

“Make their day”

A newsletter for Employees and Friends of Opaa! Food Management



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President's Message



When I think about how we can advance and improve – both for Opaa!’s team members and our client school districts – I don’t ask myself “Why isn’t Opaa! a better place?” But I always ask “How can I make Opaa! a better place?” When I do my part to identify solutions and execute those solutions, I am accepting accountability. While we all work as part of a larger team and teamwork is absolutely critical to our success, accountability for actions and results is an “I” activity.

One of Opaa!’s core values is “Accept accountability by taking ownership and responsibility for actions and results.” Regardless of our role within the company, we are each accountable for a variety of things – every one of which is important. Common examples include:

- Serving meals to students and staff on-time
- Preparing and serving meals that are appetizing to our guests
- Welcoming guests with a smile or a kind word
- Completing paperwork or reports timely
- Coaching team members
- Assisting a team member lift a heavy item
- Meeting established deadlines for projects

I would encourage each team member to consider how you deal with issues as you go about your daily activities.

- Are you unaware when an issue is brought to your attention?
- Do you blame others?
- Do you wait and hope things will improve?
- Do you recognize a bad situation?
- Do you figure out a solution?
- Do you exclaim “I can handle that!” or “I can fix that!” or “Let me solve that problem!”???

When you accept accountability for your actions and the related outcomes, you will go a long way to achieving our mission...”Make Their Day!”

Opaa!

Kevin

How Safe is Your Food?

By: Scott Meyer



Have you ever gone to a food establishment for a meal only to have an upset stomach a few hours later, thinking that it must be something that disagrees with your body?

Or dismiss it as symptoms of a “bug” that is going around?

Facts about food borne illness from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

- An estimated 48 million Americans get sick
- Of the 48 million, 128,000 are hospitalized
- 3,000 Americans die each year of food bone illnesses

These figures are lower than those published in 1999, due to improvements in the quality and quantity of data used to estimate food borne disease, but still way to high.

In a school environment, our customers (mainly children) are considered a high risk since they have issues with their immune systems – the body’s defense system against illness. Opaa! works diligently to ensure that the food that is received, prepared, and served is as safe as it possibly can be.

HACCP is an acronym for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points. Our HACCP plan is used to control risks and hazards throughout the flow of food, from the moment the food is manufactured to the time when the prepared food rests on the customer’s plate. Standard Operating Procedures are outlined in the plan to give our employees detailed information with regards to a particular area in the process.

Ways we minimize risk:

1. Daily, weekly, and monthly records are kept in our kitchens to monitor food temperatures during production and meal service, sanitizer strength of our dish machines, and warewashing stations, equipment temperature logs, etc. This documentation is reviewed by our kitchen managers and Director of Nutrition Services on a consistent basis. Corrective action
2. Weekly Food Safety Checklists- Each employee is assigned weekly tasks such as checking to make sure all food is labeled and dated, equipment is cleaned and sanitized, food temperatures are recorded properly, food and supplies are stored correctly, etc. It is their individual responsibility to make sure the task is carried out.
3. We strive to forge a strong relationship with our county health inspectors. All school kitchens are mandated to receive 2 inspections per school year. Rather than viewing these periodic inspections as negative, we rely on the health inspectors for technical support and guidance, especially when there is an area that needs improvement. We partner with our local inspectors to provide hands on training during our monthly employee in-services.

To keep the awareness high with regards to food safety, it requires continual training and commitment. No one wants to see a customer become ill, especially from food they have just consumed.

At Opaa!, we take food safety very seriously! Our company mission is to ‘Make Your Day!’, but it is also to Make Your Meal, Safe Every Day!



Shelby Co. Celebrates 100 Days of School



Clarence Elementary celebrated 100 Days of School on January 31st. Nina, Alice and Sue decorated cup cakes with the # 100 on them and Nina made visors for them to wear. The kids were very excited when they saw the cup cakes saying do we all get one!!



2010 Employee Engagement Survey

Thank You!

Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions and observations through the 2010 Employee Engagement Survey. Your thoughts and feelings are very important to the overall success of Opaa! and will help greatly as we roll up our sleeves and plan for the future together.

