



AUTOMOTIVE RECYCLERS OF MICHIGAN

The Official Publication of the Automotive Recyclers of Michigan

YARD TALK

Issue 1

Fall-Winter 2025

The President's Message

I want to start by saying that I am so proud to be a small part of such a great state association. If you are reading this as a current member, I hope you feel the same way. There is so much



Scott Kooienga

good work taking place behind the scenes at ARM that goes unnoticed. I am continually impressed by the selfless acts of kindness, hard work, and the dedication that is reflected in so many people that I have the pleasure of working alongside, all for the greater good of ARM.

We recently had the opportunity to gather virtually as a board to work through our strategic plans for this new year. Each committee had great input setting goals and laying the foundation for what they will try to accomplish this year. This meeting was well attended and as the president of this association I can proudly say that I'm very encouraged with the leadership team that has been assembled, to drive this association forward. And remember, this is all voluntary. Thank you board

Continued on page 8

A Heartfelt Thank You for Another Wonderful Kent Utter Jr. Memorial Golf Outing

This year's Kent Utter Jr. Memorial Golf Outing was truly something special. Thanks to the enthusiasm of our attendees and the generosity of our sponsors, we came together to raise an incredible \$13,000 in support of future scholarship recipients.



We're so grateful to everyone who showed up, contributed, and helped carry forward the spirit of this event. Your kindness and dedication ensure that Kent's legacy continues to inspire and uplift others.

You can find more photos on page 12!

HAPPY
Holidays

There is no time more fitting to say "Thank You" and to wish you Happy Holidays!

We hope the coming year will bring peace, good health, good cheer and prosperity.

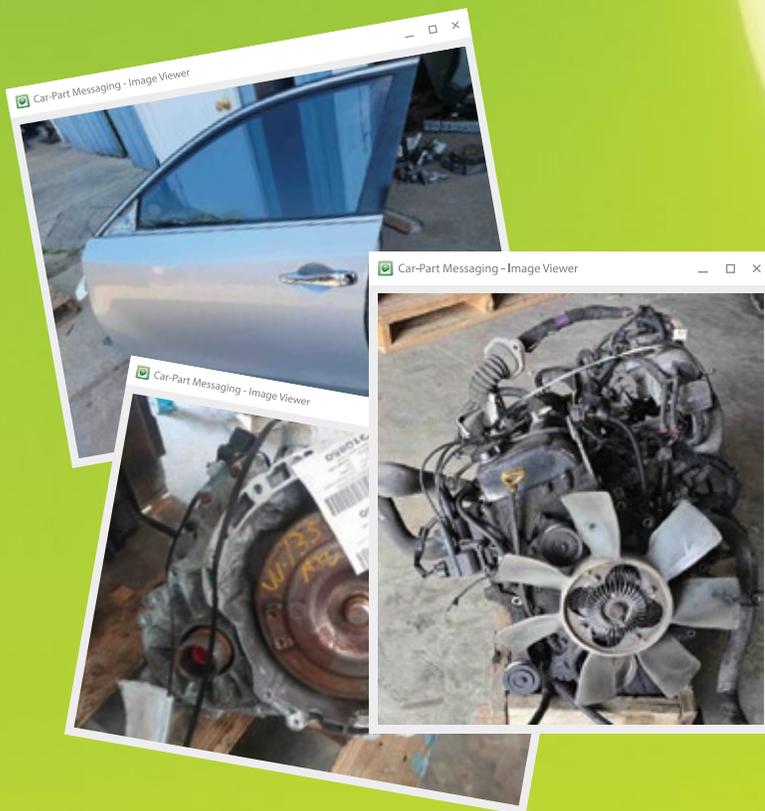
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Scrap Market Report

Markets continue to remain very vanilla with little to no change all summer and into the fall. Lots of scheduled mill outages and a general lack of demand have been key contributors. We don't anticipate any significant changes until the arrival of bad weather in Q1.

Foundry Steel.....	\$275.00 gt	Batteries	\$.24 lb.
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Chair: Daniel Gray
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Chair: Daniel Gray

YARDTALK is published quarterly.

Statements of fact and opinions are the responsibility of the author alone and do not necessarily imply any opinion on the part of the officers, director, or members of ARM.

Please address articles or letters for publication to:

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3rd Floor
Lansing, MI 48933

From the Executive Director

Dear ARM Members,

It’s been a full and exciting few months for ARM, and I continue to be inspired by all of YOU! My yard visits are well underway, and it’s been such a pleasure to connect with so many members, walking your facilities, hearing about both successes and challenges, and seeing the pride and care you bring to your work every day. Some of you have even met my sidekicks, my three-year-old daughter Leah and one-year-old son Henry, who occasionally tag along for a quick hello. I think they enjoy these visits as much as I do. Spending time with members across the state is always a reminder that ARM is more than an organization, it’s a network of dedicated people working together to keep Michigan’s automotive recycling industry strong and connected.



Jackie Timm, CAE



Our Board recently gathered for a thoughtful strategic planning session. It was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on what we’ve accomplished and to set ambitious yet attainable goals for 2025–2026. I’m so proud of the leadership and collaboration that came through in those discussions, and I’m excited to share those goals with you in this newsletter.



I’d also like to take a moment to celebrate a few members who make this organization shine. Slater Shroyer continues to lead with integrity and passion through his role on the ARA Government Affairs Committee and his active participation at the national conference. And a huge congratulations to Amber Kendrick, who was recently named ARA Member of the Year, an incredible



honor that reflects not only her hard work but also the excellence that defines our Michigan recyclers. Thank you both for all you do!

We’re delighted to welcome Reman Group Engines to the ARM family. Every new member strengthens our collective voice and brings new ideas and energy to the table.

