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Tray Talk campaign debuts

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New look and helpful new tools

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MSNA Thymes

Minnesota School Nutrition Association

State Convention Tells Participants: Believe and Achieve!

School Nutrition Association President Nancy Rice was just one of the highlights at this year's state convention, held August 8 - 11 in Rochester, MN. Rice, who made the trip from her home state of Georgia, had high praise for the enthusiasm, involvement and energy of the highly active Minnesota group.

Conference attendance was a healthy 735 members. Participants appreciated the excellent speakers, great food and lively downtown area. With the summer heat blazing away outdoors, many of those who attended mentioned the air-conditioned Rochester

skywalks as an especially appreciated part of the conference's many features.

One highlight of the annual get-together was the keynote speaker, Dr. Edward Creagan, whose topic was "How Not to Be My Patient." The doctor's inspiring and entertaining presentation included an uncomplicated formula for living a healthy, happier life. Carrie Peterson, who spoke on sports nutrition, was another attendee favorite. The information she presented was applicable both for MSNA members and the student-athletes

(Continued on page 2)



Upcoming Events

October 30: MSNA's Nutrition Conference
Chanhassen High School, Chanhassen MN. Details in newsletter insert

January 16 - 18: SNA's Child Nutrition Industry Conference in Seattle

2010 Annual Conference by the numbers

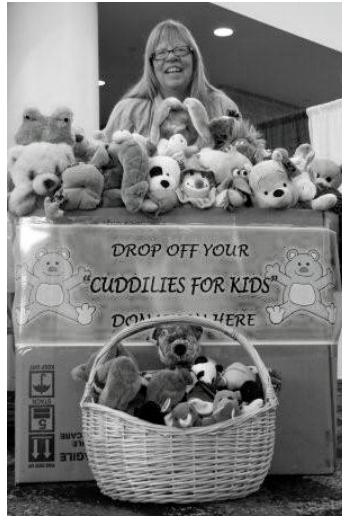
- 735 individual members attended
- 41 first-time attendees
- 350 industry members attended
- 52 attendees at Leadership Workshop
- 20 workshops
- 4 general sessions
- 175 booths in the exhibit hall
- 391 stuffed toys donated to Cuddilies for Kids
- 41 people donated more than five gallons of blood
- \$625 was earned for the PAC fund

Conference Roundup continued from page 1

at their schools.

On the lighter side, Dr. Stuart Robertshaw (Dr. Humor), was a great final-day sendoff, with rollicking laughter coming from his presentation. He taught participants the Lion, Handshake and Argument Laughs, and encouraged them to laugh daily.

The second year of the fundraising Purse Raffle was even more successful than last year, with 64 purses raising \$5,400.



Clockwise on cover: Deb LaBounty with SNA President Nancy Rice at her installation; blood donors; yoga class; Gary Barzack of Butter Buds (name badge sponsor).

Clockwise above: Cuddilies donations; Leadership Workshop participants (Liz Randall, Wendy Halonen and Cindy Prior) with Nancy Rice; first-time attendee Madeleine Krieger.



Plans for Next Year

Our 55th Annual Conference: *Navigating the Waves of Change*, will be in St. Cloud, MN July 31 - August 3, 2011

2010/2011 MSNA Strategic Plan Goals

1. Quality education and training for all members
2. Positive communications
3. Financial stability

Strategic Planning Retreat for MSNA Leadership

Setting the direction for the future of our state association is a key role for those who have been elected to serve in Executive positions. MSNA's current board, along with some past board members, met in late September to review the five-year-old strategic plan and set new goals for the organization's direction in the future. The common objective for everyone attending

was to ensure that MSNA has the vision and determination to remain a vital and valuable organization for all of its members.

