

Upholding the legacy: New company president maintains Amerex tradition of service

Posted by: Tanna Friday Posted date: May 04, 2018

By June Mathews

For The Tribune

TRUSSVILLE – While the progression from practicing law to becoming president of one of the largest manufacturers of fire extinguishers in the world might seem a bit of a winding career path, for Harrison Bishop it was relatively straightforward.

As a partner at Birmingham's, Maynard Cooper & Gale law firm, he handled corporate matters for McWane and its family of companies, including Trussville's Amerex Corporation.

"Through my law practice, I became acquainted with Amerex and many of the people here, and I was eventually asked to help on the business side of things," said Bishop.

"I came to Amerex in the fall of 2015 to learn about the products, markets, customers, inputs and manufacturing processes of the company. Thanks to the open nature of the work environment and the people at Amerex, I was exposed to a great deal of information in a relatively short amount of time."

Founded in 1971 by Ned Paine and business partner George Baureis, Amerex has grown exponentially during its 47-year history. Starting out with one product line, the company now manufactures hundreds of different fire suppression products, ranging from specialty suppressant units to engineered vehicle and restaurant systems. The company employs around 570 people.

Amerex's bread and butter, however, continues to be portable hand-held extinguishers, which were the company's original line of products.

"We've recently had an unprecedented demand for portable extinguishers in the marketplace – the result, we believe, of a robust economy," said Bishop. "Construction is up, so we're selling more. We are known as the highest quality brand, and that matters to people. So far this year, we have manufactured more fire extinguishers than ever before."

In terms of employee satisfaction, Bishop considers Amerex a great place to work, and his goal is to keep it that way. Teamwork, he said, is key, as are common goals like manufacturing quality products, maintaining a safe working environment and making the company a fun place to work – all of which figure into the overarching goal of creating a profit.

“The plan for Amerex is to continue to make products that serve the industry and keep up with the ever-changing needs of the market,” said Bishop. “We strive to provide superior quality products to our customers which are delivered on time, along with outstanding customer service.”

Intent upon maintaining the Paine legacy of community service that Amerex is known for, Bishop also sees the surrounding community as an important resource for doing business.

“Trussville and its surrounding area have a great pool of talent in the area, and as we hire, we continue to enjoy getting to know and supporting the local employment base,” he said.

A native of Dothan, Bishop is a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College, University of North Carolina School of Law, and the New York University School of Law Graduate Tax Program. He and his wife have an 11-year-old son and a 9-year-old daughter.