



Check out the new Iowa Collision Repair Association Website

www.iowacra.com

Stay current and up to date with the Iowa Collision Repair Association new website www.iowacra.com. Months in the making, this new website offers on-line membership application and event sign up. It offers a Calendar of Iowa Industry events and soon will have a message center for the Iowa collision industry. "We made a good website a great website," says ICRA Board Member Christy Jones, "this will be the 'go to' place for the Iowa collision repair industry, showing current activity, future plans and events."

ICRA Meets With Iowa Department of Insurance

February 25, ICRA Board members, Bob Jones, Christy Jones, Mark Martin and Executive Director, Janet Chaney met with the members of the Iowa Insurance Division. In attendance, Gary L. Marquette, Deputy Bureau Chief, Terra Mason, Complaint Analyst, and Tom O'Meara Deputy Bureau Chief, Market Regulation. The ICRA thanks the Iowa Department of Insurance for their time and consideration. ICRA has found that there may be laws in Iowa that the industry may use to assist in the claims handling process to afford a more complete and safer job for the consumer. "We are looking forward to the beginning of a meaningful relationship with this Department," says ICRA President Mark Martin. ICRA will continue to work with this Department and publish results to members. Check for updates on at www.iowacra.com.



(l-r) Bob Jones, Christy Jones, Gary L. Marquette, Iowa Insurance Division-Deputy Bureau Chief, Terra Mason, IID Complaint Analyst, Tom O'Meara, IID Market Regulation and Mark Martin meet in the office of the Iowa Insurance Division in Des Moines. (not pictured, Gaylen Knaack, Chair of the ICRA Insurance Committee)

Iowa Collision Repair Association Tackles Legislation

With the efforts of ICRA lobbyist Scott Weiser, his assistant Nicole Woodruff, and ICRA Board member Bob Jones, the efforts to get sales tax reimbursement on paint materials is moving full steam ahead. "This is very positive for the collision industry in Iowa," ICRA President Mark Martin recognizes, "we are moving forward- hopefully - towards seeing that collision repairers will be reimbursed for sales tax on paint materials in Iowa." "We have learned a lot about how the process works in Des Moines from Scott Weiser and the collision industry from now on will be a recognized entity to the legislature."

As of Friday, March 20 this is the update from Weiser's firm Capital Strategies Group regarding the ICRA legislation. The Iowa House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee passed HF 2530 out of committee this week, placing the bill on the House Calendar for consideration. After consultations with Senate leaders this week, we expect to ask for the Senate Ways and Means Committee to consider our legislation at its next meeting.

On Friday, interested legislators were provided with a copy of a detailed, itemized repair bill that the legislation anticipates as well as information from the Legislative Services Agency that shows that the state of Iowa will reap a \$400,000 windfall if the bill is signed into law.

We have also asked that this legislation be considered for inclusion of the final budget bill that ends the session if time becomes short.



ICRA Lobbyist, Scott Weiser, Capital Strategies Group



The ICRA Candid Camera captured an ICRA Board Member 'Dancing With The Stars'

ICRA SPRING DINNER MEETING

Storm Lake, Iowa
April 22, 2010

- Meet ICRA Lobbyist Scott Weiser
- Meet Local State Representatives
- Participate in the Iowa Industry Issues Forum
- Meet Victoria Daniels with the Iowa Department of Revenue
- Learn More About the Iowa Collision Repair Association

ICRA is bringing this Spring Meeting to NW Iowa.