As always, our advocacy work continues to be a cornerstone of what we do. The ARM Political Action Committee ensures that our voices are heard in Lansing,

Continued on page 8



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2025-2026 ARM STRATEGIC PLAN

Goals for ARM Committees

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

Chair: Slater Shroyer

Co-Chair: Nate Love

Committee Members: Daniel Gray, Aaron Arnold, Ross Lewicki

2025-2026 Committee Goals:

1. Monitor incoming legislation and provide regular updates to members (at least monthly from Nate)
2. Virtual meet/greet (25 legislators)
3. Increase PAC fund by \$500 vs prior year.
4. Plan an advocacy day if applicable
5. Short 2–3-minute video or audio updates (recorded on Zoom or a phone) summarizing key legislative developments.
6. Member-Driven action alerts-simple click to send templates for members to reach legislators

MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE:

Chair: Amber Kendrick

Committee Members: Gordon Middleton, Jason Naoumi, Reed Schram

2025-2026 Committee Goals Overall:

1. Increase Associate Membership by adding two new members
2. Increase Direct Membership by adding two new members
3. Create an 'All about ARM' video and social content
4. Continue quarterly webinar program (ie: Sue Schauls: storm water topic, Josh Reed)
5. Present Barb Utter Award at Road Show
6. Continue selling newsletter and website advertisements
7. Create a new welcome kit for new members (will include key contacts, services and welcome letter from leadership)

ROAD SHOW COMMITTEE:

Chair: Daniel Gray

Co-Chair: Scott Kooienga

Road Show Committee Members: Eric Pearson, Jason Naoumi, Gordon Middleton, Jenny McDonald, Aaron Arnold

2025-2026 Committee Goals:

1. Establish a location/date for September 2027
2. Speakers/content/find an auctioneer for the 2026 show
3. Solicit at least one new vendor or sponsor (not in attendance last year)

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE/GOLF OUTING:

Chair: Gary Hooper

Committee Members: Glenn Neuner, Barb Utter

2025-2026 Committee Goals:

1. Educate members about scholarship
2. Hold a golf outing in May 2026
3. Increase golf sponsorships by \$2,000
4. Determine scholarship gift amounts in 2026
5. Open up to Associate Members's children
6. Collect short clips of recipients thanking the organization to use on social and at golf outing

MICAR COMMITTEE:

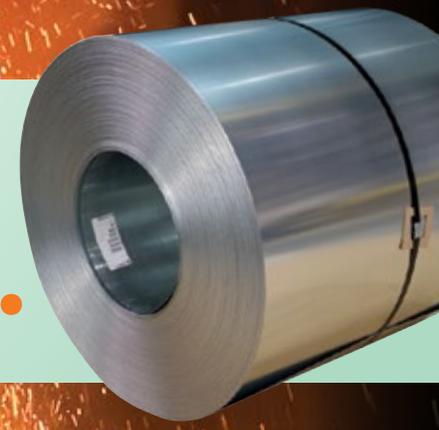
Chair: Daniel Gray

Co-Chair: Jonathan Kusowski

Committee Members: Eric Benson, Eric Pearson, Chad Hacker, Bernie Milnes

2025-2026 Committee Goals:

1. Finalize 2026 physical audits list
2. Add two new MICAR members
3. Create informational content via social media
4. Improve SPCC Compliance
5. Monitor safety, regulations, etc. and keep the membership informed
6. High voltage training in the spring with local fire departments 



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Recycling — it's all about sustainability. By reusing steel from end-of-life cars, appliances, machinery, bridges, and buildings, we conserve the earth's resources for future generations. OmniSource collects and processes steel scrap, much of which is supplied to Steel Dynamics to be melted and converted into new steel. Working as one, SDI and OmniSource take in the old ... to create the new.

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The President's Message

Continued from page 1

members for your dedication to ARM.

Of course the "glue" that keeps everything together is our very own Executive Director, Jackie. In the very short amount of time as president I am continually impressed with the drive, excitement, and genuine love for our membership that she exudes. Jackie is working hard to create additional member benefits for all of us and our employees. Jackie is also always looking for more ways to create additional revenue and I'm excited to see her enthusiasm and enjoy brainstorming ideas with her already.

We continue to add new members and our member

services committee will be focusing on growing membership even more this year. We've been able to gain some news associate members recently and acknowledge that the support from our associate membership is a huge reason for our success as an association. Thank you associate members for the support you give us each year.

In closing, don't forget to mark your calendars for the spring golf outing and the fall road show! These will be two events you WON'T want to miss. We look forward to seeing everyone in person at these events. In the meantime I wish you blessings during this upcoming holiday season and thank you again for supporting the Automotive Recyclers of Michigan. 🚗

From the Executive Director

Continued from page 4

standing up for fair and sensible policies that protect the future of automotive recycling in Michigan. If you're able, please consider making a personal contribution, your support makes a real difference in keeping our industry strong and respected.

A quick reminder to those who may still have outstanding membership invoices: please take a moment to submit your dues soon. Your continued support powers every program, event, and initiative that keeps ARM moving forward. We couldn't do this without you.

Looking ahead, I hope you'll join us on December 3 from 12 to 1 p.m. EST for a webinar on SWPPP and SPCC Essentials with Jonathan Kusowski. It's a great opportunity to stay current on environmental compliance and best practices. And be sure to mark your calendars for two of our most anticipated

gatherings: the Kent Utter Jr. Memorial Golf Outing on May 18 at Copper Ridge Golf Club in Davison, and the ARM Road Show on September 19 at Premier Auto & Truck Parts in Cedar Springs. Both events promise great company, good fun, and valuable time to connect with peers across the state.

