

A Few Minor Tweaks



Dear Editor:

As one who has been intimately involved with movable operating machinery for the past 40 years, I was delighted to read your article about Chicago's many movable bridges. Over the years, I've worked closely on bridges with Dan Burke and Tom Powers, as well as many of their predecessors going back to the days of Henry Ecale, Fred Olivi and Lou Konza.

While your description of the bridges is most interesting, I noticed several errors that should be corrected. When describing the Michigan Ave. double-leaf, double-deck bascule, you conclude, "... most other bridges in the system have only one leaf." This is not true. Fact is, most Chicago trunnion bascules have two leaves, but only a few are double-deck bridges—Michigan Ave., Lake Shore Drive, etc.

A couple paragraphs later, in describing the drive system, it is noted, "... those four motors drive the trunnion—or axle—which in turn activates a gear set of increasing size to power the bridge. The last in the

series—the bull gear—has the largest teeth of the set and actually rotates the rack and in turn powers the raising and lowering of the bridge sections." This description is a bit confusing as well as somewhat inaccurate since the motors do not drive the trunnion.

Here's another way to describe the drive system: Each of the four motors drives a series of reduction gears, which reduce the speed and increase the torque to a final member called the rack pinion, which meshes with a large gear segment called the rack that is mounted on the movable leaf; thus causing the leaf to rotate about the centerline of its axles, known as trunnions, to the open or closed position. One might visualize the leaf being a segment of the last gear in the power train, rotating only about 90 degrees.

Please accept these as constructive observations and not nit-picking; overall you did a good job in publicizing movable bridges.

Sincerely,
Bob Cragg

will be a good year for attendance.

We have had to ask the hotels to increase the room blocks for Gear Expo multiple times; advanced registrations are well ahead of the history, and registrations for the educational programs appear strong at this point.

But you outdid yourself with the August issue! Beyond the informative show preview, your action to make sure the Gear Expo logo was on every exhibitor's ad makes the event truly stand out. Again and again it is one of the first images one sees on each page. Thanks. Please extend my appreciation to your staff. I know it takes many hands and brains to do such good work.

Sincerely,
Joe T. Franklin, Jr.
American Gear Manufacturers Assoc.
Alexandria, VA

Editor's note: According to AGMA numbers, Gear Expo 2007 attracted more than 3,000 total attendees (including exhibitors), making it the largest show since 2001. See our post-show coverage on p. 64.

Call To Action

Dear Editor:
I am writing to express my appreciation for the superior coverage you and your staff have given this year's Gear Expo. Your clever cicada editorial in July was a good call to action, and you put the burden right on the bull's eye. This show belongs to the industry. Due to your good words and the actions of a number of others—exhibitors have mailed over twice the number of guest passes as in any prior year—indications are that this

PUBLISHER'S PAGE

What's All the Buzz About?
What's that you say? I'm sorry, could you repeat that? Would you speak up, please? I can't hear a thing you just said!

Sorry about that. It's just hard to hear around here lately with all the cicadas. Many of you have probably heard—we maybe you've been infested as well—but the Michigan Ave. has a very peculiar brood of 17-year cicadas, and 2007 was their year.

For 17 years, these cicadas live underground as nymphs, quietly sucking the sap from tree roots. Much of the life cycle is spent where they're down there all that time. But hey, do we know now? We've said that, in some areas there are 1-1.5 million cicadas per acre (400,000-600,000 per hectare, or 250-370 cicadas per square meter).

Around the beginning of June, the nymphs begin crawling out of the ground and making their way up tree trunks where they attached themselves, shed their skins and transformed into winged adults. And then the cicada begins.

In some areas, the noise is about deafening. It seems steady or less constant, but if you stand and listen, you can hear the cicadas react to each other on masses. That chirping is their way of communicating with one another.

And then there are the great droves of cicadas.

Cicadas aren't particularly good swimmers, and they'll sink into pretty much anything they run into, even—in other words—for an evening cycle.

By the time you read this, this batch of 17-year cicadas will all be gone. They'll have mated, the females will have laid their eggs, and the adults will have shed and their wings crumpled. Of course, the eggs will hatch, and the nymphs will drop to the ground and burrow underground, where they'll stay for 17 more years.

Even though they are absent around only about one week, the cicadas have given us plenty to talk about around Chicago. The whole town is abuzz with them, if you'll pardon my pun.

