

ACCESS

ALBERTA

October - December 2003

Getting an Edge on Business in Alberta

by Sherry Brownlee

Remember when you were a child and you dreamed you could do whatever you wanted when you grew up? You could own your own business and it would be exciting and glamorous. You would be a mover, a shaker and, of course, wildly successful.

For the few — the determined — that dream carried through into adulthood. Today, as any savvy entrepreneur quickly realizes, success requires more than simply having an idea and some talent. It requires strategic planning based on the best available information about your market. For Calgary region entrepreneurs, connecting with the helpful team at the **Calgary Business Information Centre (CBIC)** is the first

step in gathering the very best in customized business information.

In 1999, Rob Driscoll recognized the Alberta market was calling for a weekly news magazine that would address the need for more in-depth and insightful coverage of the Alberta business scene.

In developing a business plan, Driscoll visited CBIC in search of market information for Alberta. “I needed to know what size our market was and just where it was. The friendly staff at CBIC helped us find exactly what we were looking for.”

Armed with this custom information, Driscoll and fellow journalist Terry Inigo-Jones launched **Business Edge News Magazine** in October 2000.

Continued on back cover



Rob Driscoll, publisher of Business Edge, pressing for success.

Photo courtesy of David Lazarowych.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Cochrane Artists Add a Touch of “Glass”



Glass-blowing demonstrations on Saturday afternoons are a "must-see" for tourists, and residents, that offer an opportunity to learn about the art and appreciate the unique talents of the Mayerson's.

Photos courtesy to BDCWest.

John and Evelyn Mayerson share a flare for the artistic.

John began with silver smithing, soap stone carving and stained glass, eventually turning to glass blowing. Evelyn had a flare for flowery, greenery and the environment that she sketched, arranged and photographed. When Evelyn became fascinated with John, and the world of glass blowing, she quickly picked up the art with his instruction.

Together, the Mayerson's have blended their individual talents and inspirations to create original glass artworks.

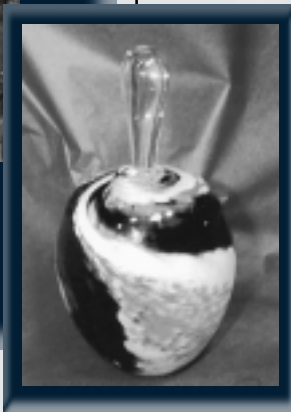
With a vision of opening a retail/wholesale hand-blown glass shop, the Mayerson's visited **Business Development Centre West** in March 1999. BDCWest helped Evelyn finalize a business plan and provided them with start-up financing to open a storefront location for **JEM Glassworks** in Cochrane.

"We had worked from our home since 1986, but business was primarily consignment and custom orders," indicated Evelyn. "Folks didn't think that an art glass business would make it. The loan allowed us to open a retail space to showcase our art. Our work has received greater exposure and business has grown ever since."

The couple's entrepreneurial experience, management skills, work ethic and unique artistic talents have allowed them to succeed.

A visit to Cochrane should include a stop at JEM Glassworks to see the vast selection of different glass mediums ... custom entryways and windows, hand bevels, hand-blown and stained glass, sandblasts, glass beads, sculptures, lamps and exquisite giftware ... all created by John and Evelyn.

For a virtual catalog of JEM Glassworks unique glass creations, visit their Web site at: <http://jemglassworks.com>. ♦



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurial By Design

by Shawna Bourke

Alberta Women's Enterprise Initiative Association

Entering into the Edmonton showroom of **Panache Ceramics Industries Ltd.** is like stepping into an upscale designer's dream. Internationally known for their artistic designs and timeless style, entrepreneurs Rose Haugland and Laura Rogerson manufacture handmade ceramic, glass and metal tiles. Many are sculpted, dimensional tiles, borders and murals, which have been created to coordinate with fabrics, wallpapers and a client's personal taste.


Looking to fill a designer niche in the marketplace, Haugland and Rogerson started the company in 1994. By 1998 they were ready to take the U.S. market by storm and approached the **Alberta Women's Enterprise Initiative Association (AWEIA)** for financing to attend a major interior design tradeshow in Florida.

Today, over 80 per cent of their sales are driven by the U.S. market and they continue to access AWEIA's support as they expand into Europe. "AWEIA's

business coaching is great, continually providing a second opinion when we really need it," notes Haugland. "The AWEIA loan program is fantastic."