Finally, don't forget to stay connected with us on Facebook, where we're sharing updates, photos, and highlights from members and events.

Wishing you and your family a joyful holiday season filled with rest, laughter, and time with loved ones. Thank you for all that you do to make ARM such a special organization. I look forward to an exciting and productive year with all of you. 🚗

See you soon!

Jackie





TRIVIA

1. What year was the first U.S. federal law passed regulating vehicle emissions?

- A) 1955
- B) 1963
- C) 1970
- D) 1985

2. What part of a car is commonly recycled into carpet padding and insulation?

- A) Windshield glass
- B) Bumper covers
- C) Tires
- D) Seat belts

3. What's the average number of tires recycled in the U.S. each year?

- A) 50 million
- B) 100 million
- C) 150 million
- D) 300 million

4. Which U.S. automaker developed the first vehicle made with parts from 100% recycled plastic?

- A) General Motors
- B) Ford
- C) Tesla
- D) Chrysler

5. What's the oldest known recycled material used in early vehicles?

- A) Reused wood from boats
- B) Scrap iron from railroads
- C) Re-melted glass
- D) Leather from old saddles

Good luck! Please see answer key on page 27.

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By Nate Love of Kelley Cawthorne

Legal & Government Relations Counsel to ARM

Work continues on legislation that would eliminate paper TR-9 forms. ARM has continued to engage with stakeholders such as the Secretary of State and Michigan Automobile Dealers Association on the matter, and has received another set of approvals on language that we are advocating for from the Secretary of State’s office. As conversations continue, we will remain engaged on the issue.

Legislation aimed at reforming the towing industry has been introduced. Among other things, the bills would cap recovery rates, mandate certain payment methods, and require the return of vehicles within certain time frames. While this legislation does not directly impact the automotive recycling industry, some members could be impacted through other lines of business. We will continue to monitor the legislation for potential impacts as it moves through the process.

In response to the continuing government shutdown, the Senate passed a \$71 million supplemental spending bill sending money for emergency food relief as a means of bridging the gap until SNAP benefits are restored. However, because the measure was first chamber bill, the House of Representatives could not take action for five days, moving through the November 1 deadline for the expiration of food benefits. In response, the House of Representatives, working in coordination with Gov. Whitmer, passed a \$4.5 million supplemental spending bill giving funding to support food banks across the state. The funding would serve as a two week stopgap, but also highlights the ongoing tension and dysfunction between the Senate, Governor, and House.

Another source of tension between the Senate and House of Representatives continues to be legislation outlining the process for Legislatively Directed Spending Items (LDSIs). The largest disagreement between the two chambers is the amount of time that a spending item must be disclosed for prior to being voted on in the budget. The House of Representatives is seeking a 90 day period, while the Senate is seeking a shorter 10 day period. Speaker of the House Matt Hall has said that he will not pass any Senate legislation through the House chamber until the dispute is resolved.

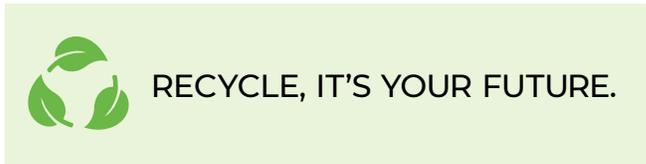
Additional legislation on economic development is expected before the end of the year. However, the only legislation seen so far has been competing bill packages in both chambers that would eliminate the Michigan Economic Development Corporation entirely. These bills are not expected to move, but they do highlight growing anti-MEDC sentiment in the legislature. 🚗

SAVE THE DATE

ARM GOLF OUTING
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18 MAY 2026

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Innovation, Partnership, and Progress: A Recap of ARA's 82nd Annual Convention & Expo

By Amber Kendrick

The 82nd Annual Automotive Recyclers Association (ARA) Convention & Expo brought together recyclers, suppliers, and industry partners from across the U.S. and beyond for three days of innovation, insight, and collaboration. The theme was Game On, and many recyclers and vendors got into the spirit with jerseys for their favorite teams. Held October 16–18 in Birmingham, Alabama, the event reflected a shared commitment to raising the bar, from the professional speaker sessions as well as the recycler-led panels and keynotes, and into the social activities.

Advocating for the Future

ARA's Governmental Affairs Committee, led by Chairperson Slater Shroyer and Vice President of Strategy, Government & Regulatory Affairs Emil Nusbaum, shared this year's advocacy milestones and legislative priorities. Through an impactful video presentation, they reminded attendees of what's at stake when policies threaten the industry's ability to operate freely and sustainably.

Each year, professional automotive recyclers recover and responsibly manage staggering quantities of materials — over 100 million gallons of gasoline and diesel, 24 million gallons of motor oil, and 96% of all lead-acid batteries, among others. The data underscores an undeniable truth: automotive recycling is a carbon-negative industry. As Nusbaum noted, "Every ton of new steel made from scrap conserves 2,500 pounds of iron ore, 1,400 pounds of coal, and 120 pounds of limestone."



With environmental performance increasingly tied to business credibility, ARA's advocacy continues to highlight recyclers' essential role in sustainability, safety, and circular manufacturing. The commitment to advocacy is strong in ARA, and many donations were gathered for the PAC at the event.

Built Together: The Power of Partnership

One of the most inspiring moments of the convention came during the keynote "Built Together: The Power of Partnership and Business", featuring JC and Holly Cahill. Moderated by Vince Edivan, the session highlighted how the husband-and-wife team transformed their shared vision into a series of successful ventures, including VinMatch Pro, Pasco You-Pull-It, and consulting work supporting recyclers nationwide.