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ICRA Spring Dinner Meeting

Cocktails 6:00 p.m. • Dinner 6:30 p.m. • Dinner Meeting 7:00 – 8:30
\$45.00 ICRA Members - \$50.00 non-ICRA Members

Name _____ Phone# _____
Business _____
Address _____
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SIGN UP ON LINE AT www.iowacra.com

Or mail your check to:

ICRA
109 N.W. 9th St. Ste. 1
Ankeny, Iowa 50023

Or Fax Information to: 515-964-0468

Questions: Call Janet Chaney 480.720.2565

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Meet ICRA

Training and Education John Arnold:

The recent 6H or NESHAP seminars conducted by the Iowa Waste Reduction Center, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Collision Repair Association proved to be a huge success as over 500 individuals attended the seminars across Iowa. These 6H seminars were the most complete and accurate seminars conducted in Iowa and proved, once again, that the Iowa collision repair industry is "ahead of the curve" in industry education and training.



In 2010, the ICRA will be working with local associations and individuals wanting to bring ICAR to their local area. The pursuit of ICAR training is becoming more difficult as ICAR is decentralizing their responsibilities by asking local committees to take charge of education in their area. The ICRA has guidelines to assist those wishing to form a committee, as does ICAR, and will share them with anyone requesting the information. This will be a challenge for us all as education and investment in technology become critical for a shop's survival.

The ICRA has the ability to provide other educational opportunities in Iowa. If you have any specific seminars you would like to attend in Iowa, please advise. Please contact John Arnold at john@arnoldsbodyshop.com or 563-388-0004 for information on ICAR committees. Please check the ICAR website (www.i-car.com) for specific classes in your area.

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Future Trends from CIC

At the Collision Industry Conference meeting last January in Palm Springs, CIC Chairman Russell Thrall III led the panel discussion, 'Future Trends'. Panelists represented diverse industry interests and were asked to delve deep into issues. Guy Bargnes, Bargnes and Associates, Aaron Clark, Collision Solutions, John Edelen, ICAR, Roger Foss, Toyota, Gene Hamilton, Sports and Imports, and Aaron Schulenburg, Society of Collision Repair Specialists.

With the industry facing the new market realities of reduced margins and over capacity this discussion reviewed some of the elements of the current business challenges and worked towards the identification of solutions.

Guy Bargnes of Bargnes and Associates, Detroit, Michigan, representing the jobber point of view, asks these questions, "How do we meet market demand, avoid commoditization and avoid price being the common denominator?" Bargnes feels that future strategic partnering will bring customer value.

Aaron Clark, owner of Collision Solutions, Indianapolis, IN, is using 15 different 'vertical' software packages to facilitate his insurer relationship work. "It is difficult to stay as focused on the repair as we should be," Clark states, "It is overwhelming, sometimes, the number of issues affecting our business." Clark recognized the challenges that shops go through to get the training for a safe and quality repair, stating that training is not readily available to the independent repair shops. "Traditional marketing does not have the yield it once had," Clark continues, "everyone is feeling the affects of overcapacity-we need more work."

"The things that show up on my radar screen is the unemployment challenge we are facing for the next 5 years," John Edelen, CEO of ICAR, states, "From a macro standpoint It may be 2015 before we get back to pre-meltdown." Edelen recognized that where margins are under pressure there may be an under investment in training. "There is an erosion of careers for young people today," he continues, "We need access to skilled crafts people." As CEO of ICAR, Edelen is working towards a better 'connect' of training to the industry. "We need a win-win situation," Edelen concludes.

Roger Foss says that Toyota will be offering a proliferation of hybrids with more variations. "Auto collision notification, SOS buttons and expanded use of exotic materials will be common in new Toyota's," Foss reports. "How are we to communicate this information to collision repairers and where are future technicians going to be coming from," Foss questions.

Randy Hansen, Allstate Insurance, also expressed concern over the training element, "How do we deliver that to our staff?" Hansen states that the industry needs to be challenging ourselves and collision repairers and insurers should be prepared for an economic downturn recognizing we are not at all 'out of the woods'. Hansen recognized the 'troubling trend of industry legislative solutions that are expensive for everyone' and commented that, 'If we sit down and have the difficult conversation, we should be able to solve most of the problems in this room'.

