

CREATIVITY A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

By Alex Browne - Peace Arch News - November 10, 2007

At eight years old, Rachel 'Rachie' Goulding is one of the youngest entrepreneurs around.

But not too young to be a featured vendor in the upcoming Creative Finds Art and Fine Crafts show scheduled for Dec. 1 at Sullivan Hall, where she will showcase her own line of hand and body lotions, and flavoured lip balms and breath fresheners – Rachie's Yum Yums.

Artists and craftsperson Nicci Battilana, organizer and impresario of the debut event show, said she considers the diminutive business mogul a 'creative find' herself.

"As soon as I heard about her and was in touch with her, I couldn't resist having her in the show," Battilana said.

Mom Linda Goulding explained that Rachel, who is home-schooled, developed her products after experimenting with essential oils and flavourings used in Linda's own line of home-made natural skin-care products.

"I'd never have thought of some of these combinations," Linda said of Rachel's gleeful willingness to mix cinnamons and peppermints and bubblegum flavours for breath fresheners and lip balms.

But they've already proven their marketability in a successful foray to White Rock Farmer's Market, where Rachel soon sold out the product she brought, particularly to other little girls intrigued by her flavour mixes.

"She even drew out her own name and logo and business cards," Linda added.

"I called them Rachie's Yum Yum's because they're yummy and a lot of people call me Rachie," Rachel explained.

"And I thought of butterflies because they're pretty and I like them."

Linda said the idea of Rachel's products started when her daughter, fascinated by the scents, would frequently query her whether this or that product was edible.

"They're all natural," Linda said. "They are safe for kids – you could eat a lip balm," she said.

"A lot of products out there are packaged for little kids, but they're full of chemicals. They say they are not safe for children, but how many mothers would take the time to read all the ingredients?"

Rachel also has a claim for all those opposed to animal testing of products. "She says I test them only on family and friends – she's the youngest of six," Linda said. "That way no animals are getting hurt."



Market organizer Nicci Battilana, eight year-old Rachel Goulding and Erin McCall of Sunlit Letterpress show off some of the products up for grabs at the upcoming Creative Finds: Arts and Fine Crafts Market at Sullivan Hall. Alex Browne photo.

CREATIVITY A BREATH OF FRESH AIR (CONTINUED)

The idea of creating and marketing better products is in keeping with Battilana's own determination to create a different arts and fine crafts market.

Well known for her fun stylized 'girl' paintings, jackets and handbags, she'll be using the show to help launch her newest line of jewelry using her decorative designs.

"I've done many arts and crafts shows from little ones to Circle Craft," she said.

"I've learned from each of them what I haven't enjoyed, and what I do like, so I decided I'd do one on my own."

So confident is she of the success of her new venture, she's already booked the date for a second annual pre-Christmas show at Sullivan Hall, set for Nov. 29, 2008.

"We have 30 different vendors for this year and we've tried to keep them unique," she said. "There may be some with the same kind of product, but they're very different styles."

Among them will be another Peninsula entrepreneur, Kerry Neild of Red Chair Studio, who will be showing her paintings designed specifically for providing decoration in outdoor garden and patio areas.

Other products include jewellery, scarves, hats, paintings, photography, laser-crafted pens, wood-turning, wooden signs and imaginatively presented candies.

Typifying the hand-made – yet stylish – feel of the show are the uniquely tactile indented letterpress stationery and custom invitations created by Erin McCall of Sunlit Media.

"It's a very old fashioned kind of printing, unlike all the desktop work that is happening nowadays," McCall said, pointing out that she works with two antique presses, one circa 1900 and the other dating from approximately 1911.

"One of them was actually used for printing one of White Rock's earliest newspapers," said McCall, who trained in letterpress printing at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design under Jim Rimmer.

"There's a real movement to go back to the hand-made," she said. "People are tired with the mass-produced. With this type of printing there is some indentation in the paper and card – it's a little different from the run of the mill."