Their message resonated deeply with attendees: whether in business, leadership, or personal growth, success stems from trust, communication, and the willingness to adapt together.

Bookkeeping and Accounting Best Practices

In an especially practical session, a panel featuring Natalie Miller (Miller's Auto Recycling), Dee Leech (Chuck's Auto Parts Solutions), Lauren Ortiz (Wilbert's), Shan Latham (Coco Auto Salvage), and Paula Knapp (PRPNE) discussed the systems and safeguards that keep recycling businesses financially sound.

"Controls protect your money, security protects your business, and visibility protects your future",

summarized Miller. From multi-layered check approval systems to quarterly audits and cross-training for staff, the panelists emphasized one core principle — trust your numbers, but verify them.



Latham, sharing lessons learned from experience, underscored the value of internal controls: “Protect your money at all costs and keep accountability. Growth requires letting go of some control, but never of oversight.”

There were numerous “boots on the ground” seminars and panels similar to the accounting best practices one, with industry experts who have made mistakes and are willing to share them, who have grown and changed their business at every level and are willing to help others transform their own companies. The practical experience and chance to take so much home with us was appreciated by all attendees.

These women who shared their experience were valued by all. The LARA (ladies of ARA) event was very well attended and showed just how many women are in auto recycling! This gathering continues to grow every year.

Adapting to Disruption, Entering a New Era

During the Recyclers Round Table, participants examined how emerging technologies and materials are reshaping the industry. Challenges such as carbon fiber, high-strength steels, and AI-driven systems were discussed alongside opportunities to use artificial intelligence for training, process efficiency, and customer service.

Discussion also touched on innovative tools like Notebook LM from Google, which allows teams to upload manuals and procedures and query them conversationally — an example of how AI can make employee training faster and more accessible.

Attendees also shared practical safety updates for hybrid and electric vehicles, including the growing use of fire blankets — a \$1,200 investment that has already prevented thermal runaway incidents in several yards. As one participant noted, “They’re for any car, for any fire — not just EVs.” With every purchase of a fire blanket from the Automotive Recyclers of Massachusetts, a \$150 donation to ARTI is given.

The auction at ARA this year was to benefit the ARTI

Continued on page 16



scholarship foundation, which gives away over \$80,000 in scholarships annually to the employees and children of employees of ARA members. The goal for the auction fundraiser, which focused on experiences over items this year, was to raise \$30,000, but the proceeds totaled over \$100,000! Many recyclers won fun and exciting experiences, such as lobster fishing excursions, luxury golf vacation packages, and even a special dinner cooked by executive director Vince Edivan.

It was the first ARA conference led by Vince Edivan, and it was by all accounts a smashing success. From the huge trade show to the fun social events to all the practical seminars, attendees enjoyed Birmingham and the conference.

Optimizing Incident Response

Safety and compliance took center stage in the Incident Response session, which explored how to prepare for and respond to emergencies ranging from employee injuries to large-scale environmental incidents. Speakers emphasized the importance of daily safety checklists, emergency action plans, and clear documentation during and after any event.

With OSHA penalties now exceeding \$16,000 per violation per day, and recent EPA cases resulting in fines of up to \$6.7 million, preparation is no longer optional. Attendees were encouraged to conduct mock OSHA inspections, maintain up-to-date evacuation procedures, and even prewrite media statements for crisis scenarios. The overarching message: preparedness protects not

only employees but the business itself. With the recent tragedy in Louisville where an airplane crashed into businesses including an automotive recycler, having an emergency action plan has never seemed more prevalent. The timely message was well received with specific steps each business can take to prepare for the unexpected.

A New Standard for Excellence

One of the most significant developments announced during the convention was ARA's plan to introduce a new certification program to replace the long-standing Gold Seal standard, in conjunction with the United Recyclers Group. Built around ISO-style principles and real-time performance data, the new framework will evaluate recyclers on measurable factors such as customer satisfaction, returns, and compliance.

This evolution signals a shift from static recognition to continuous accountability — positioning recyclers to demonstrate excellence through results, not just reputation. The partnership between URG and ARA continues to flourish. Kristen Alexander and Amanda Morrison shared updates on new program features and sneak peeks of what is in the URG project pipeline. They teamed up with Tim Wilber of Wilbert's Inc to utilize smart data management for operational efficiencies.



URG is introducing an AutoPartSearch website designed for business-to-business part sales that includes a Shopify-powered checkout, and then taking that same concept and breaking it down into microsites that will allow for individual yards to sell direct to their customers using the same Shopify integration and tools.

Sustainability and Strategy

Sessions throughout the event emphasized that sustainability is now a strategic advantage. Recyclers are quantifying their environmental impact and using that data to strengthen relationships with insurers, manufacturers, and repair networks. The metrics prove what recyclers have long known: that reusing and repurposing auto parts is one of the most effective forms of carbon reduction. It's time now to leverage the first-of-its-kind study from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) proving that reusing automobile parts reduces greenhouse gas emissions without sacrificing the quality of the products, and get this message out to the industry and the world!

Outgoing president Eric Wilbert from Wilbert's Inc shared that for the past year, the ARA board focus has been on building a strong foundation and best practices. They went through a full audit and trimmed expenses. ARA upgraded it's website and management software, went through the leadership transition, and ARA is now in a strong position to share the message of auto recyclers farther and wider than ever before.



Leadership for a New Generation

The convention closed with the formal induction of Shannon Nordstrom of Nordstrom's Automotive in Garretson, South Dakota, as ARA's new President. In a heartfelt address, Nordstrom reflected on his journey from his family's dairy farm to leading a nationally recognized certified recycling operation.

