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CLEANING & RESTORATION

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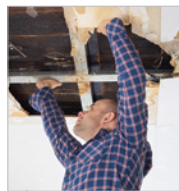
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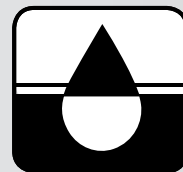
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We Celebrate Our Stories

By Chuck Violand, RIA President



Each year, I eagerly anticipate RIA's International Restoration Convention and Industry Expo. I take away so much from my time at the event, including the chance to speak one-on-one with many of you and see everyone networking with fellow restoration and reconstruction professionals. This year's event in Palm Springs, California, was no exception.

The annual convention is also a chance to celebrate the many great achievements by individuals and companies. This includes restoration and reconstruction professionals who completed their WLS, CMP and CR certifications — considered to be the premier certifications within the industry. This year, for the first time in RIA history, we had three members who earned all three of these certifications in the same year. Congratulations to Christine Boak, Owen Boak and Penny Tralau — all from Australia. What an amazing accomplishment!

This issue of *C&R* is similarly focused on honoring achievements within the industry. At the individual level, you have Cliff Zlotnik, winner of the Patricia L. Harman Golden Quill Award for his article "Concerns Over the State of the Water Damage Restoration Industry," and this year's Martin L. King Award winner Ken Larsen, CR, WLS, CMP.

At the company level, the stories behind our two Phoenix Award winners are truly inspiring.

Midwest Restoration Services, the Phoenix Award winner for Innovation in Restoration, certainly had a unique narrative. You could say they "stepped up to the plate" to help the Chicago White Sox get ready on opening day. Just hours before the start of the season, fire broke out in a warehouse within U.S. Cellular Field — literally steps away from offices and locker rooms. Midwest Restoration Services was called and provided a solution that allowed opening day to proceed on schedule, preventing the team from cancelling and having to absorb a huge revenue loss.


Likewise, Charter Construction, this year's winner of the Phoenix Award for Innovation in Reconstruction, stepped up in a big way for their client when a call for a deck repair turned into a full-fledged roof-reconstruction project. This project had it all: working with two clients, in a remote location, while braving salt water air during a windy and rainy season. Using creative methods, Charter not only saved the day, but also saved the client time and money.

While these two stories honor individual companies, their efforts epitomize the stories that shape our entire industry day after day. As you read through this issue, I encourage you to take a step back and truly embrace our collective achievements. **RIA**

STEPPING UP TO



THE PLATE



Midwest Restoration got the call to help save opening day in Chicago

By Emma Frey

Picture nearly 40,000 baseball fans unable to enter their team's stadium on opening day. That horrific image almost came to life when a fire broke out in a warehouse underneath the right field stands of U.S. Cellular Field on the Chicago White Sox's opening day April 8, 2016. Without the swift work of Midwest Restoration, recipient of the RIA 2017 Phoenix Award for Innovation in Restoration, the White Sox would have had to cancel their season opener.

Jim Hall, owner of Midwest Restoration, described the lofty task: "With a high-profile event, lots of people and very little time, we had a huge challenge in front of us. With the fire department wrapping up just hours before the gates were to open to 38,000 excited fans, our team had to get in, secure the damaged warehouse and make it appear as if nothing happened."

ALL ACCESS

The warehouse in question was located within the stadium itself — the part the public doesn't usually see: the underbelly of the stadium. It is laid out in a large circle with a series of offices and warehouses making up the perimeter interconnected by one large hallway. This is significant because the origin of the fire was literally only steps away from offices and locker rooms. In addition to the close proximity of key areas within the stadium, the warehouse was unique because it provided the only access between the first base dugout and the batting cages for the visiting team.

Step one was to provide emergency services. The fire department was leaving as the Midwest Restoration crew arrived, and the first things the Midwest crew noted were that the warehouse and adjacent areas had a strong smoke odor with soot everywhere and a wet dripping pile of burned merchandise on 20-foot-high racks.



Before Restoration: Midwest Restoration crew members had their work cut out for them in the depths of U.S. Cellular Field as a result of severe fire damage.

The crew had to:

- Reopen the tunnel in front of the warehouse for vendor traffic
- Neutralize the odor
- Contain the spread of soot
- Begin the dry out process

They used odor control fogging and Vapordeck deodorizers with HEPA air scrubbers to control odor and soot. Dehumidification equipment was set up to begin dry-out, and plastic containment was put in place to isolate the warehouse from the rest of the stadium. By the time the game began the tunnel was cleared and odor free; and over the weekend the warehouse was dried and the environment stabilized.

SPORTS-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Working with a professional baseball team presented unique challenges, particularly with regard to scheduling. Work was only permitted in the stadium on non-game days, and that work was limited to normal business hours.

Because of these restrictions, Midwest Restoration became something of an extension of the Chicago White Sox's warehouse. While the team was out of town, the crew completed the pack out. Five semi loads of contents were moved to Midwest's warehouse for cleaning and storage. When the White Sox were back in town, the crew had to clean and deliver pallets of merchandise and other materials needed for game day. Midwest made multiple deliveries over a three-month span to accommodate the needs of the team, sometimes on very short notice. All summer was

“Working with a professional baseball team presented unique challenges, particularly with regard to scheduling. Work was only permitted in the stadium on non-game days, and that work was limited to normal business hours.”

spent cleaning mascots, electronics, boxes of promotional tee shirts, game-day programs and a large assortment of promotional items.

