

# Navan Foods helps shoppers find edibles that don't irritate

By Jane Bloodworth Rowe  
Correspondent

**PRINCESS ANNE**

Shopping for a child with food allergies created more stress than Jennifer Elizondo wanted to deal with. It was hard to find products without eggs or peanuts, and it was even harder to be sure that a product was corn-free.

Elizondo, whose son, Vaughn, 3, has multiple food allergies, decided that consumers needed more choices and more information, so she launched Navan Foods: The Allergy Free Food Shop.

The store, which opened early this month in the Holland Plaza Shopping Center, specializes in foods that are free of most common food allergens, including eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, dairy products, and wheat, soy, gluten and corn products.

In addition, Elizondo labels the foods so shoppers can clearly see what ingredients they contain. This takes the guesswork out of trying to determine which products are safe, Elizondo said.

"For example, Vaughn was allergic to corn, and a lot of products have citric acid, which can be made from corn or from fruit, so I could never be sure. So, I thought that it would be nice to go into a store where someone else has done the research and you could just shop," she explained.

Elizondo created a questionnaire, which she sends to manufacturers, that asks them what ingredients are in their products and for what special diets the product might be appropriate.

A label for soy nut butter indi-



JANE BLOODWORTH ROWE

**Jennifer Elizondo straightens the cookie shelf in her new store, Navan Foods, which caters to consumers who have food allergies.**

**navan foods**

At 4312 Holland Road, Suite 115, is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. Info at 965-5422 or online at [www.navanfoods.com](http://www.navanfoods.com).

cates that it's free of genetically modified products as well as dairy, wheat, gluten and other common allergens. It also fits the requirement for vegan and kosher diets, but it does come from a facility that processes corn.

Getting all of the information she needs is a major time-saver, according to Jennifer Gregorio Alberto, who shopped at Navan Foods for the first time recently.

"I'm really excited to see this store because it takes so much time to read the fine

print on every label in the grocery store," said Alberto, a Brigadoon Pines resident whose child also has food allergies. "It's nice to have someone who knows what you're going through."

Elizondo stocks a variety of products that range from candy to frozen foods. She also stocks gluten-free baby products, soaps, sunscreens and baking mixes. Some of the brands include Enjoy Life and the Norfolk-based Lucy's Cookies.

She tries to stock fun items for children who can't eat more conventional treats. "When Vaughn goes to birthday parties, he can't have birthday cake," she said, "so I try to find child-friendly products that provide a sense of normalcy" to children with dietary restrictions.

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## your town |

**library happenings**

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dressing, gravy, cranberry sauce, roll and choice of side salad, mashed potatoes with gravy, green beans, pineapple cup or fresh fruit. Grilled chicken on bun.  
**Friday** Fish and shrimp basket and choice of side salad, sweet potatoes, green peas, strawberry

frozen juice bar or fresh fruit. Southwest salad.

**library happenings**

**LIBRARY PROGRAMS**

**Bayside Special Services Library,**  
936 Independence Blvd., 385-2680

- Crafty Wednesday, June 25 – Aug. 13, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Drop by for a weekly make and take craft program. Different craft each week in conjunction with Summer Reading Program. Age 3 – 9. No registration.
- Scene it? Harry Potter Game

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