

# TRADITIONS

*A newsletter for and by the team members of Whitsons*



Corporate Dining • School Nutrition • Culinary Development • Delivered Meals • Emergency Dining • Vending

Summer 2009



Robert E. Whitcomb  
Honored with IFMA  
Silver Plate Award

Tarrytown Opens  
New Kitchen

Culinary Center  
Expands with New  
Service...and More!

# The Silver Plate Experience



As many of you are aware, I recently received the 2009 IFMA (International Foodservice Manufacturers Association) Silver Plate Award for the Food Service Management category, along with 8 other awardees, each representing their segments of the food service industry. We received this prestigious award in Chicago on May 18th. This recognition is a professional highpoint for all of us at Whitsons, and something we can be very proud of.

The winners are voted on by a jury comprised of past award winners and the editors of the trade press. Together, this group reviews all the nominations and then votes to select the winner of each category. Among the many reasons Whitsons was selected is our ability to continue to focus on our customers and clients and grow our business in the midst of a recession in one of the most competitive markets in the country. We are not a top down organization, but rather, a hard driving team of committed professionals that achieve results.

I accepted the Silver Plate Award on behalf of the Whitcomb Family and each of you, our dedicated team members. You are the ones that have devoted your careers to Whitsons, and demonstrated your passion for service and the customer. Your commitment to excellence and hard work has made Whitsons a leader in the industry, and this award is recognition that we are making a difference in our communities. We are not the biggest, but we are the best!

This once in a lifetime experience is something I will never forget. The event culminated with a gala black tie affair similar to an academy awards celebration. A video featuring our company and our accomplishments was shown to all the attendees. I was proud to represent Whitsons and was thrilled by the realization that this evening coincided with what would have been my father's 83rd birthday! (Happy birthday, Dad.) I would also like to recognize my wife of 33 years, MaryLou, and the spouses of my family members. Your devotion has made it possible for us to make it through Whitsons' early development period, which was a very difficult time. Thank you!

Receiving this award is not only indicative of what we have accomplished and where we have been, but more importantly, it signifies the bright future we have ahead of us as a company. As we continue to grow and expand our current business lines, add new ones and welcome new team members, the opportunities for the future are endless. With the unique position of being the only truly regional company in our marketplace, our strength of providing personalized services and hands-on executive support, combined with our innovation in nutrition, food concepts and promotional programs, will keep Whitsons on the cutting edge--and the provider of choice.

Congratulations to us all!

## IN THIS ISSUE

Perspectives: The Silver Plate Experience ..... 1

Robert E. Whitcomb Receives IFMA Silver Plate.....2

A Dream Kitchen for Tarrytown ... .....3

Whitsons Team Wins 1st Place/ Chef's Corner .....4

Creative Potato Promotions.....5

Schools: Healthy Faculty Menu/ Corporate Dining: Going Green .....6

Whitsons Adds a New Service/ Career Days.....7

Spotlight On: Mary Mills and Lucille Schultes ..... 8

Team Member Corner ..... 9-10

Recipe Corner ..... Back Cover



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### FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

"The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them."  
- Denis Watley

Do YOU have an interesting story, idea or experience you'd like to share? Call Jennifer Watson at 631-750-1465 and you can be featured in our next issue!

# Robert E. Whitcomb Receives IFMA Silver Plate

By Holly Von Seggern



(Top) Robert E. Whitcomb, CEO, with fellow Silver Plate Award recipients at the Chicago Gala on May 18, 2009

(Bottom) The Proud Family (L-R): Shannon Whitcomb, MaryLou Whitcomb, Bob, Gina Daly and Ashley Vicente

We are proud to announce that Whitsons' Chairman and CEO **Robert E. Whitcomb**, FMP, has been awarded the 2009 Silver Plate in Foodservice Management from the International Foodservice Manufacturer's Association (IFMA). Considered one of the industry's most prestigious and coveted awards, each year, the Silver Plate recognizes the industry's most outstanding and accomplished foodservice operators at a special awards presentation at the National Restaurant Show in Chicago, Illinois. Now in its 55th year, the awards program honors leaders such as Bob, who show extraordinary dedication, creativity and achievement in their segments of operation.