Over 400 boxes of wet documents were dried in Midwest Restoration's dehumidification tent in Batavia, Illinois, deodorized with ozone and boxed. Electronics, including 20 large-screen TVs, were cleaned using a deionizer water system and ultrasonic cleaning station. Textiles were cleaned in their laundering facility. Large mascot uniforms were cleaned using portable upholstery equipment. Thousands of promotional items were hand-cleaned and deodorized in an ozone chamber.



After Restoration: The project was a great success. Midwest Restoration managed to save the insurer more than \$400,000.

GETTING ORGANIZED

A big part of keeping Midwest organized was using DASH for job management and ContentsTrack for inventory control. DASH was used to manage job tasks, track hours and document the job. ContentsTrack was invaluable in the pack out to inventory the White Sox property and later to locate contents and track deliveries. Without ContentsTrack, it would have been nearly impossible for Matt Nykiel, the White Sox purchasing manager, to identify the exact items he needed for their specific games, and for Midwest Restoration to make those deliveries.

more than \$400,000. This did not include the documents and records that would have been impossible to replace, or lost revenue.

For all of this stellar work, Midwest Restoration was awarded the RIA 2017 Phoenix Award for Innovation in Restoration. Hall said, "It is always an honor to be recognized by your peers for excellence in one's profession. The entire Midwest team is grateful for this award."

“The replacement cost of the merchandizing material and electronics saved the insurer more than \$400,000. This did not include the documents and records that would have been impossible to replace, or lost revenue.”

GAME ON

Overall, the project was a great success. The White Sox were able to complete the season with minimal interruptions, and the insurance companies kept Major League Baseball happy and saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in replacement cost. The replacement cost of the merchandizing material and electronics saved the insurer

What does the future look like for Midwest Restoration? "We are excited for the new challenges that face the industry," Hall said. "If restoration companies continue a campaign to grow professionally and ethically, there will always be opportunities. Midwest Restoration Services will continue to be one of those companies now and well into the future." RIA



crew discovered visible rot where the rising wall on the second floor met the deck transition. To determine the extent of the rot at the roof, additional investigation was done, leading to interesting challenges for the Charter crew as they undertook the repair of the roof as well.

The crews discovered during their in-depth investigation that the roof was a structural insulated panels (SIP) system — something Charter had never been exposed to before. SIP roofs often fail prematurely due to moisture that is created from within the home and inadequate ventilation from the roof system. The moisture becomes trapped on the bottom side of the roof sheathing, causing it to rot. The signs of damage are not always visible, and sometimes take a long time to appear.

An industry leader in the roofing industry educated crews on the best options for reconstruction, and it was clear there were two options:

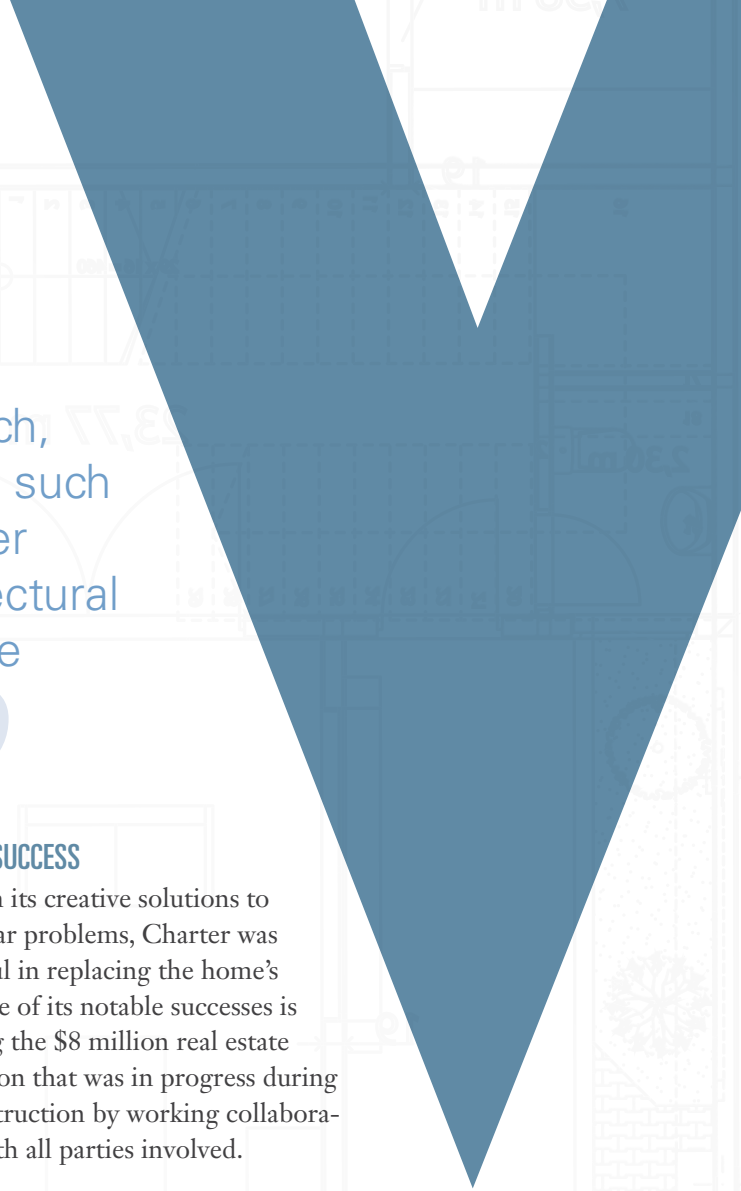
keep the SIPs roof system, or return to a more traditional stick frame roof.