Gene Hamilton, owner of the independent collision repair facility, Sports and Imports in Atlanta, Georgia, challenges the

issue of total loss vehicles. "We are totaling cars we shouldn't be," Hamilton states, Tech-Cor holds information from independent repairers,' Hamilton declares. "This is information we could be using to save these vehicles from Total Loss." Allstate's Randy Hansen, responded with the recognition that Tech-Cor is an improvement area.



(l-r) John Edelen ICAR CEO and Guy Bargnes, Bargnes and Associates are on Industry Trends Panel at CIC

Industry Responds to After Market Concerns

As a result of the Collision Industry Conference segment on After Market Parts done by industry trainer Toby Chess last January in Palm Springs, California, there has been significant response from all sides of the industry.

Chess showed a non-OEM bumper reinforcement bar made from mild steel was being sold as a replacement for an OEM part made of ultra-high-strength steel. Chess showed examples of more problems with non-OEM parts: reinforcement bars that were bent to shape rather than formed, resulting in a weak spot; a bumper bracket for the 2000-04 Nissan Xterra that was made of 2-mm-thick material rather than 3.38-mm material used for the OEM part; a core support for a 2007 Toyota Corolla that hardness testing indicated was not made of high-strength steel like the Toyota part; foam bumper inserts made of polystyrene ("coffee cup foam") rather than the much-denser polypropylene foam. "I have a 25-page report here on why (Ford) used magnesium on the core support for the F-150," Chess said, holding a non-OEM core support being sold for the vehicle that is made of aluminum. "On some of these parts you can feel the weight difference, but if you didn't have one to compare it with, how would you tell the difference? We need to have better standards."

Spurred by these reports, some insurance companies, including, Geico, Met Life and eSurance have suspended the use of certain aftermarket parts.



Toby Chess, (l), demonstrates high strength steel, with Dale Matsumoto, Auto Body Hawaii, Kona and Chuck Sulkala, Acme Body and Paint, Boston, Massachusetts.

ICAR CLASS SCHEDULES

DAM07 Damage Analysis of Advanced Automotive Systems

Start Date: Apr 05, 2010

Southwestern Community College - Creston, IA 50801

SPS03 Steel Full-Frame Sectioning

Start Date: Apr 08, 2010

Kirkwood College Training & Response Cntr. - Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

SPS06 Full-Frame Replacement

Start Date: Apr 08, 2010

Kirkwood College Training & Response Cntr. - Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

DAM08 Advanced Material Damage Analysis

Start Date: Apr 13, 2010

Des Moines Area Community College - Ankeny, IA 50021

CYC01 Overview of Cycle Time Improvements for the Collision Repair Process

Start Date: Apr 15, 2010

Des Moines Area Community College - Ankeny, IA 50021

DAM03 Mechanical Systems Analysis

Start Date: Apr 20, 2010

Kirkwood College Training & Response Cntr. - Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

SPS07 Steel Unitized Structures Technologies and Repair

Start Date: Apr 20, 2010

Des Moines Area Community College - Ankeny, IA 50021

DAM07 Damage Analysis of Advanced Automotive Systems

Start Date: Apr 21, 2010

Northeast Iowa Community College - Dubuque, IA 52001

GEN03 Collision Repair for General Motors Vehicles

Start Date: Apr 21, 2010

Northeast Iowa Community College - Dubuque, IA 52001

DAM08 Advanced Material Damage Analysis

Start Date: Apr 27, 2010

Scott Community College - Bettendorf, IA 52722

DAM08 Advanced Material Damage Analysis

Start Date: May 04, 2010

Kirkwood College Training & Response Cntr. - Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

GEN03 Collision Repair for General Motors Vehicles

Start Date: May 04, 2010

Des Moines Area Community College - Ankeny, IA 50021

POP01 Collision Repair for Select High Volume Vehicles

Start Date: May 06, 2010

Des Moines Area Community College - Ankeny, IA 50021

FCR01 Fundamentals of Collision Repair

Start Date: May 11, 2010

Kirkwood College Training & Response Cntr. - Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