Bob's nomination was selected by an IFMA jury comprising last year's Silver Plate Award recipients, chief editors of national foodservice trade publications and the chairperson of the International Gold & Silver Plate Society. Factors contributing to Bob's selection include his leadership role in growing Whitsons from its humble beginnings as a coffee shop in Garden City, New York, to a leading multi-industry dining service organization. Judges were impressed with Bob's vision and direction in developing Whitsons' innovative products, solution-driven customer service and family approach and his demonstrated commitment to clients, customers and team members as he lives our mission of "enhancing life one meal at a time."

One of the most important factors considered in awarding a Silver Plate to Bob was Whitsons' customer-focused approach and our ability to address the changing needs of the marketplace. Innovative concepts such as our Smart Choices and Nutrition Safari nutrition awareness programs, budget-conscious promotions such as Target 5, Budget Bowls and Veggie Values and international cuisines offered through SPICE and concepts such as Fiesta Fresca, Cafe Bombay and Thai Bamboo help Whitsons remain responsive to customer

preferences and industry trends and keep us at the forefront of the industry. In addition, our community efforts through Whitsons Cares and other charitable initiatives enable Bob and the rest of the Whitcomb family to give back to the local communities in which we serve.

IFMA is a leading trade association comprising more than 400 of the world's most prestigious food, equipment and supply manufacturers in the \$610 billion foodservice industry, as well as related marketing service organizations, foodservice trade publications, distributors and brokers.

*Return to TOC*



These sites were recent winners in the "Top Food Site Award" category. This is an honor given to websites that present quality food related content in a user friendly manner. So if you are surfing for some new quality food websites, check out these great award winners.

**<http://www.nicebites.com/>**

A website offering a forum for other food enthusiasts to be able to exchange opinions, information and indulge in a little light-hearted banter!

**<http://www.cheftalk.com/>**

This is a food lovers link to professional chef blogs, forums and interesting information about professional chefs.

# A Dream Kitchen for Tarrytown

By Randi T. Sachs

For twenty years, **Maria Filipelli**, Food Service Director, has cheerfully cooked and served the students and faculty of Tarrytown, and she says that she has loved every minute of it. Now, she is finally in the kitchen of her dreams at the Sleepy Hollow High School/Middle School building. When Whitsons joined the Tarrytown School District in 1998, Maria was more than willing to expand her menu and incorporate the Signature Series concepts in the secondary school cafeterias, but she was somewhat limited by the physical facilities.

“We didn’t have the space or equipment to have as many stations as we would have liked, but that’s all changing with the new kitchen,” says Maria.

The kitchen expansion is part of a larger renovation project to the school building, and was the last part of the construction to be completed. Next year, the high school/middle school building will add the district’s sixth grade students, now at the elementary schools. Before any plans were made, Whitsons and district administrators met and determined how to proceed with the new kitchen. The collaboration continued throughout the process.

“The partnership we have with Tarrytown worked beautifully,” said District Manager **RuthAnn Toxie**. “We were included in the planning at all stages, and we worked cooperatively to ensure that the student café service went uninterrupted.”

From September to February, Maria and her staff of nine worked out of a mobile kitchen, cooking and serving hundreds of meals daily. With the new kitchen, there is no problem accommodating the increased enrollment.

“Thanks to a fantastic team, service went incredibly well during the renovation,” says Maria proudly. All cooking and prep were accomplished in the mobile kitchen, but her staff had to go outside to the refrigerator and freezer. In December and January, there were times that they had to clear away ice and snow to get to the food, but Maria reports that her staff took it all in stride and did whatever was necessary to serve the students.

The team had to set up serving stations in the student’s seating area, which was also undergoing renovation. “Somehow we managed to keep everything running smoothly without having to reduce services. We met with the school food committee in October and the students and parents were very happy and somewhat surprised with how well we’ve been able to operate under the construction.”

The kitchen has all new cooking equipment, and Maria and her staff have been given the training necessary to use all the equipment features. School Concept Trainer **Rich Sandmann** visited and trained the staff on all the new menu concepts they are now able to prepare. There’s a new rotisserie, new stoves, a pizza oven, a deli station with paninis and hot sandwich melts, and a new coffee station for the high school students, who now have a seating area separate from the younger students. Maria is also excited about having an all-new bakery station and a display area for grab and go items.

“It was great working with the Tarrytown administration,” said Whitsons School Nutrition VP **John Gersbeck**. “Together, we have planned and built a kitchen to accommodate the growing school, and give the students an excellent dining facility.”

