

Ronni Feuer, Founder of FunkyChunky Passes Away

Ronni Feuer, founder and creator of FunkyChunky died on February 15, 2012, following a seven year battle with breast cancer.

February 18, 2012 (FPRC) -- Ronni Feuer, founder and creator of FunkyChunky died on February 15, 2012, following a seven year battle with breast cancer.

Ronni began her career as a painter and sculptor, and she founded Gracious Gifts, Inc., in 1993 as a way to express her artistic talents in beautiful, luxury gift baskets. Today, Gracious Gifts is a thriving business, growing at a steady rate every year, with its own line of FunkyChunky® luxury chocolate snacks.

The business got its start when Ronni moved to Minnetonka, Minn., from the Detroit area in 1992, where she had a successful business creating commissioned and non-commissioned fiber sculptures. However, she found that the Twin Cities art community favored more conservative work than hers.

Since art had been a lifelong pursuit, starting when she began painting at the age of eight, Ronni decided that producing unique gift baskets filled with beautiful items would provide the creative outlet she desired. It also would allow her to care for her two young children. Plus, she already had considerable experience with baskets. While living in Florida during the 1980s, Ronni had hand-painted thousands of one-of-a-kind baskets, which Niemen Marcus purchased for use in its gift galleries and epicurean departments.

Working from her home, Ronni's gift basket business grew. Her philosophy was to present very high quality chocolates and other gift items creatively and in plentiful quantities. One Christmas season, her chocolate supplier was not coming through in time and, anxious to serve her customers, Ronni decided to make her own gourmet chocolates.

She began dipping fresh fruit in a proprietary blend of imported chocolate and developed her own version of popcorn drizzled in chocolate that evolved into the FunkyChunky™ line of luxury chocolate snacks and FixMix™ their newest line of everyday snacking indulgence. The FunkyChunky line has expanded to include chocolate drenched pretzels and chocolate candy bars.

In 2001, having outgrown her home-based operation, Gracious Gifts moved to a showroom and production facility in Eden Prairie, Minn. Having once again outgrown its quarters, the company operations moved again in 2007 to a new location in Edina, Minn. In addition to gift baskets, the business offers custom hand-made chocolates for all occasions from baby showers and weddings to personalized corporate gifts.

Ronni's daughter and co-founder Erica Feuer-Kopilenko states "Ronni was an inspiration to many throughout her career as an artist. She was a leader the gourmet snacking industry by finding creative and unique ways of combining chocolate and other premium ingredients into delicious and indulgence snacks. She was passionate about making sure that every product that left our kitchen made a lasting impression. I believe that Ronni's strength, courage and love will continue to make a lasting impression on all the lives that she touched."

Donations in the honor of Ronni Feuer are being accepted by The Hope Chest for Breast Cancer Foundation, 3850 Shoreline Drive, Wayzata, MN 55391 or on-line at www.hopechest.us.

Contact Information

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