

SPRING 2016

POPPY SEEDS

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL FOR THE CALIFORNIA CHILD NUTRITION PROFESSIONAL



SPRING 2016 • *California School Nutrition Association* • Volume 59 - No. 4



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY DENA ENGLAND, CSNA PRESIDENT

As my part in the CSNA leadership team is coming to close and as the new Leadership team grows under Bruce, I begin to reflect. Our year of going **Back to Basics** has been challenging yet productive. With having only two global goals for the Association **Membership Growth and Involvement** and **Building Community Awareness**, it created a bit of an obstacle for our chapters. However as we all do daily there was a rally to examine what individual goals would fit best for each chapter. The chapter teams came up with their plans and in turn each chapter at whatever development stage understood they could succeed. Some reevaluated their chapter's purpose, others created new chapters and some revived dark chapters, all with the common goal to serve their members to the best of their abilities. It was encouraging to see the success stories begin to emerge.

One of the areas in the behind-the-scenes development was the introductions of co-chairs for CSNA's State committees. This is creating the opportunity to learn of a committee's purpose before actually becoming the chair. At most CSNA events encouragement to join a committee at any level has been presented. Coming soon action plans for each committee will be available on the website.

The enhancement of communication has begun. An electronic newsletter "STATS" has been created with plans in the works for a new brochure. Other communication tools are being reviewed for the future.

Getting the word out to members about the availability of scholarships and awards has been a huge objective for the Awards committee and Leadership team. A larger number of members enjoyed the chance of attendance to our Annual conference and Legislative Action conference with these scholarships. This will continue to be an area to enhance so members will become familiar with all the opportunities the Association has to offer.

It has been with great support from many that I have enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity of being your President. With the completion of the election, your new leadership team is solid and will carry CSNA forward. So in closing, I pledge to support this team as you have me.

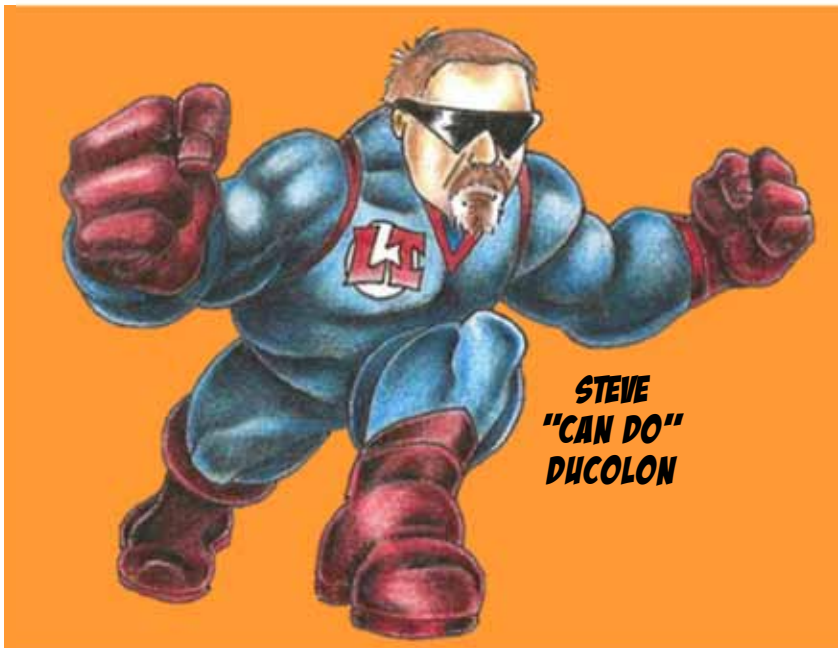
Thank you.

Dena England

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BY JANINE NICHOLS, CAE, IOM, CPL, CSNA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The CSNA office has been hard at work on a wide range of projects this past quarter.

A major highlight is the creation of STATS (*Short Timely Announcements To Share*) – a place where CSNA and Chapters can share information with members on a regular basis, to help streamline the communication process and reduce the number of emails members receive from CSNA.

It's been a busy time dealing with our partners in Sacramento. With registration and logistical coordination for 2016 State LAC, as well as contract negotiation for Sacramento LAC 2017 January 29-31, and for State Conference 2017 (November 9-12, 2017 - Mark those dates in your Calendars!).

The beginning of March, SNA held their Annual LAC in Washington, D.C., and it was a strong showing as we had more than 90 California members participate! The CSNA office organized the Annual CA State Dinner, and most of our California members joined us in the Piedmont Room at Clyde's of Gallery Place.

Some of you may be aware of the issues that we had with the Ontario Convention Center's electrical team during the first day of our 2015 Trade Show. Many of our vendors were adversely affected by the issues, yet they made the best of things and their efforts no doubt ensured that attendees still had an excellent experience. For nearly three months Jon and I held negotiations for a resolution with Ontario Convention Center to reimburse vendors who lost product due to improper refrigeration and the inability to heat, hold and sample food. It was arduous, but ultimately the Center agreed to rebate the affected exhibitors for their electrical, and also give CSNA a credit that will be passed on to the affected vendors for the 2016 Conference in Anaheim.

2016 Conference planning is under way and booth sales have begun. Reservations are being made at the Anaheim Marriott. This is sure to be a popular destination and the Program is a strong one, so make your reservations early to ensure that you get your room. Amber has been working with the decorator to get the exhibit floorplan approved by the fire marshall, and is working with floorplan genie to get the on-line floorplan updated to facilitate booth selection by the vendors. Jon and I did a site inspection with the CSNA Presidential team earlier this month to formalize the details of the conference and make sure the space still fit the vision and needs of the conference.

CSNA has on-going contract negotiations for the 2018 (Long Beach) and 2019 Annual Conferences. More details to come.

We are receiving registrations for the 2016 Child Nutrition and Industry Seminar and the final stages of the planning of that event are taking place. Rooms are filling up and if you plan to be with us, you are going to want to book NOW! See the Registration Form in this issue of Poppy Seeds and On-line.

We also had 2017 Child Nutrition and Industry Seminar hotel contract negotiations and secured The Monterey Plaza Hotel in beautiful Monterey, CA for April 30-May 2, 2017!

Along with all of the above, the CSNA office also worked on the Winter Board Meeting, providing hotel contract negotiation, registration, planning and support, and the CSNA Leadership Workshop providing hotel contract negotiation and planning. I worked with the President, President-Elect and Vice President to develop the 2016/2017 calendar which took a bit of work to fit everything in with some

Continued on Page 5

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2017 meeting date changes from SNA. There is a lot of work in developing a calendar that will allow our volunteer leaders to attend SNA events, CSNA events, and committee meetings while working around holidays and other industry events while giving them time to run their districts, prepare for their audits and reviews and maintain some sort of balance in their home life.

