

By NLDestiny



The candy lady at Lakeshore Candy, is mixing it with love and crab cakes.

Who's your candy man?

Who's your candy man now? She's a Candy lady. She mixes it with love, almost like in the Sammy Davis Jr., 1972 hit song, The Candyman. The lyrics tell of a candy man mixing his treats with love and making the world taste good.

Instead of mixing the candy with love and making the world taste good, Ann Sweeney of Lakeshore Candy, in Plattsburgh, N.Y., mixes the candy with love and makes crab cakes. The innovative concoction recipe came from her mind one day, Crab Cake chocolates. The chocolates are made of cashews, pecans, caramel and are a huge money maker for her candy business she and her ex-husband, Bob Sweeney, own together.

Although innovation does not always work out as planned in the candy business, Ann explains.

"Recently I tried a toasted coconut, craisin and almond candy recipe out on family members who thought I was losing my mind. I didn't make any more of them."

The great thing is, you can make a small batch and if it doesn't work out well, Ann says, its back to the drawing board. Ann says she mixes the recipes up in her mind and goes from there.

Ann says she hands out samples of the new candy concoctions at the bank, to customers when they walk in the store, and she tests new recipes on her family and friends. People sample her ideas, and everyone has fun doing it, she says.

When Herman Van Holton retired as the original candy man in Plattsburgh, N.Y., Ann the new candy lady took over Lakeshore Candy with Bob. Lakeshore Candy business started in February 2003 on McKinnley Ave., in Plattsburgh, N.Y. <http://lakeshorecandy.com/story.html>

Van Holton took Ann and Bob under his wing for the next eighteen months and taught them the candy making business and how to make his unique chocolates.

“Van Holton was a great mentor,” Ann says. Ann thinks he is one of the reasons the business is so successful still. Today, the business has some of the same candies Van Holton had, like the chocolate nuts and chocolate creams.

The Sweeney’s kept expanding their innovative candy line and made best sellers such as Tiger Bites, Tiger Tracks, and their homemade peanut butter cups with almonds or peanuts. Their success continues with the addition of homemade cookies, kettle and caramel corn, homemade maple, walnut, and peanut butters, and chocolate fudges.

Carrying local products such as jam, <http://www.blueridgejams.com/> coffee, BBQ sauce, honey, and syrup add to the variety that helps make the store appealing to customers, Ann says.

It’s a unique business and a unique situation as far as her business partner and her are concerned, she added. Ann’s and her ex-husband bought the business after they were no longer married. They work together every day and work well together, Ann says. They even expanded their business when they took over the candy kiosk in the Champlain Center Mall.

“It’s been two years now and it’s going well,” Ann says.

Lakeshore Candy makes up unique gift baskets <http://www.godiva.com/> and delivers them. Having over one thousand candy molds, they can accommodate nearly any request such as birthday, get well, baby, bridal, congratulations, and I love you, says Bob.

Bob Sweeney, owner says, “With the economy lately it has been tough, but people still like a good chocolate you know?”

“You can eat a whole bag of Hershey Kisses and still want chocolate, I had a candy person tell me one time. Or you can have one or two pieces of really good chocolate and be satisfied,” Bob says.

Customers can buy a piece or two of what they want, Bob says. Everything is sold by weight. The candy case is over 12 feet of candy with 100+ different kinds of chocolate in it, so customers can pick and choose what they want, he added.

“We make different boxes of chocolate up, Ann says; the creams are usually for grandmas who have trouble chewing. There is a nut lover crunchy mountain mix for the nutty individual which includes toasted coconut , molasses sponge, a hard consistency, a Lakesider Combo of a little bit of everything in it, and a full line of sugar free chocolates for diabetics.” <http://www.berries.com/sugar-free-gifts-sfg>

It keeps them busy, she says.

“Christmas is our busiest time of year, usually for about a month and then again in February we get busy for Valentine’s Day. If people want to give great gifts for the holidays, we do make up fund raisers to sell and they do really well,” Ann says.

Teri Deyo, cashier at the Champlain Center Mall Lakeshore Candy kiosk says, “The most popular item is the Tiger Bites peanut butter candy and the busiest time in the mall is definitely Christmas.”

Elizabeth Rowe, of Plattsburgh, has been a customer of Lakeshore Candy for years, and says she loves the quality of the chocolates. She added that the prices are reasonable for the high quality handmade candy, which is what keeps her coming back for more. Rowe likes that she can buy local and get quality chocolates, she says.

“I love the fact that i can get such a huge variety of high quality chocolates,” Rowe says.

SIDEBAR:

Chocolate History

<http://www.wilburbuds.com/docs/museum.html>

Chocolates beginnings are nearly impossible to pinpoint, but the earliest records date back 4000 years ago to the Aztecs and Mayans. They both believed the cocoa tree bean had magical powers. They used the cocoa bean in religious ceremonies. To alter the taste of the chocolate, spices were added.

Chocolate had a bitter taste. Around 1521 the cocoa bean was imported to Europe, where the Spanish started adding sugar to the chocolate, however they kept it a secret. The Aztecs and Mayans began trading chocolate around 1400. Chocolate was originally only afforded by the rich, however as time went on, peasants and kings alike could afford the luxury of the delicious treat and the rest is history.

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