The session was facilitated by Cathy Perme, a consultant who has worked closely with the board on the previous strategic direction planning. She helped them assess progress, identify concerns and determine where to invest time and resources

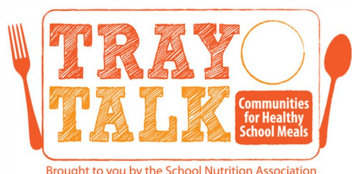
to ensure that MSNA fulfills its mission, which is to provide our members opportunities for professional development and to build relationships that make a difference in the lives of children.

Member input regarding planning is always appreciated. Look for more about results from the leadership planning retreat on the MSNA website and in future issues of the *MSNA Thymes*.

SNAC Bites: News from the National Office

Tray Talk Campaign

Have you seen **Tray Talk** yet? The SNA campaign is designed to emphasize the positive benefits of school meals and showcase success stories from school



nutrition programs. Tray Talk will provide parents with the facts about school meals and address hot topics in school nutrition. Tools and resources are available online at:

www.schoolnutrition.org/TrayTalk. At the site, there are videos and customizable presentations. Materials include backpack brochures, media outreach tips, talking points and cafeteria banners.

Connect with Peers

Imagine how great it would be if you could sit in your office with the smartest school nutrition professionals you know. Together, you could solve problems, address challenges and share new ideas. Now you *can* connect with peers from all around the country on the School Nutrition

Network (SNN), an online community just for school nutrition professionals. It's easy to get started with this new service. First, visit www.schoolnutrition.org and look for the SNN link at the top of the page.

Then create a personal profile on SNN and add friends and colleagues to



your network. You'll be ready to participate in member forums and discussions and share your expertise together.



Election Time!

One of our own MSNA members is on the slate of candidates for national leadership this year. Congratulations to Jean Ronnei, a nominee for SNA's Education Committee Chair. Ronnei, the director of nutrition & commercial services for St. Paul Public Schools, was recently featured in the July cover story of **Food Management** magazine.

Other Midwesterners running for National Board positions include Leah Schmidt (MO), a nominee for SNA President Elect. Running for Midwest Regional Director are Gay Anderson (SD) and Rose Ann Boushele (WI).

Voting is from October 15 to November 15 at www.schoolnutrition.org. Enter your membership number to cast a vote.

Events Calendar

MSNA Conferences and Events

October 30: Nutrition Conference at Chanhassen Area High School. Learn the latest about sports nutrition, physical education programs and Vitamin D, and earn four hours in Key Area 2 (Nutrition). Registration forms are available at www.mnsna.org. Click on *Conferences and Workshops* to download the form.

Other Events and Deadlines

Webinar Wednesdays: Free CEUs on hot topics. Visit www.schoolnutrition.org.

October 11-15: National School Lunch Week: *School Lunch: What's on Your Tray?* Download the lunch personality quiz at www.whatsonyourtray.org.

November 30: District of Excellence applications due, the first step towards being considered for District of the Year.

December 1: Louise Sublette Award Letter of Intent due to MSNA President. More information can be found at the SNA and MSNA websites.

SNA Conferences (Details at www.schoolnutrition.org.)



New Editor Named
Julie Kendrick, a familiar face to those who have attended conference Leadership Workshops, has accepted a position as Editor of the *MSNA Thymes*. She replaces founding editor Sarah Carroll, who has taken a communications assignment supporting the Great Trays Partnership.

Kendrick aims to maintain the *Thymes'* reputations as an informative, entertaining and reliable source of news about MSNA and its members. "Truly reflecting what's on the minds and in the hearts of nutrition professionals is my top priority," she said.

If you have comments, questions or story ideas, contact KendrickWorks@gmail.com

Digital photographs and reports from chapter meetings are especially welcome!

Fresh New Look for MSNA Website

The updated, enhanced MSNA web site received its debut at the state conference, and reactions have been very positive.

This key project for the Marketing Committee began last year, when they identified a need to add new functionality, help chapter leaders and update the look of the site.

Working with Jeff Healy of Abel Creative, the Marketing Committee outlined desired new functionality, reviewed wire frames and learned more about web design than they had ever thought possible. Members who've



Visit www.mnsna.org to see the updated website.

had a chance to visit the site have commented on the fresh look, which features pictures of eager schoolchildren in a cafeteria setting.