There have been on-going updates to the CalSNA.org website, to chapter pages as information is received, updating committee pages and working on other ways to streamline the process of updates and collecting information from committees. We have also developed an on-line registration form for board members to take care of all of their registration, travel and hotel needs.

The office created the 2016 election ballot for CSNA Members and Industry and oversaw the election process, with oversight by the EFC. The CSNA office assists chapters with their chapter ballots as well, if requested.

In addition to many other tasks, Jon has been publishing Poppy Seeds, creating the Exhibit Prospectus, and numerous other projects. Amber handles exhibitor questions and booth needs and sends out monthly membership reports to the chapters, Katherine processes memberships and registrations, Barbara follows-up on all email returns, processes mailed memberships and registrations, sends out membership renewals, and answers member calls. Charles maintains and updates the databases and websites. I maintain the master calendar, process reimbursements, prepare the monthly financial report sending it to the treasurer along with approved checks to be signed, provide governance guidance as needed to make sure the association operates in accordance with all laws, rules and regulations governing non-profit organizations and California Corporations, and provide support to the board, EFC, chapters and members as requested.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

BY SALLY SPERO, SNS, POPPY SEEDS EDITOR



When I come through the doors of the Lakeside USD Central Kitchen every morning to go to my office I can assure you that at 6:30 a.m. it is a busy place. The lights are brightly shining. There may be a delivery truck backing up with bleeper going full-blast. The employees are talking to each other as they go about their assignments. Music is being played (and we don't usually listed to harp music or flutes but rock on!) I can smell whatever is being cooked—cinnamon bread, spaghetti sauce, chicken. Many times mixers, blenders or steamers are being used and I can hear them going as well. If it's hot, we have fans on. Now the phone is ringing with something that needs my attention. Another day is in full swing!

But it's not always like this. Sometimes I stay alone at the end of the day or come in weekends or over the breaks. Now the kitchen is dark. The only sound is the hum of the refrigeration and the phone is silent. The ovens and all the other equipment are off.

We live in such a hectic world, full of stimulation that fills our senses. In recent years we seem to be adding to it with electronic devices that we think need constant checking and earbuds that let us hear music, news or podcasts no matter where we are. One night, a few weeks ago, my husband and I had to wait outside for a table at a popular restaurant. Everyone but the two of us were checking their phones or tablets, not even talking to the person who came with them.

And while I love the busy days, I also appreciate the silent ones. Times where I can sit at my desk, stare out the window and dream up new ideas. Or slow down, take a breath and really notice things that might otherwise be overlooked (hmmm, might be time to dust in here.) Or just have the opportunity for less outside stimulation competing for my attention so that I can pay attention instead to the thoughts inside my head.

I once had an employee who loved to wash the pots and pans (she was very popular.) We were talking about it once and she told me that she liked to just be able to stare at the wall and enjoy the feeling of the warm water and the sense of accomplishment that came with finishing up a task.

Maybe sometimes you come in early or maybe you stay late to lock up. Maybe sometimes you cover an odd shift and you know what I'm talking about. I hope so. As I told my husband that night at the restaurant "We are the only ones looking at the stars."

Sally Spero, SNS
Poppy Seeds Editor

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

BY LASHAWN BRAY, CSNA MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Golden Poppy, Golden Pillars or Golden Goals??



Whatever the title they still stand for Achievement, Teamwork & Growth.

At this time members, your Chapter Presidents have a list of goals that your chapter wants to accomplish this year that will be submitted to your Regional Coordinator. Whatever your goals are this year, whether it's to raise community awareness about CSNA and school nutrition or to increase membership and or certification or to invite school board members or legislators to tour your kitchens and have lunch with students, please remember to showcase and share your ideas, meetings and fun events in the *Poppy Seeds* magazine. Help other chapters grow as well. You will be updating your progress with your new Membership Director soon and displaying your accomplishments again at the Annual Conference in November in Anaheim.

With that note I'd like to thank you all for the best 4 years as your Membership Director and thank all the amazing chapters for participating in the different reward challenges and special projects I threw at you. A special thank you to my wonderful supportive Regional Coordinators, and especially thank you for making the Golden Pillar electronic photo frames experiment a great success. I hope they were as fun for you as they were for me. The books & photo frames were outstanding & so creative. The Resource Room as well.



I will miss you all, keep up the great work
& most of all. Have fun!!!





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TAKING A STAND

BY LEE ANGELA REID, SENIOR LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE, CAPITOL ADVISORS GROUP

Among the vital functions of CSNA is the deep activism members take in State and Federal government affairs. It is about articulating a message to our elected leaders that has a positive impact on the work we do to ensure that millions of children are served with healthy, nutritious meals every day. The work of crafting our message is taken very seriously by CSNA, which dedicates a committee of tireless volunteers who serve as appointees to the Public Policy and Legislation (PP&L) Committee of CSNA.

While the strategy and advice CSNA gets from us as your legislative advocates is certainly important, it is the PP&L committee members and CSNA's top state leaders who consider the legislative needs across school nutrition issues and formulate positions on countless bills and regulatory matters. They dig deep into the various policy and fiscal implications to ensure our organizational views are understood.

As the committee and leadership consider issues for a position or sponsorship by CSNA, there is framework in place for the posture we might take as an organization. When the opportunity or imperative arises for CSNA to sponsor legislation or administrative action, the association leads the effort to draft language, secure the support and authorship of a lawmaker or administrative official and shepherd that

idea through the entire process. The overwhelming majority of legislative and government action we attempt to influence is in the form of bills.

The PP&L Committee Members gather throughout the legislative year to evaluate emerging legislation and amendments to bills and then to advance recommend positions to the Executive Finance Committee (EFC.) Once actions are adopted by the EFC, they, along with PP&L members, mobilize to communicate those positions to the appropriate officials in Sacramento and Washington D.C. There are a variety of options CSNA has when considering what position to adopt on any given issue.

Positions intended to convey a supportive position begin with the actual sponsorship or co-sponsorship of legislation. These are bills of the highest priority to CSNA and indicate that our organization is the principal sponsor of the effort. In the instance of co-sponsorship, we are joined by other groups who are equally committed to the issue. There are also a number of occasions when we might not be the sponsor of a bill, but strongly advocate for its passage. In these instances, you will see that CSNA's stance reflected in a "support" position.

