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

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 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.
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