



Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Network

Your dreams are our business

Spring 2009

Inside This Issue

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Entrepreneur of the Year Award | 1 |
| Looking Ahead and EnCana | 2 |
| Sail Able | 3 |
| Pawsitively Purrfect Designs | 3 |
| Financial Awareness | 4 |
| Ask EDN | 5 |
| Our Town Earth | 6 |
| Book Report: The Fine Art of Big Talk | 7 |

Entrepreneur of The Year

The evening of the 2009 Entrepreneur of the Year awards was a great success! The event kicked off with guest speaker Dan MacNeil of Our Town Earth proclaiming "Life was not a box of chocolates, sometimes I didn't like what I ended up with, so I would pick again. If life deals you a hand that you are not content with, you have the opportunity to take another card. Create opportunities, learn to take chances, and make dreams reality." This was just the beginning of what would be a wonderful night.

There was a lively panel discussion covering 'The Media and Your Business' with two guest panelists, Pamela Scott Crace from Progress Media Group, and Steven Proctor from the Chronicle Herald. Both panelists answered questions from our members and gave great insight into the world of publicity. This portion of the event was moderated by EDN's very own Archie Gillis.

The final part of the evening – the presentation of the Entrepreneur of the Year Award – brought tears to many in attendance. There were six great nominees: Tracy Sheffield, Terry Stewart, Danielle Bordage, Sue Chessell, Nancy Marshall, and Mike Perrier. Each entrepre-



Roswell James and Mike Perrier

neur had a unique and inspiring story that was artfully delivered by EDN's Vice President, Nicole Smith.

Winner of the 2009 Entrepreneur of the Year Award is Mike Perrier. Mike has owned and operated Perrier's Concrete Homes for the last nine years, and was thrilled to accept the award.

Before beginning his business, Mike made his living working as an aluminum window and door technician. He then moved on to teach construction at Amherst's School for the Deaf. Mike continues to be active in advocating for the rights of the deaf and hard of hearing.

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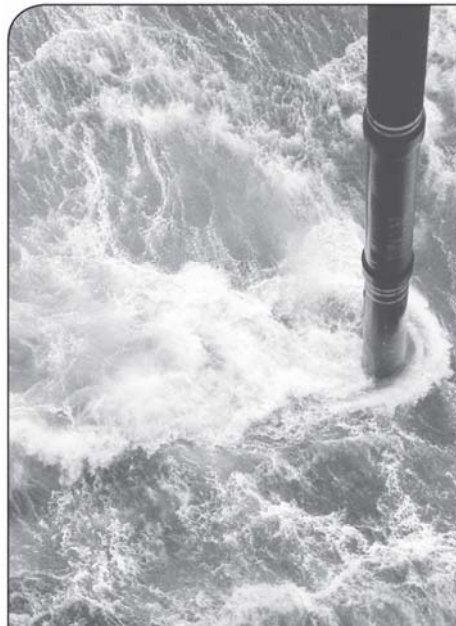
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Deep Panuke gas project business and career opportunities.

For information on business opportunities with EnCana's Deep Panuke natural gas development in Nova Scotia's offshore, visit the Deep Panuke pages on the EnCana website at www.encana.com/deeppanuke/business

For information on employment opportunities at Deep Panuke, visit the Career section on EnCana's website at www.encana.com or the Career Beacon website at www.careerbeacon.com

www.encana.com



Entrepreneur of The Year 2009 continued...

Mike took care to establish solid working relationships with customers, contractors and suppliers. After accepting the award, he reflected "When I built my first house, there were mistakes; I didn't make very much money on that house. But I

persevered; my first year in business, I built one house. Today I am booked in advance all year long." Truly a story of success and inspiration, Mike Perrier is a testament to hard work, perseverance, and living your dream.

Looking Back, Moving Ahead

Our two Winter/Spring co-op students have successfully completed spectacular work terms – thank you Jordann for all of your contributions; in particular completing the TWO newsletters and organizing the Entrepreneur of the Year Event! And Angelica's work on the "success project" has been a smashing success! Calling over 400 EDN members to discuss success, obstacles, and how obstacles to success have been overcome.