"I stand here tonight as one of you, a proud automotive recycler," Nordstrom told attendees. "We are not perfect, but we will do our best — and we will all continue to grow and learn together."

ARA Executive Director Vince Edivan praised Nordstrom's leadership, describing him as "a born leader with the skills to bring out the best in any team."

Looking Ahead

From EV battery safety to AI integration and new certification standards, this year's ARA Convention captured an industry balancing rapid change with enduring values. Collaboration, professionalism, and innovation were the defining themes — a reminder that auto recyclers don't just keep parts in circulation; they keep progress in motion.

As ARA approaches its next chapter, one thing is clear: the future belongs to recyclers who pair data-driven insight with human expertise to lead the way toward a smarter, safer, and more sustainable industry. Next year, the ARA convention will be in Atlanta, Georgia, and will surely provide the practical help and enduring connections the recent one accomplished for attendees. 🚗



Revving Up Retention: Keeping Your Best People from Becoming Someone Else's

Insights from Lisa Ryan, 2025 ARA Convention Keynote Speaker

By Amber Kendrick

At the 82nd Annual ARA Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, keynote speaker Lisa Ryan delivered a lively and heartfelt reminder that retaining great employees is less about paychecks and policies — and more about people feeling valued. Her talk, *“Revving Up Retention: Keeping Your Best People from Becoming Someone Else’s”*, resonated with recyclers who understand that just like the parts we sell, people perform best when given care, attention, and purpose.



Ryan began with a question that drew laughter and knowing nods: “Do you suffer from too much appreciation?” The icebreaker had a serious point — most people don’t leave their jobs because of hours or benefits, but because they don’t feel recognized. When employees feel unseen, energy fades, and so does loyalty.

She shared that positive recognition should happen at least once every seven days. That consistency, she explained, creates what she called the dopamine

effect — a natural boost that keeps people motivated. Whether it’s a sincere thank-you, a quick word of praise, or a small note left on someone’s desk, those simple gestures can make a lasting impact.

Ryan encouraged leaders to focus on the essentials that help employees thrive: knowing what’s expected, having the right tools, feeling like their strengths are used daily, and believing that their coworkers care about doing quality work. When those boxes are checked, people don’t just stay — they stay engaged.

She also discussed what she calls the “Culture Gear,” a set of six elements that keep a workplace running smoothly: acts of service, accountability, attitude, appreciation, access, and applause. Attitude, she reminded the audience, starts at the top. Appreciation and access mean taking time to connect and making sure people have what they need to succeed. And applause — in whatever form it takes — means celebrating wins, milestones, and moments that matter.

Small, personal touches go a long way. Ryan suggested using an “All About Me” sheet to learn each team member’s favorite candy bar or coffee order, so when recognition happens, it’s genuine and tailored. She also emphasized remembering anniversaries and milestones, saying that employees always know their hire date — and it means something when their employer does, too.

Another cornerstone of her message was gratitude. She encouraged attendees to make gratitude a daily practice, even in small ways, and to write it down. Noticing “what’s not wrong,” she said, helps reframe challenges and keeps morale strong. Research supports the idea: teams with at least three positive interactions for every negative one break even; those with six or more positive moments thrive.

For Ryan, appreciation isn’t just about happiness — it’s about purpose. She connected this directly to the mission of automotive recycling: every part saved is one

Continued on page 27



AI and the Future of Automotive Recycling

Insights from James Spears, 2025 ARA Convention Speaker

By Amber Kendrick

At the 2025 Automotive Recyclers Association Convention & Exposition, attendees heard from James Spears, Head of Automotive AI at Tractable, a leader in artificial intelligence for accident and disaster recovery. With extensive experience leading global auto physical damage operations at USAA and strategic initiatives at Farmers and Nationwide, Spears shared how AI is transforming the automotive and recycling industries — and what recyclers can expect next.

Drawing from both his military discipline and corporate leadership, Spears emphasized three guiding principles behind every innovation he's led: speed, accuracy, and service. "If an idea doesn't improve all three, we don't do it," he explained. That simple framework, he noted, applies equally to recyclers looking to modernize operations and prepare for a rapidly changing market.

For more than ten years, Tractable has been training AI to analyze vehicle damage through computer vision. The technology can identify and assess exterior panels, estimate repair costs, and distinguish between collision-related and unrelated damage. This foundation supports many body shop "instant quote" tools that allow customers to submit photos via website or QR code and receive an estimate within minutes.

Automation has already reshaped the body shop workflow. "It used to be four people working in the shop for every one up front," Spears noted. "Now it's one-to-one, and soon, more people will be working up front than in the back." AI helps manage

this workload, freeing staff for customer service and accelerating the repair process.

Cycle times — the total duration of a repair — have dropped dramatically for insurers and shops using AI. One major carrier reduced its average cycle by five days simply by approving jobs faster and focusing human effort only where AI flagged exceptions. The result: greater efficiency, happier customers, and measurable cost savings.



Spears was especially enthusiastic about how AI can now flow in reverse — from collision repair into recycling. "We've spent a decade teaching AI how to see what's broken," he said. "Now we're teaching it to recognize what's good."

By scanning images of vehicles, recyclers can automatically identify undamaged parts, evaluate condition, and even assign estimated values. Early pilots are showing promise: automated grading and

Continued on page 20

AI and the Future

Continued from page 19

valuation systems can guide decisions on which parts to harvest, how to price them, and where to sell them. The technology can already identify more than 100 exterior components, with accuracy improving continuously as more data is processed. It's easy to imagine how much less time it will take auto recyclers to evaluate vehicles for purchase, speeding up the bidding process. Then implemented in inventory, how much could be automated, inventoried by computers looking at images?