As they approach 10 years in business, this creative duo continues to grow, amazing AWEIA Business Coach Patty Breton "with their ability to develop new product lines that match their changing customers' needs at exactly the right time." Their handcrafted original designs can be seen in stylish restaurants, hotels and homes throughout Canada and the U.S.

For more information on Panache Ceramics Industries, call (780) 488-5722 or visit www.panacheceramic.com.

In addition to one-on-one business coaching and a loan program, AWEIA offers workshops, networking events and business planning assistance. For more information on AWEIA's services, call 1-800-713-3558 or visit www.aweia.ab.ca.



Laura Rogerson (L) and Rose Haugland (R), owners of Panache Ceramic Industries, offer an exciting array of beautiful and unique tiles.

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP

An Iron Will and Talent

by Laura Francis-Lamb

Dale Richard is no stranger to hard work. His 30-year career as a millwright ended abruptly, however, when a motorcycle accident in 1994 changed his life forever.

No longer able to performing the rigours of his job, Richard pursued new areas that would allow him to work from home. Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) endorsement and millwright experience, plus a Red Seal in automotives and a nearly complete welding certificate, equipped him with the skills to try something new that would provide income, flexible hours, independence and – most important – personal satisfaction.

By chance, Richard met Suzanne Prévost, an economic development officer in the St. Paul office of **La Chambre économique de l'Alberta (La CÉA)**, in a coffee shop. He told her he was toying with the idea of opening a shop of his own specializing in iron ornaments. What he needed was the proper equipment and some business assistance. Prévost connected him with

the tools and resources offered by La CÉA. She worked with him to prepare a business and financial plan, and provided business advice.

The Franco Albertan Micro Loan Program is a cooperative effort between WD, La CÉA and the Beaumont Credit Union, in cooperation with other allied credit unions in the province. WD provided \$400,000 over three years toward a loan loss reserve to leverage a \$2 million micro loan program for Francophone entrepreneurs across Alberta.

“We helped Dale understand his business plan and what his goals were. When he finished the business plan, he knew how to reach his goals,” said Prévost. “La CÉA provided him with the support he needed to make sure he was ready when he visited the loan officer at the bank.”

Prepared to turn his business idea into a reality, Richard visited the **Servus Credit Union** in Plamondon, and successfully secured a \$30,000 loan through the Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD)-supported **Franco Albertan Micro Loan Program**.

Richard purchased the necessary equipment and recently opened his home-based shop, **D & A Ornamental Iron Ltd.**, which features intricately crafted iron garden ornaments such as wrought-iron trellises, gazebos, flowerpots, and more. He's

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t Forges a New Future!

also exploring other products such as candleholders, CD holders and wine racks.

His future plans to promote the business include setting up a Web site, attending craft shows and selling his products through greenhouses, as well as through a gallery in his home. For now, requests for custom-made iron projects and work on the side performing small engine repairs, lathe and milling projects keep Richard busy.

While he knows a number of stores in Alberta already offer iron ornaments, what sets his shop apart is the uniqueness and high quality of his own custom-made iron works. "It's not a mass production product," Richard says of his creations.

By forging a new business and future, Richard is proving to himself – and to those who've seen his talent with iron first-hand – that he's made of a strong mettle.



What sets Dale Richard's shop apart is the uniqueness and high quality of his own custom-made iron works.

Photo courtesy of La CÉA.

For more information about D & A Ornamental Iron Ltd., call (780) 798-2708. ♣

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WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA

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A Network of Professionals Ready to

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) established the Western Canada Business Service Network to ensure that western Canadians have direct access to products and services that support their economic success. The network is a partnership of organizations with over 100 points of service across the West where entrepreneurs can find what they need to establish a business or make it grow, with services ranging from practical information and funding options, to counselling and support.

In addition to WD offices in Edmonton and Calgary, network partners in Alberta include:

Alberta Women's Enterprise Initiative Association

#250, 815 – 8 Avenue SW #100, 10237 – 104 Street NW
Calgary AB T2P 3P2 Edmonton AB T5J 1B1
(403) 777-4250 (780) 422-7784
1-800-713-3558
www.aweia.ab.ca

The Business Link Business Service Centre

#100, 10237 – 104 Street NW
Edmonton AB T5J 1B1
(780) 422-7722 or 1-800-272-9675
www.cbbsc.org/alberta

Calgary Business Information Centre

#250, 639 – 5 Avenue SW
Calgary AB T2P 0M9
(403) 221-7800
www.calgary-smallbusiness.com

