

NIBBLES

CHARLES BERTOK JOINS OUSD AS NEW FOOD SERVICES DIRECTOR

Food For Thought welcomes Charles Bertok, a 20 year veteran in the food service industry with degrees in institutional food management and culinary arts who became the new OUSD Food Services Director this past summer. Charles is responsible for the cafeteria operations at all of the District's schools. And he is a big supporter of the Food For Thought Salad Bar.

Charles has spent his first few months on the job getting acclimated and is in the process of creating his plans for the future. He is committed to accomplishing one of the overall goals of Food For Thought which is to encourage the OUSD to adopt an overall Food Services Policy designed to promote healthy diets.

Charles regularly visits all of the schools, so if you happen to be having a Salad Bar lunch with your child, check and see if he is around and say hello! - *S.Fields*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Food miles: Do you know that in the United States, the food that goes into a typical dinner travels 1,500 to 2,500 miles to get to your table? This is four times greater than forty years ago, when almost all of our produce came from local farms.



Shelf life of food: Because of the long distances that foods now travel, fruits and vegetables are often picked long before they are ripe, and subjected to pesticides and fumigants in order to increase their "shelf life". This results in fruits and vegetables that may look nice, but certainly don't taste as good as they could if they came from nearby farms and were ripened on the plant and freshly-picked. Fresher, riper, locally-grown produce may also be higher in nutrients than produce shipped long distances.



This Thanksgiving, try to buy the ingredients for your holiday meal from local sources. This will help ensure that you have a tastier, healthier meal while supporting our local farmers.

NUTRITION EDUCATION FOR OUR KIDS

We are pleased to announce that Food For Thought received a grant from the California Endowment that will allow us to conduct nutrition education classes throughout the year for all of the students in the OUSD elementary schools. Three workshops have been planned in which students will learn about a variety of topics including the food pyramid, food groups, appropriate daily portion sizes, and learning to make healthy, balanced and nutritional choices for their meals. Food For Thought is working with three registered dieticians (Cheryl Beers, Susan Speer, and Beth Ciuffini) who are helping to design and conduct these sessions.

In addition to the elementary schools, Food For Thought is designing and conducting outreach workshops on nutrition education for Spanish-speaking families in the Ojai Unified School District. The first workshop was held at Topa Topa Elementary School on October 12, and featured a delicious, healthy enchilada dinner, film, and demonstration by Cheryl Beers. Two more workshops are planned for the year as well as nutrition education sessions for Matilija Junior High School and Nordhoff High School.

We are looking for volunteers to help us conduct the sessions. Volunteers will receive training and instruction. Please contact Dr. Marty Fujita (646-4412; msfujita@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in volunteering for this valuable program.

-*M.Fujita*

HOLIDAY FOOD SAFETY

With the holiday season just around the corner, it is time to keep yourself, your family, and guests safe from bad food.

Here are a couple holiday food safety ideas to remember:

- Keep hot food hot, and cold food cold.
- Keep all foods out of the danger zone. The danger zone is 40 to 140 degrees.
- Thawing your turkey: If you do not use a fresh turkey, a frozen bird should be defrosted in the refrigerator or under cold running water. These are the only two methods that are recommended.
- Cooking your turkey: Stuffing should be the last thing you do before it goes to the oven. Another method is to make your stuffing in a separate pan. Cook your turkey to 165 degrees, inserting your thermometer at the thickest part of the turkey. A good guide for cooking turkey is 12 minutes per pound, depending on your oven.
- Turkey Ideas: Another trick is to cook your turkey breast side down, so all the turkey juices go to the white meat. Also, remember to let your turkey sit for 30 minutes before carving. If you have leftover turkey, take it off the bone and refrigerate as soon as possible. Sliced turkey with cranberry mayonnaise on whole grain bread is a great leftover treat!

-*C. Bertok*

DAILY SALAD BAR LAUNCHES AT MATILIJIA

Matilija Junior High School students now can enjoy the Food For Thought Salad Bar every day of the week. On November 1, a full Salad Bar lunch (with 5 vegetable choices, 3 fruit options, 2-3 protein selections and more) became available Monday through Friday.

Many of the fruits and vegetables come from local farms. In addition, special seasonal produce is selected to provide students with an opportunity to try some of the more unusual fruits or vegetables grown in Ventura County. Recently, students have been able to enjoy Fuyu Persimmons. And as an enticement to try the salad bar, students received sample tastes of the persimmons while they were waiting in line.

The response to the daily Salad Bar so far (with limited promotion) has been terrific - nearly 50 students each day are choosing to make their lunch from the salad bar instead of picking one of the pre-prepared options. Future plans include themed salad bars.

The Matilija Salad Bar lunch is \$2.50 which includes milk.

-*S.Fields*