The first challenge Charter faced was navigating a project that required the input of two different clients. Because the homeowner was in the middle of a real estate transaction, both the original and new owners were involved in the decision-making process. Ultimately, the decision was made to install a new SIPs roof system properly, in a way that would stand the test of time. After all, this type of roofing is a structural component of the house and was tied into the entire structural system. Both clients also desired maintaining the house's original design and aesthetic. With this decision made, crews got to work.

A CHALLENGING LANDSCAPE

The home's location proved to be the next challenge Charter would face in completion of this project. Access to the premises was limited, with narrow private roads and a ferry being the only two options due to its remote location. The construction boom in the greater Seattle area also made it difficult to achieve the desired manpower





“The biggest challenge crews faced was the roof design. The panel system had 36 elevations, a steep pitch, and incorporated complex roof styles, such as flat, barrel and turret details. Charter needed to maintain the unique architectural design while completely modifying the system — an exciting challenge.”

throughout the project, and competition among contractors was fierce. Undeterred, Charter leveraged industry relationships in order to keep the project running smoothly and on schedule.

The waterfront setting also meant that Charter's crews frequently dealt with inclement weather. The Pacific Northwest is known for its wind and rain, and Charter had to take measures to protect high-end interior finishes from exposure to the elements. They also worked to protect the natural habitat surrounding the house.

AN UNFAMILIAR SYSTEM

According to Jeremy Chappell, Charter's project manager, the biggest challenge crews faced was the roof design itself. The panel system had 36 elevations and a steep pitch, and incorporated complex roof styles, such as flat, barrel and turret details. Charter needed to maintain the unique architectural design while completely modifying the system — an exciting challenge.

“We involved several industry experts and architects in order to make this happen,” Chappell explained. The design work that went into the replacement roof ensured proper damage, and steel fasteners, which proved susceptible to corrosion, were replaced with a product coated over galvanized aluminum to combat future rust from the salt water and air.

“Charter Construction was also instrumental in helping identify a possible systemic issue with the use/installation of SIPS panels,” Chappell said. “Upon completion of the project we were able to succeed and overcome these challenges through perseverance and attention to details.”

FINDING SUCCESS

Through its creative solutions to unfamiliar problems, Charter was successful in replacing the home's roof. One of its notable successes is salvaging the \$8 million real estate transaction that was in progress during the construction by working collaboratively with all parties involved.

Chappell says his measure of success was in the clients' reaction. Charter worked diligently to provide a structurally sound roof that still maintained the original roof's aesthetic appeal — something that did not go unnoticed by the homeowners. “As we stood in the driveway and reflected upon all of the repairs that had taken place, [the clients] commented, ‘It's amazing — you cannot even tell what was done!’”

The team's hard work paid off, and Charter Construction received the 2017 Phoenix Award for Innovation in Reconstruction, which Chappell describes as an honor. “As we reflect upon the past winners, we are privileged to be named amongst this group of our peers. In the restoration industry, we live each day for the opportunity to help others and work on unique projects that push us to our knowledgeable limits and provide us opportunities to think outside the box and be innovators in restoring damage properties. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to work on such a unique project with industry experts involved to ensure a long-term restoration and the architectural uniqueness were maintained.” RIA





REGISTERED THIRD
PARTY EVALUATORS &

RIA'S WATER LOSS SPECIALIST (WLS)

By Ken Larsen, CR, WLS, CMP, CSDS



This is the third piece in a five-part series of articles explores the participation of a qualified third-party expert in the execution of a competently executed structural restoration. This edition explores the considerable value of RIA's WLS designation carried by such an expert.

RTPE RECAP

Few deny that the property restoration industry has progressively become more difficult due to a catastrophically diminished trust between insurers and service providers. Today, the intensity of this lack of trust has produced a market whereby administrators of preferred vendor programs, service provider networks and third-party administrations (TPAs) privately negotiate stipulations with insurance carriers that are blatantly substandard and the promise to impose rules upon service providers who participate in their programs that are patently unfair. Too often, the result is a property owner who does not receive a competently executed restoration effort and/or a short-fall in a fully justifiable insurance settlement. The service provider must choose between the risk of participating in an incompetently executed restoration effort or prudently performing the project competently while forfeiting justifiable and necessary revenue.

The solution may be found through the regular involvement of an entity that can build trust between the insurer and service provider through the evaluation and guidance of an independent expert in the competent delivery of structural restoration that is in accord with the industry's accepted standard of care to be followed; a RIA Registered Third Party Evaluator (RTPE)**. The RTPE would represent the needs of the structure — not the financial interests of the service provider or insurer.

Who would qualify to be this RTPE? It should be someone formally trained at the highest level in restoration practices, a truly seasoned professional with a significant portion of their careers spent in the development of skills and knowledge pertaining to the restoration and/or repairing of structures and contents. This would indeed contrast with many who claim to possess authoritative understandings on projects upon which they have never set foot, and trades in which they have never actually executed in commerce.

A WLS CAN BE AN IICRC S500-2015 "DRYING CONSULTANT"

Of all the perils encountered by the restoration service provider, water damage losses are by far the most

commonly debated by agencies retained by the insurance entity. There is a good reason why this is so.

