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Duo strings together successful store

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All Beads Considered is located at 167 Water Street in Exeter. By Kary McCafferty

Kary McCafferty

By **Kary McCafferty**
newsletter@seacoastonline.com
September 20, 2011 2:00 AM

EXETER — For Julie DiCarlo and Kristine Meier karma is a philosophy to live by. This way of thinking has helped the two create a successful business in a tough economy while still giving back to their community.

All Beads Considered officially found its home in Exeter on Feb. 12, 2010, alongside Meier's graphic company called Meier Design. This location is not your average beading supply and jewelry store. The two owners are constantly coming up with new ways to help the community of Exeter as well as families around the world.

Julie DiCarlo finished grad school in 2005 and found herself looking for a career in a bad economy. A trip to the Southwest introduced her to beading. After creating a bracelet for Meier's daughter Helena she began researching different business models. In 2009 the two teamed up to create Helena's Baby Beads, a line of bracelets for children.

"We simply wanted to see what we could do with a simple and elegant product," said DiCarlo. "You could make it affordable."

With the continuation of business model research, creating baby bracelets eventually escalated into a socially conscious bead and supply shop, All Beads Considered.

DiCarlo and Meier are strong believers in giving back and helping out people who are in need.

"We are a bead supply and activity shop, but also a social outreach behind the scenes," she said.

This past year All Beads Considered has gotten involved in the Fair Trade business. After looking at various organizations the duo settled on Stratham's non-profit group Hope Craft. Volunteers go to Africa and give money directly to the impoverished women whose products they bring back to sell in the United States.

"It's the thing to do right now," said DiCarlo. "We wanted this to be a truly ethical win-win for the people working in this arena."

Hope Craft was unsure on how to sell the products once they got back to the states. The non-profit teamed up with All Beads Considered when the organizations president Erin Kennedy came into the bead store and struck up a conversation with Meier and DiCarlo.

"It seems like every time Kris and I are like 'OK, how do we get over this business hurdle?' someone walks in the door," DiCarlo said.

"Now they have a place to put it and sell it and market from," said Meier. Hope Craft products include jewelry, animal figures and bowls made out of beads.

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At a glance

All Beads Considered
Owners: Julie DiCarlo and Kristine Meier
Where: 167 Water St., Exeter
Hours: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays to Wednesday, and Friday and Saturday; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday, and noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday.
Info: Visit www.allbeadsconsidered.com or check out All Beads Considered on Facebook.

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All Beads Considered also sells the products of locals, some who are out of work or sick. DiCarlo said in the month of July they wrote checks adding up to more than \$3,000 to help the community and various families.

Currently the shop is selling four one-of-a-kind necklaces from a local artist who is currently ill. DiCarlo and Meier plan to donate all proceeds from the four pieces to this family.

A large portion of their bead collection on the top sale floor comes from a New Jersey family who lost their business in the current poor economy. All Beads Considered now sells their inventory through a mutually exclusive offer. The family is able to keep what they had left and still make a profit.

The duo also sells necklaces made by the mother of a local artist named Ivan Stanek. Profits made off of the jewelry are his mother's income so in return Stanek created two jewelry displays for the shop to show his gratitude.

All Beads Considered also sells the work of local artists including nationally renowned Keith O'Connor. O'Connor teaches classes in Raku bead making at the shop as well.

The two owners donate 30 percent of their profit from the jewelry that families make during Exeter's UFO fest to the local Kiwanis.

DiCarlo and Meier are also starting up a fund-raiser for Timberland Regional High School and Exeter High School's football programs by selling \$20 spirit feather hair accessories. Funds raised will go towards football boosters and 250 feathers have been made for each school.

"There seems to be a fizzling out with team spirit," said DiCarlo, citing funding cuts as another problem for school programs.

All Beads Considered has a loyal customer base of beading enthusiasts. For those who are not as experienced, employees will design and create pieces with you. Popular occasions when customers make jewelry includes weddings, proms and mother's day.

"We rely heavily on the opinions of our customers," DiCarlo said, citing verbal surveys as a means to communicate. All Beads Considered also make special orders on beads and jewelry making tools, ensuring customers who would otherwise have to buy online that they are getting quality products.

For the future All Beads Considered is working on ways to create new partnerships with more local artists and have the availability to take on all consignment propositions. During the holiday season the shop will also carry corn husk angel ornaments through Hope Craft.

The space is available for kid's birthday parties and lady's nights. They also do jewelry repairs.

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