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Like sponsored bills, supported legislation is also of very high priority and results in the organization using considerable energy and effort to secure passage. Occasionally there are very positive bills that might have one or more flaws that stand in the way of earning a “support” position from CSNA, but if amended could be included among the bills we support. These instances are marked by the position “support if amended.” This kind of position very overtly suggests to lawmakers and their staffs that CSNA is amenable to a support position if the legislation is amended in certain ways to address our concerns. The approach often results in the changes we need to make a better outcome for the legislation.

Among the positions that CSNA considers when it is negatively disposed to a proposal is an “oppose” or “oppose unless amended” position. These positions are also among those that earn the full force and effort of the association to lobby. In these instances, CSNA objects to the policy being advanced by the bill or regulation and aims to defeat it unless changes are made to address the concerns we have expressed.

Finally, there are positions that indicate our interest in bills that might impact school nutrition but the language and concept have not yet been fully developed. Similarly, there may be other bills that do not have negative or positive implications for school nutrition in their present form, but could be very helpful or hurtful depending upon potential amendments. These circumstances that are less clear often result in a position of “watch,” which means we continue to track the bill and its progress to determine if it becomes a problem or a meaningful solution to issues we face. Our position on these bills can quickly shift to a supportive or oppose-oriented posture depending on the amendments taken through the lawmaking process.

Finally there are the more benign positions for bills we like or dislike but that are not the highest priority for CSNA. An “approve” or “disapprove” position indicates to the Legislature our general disposition for or against a certain idea that doesn’t necessarily compel us to be more engaged. The status of these positions can be, and occasionally are, upgraded to a more active stance; but as long as they remain in the more passive position, CSNA will focus more of its energy on its targeted list of higher priorities.

The legislative process is both exciting and tedious and becomes the annual work of your CSNA leaders who are dedicated to making sure our collective voice as an organization counts in Sacramento and Washington D.C. We recently concluded the annual State Legislative Action Conference in Sacramento where child nutrition leaders from school districts all across California gathered to highlight the legislative priorities of CSNA. This is an excellent way to begin your activism in the legislative process for CSNA. Remember that democracy is not a spectator sport. The entire membership is stronger with your engagement in the policy making process at all levels of government that impact school nutrition.

Editor’s Note: Accompanying this article is a photo taken at the year’s CSNA Legislative Action Conference held in Sacramento in January 2016. Here you can see Dale Bowman and AnMarie Kumpf “taking a stand” for child nutrition with Assemblywoman Catherine Baker.



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MICHELLE CURRY WINS FAME SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

BY TONY ROBERTS



This January Michelle Curry was awarded the 2016 FAME Special Achievement Award. This is a national award given annually to honor a school food service director who has shown excellence in meeting the challenges presented by small districts with an enrollment of 10,000 students or less.

In 2007, Michelle was looking for a new professional challenge. Like Dorothy Gale of *Wizard of Oz* fame, she found out that she didn't need to look past her own backyard to find fulfillment. That year she became the Food Service Director of the 4500 student South Pasadena USD, a town where she had grown up and was raising her family in.

Michelle inherited the program from a management company that had run the program for over ten years. But due to the volume of complaints from parents, the School Board elected to return to a self-operated program. Upon their departure, they practiced what could only be called a scorched earth policy. The fund balance was zero. There was little in the way of modern equipment (they even took the telephone), there were no program records, and there was low participation, which in turn provided a measly sum of \$33,000 in entitlement dollars. Michelle knew that she could make all the changes in the world, but if she didn't change the perception of the program to the students, the Board, faculty, staff, parents, and the community then her work would be for naught.

Michelle went back to basics and concentrated on the traditional "4 P's of Marketing:" product, place, price, and promotion. Variety on the menu (the product) was key, with homemade pastas, Asian dishes, house-made deli sandwiches and gourmet salads. Current salad favorites include Asian Noodle and Chicken Caesar. Seasonal fresh fruit offerings vary from cantaloupe, pineapple, kiwi and apple pears. Other favorites include pot stickers with edamame, and breakfast for lunch. At the secondary level fresh fruit cups, yogurt parfaits, and house-made breakfast burritos with green sauce keep the students coming. Secondary sites also grill all-beef hamburgers, hot dogs, and chicken breasts daily. The most popular serving line is a partial self-serve food bar at the high school that changes themes daily ranging from pasta to salads to tacos. Two years ago she worked with the elementary site principals to institute Recess before Lunch. The results from improvements are confirmed with the 50% decrease in plate waste. Of course, better quality food costs more. Being a parent in the community, Michelle knew that parents and students would pay for quality. By creating a more efficient department, she only

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needed to raise prices by 15% to get a 50% increase in quality.

Michelle then went to working on the eating environment (place). A better place is more than just facility and equipment makeovers; it includes maximizing the students' total experience in the cafeterias. With little budget for improvements she worked with what she had, buying table cloths and signs to liven up the serving areas, including a jumbo black board at the high school. Stanchions were placed at the secondary sites to help with flow. As profits came in, she invested in new serving carts, barbeques, and had new panels in school colors put on her serving lines. She hosted an art contest at the high school to repaint the interior of an express line, now decorated with a giant tiger. With an environmentally conscious community, she switched out black foam plates for plaid trays and other eco-friendly plates.

A critical part of the lunchtime experience revolved around service time. When Michelle arrived, everything was manual. She instituted an on-line payment system and a POS system. One benefit of the POS has been the increase in the speed of the service of the meals. Wait time for food has decreased by 40%. Labor time previously used to count tickets and cash is now used more efficiently. For students, going online meant less time in-line and more free time. They no longer had to choose between eating and socializing.

Lastly, Michelle knew that she had to promote the "new" program to get results. She speaks at PTA meetings, presents at Back to School Nights, and at middle and high school orientation meetings. She uses the district Parent Connect phone and email system to alert parents when changes occur. She has presented to her school board several times, touting the program's successes and future goals. She is now included in the 9th grade tour of the high school, reaching over 300 families. Last year she created a Twitter account to showcase menu items and post articles. She has partnered with teachers and ASB to provide snacks during testing, and AP exams breakfasts. They have also worked with the high school small business class, which operates the Student Store under the cafeteria umbrella.

The department has catered the District's year end celebration and awards event every year since she arrived, as well as Staff Development Meetings. They have also assisted parents in putting on the Boosters Annual Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser at the high school since 2008. She's also the lead person on the Wellness Committee. She also has a food service website.

