



## GOOD NEWS: Back in the driver's seat

When a doctor told Jeanne Brideau, an elementary school bus driver, that she would most likely be unable to return to work in that profession, she was determined to prove him wrong.

"It just made me push myself harder," Brideau said.

At this point she had already undergone a few years of intense pain and physical therapy.

Brideau's troubles began in September 2000, when she was given a new model bus to drive; it proved to be an ergonomic nightmare for Brideau and resulted in snapping hip syndrome, forcing her to stop work. It was determined she could return to work with modifications to the school bus, and with kinesiotherapy and physiotherapy.

With much difficulty, Brideau resumed her bus run and was travelling three times a week to Bathurst (a two-hour return trip) for physiotherapy. In constant pain, and physically

exhausted from the travel, Brideau lost control of her vehicle after a session in Bathurst and sustained multiple fractures to her left ankle. Following surgery and several castings, her orthopedic surgeon questioned a return to work as a bus driver.

Her health began to deteriorate. She was unable to bear any weight and was forced to go down her stairs on her behind. She recalls with a laugh how she had to prop herself on the kitchen counter beside the stove to cook supper and caught fire – twice! And although Brideau laughs about it now, her eyes begin to well as she relates her painful journey on the road to recovery.

A previously healthy, energetic and athletic woman who had never taken so much as an Aspirin, Brideau became a recluse in her home. The pain was unbearable, and frequent nightmares affected her sleep.

No longer able to stand seeing Brideau in such a state, two friends, both nurses, forced her to go to Moncton with them to see a second orthopedic

interactive easy-to-use CD-Rom presentation that walks users through the basic steps of building a health and safety program. The CD provides important information on legislation, how to identify and eliminate workplaces hazards, and appointing health and safety representatives. As of June 1, 2006, more than 700 companies have reviewed all 12 sections of the CD.

This year, the WHSCC is confident it will expand on this success by partnering with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) to promote the campaign.

"As a representative of about 4,500 small to medium-sized business owners across New Brunswick, the CFIB knows how important small business is to economic development. We also



Jeanne Brideau at work

surgeon. She was referred to a pain clinic in Campbellton, and subsequently to the WHSCC's Workers Rehabilitation Centre (WRC) where she was diagnosed with complex regional pain syndrome, Type 1. Once again she was told she might not be able to return to work as a driver.

Unwilling to accept this, Brideau took on her rehabilitation at the WRC with dogged determination.

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know that workplace accidents cost small businesses about \$13 million every year. That's a

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## IMPORTANT DATE :

**Day of Mourning  
April 28**

Canada's National Day of Mourning is a day to remember workers killed, disabled, injured, or afflicted with an occupational disease in the workplace. Please call your local District Labour Council for the times and locations of events planned in your community.

## APPOINTMENTS :

The WHSCC is pleased to welcome Sharon Tucker, Ron Hyson and Conrad Pitre to the board of directors.

As a worker representative, Sharon Tucker replaces Chantal Lafleur, whose term expired February 5. The New Brunswick Nurses' Union nominated Tucker, a nurse manager at the Saint John Regional Hospital. Tucker lives in St. George.

As an employer representative, Ron Hyson replaces Fraser MacLeod, whose term expired February 25. Hyson, vice-president of human resources for Irving Tissue, lives in Moncton. He was nominated by Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters.

Conrad Pitre, representative to the general public, replaces Bernice Doiron Chiasson, whose term expired February 18. Pitre, who lives in Beresford, was a WHSCC health and safety officer until his retirement in April 2002.

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lot of money," says Andreea Bourgeois, senior policy analyst, CFIB.

"Our partnership with the WHSCC just makes sense. We want to help small business keep that money in their business, and promote the message that safety doesn't cost – it saves. It saves lives, it saves limbs and it saves money. By reducing accidents small business will keep both its workers and our economy healthy. We all win." •

## IMPORTANT DATES :

**North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week  
May 6-12**

For more on NAOSH Week, visit: [www.naosh.ca](http://www.naosh.ca).

**Disability Awareness Week  
May 27-June 2**

For more on DAW, visit: [www.gnb.ca/0048](http://www.gnb.ca/0048).

## IN THE COURTS

**Bonney Construction Ltd.**, was charged after an employee fell into an unguarded opening to a floor below. The employer was charged with both the offence of having an unguarded opening and with failing to immediately notify the WHSCC of the accident. At trial, the Court found Bonney Construction not guilty of failing to provide notice, but guilty of the guarding offence, for which they were fined \$1,500.

**J. D. Irving, Limited**, carrying on business as Scierie Grande-Rivière, was charged with failing to adequately train and supervise two employees. The employees were summer students who were using a forklift at the time of the accident, when one student accidentally ran over the other. The employer pleaded guilty and was fined \$6,500 plus a \$1,300 victim surcharge.

**Carson Construction Ltd.**, was fined \$10,000 for allowing workers in a trench that was not properly sloped or braced. There were no injuries, although serious injury or death could have resulted.

