

BRIEF CASE

GREEN BAY Millennium plans Main Street move

Millennium Architects & Designers, 2737 S. Ridge Road, Ashwaubenon, will move to Main Street Commons, 1263 Main St., Green Bay, on Sept. 1.

Owned by architect Mark Dillenburg and interior designer Nancy Widi, Millennium provides both services to retail, educational and commercial customers.

Prophit Marketing, 1240 Main St., Green Bay, will move to Olde Town Crossing, 1228 Main St., on Aug. 1.

Prophit Marketing, formerly J Keidinger Advertising, is owned by Joe Keidinger. The firm specializes in serving small and mid-sized companies, and has eight employees. The company also offers leadership training and other business consulting services.

Olde Town Crossing and Main Street Commons are owned by Direct Development Inc. — Richard Ryman/Press-Gazette

STURGEON BAY City extends retail build moratorium

The moratorium prohibiting construction of large retail establishments (big box retail outlets) in the city has been extended for an additional 14 days after the original Aug. 13 end date.

Mayor Tom Voegelé said the extension was a compromise between aldermen, some of whom felt any extension should wait until closer to the August deadline.

The Plan Commission is still working on the draft ordinance, and most recently increased the large retail establishment maximum square footage allowed to 115,000 square feet.

— Door County Advocate

MADISON Applications for awards available

Applications for Marketplace 2007 Minority Business Awards are now being accepted. Awards will be given out by the Bureau of Minority Business Development of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce at the Marketplace 2007 Governor's Conference on Minority Business Development, Oct. 10 and 11.

There are three award categories: Outstanding Minority Business, Rising Star Award, and Good Citizen Award. The applications will be evaluated based on specific criteria to determine the award recipients.

Further information can be found at <http://marketplace.wi.gov>. The deadline for applications is Aug. 17.

— Press-Gazette

TODAY'S DAILY BUSINESS PLANNER

■ **The Healthy Lifestyles Cooperative of Brown County:** Meeting for employers interested in potentially participating in its second insurance pool for coverage Jan. 1, 2008, through Dec. 31, 2010, 3:30 to 5 p.m. at the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, 400 S. Washington St. To register for one of the co-op informational meetings, contact Sherry Freeman at (920) 437-8704 or via e-mail at sfreeman@healthylifestylescoop.com.

■ **Lakeshore Networking Association:** 6-7:30 p.m. at CJ's Restaurant, 1510 Ellis St., Kewaunee. LNA is a networking and referral group dedicated to providing business owners with marketing tips, round-robin discussions and educational speakers. For information, call Michelle Baumann at (920) 388-3504.

■ **HBBA-Helping Businesses Build Assets Inc. Lakeshore Chapter:** 6:30 p.m. Call Brenda LuMaye at (920) 388-3277 or e-mail giftbsktsfromhrt@itol.com

— Press-Gazette

MONDAY CONVERSATION: MARY PAPPAS

Baking and pastry arts meet at Alpha Delights

Euro-styled cafe in De Pere is in 6th year of operation

The Green Bay Press-Gazette visits with newsmakers in the business world each week in its Monday Conversation feature. This week, Mary Pappas, owner of Alpha Delights European Bakery & Café, De Pere, talks about baking, her experiences of running a small business and growing up in a family that operated a popular downtown Green Bay restaurant.

Q Your parents Steve and Mabel Pappas and your uncle Ted Pappas operated Alpha Restaurant in downtown Green Bay from 1938 to 1968. Did growing up in the restaurant business whet your appetite for running your own business?

A Absolutely. I was influenced by my father's Greek entrepreneurial spirit, my mom's strong, caring sense of service to customers, and Uncle Ted's demonstration of how fun and business can go hand-in-hand. Running the restaurant was clearly demanding work, but it brought great pleasure and pride to all of them and gave them a very special sense of vitality and purpose. They all demonstrated such great cleverness, courage and tender humanness. You can be sure that being close to all those aspects of entrepreneurship whet my appetite to run our own business.

