

Westchester AND THE REGION**The New York Times****QUICK BITE**

Mount Kisco

Indulge, Charitably

EMILY DENITTO

If pastries are part of your Valentine's Day plans this year, you might consider buying ones that not only taste good, but do good: All the proceeds from Connie's Bakery and General Store in Mount Kisco go to local charities.

Although the three-year-old business is not yet profitable, its founder, Constance Milstein, a real estate lawyer and developer, has already funneled donations through the bakery's nonprofit setup to county groups like A-Home Inc., which manages affordable rental housing; Food Patch, a food bank; and Back-to-School Clothes for Kids.

These mainly personal contributions amounted to \$36,000 over the first

two years, said Deena Plotka, chief operating officer, and she expects Connie's, which opened a new cafe and gift shop at Northern Westchester Hospital last year, to be profitable by its fifth year.

In the meantime, the store's mission has inspired the community. "We get Girl Scout troops in here and moms bringing their kids to teach them about charity," Ms. Plotka said.

Scrumptious goodies, created by the executive pastry chef, Simeon Manber, include a mini flourless chocolate cake (\$3.25), crisp linzer cookies (\$15 a pound) and butter-cream cupcakes (\$1.25 to \$2). For Valentine's Day, all

sorts of heart-shaped treats, including a chocolate cake with mousse and ganache fillings, will be available.

Mr. Manber's assistants are hired through JobSTAR, which seeks training for low-income individuals. They are paid about \$5 more per hour than minimum wage and receive health benefits if full time. "Where else," asked Mr. Manber, "could I do the work I love and also feel like I'm helping people?"

Connie's Bakery and General Store, 41 South Moger Avenue, Mount Kisco; (914) 242-2014 or www.connies.org. Open Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.