Service training and development practices to enhance their competitive advantage. The image of an industry and of individual employers is influenced by the extent and quality of staff training and development.

Unfortunately, *Time* magazine was right: “Business in general spends too little time training and motivating front-line employees whom they treat as the lowest workers on the ladder.”

Regular training is well worth the investment. Motivate employees to read books on successful people, on successful businesses, and taking a stand on innovative ideas. I firmly believe too many people are bystanders and the fear of failure keeps them locked into positions they have outgrown.

Jack Canfield tells us in his book *The Success Principles* to “Learn more to earn more.” Good advice. I personally read at least two books a month. I like to keep up on new trends, new ideas, new thoughts, new faces, and how people got to where they are.

Whether a company’s training takes place on-site or online, the benefits are great.

“Ongoing Customer Service training is important not just to employee development, but it also affects the success of your business.” ~John Tschohl

About the Author:

John Tschohl is a professional speaker, trainer, and consultant. He is the President and founder of Service Quality Institute (the global leader in customer service) with operations in over 40 countries. John is a self-made millionaire traveling and speaking more than 50 times each year. He is considered to be one of the foremost authorities on service strategy, success, empowerment, and customer service in the world. John’s monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.



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Company Information

Name: _____ Title: _____
 Company Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Website: _____
 Number of stores? _____ Years in business: _____ Submit Copies of Business and Tax Certificate

Membership Category

☐ **Independent dealer enrollment: \$110.**

Identified as any dealer whose principal business is the sale of merchandise and services directly to the consumer (end user).

☐ **Associate member: \$625 each year.**

Identified as a wholesale manufacturer/distributor/supplier. Businesses located in the U.S. or International.

☐ **International member: \$150 each year.**

Identified as a dealer not located in the U.S. or Canada.

☐ **Miscellaneous Membership: \$150 each year.**

Includes: Manufacturer representatives, independent consulting firms, and advertising agencies.

SEWING\QUILTING

- ☐ Sewing Machines
☐ Knitting Products
☐ Quilting Machines
☐ Longarm Machines
☐ Embroidery Machines
☐ Sewing Parts/Accessories
☐ Notions
☐ Fabrics-Fashion/Quilting
☐ Sergers
☐ Other: _____

FLOORCARE

- ☐ Hand/Stick Vacuums
☐ Central Vacuums
☐ Stick/Broom Vacs
☐ Water-based Vacs
☐ Steam Cleaners
☐ Janitorial Products
☐ Stain Removers
☐ Vacuum Parts/Accessories
☐ Backpack Vacs
☐ Upright Vacuums
☐ Canister Vacuums
☐ Air Fresheners
☐ Air Purifiers
☐ Polishers & Buffers
☐ Other: _____

Dealer Membership & Renewal

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| 1 Year Membership | \$110 |
| 2 Year Membership | \$190 |
| 3 Year Membership | \$250 |

Multi-Store Membership Renewal

Associate Membership

International Dealer Membership

Miscellaneous Membership

Sewing Educator Alliance Membership

\$150
 \$625
 \$150
 \$150
 \$60

- Do you attend VDTA•SDTA conventions? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 • Do you have a repair department? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 • Do you teach sewing or quilting lessons in your store? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Payment Information

All payments must be made in U.S. funds

☐ Check ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa Amount: \$ _____

Cardholder Name (Print): _____

Card #: _____ (CCV# _____) Exp Date: _____

Card Registered Address (If different than above): _____

Signature: _____

Is this a one time membership payment? ☐ Autopay (next membership payment due in 12 months)
☐ This a one time payment, thank you.

Me-Made-May is Here!

Connect with your customers by asking them how they celebrate Me-Made-May

Me-Made-May has arrived, and for those of you unfamiliar with the event, it's a month-long sewing and crafting challenge created by writer Zoe of the blog "So Zo...What Do You Know." Participants endeavor to wear clothing items or accessories they've made themselves throughout the month of May with a pledge on Zoe's blog site. Now in its 8th year, Me-Made-May is a crafting phenomenon that keeps growing and reaching hundreds of sewists.

