

Our Next Leader

I had the pleasure of sitting down to dinner recently with the new president.

No, not that president! I mean Matt Croson, the new president of the American Gear Manufacturers Association, who started in June and has been busy getting to know the gear industry and AGMA's members.

In our May 2016 issue I reported that the AGMA had hired Matt Croson to replace Joe Franklin, the outgoing AGMA president who was retiring. During his 25-year tenure, Joe Franklin brought a great deal of professionalism to the association, overseeing a period of tremendous growth, not just in membership, but also in AGMA's impact on the industry. Back then, I hadn't yet met Matt, but I was filled with hope and enthusiasm for the possibilities that his leadership might bring.

Over the past months, I've met with Matt on several occasions, and I have to say that I'm even more enthusiastic now that I've gotten to know him. Matt Croson has energy, enthusiasm and vision, and I believe his new ideas and experiences will serve the association well.

We talked a lot about the need for AGMA to stay relevant as the world of manufacturing continues to change. AGMA members are being asked to do more and be more than they've ever done before. Gear manufacturers have to think like systems manufacturers, and they have to compete on a global scale. Gear manufacturers also continue to require education to train the next generation of gear industry professionals.

We also talked a lot about Gear Expo. At our most recent meeting, we were joined by Jenny Blackford, AGMA's vice president of marketing. Jenny has worked very hard over the past several years to grow and improve Gear Expo to be the world gear event it is today.

Over the past several shows, Gear Expo has become more comprehensive, particularly in the number and quality of gear manufacturers who exhibit. Whereas Gear Expo used to be a show whose attendees were primarily gear manufacturers, it's now become a more complete show for the gear industry, and it's become equally valuable for gear buyers and end users. More than 50 gear manufacturers exhibited at the last show.

Both Jenny and Matt confirmed that they were committed to continuing the growth of the show, both in size and concept. As far as I'm concerned, that can only be good for the industry.

Also, Matt made it clear that he's quickly come to understand the importance of AGMA's role in developing standards—the original reason for its formation more than 100 years ago. He sees that as the association's first and foremost responsibility.

Unfortunately, I can't tell you everything I learned from Matt. Many of the specific ideas are currently being discussed by AGMA's board of directors. Ultimately, it's the board who will



Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
Michael Goldstein

decide the future direction of the association.

But with Matt Croson's leadership and guidance, I believe that we're all going to be pleased with the direction he's going to take the association, and that our industry stands to benefit from his vision.