A key innovation on the horizon is “agentic AI” — systems capable of performing defined business tasks independently, from bidding to inventory management to sales. “You’ll have digital agents doing things that once required people,” Spears predicted. “That’s where scalability comes in — doing it cheaper, better, faster, and steadier.”

Spears encouraged recyclers to think creatively about selling parts. Instead of relying solely on traditional interchange numbers, AI could help list and market items through multiple online channels, expanding reach and revenue. “You should be able to sell your products across a whole line of additional resources,” he said.

He also cautioned against relying on insurer appraisals for sourcing recycled parts. Many total-loss appraisals, Spears explained, are “rushed to completion with minimal accuracy.” AI-generated appraisals, however, offer consistent, high-quality assessments that more accurately reflect the vehicle’s true condition.

Innovation continues at a rapid pace. At this year’s SEMA show, Tractable will debut a drive-through

scanning arch that automatically photographs and assesses vehicles as they pass — a potential game-changer for recyclers, insurers, and repairers alike. “We’re aiming for a fully connected collision and recycling ecosystem,” Spears said, “where images taken at the moment of damage can lead directly to recycled-part fulfillment.”

“We’ve spent a decade teaching AI how to see what’s broken,” he said. “Now we’re teaching it to recognize what’s good.”

—James Spears, Head of Automotive AI at Tractable

Even as he praised AI, Spears reminded recyclers to remain grounded. Technology should enhance expertise, not replace it. “Every day, it only gets better than the day before,” he said. “But your people — their judgment and their standards — still define the business.” 🚗



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12:00 PM - 1:00 PM**



The Michigan Certified Automotive Recycler (MICAR) Program

The **MICAR (Michigan Certified Automotive Recycler)** program, sponsored by the **Automotive Recyclers of Michigan (ARM)** is a certification initiative that helps automotive recycling facilities meet and maintain compliance with environmental, safety, business, licensing, and regulatory standards. By providing clear guidance, resources, and structure, MICAR supports recyclers in operating responsibly, reducing liability, and demonstrating environmental stewardship — strengthening their reputation and long-term success.

Accredited by the **Automotive Recyclers Association (ARA)**, MICAR-certified facilities that are also ARA members are automatically recognized as participants in ARA's **Certified Automotive Recycler (CAR)** program and become eligible for the **Gold Seal Program**, which highlights excellence in customer service, quality recycled parts, and professional business practices. These designations enhance credibility with customers, insurers, regulators, and industry partners while setting participating facilities apart as leaders in the industry.

MICAR members must meet established standards, participate in regular audits, and comply with ARM membership requirements. Through this process, they commit to continuous improvement and operational excellence while minimizing regulatory risk. As a result, MICAR-certified recyclers distinguish themselves as professional, responsible, and high-performing businesses dedicated to environmental protection, worker safety, and delivering quality products within the automotive recycling industry.

***NEW!!!** With the addition of dedicated compliance staff, ARM and MICAR members now receive complimentary access to expert environmental and safety consulting services — including Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) development and updates, Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) plan preparation, permit assistance, and a wide range of additional compliance support.*

Interested in the program? Contact the ARM office!

Engines, Engagement, and Eyeballs: Social Media for Auto Recyclers

Insights from Tyler Petrie and Davyd Silkovskyy, 2025 ARA Convention Speakers

By Amber Kendrick

At the 2025 ARA Convention, Tyler Petrie, Social Media Manager at Wilbert's U Pull It, and Davyd Silkovskyy, owner of A Plus Auto, shared strategies for leveraging social media to engage customers, enhance business growth, and strengthen community connections.

Tyler Petrie described his approach as both strategic and creative, emphasizing the importance of experimentation in social media engagement. "I have taken on the role of guiding our social media initiatives, combining creative content with deliberate strategy to connect with our customers in meaningful ways, and also in silly ways," he explained. Wilbert's operates nine locations, including self-serve yards, a Christmas tree farm, and a tires and service facility, with a huge customer base.

Davyd Silkovskyy highlighted the power of social media for businesses that serve both local and national markets. "Social media allows us to reach tens of thousands of potential customers beyond our immediate geographic area, providing an efficient and scalable way to communicate and showcase our services," he said.

Both speakers emphasized that social media is a key tool for customer education, engagement, and retention. Tyler noted the importance of mobile accessibility: "Ninety-five percent of social media traffic occurs on mobile devices, and 84% of our website traffic comes from mobile. Engaging customers on the platforms they use most is essential to building trust and brand loyalty."

Platform selection is guided by customer demographics. Wilbert's uses age-based data to optimize their strategy:

- 18–29: TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram
- 30–49: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube
- 50–64: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube
- 65+: Facebook, YouTube

Content creation is central to both companies' strategies. Tyler explained, "Our content must be human-centered and engaging, while providing value to the audience. We aim to educate, inform, and entertain simultaneously." Successful posts range from visual storytelling and informative videos to interactive graphics, with examples including engaging staff features and demonstration videos of available auto parts.



Giveaways were highlighted as an effective strategy for increasing engagement and building loyalty. Tyler shared, "Promotional events, such as tool giveaways, attract significant attention and enhance customer engagement. They create a sense of excitement and encourage followers to interact with our content."

Trending hashtags, popular sounds, and location or partner tagging are critical for increasing content visibility. Tyler emphasized, "By incorporating relevant trends and keywords, we maximize the reach of our posts and improve discoverability within the automotive community."

Paid advertisements and boosted posts were also discussed as tools to reach targeted audiences. Tyler explained, "We allocate budget to promote specific campaigns, such as vehicle purchase opportunities and parts availability. These efforts are designed to generate leads and facilitate customer interaction." Boosted

Continued on page 26

Share Your Story – Be Featured in ARM Member Highlights!