Ultimately, these changes made a difference in the program. In four short years program eligible meals served increased 113% and have continued to grow to 120% of her starting totals, despite the constraints of the new menu pattern. The participation rate has almost doubled in the meal program, and commodity entitlement dollars available to the program have tripled. Program size (in dollars) has soared to \$1.6 million from \$900,000, and the fund balance has grown to \$340,000. Furthermore, the growth in the program has allowed her to grow opportunities for her staff; the growth in program has allowed her to add seven staff positions, an increase of 40% from her start date. Participation by meal eligible students has more than doubled, and total participation by the student body is up over 50% from her arrival.

From what was a failure of a program, Michelle's biggest achievement is the "umbrella achievement" of creating a sustainable school meal program with minimal resources, a low needy base of 12%, and no economies of scale to leverage. Under the umbrella come the achievements of profitability, nutrition integrity, and student inclusivity.

She helps on special event days at the sites, and works a register occasionally to connect with students. She also lets parent groups use the kitchens to prepare food for district fundraisers. Her favorite day of the year is Color Day at the high school, where she dons her original cheerleader uniform and participates in the staff dance. Taking pictures in uniform with her own cheerleader daughter has made this a memorable event!

Let's all "cheer" for Michelle Curry and congratulate her on this impressive accomplishment.



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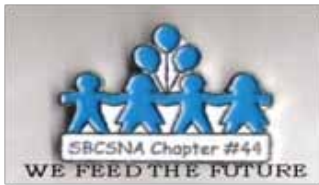
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SBCSNA CHAPTER#44 NOVEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

By Chapter #44 Secretary & Regional Coordinator, Janice Carter

ANNUAL TOY DRIVE MEETING

Chapter #44 kicked off the holiday spirit with their annual toy drive meeting with lots of toys donated by our members that were picked up by our local firemen. Our members enjoyed turkey and gravy with all the “fixins.” Waxie came out and gave a great presentation on new SDS regulations, speaking to our members on chemicals we have in our kitchens and how to label and store them.



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SPREADING SUMMER SUNSHINE

BY SALLY SPERO, SNS, POPPY SEEDS EDITOR

In November 2015 my home district of Lakeside Union School District was honored to receive a Western Region Summer Sunshine Award. The congratulation letter thanked us for “employing innovative strategies to promote meal quality, nutrition education and wellness by serving high-quality, kid-friendly menu items and involving parents to increase participation for summer meals in Lakeside California.”

If you run (or are thinking about running) a summer meal program there are many excellent resources out there to help you including in-person trainings, webinars, toolkits of materials and the tried-and-true method of calling up your colleagues to see what they do. I’d like to add some suggestions that I have found helpful in running a summer meal program.



Serve the Best Food You Possibly Can I realize that some summer locations are very challenging facilities and that cold boxed meals are the only option that makes sense. But I’ve noticed a number of schools with full facilities shut them down and serve cold boxed meals too. Or the hot boxes, salad bars and other equipment sit idle all summer when they could be used to make nicer meals.

When you are trying to attract customers you want to give them something worth making the effort to come for. We used our BBQ grills to have BBQ days and taco cart days and had pizza days. Even cold meal programs can be enhanced with summer fruits such as plums and watermelons. And don’t forget the frozen juice cups!

Have Something for the Adults In most cases, adults are the ones who bring the children to the program. Putting up signs that say “No One Under 18 Allowed” or telling adults they can’t sit with their children (both of which I have seen) is not the way to build your counts. Lots of restaurants have the concept of free meals for children with a paid adult meal so it’s something people are used to. We charge a modest price for adults and sell cold water bottles for \$1 more. You will be surprised how many people baby-sit over the summer and will bring a whole carload of children to get free meals if the food is nice and they are made to feel welcome.

And Finally....If there is a worse name than “Summer Feeding Program” to put on the materials you distribute to the community to try to attract them to your program I don’t know what it would be. Select a name that reflects your intention to offer a high-quality program and welcome people to it. I have seen many creative names such as Summer Fun Café and Fun in the Sun Lunches. We are in Lakeside so we are the Summerside Café.

Enjoy your summer!

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SUBA CHAPTER #35 CONTINUES GREAT YEAR

BY KIT MOLINARI, ELIGIBILITY SPECIALIST, NUTRITION SERVICES,
MARYSVILLE JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SUBA Chapter #35 has been busy these last few months. If you remember our article in the Winter Issue of *Poppy Seeds* we had quite a few things in the pipeline:



November 5-8 some of our ‘SUBA Lunch Lady’ members sported our new logo t-shirt at the CSNA Conference in Ontario.

November 10th ZUMBA!!! Our Zumba Class was a hit! The vast majority of those in attendance had never gone to a Zumba class before, and our instructor, Francisco, kept us moving and entertained throughout. As nutrition service professionals it is good to get out and try new things so that we can be better equipped to encourage our student population to do the same.

November 21 was the local Turkey Trot 5/10K Walk/Run benefiting Hands of Hope, a non-profit organization that supports the homeless in our local area. Members of our chapter did a wonderful job of supporting this event. Thanks to a contribution from our local mandarin orange farm co-op we were also able to keep everyone’s energy up with mandarin oranges for the participants. While people enjoyed our nutritious and tasty treat, they could take a look at our “Food Presentation” boards. These have also been featured at the November 2014 pre-conference Reception for the CSNA Smart Meals Smart Kids Conference, by SUBA Membership Chair Julie Thompson and her team from Johnson Park Elementary School.



On January 6 thirteen of us braved the rain, wind, and cold, to tour the Crystal Creamery in Modesto along with one of their dairy farms. We were greeted by Jim O’Shea, Director of Sales, and Richard Hunter, Key Account Manager who gave us an informative overall background history and company statistics of Crystal Creamery/Foster Farms Dairy. We were then honored to have a plant tour personally conducted by Larry Diggory, Plant Manager, an employee for over 30 years who had worked with Foster Farms original owner Max Foster. His wealth of knowledge about the company and its processes impressed us all. Our next host was Randy Haile at the dairy farm, and again, we were greeted by someone with an integral knowledge of what the industry and his farm does and why. Our SUBA President, Tina Bond, was especially enamored with the beautiful happy cows on the farm. Please check out our Facebook page “CSNA Chapter Thirtyfive Suba” for more pictures of our amazing tour. We look forward to making another tour possible in the spring for those who could not attend in January.



So far we are pleased to report that we have accomplished everything we set out to do back in September, except for our basic skills class, which is in the pipeline for our next SUBA Chapter meeting. Watch for our next article for highlights on that class and a year-end membership report.



