Local Candy Store Entrepreneur Sweetens Charities Through Annual Giving

John Tompkins, standing in front of the conveyor belt and explaining one of three temperature-sensing computers necessary to produce his finest chocolates. (Photo Henry M. Hidden)

Local Candy Store...
continued from front page you will ever eat.

Tompkins found opening a new business is challenging. “The whole science of tempering chocolate was something I had to learn,” he said. Tempering chocolate is necessary for making smooth, glossy, evenly colored coating for dipped chocolates. Temper- ing prevents the dull grayish color and waxy texture that happens when the cocoa fat separates out.

“The process involves melting a block of chocolate, heating to a specific temperature, and then cooling it down slowly,” he described.

Last year at this time I had a lot of big corporate orders and I couldn’t get my brand-new chocolate tempering machine to work properly,” he said. “The chocolate wasn’t coming out right and I was losing my mind. I called the manufacturer in Boston, and he walked me through the process. I was doing everything right. Finally, he came down here and discovered that the three thermostats used in nine different temperature controls in the process were not calibrated correctly at the factory. This was a big learning curve for me.”

As systems improved for Tompkins, so did profit. “As our sales began increasing, my wife Sharon, reminded me that we have had a very lucky blessed life and suggested that we use JTs to ‘pay it back,’” he said.

JT committed to donating a significant part of the profits to nonprofit organizations.

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