

Some might find it unique to learn that a college freshman like Michelle Canfield operates her own business. Perhaps even more unique is the type of business she runs. Ms. Canfield is entering her second year of making "Pet-Pourri", a functional craft product she makes by dipping stuffed animals into scented paraffin.

In 2006, while attending Bolivar-Richburg Central School, Bolivar, NY, Ms. Canfield said she discovered the "Pet-Pourri" concept while attending a local craft fair. She met a woman who sold a similar product. The woman told Ms. Canfield that she was getting out of the craft business for personal reasons. Ms. Canfield decided that she would pick up where others left off.

Ms. Canfield began going to lawn sales and putting ads in the newspaper - doing anything she could do to find small stuffed animals to use as a base for her products. Each Pet-Pourri product is created by taking stuffed animals and dipping them in a slow cooker filled with melted paraffin. Excess paraffin is then removed and the product then cools and hardens.

The stuffed animals will be firm from the paraffin but will retain their original shape and look, making them appropriate for a shelf or mantle.

The "Pet-Pourri", as Ms. Canfield has dubbed them, can take the place of burning candles because of the strength of their scent. Simply place your favorite "Pet-Pourri" stuffed animal in a room and the fragrance takes over. "People really seem to like them. They really capture people's attention," she said.

Ms. Canfield uses holiday scents like mistletoe and pine over the Christmas season, and scents like lilac and spring rain for Easter. The popularity of "Pet-Pourri" has grown as Ms. Canfield has attended more craft fairs with her product. "I have a lot of repeat customers come to the craft shows looking for me," she said. Ms. Canfield often forwards her customers to her company website, where her offers include customized "Pet-Pourri".

Ms. Canfield runs a small "Pet-Pourri" department in a store within her parent's Canfield's Lawn Equipment Sales and Service shop in Shinglehouse, PA and also provides the product on-line.

As a senior at Bolivar-Richburg, Ms. Canfield was awarded the \$2000 NFIB/Jim and Mim Herr Young Entrepreneur Award because of her business concept. She now attends college at St. Bonaventure University.

"Pet-Pourri" will be featured locally through publications and programs taking place at area schools and the Wellsville Creative Arts Center during National Entrepreneurship Week. The future of "Pet-Pourri" appears bright as Ms. Canfield's customer base continues to grow. To order "Pet-Pourri" online, go to www.canfieldslawn.com/Pet-Pourri/products.html □

The Sweet Smell of Success

BY KIP DOYLE



Michelle Canfield's
Pet-Pourri

