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Career in welding is no pipe dream for local woman

By **TED BROWN**
Staff Writer

When Courtney Chard was a little girl, riding her tricycle around in her dad Art's Caledon welding shop 20-odd years ago, little did she know that environment of arc-welding and metal fabrication would set the stage for her profession in life.

Now 32, the Georgetown resident has achieved unique distinction in her trade— she's the only female Red Seal qualified jour-

neymen steamfitter, visual X-ray technician and pipeline welder in the industry.

And she is also the only woman in Canada to have actually worked on a pipeline.

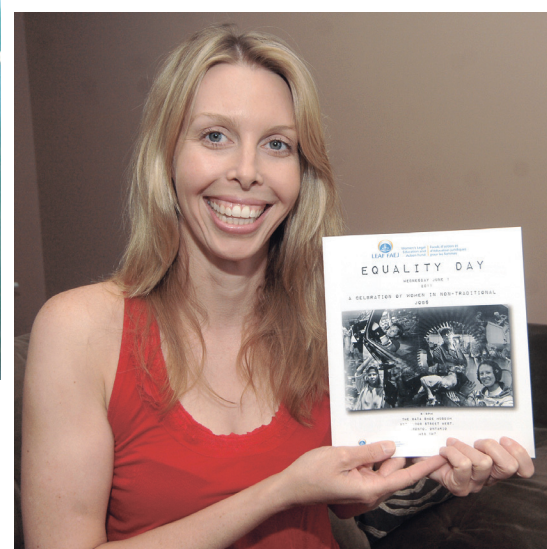
Chard didn't always want to be a welder, in fact, she attended Mayfield High School in the visual arts program, and later studied Law and Security at Sheridan College.

But when it came time to decide what she really wanted to do with her life, the thought of welding for a living came back to her.

With her dad also a former pipeline welder, it was a natural progression for her to pursue that unique trade, and knowing the ins and outs so well from her childhood days, made it that much easier.

"I knew going into welding would create some challenges," said Chard. "When a woman enters a male-dominated field, there will always be some discrimination. All I asked was to be treated as an equal, not receive special attention. But some of the guys found that hard to accept— some even suggested I should be making

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Courtney Chard, of Georgetown, welds a water line in Regent Park Toronto (above) and shows off her Women's Legal Education Fund (LEAF) honour (right). She recently received the certificate which recognizes women working in non-traditional professions.

Top photo courtesy Courtney Chard
Right photo by Ted Brown



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