

WHSCC NEWS

HELPING NEW BRUNSWICK WORKSAFE

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Pam Hanson is back to work and loving it.

GOOD NEWS: Getting back at it

Most people who've suffered a debilitating injury agree it is a life-altering experience – but most don't see it as a positive one.

Pam Hanson is an exception.

Hanson had been working at a dry cleaner's in Fredericton, on what she describes as "outdated" equipment when, on June 19, 2003, her left hand and forearm were caught in a clothes press, causing third degree burns.

"The heat was so intense I lost my fingernails," she said.

Hanson spent 3 weeks in the hospital, where she underwent skin graft surgery. She was released from the hospital on July 7. In October, once her bandages were permanently removed, she began physical and occupational therapy at the Workers' Rehabilitation Centre in Grand Bay-Westfield. Approximately 9 weeks into her program however, she was forced to leave. She was diagnosed with complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS), also known as reflex sympathetic

dystrophy (RSD), a chronic neurological condition characterized by severe burning pain, dramatic changes in skin colour and temperature, excessive sweating, tissue swelling, and extreme sensitivity to touch.

Hanson was also diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, complicated by depression, which sometimes can be as debilitating as an injury. "I suffered from very low self esteem, and would not wear short sleeves in public. I was ashamed of the scarring; I thought it was gross," she said. "I was also very angry with my employer and blamed him for my injury. I was bitter."

Counselling and medication helped Hanson overcome these feelings, and also helped make the pain somewhat more bearable. Ready to return to work, Hanson found that she was unable to return to her former employment. "I had to face the fact that I couldn't do physical work."

With support from her WHSCC vocational rehabilitation specialist, Richard Grasse, Hanson

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A New Look !

We're pleased to introduce our new look for WHSCC News. You, our readers, told us you found the size too bulky, so we've pared it down. But we've also had to pare down the content, although we're keeping the features you liked best. However, our monthly electronic newsletter will fill the gap. E-News, delivered directly to your inbox, provides more timely access to the news that's relevant to you. You'll find profiles on stakeholders and staff, as well as the inspirational

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Conference Update

There is still time to register for the WHSCC's 26th Annual Health and Safety Conference, October 22-24, at the Delta Brunswick in Saint John. Industry experts will present 19 workshops on topics ranging from general interest, such as claims and the fundamentals of first aid, to industry-specific sessions on fall protection, electrical arcing and workplace ventilation. This year sees the return of the always-popular mock trial, a staged courtroom prosecution of an employee and a supervisor under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, as well as a panel session on pandemic planning. The conference also features a trade show, with the latest in health and safety innovations. Complete conference registration materials are available on our website at www.whsc.nb.ca.

REGISTER NOW TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT! •

IMPORTANT DATES :

October 22 - 24
WHSCC Health and Safety Conference
Saint John, NB

Check the *WHSCC 2006 Workshop Calendar* for dates and times of training near you.

HOT OFF THE *PRESS* :

- *Workers' Compensation: A Guide for New Brunswick Workers*
- *When an Accident Happens (poster and pocket card)*
- *2006-2011 WHSCC Strategic Plan & Risk Assessment*
- *2007 Workshops and Events Calendar*

HAZARD ALERTS

- *Employees Working from Heights Need Fall Protection*
- *Teamwork and Communication are Vital in Woodlands Operations*

SAFETY TALKS

- # 6 (rev): *Fall Protection – Basic Types*
- # 7 (rev): *Fall Protection Equipment - Approvals and Inspection*
- # 8 (rev): *Guardrails*
- # 35 (rev): *Fall Protection - Suspended Access Equipment*

IN THE *COURTS*

N. K. Lumber (1996) Ltd. of Stickney was charged under the *OHS Act* after an employee was injured while trying to clear ice and snow from a running machine. The employer entered a guilty plea in Woodstock Provincial Court and was fined \$500, plus a \$100 Victim Surcharge. The court imposed a low fine because the employer is attempting to rebuild the mill, which was destroyed by fire after the charges had been laid.

Two supervisors, **Paul Bèlzile** and **Alain Lebel**, were charged under the *OHS Act* after they removed a lock from a machine that had been locked out by an employee who was servicing the machine. The supervisors thought that the lock was accidentally left on the machine by an employee who had worked on it during the nightshift.

Although the employee was not injured, serious injury or death could have resulted. The employer suspended the supervisors without pay and the

Commission recommended charges be laid. Both Bèlzile and Lebel pleaded guilty and were each fined \$600 plus a \$120 victim surcharge.

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R.W. Fisheries Ltd. pled guilty on April 13 to two charges resulting from an investigation into the death of a fish plant worker last August. The company was fined \$6,000 for failure to ensure that tools and equipment were kept in good condition, and \$4,000 for failing to provide adequate instruction and training.

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McCain Foods Limited entered a guilty plea to a charge of failing to provide adequate instruction, training and supervision to an employee.

They were fined \$10,000 plus a \$2,000 victim surcharge.

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GOOD *NEWS*: Continued from [page 1](#)

starting exploring career options. They considered a job in the secretarial field. "I had done that type of work for several years, and at one time had a typing speed of 102 words-per-minute. But it had been several years, and I needed to upgrade my computer skills."

So Hanson enrolled in the Employ-Ability program offered through the Neil Squire Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating independence opportunities for people with physical disabilities. The 12-week program addresses personal wellness and career development, including computer skills development, job search skills, access and accommodation.

Hanson gushes about the program. "It was fantastic – I learned so much. I was still suffering from low self-esteem, wondering who would hire me. They helped me work through those feelings."