Exciting things continue to happen at Opaa! Since our last survey in 2008, we have grown to 80 districts! That is an increase of 15 school districts in the last two years! This growth and success would not be possible without the dedicated service of all Opaa! team members. It is heartwarming to see the quality of service you provide, the loyalty you share with your fellow team members, the partnerships you form with our school communities, and your dedication to Opaa! Food Management, in general. We know we provide a meaningful service to our customers and we do it with grace and warm hospitality! Again, Thank You for all you do!



Survey Participation

For this survey, we had 89% of our Opaa! staff members participate in our third bi-annual survey, up from 80% in 2008. That is FANTASTIC! Surveys like this are more meaningful when you have the majority of the people participate.

What did we measure?

The questions on the 2010 survey were very similar to those asked in 2008; however, they were divided into the six categories Opaa! has defined as the key components for Employee Engagement. Those categories are:

- Sense of Common Purpose and Belonging
- Clarity of Role
- Sense of Being Valued
- Empowered to Act
- Freedom to Openly and Responsibly Communicate
- Opportunity for Personal and Professional Growth

Overall, 75% of the Opaa! staff members who responded to the survey indicated they are satisfied or very satisfied (a 4 or 5 rating) with various aspects of their work at Opaa! This number is impressive!

Continued on page 4.....

Survey Says.....

To be a little more specific the following is a summary of the highlights of the feedback you gave for each of the six engagement categories above. For each of the engagement factors we will summarize the feedback that was rated as a 4 or 5 on the survey. At the end, we will capture those areas in which you felt we could better support the efforts of our team members in the field

Sense of Common Purpose and Belonging: 71% of Opaa! team members rated questions in this category as a 4 or 5. You told us that new employees are made to feel welcome at Opaa! and there is a sense of “Family” or “Team” here. You also indicated that you feel your job has special meaning for your customers, and that Opaa! team members are willing to put forth extra effort to accomplish their goals.

Clarity of Role: The overall rating for this category was a solid 75%. The vast majority of Opaa! team members agreed that your supervisors do a good job of keeping them informed. You also said your supervisor does a good job of clearly communicating specific goals and expectations in order for you to be successful.

Sense of Being Valued: In this category, Opaa! team members also responded with an average score of 75%. You feel strongly that Opaa! people truly do care about each other. You agree that your supervisors genuinely relate to you as people, not just employees, and your supervisors appreciate your efforts.

Empowered to Act: The highest rated item from the entire survey is found in this category with an overall 4/5 response rate of 80%! Even better, 90% of Opaa! team members responded that your supervisors trust you to do your jobs. This is an extremely high rating and indicates that Opaa! team members feel trusted and empowered. Most of you also agree that you are provided the resources you need to do your job.

Freedom to Openly and Responsibly Communicate: This entire category on average was the highest rated category with a 4/5 response rate of 81%! The majority of Opaa! team members agree your supervisors are approachable, they listen to your concerns, and respond to your ideas.

Opportunity for Personal and Professional Growth: The overall rating for this category is a strong 76% for 4/5 responses. You told us you do receive feedback from your supervisors and that your supervisor helps you to become more effective in your job.

Next Steps...

The feedback from this survey is so valuable to us in assessing past performance and planning for our future. Your management team takes these results seriously and is hard at work developing goals and implementing programs that will continue to maintain and improve the satisfaction of all Opaa! team members!

As a result of this survey we will be working on initiatives the following areas to address those areas in which we could do a little better:

- Improved communications with all Opaa! team members
- Improved new hire orientation program
- More training and development programs
- Additional employee recognition opportunities for our team members in the field
- Improved process to orient new school districts to the Opaa! family

We need to continue to do the things we all do well, and work together to implement ideas, processes and programs that will improve the experiences for ourselves and our clients. Thank you to everyone for your commitment and thoughtful input on this survey!

Your Opinion Does Matter!

Pam Pippin Gets the Job Done... No Matter What

By: Rick Turner, RDO



By February 3rd, the Aurora School District (as most districts were) was buried under snow and ice.

The Director at Aurora, Pam Pippin, couldn't get her car out of the driveway (a five foot snowdrift was sort of in the way!). School had been closed for three days and there was no end in sight. All streets were covered in a dangerous glaze of snow and ice!

Then the call came.....