**Ganong Bros. Limited**, was fined \$2,500 for failing to ensure that its tools, machines and equipment are maintained in good condition and present a minimum risk to workers. The charges stem from an incident in 2005 when a worker lost a portion of his finger while working on one of the factory's production lines. The company was also fined a victim surcharge of \$500.

**Barry Kincaid Roofing Ltd.**, was fined \$4,800 after an accident left a worker with a fractured skull, collarbone and ribs. The accident happened in May 2005, when the 22-year-old worker, who had only been on the job for five weeks, was left unsupervised at a job site. •

## New Chair Appointed

Although the WHSCC's new chairperson has big boots to fill, she's proud to do it in heels.

Appointed November 23, Roberta Dugas, the WHSCC's first chairwoman, replaces Robert Scott, who served as chair from November 2002. Dugas says she doesn't feel any additional pressure being the first woman to chair the board. In fact, she's been down that road before, as first woman mayor of the town of Caraquet, a job she held for nine years.

"Any responsibility I feel comes from the position itself, and gender has nothing to do with it. I don't have to prove myself as a woman in the position, but rather, I must prove myself as a leader and advocate on behalf of both the workers and employers of New Brunswick," Dugas said.

And Dugas certainly has the qualifications to do so. "I've been a worker, a union representative, a manager and, as mayor, an employer. I was also co-partner in a translation business. I understand all the dynamics involved and I can identify with all the parties at the table," she said.

Dugas also served on the WHSCC board from 1995-2001, as member representing the general public, so she's acutely aware of the many

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## HOT OFF THE PRESS :

*Injuries are no accident* (poster - 2 versions)

*Warm-Up and Stretch* (poster, wallet card, pamphlet)

*Accommodation at Work Guide* (Assuring the continued employment of New Brunswickers after a permitted leave or a workplace accident)  
*Accommodation at Work* (Pamphlets – FAQs for Workers; FAQs for Employers)  
*Workplace Accommodation Process Pamphlet*

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"We have such a diversity of industry in the province – from fishing, farming, and forestry, to retail, call centres and information technology, to mills, processing and manufacturing – and it's spread between rural and urban areas. Keeping in mind, we are committed to providing service in both official languages. I want to ensure that each and every New Brunswicker receives the same quality service, no matter where they live, no matter where they work, and regardless of what language they speak."

## No Mercy!

It's the tag line behind the WHSCC's new youth campaign, launched on March 15.

"The concept is simple: the machinery and materials you work with will show no mercy if you skip steps and cut corners when it comes to working safely. As a result, young people should take a no mercy approach to getting the training, supervision and protective equipment they need to do their job safely," said Perley Brewer, manager, Client Consulting & Education Services.

"Workers between the ages of 15-24 are at highest risk for workplace injuries. They are our future workforce, so it's critical that we instill a strong health and safety ethic early on – one we hope they will maintain throughout their working lives," Brewer said.

The No Mercy campaign and its components – including posters, educational resources and branded No Mercy give-aways – were developed to drive traffic to the WHSCC's new website ([youthsafe.ca](http://youthsafe.ca)) designed specifically for youth.

The YouthSafe website gives young workers access to all the information and resources they need to help them live and work safely. The website also features sections for parents,

## Hazard Alerts

*Poor visibility in forestry operations poses great risks*  
*Overhead power lines pose threat to workers and equipment*

## Safety Talks & Advisory Bulletins

Advisory Bulletin: *Supervisors Charged*  
Safety Talk #23: *Electrical Safety*

Divorced and with her three children and four grandchildren all living in the Toronto area, Dugas says she has plenty of time and energy to devote to her new role.

"I'm very excited to be taking this on now. I want to congratulate the outgoing chair, Mr. Scott, on the good work that's been done. We have full funding and the assessment rates are down for the third year in a row. I'm dedicated to carrying on this good work.

"I applaud the path the board has taken with governance. The WHSCC has a very good staff, and we must trust them to make decisions and provide them with the resources they need to continue to provide good service. And although the service is very good, it is not at 100% – there is always room for improvement. This is something we will strive for." •

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In her first week, Brideau was unable to tolerate wearing a sock or shoe on her injured foot, but within a few days she was able to stand both a sock and shoe for the full day. Her rehabilitation was painful, she suffered bouts of nausea and other complications with medications, but the light at the end of the tunnel, in the shape of a yellow school bus, drove her on. After nine weeks she was discharged, with the condition she continue physiotherapy. Brideau says that without the unconditional support of her family physician, who has always believed in her, as well as her friends, she could not have gotten through it.

Today, Brideau still suffers pain, but is ecstatic to be back at work. "I love the children, and I love driving. In the bus, with the kids, I completely forget my pain."

Brideau appraises her ordeal philosophically. "I learned a lot, and I discovered a strength within myself I never knew existed.

Claudette Roussel, Brideau's case manager, praises Brideau's efforts. "She proved to us that with positive thinking and resolve, you can attain your goals. She worked very hard, and succeeded," Roussel said. •