ARM is proud to represent a strong, skilled, and passionate network of automotive recyclers across Michigan, and we want to showcase the people and businesses that make this community exceptional.

By completing the **ARM Member Highlights Survey**, you'll help us put a spotlight on your company's participation with ARM, and your contributions to the automotive recycling industry. These features will be shared across ARM's communications to celebrate our members and promote the benefits of being part of this professional community.

Why participate?

Promote your business to a wider audience

Showcase your involvement with ARM and industry leadership

Strengthen ARM's voice in recruiting new members and building public awareness

Inspire others in the industry by sharing your journey

Your insight helps us grow the community, support advocacy efforts, and attract new members who value the same standards of excellence. **Take a few minutes to complete the survey and help us highlight what makes your business, and ARM, great.**

Link to ARM webpage & survey: <https://automotiverecyclers.com/membership/member-highlights/>



Do You Need to File a Complaint on Unlicensed Vehicle Dealers?

ARM will file the complaint for you!

Contact the ARM office at arm@mi.automotiverecycling.org or 810-695-6760.

Or follow the link below and complete the Reporting and Unlicensed Dealer Form:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/curbstoner_form_65906_7.pdf

SHARE YOUR STORY!
CELEBRATE YOUR IMPACT!
SHOWCASE YOUR BUSINESS!
COMPLETE THE SURVEY TODAY!

[HTTPS://AUTOMOTIVERECYCLERS.COM/MEMBERSHIP/MEMBER-HIGHLIGHTS/](https://automotiverecyclers.com/membership/member-highlights/)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 3, 2025	WEBINAR SWPPP & SPCC Essentials: What Every Facility Needs to Know 12:00-1:00 PM
April 24-25, 2026	High Voltage Training More information coming soon
May 18, 2026	Kent Utter Jr. Memorial Golf Outing Cooper Ridge Golf Club Davison, MI
September 19, 2026	ARM Road Show & Business Networking Conference Premier Auto & Truck Parts Cedar Springs, MI

What is a Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) and Do I Need One?

By Jonathan Kusowski

The Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200), often called HazCom, is an OSHA regulation that ensures employees are informed about the hazardous chemicals they may encounter in the workplace. It requires employers to identify, label, and communicate chemical hazards so that workers can protect themselves.

The standard is based on the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) for classifying and labeling chemicals. It outlines how chemical hazards must be evaluated and how that information must be shared with employees through:

- Container labels
- Safety Data Sheets (SDSs)
- Employee training
- A written hazard communication program

It is **required** that all auto salvage yards have and implement a Hazard Communication Program due to the presence of hazardous compounds, which include, but not limited to:

- Gasoline and Diesel Fuel
- Used Motor Oil
- Transmission Fluid
- Brake Fluid
- Antifreeze

A strong hazard communication program helps you:

1. **Protect Employees** – Ensures workers understand the risks of exposure and how to safely handle chemicals.
2. **Prevent Accidents** – Reduces chemical spills, fires, and injuries by promoting safe storage and labeling.
3. **Stay Compliant** – Avoids OSHA citations and penalties for failing to meet federal and state safety standards.
4. **Support Emergency Response** – SDSs give firefighters, medics, and spill responders the information they need during emergencies.
5. **Improve Workplace Organization** – Proper labeling and documentation make chemical management more efficient and accountable.

Development of a HazCom Plan is included as part of the MiCAR and ARM dues. Reach out to Jonathan Kusowski (JAKEnvironmental@gmail.com) to start your HazCom plan. 📧



**Need information? Have a question?
Send us an email!**



You can reach the ARM office via e-mail:
arm@mi.automotiverecyclers.org

Our new mailing address is:

ARM Office
208 N. Capitol Ave., 3rd Floor
Lansing, MI 48933

Are Your Safety Supplies Fully Stocked?

Safety supplies serve as the last line of defense against workplace hazards. Personal protective equipment (PPE), for example, minimizes exposure to cuts, burns, chemical splashes, and respiratory hazards. Eye protection and gloves protect employees from flying debris or accidental contact with corrosive substances. Spill response materials and fire extinguishers help contain emergencies before they escalate. By ensuring these items are readily available and in good condition, facilities can reduce downtime, prevent costly incidents, and maintain compliance with OSHA and state safety standards.



Beyond compliance, prioritizing safety demonstrates a company's commitment to its workforce. Providing proper equipment and training fosters a culture of responsibility and care. Employees who feel safe and protected are more confident and efficient, leading to better morale and productivity. Regular inspections and safety audits should be conducted to confirm that all required supplies are available, properly stored, used correctly, and most importantly readily available near the work hazard areas.

Essential Safety Supplies for Auto Salvage Facilities:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Safety glasses or face shields, steel-toe boots, hearing protection, nitrile gloves, cut resistant gloves.

Spill Response Materials: Absorbent pads, oil dry, spill kits, and containment booms for managing leaks or spills. Prevents slips, trips, and falls, as well as keeping areas clean and tidy.

Fire Safety Equipment: Appropriate fire extinguishers and fire blankets.

- **Multipurpose ABC** – Dry chemical used to fight three common classes of fires:
 - **Class A** – Ordinary combustibles like wood and paper
 - **Class B** – Flammable liquids like gasoline
 - **Class C** – Electrical Fires
- **Class D** – Required for Lithium Ion Battery Fires

First Aid Supplies: Comprehensive first aid kits, eyewash stations, and emergency showers in areas with chemical handling.

Signage and Barriers: "No Smoking" or "Noise Protection Required" signs and chemical hazard labels.

Housekeeping and Maintenance Tools: Brooms, waste containers, and rags to maintain clean, organized, and safe workspaces.