Maria is most excited about the new foods she is able to cook. “Cooking for the kids and making things look beautiful—that’s my job,” she says. “Whitsons has so much to offer, and now we will finally be able to have it all in Tarrytown. We’re going to have a different kind of food bar each week and we’ll have lots of specials offered.” It’s clear to anyone who speaks to Maria that serving the Tarrytown school district for twenty years has been a labor of love. “The kids are my greatest satisfaction,” she says.



(Top) The new cafe; (Bottom) The hardworking team behind Tarrytown’s success

# Whitsons Team Wins 1st Place in Wing Challenge

Congratulations to **Jeffrey Taddeo**, Food Service Director of New Britain Schools, and teammate, Chef **James Bartlett**, on winning 1st prize at the Minors/Tyson Chicken Wing Challenge during the Thurston Food Show in Hartford, CT.

“The requirements were that you have all ingredients listed in measurements in order of use, followed by step by step instructions, including cooking and baking times. The kitchen was available, but main production needed to be done at table. We received 24 wings and had to make sauces in our own stations. There were 12 other contestants, and James was one of them. He created a Caribbean Jerk Wing and it was awesome!” said Jeff.

The team set up their table with burners to heat the items, and featured a beautiful display of two delicious, mouth-watering wing entries. First prize was \$1000, and the team was presented with the award on May 20, 2009. **John Gersbeck**, VP of School Nutrition Services, is proud of his team’s accomplishments. “I think it is great that people like Jeffrey and James got involved beyond their day-to-day responsibilities and entered into this contest, and then won first place!”

Their award-winning recipe for the Thai-Style General Tso Wings is featured in this issue! Congratulations to Jeff and James!

*Return to TOC*



# Harvesting Our Opportunities

**CHEF'S CORNER**



**Bill Doyle, CEC**

It’s summertime, summertime, sum, sum, summertime! Time to get out and enjoy nature’s bounty of fruits and vegetables that are now or about to be in season!

This time of year always brings to mind thoughts of going berry picking in the fields for strawberries and raspberries, then heading home to reap the harvest from the blueberry bush in our own garden. Mixing the two harvests would allow us to make the most delightful tarts, crumbles and preserves you can imagine! When I was a kid, my favorite part of a BBQ was when Pop would pull the watermelon out of the cooler full of ice, where it shared the rent with the day’s popular brews, and slice it up for us kids! (We had never heard of today’s almost ubiquitous “seedless” variety.) As such, seed spitting contests were just part of the fun!

What’s thematic about these memories is the seasonality of what is available during the summer months when we tend to start doing more cooking outdoors. Before you know it, sweet corn will start showing up, as will Beefsteak Tomatoes, signaling that BBQ season is in full swing! We here in the Garden State are somewhat spoiled when it comes to fresh produce. That doesn’t mean that we can’t all enjoy the bounty of what is currently in season though! Here is a short list of what is in or about to be in season:

- |          |                     |              |
|----------|---------------------|--------------|
| Apricots | Blueberries         | Strawberries |
| Cherries | Melons              | Eggplant     |
| Peaches  | Peppers (sweet/hot) | Tomatoes     |
| Okra     | Fresh Herbs         | Zucchini     |

These are just to name just a few! Now go out there and make some memories of your own! You and your customers will both be much the richer for the experience.

Have a delicious day!

*Return to TOC*



# Creative Potato Promotions Boost Sales, Participation and Fun!

By Holly Von Seggern

After a fun and exciting three-months of creative potato menuing and merchandising displays in our corporate dining and school nutrition accounts, we are pleased to announce the winners of the Idaho Potato™ contests. We were very impressed with all the submissions that came in. From the feedback, it was apparent that our clients and customers enjoyed the promotion and that many accounts sold more Idaho Potatoes than ever before, while at the same time boosting sales and participation. Several accounts have even made Idaho Potatoes a permanent addition to their menus, which is an excellent choice in terms of both nutrition and product quality.

In Corporate Dining we congratulate **Van Beutell** at PPPL for “Most Increased Sales” AND “Most Increased Participation.” Van was able to increase total sales 5% and participation by 17% over his YTD daily average on a typically slow Friday by running a Baked Idaho Potato™ Bar. “Best Marketing” went to **Diana Gutierrez** at Telcordia Technologies. Not only did Diana create a fabulous display showcasing her best dressed potato entries, but she also submitted pictures that highlight what a great job she and her team did on the serving line to merchandise a delicious-looking stuffed baked potato with choice of toppings. Well done, team!

