

Building bridges

Tao, Taylor and Beattie to represent UNB at Nationals in Montreal

by Chris Wilson-Smith

What ever happened to just eating the popsicle?

Maybe we can blame it on the good people from UNB Engineering.

The UNB Engineering Annual Popsicle Stick Bridge Building competition was held on February 1st, in front of over 300 spectators, who witnessed the destruction of seven bridges from nearly every discipline in engineering.

Each competitor in the event had to build a strong bridge, which had to fit into three Glad Kitchen Catcher bags to demonstrate that they met size requirements. The bridge had to span at least one metre, at a height of no more than 60 cm tall.

After the bridges were assembled they were inspected to ensure they passed the geometric design criteria. After this, they were tested using a machine that applies a load via a metal

cylinder with a loading area no bigger than 10 cm.

The process was controlled by computer, which projected the applied load graphs onto a big screen.

"The race was incredibly close," said Trevor Hanson, UNB Civic Engineering student and event organizer.

When all was said and done, \$350 in prize money was given out, with \$200 for first place, \$100 for second, and \$50 for third.

"Many believed the Stump Jumpers from Forest Engineering were going to win," remarked Hanson. "But it was a lighter bridge that won out in the end."

Although the winning bridge constructed by Susan Tao, Aaron Taylor and Mark Beattie held less weight, the bridge itself weighed half as much.

The main criteria for judging was the "resistance factor," which is the applied load divided by the weight of the bridge squared.

The winners of the competition will be representing UNB at the Nationals at Concordia University in Montreal this March.

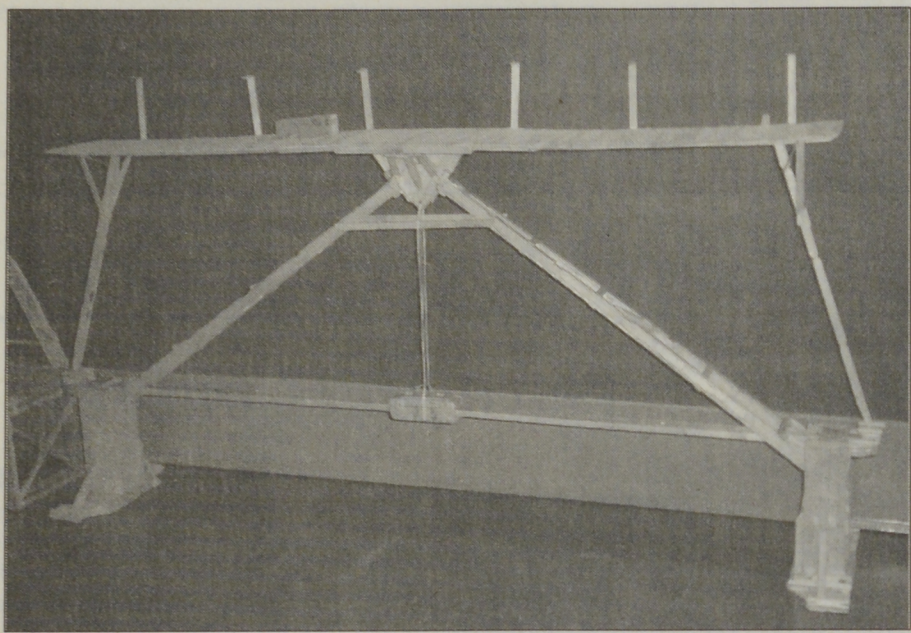


Photo courtesy of Trevor Hanson

The winning bridge of the UNB Engineering Annual Popsicle Stick Bridge Building competition, as constructed by Susan Tao, Aaron Taylor and Mark Beattie. The trio will represent UNB at the Nationals in March.

Is piercing safe?

Piercing is now a widely accepted practice, but what are the risks?

by Stephanie Brunet

The now accepted cultural phenomenon of body piercing has once again become a topic of controversy following yet another near-fatal incident.

According to a recent article published in the student journal *Interrobang*, a young woman in Ajax, Ontario suffered a near fatal brain abscess that has been linked to her tongue piercing. The abscess had to be surgically removed along with a portion of the woman's skull to reduce the extreme swelling caused by the infection. According to the article, doctors linked the bacteria that caused the abscess to bacteria commonly found on the tongue, and are blaming the tongue piercing for the transference of the infection.

This incident is not an isolated phenomenon, rather one of many such occurrences which led to the controversy that surrounds oral piercing. Medical and dental studies have linked oral piercing to health risks which range from minor infection, to potentially fatal complications. Health professionals list serious infection, potentially fatal toxic shock syndrome, and blood poisoning as some of the most serious complications arising from oral piercing.

