

Tom Renk Takes Reins as President of Family Business

Tom Renk, installed last November as president of United Machine & Foundry Corp., Winona, Minn., is partial to the strategic plan the company put in place in the Spring of 2010. After all, it was that plan that eventually made him head of the company.

"One of the projects that came out of [the strategy] was the succession plan and [me] buying the business,"

Renk said. "That is what drove it."

Renk took a roundabout route to becoming president of his family's company, a wear parts producer that pours abrasion resistant alloys for the mining, power generation, road construction and special processes industries. Coming out of Iowa State Univ., Ames, Iowa, in the early '90s, he wanted to work in aerospace and build jets. But after a job pro-

spect fell through and he spent nine months kicking around his father's company, he found a job with the American Foundry Society (AFS) working with solidification modeling software.

"My dad said there was an ad in the back of *MODERN CASTING*," Renk said. "I applied and got the job. That is how it all started. I didn't really think about the metalcasting industry until I joined AFS, and then it all fell into place."

After four years, Renk had restored his birthright and spent the next several years working in multiple companies in the metalcasting industry until finding his way home to work full-time for United Machine & Foundry in 1997.

Now, Renk is taking the reins of the company, which maintains a capacity of about 200 tons per month, and helping implement its strategic plan. He is focused on improving the business's cleanliness, optimizing its manufacturing processes and revamping its image in an attempt to find work in new markets.

"We want to clean the place up, attract better employees and be a better business in the community," Renk said. "This particular business has taken a low profile because of all of the negative associations with the 'foundry.' A huge piece of our plan is to change that image." **MC**



Engineering manager Garek Barum (left) and president Tom Renk inspect a casting. Renk was recently made president of his family's business, United Machine & Foundry Corp., Winona, Minn.

PERSONALS

Scott Guttman joined **Cast Products Inc.**, Norridge, Ill., as its vice president of sales and marketing.

General Kinematics, Crystal Lake, Ill., promoted **Thomas Musschoot** to vice president of component sales and marketing. He will replace **Randy Smith**, who will oversee global strategic projects.

The Society of Manufacturing Engineers, Dearborn, Mich., named Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee professor **Pradeep Rohatgi** to its college of fellows for his research on cast metal-matrix composites. **MC**

OBITUARIES

J. Douglas James, Erie, Pa., died March 25 at the age of 92. A former American Foundry Society (AFS) president, James was also a Cast Metals Institute trustee and a charter member of the AFS Northwestern Pennsylvania chapter, which he helped organize and lead. James was involved in the first commercial production run of a ductile iron casting, a breakthrough in the industry. In 1979, he bought High Pressure Equipment Co., Erie, Pa., where he remained chairman

and chief executive officer until his death.

John Willet Tibbits, Sharpsville, Pa., died May 23. He was 95. Tibbits started in the metalcasting industry at Canadian Steel Foundries, Longue Pointe, Montreal, Canada, before he earned his bachelor's degree. He joined Lynn MacLeod Metallurgy Ltd., Thetford Mines, Quebec, Canada, in 1967 and rose through the ranks until he retired as corporate vice president. **MC**