The first three editions of the IICRC S500 Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Water Damage Restoration (1991, 1999 and 2006) included significant

“The IICRC exam learning objectives were in large part derived from the non-ANSI, non-standard of care to be followed reference guide whereby the student would be declared “right or wrong” based upon these ideas that frequently conflicted with logic and science.”

portions of information that were either disappointingly absent or incorrect. The latest S500 standard (2015) has corrected many of these issues while some persistently remain.

Additionally, the IICRC exam learning objectives were in large part derived from the non-ANSI, non-standard of care to be followed reference guide whereby the student would be declared “right or wrong” based upon these ideas that frequently conflicted with logic and science.

These exam elements became the foundation of many debates among instructors, students and, eventually, the insurance representatives. Program work emerged that imposed the ideas mentioned not in the ANSI standard, but rather in the non-standard guideline. This problem persists to this day — particularly with shameful drying software programs built upon the substandard ideas promulgated by the IICRC exams and leveraged by insurance repair “preferred vendor program” negotiators.

Fortunately, some within the industry took the care to study the industry standards and rejected many of the dubious ideas derived from the reference guide and taught within many exams. They researched beyond the standards and studied authoritative alternate material. They researched

and considered the legalities and regulations encountered on restorative drying projects. Finally, they exercised their well-researched understandings on real projects.

Who are these individuals who have become restorative drying authorities upon whom an inquirer can acquire an intelligent answer?

A RIA Water Loss Specialist (WLS) is an individual who has demonstrated they have taken the subject of structural restorative drying particularly seriously. Established in 1996 by a distinguished group of industry experts, the program producing WLS professionals was quickly recognized as the top credential that could be acquired by a restorative drying expert.

STEPPING STONES

Several IICRC credentials were accepted as building block prerequisites for a WLS applicant. It is important to note that the intention was not to necessarily validate the learning objectives taught within other courses, but rather to recognize what the general industry has been taught — right or wrong. This is an important foundation upon which to build a valuable water damage consultancy. Knowledge of common fallacies taught to the industry can be very beneficial to an expert's body of knowledge so as to effectively respond in redirecting the poorly informed.

Other prerequisites include "... a wide variety of vetted industry-related courses representing the four major Domains of Knowledge as part of its pre-requisite course requirements."

These prerequisite Domains of Knowledge are addressed with the following subjects necessary for WLS applicants:

- "Domain #1: Basic Skills in Water Damage Restoration
- Domain #2: Hands on Water Damage, Restoration & Drying Training
- Domain #3: Microbial Remediation
- Domain #4: Health & Safety Training
- Domain #5: Building Science
- Domain #6: Project Management & Commercial Loss Training"

Aside from the formal education acquired in a classroom, WLS applicants must be able to prove they have several years (currently five) of verifiable work experience related to the restoration industry and/or several years (currently three) of verifiable supervisory experience. As this credential becomes progressively more esteemed, the necessary field experience may one day be extended

to reflect a longer time frame. It is important to note the RIA declares work experience to include:

- restoration worker,
- project supervisor,
- estimator,
- consultant,
- inspector,
- restoration company manager,
- facility manager,
- restoration instructor.

Specifically absent from this list are individuals who "review service provider files." They do not fall under the category of "worker, supervisor, consultant, manager or estimator." They are merely "reviewers" [to assemble the documents necessary to complete the file; not to interpret or evaluate the scope or procedures performed], absent of any practical experience. Such individuals are unlikely to be qualified to fully understand the trade of structural restorative drying and the decisions required to competently engineer and execute an effective restoration and drying strategy. Therefore, they are logically determined to not possess the expertise necessary to qualify them to be a competent "evaluator."

The result is that the WLS applicant who attends the Prep Course is not taught a series of exam questions, but rather attends the event with the full knowledge that they are there to prove they already possess the knowledge necessary to carry the title of Water Loss Specialist. This is likely possible since "*The Water Loss Specialist (WLS) Advanced Certification Program is recognized by insurance companies, building owners and managers, as well as the public and governmental authorities as the premiere achievement of excellence.*"²



RIA WLS SERVING AS AN IICRC S500-2015 "DRYING CONSULTANT" AND RTPE

The S500-2015 speaks specifically to the structural restorative drying service provider regarding the inclusion of a specialized expert in the execution of their work. Many of the comments made within this standard distinctly segregate the qualified from the unqualified in the performance of structural restorative drying. You are invited to seriously consider the message expressed in the carefully worded introduction to Section 12 of the S500-2015, particularly as it relates to those who attempt to review a qualified service provider's services.



The “RIA Registered Third Party Evaluator (RTPE)” is a proposed idea under consideration by the RIA. This series of articles is drafted with the intention of determining market interest and sentiment. You are strongly encouraged to provide feedback on this subject — both positive and negative — through email at ken@drystandard.org, or the editor of this magazine, mcarrozzo@restorationindustry.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

12 Specialized Experts

12.1 Introduction

“Restorers should be qualified by education, training and experience to appropriately execute the skills and expertise required to safely perform the restoration of structure and contents.”

Therefore, those who wish to contribute to or review the restorer’s processes should also be likewise qualified and their qualifications should be established prior to any dialogue with a critic or debater.

“Restorers, who respond to water damage claims should perform only those services they are qualified to perform. If there are situations that arise where there is a need to perform services beyond the expertise of the restorer, specialized experts, whether from within or outside the company, should be used. When the service of a specialized expert is needed, restorers should hire, or recommend in a timely manner that the client hire, the appropriate specialized expert.”