Moving ahead, we have two new people on our team – Stephanie Pronk is now at EDN as a co-op student and will be organizing our AGM, next newsletter, and many member specific initiatives. Joe Lang, a new Project Coordinator, is using information gleaned from the "Success Project", and is going to expand our member base by seeking "established entrepreneurs with disabilities" throughout the province.

Sail Able

Would you like to learn to sail? Well, now you can! The Sail Able Association of Nova Scotia has teamed up with the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron to offer a Learn-to-Sail program in Halifax this summer. Starting June 1st, an experienced sailing instructor will be available for individual bookings, five days a week. Each lesson will be tailored to suit your skill level, and the cost is just \$7.00 for Sail Able members. Our aim is to promote the integration of persons with disabilities into the recreation of sailing for pleasure and/or competitive sailing.

The club is located on a low-floor bus route, just minutes from the Armdale Roundabout. The program features equipment that will keep you comfortable and in



Sail Able in action

control of your experience. The facilities on site are accessible, as are the two *Martin 16* sailboats used in the program. Power-assist technology is available so that you can sail using a joystick or sip and puff device.

The 3rd Annual Sail Able BBQ is the perfect opportunity to see the facilities and give sailing a try. It will be held at the RNSYS on Sunday June 7th, 2009.

Sail Able memberships cost only \$25 per year. As a bonus for joining Sail Able this year, you will become eligible to win a trip to Europe for a Tall Ship sailing adventure made possible by SEAS-TAR and the Jubilee Sailing Trust! . No sailing experience is required.

For more information about the Sail Able Association of Nova Scotia, please visit www.sailable.ca.

Pawsitively Purrfect Designs

“Pawsitively Purrfect Designs” is a business inspired by a love of animals and a passion for creating and sewing. Linda Hill, the owner and operator, creates pet clothing such as coats, sweaters, Halloween costumes, collars, leashes, beds and countless other products. Each item is individually handcrafted and can be personalized through embroidery, specialty trims, beads, buttons, or jewelry.

Linda achieves all of this with the help of a top-of-the-line sewing and embroidery machine and a cover stitch serger for knit products; there is almost nothing Linda can't do. Her forty years of sewing and embroidering experience doesn't hurt either!

To keep up with the times in this business, where her competitors are enormous giants in the same industry, Linda tries to always stay one up on her competition by taking courses in entrepreneurship and using her former retail sales and supervising experiences to understand the needs of her customers. To keep up to date with the technologies of the industry, Linda maintains current embroidery software such as heir looming, industrial sewing and pattern alterations programs.

“Pawsitively Purrfect Designs” offer customers unique personal service. They are able to come to Linda's workshop and choose from a selection of fabrics, trims, and embellishments that reflect today's colors and designs. Owners can also request personalized embroidery designs, ranging from initials to seasonal themes. The pets can also take part, as owners bring them along to be measured, ensuring the perfect fit.

For more information about “Pawsitively Purrfect Designs”, and to find store locations, please contact Linda Hill at Ph: (902) 877-2001 or by email at lhill@accesscable.net

Financial Awareness

Don't be too timid and squeamish about your actions. All life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is our choices...that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.

J.K. Rowling



Anna Quon

Whether you're going into business for the first time or have an established business, realistic goals are the fundamentals to planning for the growth and success of your business.

Sue Chessell, the owner of In-Thread-Able-Design, a custom machine embroidery business, can attest to that. Sue has been enjoying the rewards of good planning and money management for the past couple years. "Know where you want to be and how much you can afford to spend," she advises. It's worked for her- she has seen her

sales increase each year and hopes to be self-supporting at the end of an 18-month Self-Employment program.

Money management comes naturally to Sue from her parents. She has also found it helpful to take a bookkeeping and payroll course. "I don't find it too hard because I developed a budget and stay with it. If I didn't it could be a major problem and my business could go under."

Curtis Tobin, a Commercial Account Manager with iNova Credit Union would probably say Sue's doing the right things to keep her business thriving. He advocates entrepreneurs take a "realistic approach", based on research and good planning. "Sometimes bigger doesn't mean better," Curtis says, cautioning that aspiring entrepreneurs need to know the market, their sources of financing,

have a solid business plan and financial plan, and a reasonable financial projection for their business.

