

From ordinary to extraordinary

Cowabunga Ice Cream Co. in Forked River created designer ice creams that are available through the mail

By Kelly Roncace

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Millions of packages move through the United States Postal Service every day, including letters to loved ones, gifts for friends and ice cream for the frozen dessert connoisseur.

Ice cream?

That's right. Forked River-based Cowabunga Ice Cream Co. recently announced that their numerous, designer

flavors can now reach Florida, California and even Texas, all the way from the Jersey Shore.

"Cowabunga Ice Cream elevates the ice cream experience from ordinary to extraordinary by combining divine premium ingredients with distinctive flavors that leave our customers longing for more," said Ellen Schack, founder of Cowabunga Ice Cream. "While our inspired ice cream blends are ultra-rich and luxurious on the palate, our brand uniquely blends this exquisite epicure experience with the fun and relaxed sensibility of surfing and beach culture."

This culture, which Schack calls the "Cowabunga lifestyle," trans-

lates to living life to the fullest and in abundance, until it overflows.

"We're anxious to share our ice cream, and the culture it represents, with food-and-fun-loving consumers and event planners across the nation," Schack said.

Schack started making Cowabunga Ice Cream in 2009 in an effort to give the Jersey Shore community a friendly place to gather and enjoy high-caliber, classic and healthy frozen desserts.

"We started with a store front and we wanted to use the best ingredients possible," she said. "The Jersey Shore area is known for homemade ice cream, but we wanted to knock that out of the park."

When she first opened Cowabunga, she jumped into the ice cream tub with both feet.

"We actually started with 36 flavors," Schack said. "So we picked and chose, and then asked the customers for their top 12."

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Cowabunga now features four categories of flavors, including Rodeo Drive designer flavors, Off 5th Avenue chocolate flavors, Lux vanilla flavors and Beverly Hills R.E.A.L. Yogurt — frozen yogurt selections which

are low-fat and contain probiotics to naturally promote healthy digestion. Each category has several unique flavors that are exclusively available from Cowabunga.

"When I told my suppliers I wanted to make Rice Krispy ice cream, they told me no one has ever done that," she said. "So it's exclusive to us. It has marshmallow and Rice Krispies all through it. The Rice Krispies taste like they have been in milk for just a second, so they're still crispy."

Schack's current favorite, though she said she goes back and forth between flavors constantly, is Take Five.

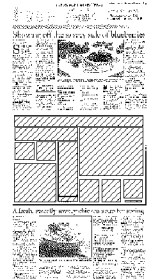
"My daughter actually came up with it based on the candy bar," she said. "There's chocolate covered pretzels, caramel and peanuts in vanilla ice cream."

After two years of serving very satisfied customers, Schack realized many visitors to the store were also visitors to the area.

"A lot of people's parents or grandparents live in the area, so they would come to visit and fall in love with our ice cream," she said.

So she thought about ways the people who didn't live in the area could still have access to Cowabunga.

"That's when the whole



online idea came about," she said.

In order to ship the frozen dessert, Schack said each order — which comes in pints or quarts — is packaged in thick foam in an insulated shipping box.

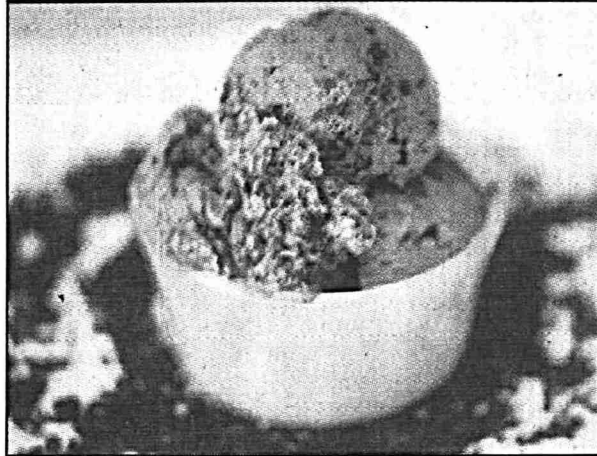
"We put a big chunk of dry ice on top of the ice cream because if you put it on top, it will keep it frozen," she explained. "If you put it on the bottom, it will just keep it cold."

Schack said she shipped many trial packages before perfecting the practice.

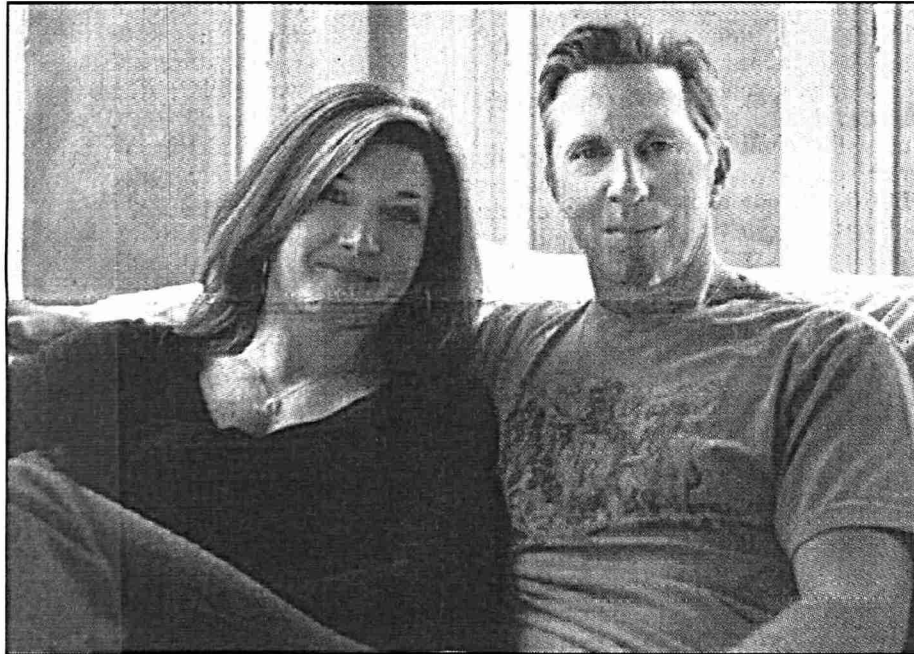
"My son is in Seattle, so when he received a quart in perfect condition, we knew we could do it," she said. "We started in February and so far have shipped to Florida, California and even Texas."

Cowabunga Ice Cream can be shipped to customers throughout the continental United States. The minimum product order must equal \$50.

For more information and to order Cowabunga Ice Cream, visit www.CowabungaIceCream.com.



'Death by Chocolate,' a rich chocolate ice cream base with chocolate cake crunch, chocolate chunks, and fudge mixed through is one of the many designer ice creams at Cowabunga Ice Cream Co.



Photos provided

Ellen Schack, founder of Cowabunga Ice Cream, and her husband Ed.