

The Journal News

Mount Kisco Bakery To Donate All Its Profits

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MOUNT KISCO — The snowy weather yesterday didn't stop the grand opening of Connie's Bakery & General Store, a shop that promises to use business to bolster charitable giving.

The store, tucked back in a walkway behind Chico's on South Moger Avenue, is donating all its profits to charity, said Connie Milstein, the store owner.

"I believe in doing well by doing good," said Milstein, a philanthropist who grew up in Scarsdale.

One charity getting a cut of this year's profits is Food-PATCH, which distributes food to soup kitchens and pantries around the county. The bakery also will make donations to an additional five charities this year, but they haven't been selected yet, said Debbie McCarthy, the bakery's director of marketing and community outreach.

"Fighting hunger in Westchester is an uphill battle," Christina Rohatynskij, the executive director of Food-PATCH, said at the grand opening. "We have many agencies to support who then feed people in their

communities, so every little bit helps."

The bakery also provides a one-year apprentice program for four students who have graduated from the county's JobSTAR program, which provides job training to low-income residents. Over in the kitchen, just beyond a glass case of scones, cinnamon rolls and cookies, Janie Jackson was mixing some chocolate icing.

"The people here, they're very patient," said Jackson, a 45-year-old Peekskill resident and a December graduate of the JobSTAR program. "I plan on staying in cooking. ... Most jobs you need some type of cooking experience to get a good job."

Milstein, an attorney and real estate business executive, is a major Democratic Party fund-raiser who has a home in South Salem. She serves on the boards of New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Refugees International, the New York City Opera and other organizations.

"I've been very blessed in my life," Milstein said. "For me to be happy, I need to share with other people."

The 1,100-square-foot store, which

is next to the Okinawa Japanese steakhouse, was a bit cramped yesterday as customers and well-wishers came to the bakery's opening. On a set of shelves were an assortment of jellies and jams, and over next to the front windows were jars filled with candy sticks and lollipops.

Cathy Titus, an Ossining resident, stopped by the store with her 2-year-old daughter, Hope, and husband, Tom.

"To be a part of the community, I think not only do you have to partake in profits but also to give back," Cathy Titus said. "That makes you want to purchase something at a store."

Mayor J. Michael Cindrich said he hoped the new store would help attract other businesses to downtown Mount Kisco.

"We're very fortunate to have something like this settle in Mount Kisco," said Cindrich, who also attended the opening.

Rep. Nita Lowey, D-Harrison, stopped by with her grandchildren.

"To think that the money will go to help feed the people in Westchester is especially meaningful," Lowey said.