La Chambre économique de l'Alberta

8929 – 82 Avenue NW
Edmonton AB T6C 0Z2
(780) 414-6125 or 1-888-414-6123
www.lacea.ab.ca

Community Futures Development Corporations

Business Development Centre West, Cochrane
(403) 932-5220
Chinook CFDC, Taber
(403) 223-2984
Crowsnest Pass Business Development Centre, Blairmore
(403) 562-8858
Drumheller Regional Chamber of Development & Tourism
(403) 823-8100
East Central Alberta CFDC, Viking
(780) 336-3497
East Parkland Community & Business Development Corp.,
Mirror
(403) 788-2212
Entre-Corp Business Development Centre, Medicine Hat
(403) 528-2824
Fort McMurray Regional Business Development Centre
(780) 791-0330
Highwood Business Development Corp., High River
(403) 652-3700
Lac La Biche Regional Community Development Corp.
(780) 623-2662
Lakeland Community Development Corp., Bonnyville
(780) 826-3858
Lamont-Two Hills Business Development Corp., Two Hills
(780) 657-3512
Lesser Slave Lake Community Development Corp.,
Slave Lake
(780) 849-3232

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to Work for You

Lethbridge & District CFDC
(403) 320-6044
Lloydminster Region CFDC
(780) 875-5458
MacKenzie Economic Development Corp., High Level
(780) 926-4233
Peace Country Development Corp., Peace River
(780) 624-1161
The Reach Corporation, Smoky Lake
(780) 656-2110
Red Deer & District Business Development Corp.
(403) 342-2055
SMEDA Business Development Corp., Beaverlodge
(780) 354-8747
Southwest Alberta Business Development Institute,
Pincher Creek
(403) 627-3020
Tawatinaw CFDC, Westlock
(780) 349-2903
Treaty Seven Economic Development Corp., Calgary
(403) 251-9242
West Central CFDC, Warburg
(780) 848-2222
West Yellowhead CFDC, Hinton
(780) 865-1224
Wild Rose Economic Development Corp., Strathmore
(403) 934-6488
Yellowhead East Business Development Corp., Sangudo
(780) 785-2900

Provincial CFDC Association:
Community Futures Network Society of Alberta,
Medicine Hat
(403) 529-6180 or 1-877-482-3672
www.cfnsa.ca



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WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Business Edge

continued from front cover

“We had assembled a remarkable team of journalists, but that was only half the battle,” said Driscoll. “Gathering the market information we needed without jumping through hoops allowed us to move right into implementing our business plan.”

Business Edge achieved a presence in the market from the get-go. The publication reached profitability within one year and doubled circulation within two. Today, the magazine is delivered to over 45,000 businesses a week through its Calgary/Red Deer and Edmonton/Fort McMurray editions.

With a plan built on a foundation of solid research, Driscoll predicts that it won't be too far into the future before *Business Edge* reaches most businesses in every city in Alberta.

Driscoll is not one of the “few” to access the resources at CBIC. In fact, Alberta entrepreneurs make a point of being well prepared for business. Last year alone, CBIC provided services to over 23,000 entrepreneurs throughout the Calgary region. Like Driscoll, they are planning to do exactly what they always dreamed of.

For more information about *Business Edge*, call (403) 219-EDGE (3343) or (780) 435-EDGE, or visit their Web site at: www.businessedge.ca.

CBIC is a member of Western Economic Diversification Canada's Western Canada Business Service Network and a first-stop resource established to provide individuals with free access to useful and authoritative information for launching a business in the Calgary region. ✱

Awards Program Recognizes Alberta Business Excellence!

The Alberta Chambers of Commerce issued a call for nominations for the 2004 **Alberta Business Awards of Distinction**. The Awards celebrate the success and contributions of Alberta's business community. Awards will be presented to deserving Alberta businesses in 16 different categories – from excellence in marketing to recognizing employers of persons with disabilities or youth, First Nations-owned businesses or new ventures in agri-value, to companies who exemplify high standards in business ethics.



THE ALBERTA
AWARDS OF
DISTINCTION

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) proudly sponsors the *Export Award of Distinction*. The award is

presented to the organization that best demonstrates outstanding achievement in exporting products or services outside of Canada's borders.

If your company has achieved corporate excellence and is looking for the benefits that an award can offer, enter your company in either WD's Export Award of Distinction or one of the other categories best suited to your individual business.

To learn more about the award categories, criteria and how to submit a nomination, visit

www.abbusinessawards.ab.ca. Deadline for nomination entries is November 17, 2003. ✱