

# THE INNOVATOR

Summer 2003



Special Anniversary Edition

# Template

## BEGNEAUD Celebrates 25

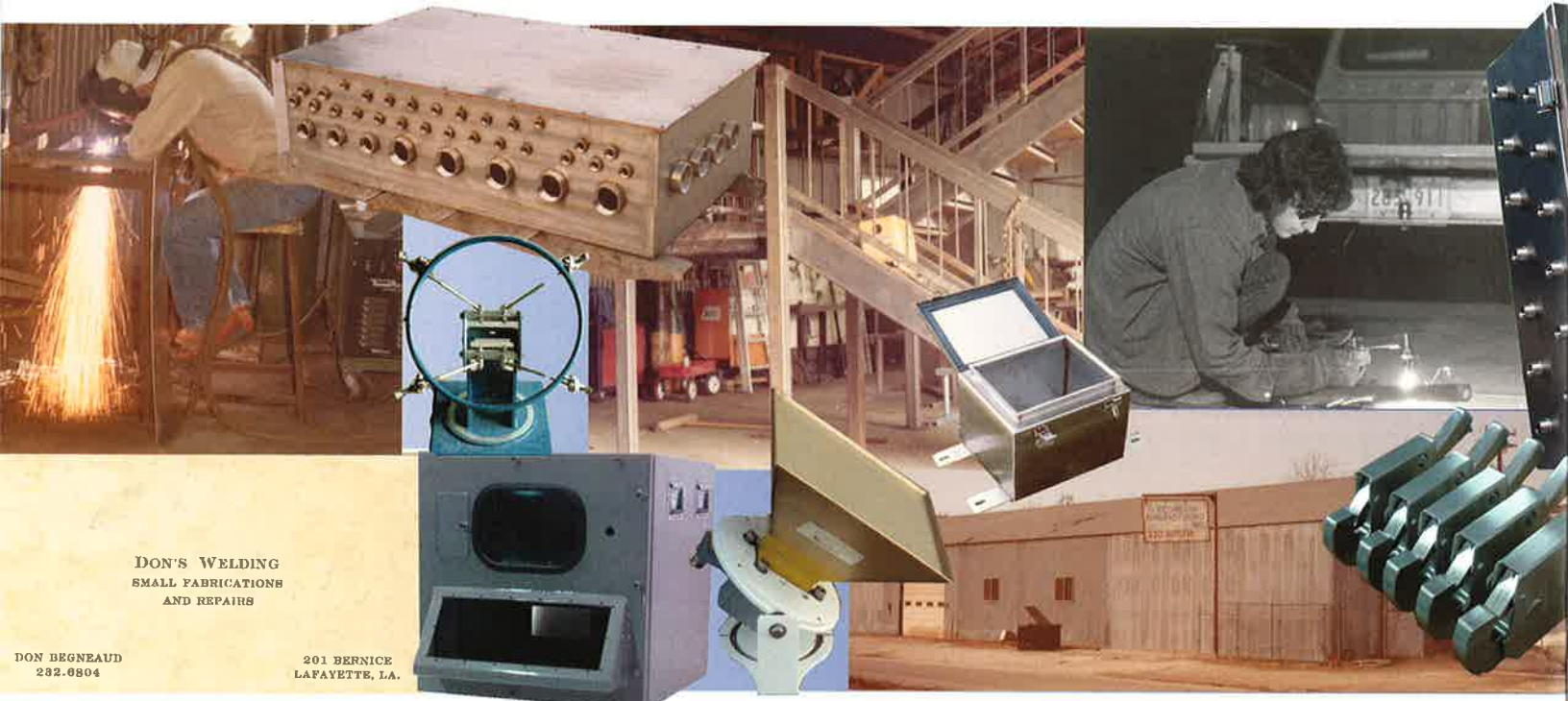


BEGNEAUD began as a vision and a commitment to customer satisfaction. We're proud that so many of our customers have been with us since the early days, and we recently asked several of them to share their thoughts on the company's first quarter century.

Electrical Engineer David Stevens of Chevron has been a customer since the early '80s, when our shop was located on Supply Road. "I remember how we enjoyed the crawfish boils. Don always appreciated his customers and treated them all as friends, and in a way we all

BEGNEAUD personnel that I can trust and who are quick to answer at a moment's notice. (You) can't get any better than that! (It's) absolutely vital to have a working relationship in which the person you deal with is familiar with the products that were built to help deal with repairs or to have another production run on the component needed with no time to spare."