In School Nutrition, it was truly a difficult decision to award the “Best Marketing” prize, but ultimately, it went to **Kathleen Weinberger** of Kings Park Central School District. She and her team really went above and beyond with a clever tie-in to St. Patrick’s Day. Not only was the whole server decked out in Idaho Potatoes and St. Patrick’s Day green, but the entire foodservice staff even wore green bowler hats adorned with the Idaho Potato logo. Plus, her Baked Idaho Potato™ Bar looked fresh and delicious and she had a nice display highlighting all her best dressed potato entries. “Most Increased Sales” went to **Rebecca Trietley** at Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, who boosted sales with a Baked Taco Stuffed Idaho Potato™ promotion. The final prize “Most Increased Participation” was for **Kevin Silvia** at Winchester Public Schools, who increased participation by an impressive 22% on his most successful potato promotion day.

We would also like to give special recognition to the customer with the most impressive best dressed potato submission across both Corporate Dining and School Nutrition. **Kevin O’Connor**, a middle school student at Whisconier Middle School in Brookfield, really impressed us with his “Spring Break Spud” potato. This entry was submitted in a cigar box with a sun and clouds pasted onto the inside lid and filled with white beach sand, and a potato lounging amongst beach toys in sunglasses, a hat and yellow swim trunks. The design was very clever and sophisticated. Kudos to Kevin for going up against adults and fellow students alike and coming out the winner!



*Favorite pics from our winning team submissions*

# Trend Watch: School Nutrition Faculty Spa Menu



Whitsons School Nutrition is dedicated to providing the students we serve with the most wholesome, natural ingredients and healthy menu items. But students aren't the only ones benefiting from our fresh and delicious smart menu choices—at East Hampton High School, faculty and staff are also provided with their own healthy “spa menu,” as the team likes to call it. In response to the request for healthier menu alternatives, Food Service Director **Melissa Curran** worked with Chef **Patricia Rother** to design a menu that allows teachers to pre-order their meal. Favorites such as roast chicken caesar salad, primavera salad, stir fry, turkey meatloaf and roast vegetable wrap are among the many choices available that have led to an increase in sales and participation. “Our adult meal count has tripled and the staff is more

aware of the importance of healthier eating,” says Melissa. This nutritional focus is in addition to the tremendous strides the team has already made on the dining program for students across the district.

In addition to offering a healthy new menu, Chef Tricia is also available for nutritional counseling, as she is a nutritionist. The team also recently ran a “Win to Lose” contest for the entire high school staff, which was also quite popular. Participants donated \$10.00 to join the contest, and after 10 weeks, the one who lost the most amount of weight won the money. For more information or a sample of the menu you could utilize in your own faculty operations, please contact Melissa at East Hampton or **Christine Kunnmann**, District Manager.

*Return to TOC*

## Corporate Dining Takes "Green" to A New Level

The team at Telcordia has brought a whole new level to our “Going Green” initiatives. Kicking off the expanded program on Earth Day, April 22, 2009, the team set-up a table in the café to inform customers about all our green efforts. We also displayed our new coffee mugs, which are recyclable and biodegradable, plus introduced the reusable coffee mug program discount offer—when a customer brings in his or her own reusable mug, they receive discounted refills on coffee. Among the many additional efforts we have introduced include:

- Recycling all cans, plastic, glass and cardboard from kitchen production
- Used oil is recycled into bio-fuel for corporate vehicles
- Bulk condiments have replaced individual packets
- Switched to paper soufflé cups instead of plastic cups, which take longer to breakdown
- Purchasing locally grown produce when possible
- Installed gas fryer, which automatically filters oil to reduce waste, extend life cycle of the oil and conserve energy more efficiently
- Replaced electric tilt kettle with a gas operated tilt kettle to reduce electric use
- Calibrated/re-fitted all plumbing water dispense lines in kitchen to prevent water waste/drips
- Use bulk purchasing to reduce delivery schedules and packing containers
- Reduced office paper usage and mailing by converting accounting and reporting systems to electronic reporting system



*Team Member Lina Contreras, VP Kellyann Friend and District Manager Mary Keane promoting our green initiatives on Earth Day*

Kudos to the Telcordia team for being one of many accounts to become more environmentally conscious. Every little thing we can do to contribute to the conservation of our earth and resources goes a long way! Great job, team!