And they answered Hanson's question of who would hire her. They did!

As Hanson was near the completion of her program, the Neil Squire Society advertised for an administrative assistant. "It was what I was training to do, so I applied, even though I didn't think I'd have a chance."

But Hanson was wrong. She was hired, and started the full-time job on August 15, 2005. She says she loves her job, and her employer.

"They've accommodated me in every way, shape and form."

And the feeling is reciprocal.

"Pam can work circles around most non-injured workers, said Diana Hall, acting regional manager of the Neil Squire Society. "She has the right skill set and the enthusiasm she brings to the job is over the top. We are so glad to have her. I don't want to make it sound like she has wings, but, as far as I'm concerned, she does," Hall said.

"As an employer, I'd encourage other employers to hire workers on compensation. They really want to work and get off compensation; it's a fantastic opportunity to get the right person. It's been a win-win situation for us."

"I'd like to thank the WHSCC for making possible her training, and for all its support in helping her return to work, including the ergonomic equipment Pam needed to better perform her job.

This equipment includes a compact keyboard so Hanson's fingers do not have to reach so far, a

special chair and floor mat, and a telephone headset, so Hanson does not have to lift the receiver to her ear.

Hall also acknowledges Hanson's team at the WHSCC: Maureen Stokoe, case manager; Colleen Kinch, occupational therapist; and Richard Grasse, rehabilitation specialist. "The time and effort they put into helping Pam return to work is commendable."

Before her injury, Hanson enjoyed playing her guitar, playing golf and riding her motorcycle. She has had to relearn playing the guitar with a slide bar, and has given golf up completely. A specialized gel glove allows her to ride her motorcycle for short periods.

Yet Hanson looks at her injury as a positive experience. "I don't look at it as having lost anything. For everything I've had to give up, I've gained double. I consider myself very lucky – I have a great job that I love. And it could've been worse. It could've been my right hand." •

A New Look! : Continued from page 1

Good News stories that appear in our print edition. *E-News* also reports on new WHSCC services and programs, upcoming workshops and conferences, new publications, accident reports and recent prosecutions.

We encourage you to subscribe to *E-News*, by going to: www.whscc.nb.ca/enews/register_e.asp.

We hope you enjoy this revised format of *WHSCC News*. Let us know what you think by sending any comments or suggestions to communications@whscc.nb.ca, or by calling the communications department at 1 800 222-9775. •

IN THE COURTS: Continued from page 2

Gagnon Ornamental Works (2004) Ltd. entered a guilty plea to a charge that they failed to take every reasonable precaution to ensure that any tool, equipment, machine or device supplied by them is reasonably safe when used as directed by the supplier or in accordance with the directions. They were fined \$6,000 plus a \$1,200 victim surcharge.

These charges stem from a November 9, 2004 accident at the McCain Foods Limited plant in Grand Falls where a 22-year-old worker was killed when a box crusher failed. McCain Foods Limited owned the machine and Gagnon Ornamental Works (2004) Ltd. built and supplied the machine.

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Carson Construction Ltd., and Enterprises Bastech Inc., were charged for violating the *OHS Act* after a WHSCC officer visited a worksite in Riverview on Aug. 25, 2003.

Carson Construction was installing sewer pipes on Waterfall Drive, while Enterprises Bastech was overseeing the work. The Crown prosecutor said the trench was about 15 feet deep, with the sides not braced or secured.

The judge fined Carson Construction \$3,500 for each violation, for a total of \$7,000, and Enterprises Bastech \$3,000. •



Train the Trainer “Grads”

The WHSCC is pleased to recognize the first “graduates” of its Train the Trainer program.

The Train the Trainer program prepares and certifies participants to deliver the WHSCC's Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) Core Training program at their own workplaces. Under proposed legislation, the JHSC Core Training will become mandatory.

The program consists of a 3-day course on Instructional Techniques, a 3-day course on Technical Content, and an in-class evaluation, conducted by Perley Brewer, the WHSCC's manager of Client Consulting and Education Services.

“The Train the Trainer Program was developed in response to a recommendation from the JHSC Legislation Technical Committee,” Brewer said. “Larger organizations expressed an interest to have an in-house trainer, which would allow more flexibility in the delivery of the JHSC Core Training.”

To date, 43 people have registered for the Train the Trainer Program. Of that number, 25 have completed the Instructional Techniques and Technical Content components, and five have presented their first in-house program, and have been evaluated. Jeremy Kelly, Health and Safety supervisor at Connors Bros., is one of those five.

“It's definitely a useful service,” Kelly said. “It's much more convenient for us to be able to deliver the JHSC training here, in our building, than sending our people to another city. And we can work around their schedules,” he said.

“It's a great course with lots of good information. The *OHS Act* is so large, but we covered it in-depth in the Technical Content component. It really helped me. When it comes to the *OHS Act*, I now feel confident that I know what I'm talking about, and can teach it to others.”

Participants also learned presentation techniques and how to deal with different personality types.

“One of the great benefits of this program is when someone like Jeremy completes the program, not only are they able to share what they have learned with their JHSC members during the 3-day core training course, but can share it with all Connors Bros. employees, whether through employee orientation sessions or during an annual refresher course,” Brewer said.

Those who have been evaluated and are now certified through the Train the Trainer program are:

Jeremy Kelly, Connors Bros.

Paul Rossignol, Bowater Maritimes Inc.

Bruce Margarvey and Debbie Richard, Hub Meats

Karen Mazerolle, Imperial Manufacturing Group •