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# NORTON MIRROR

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## Montione's Biscotti finds new home Bakery owner also pens children's book about diabetes

By Meredith Holford  
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**M**ary Montione's kitchen is equipped with a Hobart mixer the size of a small adult and mixing bowls the size of washtubs. Her chocolate dipping and cooling machine is about 30 feet long. She uses blocks of chocolate that weigh 10 pounds each.

Another piece of equipment comes from Italy. Fifty-pound bags of flour and sugar are neatly stacked on a rolling rack outside a walk-in freezer.

This is where Montione and her employees can crank out, cool and package 1,000 pounds of biscotti a day, and for the first time, the company has a permanent home. Just recently, Montione bought her own bakery building on South Worcester Street in Norton, after 20 years of a nomadic existence in three different locations. The last building was in Plainville, and before that she operated her business on Route 140 in Norton, after making her products in her home in Mansfield.

Saturday, Nov. 7 was the official open house for Montione's Biscotti Bakery, and visitors were treated to samples of every imaginable flavor of the traditional Italian treat, just in time for the upcoming holidays.

The day had a twist, too, because Montione has taken up the cause of helping to educate people about diabetes, tapping the talents of a youth diabetes education corps from the New England area, members of which roamed the store in their signature t-shirts.

Oddly enough, the family dog, Duffy, brought the Montione family and the business into the day-to-day lives of diabetes when she was diagnosed with diabetes in 2008. Montione's book, "Duffy's Dilemma" was published in 2009 to help educate children about diabetes in general by telling the story of the dog and her transformation.

Now, Montione has created a low-carbohydrate line of biscotti especially for diabetics and others who need to watch their sugar intake. Her displays included information on diabetes and recipes that use low carbohydrate versions of her biscotti.

"We have had many customers who are diabetic," Montione said, serving up low-carb trifle made from lemon biscotti and whipped cream sweetened with sucralose. With this combination, the dessert comes out with about 11 carbs and 126 calories per half ounce serving, making it a wonderfully acceptable treat for anyone whose life includes counting every carbohydrate that enters their mouth.

Montione said her efforts as a small business to raise money for various causes is not new.

"Every year, we donate a percentage of our sales to a charity," she said, listing the Children's Hospital Cardiology and the Mass General Spine Tumor Clinic. Both of those causes had a family link.

Montione is dedicated to maintaining a community presence, and said her tradition is to hold cookie samplings around the holidays.

"The best thing is to have people taste the product," she said.

She grew up in Pennsylvania cooking with an Italian mother and grandmother from Foggia, Italy. Her brand of biscotti is designed to be softer than the non-fat variety, and not as sweet, but is twice baked in the traditional way and still very low in fat. Old world flavors like anisette and almond join regional favorites like Cape Cod cranberry, ginger satin, and lemon burst. She sells 20 different varieties.

And in addition to regular and low carb biscotti, sold individually and in assorted flavor boxes for gifts, the book, "Duffy's Dilemma," is also on sale, charmingly illustrated by Norton resident David Pimental.

Duffy herself was due to make a personal appearance later in the day, but Montione said she probably wouldn't stay too long. Now managing her diabetes, Duffy is pretty peppy.

"She'd drive us all crazy," she said with a laugh.

Montione's Bakery is located at 215 South Worcester Street in Norton, and can be reached either at 508-285-4777, or at the website [www.montionesbiscotti.com](http://www.montionesbiscotti.com)