

BIZ BIO: Superior Fashions

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Good things in store for Ashland entrepreneur

When J.C. Penney decided to close their downtown Ashland store, Pam Gervais — like so many other people in town — was very disappointed and upset. “I just thought it was such a shame,” she recalled. “And ever since that happened, I have thought the people of Ashland deserve another option for clothing and accessories on Main Street.”

A former assistant manager at Payless Shoe Store in Ashland, Pam has also done real estate appraisals. Her current endeavor, Superior Fashions, began with a Facebook message posted by Mayor Deb Lewis, who had put out a call for new businesses in Ashland.

Pam had already been thinking about opening some type of store and with prompting from her daughter, Megan, who owns her own custom frame shop in Madison, Pam decided to seriously look into starting a business. Pam worked with the Ashland Area Development Corporation to prepare her business plan and obtain financing.

“Dale (Kupczyk) and everyone there was so awesome,” Pam said. “They helped me step by step with all of my paperwork. The whole experience was wonderful. I had no idea there was all of this help available to people like me. So many people were willing to help me, the Chamber, the city — everyone was great!”

The result of all of this positive energy coming together was Superior Fashions, which opened in September 2015. Pam’s new store carries men’s and women’s clothing, including plus sizes, along with cute accessories such as jewelry, gloves, scarves, socks, purses, and hats. She also sells jackets, coats, sweaters, watches and colorful infinity scarves.

“We offer a mix of dressy and casual clothing,” Pam explained, “in sizes from small to large and then XL to 3XL. And we do have nice dresses for weddings, bridal showers, and other occasions that crop up where ladies need to run out quick and get an outfit.” The store has both long and short dresses in stock along with dress shirts and slacks for guys.

In addition, Pam displays and sells framed art by Ashland nature photographer Cheryl Koval, whose work has been featured on national and local TV stations and in *Our Wisconsin* magazine. “I’ve seen her gorgeous photos on the news and on The Weather Channel,” Pam noted.

Superior Fashions also offers sparkly, “blinged-up” Denim Couture Jeans as well as traditional Lee Brand Jeans. “Customers can order Lee Jeans directly from us, too. They can come in, look through the catalogs and select specific styles.”

Pam said she has “lots of new spring stuff coming in April” and she is planning a spring promotion, too. “We will be doing a ‘buy one, get one half off’ promotion through the first half of March on everything in the store.” Her spring open house is set for March 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Superior Fashions customers should ask Pam how they can become eligible for her monthly drawing for a \$40 gift certificate. And keep an ear out for her \$20 coupons sold on the Heartland Communications

Shopping Show radio program on WNXR (107.3 FM) and WBSZ (93.3 FM).

Current store hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., but Pam will offer extended hours during the summer, including being open on Sundays.



Above, Superior Fashions owner Pam Gervais stands near a display inside her new store on a recent weekday afternoon.

