

EVE BAUM • She found her future in a UPS delivery (and prayer)

They say our economic recovery will be led by small business. In that case, call Eve Baum a one-woman economic indicator.

Baum had followed her husband from her Canadian home to central Pennsylvania. But four years ago, her marriage fell apart. Her custom-designed handbag business was going nowhere.

Her future — and that of her 2-year-old daughter — looked shaky.

Then, two things changed. First, she re-examined her faith and went on a mission trip to Haiti. There, she was baptized in the warm currents of the Caribbean and prayed for a sign of the path she needed to take.

Upon her return, she found a big UPS carton waiting in her driveway. Inside was a letter from Maj. Dan Carroll, a man she didn't know and still has never met.

He'd seen her designs and wanted his uniforms to be sewn into handbags for his fiancée, her mother and his mother.

MilitaryHandbag.com was born.

Today, Baum's company — which creates handbags, totes, briefcases and other items from worn military uniforms — has grown beyond



PHOTO BY JENNY KANE

her wildest dreams. She has a staff of 50 and can barely keep up with orders.

One of her totes was listed as a Womansday.com giveaway. Another was mentioned on Intel's blog as an alternative to a stodgy briefcase.

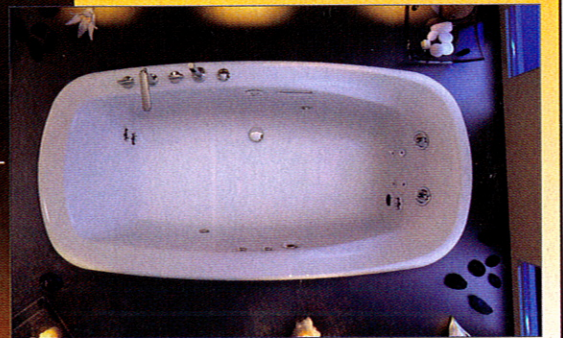
She's been spotlighted on a "Fox & Friends" seg-

ment and interviewed by local magazines and TV.

Baum said her focus now is on building her company with employees she can nurture through a similar career trajectory. "And I pray about it," she said. "If it's not going to happen now, maybe later."

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