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## Candles with a Cause



*South Burlington, Vermont - January 4, 2008*

A candle flickers in the doorway of Candles and Creations, a new business in South Burlington. While it creates a warm glow, its origins were in a much darker place.

Store co-owner Heather Paine explains, "When I lost my brother four and a half years ago, I immersed myself into candle making. And I poured all my grief into my candles."



Heather Paine lost her brother to suicide. She found candle making as a hobby to help her get through. Paine would give her creations away to friends and family, and some of those folks suggested she should sell her candles. Paine says, "I always feel I pour my intentions into my candles."

She sold them at craft shows, and that's where she met another vendor, Casey Webster Stabile. Fast friends, they discovered they were united in grief. Webster Stabile says, "A little more than a year ago, I lost my father. And a few months after, my grandfather. Which had a huge impact on my life."



Webster Stabile also immersed herself in craft as a way to cope. In her case, jewelry making. The pair figured after all they'd been through, they should give back.

So four months ago, they opened a store in South Burlington's Blue Mall, dedicating themselves to giving fifteen percent of profits from candles and jewelry they make to local charities. They have ten causes. Paine beams, "And there's room for many more."

Those include the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge, programs for suicide prevention, and support groups for parents who lost children. The business owners say in Vermont, consumerism comes with a conscience you don't find in big cities. Paine explains, "Vermont is probably the best place to do what we're doing- doing right here."

Here, total strangers seem like neighbors, and their concerns matter. More customers are finding the new store each week, and even though the pressures on a new business are great, Candles and Creations says it never gave sharing profits a second thought.

Casey Webster Stabile says, "To be really honest, and it sounds scary, I haven't really thought about doing it any other way. The truth is, this is my mission. It's the journey I am on."

It's a journey this small business will continue. The "Made in Vermont" products helped these women heal, now, they'll help others in their struggles, too.

Paine and Webster Stabile hope to turn their Blue Mall store into a gallery and community center for artists. They sell several other products that are "Made in Vermont." You can reach the store at (802) 660-8021.

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