Our 2015-16 Executive Board:

- President - Tina Bond, Site Manager Lindhurst High
- Secretary - Jeri Echols, Site Manager Marysville High
- Treasurer - Ron Chance, Site Manager Arboga Elementary
- Membership - Julie Thompson, Site Manager Johnson Park Elementary
- Membership co-chair - Karla De La Paz, Site Manager Edgewater Elementary
- Hospitality - Janet Woodward, Site Manager Ella Elementary
- Parliamentarian - Amber Watson, Director Nutrition Services Marysville Joint Unified SD
- Media Chair - Kit Molinari, Eligibility Specialist, Marysville Joint Unified SD

ROCK 'N ROSE UPDATE

BY MARY SIMONS, CHAPTER #32 PRESIDENT

The SNA “Invite a Congressman to Lunch” contest inspired Rock ‘n Rose to do just that. While our Congressman was not available and we didn’t win the contest, we were honored to have Congressman Tom McClintock’s Senior Aide Kimberly Pruett join us in December at one of our elementary schools. We chose a school that had gone through a “Smarter Lunchroom” makeover. The meeting was informative for all who attended, including our Assistant Superintendent of Business and the School Principal.



Our January meeting took us to Thunder Valley Casino where Executive Chef Luukkonen took us personally through the multiple kitchens they have. Those that attended found out how they streamline their operations so that the casino can serve thousands in its multiple restaurants. We were treated to refreshments in the bakery kitchen and got to experience behind-the-scenes operations on a scale much larger than we are used to.



The next chapter meeting in March will be held at Sysco Sacramento. A new adventure for most of our members. Also in March, we are scheduled to volunteer at the Placer Food Bank. This is the third year that our members have donated a morning of their Spring Break to give back to the community. Way to go Rock ‘n Rose!

BRINGING FARMER'S MARKET TO SCHOOLS

BY TIFFANIE URTON AND KE'ANNA DODD

At San Marcos Unified School District the Child Nutrition Services Department has created a staff-run farmer's market for our students. We focus on fruits and vegetables and the importance of eating healthy foods to fuel their growing bodies.

We rotate 3-4 classrooms at a time to join us for a fun-filled nutritional presentation followed by a trip to our fresh fruit and vegetable stand where each student has the opportunity to choose from a variety of produce to take as a sample. We also use this lesson to encourage students to try new items offered in the cafeteria lunch line or salad bar, and in turn they achieve a better understanding of our menu selections. All of this information helps to open their minds to the importance of trying new foods and reiterates our slogan "Eat A Rainbow Way" that is atop every elementary salad bar.

We are so proud to be able to offer this opportunity to our elementary students, many of whom are not aware of the growing process of produce.



EASTSIDE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT'S OMA MANAGER

BY KAREN RASCH, CHILD NUTRITION ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT,
EASTSIDE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

There seems to always be a cafeteria manager that reminds you a lot of your grandma. A lady who will ask you how your kids are and will even use their first name. One who will sew a blanket for your newborn son and make it look like one you get at a department store for \$100. One who has worked so long in food services that she knows her ins and outs around a kitchen and no task is too big for her (even if she herself is not so big in stature.) Eastside Union School District has this kind of manager and the district has benefited from having such a reliable employee in food services.



Adelheid “Heidi” Beckett was born in Germany and came to the United States when she was five years old. She has lived in California since then although she has gone back to visit her native country a few times. She began in our school district as a teacher’s aide and worked her way up to her current position of cafeteria manager. She has always led by example and her staff absolutely loves her. As the middle school manager, Heidi is also in charge of our catering events. Using her creativity, she sets up wonderful events for our district. She is that employee that will be at work ten minutes before and stay ten minutes after. If there is something she can help with she will more than gladly do it. Do not let her little figure fool you in the way she tackles big assignments.

Heidi has also served as President of our local CSNA Chapter #37. For the past two years, she has represented us in such a positive way. At the 2015 CSNA Annual Conference, Chapter #37 was presented with the Bronze Level in the Golden Pillar Awards. As a chapter, we know this was achieved through Heidi’s leadership. Our chapter meetings are always enlightening and we enjoy learning any new skill that she shares with us that night.

When I came onboard the Food Services department at Eastside Union School District, I felt lost and confused. I barely knew the difference between a cereal bowl-pack and a cereal bar. Yes, I was that inexperienced in food services! Heidi was one of the first employees to make me feel welcome. She offered her help then and she has not stopped extending her hand towards me. All of our cafeteria managers are great. Each one brings a different plate to the table, and I mean this figuratively and literally. Heidi is definitely no exception.

Along with the eighth grade class of 2016, Heidi will be promoted to a new stage in her life. After twenty years in food service, Heidi will be retiring in June of 2016. We wish her the best on her new journey and with this we say *“Danke für alles. Wir warden dich vermissen!”*



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MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARN KITCHEN BASICS

BY KIMBERLY SEGURA, RINCON MIDDLE SCHOOL KITCHEN MANAGER,
ESCONDIDO UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ms. Aguilar's Culinary Arts Class at Rincon Middle School in Escondido, California has been collaborating with the Nutrition Services Department so that they can get hands-on experience and a clearer understanding of what it is like to work in a larger kitchen as opposed to the home-like setting in their classroom.



I started off the year with lessons in H.A.C.C.P, sanitation, recipe reading, conversion and finally, the students had the opportunity to actually prepare a couple of recipes.

The students made a cilantro ranch dressing using safety knives to finely chop the cilantro. They also roasted edamame and garbanzo beans. The dressing and roasted items were served on the lunch line and the Culinary Arts Class students were very proud of their accomplishments and the opportunity to share it with their peers.

The Nutrition Services Department for the Escondido Union School District, led by Gail Gousha, will continue to support the work being done with the students in the Culinary Arts Class at Rincon Middle School. The collaboration between the department and the Culinary Arts class was started two years ago by Area Supervisor Judi Reynolds who is now the Director of Fallbrook Union High School District. We will continue working with the students on more complex recipes as the school year continues.





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SAN YSIDRO SCHOOL DISTRICT HOSTS INNOVATIVE PLANT-BASED MENU PLANNING AND MARKETING SEMINAR

BY LAUREN PITTS, RD

San Ysidro School District was recently recognized by *Live Well San Diego* for its outstanding work promoting healthier, more sustainable plant-based options through its Meatless Monday program. Located immediately north of the Mexican border in San Diego County, San Ysidro continues to improve its efforts to support overall health and wellness for students. Most recently, the district partnered with The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) dietitians and completed training for the first-ever Food Forward: Menu Planning and Marketing for Plant-Strong Meals.



