



Kathy Paradiso (center) with son, Josh, and best friend, Christie

## **Meet Kathy Paradiso, owner of Paradiso's Village Bakery...**

### **1. Describe Your Business:**

Paradiso's Village Bakery is a wholesale and retail bakery in Main Street in Montour Falls. They serve breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Paradiso's Village Bakery's menu includes everything from bagels and omelets to sandwiches and cookies. In addition to the regular menu they also serve daily specials.

### **2. Tell us your story:**

Kathy has always wanted to own a coffee shop. "It's been a long family thing," Kathy explained. "My grandfather was a baker in Watkins Glen, and he opened Paradiso's Restaurant where Bleachers is currently located. Then he got sick and my uncle took over the business. Then my cousin bought it from him. Eventually he sold it, and now it is

Bleachers." At the time, Kathy was living out of town. Although she has always wanted to open a coffee shop, she felt she couldn't open a business and raise a family at the same time. "So, I went to nursing school," Kathy said. "I was a nurse for thirty years. The last person I took care of was my father. He was in our home, and passed away from Alzheimer's. After he passed, I decided I was done with nursing. I was leaving it on a high note, and I'm going to go pursue my dream." Kathy found out that the Village Bakery was for sale, and within two months she had purchased the business. Her best friend and her son are also working with her in the bakery.

### **3. What has helped you succeed and gain experience?**

Kathy said that her parents are a big part of her success and experience. "My mother used to have a business that she ran out of our home called Carole's Cheesecakes. She sold cheesecakes to a lot of local businesses" Kathy explained. "My mom always baked with us. That's what we did together. I've been baking since I was old enough to stand at the counter. So, the knowledge I learned from my mother and my father's encouragement to do what I love are what has helped me succeed."

### **4. What inspires you?**

"I come to work around 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, and as soon as I arrive I start baking," Kathy explained. "When customers come in and say 'Oh, that's beautiful,' or 'That's the best cinnamon roll I've ever had,' or 'My grandmother used to make this,' that inspires me. The smile on the customer's face."

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

"The biggest thing I worry about is that I have three families depending on this new business," Kathy said. "I have my son, who has two children. I have my best friend Christie, who has two children. And they gave up everything and just jumped right in to be here with me too. So, the biggest thing is making sure they are okay."

### **6. What is your favorite local activity?**

"Anything with the lake!" Kathy said. "Boating and swimming. Ever since I was little I have been drawn to the lake."

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

"First of all, we are new and we want feedback," Kathy said. "If something isn't what someone expected we want to know. We don't want to be flattered." Kathy added that they want people to come into their shop and feel comfortable. "We want them to think that this is a familiar and comfortable place. It's a place where they can sit and catch up with friends they haven't seen in a while," she said. "Come in and relax, enjoy good food and family."

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