

Janet Pearson, Owner - A & A Burger Bar and Family Diner

Taking over a 28-year-old landmark burger joint in Prince George might seem a huge undertaking to some, but for Janet Pearson it was an exciting opportunity to prove her determination and drive.

Pearson researched her community and decided that A & A Burger Bar and Family Diner had great potential, if infused with new life. Formerly an outdoor stand, only open in the summer, they have now moved to a new location with indoor seating and are open all year.

"My first step was to get a foothold in the community so I could better understand the consumers and their desires," says Pearson. "I networked, built relationships and got to know the people around me. I continued forward in my business with the support and input of people I trust."

Pearson quickly discovered that having a presence in her business was just as important to her success as running the business. "As a manager I need to be ever-present, I can't just be hiding in the backroom doing paperwork. My customers associate me with the restaurant; they know me by name and know my upbeat attitude. They trust me with providing them with a homey atmosphere and the high quality of food they receive," acknowledges Pearson. "You have to build trust and a reputation for excellence among your customers and within the business community."

Pearson has recently received funding from the Women's Enterprise Centre that will help A & A Burger Bar & Family Diner continue to offer a great atmosphere and delicious food to the people of Prince George. "Getting this loan meant everything to us. It's not just that the Women's Enterprise Centre helped me; 30 people have jobs because this business exists. And it's going to be even more in the summer. We are helping many young people learn pride and workmanship," acknowledges Pearson.

As for the future of this business? Pearson dreams only of satisfying her customers and her community. "All I want to do is have a good reputation in the community; for people to see us as a clean place that's tastefully decorated and serves really great food. I want to enjoy people and I want people to enjoy coming into our dinner. That's all there is to it!"

Pearson's words of advice to other entrepreneurs looking to grow their businesses come straight from her personal experience. "No woman is an island; you have to look to others to help you, to offer you feedback and to push you forward. If nothing else, always network, always be polite and always be respectful; you never know who might come into your life or into your business!"

Women's Enterprise Centre serves women across the province from its offices in Kelowna, Victoria, and Vancouver. For more information call 1-800-643-7014 or visit www.womensenterprise.ca.