

FORMING IDEAS

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Brenco Industries has been publishing the Forming Ideas newsletter since 2007. It is intended to educate and inform our friends, customers and suppliers through our own observations and experiences. Brenco is a quality provider of metal cutting, forming and fabricating solutions.



BIZ BUZZ



What's going on? Our industry has just completed a banner year and is now in major shrink mode. Whether by force or by choice, businesses are exiting stage left.

MBM, Do It All, XL, Bar-None, Spacan, Nagesco, EP and a few others, all local, all well established, all good corporate citizens, all doing the dirt nap. And then came the major blockbuster: Supreme Steel, the risen phoenix of Canron (gone) doing business in what was originally home of Dominion Bridge (also gone).

We don't know the business reasons for Supreme's adios from BC but we can make some educated guesses: High property and corporate taxes, the Employee Health tax, a myriad of rules and regulations. (Remember the seat belt and roll cages on golf carts that Worksafe wanted? Good grief.) And maybe, just maybe, Supreme looked into the future of this beautiful province and saw that it doesn't need big steel anymore.

Some of our brethren have departed due to less than desirable circumstances but a few have called it a day because... well, because the land they sat on was worth more than their business. Why stress, struggle, fight and complain when a 'For Sale' sign on the front lawn can make your worries go away?

Let's be honest, heavy industry

isn't exactly welcome around here anymore. Try to find a building on appropriately zoned land. If it isn't grandfathered, it probably doesn't exist.

Land suitable for industrial use is a very limited resource in the Lower Mainland. A recent report states that we only have a 30 year supply remaining. Whether industrial or residential, property is becoming very expensive and is causing industrial property lease rates to jump 30 to 70%. This will likely cause more businesses to close.

Another problem facing businesses in the Lower Mainland is the migration of people from the city to the Fraser Valley as they search for affordable housing. Understandably, the further east a person lives, the more reluctant they will be to commute into the Lower Mainland.

We are a shrinking industry in this province but not all is doom and gloom. There will always be a need for locally fabricated metal. It can't all come from somewhere else. The fittest will survive to meet the ever changing needs in this fair land of ours. It's fair to say, however, that over the next couple of decades, industry will be squeezed out of the Lower Mainland.



John the Baptist, Alexander the Great and Ivan the Terrible all share the same middle name. Coincidence?

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A Tribute to the Vancouver Winter Olympic Games. Hard to believe it's been 10 years.



Brenco Installing New Press Brake

Brenco has ordered a new 1000 ton press brake from local machine builder, Accurpress. The new machine will replace our aging 750 ton X 24' press brake. Outfitted with current technology, we anticipate improvements to efficiency and accuracy. Installation and training are expected to be completed before the end of April. Decommissioning of the old brake has begun. We apologize for any inconvenience this may be causing you.

Did you hear about the mathematician who's afraid of negative numbers? He'll stop at nothing to avoid them.

TIME TO CHANGE TIME CHANGE?

The days are getting longer and the discussion around the traditional switching between Daylight Savings and Standard Time have all but ceased. As you wake from your slumber on Sunday, March 8th, you will begin the semi annual ritual of adjusting the various timepieces throughout your home and car... or not. Maybe you leave your clocks on the same setting all year and make the mental adjustment or still have a VCR with a blinking 12:00. Don't tell anyone if you do.

Daylight Savings was first proposed in 1895 by George Hudson, a British born New Zealander. German and the Austrian-Hungarian Empire were the first nations to incorporate DST on April 30th, 1916. It became most popular during the energy crisis in the late 1970's.

Growing up, we were told that the reason for the time change was to help the farmers. Made sense to a seven year old growing up in the 1960's. Even living in the city, we believed that Canada's economy was still primarily agrarian. Richmond was still primarily farmland as was Surrey and Langley. It wasn't until this author got older did he realize that cows could care less what the farmer's wind up alarm clock said. Milking time is milking time.



