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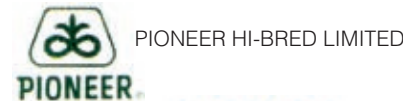
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Memorial

The CFWDR regrets to advise that Mrs. Jane Loree from Nanton, Alberta recently passed away. Jane had been residing in a Nursing Home in Nanton. Jane and her late husband, Gerald, had worked on the formation of a CFWDR branch in Alberta prior to becoming ill. Flowers were forwarded on behalf of members of the CFWDR.

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days and waited for the rehab to call. This was a pretty dark time for me, between my two ears, all alone, surrounded by family and friends. I hid the fear but wondered how in the world can I farm with my new leg.

At the rehab I went through all my paces and was approached by an occupational therapist that quizzed me on my thoughts. I told her about the farm and my fears of getting back into the swing of things and she told me about John Doe and the group he works with. She gave me a Farmers with Disabilities card with John's number on it and in a few days I went home.

I called John after a while and we had a good talk, a talk about all kinds of things. He said we could talk about the accident and surgeries if I wanted to or just talk about whatever. He explained that CFWDR was a peer support group that was there for the injured farmer and family to talk about whatever and how much of whatever was comfortable. John told me his story from the accident right through and I soon discovered I was comfortable to talk about it all too. He said he'd be up to see me some day and asked what I planned to do. I said that I guessed I'd get the cattle back home that had been boarded out and see how it went. I talked to him a few more times on the phone and one day he and his wife arrived at the barn. I was feeding the cattle. We had another great chat and it was then that the full scope of John dawned on me. This man had the biggest heart and more passion and energy for what he was doing than any one I had ever met, and he wanted it to rub off on everyone he had contact with. And believe me it does.

There is no such thing as can't, some things you approach a bit differently, but CAN'T is not an option, neither is feeling sorry for yourself. This whole accident, injury, amputation and recovery process has been a life altering experience, but a very positive one and John was the one that cut the trail to follow. I have no doubt that my life would have been different and much more difficult if I hadn't met John when I did. His wife is also a major player in their team. She has the spouse's perspective on family and life altering accidents and the aftermath. Any accident or injury not only affects the one that was injured, but every one connected to the injured family member is affected in some way. Mrs. Doe's peer counseling in that area was a great help to my wife. Since then we have become great friends and my wife and I have joined John and CFWDR, now we also volunteer with peer counseling and farm safety and awareness activities. John showed us that safety promotion is very important but more importantly to me, he showed that an accident is not the end of the road and with a little motivation and innovation you can keep right on going with your life.

Thank you ever so much to the Does and CFWDR!

*Editor's Note: This is a true story told by a young farmer who received the services of the CFWDR after losing his leg in a farming accident. If you are ever running low on energy and need convincing that the volunteer services of CFWDR are worthwhile, just remember this article!*

Canadian Farmers With Disabilities Registry

CFWDR NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 1  
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The Canadian Farmers with Disabilities Registry was developed by a group of Canadian Farmers, all actively farming, after sustaining injuries from farm accidents.

Canadian Farmers With Disabilities Meet In Moncton

"It never ceases to amaze me that so many people I meet have had someone in their family affected by a serious farm accident", states Carl Palmer, Chairman of the Canadian Farmer With Disabilities Registry. "This fact illustrates the need for an organization such as ours which can provide farm families with the support they need to meet the challenges head on."



A good time was had by all who attended the Annual Meeting of the CFWDR in Moncton in November, 2006. Pictured at the meeting were: (seated, front) guest speaker, Julian Bodnar, Saskatchewan and standing l to r are Fred Walsh, Nova Scotia; J.J. the Clown from the Shriners (also known as John Leadbetter), New Brunswick; and Neil Enns, Manitoba."

The Canadian Farmers With Disabilities Registry's mission is to organize, educate, and encourage people across Canada to promote farm safety and support families affected by severe accidents or illness. Farmers with disabilities occurring due to accident or illness are invited to register with the organization. The organization attempts to collect basic information on the accident situation so that safety programs and displays can be targeted to addressing the main causes of accidents, i.e. time of day, lack of rest breaks, weather stress, broken equipment, etc. The individuals providing their time to carry out the work of this charitable organization are all volunteers. Representatives from across Canada met in Moncton on November 8th to 10th to hold their annual meeting and participate in a training session to assist them with their peer counseling skills.

The keynote speaker for the training session was Julian Bodnar, an Advocate Lawyer Mediator from Saskatoon who is himself considered to be disabled. Julian first addressed the need to find a new meaning of disability and then followed up with some new perspectives on the realities of living with a disability. In order to reach for the sky and accomplish all we can when we are not in the state of being "as normal as others", one must believe that their disability occurred for a reason and must strive to find out what this reason can be. The disability may in fact encourage you to move towards new accomplishments which, formerly, you would never have tried.