When this statement is seriously considered, how many restoration professionals can answer the following questions relevant to the restoration of the property?

- What data has been collected to compellingly determine the category of water?
- What data indicates where the water went?
- Were the meters used on the project in excellent working condition and used as directed within the owner’s manuals?

- What risks are documented to be present on the project, and how were they managed?
- Were the equipment formulas mentioned within the S500 deployed within the context clearly described? (NOTE: This is one of the industry’s primary failures. Some formulas are NOT a component of the accepted standard of care to be followed.)
- Since the S500 equipment formulas never claim to be a “drying plan,” did the service provider define and produce a competently engineered and defensible plan? (S500-2015, 2015, p. 57; Std. 13.5.7) (Larsen, 2014, pp. Page 404 - 423)
- What evidence proves the drying records are authentic and accurate?

A CMP/WLS (and/or CR) is likely to be more qualified to answer these questions than most other credentialed tradesman within the restoration industry.

“While specialized experts are occasionally used on routine residential or commercial water restoration projects, they are more likely to be used in complex moisture intrusions involving sewage, catastrophic flooding, mud accumulation, asbestos, lead-based paint, visible mold growth, building safety or the need for specialty trades. Specialized experts include, but are not limited to:”

Yes, both residential and commercial projects can benefit from a qualified specialized expert – especially when the project is likely to undergo a rigorous third party review (TPA). These unqualified and frequently substandard TPA reviews have become a significant “risk” that must be managed by the property owner and service provider. The

list presented within the S500-2015 is long, (S500-2015, 2015, p. 45) but includes these particular skillsets carried by a WLS (and CMP):

- “safety and health (e.g., Certified Safety Professional (CSP), Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH, CAIH), **indoor environmental professional (IEP)**, safety engineer);
- other experts (e.g., **drying consultants**, mold remediators, leak detection services, infrared thermographers).

Projects that can require additional information beyond the restorer’s ability can include, but are not limited to:

- extensive or complex structural damage;
- long-term moisture problems resulting in a musty, moldy or other abnormal odor in the absence of visible microbial growth;
- the need to document the presence of visible microbial growth;
- the need to document the presence of pre-existing damage;
- the need for thermal imaging and photo documentation;
- plumbing, electrical and roofing problems;
- complex sewage backflows;
- the presence of regulated or hazardous materials (e.g., asbestos, lead, fuel oil);
- complex drying situations;
- issues involving worker and occupant safety and health; or
- the need for project oversight (e.g., administration, supervision, management and auditing of project closure).

If a pre-restoration or pre-remediation assessment is needed, then an independent specialized expert who meets the description of indoor environmental professional (IEP) should be used. If microbial post-restoration or post-remediation verifications are needed, they should be conducted by an indoor environmental professional. Where elevated risk factors are present (see section 10.6.7), then an IEP should be retained by one of the materially interested parties.”

RTPES WITH A WLS (AND CMP) CREDENTIAL AND THE TPA

Entities who have negotiated program stipulations with the insurance carriers (TPAs) carry the fiduciary responsibility to represent the interests of the entity they claim to serve: the insurance carrier. This is their customer — not the service provider or property owner. Furthermore, these entities are frequently grossly unqualified to speak to the scoping or procedural needs of the restoration project on any level! These facts should alarm all who are involved in an insurance claim.

Any homeowner who suffers damages from a covered peril according to the terms of their insurance policy can file an insurance claim and is entitled to have the expenses related to their property being competently restored. To

establish the scope of work and needs of a competent restoration protocol, a RIA RTPE can be retained by the property owner to define the needs of the project. If the insurance company and the TPA were indeed interested in serving their common customer (the property owner), they too would welcome the qualified RTPE who possesses a WLS credential.

Service providers who participate in claim referral programs regularly encounter disputes from unqualified program enforcers. A qualified RTPE can provide an unbiased description of the structural repair needs and a competent execution. The insured can then include the expense of the RTPE in their proof of loss declaration. This can also be of value to the service provider as they submit their justifiable charges for the services as collaborated with the RTPE.

The TPA can then stick to what they do best: assemble documents in preparation for the licensed adjuster’s review and expedient file closure.

An RTPE who carries a WLS credential can be a qualified “drying consultant” as described in the S500-2015 in determining the usual, customary and justifiable services required to competently restore a structure. Following the CMP credential, the second advanced credential acquired by those seeking to be an RTPE should be the Water Loss Specialist (WLS). The next credential they should seek is their capstone credential, the Certified Restorer (CR) so as to complete their RTPE accreditation — a trifecta of expertise! We will review this credential in the next issue. **RIA**

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Ken Larsen, CR, WLS, CMP, CSDS has been in the restoration industry since 1978. He holds RIA, ACAC and IICRC advanced designations. His career includes 18 years as an independent property restoration contractor; consultant to restorative drying during catastrophes and large loss drying coordination, expert witness, director of education for North America’s largest disaster restoration contracting organizations and author of *Leadership in Restorative Drying*.



INTENSE PROFESSIONALISM

Attention to detail defines the career of 2017 Martin L. King Award recipient Ken Larsen.

The career of Ken Larsen, CR, WLS, CMP, CSDS, spans almost four decades and encompasses such roles as restoration contractor, industry trainer, author and advocate for the restoration industry. He is considered by many to be a pioneer, championing many industry concepts that have led to mainstream industry best practices, such as Digital Photo Inventory for contents restoration and standardized moisture content verification reports for drying projects.

