



Meet Frank VanVolkinburg, owner of 401 Espresso...

1. Describe Your Business:

401 Espresso is a coffee and pastry shop in Montour Falls, NY. "We combine very nice pastries with excellent coffee drinks, and provide people with an indulgent experience whether they're here, or on the go." Frank explained. 401 Espresso serves everything from iced coffee & nitro coffee, to all kinds of espresso drinks, and brewed coffee. We have pastries for every taste, from the standard fare of muffins and scones to more elaborate tarts, Danishes, and mousse domes. Everything is made from scratch in our bakery.

2. Tell us your story:

When the space at 401 Espresso became available in the summer of 2017, the owner of the building, Bruce Nelson of Nelson Development, approached Frank about leasing it. "[Bruce Nelson] wanted us to make the space into a nice coffee shop," Frank said. "We were in a transitional period with our bakery at the time. We were wanting to expand our

pastries, and this space became available at the right time." 401 Espresso opened October 4, 2017.

3. What has helped you succeed and gain experience?

"Well, I didn't just walk out one day and decided 'I'll open a bakery and be baker,'" Frank stated. "I talked myself into a job in a bakery in Atlanta, starting at the bottom." Frank has been in the business for twelve years now, and has worked at two wholesale bakeries, several retail bakeries and an exclusive resort. He has had the opportunity to work with excellent bakers along the way who have helped him grow as a baker. "When you start out, the expectations put on you are pretty minimal, and then grow into having more responsibility," he described. "As you go on, you get more confidence and try more things." Frank added that he and his family opened Village Bakery in Montour Falls about five years ago, and having gotten to know the community well has been very helpful for their success.

4. What inspires you?

Frank says that people who are really passionate about what they do and produce excellent work are very inspiring for him. He added that this could be anyone, not just bakers. "There are a lot of things in this area that are really pretty good, and you can look at them and say, 'These people are working hard and have beautiful results,'" Frank said. "I look at Instagram at people who do what I do, and get ideas from that. We are members of the Bread Bakers Guild of America and Retail Bakers of America, and I am really inspired by the people I've met through these organizations. Bread Bakers Guild of America has a team that competes in a world competition every 3 years. The US team usually does well. It's not only a point of pride, but the Guild is all about sharing knowledge and passion with each other at every level. People at the top of their craft are sharing with you."

5. What keeps you up at night? What are your challenges?

"It's a challenge for us to let people know about all the great things we do and get them to come to all the way down to Montour Falls to visit our shop." Frank said. "We'd like to see more folks who are looking for a special treat, hosting an event in our dining room, or picking up their morning cup of coffee. We take pride in the high-end pastries and professional coffee service we offer. There are more and different types of pastries that we want to do. We are always adding a new layer of quality or something that people will find really exciting. "

6. What is your favorite local activity?

"My wife and I like to go out to enjoy the natural beauty of the area and visit different places to eat," Frank said. "Like FLX Wienery, which has a lot of social events. We also enjoy places like Wildflower Café, Two Goats and Elf and the Oak. We want to visit local places and see what they're all about. There is so much happening in this area, and everybody likes to eat!"

7. Is there anything else we should know about you?

Frank says that they are heavily invested in making this business the best it can be. They are applying for a beer and wine license, and working toward creating a gathering space where people can hold events or come and have light food, desserts, and a little wine and coffee. "We have big plans for this, but we couldn't start with everything all at once, so this place will evolve and become more than it is now."