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Thoughts on Life

By Jim Stavis

To quote the famous Yogi Berra, "If the world were perfect, it wouldn't be." If everyone and every company were perfect, the world would be a pretty boring place in which to live. There certainly would not be much to report or comment on. But as Yogi also said, "You can observe a lot just by watching." And there is a great deal to watch and observe both in business and in life.

Last month I had a good friend who suddenly and inexplicably died of pancreatic cancer. He was only 51 years old with a loving wife and two beautiful daughters. Their lives will never be the same. I know everyone has a friend, a parent, an uncle or someone they know who has died. It is a very sobering reality,

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Thoughts on Life

(Continued from Front)

one that forces us to look at our own mortality. Death is such a tough reality in our culture, something that to me, seems we are so ill-equipped to deal with. We value our youth, our health and tend to close our eyes to the certainty, the eventuality that we will all die one day. But we prefer not to think about it, so much so that we delay taking care of the preparations that must be made when that day arrives.

So at this point, you are wondering how this all relates to steel, as a steel newsletter should. The answer is, it doesn't and this month it will not. We are dedicating this newsletter to my friend, Ira Reisman, who taught me that there is more in life than what we do for a living, what we peddle each day. What is important is how we conduct ourselves with our families, our employees, with our customers, vendors and everyone that we come in contact with. What

matters is not how big our bank accounts are, or the type of car we drive, but how we may be remembered when we are no longer here. The impact that we have on others is the true gift of life itself.

Within the next few months, I will be undergoing a mega-surgery to hopefully correct a serious illness (juvenile diabetes) that I've had since I was a teenager. I will be receiving a transplant for a heart, kidney and pancreas to replace the failing organs in my body. I've deemed it the "organ trifecta." Fortunately for me, the technology exists today that even makes this dream possible. I feel lucky, unlike my friend Ira, who never had this chance for survival. So for all the people who are feeling sorry for me, at least I have hope, one of life's genuine miracles.

Life can be so fleeting. Just when we think we have things going the way we want, we are thrown a curve, another twist in the road. And what I have come

to learn is that the only thing we can rely upon is that change is inevitable and we had better learn how to deal with it. Life as we know it is filled with uncertainty and generally speaking this uncertainty makes us feel quite uncomfortable. And yet, it truly is this quest to deal with the unknown that makes life so interesting and worth living. Which brings us back to Yogi's quote, "If the world were perfect, it wouldn't be." Amen.

If you wish to respond, I can be reached at
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Quote of the MONTH

*People will forget what you said,
people may forget what you did;
but people will never forget how
you make them feel.*

- Maya Angelou



The Views @270 is a mixed use project located in Hollywood at the corner of Sunset and Western. It is a redevelopment project that combined private funds and public funds from the Hollywood Community Housing Corporation. Paragon Steel provided design services as well as the steel, fabrication and installation of the bus shelter shown.