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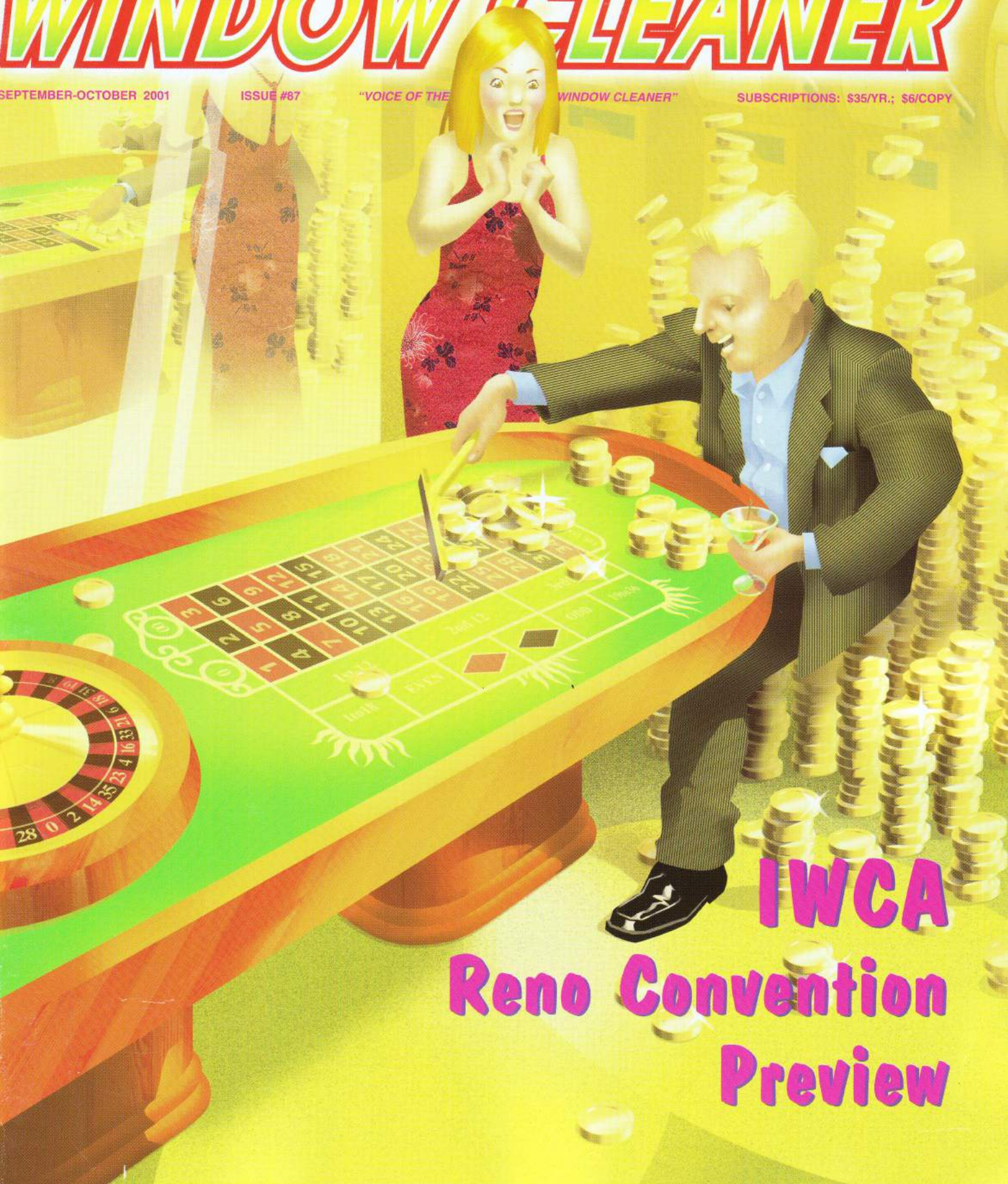
WINDOW CLEANER™

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**IWCA
Reno Convention
Preview**

Tech Toys

Technology is getting sophisticated. Computers are getting new, updated, operating systems which are more stable, attractive, and fast, beginning with the Macintosh System X and soon a new Microsoft version for the PC environment.

Computers are getting so fast, hard drives so big, RAM so cheap, that there is plenty of hardware and power to create videos. LCD multi-media projectors are also reasonable so that you could edit your own videos and then project them large onto a screen in your own home theater.

Since the trend in movie projection are multiplexes with smaller images compared to the grander movie theaters of the past, why not create your own theater, especially with the advent of DVD's to show Hollywood movies, or make your own?

Digital cameras are now coming out in the 5 mega-pixel size so that you can create larger images, in addition to snap shots. Color inkjet printers are fast and accurate. Printer technology has really come of age.

So the desktop revolution of the mid-80's which helped launch this magazine is giving way to the current digital video revolution. In addition to making your office efficient, you can use some of these same tools for creating your own multi-media environments.

Digital video editing can be done simply with software such as Imovie or more professionally and complex with such programs as Apple's Final Cut Pro or Adobe Premiere, and others.

See you in Reno in January! Bring your cameras.



Richard

*Richard welcomes
your comments:
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Yes, dear, I've been gambling. Now I want you to meet your new husband.

Safety Tips From the Safety Seminar

by Lisa Parks, *Seattle, WA*

Window cleaning veterans and novices alike were treated to doses of common sense, practical tips, and updates on the latest research on equipment and procedures in the window cleaning industry at the recent IWCA safety seminar in Seattle, Washington.

The safety seminar revolved around issues involving hydraulic lifts, ladders, bosun chairs, and swingstages. Sessions branched out to cover concerns particular to both high-rise and residential window cleaning.