"The biggest mistake that a business makes is they overspend," says Curtis. "Right in the beginning they're in the hole thousands of dollars," because they haven't done enough research and so are underfinanced, or don't follow their own budget. Established businesses often make the mistake of not planning for the future, when they need to buy more equipment or employ more people in order to grow.

Having a solid relationship with your financial institution is a key to your financial success, Curtis says. Entrepreneurs need to always be planning for the future with the help of their bank or credit union. "Refer constantly to your business plan and update it regularly so you have a focus on how to grow your business," he says

Continued on page 5



Financial Awareness continued



Sue Chessell has been putting money earned through In-Thread-Able Designs back into the business, setting aside extra money each month for inventory and supplies so that she doesn't have a huge expense to deal

with all at once. She cautions that "the money your business takes in is not all profit" but must be used to pay the bills and grow the business.

At the end of the Self Employment program, Sue hopes to be able to pay herself a regular salary. She plans to do a financial forecast so she'll know how much money to set aside for advertising and marketing, supplies, utilities, etc.

In the meantime, she advises her fellow entrepreneurs to keep their books up to date. "If somebody isn't sure how to handle their money and where

to put it in their business, they should get help for that," such as from an accountant or from organizations like EDN.

When she has time, Sue works to have extra inventory on hand for orders that come in and for the busy tourist season. She has already had a big order filled that's not deliverable until May. "That encourages me to get out there and get more business, so that I can grow the business," she says. Keeping her feet on the ground with an eye on the future, Sue looks to be on the road to making her entrepreneurial dreams come true.

Ask EDN!

Is The Customer Always Right?

This old phrase was first uttered in 1909 by a department store owner in London. It's meaning is simple "Try to satisfy the customer, no matter what". In most cases, this is an excellent customer service motto; it encourages people to go that extra mile, to give that extra inch, to go above and beyond the regular call of duty to give customers the best experience possible, whether it's designing a website, or serving a cup of coffee.

The aim is to create an experience that will have a customer coming back for more, but what about those customers that you don't want to come back? Everyone has dealt with them, some customers just can't be pleased; there will always be something wrong, something they didn't like, or something that they themselves could have done better. So, are these customers always right? Herb Kelleher, CEO of Southwest Airlines, put it best: "No, they are not, and I think that's one of the biggest betrayals of employees a boss can possibly commit. The customer is sometimes wrong. We don't carry those sorts of customers. We write to them and say 'Fly somebody else, don't abuse our people'."

The fact is, some customers are just wrong, and no amount of accommodation will please them. In these cases, a polite "Goodbye" is the best route. Always remember, as entrepreneurs, we serve people but we are not their servants.





Our Town Earth

Prepared by Holly Salsman

OurTownEarth.com™ is the first-ever social networking website of its kind, created by, and for, persons with disabilities, their families, friends and caregivers. Through customized profiles, users can easily navigate through unique neighbourhoods of homes, buildings and parks, uncovering expansive resources including entertainment, education, and entrepreneurship while communicating with like-minded individuals. Additionally, OurTownEarth.com™ provides a resource for caregivers to obtain information and connect with others to share ideas and experiences. And the cost to do this: IT IS FREE for all citizens!



OURTOWN
EARTH.COM™

**A goal without
a plan is just a
wish.**

**Antoine de
Saint-Exupery**

The founder of OurTownEarth.com™ is Dan MacNeil, a native of Cape Breton. “As a person with a disability, I want to lead by example and show the world that I will work to break down any barriers that exist for persons with disabilities,” MacNeil says. “Now, citizens all around the world will have a place they can call home, while connecting with others. Along with going global, the site will engage involvement in our communities while creating unlimited opportunities for all.”

Organizations and OurTownEarth.Com™ can establish partnerships to educate, create awareness and provide resources, and are offered the added benefit of increased exposure. By posting newsletters and announcing and promoting events in the online community, the message will be received by more people than a traditional website.

It is the goal of OurTownEarth.com™ to bring not only information and resources together, but entertainment, shopping and community involvement as well. A forum will be provided to talk about a wide range of topics as well as address concerns. OTE has also implemented a Volunteer program, where members (called “Citizens” on the website) can volunteer their time with a range of possible jobs.

