

by Fred Russell

IT'S A Family AFFAIR

With the help of her family, Celeste Mackey stays one step ahead of the competition

When it comes to a business philosophy, Celeste Mackey will tell you it's all about working hard, having faith, and trying to stay ahead of the curve. Fassler Florist & Gift Shop opened in 1957, in the Cincinnati suburb of Covington, KY. Celeste worked with her mother at the shop doing deliveries, and eventually it evolved into other aspects of the business. Her passion for the flower business grew, and before she knew it, Celeste was working there full time.

Along with Celeste's husband, Pat, their twin sons, Wesley and Dakota, and one other daughter, Serenity, their business includes the whole family. Celeste has been involved in the business for over 40 years and now runs the store with her daughter, Destiny, who has been part of the family business for nearly 10 years. We recently caught up with Celeste and found out about her love of flowers and how the business has blossomed.

● **HOW DID YOU GET STARTED?**

More than anything I fell in love with all the seasons. Being able to do something different for each of the seasons. Working with flowers every day and using beautiful blooms is

very inspiring and I love doing it. Destiny got involved after a serious car accident. It gave her a perspective that she should continue in my footsteps. Destiny adds, "I just felt like my time should be spent working for myself and not someone else. I should enjoy what I do, which is working with flowers."

● **WHAT'S BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT?**

Staying up on the latest trends, making them our own style, applying that style to our business. We are always trying to grow. I always have my eyes peeled on the latest trends. I am constantly looking for new things at state shows and in magazines. Don't be afraid to let yourself go and try something new. Networking with other florists is so important too, and we need to work together to strengthen the whole industry.

● **DISCUSS PARTICULAR BUSINESS STRATEGIES THAT HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL.**

A few years ago we got involved in something called "the wedding mafia," which has been a strategy to

go after a higher-paying bridal clientele. A photographer friend came up with the idea and their wedding business has increased 50% over the last year. Basically, we formed a group of wedding product and service providers. We collaborate on new trends, brainstorm ideas on drumming up business, do mini wedding shows, host cocktail parties and other events. The brides are in a comfortable environment and know they are working with the best of the best.

● **WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?**

There are not too many people who can say they see all of their children everyday and that's very special to me. I just feel so blessed.

● **WHAT MAKES YOUR BUSINESS UNIQUE?**

We try our best to be different. We do not do anything twice and everything is personalized to make the customer feel special. In this business, you have to keep up with technology. We're involved in social media and just developed a new website to promote our wedding and event business (www.eventsbyfassler.com). 

FAST FACTS

Owner:
Celeste Mackey, KMF

Vice President:
Destiny Mackey, KMF

Shop:
Fassler Florist and
Gift Shop

Location:
Covington, KY

Year Established:
1957

Interesting Tidbit:

✿ Fassler's were recently chosen to participate in a million dollar marketing campaign sponsored by their local phone company that included direct mail, video, radio spots and full page ads in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. The selection was based on a referral process of top businesses in the tri-state Cincinnati area and the opportunity has given them tremendous exposure.

>>> Celeste Mackey enjoys being surrounded by her family in their business.