Currently many health care professionals are calling for legislation that would place stricter regulations on oral piercing, and professionalism in a practice which they claim is of a surgical nature. Many medical professionals are convinced it is the lack of regulations placed on those who can perform such piercings that has led to the number of serious cases resulting from tongue piercing. They believe certification and licensing should be required in order to practice body piercing. Currently, the fashionable trend can be carried out by anyone with a piercing gun, or needle.

It is common practice for the adventurous to frequent the local tattoo and piercing parlor to have the procedure done by an experienced individual. However, there are also those who have their tongues pierced in less than professional settings; these are often done by those who do not possess the required knowledge and equipment for a proper oral piercing.

It is such situations and conditions that worry medical professionals and lead to incidents like the one in Ontario.

Red Lion, a local tattoo and piercing establishment, commented on the bad reputation that unsafe practices are giving the piercing industry:

"Often the client will opt to save ten dollars and go to less professional and less sanitary establishments," said the media contact from Red Lion. "Young people tend to not think of the advantages that a clean and experienced piercer has over someone who has performed the procedure a few times with no direction, or knowledge." The actual potential for something to go wrong lies more in the lack of understanding and education and less in the actual procedure.

The Red Lion went on to say that with procedures such as tongue piercings being carried out on a daily basis, the comparable numbers of incidents to actual piercings is often not taken into account. The local piercers went on to say that many times it because of poor after-care that complications arise.

"After care is crucial, and it only requires a little common sense when dealing with any piercing." The media contact went on to say that people are often slow to react to any problems related to a piercing, and that it never it hurts to go back and have a piercing checked if there is any doubt. If complications arise it is usually a good indicator that the piercing should probably be removed.

Finally the Red Lion offered the advice of going to an establishment that has a good reputation, and is known for professional and clean service. They went on to say that "Nowadays the price of sterilized needles, and other piercing materials is so reasonable, especially when compared to the cost that re-using materials can create, that it doesn't make sense not use new supplies each time."

President

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McLaughlin also placed emphasis on the teaching environment.

"I actually think that UNB is an ideal size to have strength both from teaching and bring it together with research. In some ways we could get the best of both worlds, but I know we have a lot of work to do, and that will be another high priority."

McLaughlin noted that the province is showing interest in assisting with further funding because of the economic importance UNB brings to the City of Fredericton and the province.

Campus parking affected by snow, cars

by Andy Kolbeck

Finding a convenient place to park on the UNB campus can be, and often is, an infuriating exercise in futility.

Many students and staff have simply chosen to park wherever it suits them, be it legal or illegal. Randy Mahoney, Traffic Supervisor for the UNB, feels this needs to be checked, and right away.

"The problem we've run into, is vehicles that are parking in restricted areas, tow-away zones, and blocking crosswalks," Mahoney says. "...If we need to get an emergency vehicle... we're not going to be able to do it."

Mahoney also feels the choice is, ultimately, with the driver but there is absolutely no reason to park illegally. "We are ticketing on a regular basis, but as yet, the only vehicles that we have actually towed away are vehicles that have to be," he said. Mahoney wants people to be more conscious of where they park.

Mahoney feels there is ample parking on campus but there is "none close by the buildings half the time."

The on-going parking problem is nothing new - it seems little has changed in almost two decades. "It's a continual problem, it's nothing new, we've had a parking congestion as long as I've been here, and I've been on campus for 17 years," Mahoney says.

Concern for others safety is primary motivation behind towing and ticketing. While illegal parking could end up with your car being towed away, it could easily cause more serious problems. "Our main concern is for people's safety," said Mahoney.

It appears the peak times for congestion and the resulting illegal parking, occur Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Still, even on the slow days, the problem is evident. "It is a daily problem. There are some people who do it on a regular occasion and they have been ticketed, but the tickets don't seem to be having the desired effect," says Mahoney.

The desired effect, of course, is for the offenders to change their ways. Yet for many, the lure of being near class - especially when it's cold outside - is worth the risk, rather than a five or

10 minute walk to class.

"We do have a lot of repeat offenders... Some people just don't pay attention to tickets," said Mahoney.

Violations are \$10 for not registering your vehicle with the Traffic Department. The cost of parking in non-designated areas is \$20, and you could possibly wind up with your vehicle being towed away.

On top of this, repeat offenders who do not pay their tickets will be towed off the campus if found parked on University property, even if legitimately parked.

The Traffic Department does recognize it's winter, and no one wants to walk any distance in the cold, yet they stress they need everyone's cooperation in recognizing the safety concerns related to illegal parking.