Larsen has served on multiple Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) committees and task forces, and has contributed to their certification and standards development activities over the years. His involvement in industry certification also includes work with the American Council for Accredited Certification (ACAC), a third-party accredited certification organization primarily serving the Indoor Air Quality

(IAQ) and Remediation sector, as a contributor to those groups' restoration-related credentials.

The holder of three RIA advanced certifications and one from ACAC, Larsen has served RIA in a variety of ways. These include committee membership on the Mechanical Systems Hygiene Institute (MSHI), a division of ASCR that eventually became the Environmental Council, as well as being an engaged member of RIA's Education Committee and serving on various subcommittees.

One of his most prominent contributions to the industry has been serving as a member of the Certified Restorer Redevelopment transition team and peer reviewer of the CR Body of Knowledge.

For Larsen, it is a determination to accuracy and professionalism that drives him through it all.

THE MARTIN L. KING AWARD

RIA has presented the Martin L. King Award annually since 1986 to an individual who has, like its namesake, made significant contributions to the restoration profession over the span of many years. The prestigious award honors the career of one of the industry's founding fathers, Martin "Marty" L. King, who passed away in May 2015. A prolific author and leading innovator, Marty is perhaps best known for his leadership in helping professionalize the trade. He created the Certified Restorer (CR) advanced certification, wrote the Guidelines for Fire and Smoke Damage Repair, and served as a mentor and role model for many generations of restorers.



"Many years ago, when I first started in this industry, I described myself as a 'restoration professional,' during a debate with an adjuster," said Larsen. "The adjuster looked at me with a frown and simply said, 'A professional simply means you make a living at restoration. It's your 'profession.' It doesn't mean you are good at it."

That inspired Larsen to think hard about the subject of being a professional, especially one that represented the demographic recognized to be a qualified professional. He added, "Up to that time (the late 1970s), there were minimal education opportunities available to those who wished to make a career within restoration work, but they were available if you were ambitious enough to look."

After many years of investing in a variety of classroom education events, Larsen realized that much of what he was being taught failed to comply with the information he knew to be true.

"I researched outside of the course textbook — libraries, television documentaries, field tests and experiments, and eventually online research all helped me develop a much more sophisticated understanding of my trade," said Larsen. "It is this action — the drive to research our trade beyond what is spoken in the classroom — that provides the greatest contribution to development of a true industry professional recognized by others as authoritative."

A CLOSE-KNIT GROUP

Recalling the first time he observed an RIA (formerly ASCR) conference, Larsen said he was amazed by the friendly disposition and professional wisdom so openly shared among these international heavyweights.

"That was an eye-opening moment for me, and I strove to imitate these world-class restoration experts back at home. The surprising result was the natural segregation between quality collaborators who wished to ally, and the less confident contractors who viewed all competitors as 'the enemy.'"

To this day, Larsen holds professional relationships with many of these former competitors — some of whom he has embraced as very close friends. He adds, "It is a value of RIA membership that I find difficult to express into words. How do you express gratitude to an organization that introduced you to a culture and group of people who become life-long friends?"

AN "INTENSE" REFLECTION

Being bestowed with the honor of the MLK Award — considered by many to be a pinnacle recognition within the restoration industry — is what Larsen calls "intense."

Such an "intense moment" causes him to do much reflection over his career. There were times when he worried about how a project was progressing and the potential impacts upon customers and their property. There were exhaustingly intense disputes with those he considered to be "uneducated file reviewers, attorneys, insurance claims representatives (and their TPA comrades)" over the needs of a competent restoration protocol. And there are even sleepless nights spent pondering the general state of the industry (including the impact of its formal education offerings) and how the industry will (or will not) survive the apathetic views toward the interests of the future of the competent restoration professional.

Through it all, Larsen realizes that he is not the only one who endures such concerns. He believes these are investments in energy that a typical RIA member expends daily. And that energy is one that has led him to this distinguished honor.

"Marty King was passionate about the industry," said Larsen. "This passion rubbed off on many who learned from him, and I think I was one of them. It is nice to know that others have noticed how much a person cares about the industry and took the time to let you know they appreciate the effort. The MLK Award is for all those who care about the restoration industry as much as he did." **RIA**



Cliff Zlotnik records "Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Radio," a weekly podcast he co-hosts with Joe Hughes, which is designed to help promote education and communication for restoration industry professionals and consumers.

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

Golden Quill Award winner takes 16-year journey to pen narrative against "made-up science."

Each year, one feature article from *C&R* magazine is selected for the Patricia L. Harman Golden Quill Award, presented at the Restoration Industry Association's annual convention. The award, written by an RIA member, is based on the following criteria:

- Degree of usefulness of information
- Composition and clarity of the article
- Style or personality conveyed by the author

This year, Cliff Zlotnik was honored for his article "Concerns Over the State of the Water Damage Restoration Industry," which was published in the October 2016 issue of *C&R*.

Zlotnik learned water damage restoration firsthand from Lloyd Weaver, the inventor of the air mover and father of what is called "water damage restoration." Lloyd's

students, among them Ernie Storrer, Pete Consigli and Claude Blackburn, founder of Dri-Eaz, had no doubts as to how water damage restoration was to be done in the 1970s.

Since 2001, Zlotnik had been concerned over what he called "the inaccuracy of the in-place drying narrative." Through the years he had expressed concerns to restorers, equipment manufacturers, distributors and industry educators.

