

A Hopeful New Year



Jt always strikes me as something of an irony that the brightest holidays of the year fall in the deepest part of the darkest season. They come when the days are the shortest, the clouds the thickest, the weather (at least in Chicago), the worst. And yet it is at precisely this time when we celebrate the happier human emotions of family, love, and charity and somewhat arbitrarily declare a "new" year.

We indulge in the symbolically optimistic exercises of opening our new calendars and making our New Year's resolutions.

Underlying all the hype and hoopla of the holidays is the implicit assumption that we have a clean slate, a fresh start, another chance. Next year, we think, however briefly, will be better.

And why not? Maybe it will be.

This year, on a national scale, the notion of the clean slate is even stronger. Soon there will be a new president in Washington, dozens of new congresspeople, a lot of new faces. In November nearly two-thirds of the voters in America said quite clearly that it was time for something new. They may not have been sure what that something new was, but they were sure they wanted it - and they got it. Reason enough to be hopeful, at least in the short term.

The causes for optimism are not entirely artificial either. Slowly, slowly the economy is getting better. Exports remain strong. There are some signs that unemployment is declining. Psychologically, perhaps because there will be new faces in Washington, perhaps because of the holiday season, perhaps because people are just tired of feeling gloomy, consumer confidence seems a bit stronger.

In our own industry, the overall export situation is good news, and cutting tool sales

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here in America are very strong. The sense that the recession may be winding down breeds optimism for us too. We are by no means out of the woods yet, but a feeling exists in the gear industry that finding the way may be possible after all.



It's a new year kind of feeling. We have another chance to do it right.

At *Gear Technology*, we are no less susceptible to this ingrained optimism than anyone else. We have great plans for the new year too. For the first time, in 1993 we are assigning special themes to certain issues. For example, this January/February issue deals with matters relating to cutting tools. Other focuses for the year include heat treating and the computer in design and manufacturing, as well as our traditional Gear Expo pre-show and show issues. Our final new venture for the year will be a Buyer's Guide Supplement. These plans are the fulfillment of our on-going New Year's resolution to make *Gear Technology* even better and more useful to you, our readers and advertisers.

Actually, we could use your help with keeping this important resolution. In this issue, you will find a Reader Survey similar to the one we ran in the last issue. Please take a few minutes to fill it out and return it to us either by mail or fax. The answers you give will help us in planning for the coming year.

At the same time, we'd like to say a special thanks to those of you who returned the survey last month. We loved the compliments, and we welcome your suggestions for improvement.

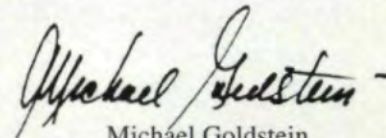
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 Enjoy this year
& every year after...


you appreciate their support of the magazine. They are the ones who make it possible for us to bring you the information you tell us is so valuable.

Based on the results of the survey, we do have a lot to be optimistic about, even though as I write this editorial, the days are still growing shorter, and the sun has not shined in 20 days. Still, the new year is on the way. Its arrival is always a sign of hope, which Ambrose Bierce described as desire and expectation rolled into one. And perhaps it is appropriate that the new year does arrive just at the time when things seem the darkest. After all, the days will soon begin to get longer; the weather will slowly warm again; we do get a clean calendar and a clean slate; and we all desire and expect this year will be better than last. That desire, expectation, and hope is our wish for you at the beginning of 1993.

One of the things that pleased us most about the survey was the number of you who said that you used *Gear Technology* as a resource when purchasing new equipment. That's good news both for us and our advertisers. It's important for them - and us - to know that their ad dollars are well-spent in our pages. When you contact them to purchase products, be sure to let them know you saw their ad in *Gear Technology* and that


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