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New England Products Trade Show Announces Best New Product and Best New Booth Winners for 2010

13 New England Manufacturers Honored

March 2010, Portland, ME... The New England Products Trade Show (NEPTS) recently announced the winners of the 2010 Best New Product and Best Booth awards. The 13 honorees were recognized at the 26th Annual New England Products Trade Show, Portland, Maine on March 14, 2010.

The 2010 Best New Product Giftware winners (*sponsored by MEMIC*) are:

- Lorna's Wool, Spofford, New Hampshire (*First Place*)
- ShellStone Inc., Portland, Maine (*Second Place*)
- Laceypots, South Portland, Maine (*Honorable Mention*)
- CHART metalworks, Portland, Maine (*Honorable Mention*)
- Ikebana Ware LLC, Belfast, Maine (*Honorable Mention*)

The 2010 Best New Product Specialty Food winners (*sponsored by MEMIC*) are:

- Sizzlin Sauces, LLC, Conway, New Hampshire (*First Place*)
- Haven's Candies, Westbrook, Maine (*Second Place*)
- The Nut Lady, LLC, Agawam, Massachusetts (*Honorable Mention*)

The 2010 Best Booth winners (*sponsored by Maine Small Business Development Centers*) are:

- ShellStone Inc., Portland, Maine (*Best Booth*)
- Stillwood Pottery, Orono, Maine (*Honorable Mention*)
- Ember Grove, Portland, Maine (*Best NEW Booth*)
- Wild Ivy Designs, Winterport, Maine (*Honorable Mention*)
- Better Than Average, LLC, Mechanic Falls, Maine (*Honorable Mention*)

The NEPTS Best New Products awards are sponsored by MEMIC and given in two categories, giftware and specialty food. Best Booth contest is sponsored by the Maine Small Business Development Centers and recognizes exhibitors for both Best Booth and Best New Booth. Winners of both Best Booth and Best New Products receive awards of either cash or credit towards their 2011 booth payment. Awards are

generously underwritten by NEPTS sponsors, MEMIC and the Maine Small Business Development Centers.

“Overwhelmingly, our buyers let us know that this is one of their favorite shows due to the high caliber, local products that we showcase. Their customers are demanding top quality locally-made products, and NEPTS is known as the tradeshow that delivers those products,” says Stefa Normantas, Show Producer. “The innovation and craftsmanship displayed by our Best New Product and Best Booth winners truly speaks to the spirit of New England. We are so proud to acknowledge our winners for a job well done.”

The 26th Annual New England Products Trade Show, the country’s only trade show featuring products exclusively from New England, ran March 13-15, 2010, at the Portland Sports Complex. NEPTS attracts approximately 2,000 retail buyers from across the country and showcases over 200 companies. The show presents a juried selection of giftware, home furnishings, and specialty food from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The New England Products Trade Show is owned and managed by Giraffe Events, LLC.

MEMIC sponsored awards in the following categories:

Best New Product – Giftware

First Place: Lorna’s Wool (Spofford, New Hampshire) for their “Songbird Needle Felting Kit”. Songbird Needle Felting Kits teach you how to needle felt while making an adorable wool goldfinch and bluebird. All kits are manufactured on their New Hampshire sheep farm, and feature 100% natural wool, tool, and full color, step-by-step instructions that make needle felting an accessible craft, even for beginners.

“Imagine our delight when Lorna's Wool Needle Felting Kits won the Best New Product Award for 2010! We believe strongly in our mission to get wool into the hands of the people as a way of helping others to learn about the wonders of this renewable natural fiber. Receiving this award has helped us to further actualize that dream by providing the seed money for the production of our next new product, the Lobster Kit. Thanks to all of our buyers and visitors for the suggestion that no booth at NEPTS is complete without a lobster!”

Second Place: ShellStone Inc., (Portland, Maine) for their “Seashell Travel Mugs”. Drink your coffee with “green confidence” as these travel mugs are created using a pressed shell process. All mugs use regenerated Maine Seashells that have been saved from ending up in landfills.

“Winning 2nd Place for the Best New Product award for our Seashell Travel Mugs showed us that our new concept was a hit! It takes a lot of time, work, and money to introduce a new product to a business line. You always are taking a chance as to whether it will be a hit or not. Luckily, the New England Products Trade Show is a great way to gauge whether or not you have a successful product as it is the buyer’s who attend the

show that vote,” says Tamra Philbrook, Owner. “Having won Best New Product twice and to receive honorable mentions twice for different products has proven that our business is reliable, innovative, and will always keep consumers guessing as to what else in the world a business can do with recycled Maine Seashells! A big thank you to the New England Products Trade Show staff for creating such a professional and worthwhile event for our state. We are always proud to attend this show and look forward to attend next year’s show!”

Honorable Mention: Laceypots (South Portland, Maine) for their “Peace Bowl”.

“This was my first time at the NEPTS and receiving this award was a pleasant surprise,” says Lacey Goodrich, Owner. “In addition to my craft being well received, I feel this was another indicator that in years to come I will continue to gain clients and new friends. I loved this show!”

Honorable Mention: CHART metalworks (Portland, Maine) for their CHART metalworks Belt Buckle, part of their line of unique nautical chart jewelry inspired by the ocean and handcrafted on Portland, Maine's working waterfront.

“It’s such a pleasure to be able to walk to the wharf every day and work above the water creating custom pieces and sharing the stories of our great customers,” says Charlotte Leavitt, Owner/Designer. “We feel fortunate and grateful to be able to love what we do so much and support the local Maine economy at the same time. Thanks to NEPTS and our loyal customers for their ongoing support!”