If your supplies are currently or consistently lacking, consider using a company that can consistently service and stock supplies to ensure you are always compliant. 🚚

Social Media for Recyclers

Continued from page 22

content is most effective when paired with trending and popular material, he added.

Verification on social media platforms is essential for establishing credibility. Tyler noted, "Verification signals legitimacy to our audience and reinforces the trust they place in our business."

Stories and reels serve complementary purposes. Stories maintain engagement with existing followers and can include interactive elements such as polls and countdowns. Reels, which remain visible indefinitely, are used to reach new audiences and showcase the breadth of products and services. "Reels offer a lasting opportunity to highlight what our business provides and to engage with both current and prospective customers," Tyler explained.

Collaboration within the auto recycling community is another key component of their approach. Partnering on challenges, tagging other locations, and sharing

content helps extend reach while fostering community engagement. "Sharing content and collaborating with peers amplifies our visibility and creates a more connected network within the industry," Tyler said.

The frequency of posting should be consistent, so if you can't post daily, at least post weekly. You can set up a social media calendar and prepare content in advance, so instead of dedicating time every day or every week to it, one option is to work on it a few days per month and schedule out your posts! Davyd and Tyler encouraged attendees not to get intimidated by accounts like theirs with hundreds of thousands of views and thousands of followers, start small in your own community and have fun with it, and your social media presence will grow naturally.

Looking ahead, both Tyler and Davyd plan to expand the use of AI in content creation, explore emerging platforms, and continue refining their social media strategies based on performance and trends. A comprehensive and adaptable social media strategy is essential for building customer loyalty, enhancing community engagement, and achieving growth. 🚗



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Have you ever sat around and griped about the rules and regulations that face our industry?

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ARM PAC 208 N. Capitol Ave., 3rd Floor, Lansing, MI 48933

Together we are making a difference!

Revvng Up Retention

Continued from page 18

less that has to be made. “We attract people who care about sustainability and leaving the planet better than we found it,” she said. Acts of service, she added, also mean giving employees respect and balance. “The work will be here tomorrow, but their kids won’t stay little forever.”

Building a strong culture doesn’t happen overnight, and Ryan urged businesses to start small. “Pick one thing to work on,” she advised. “Implement that and see the benefits before trying to change everything at once.” The key is to stay intentional — because even minor adjustments, done consistently, can transform a workplace.

As the session closed, Ryan left recyclers with a moving metaphor that tied it all together: just as a car’s parts can live on in another vehicle, the work recyclers do gives new life and purpose every day. “Just like you’re an organ donor,” she said, “my car was a parts donor — and she’s still out there helping people. Because of you, nothing truly ends. It just gets a second chance to keep moving.”

Her message was clear: when you invest in people, you invest in the promise of your business. Every part you move — and every person you appreciate — keeps that promise alive. 🚗



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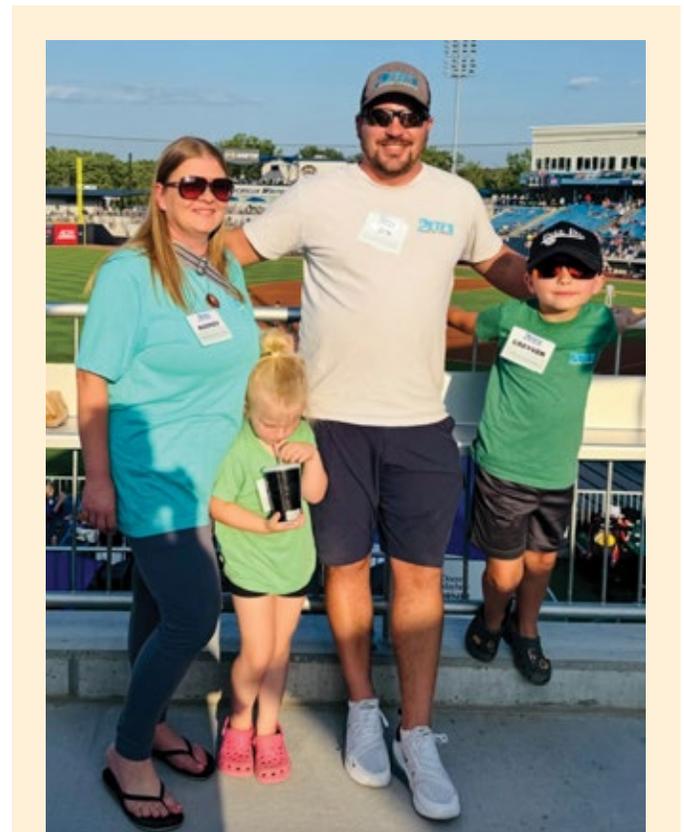
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6 Months - \$480
12 Months - \$840

→ RESERVE YOUR AD SPACE



We are saddened to share that Audrey McMahon, office manager at Pete’s Auto Parts, has passed away. Many in the auto recycling community knew Audrey through her work with Pete’s and their day-to-day operations. Audrey’s husband, Jim, also works at Pete’s Auto Parts as their shipping manager. Please keep the Pete’s Auto Parts team and Audrey’s family in your thoughts.

ARM Trivia Answer Key

1. Answer: C) 1970
2. Answer: B) Bumper covers
3. Answer: D) 300 million
4. Answer: B) Ford
5. Answer: B) Scrap iron from railroads

F.Y.I. The deadline for the next issue of the Automotive Recyclers of Michigan’s *YardTalk* newsletter is **February 6, 2026**. If you would like to place an advertisement or submit an article, please call the ARM office at 810-695-6760.



**Automotive Recyclers
of Michigan**

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