

ACRA IS MOVING

It is now official – ACRA will meet at the NEW Pulaski Technical College Campus at 13,000 Interstate 30, Little Rock, Arkansas. The Auto Body and related departments of Pulaski Tech moved from the Scenic Hill location in North Little Rock to the former Expo Center, close to the Saline-Pulaski County line. The former mall has been completely remodeled in to a modern campus. The Auto Body Department has new, modern equipment that will be available for ACRA meetings. An added bonus will be the interaction between the staff/students of Pulaski Tech and the members of ACRA. This is truly a Win – Win situation.

If you are coming to the new location from the Fort Smith or Memphis area, take from I-40 take I-430 south to I-30. Take Exit 128 [Mabelvale West Road/Otter Creek Road]. Stay on the access road. When the two-lane access road begins to narrow into one lane, look immediately for the Pulaski Technical College entrance on the right.

If you are coming to the new location from the Texarkana area, take I-30 east toward Little Rock. Take Exit 126 [Alexander Road exit]. Stay on the access road and Turn right approaching Vimy Ridge Road. Turn left on Vimy Ridge Road and cross over the interstate. Vimy Ridge Road circles to the west and ends at the I-30 west bound access road. Turn right on the I-30 westbound access road. When the two-lane access road begins to narrow into one lane, look immediately for the Pulaski Technical College entrance on the right.

The Auto Body shop is on the ‘west side’ of the building. It is at the rear of the main building.

ACRA MEETING SUMMARY

Education Programs in 2009 included: Paint-less Dent Repair by Tom Harris of Dent Doctor; I-CAR Overview by Johnny Dickerson; Arkansas Insurance Department Update by Staff Attorney Bill Lacy; New Equipment Program by Snap On Equipment by Don Coombes; New Technical Problems [Sensors, Computers] by Don Coombes; I-CAR Class 2009 at Pulaski Tech; Wheel Identification and Repair by Keenan Morris of Midwest Wheel Repair; Paint Booth Problems and Corrections by Tom Warren; Arkansas Automobile Dealers Assn. Presentation by Dennis Jungmier; Presentation of Current Issues in Recycling by Mike Harrell of Preferred Auto & Truck Parts.

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

Nomination of Officers of the ACRA for 2010 will begin in January. The election of officers will be held at the February 9, 2010 meeting. If you are interested in nominating someone for office please attend the January or February meeting. If you are unable to attend either of the meetings and still wish to nominate someone, please notify Jay Scott at jaysdjservice@aristotle.net by February 5, 2009.

Special Guest: Mr. Steve Beene of AllData Collision attended the November ACRA meeting.

2010 Educational Programs:

January 12, 2010	Educational Program by Pulaski Tech Collision Repair Dept.
February 9, 2010	Educational Program by AllData
March 9, 2010	Pending
April 13, 2010	Pending
May 11, 2010	Pending



Arkansas Collision Repair Association

December 2009

November Education Program



Michael Harrell

standards for auto recyclers. As a result, a system of codes for describing damage on parts has emerged. Exactly what parts are and are not included in major part assemblies has also been clearly defined. When you visit the Preferred web site, you will find a printable “cut sheet” for ordering body sections such as quarter panels. How a section is to be cut can be marked on the sheet, and sent by fax to Preferred.

had old hand-held radios and talked about “squawk boxes” and satellite locating systems. Today, Preferred relies on FAX, cell phones, instant messenger services, the Internet, and email to communicate with their customers and other used part vendors. Preferred uses a computerized Yard Management System (YMS) for pricing, tracking inventory, and accounting functions. Mike also stated that there are 260,000,000 cars in America today. Each year, 11,000,000 cars are salvaged and 90 percent of a vehicle can be recycled. When asked to address the Cash-For-Clunkers Program, Mike said at first the thought was it would take away the vehicles Preferred sells parts for, and would also devalue parts already in inventory. So far, that does not seem to be the case.

The November 2009 educational program was presented by Mr. Michael Harrell of Preferred Auto & Truck Parts of Conway, Arkansas. Mike was “raised in his father’s transmission shop”, and worked for Art Worman (Worman’s Auto Salvage) while he attended the University of Central Arkansas. Mike graduated UCA in 1987 with a BBA degree in business management. After graduation, he worked briefly for Jones Nissan-Isuzu in North Little Rock before returning to work for Worman’s Auto Salvage.