Chapter Leaders have been commenting on the new tools available for them to

post meeting information, and many are enjoying the new "instant email feature." This generates an up-to-date email screen just by clicking on a chapter president's name, allowing for a more efficient way to stay in touch with fellow members.

Financial Management Workshops Held

Summer was education time for MSNA members, who attended Financial Management Training sessions in Fergus Falls and Marshall. The informative workshops were well-received by attendees.

According to Kathy Burrill, who conducted the training, "The attendees were happy to be able to have a uniform measurement to use as a guide for their programs, and the business managers who attended gained a better insight and understanding of the value and strength



Attendees at the July 20 Financial Management Workshop in Marshall sharpened their pencils and learned new skills.

of our association, and how seriously food service directors take their jobs and their budgets. In these

tough economic times, the workshop was especially valuable for all who attended," she concluded.

Great Trays' Goal: Reduce Childhood Obesity

All of us who work in child nutrition are concerned about the childhood obesity epidemic. Overweight kids are at risk for serious conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. One strategy to address this problem is a home-grown, locally produced one. The Minnesota Department of Health has been awarded a two-year, \$2.3 million grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase schools' access to healthy foods and training.

Great Trays Partnership

will provide specific solutions to meet the challenges of school food service, with an emphasis on cost control and skills training.

Great Trays will identify cost savings on healthier foods and provide tools and training on planning creative meals and menus with less equipment. Taking advantage of an existing Minnesota-based food-buying cooperative, the partnership will invite more public schools to take advantage of significant food cost savings. There will be a one-time discount

on membership to the Minnesota School Food Buying Group (MSFBG).

There will also be free trainings throughout the state, starting in 2011. Participants will learn about meal planning, procurement, portion sizes, recipe adaptation, production forecasting, food handling, preparation techniques and menu marketing.

To find out more about the Great Trays Partnership, visit www.mnsna.org

Great Trays Partners

- Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Minnesota Department of Education
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Human Services
- Minnesota School Nutrition Association
- Minnesota School Food Buying Group
- University of Minnesota Extension
- University of Minnesota School of Public Health

Membership Drive Ends Soon; Rice Challenges MSNA

The fall membership drive, called *SNA Membership - A Good Investment*, is in full swing through the end of October.

During her discussions with chapter leaders at the MSNA Conference in Rochester, SNA president Nancy Rice challenged each current member to recruit just one new person to the organization. "If we each do that," she said, "we'll be doing great." Total membership has been declining in past years. But Rice is confident that the

The Prez Sez

"We feed generations of children, making sure that hungry kids are fed at school. We're important!"

"If you can't have fun with it, don't bother doing it!"

What's Nancy's favorite school lunch? "Spaghetti and salad, always. And these days, it's got to be *skim* milk."

trend can be reversed, since she feels that the need is greater than ever for SNA's educational offerings, professional support and career networking opportunities.

MSNA has historically had high membership. In fact, 52 new members were added in just the past four months. Mary Fish, MSNA's new member service chair, has sent membership recruitment kits to all chapter presidents, with information on how to

become a STAR Club member. Meeting recruitment goals can earn you special recognition at the Annual National Conference and a chance to attend the invitation-only STAR Club member breakfast.

Search "Star Club" on the SNA website for details, recruitment tips and more.



Welcome to New Industry Member

MSNA welcomes T.I.E.S. Fee Pay (Online School Payment), our newest industry member.

Local Tastes Best

Mary Fish (Anoka - Hennepin) recently conducted her own taste test, and "fresh and local" came out on top. She was planning to use colleague Gretchen Schroeder's honey during a Farm to School chapter meeting, so she tested a honey-based recipe at home.

"I tried the recipe at home with grocery-store honey. It was fine, and the dish was good. But when the time for the meeting came, and we used the honey that Gretchen had donated, there was a significant difference. The fresh, local honey tasted much better!"

