

Retailing



Photos by Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

Tammy Appleton's T-shirts debuted in the fall.

For entrepreneur, Wicked is Better

By SARAH L. SMITH
COASTAL OBSERVER

Forget about "Life is Good." Sometimes, "Wicked is Better." That's why Tammy Appleton, the owner of Wicked Fitness in Pawleys Island, created her Wicked is Better clothing and accessory line last fall. The line includes T-shirts for men, women, babies and dogs, and accessories for work and play, such as mousepads and skateboards. Each product incorporates the black oval logo with the words, "Wicked is Better," and a drawing of the two main characters, Wicked Willie or Wicked Wilma, enjoying leisure activities: motorcycle riding, surfing, sailing or fishing. "It's about having a good time and

being a little mischievous," Appleton said. The cartoon characters, designed by Nathan Kirk, a local artist, always wear the same expression. Wicked Willie's tongue sticks out and Wicked Wilma's eyes look to the side and her face looks smug. Appleton came up with the idea for Wicked is Better after she and her husband, Rich, moved to Pawleys Island from Boston about four years ago. "When I was in Boston, 'wicked' was a very common statement. When I got here and ran into a lot of Life is Good shirts, I said, 'honestly, I think we can do better,'" Appleton said. With entrepreneurial experience from Boston under her belt, Appleton opened Wicked Fitness last spring. After getting Wicked is Better trade-

marked, she introduced the clothing line in November. "It's very new, but the reception has been great," she said. What appeals to the public so far is that the themed or plain T-shirts and accessories appeal to a variety of people. Since the first basic Wicked is Better shirts debuted, she's added more colorful shirts to the line. "When I first started there were two logos," she said. "Now they are more playful, and a few of the shirts have an Ed Hardy look," she said. Ed Hardy is a clothing line designed by Christian Audigier and Don Hardy. Known for its colorful and graphic tattoo-like designs, the line is popular among celebrities. Appleton said people ranging from her two boys, ages 6 and 8, to bikers enjoy the shirts and products. "We got a lot of attention during Bike Week," she said. "We gave quite a few away for free." Her sons' favorite product is the skateboard which has a little boy hanging from the logo. "It's more playful and innocent," she said. Her favorite is the friends T-shirt. On the front, Wicked Wilma stands by while Wicked Willie blows up Wilma's friends. The logo is emblazoned above. On the back, the words "with friends" are accompanied by a black mark where Wicked Wilma's friend once sat. What is great about the shirts, Appleton said, is that they let you be whoever you want to be. "It's just to be fun," she said.

WICKED IS BETTER products are sold at Wicked Fitness in Downtown Pawleys, and at wickedisbetter.com.

People

Economist leaves Coastal Carolina

Donald Schunk, research economist at Coastal Carolina University, is leaving at the end of the month to take a job with U.S. Bank in Minneapolis. Schunk, a Minnesota native, joined the university's Wall College of Business in 2007. He has provided regular assessments on economic impacts in the community, including a study of the health care industry in Murrells Inlet and the economic impact of the Port of Georgetown. He provided Georgetown County and the county school district with an economic forecast in advance of this year's budget cycles. "His work has played a pivotal role in raising awareness about the tremendous expertise we have on the CCU campus," said David DeCenzo, the university president. Schunk said the best part of his job was providing economic insight and analysis to the community.

Bouchette heads BNC branches

Tommy Bouchette of Murrells Inlet, one of the founders of the former SunBank, is the head of BNC branches in South Carolina.

The Bank of North Carolina acquired seven branches of Beach First after it was closed by the Comptroller of the Currency in April. The bank has a branch at Litchfield Market Village. SunBank was started in Murrells Inlet in 2000 and sold to South Carolina Bank and Trust in 2005. Bouchette is a past president of the Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce. "We're excited to have someone of his caliber leading our South Carolina branches," said Richard Callicutt, chief operating officer of BNC Bancorp.

Certifications

- Dr. Ralph Sprinkle of Pawleys Island has been re-certified in foot surgery by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery. He owns Georgetown Podiatry Group.
- Two registered nurses at Georgetown Memorial Hospital are among 13 nurses in the state who have earned their cardiac medicine certification through the American Association of Critical Care Nurses. Melanie Johnston is clinical director of the critical care unit. Rebecca Griggs is the unit's education specialist. They also have certification in adult critical-care nursing.

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