The HSUS hosted the two hour event with San Ysidro School District, sharing tips and tricks with kitchen staff on how to expand the district's Meatless Monday program through marketing and recipe development, while providing hands-on cooking demonstrations. Delicious recipes included a Fiesta Rice Bowl Salad Shaker, Protein-Packed Pasta Marinara and Sriracha Lime Tacos with Spanish Rice and Caliente Corn Salsa. The staff was able to sample all the dishes and determine which would be the most popular among students. The program and recipes were so well-liked, the school district planned to roll out at least two new recipes for Meatless Monday in February.

San Ysidro School District is one of many schools, hospitals and universities all across the country to participate in Meatless Monday. The decision to choose more plant-based foods is as simple as following the Three Rs: “reducing” or “replacing” consumption of animal products, and “refining” our diets by switching to products from sources that adhere to higher animal welfare standards, which in turn decreases the number of animals being bred and confined on factory farms.

Plant-based eating is gaining momentum through programs like Meatless Monday. More and more people are turning to plant-based options and decreasing meat consumption to reduce their risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer and obesity. Currently, one in three children is considered overweight or obese in the United States. According to the State of Obesity report, “if we fail to change the course of the nation's obesity epidemic, the current generation of young people may be the first in American history to live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents.”

Fortunately, many California schools are taking a stand against this problem and offering more plant-based options to their students to help balance meals and improve overall health. The HSUS offers free resources, recipes, marketing materials and training on Meatless Monday.

Lauren Pitts, RD is the Southern California Food Policy Coordinator for The Humane Society of the United States. For more information please visit www.humanesociety.org/mmresources.

EL MONTE SCHOOL DISTRICTS COLLABORATE ON WELLNESS

BY DR. ROBERT LEWIS

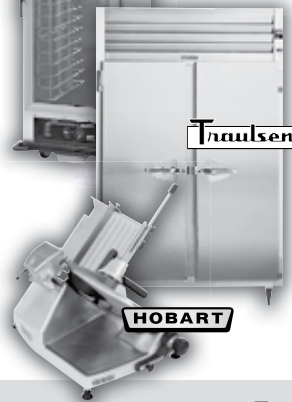
El Monte Elementary and El Monte High School Districts were both awarded the 2016 Community Health Collaborator of the Year from the Dairy Council of California. Pictured are Dr. Robert Lewis, Nutrition Director for EMCD; Suzy Sayre, Nutrition director for EMHSD; EMCSD's Nutrition Project Coordinator Lorena Quezada and Candice Sainz, Dairy Council of California Representative for both districts.



Together, we utilize student wellness curriculum supplied by the Dairy Council. We all sit on the City of El Monte's wellness team, and we have participated in several joint community efforts for student wellness.

Candice is responsible for bringing the Mobile Dairy Classroom and the dairy cow to our campuses. She also joins us for such events as Walk to School and the Student Wellness Expo that we host each year. Candice is a member of our district Coordinated School Health Team. Both districts were jointly honored to bring about increased student wellness efforts.

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Non-CSNA Member - School District <i>Includes Monday Night Reception</i>	\$445	\$495	_____
CSNA Member - Industry	\$445	\$495	_____
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You will want to join us for CSNA Child Nutrition and Industry Summit at the Riviera Palm Springs, 1600 North Indian Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, CA 92262. Riviera Palm Springs offers special amenities for our group, so plan on arriving early or staying late to take advantage of everything the property has to offer. Our Group Rate will be honored 3 days before and after the Child Nutrition and Industry Summit, subject to availability.

The Child Nutrition and Industry Summit Committee is hard at work planning the details of the event.

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Hotel Reservation Cut-Off date is Monday, April 13th!

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We negotiated with the hotel to lower the resort fee to just \$10 for our group, and we have negotiated a **free** self-parking rate or valet parking rate of \$20 per day (for those coming in for the day or overnight.)

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See you all in Palm Springs!

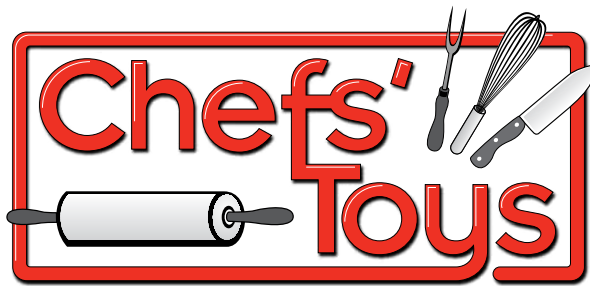
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This is to invite your support for CSNA's 9th Annual Installation of Officers which will be held on May 15, 2016, at the Riviera Hotel in Palm Springs, CA. We invite you to join us for a fabulous dinner and an unforgettable evening. Our goal is to make this a truly special occasion for all our members, including our sustaining members who support the Association in so many important ways. This night is organized to express our appreciation to volunteers and members for their time, dedication and commitment to the Association on behalf of California's children. We will celebrate the installation of the new Association officers, and welcome new Board members. This will be incorporated into our Industry Seminar program being held Sunday - Tuesday, but members can register for the Installation Dinner only. We hope you can join us for all or part of this weekend.

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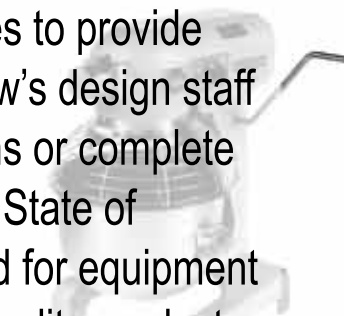
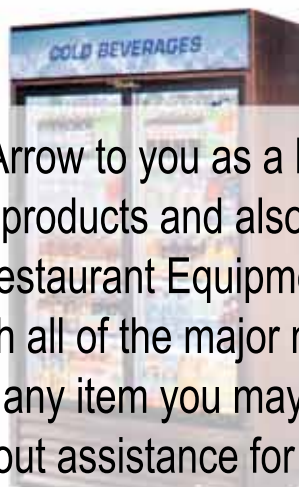
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Volunteering to help in the various areas at Conference is a great opportunity for you to learn more about your Association, Meet your peers and to gain a sense of pride in knowing that you helped to enhance the experience of all in attendance!

Additionally, start to promote the value and the opportunity of volunteering at 2016 Conference your interns! Conference in a chance for your interns to have access to other Child Nutrition Professionals and learn more about the profession.

