



NIBBLES

FOOD FOR THOUGHT HEROES

There are many unsung heroes who have helped to make the Thursday Salad Bars so successful. These people, plus all of the parent volunteers at each school, have all contributed enormously so that Ojai's school children can experience the wonders of locally grown, seasonal fruits and vegetables.

FOOD SERVICE PERSONNEL:

Denise Hawkins / Food Service Director
Pam Sheets / Topa Topa
Mary Wood / Miramonte
Susan Thomas / Meiners Oaks

PARENT VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS:

Susan DeCordova / Topa Topa
Syd Galbraith / Miramonte
Lori Hamor / Meiners Oaks

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE WITH

FAMILY FARMERS :

Judy Blue, Felix Garcia, and Jim Churchill (they get the produce orders, pick it up and deliver it to the schools)

DINNER AND A MOVIE

On April 3, Slow Food Ojai sponsored a fundraising event for Food For Thought called Dinner and a Movie. The event featured Tony Shalhoub, Emmy Award winning star of the TV series *Monk*, introducing his new movie, *Made-Up*, and a dinner at Pangea Restaurant by chefs Mario Gonzalez (Pangea), Susan Coulter (Movino) and Jeri Oshima (Fourworlds). The dinner featured locally grown produce, which was all donated by the growers who sell to the Salad Bar. The event was hosted by Ojai-resident and San Antonio school dad, Claud Mann, who is the chef on the hit TBS series, *Dinner and a Movie*.

By all accounts, the event was a great success - it was a sell out and everyone had a great time. We exceeded our fundraising goals. These funds will be used to expand the program to more schools, purchase needed equipment, and fund additional activities such as garden-based learning and farm field trips.

If you missed this year's, look for the 2nd annual Dinner and a Movie event next year!

FARM TRIP UPDATE

In May and June, 3rd and 4th grade students at Topa Topa, Miramonte, and Meiners Oaks Elementary schools will be visiting McGrath Farms in Oxnard. Phil McGrath, whose family has been farming in Oxnard for several generations, will be the guide as the children learn about what it takes to grow a wide range of fruits and vegetables. Phil has been a pioneer in the locally grown, sustainable agriculture movement. He sells his produce at a variety of farmers markets, including Ojai's Sunday Farmers Market. The field trips have been made possible by a grant to Food For Thought from the UC Hansen Trust, which also operates Faulkner Farm in Santa Paula.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

A study released by the Center for Science in the Public Interest found that in vending machines at junior and senior high schools, 85% of snacks consist of junk food and 75% of drinks are sugary sodas. The study also found that 14 schools in Chicago that switched to healthier vending machine snacks did not lose money. *Chicago Sun-Times. May 12, 2004.*



According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, childhood obesity increases the incidence of medical complications such as hypertension, type 2 diabetes, respiratory ailments and depression. A Kaiser Family Foundation study found that one of the main reasons for the rise in childhood obesity is media laden with commercial advertising targeted to kids. A typical child can be exposed to about 40,000 TV commercials a year that promote candy, sodas and junk food snacks. *Kaiser Family Foundation: the role of media in childhood obesity. February 2004.*

VOLUNTEER'S NEEDED

Each elementary school had a great group of parent (or grandparent) volunteers to help on Salad Bar Thursdays. But, we will need some new volunteers for the next school year. Please contact your school coordinator, stop in at a Thursday Salad Bar, or e-mail msfujita@sbcglobal.net. It is a great way to get connected with your school and you can stay and enjoy a great salad bar lunch!

BREAKFAST FOR CHAMPIONS

Teachers know that students who eat a good breakfast perform better in the classroom. What constitutes a "good" breakfast? Are breakfast or energy bars eaten on the run good enough?

A "good" breakfast should include at least 3 of the 5 Food Guide Pyramid food groups--the easiest 3 are Grain, Dairy and Fruit. The preferred grain choices will be whole-grain, low sugar choices such as: whole wheat bread/toast, whole-grain cereal, low sugar cereals (Cheerios, Wheaties, Plain Oatmeal). Choose fresh fruit or 100% juice (avoid juice blends with added sugar). Milk can be either non-fat or low-fat; fortified soy or rice beverages may be used (look for low sugar brands).

Breakfast bars and energy bars are loaded with sugar (including high fructose corn syrup) and trans fats. Even the ones that sound like they are whole-grain usually contain very little.

Breakfast can be an easy meal to make fast and healthy. A bowl of whole-grain cereal with milk and fruit or juice or a cup of yogurt with added fruit plus a slice of whole-wheat toast with peanut butter provide great nutrition and can even be made by many school-age children.

If you still think you don't have time in the morning, here are some suggestions:

- Set the breakfast table the night before. Put out bowls and utensils for cereal, glasses for juice, etc. This task can be assigned to one of the children.
- Cut-up fruit ahead of time. A large fruit salad will keep for several days and can also be used for after school snacks.
- Keep hard-cooked eggs, whole-grain crackers or graham crackers with peanut butter, string cheese and fruit for quick "grab-and-go" meals/snacks.

Remember it is important to get kids off to a good start each morning. And you don't have to slave over a hot stove to do it.