



HE'S HERE TO STAY

Colts sign tight end Dallas Clark to six-year deal after marking him with franchise tag. **Page B1**

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Find out in Free Time. Pages C5-C8

Free Time



MAKING SCENTS

Greenwood couple build candle company. **Page C1**

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Johnson County, Indiana

50 cents



Rich and Jodi Scheve own Twisted Wick Candle Co. They make the all-natural soy candles in their Greenwood home and sell them in a variety of central Indiana shops.

Business on fire

All-natural candles keep entrepreneurs focused on expansion

STORIES BY RYAN TRARES

Rich and Jodi Scheve have smelled success, and it comes in some tantalizing scents — eucalyptus, spearmint, fresh-cut lilies, chocolate truffles, hot cinnamon and grandma's kitchen.

The Greenwood couple own Twisted Wick Candle Co., a business that specializes in all-natural soy candles and spa products.

Web extra
See other Twisted Wick photos at thejournalnet.com.

In just more than a year, the business has spread from a home base in Brown County to boutiques and specialty stores in Greenwood and the Indianapolis area, with further expansion in the works.

Twisted Wick was born from the Scheves' desire to own a business.

Both 2003 Purdue University graduates, they had been working for Walgreens, with Rich Scheve as an assistant manager and Jodi Scheve as an executive assistant.

Rich Scheve said they enjoyed working in the Walgreens corporate setting, but they felt an itch

(SEE FIRE, PAGE C4)



STAFF PHOTOS BY SCOTT ROBERSON/roberson@thejournalnet.com
Twisted Wick Candle Co. includes a variety of all-natural candles and soaps. The company continues to expand.

All those twisted wicks take up lots of space

Thinking of a candle factory might evoke images of bubbling cauldrons surrounded by exotic herbs, oils and fragrances.

That's not the world of Rich and Jodi Scheve. Operating out of their Greenwood home, their Twisted Wick Candle Co. is more like a laboratory.

"There is a room dedicated just to candles, lots of stainless steel. It's kept very clean," Rich Scheve said.

A primary concern is storage. He said they keep 1,800 pounds of wax at a time in the garage until candle-making time.

The garage also houses Twisted Wick's rainbow of dyes and oils, which will be mixed in to create more than 70 scents, Scheve said.

"We really like the effect of smells on people.

Smell is a very emotional bond you can get with a customer," he said.

Though they like to experiment with various scents, Scheve said most are ready to go when they come from their wholesaler in Michigan.

When they start to make a batch of candles, the first chore is to melt the wax, Scheve said. They have 50 pounds bubbling on a burner at a time; and once the proper oils and colors are mixed in, they pour each candle individually.

The Scheves can pour around 250 10-ounce or 450 3-ounce candles a day.

Storing them becomes an issue before they can move the finished products to stores that carry them. "At times, it gets to the point where it just seems like there's candles everywhere," Scheve said.

• Fire

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1)

be their own bosses.

They saved their money and researched a handful of potential businesses, including remodeling houses or opening a franchise.

Those options were deemed too expensive and would have required the Scheves to take out a loan, something they wanted to avoid.

In the end, it was candles that fired them up.

"It was something we'd really enjoy, that was the biggest thing," Rich Scheve said. "Plus, there was a good opportunity with candles to expand into different things."

The appeal of Twisted Wick's products is that they are all-natural, the owners say. The candles are made with 100 percent soy wax, which burns cleanly, without the soot paraffin candles leave.

Playing around with appearance and the design, the pair felt the unique spiral-shaped wick could serve as a brand for their product.

That brand has expanded to include more than just candles. This year, the company introduced soaps, lotions, shampoos and other items as part of a Serenity Spa line.

Like the candles, the spa products are all-natural, Jodi Scheve said.

Rich Scheve said they like to introduce new products once a month to offer return customers something fresh. The Scheves have been working at their Nashville shop this week, revamping it for the return of tourists in the spring.

"When people come down this coming year, we don't want them to see all the same things," Rich Scheve said.

The evolution of their product line has dovetailed with a swelling of sales territory for the



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/roberson@thejournalnet.com

Rich and Jodi Scheve decided on the name Twisted Wick Candle Co. to incorporate a unique spiral-shaped wick as a brand for their products.

business. The Scheves opened a Twisted Wick store in Nashville on June 23; since then, have placed products in the arty Massachusetts Avenue district in downtown Indianapolis and in For the Love of Art in Greenwood.

"With Twisted Wick, they have a phenomenal candle product," said Chad Hosier, whose Indianapolis store Circle City Basket Co. sells the candles. "The scents are great, they burn properly, they're organic. There are many reasons why we carry them."

Rich Scheve said their first year has been a success. He estimates the company will have brought in \$150,000 in revenue.

Yet even with the popularity they've experienced, the Scheves have tempered expectations for

the future of the business.

The focus now is introducing their products at large trade shows and selling at more area stores.

"We want to let it see how big it can get. We really try to examine ways to expand without spending a tremendous amount of money," Rich Scheve said.

Jodi Scheve added, "And without losing control of our company."

Successful sales have allowed Jodi Scheve to work at the shop full-time, while Rich Scheve puts in a couple of days a week. The rest of the time, he works as a third-shift manager at Walgreens.

The hope is that business will expand enough to allow both to focus full time on the company, Rich Scheve said.

The Scheves sell Twisted Wick Candle Co. products in their Nashville store, in the arty Massachusetts Avenue district in downtown Indianapolis and at For the Love of Art in Greenwood.

