

NEW Pioneers

STORIES OF 100 BC WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS



Foreword by Premier Gordon Campbell



“There’s no other paycheque
from somewhere else so I’m
full on all the time”

Maureen Drew & Judy McArthur

ARTISAN EDIBLES FINE FOOD COMPANY LTD.
895 DICKINSON WAY, PARKSVILLE, BC
250.248.0670 | www.artisanedibles.com

When most people their age were thinking about retirement, Maureen Drew and Judy McArthur decided they would rather ‘re-fire’ their lives than retire. Maureen and Judy are 50/50 partners in Artisan Edibles Fine Food Company Ltd. and these two ‘seniorpreneurs’ are not about to slow down any time soon.

They first met 28 years ago and reconnected in 2003 when Maureen moved to Vancouver Island. Judy wanted to expand her home business, Artisan Preserves and Maureen, whose background is in marketing, was looking to introduce a product into the market.

They decided to combine their skills, established a partnership in July 2004 and Artisan Edibles Fine Food Company was born. They set up a commercial kitchen in Maureen’s home, had it approved and in November 2005, they launched their products in stores where specialty foods were sold.

“Most of what we manufacture is grown right on Vancouver Island and the products are inspired by what is available locally... unique products like wild rose and champagne jelly where you can actually see the rose petals floating in the jelly. We make preserves without

preservatives, everything is all natural,” says Judy.

Maureen and Judy financed their business with lines of credit. “Have capital behind you,” Maureen advises. “Financing is the most important thing. You need money to invest in your company and to live comfortably while you grow your business. A business plan will show you what you need to start and grow. Continually revisit your business strategy.”

The duo works 14 hours a day and usually seven days a week during the busy seasons, taking vacations during downtime. “I feel like I am continually multi-tasking with family and the business. Even at the end of the day I’m thinking about the big picture for the business while still being there for my family,” says Maureen.

Entrepreneurs have “that passion in your belly that makes you step out and take the risks,” says Judy. “I used to work full-time and have my small business on the side that I did on my own time. This is a totally different commitment.”

“We’re re-fring our lives, not retiring.”