Q Alpha Delights has been in business for more than six years. What do you know now that you wish you knew then?

A Some of the rhythms and underlying patterns of the business. For example, how individual days flow, what products people like and when, how windows of opportunity open for product development, and when to push hard and when we should lighten up a bit. My husband, Rick Martens, and I have noticed our personal rhythms, too, as they relate to our business.

Q Did the vision you formed about your business before opening evolve as time went by? If so, how?

A The vision really hasn't changed, but our understanding of it has grown deeper through conversations with our employees and customers and through our business experiences. The vision still inspires me, it guides our employees' continuously growing commitment to excellence, and it's still shaping how we conduct our business. For example, we have been looking at several new possibilities, including adding wholesale sales, and the vision is influencing how we position ourselves.

Q What advice do you have for someone who wants to operate a baking business/restaurant?



Master baker Debra Socha, left, looks on as Alpha Delights owner Mary Pappas curls chocolate in this photo from 2005. **H. Marc Larson/Press-Gazette**

Name: Mary Pappas

- **City of residence:** Green Bay
- **Business:** Alpha Delights European Bakery & Café, De Pere
- **Background:** Childhood in family restaurant; bachelor's degree in journalism, UW-Madison; various professional positions in government, media and private industry; culinary training at the National Baking Institute, Minneapolis and Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton.
- **Best business advice you've received:** Have a good personal support system (Jackie Scott, Madison bakery owner)
- **Best business advice you'd give:** Have a clear vision that you're passionate about and let it lead you.

A Fight hard to physically and psychologically get outside the walls of your business. The daily demands of a business can consume you and cut you off from opportunities for learning and inspiration. New knowledge always comes from some outside stim-

ulation. If you keep working with what you know and what's in your daily world you'll just keep doing basically the same things over and over again. Your business will most likely atrophy because of it. If you expose yourself to what's going on outside your normal sphere and let your assumptions be challenged you'll see and create new opportunities for growth. It's like putting a new spice in your batch of soup. It'll turn out differently and you'll end up learning a few more things about how to make a good soup.

Q Quality baking is more than plopping some dough on a pan and baking or frying it. What kind of training should those who want to be bakers take? What career opportunities are there for bakers?

A This is a big, important topic for me because we've positioned Alpha Delights to be a leader in an emerging baking renaissance. This renaissance is slowly leading to more career opportunities that inter-mingle baking and pastry arts — two different

► See Alpha, B-2

Nutorious hopes confections will bring nationwide distribution

Christmas snack turns into big business for owners

BY LEE REINSCH
Special to the Press-Gazette

ALLOUEZ — In the 1980s, Carrie Liebhauser suspected she had a good thing going when her friends in college went wild over her mother's sweet Christmas nuts.

Just how good, the now Wrightstown mother of two and former bank manager didn't quite grasp until years later when she found herself at the same food show as representatives from Ghirardelli chocolates and Dole produce.

Fast forward three years, and Nutorious, the company Liebhauser owns with business partner Jennifer Gille, is selling its hand-mixed, glazed almond-pecan-walnut mix in five flavors to retailers across

the country. Trade magazine Inland Empire named Nutorious one of its "top 55 fabulous food finds," and the foodie e-zine The Nibble recently bestowed them a "top pick of the week."

"There's nothing like this on the market," Liebhauser said. "Most coated nuts are mushy. People who come and sample ours say they're crunchy. A lot of nuts are so heavily coated that you can't taste the nut."

Last year, Nutorious made 8,000 pounds of glazed nuts.

Liebhauser and Gille work 15 or 16 hours at a stretch, making 1,000 pounds at a time in a commercial-grade kitchen they rent in Algoma.

They're planning a move to a production facility of their own in Bellevue. Already, they turned one site down because they didn't think the kitchen was large enough.