Because of the conditions, an emergency BOE meeting was being called for that evening. As was usual protocol, food and beverages were to be provided by OPAA! Undeterred, Pam borrowed a friend with a four wheeler and made it to the schools back door only to find more huge drifts of snow. She fought through the drifts with dogged determination and was able to serve the BOE a hot dinner with beverages.

Pam should be applauded for showing what "accepting accountability" is all about!

Hamilton Celebrates National School Lunch Week

By: Millie Norman, DNS

The KM, at Middle High, Shellie Eitel wanted to get the students involved in National School Lunch week. She ask some of the students to



write down what they liked about Opaa! food. We got lots of feed back, some very unusual, like lunch is ummy in my tummy, and lots more. The other students enjoyed coming in and reading each one and guessing who wrote them.



Tracy Lepley Awarded Spirit Award

By: Karen Wracher, RDO

Karen Wracher, Regional Director, chose to award Tracy Lepley, Director of Morgan County, with the Regional Spirit Award at the February meeting. The Spirit Award is awarded to one Director each month during a Regional Meeting and can be awarded for a variety of reasons.

"I wanted to honor Tracy with the Spirit Award this month because I believe we should all acknowledge her for her dedication to her job." said Karen. "Tracy has achieved 100% accuracy and timeliness. She should be very proud of herself. That is not an easy task."

Tracy is one of five Directors throughout Opaa! that has maintained this level of accuracy. This is also the second year in a row she has been at 100%.

Not only does Tracy take the extra time to ensure she is doing her work accurately, she is always a great help to other Directors within her Region. "She is always willing to help with any questions I may have and always has a smile and great attitude to go along." said Cathy Marsch, Director of Gasconade County.

Congratulations Tracy and we hope you continue to be a positive influence on those around you.



“Dine with a Chef just say yes to family meals”

By: Becky Morton, DNS

As a part of our elementary schools active and healthy program, and in conjunction with the University of Missouri Extension and Opaa! Food Management on Thursday night February 10, 2011 we did our first dine with a chef. Mrs. Florence elementary principal selected 12 students from the 4th grade to participate in this project the students could invite two guests to join them for the meal. The cafeteria was transformed to look like a restaurant setting with linen table cloths, centerpieces and china to serve the meal on. Our chef for the night was Rick Tuner, RDO Opaa! Food Management. Rick talked to the students and parents about how to prepare from scratch easy healthy meals to serve at home He started their night off with relish trays consisting of fresh broccoli, cauliflower, celery sticks, carrots sticks, yellow peppers and grape tomatoes, that was fol-



lowed by a Caesar salads. For the main course they all enjoyed chicken kabobs, mashed potatoes, slaw, hot rolls and banana foster served over low fat vanilla yogurt for desert. Rick did a demonstration on how to prepare the banana foster before the desert was served. When Rick was talking the students were very attentive to what he was talking about and several of the students wanted to have their picture taken with Chef Rick at the end of the night. I am sure this was an experience that some of the students have never gotten to experience it was a huge success, The day after the event the students and staff are still talking about the night with the chef. A great big thank you to Rick for coming and doing this event for me, and for all of the help and support I got from Kay, Linda, Sheila and Greg who were a tremendous help the night of the event. Also a thank you is due to Mrs. Florence elementary principal, Lynda Johnson and Marcia Corbin at the University of Missouri Extension for helping to promote and work the event.



Morgan County Serves Snowman Pretzels

By: Tracy Lepley, DNS

Students at Morgan County R-2 are excited to see new products on the menu this year. The kids enjoy coming in to the cafeteria to try the new items. Some of their favorites started out with the delicious Missouri apples! They were excited to know that the apples they were eating came from right here in Missouri! Another favorite



was the stars and stripes. Students also had fun with the smiley face potatoes for National Smile Day. We definitely saw a lot of smiles that day!!

They loved the corn on the cob and the fish shapes were a big hit as well. I think the biggest surprise of all was what was the most appropriate this year....the snowman pretzels! We have definitely seen our fair share of snow!! Everyone recognized the snowmen possibly because we have seen so many around town lately. The students look forward to seeing other new items that may be coming along thru out the remainder of the year.

What do “school meals” consist of? Know the facts!

