

# THE MIRROR *Weekend Section*

## Family Purchases Donut Business And Fills A Hole In The Market

BY KAREN BERGER  
MIRROR REPORTER

Ever since his kids could lift a shovel, John Guercio has had them helping out in the family business.

First, it was digging trenches and planting trees through G Force Property Maintenance. This year, the Guercios took on running the snack shack at the Jewish Community Center, and now it's Tom's Donuts.

"I opened this up as a family business because I'll have five kids to put through college," said John Guercio, who purchased the former Donut Guy shop on Airport Highway in order to give his kids a place to work and earn money for college.

A family business is the perfect opportunity to keep the family together and develop each of his children's talents, John said.

Kenny wants to be a chef and will study culinary arts as a junior at Penta Career Center. Twin Jonathan, who wants to be an attorney, will remain at Springfield High School.

Ashley, 21, has studied marketing at Owens Community College and is transferring to



John Guercio (third from right) purchased the former Donut Guy location to open a Tom's Donuts so his children would have a business to operate while in school. Pictured are (from left) Kenny, Ashley, Kris, Hannah, John, Jonathan and Patrick.

MIRROR PHOTO BY KAREN BERGER

The University of Toledo, where Patrick, 19, is studying finance. Hannah, age 2, hasn't decided her major yet, but Dad jokes that she'll be a doctor.

"We have one kid in every profession, so they can take care of every portion of the business," John said.

While each could work for other employers, running a business gives them a different

perspective. Turning off the lights and turning the thermostat up to save on the air conditioning bill are among the small details most employees don't think about, John said.

A family business also allows each to express his or her creativity. Kenny has experimented with smoothies at the JCC snack shop and has brought some of his light creations to Tom's Donuts. Ashley makes all of the calls to media and is looking into creating a Web site. Each takes turns running payroll to different sites, and all work at the snack shop, which is open seven days a week.

Keeping it all organized — answering calls and sending the four children in different directions, requires patience, an ability to let them make their own decisions at times, and an understanding spouse.

"For every successful business, you've got to have an understanding spouse to back you up and give you a push when things are rough," John said of his wife Kris. "We aren't like every other family. We're very close."

That's obvious by the way each family member gives the others a kiss and an "I love you." Even Hannah chimes in with an "I love you" as they say goodbye.

It was at large family gatherings where Kenny developed a love of cooking. He describes making his grandmother's tomato sauce, sausages, meatballs and other Sicilian favorites with his father.

Someday, John would like to incorporate those family recipes into the shop. But for now, he's already submitted plans to the health department so he can add subs and panini sandwiches to the menu within the next six months.

By August 1, Tom's Donuts will have free WiFi service and soft-serve ice cream.

Since opening the shop on June 27, the Guercios have offered Tom's Donuts, baked and delivered daily.

topped with peanut butter.

John wants to let customers know that although the store had two owners during the year before he bought it, he's guaranteeing the quality expected out of Tom's Donuts — plus some.

Manager Amy Craven roasts the coffee beans daily and starts the coffee brewing before the 5:00 a.m. opening. In addition to fresh coffee, Tom's features chai tea, chocolate iced coffees and blended iced coffees. The smoothie selection is expanding thanks to Kenny's creativity.

Customers have also gobbled up the Old World bagels and six different types of cream cheese.

Tom's Donuts, 7460 Airport Hwy., is open from 5:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. weekdays, from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday and from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Sunday. The phone number is (419) 866-8667.

Favorites include the turtle donut with vanilla icing, crushed peanuts, a mound of apple fritter icing and drizzled with chocolate. Persians are another adult favorite, while kids like the jelly-filled donut



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