

BUSINESS

This page offers news updates on businesses in your town

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Yogen Früz is coming to Greece

By MIKE MURPHY
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When the economy fizzled to the point where it was making lemons for developer George Traikos, he decided to sell, well, not lemonade, but yogurt.

And so far it seems to be paying off — in a low-fat, delicious kind of way.

Traikos is president of YF of Upstate New York, a master franchisee of Canada-based Yogen Früz. Traikos is embarking on a plan to open stores — and is actively seeking franchise partners to run them — throughout the upstate region, including one in the Mall at Greece Ridge in the next six to eight weeks.

In addition to a store in Eastview Mall, which opened a year ago, several stores have opened recently in Buffalo and Syracuse.

"In turns of timing, we were very fortunate we hooked up at the time we did," said Traikos, from his bare-bones office in a Chili warehouse that stores dry goods for the business.

Traikos came to the area from Florida after seeing the real estate business there start to take a downturn a few years ago.

The historic Rochester Free Academy building downtown was the attraction, and with some work he saw the potential for new city housing and retail businesses. An article he read in March 2008 about the success of the Canada-based Yogen Früz chain turned his attention to frozen yogurt.

That May he visited the company headquarters in Toronto, and signed a deal that September.

The chain has 1,300 stores in more than 30 countries,

By the numbers

1

The number of Yogen Früz stores in the Rochester area (Eastview Mall), but another is on the way at the Mall at Greece Ridge.

50

The number of part-time workers employed by Chili-based YF of Upstate New York.

2

The number of full-time workers.

and was looking for more in the U.S., even though ice cream remains the go-to dessert among Americans.

According to 2008 figures from the International Dairy Food Association, regular ice cream made up 61.1 percent of the frozen food market, with reduced-fat, low-fat and nonfat ice cream coming in at 25.4 percent of the market.

Yogurt was next at 4.8 percent, according to the association's figure, but Traikos is hoping to tap into the healthy-eating trend and grow those numbers.

"Fro-Yo (for frozen yogurt) is one of the fastest growing franchise categories out there, especially in light of our country's focus on improving wellness and reducing obesity, diabetes and the costs of treating these health problems," Traikos said.

It helps that frozen yogurt has 150 calories, he said, but "tastes like it has 1,000 calories."

"I can talk all day about the product, but it's hard to explain taste," Traikos said. "Once people try it, they get hooked on it. It's great."

Local woman launching new business strategy book

By DENISE M. CHAMPAGNE
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A new book co-authored by a Pittsford businesswoman stresses a different set of three R's.

In "Strategy, Leadership and the Soul," Jennifer Sertl and her writing partner, Koby Huberman of Tel Aviv, Israel, emphasize resilience, responsiveness and reflection, and how critical thought and action are for success in today's marketplace. They'll be together Saturday for a Pittsford book signing which kicks off an international tour that will wrap up in September in Huberman's city.

The two met in 2005 at a conference in France where she was talking about finding common ground in conflicting situations. They discovered they had similar philosophies and continued communicating, via Internet calls. They eventually decided to compile their conversations into a book, officially released this week by Triarchy Press, a British business strategy publisher.

The authors examine the evolution of organizations amid rapidly changing business practices, advancing technology and the diverse needs of customers and employees in a global economy.

Sertl is owner and president of Agility 3R,



Jennifer Sertl, of Pittsford, will be at a book-signing Saturday for a new book she co-authored, "Strategy, Leadership and the Soul."

an organizational effectiveness company whose primary objective is aligning strategy and people to create customer value. Her expertise lies in the coordination of executive leadership, shareholder responsibility and employee engagement. She has been a roundtable facilitator with Vistage, the world's largest CEO membership organization, and currently facilitates a CEO think tank through Renaissance Executive Forums. She travels extensively speaking before many business and community organizations.

If you go

WHAT Book signing by new author Jennifer Sertl of Pittsford and her writing partner, Koby Huberman of Tel Aviv.

WHEN 8 to 10 a.m. Saturday, June 12, at Starbucks, 5 State St., Pittsford.

DETAILS The book, "Strategy, Leadership and the Soul: Resilience, Responsiveness and Reflection for a Global Economy," is about the importance of thought and action in today's marketplace. It's available through Amazon and Triarchy Press.

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