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Quilt shop selected as Business of the Year

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PORTLAND - 2009 was a remarkable year for the Around the Block Quilt Shop.

The store, located at 120 Maple St. in Portland, celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2009 and also expanded its operations into the storefront at 123 Kent St.

The good news kept coming last week as the quilt shop was honored as the Business of the Year by the Portland Area Chamber of Commerce (PACC.) The honor was presented to store owners Cathy and Tom McCann and Cathy and Steve Norton during the chamber's annual dinner and awards meeting on Jan. 21 at the Wagon Wheel American Grill.

PACC president R.J. Niklas said Around the Block was deserving of the honor.

"Here they are expanding their business when the times are tough," said Niklas. "They are very successful and bring large groups of customers into town. Plus, they have a huge following and ship products internationally. They have also made significant contributions to the community."

The Business of the Year award was one of three honors presented by the PACC during the event. The organization also honored Ed Barr as its 2009 Citizen of the Year.

"Ed does a lot of work for the First Congregational Church as well as the entire community," said Niklas. "He will volunteer to help out and not expect any compensation. He just wants to do it out of the goodness in his heart. It means a lot to have someone like Ed in the community during these tough times."

The PACC also honored Nancy Binkowski as the chamber's Director of the Year for 2009. Binkowski is a member of the chamber's Board of Directors and operates Alpaca Barber.

"Nancy is a person who has never turned down any assignment that was asked of her," said Niklas. "She is a very hard worker and will give you her best effort. We had a lot of tough tasks this past year and she handled them all."

Along with the awards presentation, the event also included a silent auction featuring items donated by Portland-area businesses. Entertainment was provided by music students of Mary Ann Reed and Rush Clement.