Editor's Note: Did your chapter kick it up a notch during Farm to School Week? Email pictures and details to kendrickworks@gmail.com and your activity might be featured in a future issue of *MSNA Thymes*.

Chapter Chatter: Finding Next Year's Leaders

Taking on a leadership role within a chapter is often a pivotal moment in many MSNA members' lives and careers. Making new friends and learning new skills are the natural benefits of leading. But it's often hard to encourage members to take that one small step toward leadership. Brenda Blomgren, Chapter 11, recently tried a quick and easy way to encourage new leadership. She invited past

leaders to attend a panel discussion as part of the regular chapter meeting, asking them to talk about what leadership had meant to them. Then she held a "speed dating" type session, during which leaders spoke to small groups in timed, 15-minute sessions. After a group meal, Blomgren asked for volunteers for next year and filled all positions that evening.

When asked what advice

she would give those who are struggling to fill slots on their boards, Blomgren counseled, "Be flexible! If someone is wary about the role, have them volunteer with a friend as a co-leader. Or if they only can make a one year commitment instead of two years, work it out with them. The more flexible you are, the more your members will want to say yes to becoming leaders at the chapter level."

Honey, We're Local: Schroeder's Bees Pass Taste Test

Some MSNA members are taking "Farm to School" to a whole new level, and creating "Farm at Home" products, too.

Gretchen Schroeder, a Site Supervisor at Jackson Middle School in Anoka-Hennepin, raises bees and makes honey with her husband. They have several hives on their property.

Her own honey was used in a recent chapter meeting that highlighted local products. (See sidebar at left)

Honey-Glazed Chicken Breasts

6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts

(1 3/4 lb.)

1/2 cup orange juice

1/2 cup honey

2 Tablespoons lemon juice

1/4 teaspoon salt

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray 13 x 9 inch pan with cooking spray.

Place chicken in pan. In small bowl, mix remaining ingredients; pour over chicken.

Cover with foil; bake 20 minutes.

Turn chicken; bake

uncovered 20-30 minutes longer or until juice of chicken is clear when center of thickest part is cut (170 degrees).



Gretchen Schroeder's bees are ready for their "Eat Local" close-up. In this glamour shot, Schroeder reports that "the hive was too hot, and the bees must cool the inside, so they hang around outside."

Cafeteria Communications: What's on Your Walls?



This campaign was produced for display in the Wayzata Public School's Culinary Express locations.

While much care is devoted to what's on a cafeteria's lunch trays, many directors are expanding their attention to what's on the walls, as well. The Wayzata school district has recently joined the ranks of those who have created healthy choice marketing campaigns.

Wayzata's Director of Culinary Express, Mary Anderson, noted that the new posters are part of a

larger campaign. "Change is in the air, from these new marketing materials to an updated web page. The changes mirror our ongoing efforts to increase fresh fruit and vegetable choices, increase our whole grain offerings and expand our farm to school program," Anderson said. "Simple is good," she concluded, "and it's embraced by our customers." Tonja Larson,

who designed the campaign, described other objectives that included promoting composting and recycling, trying new foods, exploring ethnic choices, and choosing good nutrition and proper exercise.

"Large images of food and kids, tied with witty headlines, helped create a quick and engaging message," Larson said.

Another school cafeteria campaign created by graphic designer Tonja Larson.



Posters are just part of the story

While attractive posters on display are a great feature for any school cafeteria, it's important to consider them as part of an entire operational presentation package for dining.

If students, parents, teachers and staff can see marketing materials that have positive, "health halo" messages and a welcoming feeling, they might be more likely to make healthier choices for their meals.

Things that contribute to the positive atmosphere include clean trays, real silverware and employees with proper attire. The combination of happy faces, caring people and whole food makes the in-school dining experience one that supports the best possible choices for nutritious meals.

To see more of Tonja Larson's graphic designs, visit www.ladywithafan.com.

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