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Crazy About Cookies

Baker extraordinaire Kim Cook finds her cookie calling.

Kim Cook expertly wraps classic black polka-dot cellophane around a white box before tying off the finished product with dazzling pink and green ribbons.

With such an attractive covering, you almost hate to open the carton. Key word: almost. One taste of the signature treat from the Cornelius-based Bird & Bear Cookie Co. will remind you why it's what's inside that really counts.

Successful Start

After tossing around the idea for years, Kim began her gourmet cookie company in April 2004. "The kids were finally at an age when I could come up for air," she says. "Baking had always been my forte, so I thought, 'Why not?'"

The name came naturally too. "I liked the idea of our kids having a



top: Six-year-olds Jane "Bird" and Carter "Bear" Cook often taste-test the wide selection of cookies for their mom's business.

lasting connection to our company," says the mother of 6-year-old twins, Jane and Carter, nicknamed "Bird" and "Bear" respectively. "It just fit."

Initially, the entrepreneur assumed her home-based business would be a small part-time job. Kim created a few packages for friends just in time for end-of-the-year teacher gifts. Then, within a few weeks, word spread, orders rolled in, and Bird & Bear took off.

Once she saw how quickly the business might expand, Kim realized her home oven couldn't accommodate, say, corporate orders for 60 dozen cookies. Today, Kim works out of a commercial kitchen and sells her cookies on the Internet and in Summit Coffee in nearby Davidson. Although she fondly calls her current space a "one-butt kitchen" (there's not much moving room for multiple



above: Bird & Bear Cookie Co. is a true family business—Carter, Jane, and Kim’s husband, Dan, eagerly pitch in.

cooks), it’s just what the baker needs to satisfy everyone’s sweet tooth.

Perfecting the Product
“Kim follows the price of butter like the stock market,” says Dan, Kim’s husband and right-hand man. “But she won’t just settle for the cheap stuff.” The end result of Kim’s high standards makes it all worthwhile. Bird & Bear offers 10 tempting cookie selections, with many more in the taste-testing phase. Back in their dating years, Dan often received cookies straight from Kim’s sorority house kitchen. Today, they work

Sizing Up

In addition to stylish packaging, Bird & Bear Cookie Co. specializes in oversize products. Each cookie measures approximately 4 inches in diameter and weighs in at a minimum of 3½ ounces. There’s nothing light about these mammoth treats—but nobody complains. “Demand for comfort foods will never slow down,” Kim says.

side-by-side—that is, when Dan’s not flying. As a UPS pilot, Dan’s schedule allows him to be home for a few weeks at a time. “Our company plays in very well with Dan’s career,” Kim says. “Many pilots often work side businesses. Having him here is such great support.”

After living all across the country, the Cooks landed in Cornelius as Dan was leaving the Navy six years ago. The family fell in love with a charming home on the lake and decided it was the perfect place to raise the family—and their chocolate-colored springer spaniel.

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Dreaming Big

As the business continues to grow, Kim says she hopes to one day open her own bakery in downtown Davidson. Until then, she will continue to focus on developing and maintaining her highest-quality recipes. “I live and breathe cookies,” she says. “I even dream about them at night.” Bird & Bear customers do too.

LAUREN RIPPEY

For more information or to order your own batch of cookies (average \$25 per dozen), visit the bakery online at www.birdandbearcookies.com.