Mike stated the use of the cut sheets has greatly increased communication between the collision repair facility and the recycler. Mike said when he first entered the recycling industry, parts were generally only delivered to a collision repair facility when picking up wrecked cars at that location. Deliveries were made on trucks designed to haul vehicles. Today, Preferred uses specialized delivery

Mike outlined many of the changes that have occurred over the last 20 years in the used-parts industry. The salvage business has now become known as the automotive recycling industry. Twenty or so years ago, fuel injection was not common, most cars were rear-wheel-drive with frames under them, and there were only a handful of vehicle manufacturers in the United States.



trucks with Tommy Lifts, pallet jacks, and tie-down rails. Much more care is used in the delivery of parts today. Mike brought a variety of instruments used in the past 25 years to help locate parts. He



Jason Deno

Mike introduced Mr. Jason Deno. Mr. Deno is the manager of Preferred’s new aftermarket division. That’s right-Preferred, which was formerly solely in the business of selling used parts, now has an aftermarket parts division. Jason said his division is new this year, and encouraged all ACRA members to purchase their aftermarket parts from his division. He can be reached at 1-877-950-4222.

Preferred Auto & Truck Parts is located at 650 Simon Road, Conway, Arkansas and can be reached at 501-327-7024 or 1-800-482-9338. Their website is www.preferredautoparts.com.

**JURY SAYS THE HARTFORD INSURANCE CO. VIOLATED FAIR BUSINESS LAWS
AUTO BODY ASSOC. AWARDED \$15 MILLION IN CLASS ACTION VERDICT**

A Press release from the Auto Body Association of Connecticut stated that on November 17, 2009 a Stamford Superior Court jury awarded \$15 million to a group of auto body repair firms after saying the Hartford Insurance Co. engaged in unfair business practices. The class action lawsuit filed by The Auto Body Association of Connecticut [ABAC] and three of its members alleged that the insurance company engaged in a patten of unfair practices that violated Connecticut law. The jury agreed that The Hartford artificially suppressed body shop labor rates by eliminating the use of independent appraisers and relying exclusively on its own automobile service representative to perform appraisals so the company could control their content, including labor rates. The result: consumers do not get fair, independent appraisals of the damage to their automobiles.

“We are gratified that the jury agreed that The Hartford systematically violated the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act,”

said Bob Skrip, president of ABAC and owner of Skrip’s Auto Body, Inc., Prospect. “This is just one more step in a long road against The Hartford and other insurance companies that seemingly disregard both regulations and consumers’ interest. It is a positive development for consumers and body shops statewide, but it remains a long process. We are more confident than ever that we will ultimately prevail.”

The accusations against The Hartford were supported in the lawsuit by extensive documentation including internal memoranda detailing company policies, as well as several depositions by company employees, Skrip said. The jury agreed that The Hartford improperly forced auto body shops to charge lower labor rates than general market conditions otherwise allow, in effect strangling the industry by exerting undue influence on its appraisers.

The lawsuit said that when customers need auto body repairs following an accident,

employees of The Hartford, ‘customer care team specialist,’ were instructed to direct the customers to a preferred shop I The Hartford’s ‘customer care repair service program.’ Consumers were often pressured to abandon their choice in favor of The Hartford’s preferred shop, allowing The Hartford’s appraisers to exert greater control over the repair.

“We are thrilled the jury found that The Hartford suppresses labor rates. This lawsuit was an attempt to change the way business is done in this industry,” said Atty. David Slossberg of Hurwitz, Sagarin, Slossberg and Knuff, of Milford, co-counsel for ABAC. The jury’s verdict is a major victory toward that end. “The next step is to ask the court for immediate injunctive relief,” Slossberg added. “Our team is looking forward to crafting that request.”

Addition information is available at ABAC’s web site: www.abacomm.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

10 November 2009

Directors Present	
Jody Gatchel, President	jody@ajcollision.com
Adam Reiter, Treasurer	adamreiter@cablelynx.com
Larry Golden, At-Large Director	larrygodlencollisioncenter.com
Ed Covington, At Large Director	ed-c@sbcglobal.net
Director Absent	
Phil Plyler, At-Large Director	rivercityauto@sbcglobal.net
Also Present	
Jay Scott, Executive Director	jaysdjservice@aristotle.net

The meeting was called to order by Jody Gatchel. The location of this meeting was Pulaski Technical College campus at 3303 East Roosevelt Road, Little Rock, Arkansas.