But for me, all the talk about cicadas reminds me of another cyclical event, one which is about to arrive in the gear industry: GE EXPO. I'm talking about Gear Expo, which will take place October 7-10 in Detroit's Crisler Center.

Like the cicadas, Gear Expo comes on a regular cycle.

So I wonder: Will Gear Expo 2007 generate the same kind of buzz in the gear industry that the cicadas have generated in the Chicago area? Will gear industry professionals swarm to Gear Expo like the cicadas have swarmed some of our neighborhoods? Will we be talking about Gear Expo 2007 for months and years to come, or will we forget about it as soon as it's over?

It's hard to say. Mostly, the success depends on you. AGMA has been naming

to every issue writing you to "Grab Your Gear and Go" to Gear Expo. (See page 58 in AGMA's show ad.) But how many of you have taken the time to log in and register? How many have purchased it as to your schedule? How many have booked accommodations?

In theory, people attend trade shows when they have money to spend, when they need extra manufacturing capacity, or when there are new technologies being introduced, or just to meet friends and develop relationships. I know that most of you are pretty busy. Hopefully, that means you're also making money. It probably means you're in need of extra capacity, but it also means you might not find the time to go to the show. But that's the point of the cicada. Gear Expo is a limited engagement. If you miss it, you'll have to wait another two years.

The same is so for you. If you value the show, if you value your own knowledge, if you value the opportunity to meet with the thought, sales and service personnel of your suppliers, then register for Gear Expo by going to www.gearexpo.com.

Let's reverse the conventional of dwindling attendance and make this a year to remember.

After all, as a strong advocate of a strong industry, we'll be there, always, making as much noise as we possibly can. We hope you'll join us.

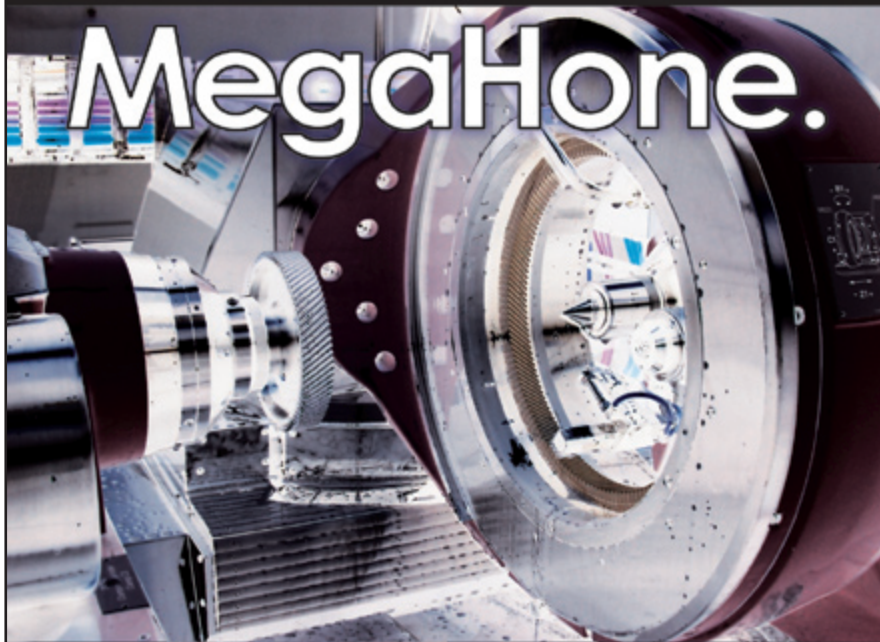
Let's give our gear industry something to buzz about.

Michael Goldstein
Michael Goldstein,
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

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VOICES

Outside the Gear World



Dear Editor:

I just wanted to let the Editor-in-Chief know how much I enjoyed his editorial and suggestion that I watch The War series on PBS. As a 40-something daughter of a WWII vet, I knew little. My father didn't talk too much about his experiences, but always showed such pride and dedication to our country that it filtered into our family values and moral obligations. Thanks for writing a piece outside of the gear world. Although my father and many WWII vets have now passed, the special helped me understand some of what he (they) must have felt, and how the country at home dealt with this victory/loss, etc.

I am a better American and just wanted to say thanks.

Maria Scherer
QEK
Ypsilanti, MI