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Auto Glass Week™ Brings the Industry Together in Memphis

Auto Glass Week™ brought together all of the industry's auto glass groups, the National Windshield Repair Association (NWRA), the Auto Glass Replacement Safety Standards (AGRSS®) Council Inc., the Independent Glass Association (IGA), the National Glass Association (NGA) and **AGRRTM**/glassBYTEs.com™ magazine for the first time all in one location.

The event drew more than 1,000 attendees from all over the world, as far as Spain, Australia and Germany, and gave all an opportunity to participate in three days of educational sessions, along with a massive Exhibition/Extravaganza.



In addition to educational sessions, the event included a massive Exhibition/Extravaganza.



Attendees traveled from all over the world for Auto Glass Week™.

It included educational sessions spanning a variety of topics, from marketing to the newest cars and the glass they entail to the latest insurance information.

An organizational update offered a look into the current work of the NWRA and a number of other groups.

Kerry Wanstrath, president of the NWRA, spoke about the ROLAGS™ Standard, repair quality and certification. "Quality remains after price is forgotten," said Wanstrath, after showing several photos of low-quality repairs. "The industry can use quality and certifi-

cation to slay the giant, whomever that may be in your area."

Keith Beveridge, chair of the ROLAGS Committee, provided attendees an update on the ROLAGS Standards.

Beveridge said it soon will see some changes, after some language "tweaking" that occurred at the meeting that week in Memphis. He said the ROLAGS committee intends to get the document to ANSI by the end of the year.

A panel featuring Gilbert Gutierrez of Equalizer Industries and Paul Heinauer of Glasspro Inc. looked at professionalism and customer service. Heinauer reminded attendees that even if a customer calls a shop unintentionally, being helpful can be beneficial in the long run. "We want our folks to look up the number the person needed for them," offered Heinauer. "... Customer satisfaction is becoming bigger and bigger."

Gutierrez spoke about how to reach employees with tips like these. "Educate them, keep them motivated," he said. "This is what is going to make them do something for [your company]."

Gutierrez also touched on certification. "Why do I want to get certified?" he asked. "I want my customer to know I've learned that what I'm doing is right."



Keynote speaker Mike Eruzione, the captain of the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team who led the team to victory over the Soviets, offered a lesson in teamwork and adapting to change during his keynote speech at Auto Glass Week. Eruzione compared the challenges auto glass businesses encounter with those his team encountered as it prepared for the 1980 Olympic games.

That process included adapting to new challenges. "If things aren't working, find a way to fix them," said Eruzione. "Change, adapt."

Eruzione recalled the words of his coach, Herb Brooks, as he offered this lesson. "Check your ego at the door. Everyone has a job, and everyone has a

role on this team," said Eruzione. "It's the same in business—you have to surround yourself with people who have the same goal as you."

After returning from the event Wanstrath reflected on what an event such as Auto Glass Week can do for the windshield repair industry.

"It is very encouraging to see the various industry associations working together for the first time in years," says Wanstrath. "Finally, we are starting to realize there is more good to be accomplished working for our common goals and interests. We are not enemies because each association brings something to the table."



To view NWRA president Kerry Wanstrath's fascinating presentation, visit www.autoglassweek.com

Windshield Repair Olympics Goes International

Jose Manuel Llano of Lunia Glas came all the way from Spain to walk away as the Walt Gorman Windshield Repair Olympics (WRO) champion. Llano, 48, has 13 years' experience in the industry. This was his second time competing, and earlier this year he was recognized as the third-place winner in GlasWeld's competition in Madrid, Spain.

"I'm very happy to be here with all of the other technicians and achieve what I've achieved," said Llano shortly after the win. "... This is the world reference for us in service and our job and if possible we will be here next year."

Antonio Galvez of Walqaluna S.L. in Monzon, Huesco, Spain, rounded out the WRO at second place. Chris Smith of Techna Glass in Draper, Utah, followed at third.

"This was our sixth year and it was such a pleasure having such an international group being represented," says event director Holly Biller. "Our winner, Jose Llano Manuel, had a perfect score on his preliminary round and Randy Olson received a perfect score on the questions pertaining to the ROLAGS™ Standard. That high level of care and dedication to their craft simply sets the benchmark higher each year for the repair technicians. We're so excited to see the event growing and bettering the industry as a whole!"

