

Person of interest: Elaine Bellin

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By China Millman, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette



Lake Fong/Post-Gazette

Elaine Bellin, president of Paragon Foods, a fresh food distributor for the food service industry in the Pittsburgh region.

Elaine Bellin has been working at the family business, Paragon Foods, for 27 years and has been president for the past 18. Unlike her father, she doesn't have to get up at 2 a.m. to buy fruits and vegetables in the Strip District, but overseeing the delivery of fresh foods to hundreds of restaurants in Western Pennsylvania still requires long hours of hard work.

Since 2001, Ms. Bellin has focused on becoming the regional leader in sourcing local food. In 2010, the company purchased and sold more than 200,000 cases of locally grown fruits and vegetables. Beginning this season, they have the ability to track specific products from the farm to restaurant kitchens, creating a new pathway for farm-restaurant partnerships.

Resides in: Fox Chapel.

Most mornings, I get up ... Between 5 and 5:30.

My perfect weekend: Is getting extra sleep!

I'm surprisingly good at ... playing chess.

My emergency dinner consists of ... Chinese takeout.

On my last vacation, I ... ran a half marathon.

Pet peeve about Pittsburgh: High airline costs and lack of direct flights.

Favorite spot in the 'Burgh: Being on the Allegheny or Monongahela rivers.

Can't live without: Evian water.

The best gift I've ever been given was . . . my two sons.

When I'm not at work, I can often be found ... running, playing with my kids (chauffeurng them, too).

Someday I'd like to ... open up an ice cream shop, the kind with high butterfat!

If I won the lottery tomorrow, I'd ... continue the same routine.

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