

L Dimensions of Living

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Sweet smell of success

Fragrance designer's business draws on power of scent, emotion

By MICHELLE CENTAMORE

For as long as she can remember, Doreen Bollhofer was graced with a keen sense of smell, a gift she attributes to good genes from her father and grandmother. A 1979 graduate of Smithtown High School West, Ms. Bollhofer studied education and marketing at CW Post. Although education will always remain a passion, Ms. Bollhofer was inspired by the power of a scent to instill emotion in an individual and even influence their feelings about a brand. At 21 years of age, she knew she wanted to go into perfumery; she worked her way up to an exceptionally successful business in fragrance design. Her company, Scented Interiors by Design Ltd., is located at 291 Lake Avenue in St. James.

Along the path leading up to her starting her own business, Ms. Bollhofer collaborated with some of the biggest fragrance houses in the business, including Avon, Coty, Elizabeth Arden and Ralph Lauren, as well as celebrities Sarah Jessica Parker, Gwen Stefani, and designer David Yurman.

As the founder of and expert fragrance designer at Scented Interiors by Design Ltd., a “dynamic fragrance design and branding company that uses the emotive power of scent to enhance, enliven and create memorable distinction for any interior space,” her impeccably designed scents can be discovered in a variety of spaces including retail, hospitality, office, gym and fitness centers, real estate and private residence. Scented Interiors by Design offers clients the option to select from the company’s signature scents, such as Orange Ginger & Lemongrass; Sage, Amber & Mint; Siberian Fir and Lavender Mint, among many others, or have a custom design created exclusively for their brand by Ms. Bollhofer.

The sense of smell is a powerful tool—a skill—that could be honed and utilized to draw upon human emotion, especially when paired with an artist’s insight, explained Ms. Bollhofer. “You are born with your sense of smell

and you can train it like a muscle,” she said. “In a way, designing scents is akin to [being] an artist. For me, it is a gift. I can look at a brand or interior space and know in my mind what scent would be fitting. I work with color, texture, architecture, brand message, when designing the appropriate scent.”

Ms. Bollhofer’s career in fragrance design began at Estee Lauder working in product development. At Elizabeth Arden, she was responsible for the blissful scent of Sunflower perfume. At Ralph Lauren, she continued to influence major brands in their fragrance selection with her skills and intuition. Two favorite fragrances she designed with perfumers were Polo Blue and Polo Black. For Polo Blue, her vision was “where the cool wetness of the water meets the warmth of the sand.” During development, she advised the perfumers that the fragrance needed a “hook.” She recalled, “It needed something to take it from nice to special. People aren’t buying nice; they have to love it.” The signature hook—which was inspired in 2002 while she was in France for the World Perfumery Congress in which she was a presenter—was adding a wet melon note to the top of the fragrance. That final touch took the scent to a top-ranking men’s fragrance.

By 2004, “I was at the top of my game at L’Oreal and loved working on the Ralph Lauren brand, but it was time for me to spread my wings.” She went into consulting and a world of opportunities seemed to open “threefold.” In 2016, an article in the New York Observer titled “Aroma is the New Frontier in Interior Design,” gave Ms. Bollhofer a revelation and the impetus to embark on a business adventure that would enable her to utilize her professional design experience, creativity and natural gift to create fragrance for interior spaces. Scented Interiors by Design was born.

At Scented Interiors by Design, Ms. Bollhofer guides perfumers to create a scent that will both compliment the brand and help the customer to form a lasting emotional connection with that brand. Ambient Scenting is a relatively new category, but so important to a



Fragrance designer, and entrepreneur, Doreen Bollhofer.

-Ron Denenberg photo

brand’s success she explained. “Scent is the fastest and most powerful way to reach our emotions as our sense of smell is our only sense that connects to the part of our brain associated with emotion, mood and memory. I make it a point to create signature fragrances that are not polarizing—feel good

fragrances that engage the emotions. When our emotions are engaged, we are more likely to remember the brand, buy the product.”

Once a fragrance is selected, Scented Interiors by Design’s scent systems

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“Memories, imagination, old sentiments, and associations are more readily reached through the sense of smell than through any other channel.”