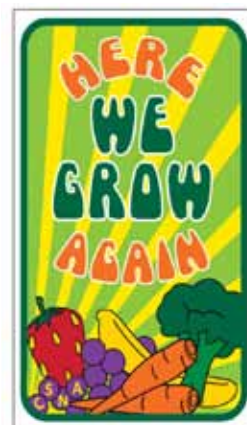
2016 CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

KAYLA HARRISON

On August 2, 2012, Kayla Harrison became the first American in history to capture an Olympic Gold Medal in the sport of Judo. In doing so, she made history for her country and her sport. As an individual, she climbed a personal peak that only a few years prior seemed insurmountable. At the age of 16, Kayla revealed that for years she had been sexually abused by her judo coach. Her revelation turned her world upside down. Kayla pressed charges and a federal criminal prosecution followed. Kayla moved from her home and family in Ohio to Massachusetts to live and train with Jimmy Pedro and his father “Big Jim.” They became her coaches and surrogate family. As a teenager, Kayla was made to rebuild her life in a new place surrounded by new people. Her Olympic Gold Medal represents the height of her athletic accomplishments, but doesn’t begin to tell Kayla’s story of personal triumph.



*Kayla’s messages of **BELIEF IN ONESELF, PERSEVERANCE AMIDST OBSTACLES, SETTING AND REACHING GOALS AND PEAK PERFORMANCE** have captivated audiences from community groups, to high schools and colleges, to women’s groups to Fortune 500 companies. Kayla is an especially sought after motivational speaker on overcoming adversity and her story is proof that with the right help, **ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.***



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WHAT'S COOKING WITH CHEF JIM

BY SALLY SPERO, SNS, POPPY SEEDS EDITOR

How brave are you?

This is a question a lot of school food service people are asking lately. While our many wonderful vendors provide a variety of tasty and affordable choices, sometimes we are looking for something that just isn't currently available in the marketplace. And sometimes that takes us to the point where we have to consider using.....

.....raw meat.

This is something that hasn't been used much in our field for many years as safety concerns increased and more products became available. But Chef Jim and I have taken on this challenge with good success and are sharing our recipes with you below.

We talked at length about doing this and also did research on what products were available in the marketplace. We decided to go with fresh chicken and fresh ground beef to avoid space problems that might arise during thawing. We decided to use chicken leg quarters to make serving on the line easier to manage. And the giant meatball is also easier to serve than a lot of little ones. The meatball is served with pasta mixed with meatless spaghetti sauce (everyone has their own version of this so I'm only including the meatball recipe.)

All our employees are ServSafe certified but we still reviewed proper handling techniques with them. On a strictly practical level, we also considered what kind of pan liners to use as both these recipes can lead to pans that could end up using a lot of scrubbing.

Be brave! The results will be worth it.

Roast Chicken 700 2-Meat Servings

Salt	2 lb. + 4 oz.
White pepper	1 lb. + 8 oz.
Black pepper	14 oz.
AP Flour	10 lb.
Chicken leg quarters	700 each

Combine salt, white pepper, black pepper and flour. Dredge chicken pieces in seasoned flour and place on prepared pans. Bake at 375 degrees conventional oven for 45 minutes or 325 degrees convection oven for 35 minutes or until chicken reaches minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F.



Continued on Page 45

Giant Meatball 200 2.75-Meat Servings

Chicken base	8 tsp.
Water	8 oz.
Fresh eggs	20
Dry milk powder	10 oz.
Raw onions, diced	4 lb.
Dried parsley	1 cup
Black pepper	¼ cup
Granulated garlic	¼ cup
Ground basil	¼ cup
Ground oregano	¼ cup
Salt	¼ cup
Ground fennel seed	1 Tbsp.
Ground marjoram	2 tsp.
Raw ground beef 80/20	32 lb.
Rolled oats	4 lb.
Parmesan cheese, shredded	2 lb.
Tomato paste	19 oz.



Combine chicken base, water, eggs, milk, onions, parsley, black pepper, garlic, basil, oregano, salt, fennel seeds and marjoram. Puree until smooth.

Place ground beef, oats and parmesan cheese in a mixer bowl. Add slurry and combine using paddle attachment. Portion with #8 scoop onto prepared pans and bake at 350 degrees conventional oven or 325 degrees convection oven for 30 minutes or until internal temperature of 165 degrees is reached.

COVER PHOTO

BY SALLY SPERO, SNS, POPPY SEEDS EDITOR

Elsewhere in this issue of *Poppy Seeds* you can read about the innovative Farmers Market program being offered at the San Marcos Unified School District.

In the cover photo you can see the project in action as student Mayerlin Munoz selects fresh beets to take home and share with her family. This engaging shot was taken by photographer Anna Lucia Roybal.





BY DAIRY COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA



Dairy Council of California and Health-e Meal Planner Pro recently teamed up with the Southern California School Nutrition Association (SCSNA) to sponsor the Eat Smart 2 Be Smart Nutrition Educator Contest. According to Anna Apoian, Marketing Chair for SCSNA, the purpose of the contest was to recognize teachers for their commitment in educating children in regards to developing sound eating habits. She explained that teachers are an integral part of making the classroom to cafeteria connection. Students learn about wholesome eating in the classroom and then experience eating nutritious foods in the cafeteria. The end goal is that children take the messages home.

Forty-five teachers submitted nutrition education lessons for the first ever Eat Smart 2 Be Smart Nutrition Educator Contest. The contest was open throughout California. The award winners were Ms. Michelle Radmanesh, first-grade teacher at Willow Elementary School in Lakewood, and Ms. Christine Flores, teacher-librarian at Central High School East in Fresno. They were awarded \$500 each for their creative and passionate implementation of a nutrition lesson.

Ms. Radmanesh says she frequently incorporates nutrition into her lesson plans because students are able to use math, science, and language arts skills all in one project. She reports her students enjoy learning about nutrition and trying new foods in a

fun environment. The lesson plan Ms. Radmanesh submitted for the contest involved reading a story about a dragon who ate too much junk food. Students learned about cause and effect and wrote an argumentative essay about the benefits of eating healthy foods. Ms. Radmanesh said “Being a new teacher, it was really nice to win this award because it provides more resources for my classroom and students.”

Ms. Flores’ submission was Central USD’s *Athletes as Readers and Leaders* program which is in its eighth year. High school student athletes make weekly trips to elementary schools to read a book and teach a lesson about nutrition, health and exercise to K-3rd graders. The athletes encourage the younger students to live healthy and work hard in school. This program started in 2008 and was developed by her colleague, Janet Wile, Supervisor of Library Services at Central USD. Ms. Flores was inspired to submit the program for the contest because in her words “It was a perfect fit.” She describes the program as a powerful mentoring experience that has reached thousands of children with nutrition and health messages. Their book list can be found on EatSmart2BeSmart.org. One of the people most excited about this award was Lisa Persons, Assistant Director in the Child Nutrition Department at Central USD. She promoted the contest to her district through her local Chapter meeting.