1. A discussion was held regarding the Farmers Insurance Participation Check. A check was given from Farmers Insurance to ACRA as part of a Worker’s Compensation Participation Program between ACRA and Farmers. Depending upon claims and other factors, Farmers will periodically pay to ACRA a portion of premiums paid for Workers Compensation Insurance associated with this program. ACRA received a check from Farmers under this program in late 2008. Along with the check, Farmers also provided a report that breaks down the amounts that made up the ACRA check. The Farmers Insurance agent who created the program was consulted as to the uses available for the funds. An attorney was also consulted to confirm this information. Their responses were presented to the ACRA Board of Directors.

2. A Motion was made by Jody Gatchel to distribute a portion of the funds received in 2008 from the Farmers Participation Check to ACRA members who fulfill all three of the following mandatory qualifications.

First, the shop must be a member of the Farmer’s Worker’s Compensation program associated with ACRA and be listed by Farmers on the report that breaks down and details the participation payment received by ACRA.

Second, the year the funds were received by ACRA is deemed the qualifying year for a member to be eligible for a distribution. 2008 is designated as the qualifying year for this distribution.

Third, the shop must have been a current paid member in good standing with ACRA in the qualifying year. For this distribution, the qualifying year is designated as 2008.

The Motion states that if the First, Second and Third qualifications above are fully and completely met by an ACRA member, that member will receive a distribution check. The amount of the member’s check will be the amount listed by Farmers Insurance, for that member, on

Board of Directors Minutes (cont.)

the Farmers Report that breaks down the amounts detailing that member’s activity. Ed Covington made a Second to the Motion. The ACRA Board vote passed the Motion unanimously.

3. A Motion was made by Larry Golden that any future Farmer’s Worker’s Compensation Participation Checks received by ACRA, be distributed using the same three mandatory qualifications listed above. Program participants that do not fulfill all three of the mandatory requirements listed above will not receive any share of the proceeds of any Farmers Workers Compensation Participation Check received by ACRA. The portion of proceeds from program participants that do not meet the mandatory qualifications will be retained by ACRA for the betterment of the association. The Motion was seconded by Adam Reiter and passed by Board vote.
4. A discussion was held regarding offering each ACRA member one voucher to attend an I-CAR class as was done in 2009. Larry Golden made a Motion that each dues paying member of ACRA in 2010 will be allowed one voucher to attend an I-CAR class [usually in June or July]. Adam Reiter made a second to the Motion, which passed by Board vote.
5. A discussion was held regarding including the Purpose of ACRA in each newsletter. It was also discussed that notice should be given in the newsletter of the up coming election of officers for ACRA. Also discussed was the ACRA web site and that Biz Tech is currently working on bringing the site up to date.
6. A □ payment of dues to this organization. Ed Covington made a second to the Motion, which passed by Board vote.
7. A Motion to adjourn was made by Jody Gatchel with a second by Ed Covington. The Motion passed.

JANUARY 2010 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The January 2010 Educational Program will be presented by Mr. Jacob Standley, Instructor of Collision Repair, at the new meeting location. Mr. Standley will give a tour of Pulaski Tech’s new Collision Repair lab and classrooms. He will address the educational program Pulaski Tech has for students desiring to enter into the collision repair industry. We expect a number of students at this and future programs.

The February 2010 Educational Program will be presented by AllData Collision.

2010 ACRA MEMBERSHIP DUES

(If your business year ends on December 31, 2009 you may want to pay your 2010 ACRA Membership Dues in 2009 to take advantage of tax deductions)

Name of Collision Repair Member: _____

Address _____

Office Telephone: _____

FAX Telephone: _____

Web Site: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please remit a check in the sum of \$150.00 for your 2010 ACRA dues, payable to ACRA or Arkansas Collision Repair Association. Mail this completed form and your dues check to:

ACRA
826 North Creek Circle
Conway, Arkansas 72032