WRO contestants must complete a windshield repair in accordance with the Repair of Laminated Auto Glass Standard (ROLAGS™) and all contestants also must participate in a short, 10-question test about proper windshield repair practices (based on ROLAGS™).

Randy Olson of Chip Medic in Bend, Ore., who took first place in the 2010 WRO, received a perfect score on the test.

The six areas judged in the WRO competition were as follows: customer greeting; technician comportment (professionalism/conduct); vehicle preparation; products to be used; repair technique; and post-repair procedures.

The WRO competition was judged by Frank Levesque of Glass Doctor in Waco, Texas; Dan Mock of HSG/Pro Glass Alliance in Eau Claire, Wis.; and Lucien Boulanger of A-1 Windshield Doctor in Seekonk, Mass. Gerald Zwart of Clearview Windshields in Inwood, Iowa, served as the emcee.



(left to right) Bronze medalist Chris Smith of Techna Glass; gold medalist Jose Manuel Llano of LuniaGlas; and silver medalist Antonio Galvez of Walqaluna S.L.

NWRA on a Mission

by Kerry Wanstrath

The National Windshield Repair Association (NWRA) is on a mission to make a difference in the way the repair side of the auto glass industry is viewed. While this process has already commenced, as was evident from my discussions with many of those in attendance at Auto Glass Week™ in Memphis, Tenn., I will say this is only the beginning.

The NWRA has some great things in the works that we believe will help separate the wheat from the chaff. Volunteers have been quietly gathering information across several states to document the quality of repairs being done in the field over the last few months. It actually has been unbelievable to see the ‘standard’ by which some operate; if I hadn’t seen it with my own eyes I wouldn’t have believed it myself. The breaks I have seen have not been anything beyond what an average windshield repair technician should be able to repair after some months of experience and training.

Certification Now

Due to this seeming lack of quality in the industry, the NWRA is interested in producing an education, testing and certification program for our members that will stand head and shoulders above anything else the industry has to offer. The

NWRA already is recognized as the industry’s leading repair organization, by its work in the completion of the ANSI standard for the Repair of Laminated Glass (the Repair of Laminated Auto Glass Standard). Now we believe with education, testing and certification we will allow our members to certify to the industry that they are operating to a

“The NWRA has some great things in the works that we believe will help separate the wheat from the chaff.”

higher standard. This, in itself, should give added confidence to the insurance world that these members, willing to take this extra step, may be deserving of special consideration.

Our motive is to elevate the overall image of repair and especially those companies with a repair-first attitude. We also are still quietly gathering data about repair quality across several states that maybe helpful. Repairing first is the right thing to do for so many reasons; it’s good for the consumer, good for the environment, and good for insurance companies. It also is

good for the shops, because it creates a sense of goodwill and trust between you and the customer. It is a fact that a customer will come back to the same business for a replacement if he received a quality repair first from that business.

Looking Ahead

Undoubtedly there are technicians and businesses out there who will continue to do poor quality repairs or use repair as a tool for getting replacement work. I don’t think any one person or group can ever totally stop this from happening. My goal is to exploit the benefits of quality, education, certification and also verification of quality to those to whom this matters most—both the consumer and insurers who pay for windshield repair. Are they not both entitled to these?

We plan to aggressively market the certification program to the insurance industry and various third-party administrators, so that you, the technician or shop, can benefit. The NWRA plans to announce the opening date for these programs soon.

Kerry Wanstrath is the president of the National Windshield Repair Association and the president of Glass Technology in Durango, Colo.

Service Spotlight: Insurance Provider Guide

The NWRA is proud to announce the creation of the insurance provider guide, a new for members-only service. The NWRA board of directors has collaborated together to create a full guide of how to contact insurance companies. Members will be able to find phone numbers and fax numbers as well as basic instructions for those technicians that are new to the industry.

This guide will make a technician’s job easier when it comes to handling the insurance portion of a windshield repair. As phone numbers change and companies come and go this guide will be updated and a new version will be emailed out to all NWRA members. If members have updates to the guide they can send them to the association and the NWRA will implement these changes accordingly. Look for this new service in the coming months.



Watch www.nwrassn.org for more information as it becomes available.

Welcome to New and Returning Members

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