– Oliver Wendell Holmes

Dimensions of living Fragrance entrepreneur marries scent with emotion

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introduce the scent into the space. The diffusers use cold-air diffusion technology to maintain the quality of essential and aroma oils, releasing the scent in a mist unseen to the naked eye. "Our scent systems are like computers; they are programmable to go on and off as you wish, seven days a week, seven different schedules, and you can control the output of the scent with a variety of misting levels from which to choose. I always suggest the lighter of misting levels as the scent is meant to subtly enhance the space and not overwhelm." The wide selection of diffusers Scented Interiors by Design offers cover a range of 7000 cubic feet to 353,000 cubic feet, something for every space. "All of our diffusers except our smallest diffuser can connect with the HVAC system or stand alone. While my company is not the first to enter this category, my point of distinction is in the quality and design of the fragrances," Ms. Bollhofer said.

Ms. Bollhofer works with perfume partners to design the scents, which are all manufactured by essential oil houses in New Jersey. The scents are complex blends, very different than "simple aromatherapy oils," said Ms. Bollhofer. Depending on the project, she will meet with marketing teams, builders, architects and operation managers to get a good feel of the space, the brand message and the desired end result.

With her current momentum, Ms. Bollhofer has no plans of stopping anytime soon and is determined to not only enhance her business but also give back to those in need all while continuing on a creative journey where she could challenge her mind indefinitely.

"As I embarked on this business, my brain has been stretched in more ways than I could have ever imagined," Ms. Bollhofer said, noting that she had been immersed in trades she knew nothing about but learned in order to bring nothing but the best to her clients. She has brainstormed with engineers, learned complex technical components of a business, etc. "There is so much learning and growing and it's been great!"

Going forward, Ms. Bollhofer aims to help others who may not be so fortunate. "I want to be in a comfortable place where I can spend a greater part of my time helping children that have cancer," she expressed. "We get to a point in life where it's our time to give back." Plus, it would be an opportunity to revisit her foundation in education. "I was trained to be a teacher; even though I did not go down that road, it's always been in me." Of children with cancer, she said, "I want to bring joy into their world in whatever capacity I can."

As an accomplished entrepreneur, Ms. Bollhofer has some practical yet valuable suggestions for climbing the ladder to success, beginning with faith in oneself and in one's dreams. Next is passion. "You have to be committed and in order to be committed, you have to be passionate. You have to love what you're doing. Every ounce of your being goes into your business," she said. Persistence and patience and gratitude, too, must also come into play.

After 36 years in fragrance design, Ms. Bollhofer is still overwhelmed with inspiration and joy when she has completed a project. "When I walk into a space that I scent I get so excited and say, 'Wow! It smells really good!' One of the properties the company scents is Vanderbilt Luxury Rental Residences - Beechwood Homes. "It just smells glorious when you enter the building - the scent marries well with the simple elegance and sophistication of the building. I truly love what I do and feel so blessed."

Never forgetting her roots, Ms. Bollhofer expressed a deep appreciation for her parents, Smithtown residents, who clearly served as role models. "My parents have always inspired my brother, sister and me to be our own boss. My dad has had a successful building and electrical contracting business; my mom, her own interior design company." Ms. Bollhofer's brother, Joe, also followed suit with a successful law firm in St. James. "It was a natural career path for me to have my own business," she said while expressing gratitude.

For information, call 631-881-4244, email info@scentedinteriorsbydesign.com.



Peter G. Moloney (Co-Owner) with Kota.

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February Break With The Smithtown Historical Society

Monday February 18th, 2019

Decorative Winter Snowflake Plate

Create a paper-crafted snowflake, which we will decoupage on a decorative plate.

Tuesday February 19th, 2019

Fairy Tale Day

Join us as we enter the world of fairy's and craft something super fun.

There may be fairy wings and dragons involved!

Wednesday February 20th, 2019

Presidential Cooking

Come in out of the cold as we cook up some tasty treats to honor Washington and Lincoln!

Thursday February 21st, 2019

Pretzel Party is back!

Sign up quick as this is our most popular program!

Friday February 22nd, 2019

Celebrate National Dog Biscuit Day with us - and maybe a furry friend or 2!

All programs are drop off, & run from 9:30 am—12:30pm

\$30/Day—Non Members and \$25/Day—Members

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