



Lehman's Garage Update

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NACE & CARS Co-locate First annual Automotive Service & Repair Week (ASRW)

This year marked the 26th annual International Autobody Congress & Exposition (NACE) in Las Vegas, Nevada. For the first time as part of the newly created Automotive Service & Repair Week (ASRW), NACE and the Congress of Automotive Repair & Service (CARS) co-located their conferences for collision repair and automotive service professionals.

Lehman's Garage President Darrell Amberson was the NACE Chairman for the second year in a row. As NACE Chairman, Amberson took part in a discussion on today's industry with CARS Chairman Aaron Clements during ASRW's opening general session.

Also attending the conference from Lehman's were Greg Mann (Controller), Chad Ege (Bloomington Production Manager), Steve Mitchell (Eagan Production Manager), and Mark Johnson (Bloomington Service Manager).



CARS chairman Anderson and NACE chairman Amberson kick off ASRW

First Time at NACE/CARS

by Mark Johnson, Bloomington Service Manager

This was my first trip to the NACE/CARS convention and I was not sure what to expect. What I got was a flurry of activity from classes and conferences during the day, to dinner meetings with our local paint supplier Lowell's, and a world class trade show full of all the new equipment that we all want in our shops.

Having the auto body and the mechanical people intermixed in classes and conferences gave everyone a different outlook from what we normally see. While there, I was able to talk to people from all across the country, and even from as far away as Australia. It was interesting to see how the same principles worked differently in areas around the world.

In the general conference sessions the overall theme was change. Everyone is looking for a better and more efficient way to do their jobs in today's economy. The lean concept of shop management and customer satisfaction were always top on the list. The keynote speaker of the opening general session was Archie Manning who is humorous, informative and motivational. His talk was a great way to end the morning assembly and lead into hours of exploring the trade show.

With all there was to do at NACE and in Las Vegas, the time passed very quickly, but it was definitely a worthwhile experience.

What I Learned at NACE

by Steve Mitchell, Eagan Production Manager

At NACE there were a lot of new products and things that I normally only get to see in some of the industry publications. Sometimes you see these products and they look useful, but it was great to see them up close and in action and even try them out.

With all the industry buzz about lean, it was nice to look at products that could help in our move to a leaner shop. In the Eagan and Bloomington shops, we received parts carts to demo from a vender we met at NACE. The carts work out great! The Techs really like

them, and keeping parts together and out of the cars makes the shop look and function better.

It was also interesting to talk to people from everywhere that do what we do and find that they are having or have had some of the same challenges that we face. We talked with shop owners from Australia who are having some very interesting parts issues.

NACE also showed me that this industry is changing. The days of the stereotypical dirty little body shop are ending. You need to stay ahead of the game if you're going to make it. New vehicles are so advanced and it was awesome to see so many people educating themselves to repair these vehicles properly.



Happy Holidays

