



# The PELICAN



Open every Saturday at the north-east corner of Atlantic Boulevard and Dixie Highway at 8 a.m.

## Hometown News & Views

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## State of the art Mr. Squeaky Car Wash offers clients speed, service and quality

By Phyllis J. Neuberger

PELICAN STAFF

Mr. Squeaky Car Wash at 499 W. Atlantic Blvd., next to RaceTrac Gas Station, opened in January of this year and those who have tried it are addicted to the experience.

"I've been coming here very often ever since it opened. I like a clean car and you can't beat this quality wash for \$8," says Rick Yerich. "And it's quick. I'm out of here in less than five minutes. It doesn't pay to work up a sweat in my driveway."

David Rigby, who is vacuuming his car interior, nods in agreement. "I like the car wash here compared to what I get in other places, and I really like the free vacuum. I can take my time and really clean the interior because there's a lot of space and no one rushes me."

That's what owner Richard Sasso likes to hear. He's delighted to show first time customers how to operate the automated cashier check in system. He flashes a welcoming smile and speaks to them in English or Spanish. He's quick to point out the 'Help button' which will bring a live attendant to assist those who are confused. Customers drive in, select from six different car wash choices, swipe a credit card or insert cash. Once done, they drive their own car up to an attendant who guides them into a 135-foot long tunnel, packed with car wash cleaning equipment including machinery, high pressure water, soap dispensers, dryers and soft cloths. Sasso says, "Many car washes try to do the job in a 35-foot tunnel. They cannot get the result we get with the newest technology and top quality equipment available. Our exterior wash only takes about three minutes and a full service takes only 10. We offer white glove service and wash every model from Buick to Bentley with the same attention to detail. That is one reason our result is superior. Speed is another. There is no comparable value in South Florida."

That's quite a claim, but then Sasso is an unusual car wash owner.

Just 32, he was a practicing Miami lawyer for a few years when he decided he wanted to get out from behind a desk and interact with the world in a non confrontational way. "I love the outdoors and visiting with



Mr. Squeaky Car Wash, 499 W. Atlantic Blvd., Pompano Beach, next to RaceTrac Gas Station, opened this past January. "I've been coming here very often ever since it opened. I like a clean car and you can't beat this quality wash for \$8," says Rick Yerich, a Mr. Squeaky customer.

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people," he says. "So I began to check into different business opportunities. I did a lot of research before I invested in Mr. Squeaky. I traveled the country talking with operators, owners and customers of car washes to see what worked and what was needed. I visited countless car washes in Florida and at least 10 other states. I went to car wash conventions and learned about the equipment and how to run this kind of business."

He even attended Car Wash College in Tamarac where he took one week courses in equipment repair, maintenance and management. He



Richard Sasso, owner of Mr. Squeaky Car Wash, and his staff are delighted to show first time customers how to operate the automated check-in system which allows customer to select from six different car washes, swipe a credit card or insert cash. [Photos courtesy of Richard Sasso].

was the first student to pass all three subjects and earned a Master Certification. "I think this college probably saved me a year of trial and error," he says, smiling, "and now I am teaching my staff everything I learned."

Sasso found a prime location, just east of I-95, at 499 W. Atlantic Blvd. and built his top of the line car wash on it. "This land had never been developed and now it's buzzing with activity," he says. "I feel good about that and I'm also proud of our spacious set up and our landscaping which is designed with native, Florida friendly grass, trees and plants. I'm here for the long run and I want it to be attractive. After all, my staff and I spend more time here than we do at home with our families. My wife, Lynn, who is a practicing lawyer,

often comes over to help out on weekends. She gets a workout and enjoys it."

Business grows every day. Planned to handle up to 2,000 cars a day, Mr. Squeaky's volume already exceeds 500 on Saturdays. Beside offering six different washes, priced from \$8 to \$49, Mr. Squeaky also offers free self vacuum and pre-loaded gift cards which are programmed to work on his automated machines. Sasso says, "We've sold quite a few cards from \$10 to \$200. We also give a 20 percent bonus to every gift card purchased. That's our main promotion."

Sasso winds up this interview with, "We're open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., 7 days a week. We make it convenient to drive a squeaky clean car."