

# Mother-daughter duo win fans with healthy snack

Every night when he got home from work, Lorraine Vandenberg's dad would make popcorn. A World War II veteran who earned two Purple Hearts in combat, he went on to work as a meat cutter.

"They had a lot of neighborhood stores in those days," she recalls. "I grew up with such good meat."

And good popcorn.

"When we started this business, we didn't know most people get it in a microwaveable bag," she says.

Vandenberg and her daughter Juli McCarty launched Papa Hill's Popcorn to pay tribute to Lorraine's dad, who would have turned 100 this year. Her mom, Mary Hill (below, sticking on labels) is still going strong at 93 and contributes to the business along with Juli's two youngest children Hannah and Gabe.

"There is nothing out there like our popcorn," Lorraine says.

She recalls her dad popping the snack in bacon grease. But they kept tweaking the old recipe to make it healthier.

They buy certified non-genetically modified popcorn grown in Nebraska, pop it in extra virgin olive oil and pure sunflower oil and give it a light sprinkling of sea salt. A bit of butter is put in the kettle during cooking, not poured over the top. The corn pops up light and fluffy, free of any hulls.

"The glycemic load is low, low, low," Lorraine says. "For diabetics, it's a great snack."

The corn is popped fresh, almost daily, but it also keeps well sealed in a bag with a twist-tie.

As two single mothers, the women have bonded as they've taken on the adventure of starting a small business. "We're like a couple who has been married for 30 or 40 years," Juli laughs.

"It brings families together when you work together," Lorraine adds. "Everyone gets involved."

"We just believe that small business owners have to



be brave and that people have to be willing to start small businesses," Juli adds. "We have to start being independent and supporting each other in this country."

Their melt-in-your-mouth popcorn is sold at Ranch Foods Direct and several other stores along the Front Range, winning loyal fans for the combination of healthiness and flavor. "When you think of healthy snacks, you typically think of things that are dry and tasteless. You're telling yourself it's good, but it's not," Juli says.

So what would Papa Hill think if he could see what they've accomplished with his popcorn legacy?

"Mom has told me that a couple of different times

he wanted to start a business himself," Lorraine says. "Having lived through the Depression, it was scary for grandmother to go that route," Juli adds. "I kind of feel like by doing this, we're honoring her, too."

## Back to school ... back to busy!

Now is the time to consider the convenience of a home service plan, which delivers your choice of high quality Ranch Foods Direct food items right to your door. Call Pete Vieth at 473-2306 to arrange an appointment to discuss how a home service program can benefit you.



[www.rfdhomeservice.com](http://www.rfdhomeservice.com)