A presentation on the work of the Prince Edward Island Farmer Assistance Program, which provides services to farmers who seek help, was well received. In these times of increasing financial stress on farms it is crucial to maintain this service. Fred Walsh, a farmer who lost sight in one eye due to a farm accident, provided information on the work of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB).

A highlight of the session was a presentation by the Luxor Shriners of New Brunswick who showed great enthusiasm for the work they do in raising funding to maintain services for children at the Montreal Shriners Hospital. Rose Marie Chaisson, Head of Social Services at the Montreal Hospital, provided information on how to access the services of the hospital and the steps which are taken in

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## News From Across Canada

### Alberta



Those attending the Red Deer meeting posed for a photo in front of the CFWDR display, which was left with the newly formed Alberta Farmers With Disabilities Registry group for use in that province. Pictured in the back row (l to r) are John Ebeling, Emil Palsitt, and Michelle Palsitt. Front row (l to r) are: Carl Palmer, Nancy Ebeling, David Clark, Edna Clark, and Donna Langille.

Carl Palmer, Donna Langille, and Tyler Fraser traveled to Alberta in March to meet with farmers who had expressed an interest in establishing an active organization in that province. There is a great deal of enthusiasm and interest in this group and we expect that the Albertans will play a very visible part in our programs in the future.

Chairman of the Alberta group is David Clark from Vulcan. David's family farm is celebrating 100 years in operation with Dave being the 4th generation on this grain farm. David is a graduate of Olds Agriculture College. Twelve years ago he was injured in a car accident, becoming a paraplegic. Using a Freedom Lift, Dave has been able to get into his farm machinery and continue farming with his son. Dave has been active in many organizations over the years including Vulcan Council, School Board, Hospital Board, and as a senator for the University of Lethbridge. His wife, Edna, is retired now but previously worked as a school principal. The Clarks have already made contact with the Farm Safety Coordinator at Alberta Agriculture and the Coordinator of the Alberta Farm Safety Centre to express an interest in working with these organizations.

Vice-Chair is Nancy Ebeling from Lacombe. She and her husband, John, run a small beef operation while working off the farm as well. Also active in the organizing group are Emil and

Michelle Palsitt from Two Hills. Emil runs a beef operation while Michelle works with Agriculture Financial Services Corporation and is active volunteering in 4-H and other organizations.

Although not able to attend the Red Deer meeting, Cliff and Shirley Breitreuz from Oneway have indicated their interest in being a part of the Alberta Farmers With Disabilities Registry.

### Saskatchewan

Clint and Pat Sira are keeping the CFWDR active in Saskatchewan. When Clint heard that Carl Palmer would be coming for a visit in March he immediately lined up a school visit in his home community of Hanley. Children at the Hanley School are mainly from farm backgrounds so it was a great place to pass on the message about the need to farm safely.



Clint Sira (seated, left) and Carl Palmer are shown in the midst of their presentation to staff and grades 4 and 5 children at the Hanley School. It is obvious that children on farms are going to be around large farm machinery so CFWDR believes there is need for programs to help educate children about safer farming practices. It is hoped that the parents will be willing to accept recommendations from their children!

When the question was asked as to how many of the students (grades 4 and 5) have driven tractors, almost all had driven some form of tractor, from lawn size, up. When questioned about commercial farm size tractors almost 60% had driven this equipment on their own. Several of the students also indicated that they have driven combines. It is evident that children growing up on farms are going to be around heavy equipment at a young age so it is crucial that they have farm safety training. They are quick learners and are truly interested in how they can do a job

safely. Many planned to go home and give their parents some pointers!

A visit was also planned with Betty Abrey in Imperial but Betty was called away to assist sick relatives in another province. Betty continues to be a major supporter of CFWDR activities.

### British Columbia

Grant Smith reported to the AGM on his activities which included:

- Attended the Pacific Agriculture Expedition in Abbotsford, BC in February/06
- Attended the Vancouver Island Exhibition in Dawson Creek in August
- Held discussions with the Farm and Ranch Safety Association who is mandated to provide safety. They try to make sure there is no duplication of information/services.
- Illnesses seem to be a problem. Grant feels this will become an even bigger problem as the farm population ages.

### Manitoba

Roy Vust reported on the following activities in his province:

- 10th anniversary of Farmers with Disabilities program in Manitoba has been celebrated
- Attended 24 Progressive Farm Camps to teach safety to children
- Attended Ag Days at Brandon
- Plan to place emphasis on increasing membership in CFWDR when they attend functions.