Part 2

By: Linda Jones

Essentially two types of foods are offered in our school cafeterias during the school day. Meals served through the federally funded USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), and foods served outside of these programs (meals from home).

Opaa! meals served through NSLP and SBP are required to meet national nutrition standards by federal law. In return, schools receive reimbursement for each meal served. All other foods are typically served through vending machines, a la carte foods, fundraisers, class parties, etc. These foods, often known as “competitive foods” because they compete with NSLP and NSBP, are not required to meet federal law. However, they are also increasingly being subject to local, county and state laws that require nutrition standards.

Students served by Opaa! had opportunities to select low-fat lunch options such as Salad Bars or Chef Salads Daily. Serving sizes are based on recommendations that are age appropriate for students. No Super-Sizing Here! Serving sizes are in compliance with USDA recommendations - making schools one of the last places in the U.S. where you can purchase a meal with the recommended serving sizes.

Coming Soon!

**Look for a new format
of the newsletter in the next issue**



Ode to the Kitchen Manager

By: Jami Stine

The job that you do comes with minimal praise
From those that you serve in so many ways.
It seems no one appreciates all that you do
To keep everyone happy and the day running
smooth.

A manager's day can be filled with frustration;
If a sub can be found it is cause for elation!
You must manage the orders, your inventory and staff
Then feed the whole school in an hour and a half.

The students can pick menu one, two or three
So you plan for the day and cook accordingly.
But once they're in line who knows what they'll do.
They want something different from what they told
you.

Older kids are a challenge, they want something new,
And they aren't always pleasant, we know this is true.
With a smile on your face, you grin and you bear it
While actually thinking, "Your food-how'd you like
to wear it?"

Each day can be stressful, (that happens a lot)
But sometimes a smile from that one little tot
And the quiet little thank you that hear them say
Is all that it takes to just Make "Your" Day!

We ask a lot from you, we know this is true
Manage meals, kids & teachers and co-workers too.
Your leadership skills are put to the test
But we think our managers are simply the best.

Remember these words as you fall into bed
At the end of the day when all's done and said:
"Your job is important; we know it is tough
So believe when we say, we can't thank you enough!"

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Chocolate Carmel Muffins

Ingredients:

2 cups all purpose flour
1 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1 cups milk
1 Egg
1/3 cup oil
20 Carmels
1 Tbsp Water
2 cups chunked chocolate

Instructions:

Heat oven to 400. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar. In another bowl, mix together the milk; eggs, and corn oil. Add the milk mixture to the flour mixture and stir just until the dry ingredients are moistened. Chop the chocolate bars into small pieces and stir into the batter. Put the caramels into a bowl with water and melt them in a microwave oven by cooking them on a high setting for 2 minutes. Note: Be careful not to burn the caramels.

Spoon 1 heaping tablespoon of batter into each greased muffin tin, Add a layer of 1 teaspoon of melted caramel. Top with another tablespoon of batter. Bake for 20 minutes or until the muffins are brown.

Accident Free Zone

The following districts had no accident claims during the months of August thru January 31st:
(Includes "For Record Only" claims)

Dan Wolff Region

Harrisburg
Spring Bluff
Winfield

Janie Duffey Region

Diamond
El Dorado Springs
Jasper
Lamar
Nevada
Westview
Wheaton

Kay Divelbiss Region

Archie
Butler
Holden * *New Acct.*
Johnson County
Lafayette County
Oak Grove
Odessa
Smithville

Kathy Diederich Region

Centralia
Clark County
Fayette
Moberly
North Calloway
Palmyra
Paris

Karen Wracher Region

Clearwater
Gasconade County
Greenville
Maries County
Steelville
Van Buren
Winona

Louis Thorpe Region

Clinton County (Plattsburg)
East Buchanan
Hamilton
Lawson
Maysville

Steve Strup Region

Arcadia Valley
Caruthersville
Charleston
East Carter
East Prairie
Hayti
Kennett
Pemiscot
Puxico * *New Acct.*
Scott City
Woodland

Rick Turner Region

Aurora
Marshfield
Verona
West Plains

Districts Accident Free (Aug-Jan. 31): **66 %**

Opaa! Kitchens Accident Free (Aug-Jan. 31): **87%**

Last Year – **68%**

Last Year – **88%**



Work Smart, Do Your Part!