



PHOTO BY RICHARD MCNEY

Amy Yule, owner of Pecan Yummies, created the business around her holiday recipe. Pictured on the left is her partner Lawson Kratz, who helps her in all aspects of the business.

Holiday tradition grows into successful business

Easton woman turns 'Pecan Yummies' from hobby into regional product

By RICHARD MCNEY
 Chesapeake Business Ledger Editor

EASTON — Amy Yule has been making Pecan Yummies since about 1979, although they were not always known by that name. Yule created the sweetly coated pecan treats by modifying a recipe she came upon.

"I gave them to all of my clients, neighbors and friends as Christmas presents," said Yule, who worked as a travel agent for about 22 years. "Everyone always said I should sell these."

In 2003, after becoming fed up with the travel business post-Sept. 11, Yule went into business selling her holiday treat, naming the product Pecan Yummies.

"I was kind of going through a change in my life where my children were grown and they were out

on their own," she said. "I was going through, unfortunately, a very messy divorce and I needed a job. I don't know when I started it that I would still be doing it five years down the road."

Yule began marketing the business through local business groups including the Talbot County and Annapolis chambers. She also began setting up a distributor network of stores to carry her product.

When the business started Yule did the baking at her home, but even spending a whole day baking there she could only make about 18 pounds of product.

"I soon realized that 18 pounds — even if I baked two to three times a week — was not going to be enough product for even the demand that I had initially," she said.

She now rents space at a commercial kitchen in Easton and can bake 270 pounds of finished product in an eight-hour day with the help of her business partner, helper and friend Lawson Kratz. He is semi-

retired from engineering consultant work.

"He has been instrumental in helping me and my business," she said. "He helps me in every aspect of it."

Yule mostly sells Pecan Yummies in 4-ounce bags for \$5 or 8-ounce bags for \$10. The product is also available in a one-pound package.

She finds her new business to be an outlet for her creativity.

"I am always trying to think of new ways to package my product," she said. "On my Web site I have about 200 ways to package it."

Pecan Yummies are available in a variety of holiday and seasonal tins and decorative boxes. The treats are also popular as corporate gifts and businesses can have their business cards inserted into the packaging or contact info printed on it.

In 2005 Yule created a new product, called Yummie Crummies, from the coating crumbs that fall off during the baking process and were being thrown away. She also

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Arentz named Business Leader of Year for QA's

By JACK SHAUM
 Staff Writer

STEVENSVILLE — The Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce has recognized six individuals and firms for their contributions to the area's business community over the past year.

The awards were handed out during the chamber's Excellence in Business Luncheon at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club Oct. 23. They were for Volunteer of the Year, Environmental Awareness, Excellence in Agriculture, Entrepreneur of the Year, Public Servant of the Year and Business Leader of the Year.

Receiving the Business Leader of the Year Award was Biana Arentz of Hemingway's Restaurant.

"The Business Leader of the Year is presented to an individual who has demonstrated the exceptional qualities that are needed in managing a successful business," said Merry Tobin, chairman of the chamber's board of directors. "The nominee should be a visionary and possess outstanding leadership attributes."

Tobin said Arentz has more than 19 years in the local business community, has been a successful real estate agent, served on the Chesapeake College board of trustees, the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and the board of Bosom Buddies.

The Volunteer of Year Award went to Eileen Nonemaker of Paradigm Associates LLC. Tobin said she has "donated many hours of service to the betterment of the chamber's way of life."

She said Nonemaker is on the chamber's membership committee, golf committee, education committee, did a pre-Business Showcase seminar and donated time to the Maryland Chamber of Commerce's Mini Institute where she taught a course in customer service.

Chaney Enterprises/C&D Concrete won the Environmental Awareness Award for promoting



Biana Arentz, left, of Hemingway's Restaurant, was named Business Leader of the Year by the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce. She is pictured with Merry Tobin, chamber board chairman.

the use of pervious concrete. Accepting the award were Jessica Goad and Audrey Scott.

"Pervious concrete is an economically and environmentally sound choice in storm water management," Tobin said. "This type of concrete permits rain to pass through the pavement and directly into the soil, which allows groundwater to be replenished, runoff into local watersheds to virtually be eliminated, and, at the same time, meet EPA regulatory requirements."

The Excellence in Agriculture Award was presented to Kevin Leaverton, owner of Wye Branch Manor, an agriculture conference center, where he "works with cattle reproduction, embracing the vision of conducting business internationally," Tobin said.

Leaverton's family owns a 2,500-acre dairy and grain farm and he serves on the Chesapeake College/Wye Area Technical Committee.

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Area businesses showcased at Chamber event

By JACK SHAUM
 Staff Writer

STEVENSVILLE — The organizers of the first-ever Queen Anne's County Business Showcase say they're pleased with the event and are already looking ahead to next year.

The affair, held Oct. 23 at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club, was billed as a "one-day celebration of business in Queen Anne's County," said Linda Friday, president of the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce, which mounted the event.

It included the Excellence in Business Luncheon, with former Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. as the featured speaker; a sprawling showcase in which local businesses put forth their products and a variety of business seminars.

"Can you feel the energy in

this room? It's awesome. I'm very excited," said Friday as she walked through the various exhibit rooms. "We'd like to make it yearly and build on what we've done."

She said credit for the event goes to a lot of people.

"In early spring, the board of directors of the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce, the staff and some of our committee people, worked to develop a strategic plan for the Chamber of Commerce. Out of that plan came this event," she said.

The day began with 200 people attending the Excellence in Business Luncheon, following with awards for excellence. The business showcase itself came next from 2:30 to 7:30 p.m., during which area businesses set up 97 tables and displays in the Garden Room, Sunset and Tavern ballrooms.

"It's wonderful. It's great for us because we market to businesses," said Heather Tinelli of Shore Accountants

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