The challenge works on both a personal and community level, as an individual sewist or group can participate. For instance, a single sewist might pledge to wear a self-stitched clothing item every day or a group might pledge to wear five "me-made" items a week between its members.

So how can you - the independent retailer - benefit?

Connect: Connect with your customers and ask them, "How are you celebrating Me-Made-May?"

The customer who is familiar with the month-long challenge will launch into their plans, and you get to help meet their project and product needs.

The customer who doesn't know about the challenge will ask you questions about it. Now you have a chance to explain the month-long event, and add that "It's not too late to join in!" Hand out a flyer with Me-Made-May information. Especially encourage your customers to complete an Un-Finished Object, or "UFO" as Zoe says, by the end of the month. Then offer product recommendations that could make their pledge easier. Urge them to take a pictures and post them in your store's showroom or online.

Use the challenge of Me-Made-May to highlight the love of sewing that surrounds your store and community.

May-Made-May IS:

- Taking pride in your sewing and crafting abilities, no matter your skill level.
- Wearing and re-wearing handmade items throughout the month, building a more sustainable wardrobe.
- Completing an unfinished project.
- Discovering the next sewing technique you'd like to learn.
- Building community with other sewists in your area.
- Challenging! Push yourself, and you'll love your sense of achievement.

Me-Made-May IS NOT:

- A Contest of "Selfies": Photos are fun, but are not required. While taking pictures helps participants stay accountable and share their creativity, no need to focus on photo-fame.
- A Reason to "panic-sew": As Zoe's blog says, don't try to sew a whole new wardrobe. Rather, make a few new items and rediscover older ones.
- A Rivalry: Don't despair if someone's serger skills are better than yours, if their budget for fabric is bigger, etc. Find unity in a shared hobby.

Let us know how Me-Made-May goes for you!

**Email your store's experience to
VDTA Editor Tonya, tonya@vdt.com**

SCHMETZ Hosts Visitors

By Rhonda Pierce



SCHMETZ recently had visitors from the Industrial Division of SCHMETZ Germany. To help SCHMETZ executives better understand the consumer market, many activities were arranged. Yes, we had traditional meetings and visited retail shops, but we ended the week with a star-studded designer showcase with five designers from the Chicago area. Each designer presented their special niche in the marketplace. The result was aptly described by SCHMETZ as “astonishing!” The day was laced with energy, talent, savvy and a passion for creativity.

These five business women demonstrated grit, talent, creativity and strategic work. With hard work, that never goes out of style, they make awesome contributions to the sewing industry that we love. Without a doubt, Cheryl Sleboda, Ebony Love, Reen Wilcoxson, Frieda Anderson, and Angela Wolf are five shining stars that make sewing even more fun!

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Winners

1st place: Rodney Kamdar,
M&M Vacuum (right)

2nd place: Kevin Fick,
Omaha Vacuums (middle)

3rd place: Robert L. Hines Jr.,
Sun Sew Vac (left)

After the show closed for the evening, all were invited to attend the VDTA/Epstein Charity Fun Night and the annual VDTA/Epstein Charity Tournament. Before the tournament attendees could do some "Mystery Shopping." With a \$20 donation, attendees received a mystery item, wrapped in a gift bag, donated by industry manufacturers and distributors.

After the Mystery Shopping ended, the tournament kicked off. Players were seated at 1 of 10 tables sponsored by: RNK Distributing, Steel City, Janome, SVP Worldwide, Tacony Corp, Elna, and Essco. As players bluffed, called, and went all in, it came down to the final table. Congratulations to 1st place winner Rodney Kamdar of M&M Vacuum, 2nd place winner Kevin Fick of Omaha Vacuums, and 3rd place winner Robert L. Hines Jr. of Sun Sew Vac. You can make an individual monetary donation to the VDTA/Epstein Scholarship fund anytime. Just visit www.vdta-sdta.com.