MEA01 Measuring

Start Date: May 18, 2010

Kirkwood College Training & Response Cntr. - Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

***"If we keep doing what we're doing,
we're going to keep getting what
we're getting."
-Stephen Covey***

STATEMENT

Contact: Gerry Bonanni
313-317-9000
gbonanni@ford.com



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CLEARCOAT BLENDING PROCEDURE NOT RECOMMENDED

DEARBORN, Mich., October 6, 2009 – Ford Motor Company does not condone or recommend the procedure of clearcoat blending or using clearcoat blending in any warranty or collision repair. Furthermore, Ford never allows for partial clearcoat blending on warranty paint repairs and strongly recommends that repairers do not perform clearcoat blending on customer-pay or insurance-pay repairs.

Paint companies and vehicle manufacturers agree that a repair using this material and procedure is not robust, and that over time, the edge will begin to lift and discolor, making the edge around the repair very noticeable. To resist ultraviolet light and other environmental factors, the clearcoat needs approximately two mils of thickness, however, the millage of the clearcoat in a blended area tapers out at the edge.

Ford's position is continually reinforced in all approved paint system manuals. Furthermore, paint companies will not warrant any products if clearcoat blending has been done. The preferred process – and the one that Ford approves – is to blend the basecoat color as necessary and then clearcoat the entire panel. On a quarter panel or roof, the ditch area is usually the line to make a break point. Most Ford vehicles include a ditch area, which makes it easier to perform the procedure the right way the first time.

More information on specific paint company recommendations will generally appear with their clearcoat application guidelines and mix information.

Go to <http://media.ford.com> for news releases and high-resolution photographs.

Iowa ICAR Instructors, Scott Shuerman and Joe Doyle, received Congratulations and an invitation to the ICAR Regional Event in Chicago, Feb. 18-20. The combined efforts of Joe and Scott resulted in the training of almost 2000 students in Iowa in 2009. As ICAR Regional Manager, Keith Risley says, "Nice Work Here!"

The Iowa Collision Repair Association agrees - Thank You Joe and Scott.

How to Acquire and Retain Collision Shop Customers

Insurers can steer customers to their preferred shops, but we can steer them too. Copy what they do and you'll be well on your way to regaining control of your customers.

By Lee Amaradio Jr

The collision industry is constantly changing, and we must pay attention to this evolution so we can move forward with as much information as possible and increase our chance of prospering. I use the word "prosper" because the reason we're in business is to prosper, not just survive.

I've watched a movement among the insurance companies to take control of the consumer. They're using well thought out marketing plans to take our customers from us. I've always paid close attention to what insurers do and try to mimic them when possible. They have "accident forgiveness," the "Gecko" and other mascots, and the "concierge" program. They're spending hundreds of millions of dollars to win over our customers. So for us to take those customers back and continue to build our customer base, we must mimic what insurers do.

This effort by insurers is built around offering the customer convenience and peace of mind, which is comforting in a time of uncertainty and trouble. Removing the hassle by giving the customer a quick and easy solution with a guarantee is a tough act to follow. Let me offer some ideas that we've implemented at our shop to keep our customers and win new ones in an increasingly difficult environment.

Create a Marketing Plan

The first thing you must do is find out where your customers are coming from and what brought them to you in the first place. Once you establish who your customers are and where they're coming from, you'll know how to direct your marketing dollars.

Yes, you must spend money, so it's important to find out how much you can afford so you can then create a marketing budget. Word-of-mouth is no longer enough to match insurers' clever advertising and marketing plans. Start small if you need to, but make sure you're getting the most bang for your buck. A good number to spend is between 1 and 2 percent of your gross sales. We're firm believers in advertising and have developed a strong marketing plan that includes cable television, radio and direct mail. However, this is still not enough.

We realize that it's not a guarantee that many of our long-time customers will return, so we developed a plan that would keep them coming back and referring us for life. Most people keep their insurance companies for years – why not give them a reason to keep us at their collision repair facility of choice? Where did we get our ideas? From the insurers that were leading our customers away, of course.