So, why do we continue to subject ourselves to this masochistic exercise? Twice a year, we reset our clocks, making ourselves late (or early) for work, live in a mental fog for a week and get ourselves into car accidents. Is it because the whole world does the time change thing? Actually, no.

Truth be told, not many countries participate in this exercise. The list is pretty much limited to North America, Europe, Turkey, Chile, Southern Australia, New Zealand and a couple small nation states. Even within these nations, some jurisdictions like Saskatchewan and Northeastern BC keep their clocks set on DST. Most of the world, including Russia, China, India and much of Africa and South America no longer make the semi annual time change.

Here in BC, discussion will likely resume shortly in the Legislature. Two options are being considered: Daylight Savings Time or continuing to change our clocks twice a year. A loose poll taken by the government, shows 93% support for remaining on DST. However, 54% don't want to do it until Alberta and Washington do the same.



One Name That Instills Big Emotion: Greta

The feisty, diminutive Swedish girl who exhibits her rage on behalf of all those that believe we've reached the end of the world as we know it. (BTW, I feel fine.) Love her or despise her, Thunberg represents a belief held by thousands, if not millions.

You may not be a believer but it's likely that you, dear reader, want to leave the planet in better shape than it was when you arrived. There are many examples of improvements here in our own back yard: Herons, hawks and eagles have returned to healthy numbers thanks to the elimination of DDT. Large areas of wilderness are now protected. Vancouver is no longer enshrouded in heavy fog during the winter months, an anomaly caused by heating homes with coal and oil. Our rivers are cleaner. The lead is gone from our paint and being in a confined space with a car running no longer emits the gag reflex.

Greta Thunberg presents us with a very stark choice: You can have the earth, or you can have 'money'. You cannot have both. And it is interesting to hear her say the word, "money". Never has it been said with such contempt. When offered this choice, the argument is no longer scientific. Nor is it logical. Considering that the biggest offenders of environmental destruction are located in parts of the world where there is a LACK of money, the argument approaches absurdity.

Even here in the wealthy west, we still do some pretty dumb stuff but compared to what is tak-

ing place in other parts of the world, we're light years ahead. Very often, a solution to a problem causes another problem. Improvement is not a linear process. Nor does it occur as a result of a lack of money. To the contrary, it is expedited by an abundance of money.

It should be concerning to everyone that money is being cast as the root of all evil. Poverty will not save the planet and those in the Thunberg camp likely know this. This then, must be an attack on something else. Who or what? Capitalism? The uber wealthy? Large corporations? Or, anybody that drives a car powered by an internal combustion engine or flies in an airplane? That's most of us.

Society creates boogeymen. Why? Boogeymen keep us aligned by representing a common enemy. They play into our imaginations as something intangible, uncontrollable yet truly threatening. Here's a list of previous boogeymen that society has embraced over the years. To demonstrate that this is not a 20th century phenomenon, the first example dates back 400 years:

- 1600's Witches
- 1950's Communism
- 1960's Nuclear War, Over Population
- 1970's Ice Age, Energy Crisis
- 2000's SARS Virus, Global Warming
- 2010's Climate Change, Carbon Emissions, China
- 2020 COVID-19 Virus

This is not to say that many of these threats weren't real. They were and some still are. It's the human behaviour towards these issues that is of most interest.

George Friedman, an internationally recognized expert on Geopolitics brilliantly wrote, "Now, if you expect me to discuss global warming here, not a chance. I learned in the 1960's not to get involved with religious wars."



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 **brenco**
 Metal Processing & Fabricating

Address 10030 River Way,
 Delta, BC, V4G 1M9
 Phone 604-584-2700
 Email TheBest@Brenco.com
 Web Site www.brenco.com
 Art Web Site www.brencoart.com

It's hard to believe that the Vancouver Winter Olympic Games took place 10 years ago. It was a wonderful experience enjoyed by people from all over the world. Above, a few photos to rekindle the spirit of 2010.