

# Ricki Ford

## Freckles & Giggles



If you would like to learn more about Freckles and Giggles, email him at [rickifoto@gmail.com](mailto:rickifoto@gmail.com).

**You** may originally know Ricki Ford as a photographer whose work often appears in *She Magazine*. Or, perhaps you've seen him capturing memories at wedding that you have attended. These days, he has traded in his camera for an ice cream scoop. The idea for his own ice cream shop came during a 1999 trip to Hawaii. "I saw a smoothie stand, and seeing how the vendor worked and the way he interacted with his customers made me think that was something I would love to do." At first, the thought of starting this business was a bit scary for Ricki. "Just the thought of getting out on my own while starting from ground up was scary. Would I have enough money or would anyone like my ice cream? Then I remembered what God said through His word, 'Fear not.'" Ricki hasn't completely given up photography as he now takes photos as a hobby. "There weren't any concerns as far as photography. I still love to photograph." Although photography differs from ice cream, the two businesses do have one thing in common: customers. "They both represent satisfying the customer, but in different ways. That's what I love about it."

For Ricki, his new business venture was all about family. "I thought that this would leave more of an inheritance to my family. This has definitely become more family involved. God comes first, family second and business third." Ricki's wife, Sommer chose the name, Freckles & Giggles. This was inspired by their three girls: Carlie, Raven and Triniti. According to Ricki, Carlie is full of freckles and Raven and Triniti love to giggle. The store is currently located in North Myrtle Beach, where Ricki and his family street vend. "Our girls definitely get involved with that," he admits. If you aren't located in that area, there's no need to worry. The IGAs in Mullins and Lake View cur-

rently sell small containers. It is also sold in several restaurants, such as Pizza Shak in Mullins. Since making ice cream is new to him, Ricki anticipated feedback from the public. So far, the results have been positive. "They say, 'Mmmmmmm, this is good!' Within a couple of hours of putting our new flavors in the grocery store, they were sold out. That was awesome! As we were street vending one night, we had a guy buy our Banana Puddin' ice cream. When he got a block away, he hollered back, 'This is some good stuff!' That was a boost at the right time. We had already been out there for quite some time and that was a perfect ending to that day."

Ricki and his family create all of the Freckles & Giggles ice cream from scratch. They guarantee to use only the freshest ingredients, which are poured into their batch machine. Customers can choose from Vanilla, Chocolate (which Ricki says is the best in the world), Strawberry, Butter Pecan, Banana Puddin', Cheesecake, Strawberry Cheesecake, Cookies 'n Cream, and Pink Cookies 'n Cream (made with Oreos that have pink filling). Ricki and family are currently working on a new flavor - Coffee Chocolate Chip. Making the ice cream is Ricki's favorite part about his business, as well as the results afterwards. "It's gratifying to see people enjoying what you have made." As for the future, Ricki hopes to acquire an ice cream truck. He also hopes more stores will decide to sell Freckles & Giggles.

When starting your own business, it is inevitable to have doubts and fears about failing. However, Ricki, continues to put his trust in God. "Someone asked me one time, 'What are you going to do if you fail?' I said, 'Well, I'll just dust myself off and try again.' If you don't learn from your mistakes, then you can't grow. That's something God has taught me."