

# ACCESS

## MANITOBA

April - June 2003

### Not Just Any Dessert Will Do!

by Lee Gregg

Not for the weak-willed, a walk through **Dessert Sensations & Design** will delight and tantalize the senses. From walnut sponge cake with bittersweet dark butter cream filling, to New York style cheesecake dipped in white Belgian chocolate with fresh lemon curd, you will feel as if you are slipping between heaven and earth!

Working from a church basement kitchen, Barbara O'Hara began her business in 1997 by designing and baking wedding cakes. In the spring 2000, with financing from the **Women's Enterprise Centre of Manitoba**, O'Hara opened her storefront location in Osborne Village.

"The Women's Enterprise Centre is an amazing organization," said O'Hara. "They provided the financial support I needed, and they continue to provide the resources and advice that help me to succeed. Women entrepreneurs who are looking for financial assistance should not overlook them, they are an excellent lender."

Customers will find a stunning display of wedding and theme cakes, an elegant designer showroom featuring unique, all-occasion giftware and a take-away counter filled with wildly delicious and sinfully indulgent desserts at the Osbourne store.

A "from-scratch bakery," Dessert Sensations uses no premixes or preservatives, and specializes in catering to



*Barbara O'Hara in the Dessert Sensations & Design showroom.*

customers on vegan, diabetic and gluten-free diets. O'Hara's corporate clientele has also taken advantage of her unique and exquisite centerpieces, and can choose from Waterford or Wedgewood, exclusive handmade paper and other beautifully designed gifts.

To experience your own *sinsational* encounter, visit Dessert Sensations or for an appointment call (204) 284-4661.

For more information about the Women's Enterprise Centre of Manitoba, visit their Web site at: [www.wecm.ca](http://www.wecm.ca) •

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

# ScootAround North America . . . and the World!

by Lee Gregg



*ScootAround President Lee Meagher (L) hired Christie Procter (R) to boost export sales in the U.S. conventions market.*

Are mobility problems putting your travel plans on hold? With assistance from **ScootAround Inc.**, your problems are solved.

ScootAround offers scooter and wheelchair rental services for mature and disabled travelers. Founded in 1997, the company rents scooters, wheelchairs and other mobility assistance machines in over 500 locations throughout North America, Europe, Australia and the Caribbean.

This service is made possible through the hard

work and determination of Lee Meagher and David Vincent, a sister-brother team who founded the company because they were unable to locate scooters while on vacation with their father who experienced decreased mobility after suffering a stroke.

“We were pioneers in a new industry,” noted Meagher. “There was no research material specific to our business, but the **Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre** was extremely helpful in locating information that was very useful in building our business plan.”

Further assistance was provided through Western Economic Diversification Canada’s **International Trade Personnel**

**Program (ITPP).** Christie Procter, a graduate of the University of Winnipeg, was hired to assist with marketing ScootAround’s services in the U.S. conventions market.

“Christie has broken a dam,” said Meagher, who is thrilled with the company’s growth in the conventions market.

“The ITPP has given me an amazing opportunity,” indicated Procter. “I never saw myself in a business position until I came here. It’s exciting to watch this company grow and I’m excited to be growing with it.”

Meagher credits her company’s recent success to WD’s support. “Of all the government programs available, the ITPP is the best one out there,” said an enthusiastic Meagher. “This year we have seen the company grow from three full-time staff to seven full-time and three part-time positions.”

ScootAround’s mission is to provide an easy, convenient way for mature and disabled travelers to have the freedom and independence to enjoy their vacations and other excursions, and not worry about their personal mobility.

For more information on ScootAround, call 1-888-441-7575 or visit their Web site at: [www.scootaround.com](http://www.scootaround.com).

The Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre is a member of the Western Canada Business Service Network and is financially supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada. For more information, visit their Web site at: [www.cbbsc.org/manitoba](http://www.cbbsc.org/manitoba). For information about WD’s programs and services, visit: [www.wd.gc.ca](http://www.wd.gc.ca). ♦

## INNOVATION

# Making Tomorrow's Products Better

by Lee Gregg

When Atomic Energy Canada Limited (AECL) decided in 1995 to decommission their Whiteshell Laboratories in Pinawa, the scientists and technicians from the Radiation Applications Research branch seized the opportunity to start their own company. Combining their talents and resources, they founded **Acsion Industries Ltd.**

*"Making Tomorrow's Products Better"* is Acsion's motto, and with assistance from Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) they are achieving their goal.

