



Topanga Kid Bakes Up Sweet Goodness

By Kateri Wozny

Lucy Babcock is a child who is as sweet as they come. Literally.

As a second-grader at Calabash Charter Academy, the 7-year-old has a unique talent that turned into a business venture: baking cupcakes.

Lucy first discovered her love for baking after attending her Girl Scout Troop meeting.

"When I started baking cupcakes for the Girl Scouts, I felt it was a passion to do this," she said.

At 6, the young entrepreneur began her business, Lucy's Bake Shop, that kicked off last July when she learned her Aunt Michelle was getting married that month and needed help finding a bakery.

"My aunt called my mom to have her help find some bakeries and I said, 'Why doesn't she hire me instead?'" Lucy said.

"[The next time my aunt called], I answered and said, 'Hello! It's Lucy's Bake Shop! Would you like to place an order for your wedding?'" Impressed, Michelle hired her niece who ended up making 484 cupcakes in two days.

Lucy has more than 30 customers and bakes for many occasions, including the Topanga Chamber of Commerce, her brother Wyatt's soccer team parents, birthdays, weddings, baby showers, fundraisers and school events. Half of her customers have ordered from her more than once.

"[All of my customers] love the cupcakes, none of them have said that they are bad," Lucy said. "There's a girl I know who has gone to famous bakeries and she told me that I am better than all of them." Lucy bakes a variety of sweet goodies, including cookies, cakes, Whoopie Pies and the most popular, cupcakes. All-time cupcake favorites of her customers include Chocolate S'mores, Mint Patty, Red Hot Red Velvet (with cinnamon and cayenne pepper), Chocolate Strawberry Cupcake (with strawberries, instant espresso and coconut milk), Grape (made with Muscat wine and whole grapes) and Lemon Blueberry (made with sour cream, fresh lemon juice and blueberries, and lemon zest).

She also has upcoming specials that include the Chocolate Strawberry Shortcake for Mother's Day and a "Man Cake," a pumpkin Whoopie Pie filled with maple buttercream frosting, graham cracker crust and brown sugar bacon for Father's Day.

"She's my favorite baker," said Wyatt, 9, with a big smile.

Lucy whips up everything from scratch and gets her recipes from the Food Network, her mom's classics, magazines and other cookbooks. She also uses certain baking products, such as



As the youngest member of the Topanga Chamber of Commerce, Lucy Babcock of Lucy's Bake Shop creates custom cupcakes and donates to special causes.

purchasing her baking eggs from Red Barn Eggs to help support a boy who raises chickens.

"Lucy looks for opportunities to help other people," said Jennifer, her mom.

Since the launch of her business, Lucy has baked a couple thousand cupcakes. This past October, she became the youngest member ever registered with the Topanga Chamber of Commerce.

"It feels special to be the youngest because, since I joined, I can meet more people and I don't feel shy around the grown-ups," she said.

As a former board member of the Topanga Chamber, Jennifer encouraged her daughter to join. Jennifer works from home as a graphic designer and believes Lucy learned her business-savvy skills from having Lucy listen to her on the phone with clients.

"She really enjoys doing it and is having a lot of fun," Jennifer said. "I am very proud of her and everything she has done has been at her own suggestion. I'm here to support and encourage her."

Jennifer also plays a prominent role in Lucy's business: "I finance the ingredients and clean the dishes," she laughs.

With 200 registered businesses in the area, Topanga Chamber President Joseph Rosendo says the future of not just the Chamber but the community of Topanga resides in its youth.

"This year we've made a special

455 Live Rocks Topanga



Topanga's own homegrown rock band, Forty Feet Tall are, from left, Charlie Sehres, (keyboards), Guy Moore (bass), Will Henley-Dias (drums, rear) Steven Driscoll, (drums, front in the hat), Cole Gann (guitar and vocals) and Jack Sehres (guitar).

By Annemarie Donkin

The sun broke through on a breezy afternoon when Topanga Youth Services (TYS) hosted four exciting, up-and-coming local rock bands for an inaugural outdoor festival on April 13.

Topanga's very own homegrown band, Forty Feet Tall (formally Ote for President) headlined a concert that included the amazing Steel Toed Slippers, Baby Fleas and Stellar Sons & Daughters.

In between the sets at the Topanga ball field, the music continued with three beautiful and fabulously talented singer/songwriters, Poeina Suddarth,

Maya Bon and Soren Bryce.

Overall it was a mellow vibe as Baby Fleas began the concert with a set of original tunes.

While the youthful fans sat on the ground or on blankets, adults brought lawn chairs and umbrellas. Kids played Frisbee and kicked a soccer ball on the lawn. After awhile, no one could resist: everyone was on their feet dancing to the head banging music as Steel Toed Slippers ripped through a set of original songs with some Led Zeppelin thrown in.

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TEP Makes \$1,300 at Vintage Market

By Patrice Curedale

Topanga Elementary School's Topanga Enrichment Program (TEP), broke a new record by raising \$1,300 at the Topanga Vintage Market (TVM) on March 24. TEP has had a bake sale booth at most of the monthly flea markets, but that month "takes the cake."

The Topanga Vintage Market bake sale booth is one of many fundraising vehicles run by TEP to help the school offer science studies, art, PE, extra teacher's aides, and sometimes an extra teacher to keep class sizes down. TEP's role in making Topanga Elementary an outstanding school is critical, and with parent donations down, every bake sale counts.

Thad Wadleigh has been the mover and shaker parent behind this project, showing up at 6 a.m. to set up the booth at the Topanga Vintage Market and start

selling coffee (donated by The Corner Bakery), Blinkies Donuts, and his specialty breakfast burritos, often sold "booth to booth" by his son, Tristan, who covers the early morning shift.

Topanga Vintage Market was started by Topanga moms Patrice Curedale and Lori Rotblatt because they just love flea markets. The market features more than 160 vendors of antiques, vintage and collectibles in the Westfield Promenade parking lot, 6100 Topanga Canyon Blvd. at Oxnard St. Food and drinks are sold by local charities to raise money and Rotblatt and Curedale hope to help TEP raise more than \$10,000 a year.

The next market is May 26. Donate baked goods or drinks to sell and get in free! The market is open 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Westfield Promenade, Admission is \$2, kids under 12 are free, for more information: TopangaVintageMarket.com or (310) 422-1844. ■



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