Starting in 2016, Zlotnik, with the help of Ken Larsen, Pete Consigli, and John Downey, made the commitment to author an article that he believes combats other narratives that are centered mainly on "made-up science."

We sat down with Zlotnik to get his thoughts on what it is like to be a part of RIA, his thoughts on being honored and his drive as a professional.

C&R: What does it mean to you to be a professional in the restoration industry?

Zlotnik: Choosing disaster restoration as a career means: hard work, long hours and emergency response. Looking back over a career spanning more than four decades, it's a commitment to always putting the customer first; regrettably often ahead of my family. A dependence upon the gratification and personal satisfaction that comes with each client's sincere thank you for every job done right. An obsession with making a positive difference on every claim.

C&R: In what ways has being a member of RIA shaped you as a professional — and as a person?

Zlotnik: I've been an RIA member longer than most, spanning back to the mid-1970s. From my vantage point, RIA was the birthplace of restoration. In the early days, many of us were specialty cleaners and/or small general contractors handling fire damage claims. We learned "black magic." We could miraculously make both the black discoloration and the stubborn and lingering odor of smoke disappear from both structure and contents. This was years before structural drying and decades before mold remediation became areas of specialty.

RIA workshops and conventions were the places where budding restorers gathered. The opportunity to serve voluntarily on the leadership committee was highly coveted. Back then you didn't ask to serve on a committee; the committee asked you. There was a waiting list to serve. I was an active member for eight years before being asked to serve on the NIDR committee.

Like many of my peers I learned much about fire restoration from Martin King. The person who I learned the most from and who had the biggest professional impact on me was Major Long. He ran a sizable and highly successful restoration business called Smoke Services in Atlanta, Georgia. He franchised Smoke Services into other major markets. Creative, innovative and always ahead of the curve, Major Long openly shared his methods and procedures with RIA members. He was first to provide a remote fee based estimating and consulting service, which he advertised in C&R magazine. He developed an effective estimating form and an early computerized estimating program.



CONCERNS OVER THE STATE OF THE WATER DAMAGE RESTORATION INDUSTRY
By Cliff Zlotnik

Editor's Note & Disclaimer: This article is reprinted with permission from the August 2016 issue of The Journal of Cleaning, Restoration & Inspection, published by the IICRC. The IICRC and the IICRC are NISO partner organizations.

FOREWORD FROM THE AUTHOR

Be careful what you wish for; you may regret it.

In the 1970s, Lloyd Weaver invented the "Lloyd's Porta Dryer" to dry water-damaged wall-to-wall carpet and cushion on location. Weaver's method was a huge improvement over the previous options: extract the carpet, spray deodorant or antimicrobial and hope nothing bad happened; remove the carpet for remote drying and cleaning; then attempt reinstallation; or remove and replace.

A new method called top-down drying (TDD) was marketed as being superior and proved profitable because it was less labor intensive and more profitable. Would-be practitioners moved into training courses, purchased new extraction equipment and significantly increased inventories of drying equipment. Absorbed commercial opportunities ensued — in-place drying triggered and led a business frenzy that led the IICRC to include the method in its Water Restoration Technician Course, create a new certification course and add the practice to its S500 industry standard. Everyone seemed to get what they wanted for a while. A burgeoning industry focused on securing their share of the pie and, in doing so, overlooked the inefficiencies of in-place drying.

The IICRC got sidetracked into overlooking the unintended consequences of relying on unproven, scientifically unsound methodologies, forcing the industry to use impractical technology through their prescriptive standards, creating unreasonable performance expectations and exponential increases in rental equipment cost.

The IICRC rushed to add TDD to their training course, created a new certification course and added the methodology into standards. They now have the responsibility to acknowledge their error and repair the damage they've caused. Let's watch closely to see what they do and when they do it.

Feedback and comments are encouraged.

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Major once mentioned to me that he was having difficulty deodorizing attics after smoke damage. I told him that I had developed products and a procedure that was working well for me. He wanted to try it, so I sent him a chemical care package and some instructions. One day my insurance agent stopped by to chat and saw a small pile of free care packages addressed to industry colleagues. He told me about Products Liability coverage and we soon added it to our insurance policy, and "Unsmoke Systems" was born.

Don Bragonier of DonJean Cleaning & Restoration Merced, California, a chemical customer, once called to discuss a stubborn protein fire odor originating in a microwave. My brother and I kidnapped my mom's microwave, took it into my parents' driveway and carbonized a turkey inside of it for the express purpose of duplicating the burnt residue and odor so we could develop an odor counteractant for protein odor. Several hours later we had developed an effective product that worked to our mom's complete satisfaction. Confident that there wasn't an odor problem I couldn't resolve, I began advertising an odor removal consulting service in C&R magazine.