Under WD's Strategic Initiatives program, they received a \$100,000 repayable contribution in August 1998 to purchase and upgrade the AECL assets and establish Acsion as an independent business.

In June 2001, the company received a \$375,000 repayable contribution under WD's Whiteshell Economic Development Assistance program to help replace an obsolete current electron beam (EB) accelerator. The new accelerator has provided Acsion with advanced EB technology capabilities.

"Acsion is committed to innovation through technology, research and development, and commercialization," said company President Chris Saunders. "By working with Western Economic Diversification and the National Research Council, our company was able to become the world leader in electron beam technologies."

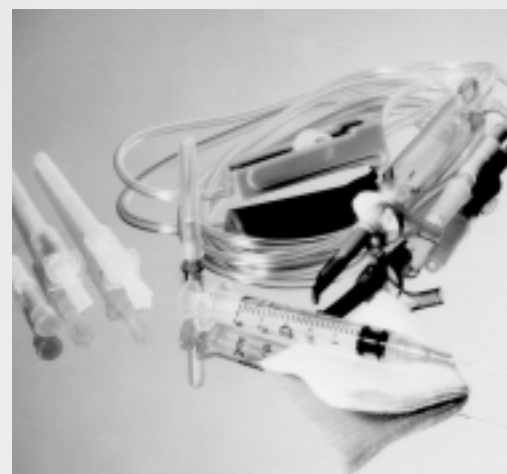
Instead of using heat from an oven or autoclave, EB treatment is a stream of high-energy electrons from an accelerator. The electrons are sprayed onto products to produce specific effects,

such as: neutralizing pathogens in foods, sterilizing bandages and medical devices, or improving the properties of plastics to make them harder, stronger and more heat-resistant. Acsion also provides services in detoxifying waste streams and in the destruction of hazardous wastes.

Air Canada joined forces with Acsion in August 2001 to create **ACETEK Composites**, an aircraft repair and manufacturing company located in Winnipeg. ACETEK focuses on providing composite component repair services for the aerospace industry and is expected to create 270 high-tech aerospace jobs in Manitoba.

Acsion opened its doors in January 1998 with only five employees. Today, they have over 20 employees and are the only company in North America providing all the needed expertise and equipment in a single location to develop EB-based products.

For information on the services offered by Acsion Industries, call (204) 753-2255 or visit their Web site at: [www.acsion.com](http://www.acsion.com). ■



*Medical supplies are one of many products that can be sterilized by electron beam technology.*



## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

# New Health Care Centre Fills Need in St. Laurent

by Lee Gregg

Recently cited by the Smithsonian Institute as a community of 'Métis cultural uniqueness,' the citizens of St. Laurent have something else to be proud of — the **Neil Gaudry Health Centre**, named after the late St. Boniface MLA who was an active member of this community and a role model for its youth.

With help from the **Super Six Community Futures Development Corporation** (CFDC), the St. Laurent Community Development Corporation (CDC) was formed to make town priorities a reality. At the top of their list was an assisted living health centre. With \$7,500 in assistance from Super Six, a feasibility study was prepared. The result — the Neil Gaudry Health Centre opened in the fall of 2001.

"Henry Sikora of Super Six was very supportive of this initiative," said Louis Allain, CDC chairperson. "The study was instrumental in proving to the community stakeholders that they should rally behind the project."

Additional assistance was provided by the **Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (CDEM)**. "Maurice McCarthy and Lina LeGal of CDEM were there for the whole process," added Allain. "They helped to tailor the project to meet the



*Bernice Johnson, administrator of the Neil Gaudry Health Centre, and Louis Allain.*

expectations of the federal and provincial governments, as well as negotiate with the Regional Health Authority."

The vacant Franciscaines Missionnaires convent was purchased by the St. Laurent CDC and renovated to house four Level 1 and 2 home care suites and one respite suite. It is unique in that it offers a transition level for the elders by providing the care and attention they need within a language and culture familiar

to them. This also allows the town to preserve its culture and heritage by keeping the elders in their community.

The Regional Health Authority operates the on-site clinic, offering a family medical practice, physiotherapy, home care services and senior's resource council. The Centre has created nine permanent new jobs.

Super Six also provided \$3,000 to the CDC for a feasibility study that would see the Centre expand to include 10 new home care suites.

Super Six CFDC and CDEM are members of the Western Canada Business Service Network and are financially supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada. For additional information, visit WD's Web site at: [www.wd.gc.ca](http://www.wd.gc.ca). ♦