Show PICTURES





Classifieds

Business for Sale: Owner retiring after 40+ years - For sale profitable retail sewing machine store servicing tri-state area in North Texas. Built-in repeat service business, loyal clients, and highly-trained staff in desirable high traffic area. Turn-key - all stock, office equipment, tools, gauges, etc.- the works including complete customer list. Sales in excess of \$500,000 annually and growing. Owner will consider partial financing. Priced at \$150,000. Please email Cjm12400@gmail.com for more information. (3-3)

Business for Sale: Move to paradise? 125K. Well established Vacuum, Sewing machine business located at a main intersection in beautiful St Augustine, Florida. Contact asewvac@gmail.com. (3-6)

Business for Sale: Vacuum cleaner sales and service. 35 years of successful operation, upstate NY, Saratoga county. \$166,000 building available. Rent/buy. Store view. www.hotvac.com. Contact David Swinton. 518-587-2177. Hotvac@hotmail.com. (3-3)

Business for Sale: Turn-key Sewing Supplies Business FOR SALE. Owner retiring after 43 years. NYS industry leader. Patchogue, NY. Listed at \$199K. Call 1-631-288-6333. (0-0)

Business for Sale: Vac and Sew shop, established, growing community. Between Tuscon and Phoenix, only shop for 70 mile radius. Selling for health reasons. 25K. info@thevacdoctor.com. (1-1)

Help Wanted: TOPS VACUUM & SEWING. HIRING FOR ALL POSITIONS! Longarm Installer - Experience with HandiQuilter a must • Sewing Mechanic - Experience necessary (Brother/Babylock) • Vacuum Sales/Service - Simplicity/ Miele/Oreck • Web Developer/ Unique Content Writer - any web experience? • Telephone Customer Service (vacuums). Good At Your Craft? - Relocate To Florida! Top wages paid on all positions. Email resume to Greg Bank, Owner - gregoryabank@gmail.com.

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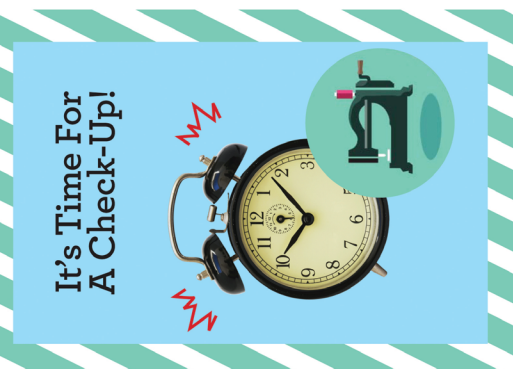
MAKE: _____ SERIAL #: _____ COVER: _____ Bobbin Case _____ Presser Foot _____
MODEL: _____ Hard Plastic _____ Soft _____ None _____ PowerCord _____ Cassette Cam _____
Foot Control _____ Thread _____

Customer Name: _____ Date: _____

Standard Tune-up includes but not limited to:

| ITEM | Check | ADJUST/LUBE | REPLACE | ITEM | Check | ADJUST/LUBE | REPLACE |
|-------------------|-------|-------------|---------|----------------------------|-------|-------------|---------|
| Hook/Needle Clear | | | | Needle Guard | | | |
| Needle(s) | | | | Power clean inside | | | |
| Needle Bar | | | | Clean & Oil | | | |
| Needle Plate | | | | Broken teeth on gears | | | |
| Bobbin Case | | | | Check & oil take-up lever | | | |
| Feeddog/Hgt. | | | | Presser foot alignment | | | |
| Belt | | | | Lift operation | | | |
| Bobbin Winder | | | | Tension release | | | |
| Gears | | | | Balance | | | |
| Timing | | | | Sew off straight & zig zag | | | |
| Upper Tension | | | | | | | |
| Take up Lever | | | | | | | |
| Lights | | | | | | | |
| Motor | | | | | | | |
| Electrical/Cords | | | | | | | |
| Housing | | | | | | | |
| Reverse Feed Bal. | | | | | | | |
| Thread Guides | | | | | | | |
| Knives | | | | | | | |
| Loopers | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|----------|---|----|----|
| SUN. | MON. | TUES. | WED. | THUR. | FRI. | SAT. | PROMISED | / | AM | PM |
|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|----------|---|----|----|



