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Steel Crazy after 32 Years



This past July 5th, Paragon Steel celebrated our 32nd year of business. It was a virtual celebration this year for obvious reasons. We started the business in 1988 above an Irish bar in the Belmont Shores section of Long Beach. How time flies! Believe

it or not we have three employees who have been with us for over 25 years. **Blake O'Brien** celebrated his 25th anniversary recently; **Greg Ogle** is at 26 years and **Arnie Ventura**, a driver, came aboard just six months after the business was formed, so he's at 31 ½ years and counting.

We've seen many changes throughout our span of business. Many high and lows, and yet the key to survival is being able to swing with the punches. Our ability to focus on higher levels of customer service has really been an integral part of our success. Our customers are loyal and know that their needs will always be our highest priority. And yes, we are steel crazy after all these years. Let's hope for another 32.

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What if These
are The Good
Ol Days?

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER
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32 YEARS



What if These are The Good Ol Days?

By Jim Stavis

First of all, let's all take a deep breath. Whenever I'm confronted with a big challenge, I pause, and take a deep breath. We all need to collectively take that deep breath.

Since this pandemic came into our lives, people are quick to point out what we're doing right or more likely what we're doing wrong. We have quickly become experts with the origins of the Covid19 virus, protective gear, what's happened in New York, Italy and China, and now the second wave. We are consumed with social distancing, wearing masks and when will it be safe to reopen society and finally go back to work. Let's be fair, it is tricky. Guess wrong and the next wave of the virus

could be harsher than the first. Yet in facing reality we all know that it's going to take time before there is a vaccine or medications to cure the sick.

I personally am one of the unlucky ones that fits the profile of those most at risk. With my triple organ transplant of 15 years ago, I currently take medications that intentionally weaken my immune system. That sounds crazy, I know. But if I didn't take anti-rejection meds, my immunity system would attack the transplanted organs themselves. Plus, I have the distinction of being over the age of 65 — another risk factor. So, when they speak of people overage with underlying health problems, there should be a picture of me attached. As a result, I don't go out. I work remotely, my grocery shopping has been outsourced to others in my family and I'm suddenly quite germophobic. I believe for all of us, we've had to adapt to this new normal. For me it is even more restrictive and for good reason.

Through it all, I truly have a sense of gratitude for the fact that we are still here. Paragon thankfully is still operating in business; our customer's businesses have been maintained and our employees still have jobs. This is all good. We are witnessing something that is a once in a lifetime event. It will shape the rest of our lives I'm

certain. I'm watching my grandchildren who are still too young to be able to understand these times. And quite honestly, I'm right there with them. After all, we've never experienced a pandemic ourselves. That's the part that annoys me with all the politicizing of who is acting rightly or wrongly. If we knew this was going to happen, we could have been more prepared. But it's kind of like preparing for an asteroid to hit the planet. Hopefully we will figure it out once it strikes.

There are many parts of this story that still need to unfold. I feel horrible for those companies that have been forced to close their doors. I also feel for the employees who have lost their jobs and must figure out how they can feed their families. This is tragic. The one thing I've learned through all of my trials and tribulations is that this too shall pass. It is sad how much pain and sorrow we've had to endure. The uncertainty of the economy has shattered many 401K's for which for some can never be replenished. It may upend an entire generation of their hopes and dreams. I have grown up children who wonder if life will ever return to normal. Their life as they knew it, will never be the same. There is a line in a Carly Simon song which I frequently refer to. It said, "What if these are the good ol days?" There are many that are quick to reflect back to a time the way things used to be. But through these

times there are some positives. We've learned how to appreciate the simpler things like taking daily walks in the park or spending more time at home with our kids. We spend less time commuting to work, we've reached out to old friends, sometimes via Zoom and actually taken the time to care for our parents. We've read a book, or watched Netflix, or taken more time to appreciate cooking. Whatever it is, it's how we choose to spend our time. Maybe, just maybe, this is just one big time out! Or maybe, these will actually be remembered as the good ol days.