Ladder safety surfaced frequently in the seminar, as most accidents on the job involve ladders. Attendees learned when ladders pop, proper footing on ladders, and the correct angles, and reviewed knots and side-loading.

According to Stefan Bright, the IWCA Safety Director, "At these seminars, the most common topics of discussion are safety issues involving ladders, ropes, and chairs. Rope chairs are generally a prime concern. There are about six deaths a year from rope use (out of an estimated four to five million ventures over the side of tall buildings) — the margin for error is obviously slim."

Bright kicked off the seminar with chilling stories of accidents and deaths

in the industry over the years. The stories were not a cheap scare tactic; they were meant to underscore the absolute necessity of taking precautions on a job that involves many possible perils.



Barry Durmaz of Cleaning Specialists in Portland, Oregon, took the message to heart. "The accident stories are very motivating." His employee, Mustafa, agreed. "It was good to hear about all the accidents. I now think of my

job differently. I realize I must be careful to focus, to always concentrate on what I am doing, and not be thinking of home, or other things."

"Although," adds Durmaz, "more people do die in auto accidents. You're more likely to be hit by lightning than fall off a building. But just like getting into a car, taking a few moments of precautions on the job is like putting on a seat belt. That's what we're here for today."

Attendees share with you specific tips they picked up at the seminar:

- If you use a sectional ladder, or piece ladder, the ladder should be kept vertical to keep it weighted properly. Sectional ladders have a lot of flexibility. If you keep it straight up and down, it keeps it more structurally sound.

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Otherwise, if you tilt it at an angle, the weight is distributed over parts without reinforcement.

- Vibrations loosen fist grips. Check your fist grips every day before using your platform, because they will loosen by themselves.

- On uneven terrain, make sure the ladder is even on the top and bottom. If even one corner is not touching, your stability is compromised. You can stick rubber skid plates at the foot of the ladder so it doesn't move while you're on it.

- Don't tie off a work rope to a stink pipe. A lot of people do, but the device you tie off to should hold at least four times the weight of what may be loaded. For instance, for someone my size and my partner, with the equipment we use, there should be 5,000 pounds of support. Stink pipes aren't even close to being strong enough.

- When you attach a safety line, you want to wrap it around the structure a couple times so it doesn't put pressure on the knot.

- Don't tighten and load a horizontal line if you have to rappel off the line. Don't tie the rope across the top too tight. If you do, it puts too much pressure on the line. For example, on a tight line, the weight of a 210-pound man makes the tension on the line equal to 10,000 pounds. But if you just give the right amount of slack, the tension on the rope can be lowered to your weight, the 210 pounds.

- You've heard that a knot in a rope decreases its strength by 50%? We researched that, using a new rope and a figure 8-loop knot, and found that the best results yielded only a 22% decrease in rope strength.

- Over the last three years, there have been 18 deaths using the rope descending system. Of those, 14 were caused because they were being pushed horizontally. Never try to go horizontally, or you compromise your safety and stability.

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From the IWCA Board Meeting in Seattle

As reported by William R. Griffin, President, Cleaning Consultant Services, Inc., Seattle, WA

l to r standing:

Ron Friman, Marc Lebel, Tom McGrath, Stefan Bright, Tom Trinen, Bob Zeolla, Don Chute, Jon Colton.

Sitting:

Mike Amoroso



Photo courtesy William R. Griffin

The IWCA began its three-day board meeting in Seattle, WA on October 5, 2001. I stopped by to say hello and joined the board for a pizza and salad lunch. Being we had a few minutes after lunch, I posed a few questions to the group and here's what they had to say:

AWC: Has the September 11th terrorist acts had any impact on the window cleaning industry?

Jon Colton: "I am seeing some impact on malls, retail stores, hotels and restaurants. There is less traffic. I'd say business might be off about 15-20%."

Bob Zeolla: "I'm seeing the same thing, but I am anticipating and hoping it will only be temporary and business will pick up again in the near future."

Don Chute: "I'm primarily in the residential market and I haven't seen any impact, except for the first week, when not much of anything got done. In fact I ran an ad offering to donate 5% of my sales to the Police and Fireman's Fund and that seemed to go over pretty well with my customers and generated some new business as well."

Stefan Bright: "Market segments and customers seem to be responding differently. I think it's important that our members focus on their marketing efforts and be especially aggressive in going after new business. Being discouraged won't help anybody."

Marc Lebel: "There is a lot of uncertainty in business today. It's important that business owners monitor receivables and budgets. You have to run your business more tightly today. There just isn't any room for overage or sloppiness. You've got to bid right and stay on budget if you want to make money and stay in business when there is a downturn in the economy."

AWC: Has the convention format or subject matter changed because of the current state of affairs?

Stefan Bright: "We have added new slants and supplements to the convention program to help members deal and cope with changing times."

"Some things we are doing differently this year include having the speed contest on one night and a special fun night on Thursday. There is a seminar on security issues and a board meeting that everyone is welcome to attend."

Bob Zeolla: "I think it's a great time to travel. I came from Boston and my round trip ticket was \$160. Others came from New York, Canada and all over the country at discounted prices. None of us experienced any problems on the way here. My advice is to book early and shop around for the best deal you can find. There are plenty of open seats right now, so it's a great time to travel."

Don Chute: "I'd encourage all our members to attend the convention in Reno this year. There are many excellent presentations that will provide useful information that attendees can take home with them to run their businesses more efficiently and profitably."

Jim Grady: "This year we have more paid speakers than ever before. Members have told us they want to hear more professional speakers and so that is one of the changes we have made to this year's program."

William R. Griffin has over 26 years experience as a consultant of technical and managerial aspects of cleaning, and is the author of numerous books: 206-682-9748; wgriffin@cleaningconsultants.com