### New Brunswick

Bill Macdonald reported that he plans to work with Wilbur Ludwick to make the CFWDR more active in this province. They have met with several farmers injured in farm accidents. Bill stated that it is difficult to find information on who has been injured and then how to find them. It appears that there are few records being kept in regard to farm accidents.

### Quebec

Claude Daigneault reported that Francois Berard from Ste-Elizabeth will be assisting him with the work of the CFWDR in Quebec. Francois was injured in 1993 when he had an accident with a corn wagon. He farms with his brother and son. All of the CFWDR's promotional materials must be translated into French and Claude and Francois have offered to help with this in future.

## Work Plan for 2007 / 08

Farmers with disabilities face unique challenges. Typically, they are not eligible for Canada Disability Pensions or Employment Insurance. Anecdotal evidence also has revealed that disabled farmers are at greater risk for additional injury because needed workplace modifications are often not a financial option. The relative lack of health care supports and community services in rural areas only compound these issues. CASA has supported the CFWDR in previous years, through funds from CASP, to develop resources needed by the organization's volunteers. Most recently, CASA funded strategic planning activities to allow the organization to become a more established and recognizable association.

CFWDR has expanded its network to include all provinces. If the provincial organizations are to gain momentum then each must be provided with the necessary support and office base with which to be viewed as a creditable organization

– this is to be our major objective in 2007. Our other priority for the coming year will be to provide information to rehabilitation centers and other medical facilities to better inform them of the services avail-

able through the Canadian Farmers With Disabilities Registry. These two new priorities will have to be accomplished while maintaining our peer counseling efforts and farm safety promotion activities.

## 2006 Board of Directors

<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>Carl Palmer</b>	<b>(902) 847-9420</b>
<b>Vice Chairman:</b>	<b>Billy Woods</b>	<b>(709) 437-1480</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Betty Abrey</b>	<b>(306) 963-2153</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Claude Daigneault</b>	<b>(450) 829-3358</b>
<b>Board Members:</b>	<b>Clint Sira</b>	<b>(306) 544-2201</b>
	<b>Loretta Sherman</b>	<b>(902) 686-3217</b>
	<b>Janny Arendz</b>	<b>(902) 621-0349</b>

Please call a member of the Board if you have any questions pertaining to the operations of CFWDR. We are always interested in encouraging more people to join our organization and we would appreciate receiving referrals if you know someone who has had an accident or is seriously ill and could benefit from a visit by a CFWDR volunteer.

## A Story from a Survivor *(names deleted for privacy)*

Well it's been seven and a half short years since my farm accident. It happened on July 13th, 1999 at 3:40 in the afternoon - too much hay down, weather deteriorating and I was in too much of a hurry. I got careless and in the blink of an eye my life was changed forever. The next three days were a series of operations to clean and rebuild what was left of my leg, followed by ten days of I.V.s, antibiotics, and a number of tests to see how the grafts were doing. Then came two weeks at home where I waited and hoped to see signs of healing, but I couldn't see any.

Check up time back in hospital confirmed my fears; the grafts were not taking and a 'clean up' surgery was needed to assess progress. After the 'clean up' surgery I came to, to a bandaged leg, and a mind full of wonder. The bandages were changed the next morning and the wonder was replaced with horror and

disappointment; it was likely the darkest, lowest point of the whole ordeal. The harvest surgery for the graft material was all for nothing, the days of lying still hardly daring to cough, all for nothing. The doctors came in and announced that maybe the grafts were too big and they would do it again, only this time in stages. The old contrary farmer showed up for the first time in nearly a month. I knew of people who had artificial limbs and I didn't have any more time for doctors to practice on me! I told them to cut it off and I'd be on my way.

I had to wait a week on stand-by for the surgery. August 19th off it came, a social worker stopped by the next day to see how I was doing mentally and I told her I was very anxious about what was next. She had a friend of hers, an amputee, stop by to see me, which quelled the fears of just how I would get up and get moving again. I went home after a few

### "Canadian Farmers..." continued from page 1

assessing the children which are admitted. Betty Abrey, secretary of the CFWDR, gave a heartfelt thank you to the Shriners as one of her grandchildren had been a beneficiary of the hospital's services and her family knew first hand the difference the hospital can make in a child's recovery.

The guest speaker for the closing banquet was the New Brunswick Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Ronald Ouelette, who informed the members that he too had experience with a serious farm accident, which resulted in the loss of his father when he was a young boy. A moment of letting down your guard or rushing to finish a job can result in a lifetime of loss for the family left behind.

"I thought that the 2006 meeting of the CFWDR was the best one yet and I think we all came away from the meeting with an increased purpose and a belief that we have the strength to help other people reach a degree of comfort with their own particular disability," concluded Mr. Palmer.

*Continued on page 4*