Be a Copycat

We started a customer care program through a shop network of best-in-class shops that enabled us to track our customers and make them members of our shop. We tweaked the plan and added our own custom gift card so we could add money (\$100 to

\$200) to it any time we wanted. Every customer gets one of these cards, and their information is recorded in our database. This is our version of accident forgiveness, except we allow customers to give their credit to family members or friends if they want. We encourage them to keep their card because we periodically reload it.

Our customers can use their gift cards for details, painless dent repair, windshield repair or other things. We don't allow them to use them toward their deductibles or anything related to the current repair. The cards are designed to make them return the next time without giving the impression that we're offering a discount. Rather, we want to emphasize that we're rewarding them for their loyalty.

Our database contains thousands of customers who have credit from us and are just waiting to redeem it with their next repair. We average one to two customers who return every week to redeem their credit.

We also have the ability to target a customer insured by a particular insurer through direct mail. If a particular insurance company is steering work away from us, we pull up everyone in our database who's insured by that insurer and load their cards. This allows us to put our own accident forgiveness in place to encourage our customers to remain loyal and return to us no matter what their insurers offer.

Educate the Customer

Consumer education is the theme of our advertising. Through research, we've found that, as loyal as customers may seem, the majority of them will go where their insurers recommend. This is why we created a well thought out word track designed to answer key questions and prepare our customers so they'll know what to expect when confronted by insurers that may try to direct them away from our shop.

We explain to our customers that the promise of a guarantee is not the same thing as a high quality, safe repair. We explain that insurers might tell them that if they don't go to shops on their preferred lists, their repairs might be delayed, the repairs won't be warrantied or there will be additional non-covered costs.

Our word track is the most important part of our sales pitch because we've watched too many potential sales go away after the insurer talked to the customer. Our sales are directed with the purpose of gaining a customer for life, so we always look beyond the initial repair and make sure we offer customers what they need.

We also try to spend a lot of time educating our customers on the proper repair procedures that OEMs recommend for their vehicles. We explain how many safety issues are overlooked because of the lack of training or equipment. We offer a shop tour and show them some work in progress and point out areas of the repair that are often overlooked by less experienced or less equipped shops. We explain in detail how most of the repair is hidden and that they won't be able to see the quality that's put into it.

Learn To Steer

Just like there are good and bad body shops, there also are good and bad insurers. There are many insurers that are better

Coming Events

April 22
ICRA SPRING DINNER MEETING
Storm Lake, Iowa
www.iowacra.com

April 30
SKILLS USA
DMACC
Des Moines, Iowa

May 2-4
WIN - WOMENS INDUSTRY NETWORK
Peabody Hotel,
Orlando, FL
info@womensindustrynetwork.com

April 13-14
SOCIETY OF COLLISION REPAIR
SPECIALISTS ANNUAL MEETING
Crown Plaza Ravinia
Atlanta, Georgia
www.scrs.com

CIC MEETINGS

April 14-15
CROWN PLAZA RAVINIA
Atlanta, GA
www.cic-link.com

July 21-22
INTERCONTINENTAL CHICAGO O'HARE
In conjunction with I-CAR Meetings
Chicago, IL
www.cic-link.com

November 3
COLLISION INDUSTRY CONFERENCE
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Las Vegas Hilton
Las Vegas, NV
www.ciclink.com

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11 and over \$2000.00

Please make checks payable to ICRA.

Mail to: Iowa Collision Repair Association

109 NW 9th St, Ste 1

Ankeny, IA 50023

Questions: Call Janet Chaney 480.720.2565

The Iowa Collision Repair Association is committed to the future of the collision repair industry: to provide the leadership needed; raise the professional image of the industry and the individual and the industry. Our goal is to education, inform and represent the Collision Repair Professional in all aspects of the industry.



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