Tom Taylor, Owner and President of Taylor Ignition, shares a first impression common to many. When he first visited he thought, "Wow, this is the cleanest, neatest welding shop I've ever seen." In fact, Taylor says, his first contact with BEGNEAUD was significant for a number of reasons. "We had not been in business very long, had no business history and no credit history, but we were treated just like any other



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SMALL FABRICATIONS  
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became good friends through our business dealings. Don always prided himself on doing a first class job on even the smallest of projects and wouldn't hesitate to make any necessary changes to meet his customers' needs. Quality and customer satisfaction were always first."

Those goals have grown with our company. "BEGNEAUD is good at using technology to build better products while maintaining or reducing the cost of those products to the end customer," explains Phil Stutes, President of Fugro Chance Inc. He remembers his company's first major order from Don's Welding Service in the '70s, for the construction of 35 aluminum radio boxes. "These boxes were practical, useful, innovative and durable. Many are still in use today. The tailbuoys and hydro/generators towed behind offshore vessels were the most exciting, but the 'silver bullets' (enormous aluminum carrying containers) have been the most copied concept we've developed."

Kevin Meche, Cam Division Supervisor at Frank's Casing Crew & Rental Tools, Inc., echoes Stutes' sentiments: "It's been 14 years that I can remember working with BEGNEAUD to produce equipment that's still in use today. That's quality!" When Meche thinks of BEGNEAUD, he says, "I think of a quality end product that's made to last by

customer. We have had the pleasure of a long, warm, friendly working relationship ever since."

"Their continual investment in new technology," Taylor says, "means that the owner of the company is putting the profits back into the company. Our working relationship is of the utmost importance. Without BEGNEAUD, we would not be able to do many of the things we do for our customers. We're truly glad BEGNEAUD is here to help us."

Don Begneaud says: "We just want to keep moving forward, whether that involves acquiring new technologies or just re-thinking an age-old approach. In the old days, we use to create physical templates by scribing the geometric layout on a piece of material, and then we would cut the shape out using a band saw. We used the physical template as a reference to duplicate jobs. Today our reference files are stored on a computer, and strings of programming written here power laser and punch processing, as well as many other high-tech machines."

"We wouldn't be here without four essential groups of people – our customers, employees, vendors and associates. I'd like to sincerely thank everyone that has contributed to our success. There are a lot of

# es to Technology

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people that have helped this company just by being friends and telling people about us."

Jeff Walker, Vice President of Worldwide Screen Products for Varco, appreciates the exchange of ideas that has characterized his company's relationship with BEGNEAUD. "Don and his staff are constantly upgrading equipment, modifying procedures and training personnel. This ensures the quality product and timely delivery we depend on."

Stutes also feels there are common denominators in his company's relationship with BEGNEAUD. "The mutual trust and respect have been indispensable in helping us to experiment together to build products that

equipped to approach."

Stutes looks forward to an ongoing relationship he characterizes as "an open and honest, mutually beneficial business at its best." He hopes "that the company continues to enjoy a sound business environment that affords Don the opportunity to exercise his inventive mind." Taylor agrees. "My wish for the future is that Don Begneaud can continue to follow his dream," he says.

"I can't even imagine what the future of BEGNEAUD will look like," Delcambre says. "But I'd bet that none of the shiny, state-of-the-art lasers and punch machines that are so prevalent in the facility today will be there. I'd wager that all these will be replaced by equipment performing



better meet our needs."

Bill Delcambre of Welding Supply House has known Don since they were both students at Cathedral-Carmel High School in Lafayette. "I'll bet Don was the only student in Bendel Gardens to have a welding rig in the back of his pickup truck," he says.

"Since I'm a vendor, I tend to scrutinize new equipment at BEGNEAUD with regard to its impact on the volume of welding and/or cutting it will enable or replace," he says. "Don and I have shared many laughs about his 'blatant attempts to eliminate welding' in metal forming processes. This has never really proven to be the case, of course. Each new punch produces an additional volume of weldments to be fabricated and each laser uses significant quantities of industrial gases."

"Working with Don and the employees at BEGNEAUD has always been a partnering experience, and I don't use this term very much. It's truly a pleasure to conduct business with folks who are open and really anxious to hear what you've got to say," Delcambre adds. "The insistence on quality equipment has enabled BEGNEAUD to produce top quality products as well as take on projects that others aren't

processes we can't even imagine now. New equipment and processes won't benefit anyone at all without motivated employees to support them, though."