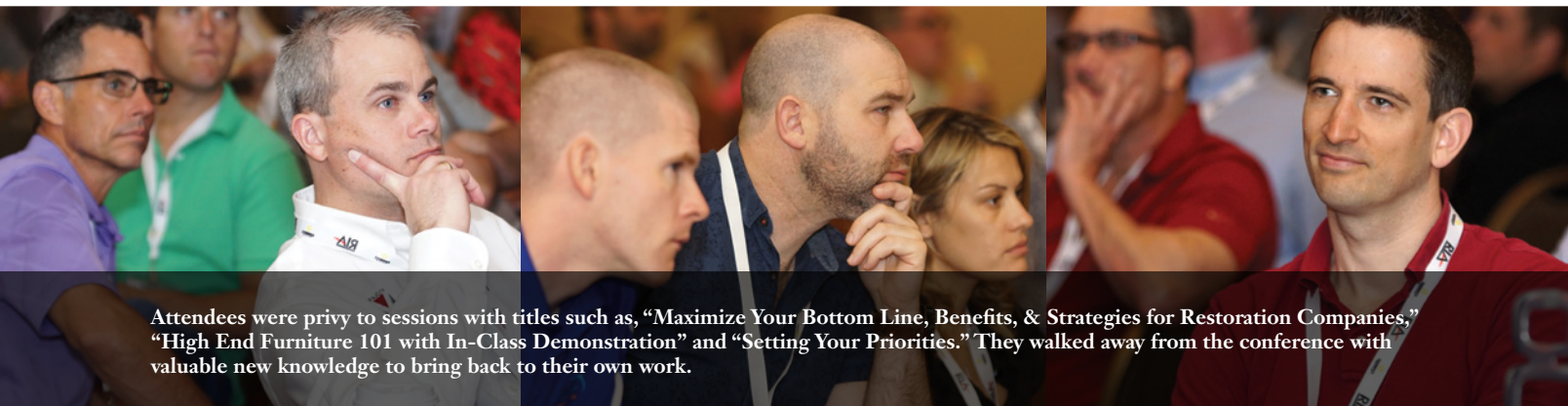
C&R: What does it mean to you to be honored with the Patricia L. Harman Golden Quill Award?

Zlotnik: The medical profession pledges to uphold an oath to "do no harm." I feel the IICRC did the industry harm by promoting "in-place drying." The articles in The Journal of Cleaning, Restoration & Inspection and Cleaning & Restoration provided the opportunity to correct the historical record and bring to light what I considered to be a serious case of industry malpractice. **RIA**

INTERNATIONAL RESTORATION

CONVENTION & INDUSTRY EXPO

The 2017 International Restoration Convention and Industry Expo took place April 5-7 at the Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel in Palm Springs, California. The conference featured a robust array of sessions focused on current issues and topics facing the restoration industry, and attendees were able to network with peers and thought leaders in the field. Take a look at some of the moments captured from the event.



Attendees were privy to sessions with titles such as, “Maximize Your Bottom Line, Benefits, & Strategies for Restoration Companies,” “High End Furniture 101 with In-Class Demonstration” and “Setting Your Priorities.” They walked away from the conference with valuable new knowledge to bring back to their own work.



Our 2017 keynote speaker was Randy Hetrick, a 14-year Navy SEAL Officer, bootstrap entrepreneur, multi-patented inventor and growth company CEO. Hetrick shared his insights for attaining success with conference attendees, making for an engaging and thought-provoking keynote session.



The Industry Expo offered attendees an opportunity to explore products to improve restoration processes while connecting with a wide array of professional peers.



Chuck Violand, RIA President, welcomes attendees to the 2017 International Restoration Convention.



5 QUESTIONS



Shane Hobbs is the CEO of Dalworth Restoration, a business considered a household name in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) metroplex. Dalworth Restoration not only restores properties in DFW, but also travels nationwide for major flooding and hurricane relief. The company is run with an intense focus on customer service, innovation, quality and integrity. It has garnered numerous industry accolades and awards, as well as respect from competitors and customers alike.

HOW DID YOU GET YOUR START IN THE RESTORATION INDUSTRY?

We started as a carpet cleaning company in 1976. We noticed that a lot of our customers had floods and needed mitigation services, so we began extracting too. In 1989 we grew to the status of full service restoration company. From there, we began doing residential jobs and striving to grow to do large commercial jobs. We would travel for big storms to build our business. Today, a large portion of our business is local commercial restoration work.

WHAT CHANGES OR TRENDS DO YOU PREDICT IN THE RESTORATION INDUSTRY?

It's imperative that we become more professional, provide better service and focus more on the customer experience to make lifetime customers. Customers want and demand great customer service, and we have to provide it.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT BEING IN THE RESTORATION INDUSTRY?

It is extremely challenging and every challenge is different. I like the fast-paced environment, the network of people I have come to know because of this industry, and the fact that this industry is always changing.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS?

It comes down to constantly learning. Never quit learning — always be reading new books, then execute what you learn. I have even implemented a program for my employees to encourage them to read and stay engaged with the trends of the marketplace, and then we work to determine how we can better serve our customers.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING OUTSIDE OF WORK?

I like to exercise and ride bikes, and I love cars, reading and learning. I enjoy drinking wine, looking at art... basically anything and everything. I love spending time with my family and grandchildren.

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The Summit at Lone Mountain

RIA is proud to sponsor the IICRC's 2017 technical conference: The Summit at Lone Mountain, which will be held August 9-11 in Big Sky, Montana.

The Summit promises to be a unique experience. It has been developed to encourage scientific thinking within the industry, while also making industry research accessible.



The Summit will have three concurrent educational symposiums, each focused on one of the three technical disciplines served by the IICRC:

- Flooring Inspection
- Cleaning
- Disaster Restoration & Remediation

It will also provide valuable networking opportunities with your peers.

Take advantage of this unique opportunity to enhance your science-based knowledge and add to the professionalism that serves you and your customers so well.

As a member benefit, you qualify for a special reduced registration rate of \$795 (base rate is \$950). You can find additional details and register to attend here:

<http://www.iicrc.org/registrants/thesummit/>

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