



NOVA SCOTIA

KATHY'S HOLIDAY CREATIONS

KATHY PAUGH was looking for an opportunity to put her artistic talents to good – and profitable use. Her goal was to establish a simple home-based business, but she did not enter the world of entrepreneurship unprepared. In June 1995, after a year of research, planning and training, she launched Kathy's Holiday Creations.

The motivation for this, her first business, came during a 7 week stay at the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre where she learned Chronic Pain Management for serious back problems. "I realized that I wanted to create something I could do at my own speed," says Kathy. "I understood how frustrating and scary it can be to know you have a disability that limits opportunities to find a job. This was something I knew I could do. And I knew that when it grew, it would give others a chance to build confidence in themselves just as it has for me."

Located in the basement of her home in Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia, Kathy's Holiday Creations manufactures quality, Canadian-made classic hand-tied gift bows for all occasions as well as home decor crafts such as wreaths, swags and Christmas balls. The bows are made of weatherproof or velvet ribbon and imported wire lamés.

Kathy's extensive market research included a trip to Boston where she learned how to make bows professionally. "At first, it took about 500 bows to make one perfect bow," she laughs. "Fortunately, we've gotten a lot more productive since then." She also took an entrepreneurship course offered by the Business Development Bank of Canada. When she mastered production, she ordered some supplies, registered her business, and set to work establishing a sales network. Her business was initially intended to be a wholesale operation but within months



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she was selling to a growing number of retail customers.

She regularly works with two women who also have physical disabilities and, on one occasion, initiated a team effort to boost the confidence of others in her community. For this project, 14 people were trained to help produce the customized bows. These

goals are reachable - just believe in yourself. I've been really lucky... my husband and kids have been wonderful helping me to build this business and the Blue Water Business Development Corporation and Nova Scotia Economic Renewal Agency have provided funding, advice and great moral support."

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individuals worked from their own homes, at their own pace, then brought their finished products to Kathy for inspection. Together, the group produced 3500 bows/wreaths, 200 swags and 200 Christmas balls. This helped Kathy to meet the demands of the Christmas season.

Asked to offer a few words of wisdom to those looking to start a business of their own, Kathy says: "Give it your all and maintain a positive attitude no matter what. You have to be a survivor and have confidence in what you're doing. Remember that your

Editor's Note:

Continued degeneration of her spine has recently resulted in further nerve damage and limited Kathy's own mobility and, as a result, she must sell her business. She admits that handing over the business breaks her heart, but she is content knowing she gave it her all. Her business plan had projected revenues of \$50,000 for 1997.

Kathy will share her own entrepreneurial expertise by training the new owner how to make the bows, how to get around red tape, and how to carry on the success she has started.

Kathy Paugh

WHERE TO REACH KATHY PAUGH

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