"Winter conditions do make it that much more difficult for the simple fact that... it's harder to get around. We still need your cooperation. We are trying to be a little proactive instead of just calling a tow-truck. Our biggest concern right now is the safety factor," says Mahoney.

Lord sets up innovation fund for universities

by T.J. Essensa

Premier Bernard Lord announced an innovation fund to create greater opportunities in New Brunswick.

The government has recognized innovation, research, and development as determinants for success in today's economy by establishing this support fund.

Lord announced the fund this past Tuesday. As outlined in New Brunswick's Prosperity Plan, 2002-2012. The new innovation fund will create greater opportunity for New Brunswick to help the province achieve its goals.

"The government has understood that for universities to compete successfully for new federal research dollars we need access to a fund to provide us with the leverage to match federal money," said Elizabeth Parr-Johnston, president of the University of New Brunswick.

"The prosperity plan rightly points out that the strongest economies are also the most innovative. But innovation doesn't just happen. It must be actively encouraged and supported. Like my colleagues, I am delighted to see the importance of universities highlighted in the plan and the promise of tangible support through the Innovation Fund," continued Parr-Johnston.

Since universities play such a vital

role in the economy of New Brunswick this will be an important step by guaranteeing up to 50% of capital construction costs for high-tech buildings in university-related research parks.

"We welcome this announcement," said Daniel O'Brien, president of St. Thomas University. "The creation of such a fund has been something the New Brunswick universities have been working on for some time. I especially hope it will increase the funding for research in the applied social sciences and humanities."

"Innovation generally, including innovation in research, is part of Mount Allison's ongoing pursuit of excellence," said A. Wayne MacKay, president of Mount Allison University. "This new fund will be of great benefit to all the universities in our province, and will help New Brunswick close the gap in the increasingly knowledge-based economy."

According to Premier Lord, the province needs to increase investment in research and development and foster new strategic partnerships. In order to do this new initiatives must be taken, including a New Brunswick Innovation foundation, which will have representation from the private sector, universities, and government. This organization will have an initial \$20 million in seed money and seek to leverage up to \$100 million in new R&D and innovation investments for New Brunswick.

In addition, the universities will be invited to participate to share ideas and plans in an Innovation Summit on May 1st. This summit will be held by the province in partnership with the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters.

The four main objectives to this fund are to increase private sector research and development investment, increase New Brunswick's share of federal innovation money, spur the creation of more small and medium-sized businesses, and foster stronger collaboration between government, the private sector, and the universities.

With New Brunswick increasingly falling behind in research funding, the universities look forward to learning details of the Innovation Fund in hopes the trend will be reversed.

"We are seeing a big step in the right direction. We are very pleased to see this recognition of the importance of research, along with concrete support to increase our capacity," said Université de Moncton president Yvon Fontaine. "The university community has been looking for this kind of commitment for some time," concluded Fontaine.

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Stephanie Brunet/The Brunswickan

A panel discussion titled "Feminism and You," was held last Monday as part of the V-Day campaign. The campaign is a movement to stop sexual violence against women and girls.

GSA showcases research

by Chris R.K. Wilson-Smith

Graduate students at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton will showcase their research at this year's GSA Conference on Student Research.

"Research by graduate students is important because it sheds light on answers to questions we all ask," said Mary Milliken.

The conference takes place at the Wu Centre February 21st and 22nd, and will feature 34 presentations on a variety of subjects.

Included in the presentations will be one by Michael Pitblado, who will talk about using war films to study history, as well as Susan Richardson's talk on nurses who give spiritual care to palliative patients.

The opening address will be delivered by UNB psychology and kinesiology professor David Scott, who will talk about the benefits of collaborative research.

Dr. Scott has served as a sports psychology consultant with several sports teams, including the Philadelphia Flyers, the North Bay Centennials, and the Louisville Panthers.

The conference, organized by the GSA and sponsored in part by ACOA and the Community Services Department of the City of Fredericton, is free of charge and everyone is welcome to attend.

For a complete schedule of presenters and topics, visit the GSA Web site at www.unb.ca/GSA.

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At: The UNB SUB Cafeteria
Date: Saturday February 16th, 2002.
Starting Time: 6:00 pm. (doors open at 5:30 pm.)
Admission: \$6.00 for children & \$12.00 for adults

Program includes: Dinner (Caribbean Cuisine)
Cultural Performances
Dance

Tickets available at: The Paper Trail (SUB Building, UNB)
Cafeteria (Downtown) &
From Caribbean Circle Members