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# Executive Suite: Reinwald's Bakery chief

April 11, 2011 by PATRICIA KITCHEN / [patricia.kitchen@newsday.com](mailto:patricia.kitchen@newsday.com)



Not unlike the [George Bailey](#) character in the classic film "It's a Wonderful Life," Richard Reinwald thought he had something "more pressing to do" than make a career of working in his family's business.

Still, after he graduated from college in 1974, he agreed to tend the then third-generation bakery while his parents took a six-week trip to [Europe](#). Reinwald, 58, says his father "must have known something about me, because I never left. During that time I found out I enjoyed choreographing and blending the team on a daily basis."

Certainly many people think it must be heaven to work in an establishment such as his. And, Reinwald says, indeed, "We encourage our staff to try things, so they can better describe them." Just last weekend he and his team whipped up a 14-inch replica of a Hostess cupcake for someone's 60th birthday celebration.

Still, he describes the "pressures of producing everything fresh every day" and having "10 hours' worth of work and six hours to get it done."

## What new trends are you watching?

"In our industry there are always going to be food fads. . . . Currently we're probably at the tail end of the cupcakes fad" with French macarons or whoopie pies on the horizon. "An emerging trend in the food business has been more locally produced foods and less processed. . . . I am examining several opportunities to take advantage of that. One could be to [bring products to sell] at farmers markets in the area."

## What are the benefits and challenges of working with family members?

"What's great is that they have your back, they really do. On the other side of the coin, at one time I had an argument with my brother. I said, 'You're not supposed to argue with the

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boss.' He said, 'I'm not; I'm arguing with my brother.' "

**What conversations do you have about customer service?**

"We have regular meetings with the staff, and I ask them, 'What good experiences have you had in other food stores and what bad experiences have you had? I'll say, 'Duplicate those, and avoid those.' "

**What do you do if someone makes a mistake?**

"Mistakes happen. I never focus on the mistake. I want to focus on an immediate solution. I don't care who did it. We can look at that later. Right now what I want to do is, we have to fix the problem."

**How about your Facebook endeavor?**

"My nephew does it. I always joke that I'm a technophobe, but I can appreciate the advantages. . . . I've been invited to speak next October on social media at an event sponsored by the German Baking Association in [Munich](#). I'm getting nervous. [Social media] keeps changing so quickly."

## Corporate snapshot

**NAME.** Richard Reinwald

**TITLE.** Owner, certified master baker

**BUSINES.** Reinwald's Bakery, manufacturer and retailer of baked goods, Huntington

**WHAT THEY DO.** "We help families create memorable moments. We consider it an honor to be on their holiday tables and at other milestone moments. I was humbled going to church on Christmas Day and a customer came up and thanked me for helping them make their day special."

**REVENUE.** \$1 million to \$5 million

**EMPLOYEES.** 17 full-time, 11 part-time; seven are family members

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