

Inventor comes up with dream product

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**By Susan D. Brandenburg**

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Shorelines correspondent

While his natural curiosity has often led inventor Frank Miller of Ponte Vedra Beach to research and development, his diagnosis of prostate cancer six years ago added another kind of R&D to his repertoire — resolve and determination.

"I had no insurance when I was diagnosed with cancer," he recalled. "I was dead broke and nearly dead when I picked myself up off the floor and started researching an idea that had been in the back of my mind for years. I had nothing left but time on my hands and the intense desire to leave something of value behind me."

Frank's idea? Inventing an environmentally safe, non-solvent metal cleaner that would work in engines, gear-boxes, transmissions and any type of oil-lubricated equipment. An application engineer who worked in the printing industry for some 30 years, Miller said he spent much of his career "knee-deep" in petroleum-based solvents used to clean printing presses. He's convinced that his close proximity to those solvents brought on his cancer.

"I found out that my fellow in-plant technicians nearly all had the same cancer," Miller said. "It's the constant eight hours a day, five days a week of solvents getting into your skin and pores that does it, and it's in the air that we breathe. Solvents do not disappear. When they drift from the printing plant or through the emissions from your car, they hang onto leaves and drop into the grass. They are there forever."

Physically weak and financially strapped, Miller spent hours at his computer, searching the Internet for the newest non-solvent, non-petroleum chemical technology.

"I was determined to find a formula that would clean metal and not poison me," he said, "and I found it in Natralube 1006, a natural occurring ester chemical formula developed by the Fanning Corp. With

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that formula as a base, we developed the pourability that would make the product viable."

After independent field and emissions tests and receiving U.S. application patent No. 6,544,349 for the cleaner, which he named Auto-RX, Miller arranged with Haviland Consumer Products in Grand Rapids, Mich., to produce and bottle it, set up his Web site and began marketing it over the Internet.

"It was a stroke of genius to sell it only over the Internet," said Miller's friend, Michael Camar of Jacksonville Beach. "Frank has complete control over his invention. He answers his phone and his e-mails, fields questions and gives advice one-on-one to customers. That kind of service is rare these days. Frank's invented the most ecologically safe product I've ever seen, and it's working in engines everywhere from California to the People's Republic of China."

Camar and Miller met recently to add a 12-ounce bottle of Auto-RX to the oil in Camar's 1994 Ford Taurus.

"After 35 years in the operations end of the oil business, I was a skeptic," said Camar, now retired, "but I've watched Frank market Auto-RX and seen the e-mail testimonies pour in, so I had to try it. This old car had some transmission problems, but since Auto-RX went into my transmission fluid, the results have been remarkable. Now, it's going into my oil. As Frank says, a clean engine is a healthy engine, and since better combustion equals better gas mileage, that's for me!"

On Miller's Web site,

[www.auto-rx.com](http://www.auto-rx.com)

, and other Web sites frequented by auto enthusiasts, such as

[www.bobistheoilguy.com](http://www.bobistheoilguy.com)

, the buzz about Auto-RX is predominantly positive.

"I have noticed an increase that went from 18 miles per gallon to 21 miles per gallon," wrote Daryl Baines of DeLand. "On my daily commute, coming home tonight, I did tank top up and got 27 MPG versus my normal 24.5! ... Woo Woo ... Snake oil, I think not," wrote Steve On from Palmdale, Calif.

Frank Nipper of Jacksonville said a lubrication specialist recommended that he try Auto-RX for the rear main seal oil leak in his 1987 Mitsubishi pickup truck.

"It just absolutely stopped the leak," Nipper said. "It seems Frank has a really effective product."

"It cost me less per bottle than the present-day cost of a tank of gas, and my engine in my 2002 Chrysler Sebring is worth \$6,000," said John Marchant of Jacksonville's Northside. "The dealership told me I had sludge in the engine and they couldn't do anything for me. I put Auto-RX in my oil. My engine is now quieter and running smoother. It's working."

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After about five years of marketing on the Internet, and the addition of new lines including 3-RX for printing presses and Cycle-RX for motorcycles, Miller recently incorporated his business.

"I just need a couple more years to make my dreams come true and leave a legacy for my four kids and four grandkids," he said.

"I've devoted myself to staying alive and getting this thing off the ground," he said. "I go in for treatments every four months, work out twice a day, eat a lot of healthy green stuff like broccoli, and take a battery of strong nutrients over and above the chemo. I'm not afraid to die. I just want to die well, knowing that I've done something good. I'm praying to God that my kids inherit a company they can be proud of or the money from the sale of that company. Either way, I'll be in the history books as the guy who did this."

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## **How to Patent Your Invention**

**By Neil Armand**

A patent is a government granted right that allows the inventor to exclude anyone else from making, using or selling the invention in the country that issued the patent. The government grants this right to help encourage inventors to spend the time, money and effort to invent new products, technologies and the like.

In the United States, the term of a new patent is 20 years from the date on which the application for the patent was filed or, in special cases, from the date an earlier related application was filed, subject to the payment of maintenance fees.

When a patent expires, the invention enters the "public domain" allowing anyone to make, use or sell the invention without needing the permission or paying any royalty to the inventor. The government requires patents to expire because otherwise one person can control an entire industry if that person was the first to conceive of a type of product.

The patent law specifies the general field of subject matter that can be patented and the conditions under which a patent for an invention may be obtained. Any person who "invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent," subject to the conditions and requirements of the law.

In order for an invention to be patentable it must be new as defined in the patent law, which provides that an invention cannot be patented if: "(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country,

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or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent," or "(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country more than one year prior to the application for patent.

If the invention had been described in a printed publication anywhere in the world, or if it has been in public use or on sale in this country before the date that the applicant made his/her invention, a patent cannot be obtained. If the invention had been described in a printed publication anywhere, or has been in public use or on sale in this country more than one year before the date on which an application for patent is filed in this country, a patent cannot be obtained.

In this connection it is immaterial when the invention had been made, or whether the printed publication or public use was by the inventor himself/herself or by someone else. If the inventor describes the invention in a printed publication or uses the invention publicly, or places it on sale, he/she must apply for a patent before one year has gone by, otherwise any right to a patent for an invention will be lost. The inventor must file on the date of public use or disclosure, however, in order to preserve patent rights in many foreign countries.

According to the law, only the inventor may apply for a patent for his or her invention, with certain exceptions. If the inventor is dead, the application may be made by legal representatives, that is, the

administrator or executor of the estate. If the inventor is insane, the application for patent for an invention may be made by a guardian. If an inventor refuses to apply for a patent for his or her inventions, or cannot be found, a joint inventor or, if there is no joint inventor available, a person having a proprietary interest in the invention may apply on behalf of the non-signing inventor.

If two or more persons make an invention jointly, they apply for a patent as joint inventors. A person who makes only a financial contribution for the invention is not a joint inventor and cannot be joined in the application as an inventor.

Additional information on how to patent an invention is available at

<http://www.newideatrade.com/patents.htm>

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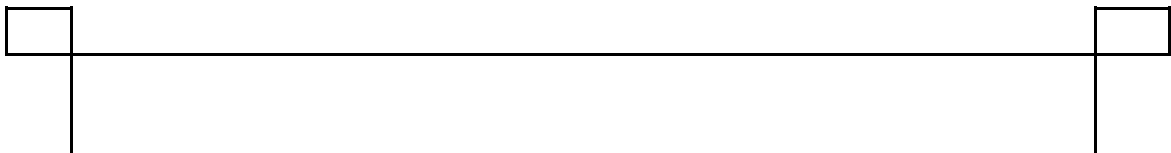
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