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LINDA FIVESON CELEBRATES GRAND RE-OPENING

by Leah Bush

Music blasted through the seams of an expansive unfinished office space in Syosset Plaza on Friday, July 31st, where a throng of women and men were celebrating the Grand Re-Opening of Linda Fiveson's Long Island Weight Counseling, a successful and well-known company whose founder and president had come close to serious injury when the old location at the Woodbury Colonial Center burned on Thursday, April 9th. "We were working, there were no smoke alarms or fire alarms and somebody called from the street asking us if we could get out of the building because it was on fire. That was the last time we ever went back into the building, it totally collapsed. It was horrible," said Linda Fiveson, who lives in Woodbury. After losing everything inside her 19 year-old business, she decided to pick up the pieces and get right back on the horse at a new location in Syosset Plaza Shopping Center at 633 Jericho Turnpike in Syosset.

The Grand Re-Opening party was held a few doors down in a large unfinished space that showcased tastings of her "fabulous fakes," healthy foods that mimic the tastes and textures of fattening treats. "I've created all these fake foods that make us feel like we're eating bread or cake or a crepe and everything has no flour, no sugar, no gluten, no preservatives and it evolved into many recipes," said Fiveson. Among her personal favorites are the cauliflower latkes, but she says people can't get enough of the paninis, muffins and blintzes.

The party also featured raffles, giveaways and a DJ. "Today is about getting to know you. We're doing a lot of nutrition trivia, a lot of prizes and offering samples of the foods I sell. It's a party to celebrate that I came back," said Fiveson. "I'm going to be 60 years-old and why not have a party. I'm letting people know that I'm here."

Fiveson is foremost a survivor. She has been a nutrition counselor for over 30 years and her passion for helping others was inspired by her own struggle with weight loss. "I got very scared. It was an epiphany - I realized I can't be 260 pounds. Having been on so many diets, I said, 'I'm not going on a diet, I'm just giving up what makes me fat,'" she said.

In the course of a year Fiveson lost



Linda Fiveson celebrated the Grand Re-Opening of her Long Island Weight Counseling center at its new location in Syosset Plaza Shopping Center at 633 Jericho Turnpike in Syosset on Friday July 31st. (Photo by Leah Bush)

140 pounds and has kept it off for three decades. How you ask? Through her own "fabulous fake" recipes and a steadfast resolve. "I've reached a goal and I'm so in love with that goal that there is no food that could distract me. Today I knew I was having the party, I didn't think about what I was wearing, I didn't have to go buy something, I didn't go into that mode where 'I hope something will fit, I feel so fat.' I love that that's not part of my life," she said. "Not eating well is very noisy, you're always thinking about what you're doing, you're always guilty, you're always thinking about how you're going to make up for it. It's a constant game of 'Let's Make a Deal.' I don't do that anymore and I don't look at that food as something I can have - it makes me fat."

Fiveson attributes the success of her program to her shared experience with her clients. "I understand the habits of a fat person so they don't feel bad about something that might be embarrassing to tell somebody else. I tell everybody, we're eaters but you don't have to be an under eater, there's no weigh-in or measuring, over-eaters can be thin."

For more information on Linda Fiveson's Long Island Weight Counseling, call (516) 496-2300 or visit: www.lindafiveson.com.