Jody Fiscus, owner of The Oak Tree in Holyoke, is well-known as an entrepreneurial sort of person.

Recently that was rubber-stamped when Fiscus and her stores were highlighted in a full-page feature on the outside of the June 2009 edition of *Gift Beat*.

With its slogan, “Tracking the Product Pulse of the Gift Industry,” *Gift Beat* uses reliable sources in the industry to report what’s selling in their stores. Oak Tree was selected as a reporting store for the publication.

Celebrating her 20th year in business this year, Fiscus has survived two decades in business by listening to the pulse of her customers and by working hard.

In 1989, she opened the Flower Station as one of several individual businesses in Central Street Shoppes, in her current Oak Tree location at 141 S. Interocean Ave.

Tracy Pulley’s *Gift Beat* feature notes when Fiscus opened with $5,000, she wasn’t sure if her fledgling store would see an anniversary at all.

She found herself working six days a week for three straight years. Noticing her small merchandise selection was more of a draw, she listened to her customers and reinvented herself as The Oak Tree.

Today, The Oak Tree offers a little bit of everything, from home decor to luggage. Fiscus is always willing to try something new, as long as it’s at a reasonable price point.

She’s experienced success in an unexpected area—bulk foods.

Praising her customers as both savvy and diverse, Fiscus is quoted in *Gift Beat*, “When people ask what my target market is, I say, ‘Everybody.’”

Serving all ages, she notes she can’t do a traditional business plan. As a result, The Oak Tree has a little bit of everything—baby gifts, lotions, candles, slippers, jewelry, purses, music boxes, kitchen gadgets, cookbooks, stuffed animals, gift baskets and photo albums. Fiscus is always searching for another unique, affordable line for her store.

Holyoke’s Oak Tree added an expansion in 2001 and opened a second store in Fort Morgan in 2005.

Noting her focus to never give up, Fiscus is on her third attempt at making a web site work. She said this time she’s dedicating more time to making www.shopoaktree.com work.

Cited in Fiscus’ success story are:

—finding good help.

—counting all costs.

—offering entertainment (her annual open houses).