Honorable Mention: Ikebana Ware, LLC (Belfast, Maine) for their “Patio Flame”. The Patio Flame is a hand-crafted, mini, table-top fire pit.

“I must say that I am thrilled with the recognition that my new product received at the New England Products Trade Show,” says Mark Kuzio, Owner. “The special attention paid by the buyers to my Patio Flame helps to confirm in my mind the uniqueness and beauty of my new product in the marketplace!”

Best New Product – Specialty Food

First Place: Sizzlin Sauces, LLC (Conway, New Hampshire) for their “Mojo's Tapenade”. Mojo’s Tapenade is a Kalimata Olive / Sun Dried Tomato Relish, great for use as a bruschetta topping on french bread, or an accompaniment with anything coming off of the grill.

“Winning 1st Place for Best New Specialty Food Product was a true honor! Mojo’s Tapenade joins our other award winning line and this award now makes 33 National Awards to date,” says Chef Bud Selmi. “For a new product which has literally been on the market for only several weeks, this award helps solidify and recognize the fact that Mojo’s Tapenade truly is an outstanding product that folks attending the New

England Products Trade Show not only recognized but seem to expect to find at a show like NEPTS.”

Second Place: Haven’s Candies (Westbrook, Maine) for their “Ode to Joy”, which combines coconut, almonds and chocolate.

“We are thrilled that our new product, Ode to Joy, won second place in the best new product category at the recent NEPTS,” says Andy Charles, Owner. “As a Maine-based confectioner we truly value the loyalty of our customers, and we are always looking for new ideas and products. When we created Ode to Joy with its perfect combination of coconut, almonds and chocolate we were pretty sure it would be a hit. This award indicates our hunch was correct, and we are so grateful that show attendees recognized us with their votes.”

Honorable Mention: The Nut Lady, LLC (Agawam, Massachusetts) for their “Ten Ounce Sampler”. The Nut Lady’s 10 oz Samplers offer Almonds, Walnuts, Pecans and Cashews baked in a light cinnamon-meringue coating. Gluten-Free and Kosher they are all natural and melt in your mouth.

“I was thrilled to receive the Honorable Mention-Best New Product Specialty Food Award as a first time exhibitor at NEPTS,” says Joanne Attardi, Owner. “The show was very well run and family and staff members were so pleasant to work with.”

The Maine Small Business Development Center sponsored awards in the following two categories:

Best Booth

First Place: ShellStone, Inc. (Portland, Maine). Tamra Philbrook started her business as an artisan of handcrafted pieces. She began by handpicking seashells from the Maine shoreline, and soon after created a patented process that allowed her to use them for beautiful tableware. Today ShellStone is an eco-friendly, contemporary brand that represents the spirit found in the heart of Maine as its work uses reclaimed Lobster, Mussel, and Clam Shells from Maine. ShellStone products are designed to stimulate fond memories, create conversations and bring the beauty and rawness of the sea into your home.

“Winning first place for booth design is something we have been working on for several years. It takes a couple of workshops with Bruce Baker and the time to attend several trade shows before knowing how to design a booth that complements your product line and draws in business. As time goes by you finally get it . . . details count.”

Honorable Mention: Stillwood Pottery (Orono, Maine). Inspired by nature and nurtured by solitude, Stillwood Pottery of Orono, Maine captures the peaceful essence of New England life in every unique terra cotta form. Primarily drawing from the simplistic beauty of leaves, each piece is individually shaped and glazed, creating wonderful variations within a given series.

“To participate in The New England Products Trade Show and present my work along side such talented craftsman is an enormous honor,” says K. Hennessey, Owner. “To be recognized for excelling at presentation at such an extraordinary venue is incredibly flattering and very much appreciated. Thank you New England Products Trade Show.”

Best NEW Booth

First Place: Ember Grove (Portland, Maine). Ember Grove creates specialty lighting and accessories; pendant lighting, table lamps, nightlights, switch plates and jewelry. All pieces are created with their own original handmade paper and forms.

"We were delighted to be recognized as the best new booth at NEPTS. We worked very hard to make our display crisp yet simplified to showcase our distinctive products," says Lisa Ferreira, Owner. "We had hoped the booth would emphasize our unique products and showcase their designs and colors. To be honored with this award at our first wholesale show validates all the hard work!"

Honorable Mention: Wild Ivy Designs (Winterport, Maine). Wild Ivy Designs creates and markets jewelry, prints, and cards of Suzan Scribner-Reed's original artwork and a line of jewelry created from recycled paper. Suzan's collages blend acrylic paint, pastels and recycled papers, transforming these recycled materials into intricate and thoughtful images.

"We are honored to have our booth recognized. We have invested considerable time and thought over the years to make the booth an inviting and interesting experience for our customers. Thank you again to NEPTS for the encouragement and support."

Honorable Mention: Better Than Average, LLC (Mechanic Falls, Maine). Better Than Average LLC., is a manufacturer of Maine-made jams, jellies and sauces. Our wide range of product lines exhibits excellent quality, and unique recipes that you won't find everyday. Specializing in pepper jams and jellies, they have sweet, mild and hot varieties.

“This being our first year as an exhibitor in the New England Products trade show, we were both honored and excited about winning honorable mention in the Best New Booth category. We know we have a great product and to be recognized for our presentation and promotion of it is a big confidence builder. We gained valuable knowledge and experience which will help us in our future efforts to promote our products and solidify customer loyalty. We would like to thank the New England Products trade show staff for all they did for us and we look forward to attending the show next year." -Shannon Bissonnette, Owner of Better Than Average LLC.

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