Their goal is to be distributed nationwide.

Nutorious Nut Confections

- **Located:** Allouez and Wrightstown
- **What they are:** Glazed, crunchy, sweet nuts — walnuts, whole almonds and pecan halves
- **Who they are:** Carrie Liebhauser, 41, and Jennifer Gille, 36
- **Their flavors:** Cha Cha Chipotle, Door County Cherry Vanilla, Ooo La La Original, Chocolate Coconutty and Orange Cranberry.
- **Retails for:** Around \$4.50 to \$5.50 per 4-ounce bag and \$7.50 to \$9.99 for an 8-ounce bag.
- **More information:** www.nutoriousnuts.com

Nutorious launched in January 2005 and continued developing its recipes

through that March. Within six months, they had signed on with a community kitchen in Algoma for larger-scale production.

Their first big boost came after joining the National Association of Specialty Foods and taking their nuts to the upscale Chicago Fancy Food Show.

"There we were — two little girls from Green Bay," Gille said.

The duo started out in 2005 as Totally Nuts, but learned it was trademarked by a Utah storefront. Gille's husband Larry came up with Nutorious, and it stuck.

The recipe for the nuts actually comes from Liebhauser's mom, Bonnie Platten of Green Bay. She made them for 30 years as holiday treats and gave them away as gifts.

"They were easy to make," Platten said. "I don't like making cookies."

Liebhauser did the same, handing the nuts out to anyone who would try them. They experimented with flavors.

"We made it more decadent and more rich (than the original recipe)," Liebhauser said.

Once they perfected the recipe, they took their nuts to Door County to peddle to retailers and at farmers markets.

Platten doesn't mind that her daughter took liberties with her recipe.

"What I make is what she calls the original; it's recognizable, sort of, but hers are better," Platten said. "She buys the best ingredients and it seems to work."

To date, their customers include the Biltmore Estate in North Carolina, the Shoppes at Woodlake in Kohler, Serogy's in De Pere, Whole Foods in Madison, Sendik's grocery in Milwaukee and shops in Door county.

MICK HAGER
Guest commentary



Performance reviews a year-long process

Performance development planning is a year-round process. Too many managers treat performance reviews as a one-time event where they fill out the evaluation the day before the meeting, give it to the employee (hopefully) and then put it away. Worse yet, many employees get little surprises (dings) that should have been discussed when they occurred ... so they could have been fixed. It's no wonder managers and employees hate review time.

On the other hand, performance development planning is more productive because it is a year-round process.

The month before the performance development planning meeting:

■ **Prepare, prepare, prepare!** Pull together all of your observations and discussion points from throughout the year. Double check to make sure there are no surprises.

■ **Review the job description** and agreed upon performance standards.

■ **Review the performance** plan from the previous year and employee progress.

■ **Meet with employee** to find out what the employee would like to discuss and prepare an agenda for the planning meeting.

■ **Complete the evaluation** form and give a separate form for the employee to complete.

■ **Set aside adequate time** so the meeting isn't "rushed."

At the planning meeting:

■ **Share the constructive** purpose of the meeting. If you have been meeting regularly throughout the year, this should be obvious.

■ **Ask the employee** to review himself first.

■ **Summarize and conclude.** Set regular follow-up dates throughout the year.

Over the next 11 months:

■ **Keep good records** and observe the employee's performance on a regular basis.

■ **Meet regularly** to give constructive feedback, especially when performance needs improving. Remember no surprises allowed at review time.

■ **Coach the employee** when necessary. Help him get beyond any weaknesses, shortcomings or roadblocks. Please e-mail Hager at Mick@Mick-Hager.com with your management questions, and he will answer them in an upcoming article. Mick Hager is a business adviser, speaker and co-author of "Monkey Business, 7 Laws of the Jungle for Becoming Best of the Bunch." Visit his Web site at www.mickhager.com.



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