The Nutrition Educator Award is one way the Southern California School Nutrition Association is achieving their goal of reaching beyond its membership to partner and recognize the positive contributions being made in the child nutrition field. As a healthy eating organization, Dairy Council of California provides support in educating students on the benefits of eating from all five food groups, and

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therefore, was a natural partner for this innovative program. In addition, Dairy Council of California offers teachers free turnkey nutrition lesson plans that are easy to teach and align with Common Core State Standards. Health-e Meal Planner Pro provides USDA approved software that analyzes school menus, and allows districts to post valuable nutrition information to parents, while simultaneously educating families on nutrient content and the benefit of a balanced meal.

The Southern California School Nutrition Association would like to thank the sponsors, Health-e Meal Planner Pro owner, Meg Chesley and the Dairy Council of CA and as well as the Nutrition Educator Contest judges Sara Minkow, R.D., Debra Amos, R.D. and Candice Sainz, for their time and support.



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LAUGH OUT LOUD: FINDING COMIC RELIEF IN THE KITCHEN

BY KAREN RASCH, CHILD NUTRITION ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, EASTSIDE UNION SD

Ring. Ring.

“Thank you for calling Child Nutrition. This is Karen. How may I help you?”

“Hey, Karen, it’s me. I have a problem with my reports. I’m typing in my numbers but it’s not taking them. I’ve been trying to finish this report for half an hour already and it’s not working. What should I do?”

“Hmm... Have you tried restarting your computer?”

“Yes. Twice.”

“Okay, I’ll create a ticket for IT to take a look at it.”

One hour later.

Ring. Ring.

“Thank you for calling Child Nutrition. This is Karen. How may I help you?”

“Hey, it’s me again. So, IT fixed the problem already.”

“Oh, good! What was wrong with the computer?”

“I had the Number Lock on so that’s why my numbers weren’t showing up on the screen. I hate computers.”

For those that may not know what the Number Lock key on your keyboard is, let me explain. There are a set of numbers on the keyboard on the right hand side.

Right above the “7” key is the Number Lock key. If you press that key, you will not be able to use any number keys on that side of the keyboard. Go ahead and try it. You will see I am not lying! Of course, if you are not familiar with this button, you will panic as you try typing in numbers and they are nowhere to be found. The dialogue above was meant to show you that there is humor in our everyday routines. Instead of getting mad and frustrated, this manager laughed it off and continued with her day. She was humble enough to admit she is not too tech savvy but she did not let that bring her attitude down.

Before getting the job as the Administrative Assistant in Child Nutrition, I did not have any experience in food services or food in general for that matter. Let me explain just how bad I am. I have burnt a cup of noodles because I put it in the microwave without water. I have bought zucchinis thinking they were cucumbers. My pancakes look like amoebas instead of perfect circles. My list of embarrassments is too long so I will stop there. These confessions kind of make you think, “How did she end up being the administrative assistant in food services?” When I find out, I promise I will let you know!

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I share my background for a couple of reasons. First, I encourage anyone in food services who struggles with cooking or food knowledge in general to never give up. We may be few but the food services department is a great one to work for. We fill our brains with knowledge and stomachs with food. What other department can say that? None.

Second, I have seen how a group of people will come to your aid when you are lost and confused. I know I can call any staff member within Child Nutrition and ask them the silly questions I have. They are all there to help and encourage me. I strongly believe that Child Nutrition has the kindest workers in a district. The saying "The way into a man's heart is through his stomach" can be applied to children as well. We are feeding thousands and tens of thousands of students and we do it with a bright smile and warm heart. And those kids feel it. They may not express their

gratitude and their complaints may say otherwise but I know they are thankful for the services we give them.

We will have struggles from time to time and obstacles will arise. However, it is the way we handle these challenges that will either make us or break us. We need to learn to laugh it off. So what if I confused 1# chicken as the #1 best chicken to use? If we take ourselves too seriously, we will miss life's comedic reliefs. On behalf of those who do not know how to cook or struggle with kitchens in general, I thank all you cafeteria workers for your help and support. Whether you struggle with computer keyboards or kitchen appliances, you have the ability to see life in a positive way. Let us do as text messages say and laugh out loud!

BOOK REVIEW

“FIRST BITE: HOW WE LEARN TO EAT”

BY BEE WILSON

BY SALLY SPERO, SNS, POPPY SEEDS EDITOR

Bee Wilson begins her book by describing a meal at home with her three children. Grilled eggplant is being served. Child Number One is delighted because she loves grilled eggplant. Child Number Two takes one look at it and refuses to take even a small bite because he hates grilled eggplant. Child Number Three is crying because she loves grilled eggplant but it has touched the chicken on her plate, making it now inedible. Oh Ms. Wilson, multiply that by thousands and welcome to the world of school food service!

In her new book *First Bite*, the author explores scientific evidence on how tastes are developed in early life, reviews different types of disordered eating, and looks at successful strategies that have been developed to change eating habits. So much of what we are exposed to in books about eating habits takes the form of what worked for one child or one family and not the larger picture (there is always a family where everyone loves kale salad.) Other times we are exposed to what are essentially diet fads (Paleo, South Beach, etc.) by the authors. But this book was very well-researched and contained information that added to my knowledge about how tastes are formed and re-formed throughout our lives.

One topic that I was especially interested in was getting people to eat foods they do not want to eat. As you know, this is a hot topic in the school food service field right now. In one instance, the HHFKA has



required all reimbursable meals to have a fruit or vegetable. The information on how that has been playing out has been contradictory with some saying that they are throwing out more and others saying the children are eating more. Is this a good strategy or not? Another instance has to do with chocolate milk versus white milk. There are those who maintain that if chocolate milk is taken away the children will eventually get thirsty enough to drink white milk and others say the children give up on milk entirely if they don't get the flavor they want. What can studying eating habits show us? Are these the best ways or are there better ways that we could learn from? The author offers up some intriguing possibilities for us to consider.

If the book had any disadvantage it is that the author is based in the United Kingdom and so any discussion of school meals is based on the system in that country (it was interesting to learn how well-intentioned people had raised generations of rice-pudding haters through their school meal system.) It would have been nice to have information about what has gone on in the USA included in the book. Maybe the author will move someday and update it!

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