

# Pastries, generosity and more: a Westborough bakery begins anew

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By

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“Mr. James” Frey, one of the bakers at Main Street Pastries and More on Turnpike Road, places some cupcakes in the case. (Photo/Maureen Sullivan)

WESTBOROUGH – Sweets fill the space within the newly-opened Main Street Pastries and More at the Chauncy Plaza at 135 Turnpike Road.

Cookies, cupcakes, cocoa bombs, truffles, apple turnovers, gingerbread, cheesecake – gluten-free, sugar-free, allergen-free, free for those in need.

At the center of it all – a single mother of five who overcame a lot of obstacles over the past few months.

## **Challenges**

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After deciding to move from Northborough last summer, owner Diana Batista thought it would take about \$10,000 to convert a salon that had closed in the plaza at the intersection of Turnpike Road and Lyman Street into a bakery.

“It’s about three times the size. It’s an easy commute for me, and there’s parking,” she said about the new site.

However, the store needed a sewer hookup, a new refrigerator, new stove, floors and ceiling – that \$10,000 soon became \$100,000.

During this time, Batista also had to deal with heart trouble.

“I have a thyroid condition, and I gained about 100 pounds,” said Batista.

She had a “fibrillation” in July, but thanks to blood and iron transfusions, “my numbers are going down.”

She said she’s fine now, and she credits her family and staff for helping her get through this difficult period.

“It truly is a family,” she said.

In late November, Batista and her crew got the word – all the permits were granted, and the store was ready to open.



Main Street Pastries and More recently moved from Northborough to Chauncy Plaza at Turnpike Road in Westborough. (Photo/Maureen Sullivan)

“It was the Monday before Thanksgiving,” she said. “We moved nothing but big-ticket items. We brought the cases, and then the boxes and chocolates. We worked all night. We took our first shipment on Tuesday, and we’ve been baking ever since.”

On that Wednesday, the store held a “soft” opening.

“My 80-year-old father was there opening the door,” said Batista.

### **Mr. James and staff**

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The bakery includes a separate area to prepare allergen-free and gluten-free items. Batista knows something about allergies, since all five of her children are allergic to something.

It takes a lot of hands to create all the goodies offered by the bakery. This includes the making and selling of cocoa bombs (they sold 53,000 of them last year), along with gourmet cupcakes, custom cakes and more.



The cocoa bomb is among the most popular items at Main Street Pastries and More on Turnpike Road. The bakery sold 53,000 of them last year. (Photo/Maureen Sullivan)

Two of those hands belong to James Frey, a Pennsylvania native who's called "Mr. James" by the staff. That's to lessen the confusion with the other James – Batista's son – who works at the bakery.

Frey started baking when he worked at an Auntie Anne's pretzel place, and he learned how to twist the dough into pretzels. From there, he became a tattoo artist, with a bit of baking on the side. When the pandemic erased his job, Frey joined Main Street Pastries full time.

He's since created several non-bakery items for the shop, including the design on the coffee mugs and "Elfita," the elf who comes out in December and July to help the bakery's customers.

Batista herself is a Hudson native and an alumnus of Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School. She is a hairdresser by trade, though her first job was a baker. Now, Batista has been baking for 35 years and just made the switch to full-time.

The bakery also employs two culinary arts students, and it recently added two new bakers.



“We’re doing well,” said Batista.



“Mr. James” Frey prepares goods for baking at Main Street Pastries and More on Turnpike Road. He’s been with the bakery about four years. With him is Jay Guarino of Northborough. (Photo/Maureen Sullivan)

## **Baking up generosity**

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Donations for worthy causes have been part of Main Street Pastries’ menu since the beginning.

The bakery runs a nonprofit called the Hope Bread program. Started before the COVID-19 pandemic, the program helps less fortunate families access food and other goods.

If an adult staff member receives a tip, that goes right to Hope Bread.

In addition, Main Street Pastries has helped the Fitzgerald Community School purchase the Friend Fridge, and they donate baked goods along with fresh fruits and vegetables and dairy items. They also help Trinity Church with their weekly outreach as well as many veterans groups, schools, hospitals and nonprofits.

“We try to give back,” said Batista.

In the bakery cases, there are rainbow bagels (for Pride Month) and cookies with a cross. She's received some flak for offering these goods, but the goods remain, and so does Batista's determination to offer them.

"There's no hate here at all," she said.



Main Street Pastries and More offers a case full of items that are gluten- and allergen-free.  
(Photo/Maureen Sullivan)

## Busy in the evening

Some bakeries have a breakfast crowd and lunchtime crowd.

For Main Street Pastries and More, the crowd comes in in the morning and after 5 p.m.

According to Batista, that's because the Route 9 evening commute goes right by the bakery, and people stop in while heading home.

The bakery is open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Main Street Pastries and More is at 135 Turnpike Road, Suite 3. The phone number is 508-330-6300. For the latest, visit [mainstreetpastriesandmore.square.site](http://mainstreetpastriesandmore.square.site) or its Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/mainstreetpastriesandmore](http://www.facebook.com/mainstreetpastriesandmore).