OurTownEarth.com™ invites everyone to register and become a citizen.

Click: www.ourtownearth.com

Call: 1-902-406-5998

Email: info@ourtownearth.com

**Genius is one
per cent
inspiration,
ninety-nine per
cent
perspiration.**

**Thomas A.
Edison**

Book Report: The Fine Art of The Big Talk

After the success of her first book (previously reviewed by this column) author Debra Fine returns with her sequel *The Fine Art of the Big Talk*. This edition moves past the initial getting-to-know-you conversations, to tackle the harder parts of conversation, otherwise known as The Big Talk.

So what is 'The Big Talk'? According to the book, it can be anything from presentations, to asking your boss for a raise, to solving employee conflict resolution; essentially Big Talk is anything that could actually make a difference in someone's life, and for that reason it is important to be skillful at it.

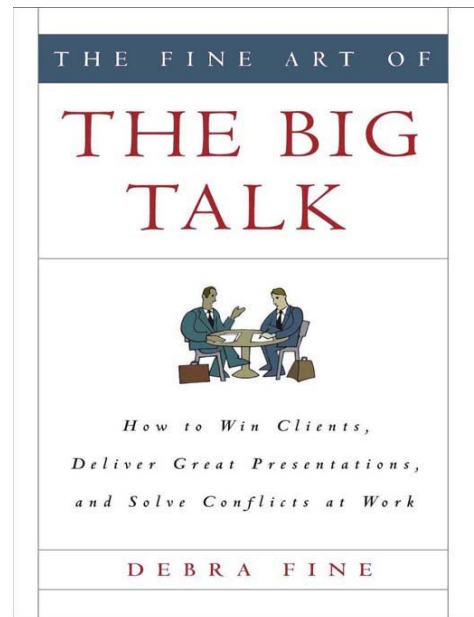
The book does not cover specific topics like presentations or conflict resolution directly, but rather equips its readers with the tools to handle any Big Talk situation, no matter what the subject.

Chapters such as 'Recognize the Danger Signs' give the reader the skills necessary to handle any situation that arises, no matter how awkward. After reading the book, you'll be able to recognize what facial expressions and body language indicate stress, and how to steer the discussion away from these 'hot button topics' while still getting your point across.

Another chapter titled 'Manage the Conversation' gives us tried and true methods to keep our conversations on track and get the information we need. This may sound simple and unnecessary, but how many of us have gone into a conversation needing particular information, and upon leaving it, realize we didn't even ask the question?

Although it tackles serious information, the book, like its Small Talk relative, remains upbeat and light-hearted. Fine delivers her wisdom through anecdotes and frank, down-to-earth talk. There are also convenient info boxes throughout the book that offer solutions for concentrated problems such as 'Dealing with Unfriendly People' and 'Make the Most of Networking Events'.

The final result is a book that is a handy guide for everyone who is looking to have more productive relationships; the information given in this book can be used in everyday interactions with everyone you meet, both in business and otherwise. A definite must-read.



The greatest mistake you can make in life is to continually fear you will make one.

Elbert Hubbard

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

Thomas A. Edison



**Not a member yet?
Contact EDN & join!**

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Mission:

To promote and facilitate entrepreneurship among people with disabilities. To understand and represent the needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities. To advise government, business service providers and others on how best to serve entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Our Vision:

To have an impact on society, that will ensure the barriers that persons with disabilities face will be overcome and give persons with disabilities the option to realize their dreams and reach their full potential.

<http://www.ednns.ca>

Upcoming Workshops and Events!

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Annual General Meeting The Westin Nova Scotian June 25th Time to Be Determined</p> | <p>All members are welcome to enjoy an evening where they can meet new people and catch up with old friends.</p> |
| <p>Financial Awareness Workshop Canada Business Service Center July 8th 5-7pm</p> | <p>Join Rebecca Oulton and Danielle Bordage in an open discussion as they share their tips, tools, and techniques for practical financial management.</p> |

**Call EDN at 426-0591 (Archie) to register. Spaces are limited!
Please let us know of any personal accommodation requirements in advance.**



EDN would like to thank the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia for their generous support



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NOVA SCOTIA

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