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# WHITE ROCK LAKE WEEKLY

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## CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OR MORE IN WHITE ROCK Casa Linda Bakery knows secret recipe for success

By Shari Stern

Who knew that if a gingerbread man's tummy is poochy, it's because someone used the wrong kind of flour? Robbie Sutton knew – that's who! A Bryan Adams (BA) graduate, Robbie Whitson knows that if you use the wrong kind of four possible types of flour, like bread flour, the little guy would appear to have a beer belly. That's because until three years ago, the skilled baker was the owner of the legendary Casa Linda Bakery since 1980.

The Casa Linda fixture, historically known for its exemplary cakes, was originally Vavra's Bakery, owned by the late Gordon Baker, and was located in the Plaza where Chili's is now, next door to Mr. and Mrs. Gifts.

When Robbie's husband, David, learned about the bakery his Uncle Regis (Sutton) purchased – another Dallas icon, Stein's Bakery – he became interested. He went to work there as a night



Photo by Nancy Black

Time flies when you are having fun. Laura Chennault (left) has been with the bakery more than 25 years. Her co-worker, They Chin, is in her third year at Casa Linda's iconic store.

baker. David saw how hard his uncle worked and how well Stein's was doing. He wanted to be his own boss, so he saved his money until he could purchase the bakery in Casa Linda from Gordon Baker. Robbie and David were married the next year. Sadly, Robbie's husband, David Sutton, passed away suddenly last year.

"We worked really hard

together," Robbie said about her late husband. "Whatever venture we took, we took together. We both had a passion for life, and for each other."

Robbie said she and her late husband worked 50 hours a week, while also raising their three children, who are now 21 to 27. Robbie learned how to decorate at Stein's. Elaborately decorated cakes

have always been Casa Linda Bakery's specialty, and their trademark flavors are Italian crème, ~~cream~~, Cream Cheese and German Chocolate, and their best-selling icings are butter cream and chocolate. Casa Linda Bakery's was named 3rd place in WFAA-TV's Best in the Metroplex.

In 1987, when Chili's was interested in the property, the Suttons moved the bakery to another Casa Linda location, and later purchased the building on Garland Road where the bakery is today.

Robbie said the reason the bakery has thrived for so long is its consistent quality. Many customers have been coming in for 30 years. "They know when they order a cake, all the specifications will be the same as the last time they ordered the same cake," Robbie explained. "Right after we sold the shop, the prices of flour, sugar and eggs went through the roof, but the bakery had to uphold its

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## COMMUNITY NEWS Concert huge success for *Women to Women*



Artists from left to right: Jessica Sublett, Tori Pendergrass, Michelle Stroescu, Jill Badonsky, Ashley Thames Brown, Shannon Johnson, Sherry Houpt, Jill Allison Bryan, Kim Hammond.

East Dallas singer/songwriter, Jill Allison Bryan raised more than \$10,000 to benefit Women for Women International with the help of some talented female artists (many of whom live in East Dallas) and much local support.

To celebrate the debut of her solo CD release, "Dancing In Limbo," Jill created "Infinite Possibility – A Night of Music, Art & Women Helping Women," featuring a concert by Jill, a silent auction with 13 original pieces of artwork each inspired by the 13 songs on her CD and an amazing raffle prize basket worth more than \$1,000.

The event was held at 7 Senses in the Dallas Design District. To purchase Jill's CD (now enjoying airplay on local public radio station KXT 91.7) visit <http://www.edbaby.com/cd/>

*'If they could see me now'*