"I've always marveled at the way Don absolutely beams while describing each new piece of equipment," Delcambre continues.

"What not many people know is that the same beaming enthusiasm was there when we first unloaded a new, gas-powered welder in his backyard so many years ago. He was as excited about the capabilities of that welder as he is about the new Technology Center. Maintaining this level of enthusiasm, and at the same time, spreading it throughout the organization has truly been Don's greatest success, in my opinion."



## The BEGNEAUD Touch

Several members of the BEGNEAUD team have been on board for more than a decade. These key players in the company's evolution share the passion and values that have defined our first quarter century.

Fabricator Mike McWilliams began working as an apprentice at the old BEGNEAUD shop on Supply Road while still in high school. "We have come a long way since then. I would have never dreamed the company would be as big as it is today." Mike feels the company's diversification has sustained its growth. "We have a strong presence in a lot of industries. When one department is slow, the company as a whole is still busy."

"I chose BEGNEAUD as a career because of the environment," Fabricator Mike Doucet says. "BEGNEAUD is a people company, they work for you and not against you."

"Don Begneaud and his ideas and attitude make this company special," Welding/Fabrication Supervisor Gary May adds. "Don started out with a dream and has probably surpassed it. I established a career at BEGNEAUD because I love to fabricate and weld, but more importantly, because of the respect and trust that Don has given me. If I had to list only one achievement, I would have to say it is the fact that Don has never had a layoff here."

Finishing Supervisor Blaine Baudoin finds intrinsic value in his accomplishments. "Working with my hands is something I enjoy," he explains. "Taking pride in what I do lets the work speak for itself. The fact that management has always been very supportive of my professional and personal growth is also a large plus."

Production Advisor Doug Begneaud sees a common thread in the BEGNEAUD approach. "Some things don't change," he says. "Although we have progressed, we continue to offer some of the same services that we provided in the beginning."

"We're a state-of-the-art job shop, second to none in the state," Senior Vice President and Research and Development Manager René DeMoura emphasizes. "And the company's goals, objectives, values and vision are in synch with my family's. I'm looking forward to 25 more great years. Let's go!"

"Don often says every employee has an opportunity to create their own destiny," Support Group Manager Andy Begneaud says. "We are fortunate to have so many dedicated skilled people who have chosen BEGNEAUD as a career."

"I have a loyalty to Don and the company, and Don gives the same loyalty back," Vice President and Production Manager Mark Faul says. "A person could come to work 365 days a year if they wanted. The working conditions are excellent, and where else are you going to find an air-conditioned welding shop? BEGNEAUD is the kind of place that makes you want to come to work. There is always something different, and you can bet it will be fascinating." ■



Mike McWilliams



Mike Doucet



Gary May



Blaine Baudoin



Doug Begneaud



René DeMoura



Andy Begneaud



Mark Faul

## Calendar of Events

|             |                             |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| July 4      | Closed for Independence Day |
| September 1 | Closed for Labor Day        |

## Employee Anniversaries

|           |                    |          |
|-----------|--------------------|----------|
| July      | Brent Reinhardt    | 9 years  |
|           | Scott Thibodeaux   | 5 years  |
|           | Colby Cormier      | 3 years  |
|           | Mary Trahan        | 1 year   |
|           | Sandra Smith       | 1 year   |
| August    | Johnny Balutansky  | 7 years  |
|           | Thomas Broussard   | 6 years  |
|           | Matthias Mayer     | 5 years  |
| September | Tony Bearb         | 1 year   |
|           | Andy Begneaud      | 15 years |
|           | Burton Andrepont   | 9 years  |
|           | Stephanie LaGrange | 3 years  |
|           | Terry Blackstone   | 3 years  |
|           | Cindy Stansbury    | 1 year   |
|           | Michael Veillon II | 1 year   |

## Contributors

We'd like to extend a special thanks to everyone whose hard work, talent and friendship made this special issue possible. We appreciate you!

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Member of:



Fabricators and Manufacturers Association



Laser Institute of America



American Welding Society



Acadiana Arts Council



Society of Manufacturing Engineers

LAFAYETTE EDUCATION FOUNDATION



Louisiana Association of Business and Industry



Mothers Against Drunk Drivers



Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce



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