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MEMBER

Customer Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Working ☐ Not Working ☐ Call w/Est. ☐ Warranty
☐ Basic ☐ Tune-up ☐ Complete ☐ Install Parts Only

Test Sew: _____

Software: _____

ESTIMATES:
INITIAL ESTIMATE (Includes Parts & Labor) \$ _____
Non-refundable Deposit: \$ _____
Deposit/Fee Paid by: ☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card
Reassembly fee is estimate is declined: \$ _____
Customer Notified ☐ by phone ☐ in person by: _____

Customer Signature _____

REVISED ESTIMATE (Includes Parts & Labor) \$ _____

Authorized by: _____ Date: / / Time: AM PM

Repair Completed by: _____ Date: / / Time: AM PM

Customer Contacted by: _____ Date: / / Time: AM PM

Machine picked up: _____ Date: / / Time: AM PM

Signature _____

Your signature constitutes acceptance of the above work as being satisfactory and equipment has been returned in good condition.
Please see shop policies

PAYMENT:
☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card

Subtotal of parts, Labor & Tax _____

Deposit Paid _____

TOTAL DUE _____

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HOW DO YOU SOLVE PROBLEMS?

When you solve problems the same way, you assume there is only one possible solution or one solution that works. That approach may become a limiting belief that costs you time and money.

Years ago, I lived in an apartment with no laundry facilities. Luckily, I found a nearby laundromat. The family-owned business tried to engage with customers, with a whiteboard that featured the laundry tip of the week.

The tips were always about stains and after a few weeks, I noticed something. The tip was always the same: *Take some powdered Tide detergent, mix with water, and rub the paste into the stain. Wash with the rest of your clothes.*

The stain could be grease, wine, or chocolate, but the solution was always the same. While I'm not a laundry expert, I had a feeling the advice was of limited value. A visit to the American Cleaning Institute's website shows a wide variety of stain removal processes.

The laundromat's management was kind in giving out advice, yet obviously limited by expertise. I'm sure some customers followed the tip and were disappointed in the outcome. You can't solve problems the same way.

Maybe at work, you're disappointed in some of the answers you're receiving when it comes to challenges. Consider this process to help you think of better solutions:

THE MONEY GAME

Consider how you'd solve the problem if you had \$10 or \$10,000. This can open the door to creative thinking and help you scale solutions to your budget. Make sure the responses are grounded in reality. You're not allowed to say, "We'd just hire Superman."

TRAVEL THROUGH TIME

Ask if things stay the same, how much will the problem or the solution cost you in one year? Put a price tag on the total disruption.

For example, a copier that breaks once a month may require monthly service repairs. You should also consider the cost of people going elsewhere to make copies, while the machine is broken. Suddenly, the cost of a new machine may be more attractive.

REMEMBER REJECTED IDEAS

In the past, a new solution may not have been pursued because of objection X, Y, or Z - Perhaps something like a high price tag. Since that discussion, marketplace competition may have lowered the cost or improved the offering. It's wise to revisit the solutions that were rejected.

CONSIDER OUTSIDE ADVICE

We live in a world of abundant online review. It's a great starting point for searching for new solutions to problems. Old-fashioned networking also provides a chance to talk shop with your peers.

In isolation, an organization's ideas may grow stagnant. Empower through education. Sometimes a shared challenge may be solved through a united response. That process doesn't happen if everyone stays silent.

Over time, a problem could define the success of your organization. Don't solve problems the same way.

About the Author: Ken Okel speaks to smart leaders and associations who want to unleash employee production, performance, and profitability. He introduces them to lessons learned from his time in TV News, Disaster Relief, and running a Professional Ballet Company. He wrote the book, *Stuck on Yellow* and is the host of the 2 Minute Takeaway Podcast. Ken's weekly productivity tips can be found at: www.KenOkel.com.



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