*Return to TOC*

# Whitsons Adds a New Chef's Hat to its Repertoire

By Randi T. Sachs

Whitsons is excited to announce that we have expanded our Culinary Development Services to include order fulfillment. Whitsons currently manufactures restaurant-quality products for a number retail companies, who then distribute meals directly to their customers. Now, these products are prepared on-site and then shipped directly to customers throughout the country from our Islandia Culinary Center.

“We’ve been making these entrees for several years, and the customers have been loyal, repeat buyers who rate the product highly,” says **Robert Whitcomb**, CEO, who is excited about embarking on this new business endeavor. On the cable network’s website, customers write in their personal reviews of each of the product. Lobster butter chicken was a great hit with customers reporting, “My teen nephews love it! Something different for a change.” “My family really loves them. The chicken is tender, juicy, and full of flavor.” Examples of this gourmet line include Cranberry Double-Stuffed Chicken, Sausage Stuffed Chicken Breast, Chicken Pot Pie Stuffed Wellingtons, Crispy Chicken Cordon Bleu, just to name a few. Whitsons is also preparing a line of allergen-free entrees.

The addition of our fulfillment center gives us the unique ability to provide multiple services to our culinary development clients. We have already contracted to serve a number of additional clients in this capacity, with more opportunities to come.

“Now that Whitsons is approved as both a manufacturer and fulfillment house, we can look forward to steadily expanding this business,” says Whitcomb.

*Return to TOC*

## Career Days: Recruiting for the Future

Our team members are always going above and beyond, and taking the time to educate our chefs and foodservice leaders of tomorrow is just one way of bringing a little extra something to the communities we serve.

On March 6, 2009, **Linda Ladolcetta**, Food Service Director, participated in career day at Pomona Middle School in East Ramapo. Linda gave a classroom instruction to the students explaining the different careers in food service and how they relate to nutrition and healthy food choices. After the session, the students then went to the cafeteria for lunch, where Linda and a Guest Chef demonstrated the job of a chef, and presented fresh, nutritious entrees prepared using the Ruby's Flats concept.

On June 1, 2009, a Career Day was held at the Alexander Hamilton Elementary School in New Jersey. Research Chef **Michael Joy** of the Islandia Culinary Center presented options for careers in the Culinary field to 76 5th graders in this central NJ school. Passion for doing something you love and how Whitsons Culinary Group offers countless culinary career opportunities were the main speaking points. The teachers and administration staff raved about Whitsons’ Chicken Breast Stuffed with Broccoli and Cheese and the Chicken Meatball Subs that were served afterwards.

Kudos to Linda and Mike for guiding the young minds of our communities!



*Top: Linda Ladolcetta at East Ramapo*

*Bottom: Michael Joy at Alexander Hamilton School*



# SpⓄtlight Ⓞn: Mary Mills and Lucille Schultes

By Randi T. Sachs



After just three years as a Whitsons team member, **Mary Mills**, Food Service Director for Ossining Schools, has proven that she is an exceptional part of the management team. Mary faces a bit of a unique challenge at Ossining, where each of the buildings serves different grade levels and requires a different type of menu. But Mary is determined

to make school lunch a true dining experience, and serves her students with the Whitsons care and attention to detail that makes the difference.

Mary grew up in Breezy Point, Queens, and became a great beach lover. After moving to Rockland County when her youngest (of three) sons was about to enter kindergarten, she was happy to discover that Rockland also has beautiful parks and recreation areas where she can continue to spend time in the great outdoors.

In Queens, Mary owned a deli and found that she liked having her work revolve around food. "Providing good food to people makes them happy," she says. "It's something I found I liked and was quite good at." After leaving the deli, Mary worked in a residential living program for adults with developmental disabilities in Rockland, but like so many mothers, decided to make the switch to school food service when she found she needed to be more accessible to her sons.

Before Whitsons, Mary was with another management company. She really feels there is a great difference in working for Whitsons compared with a larger multinational corporation. "Not only are we able to give our customers personal attention, but as Whitsons team members, we are given that personal attention ourselves. I can talk to [Executive Vice President] **John Whitcomb** and he will listen and respond to me. That's something that can be very unique in the work world, and I appreciate it."

When asked what makes her the happiest, Mary talks of her three sons with great pride. "It's been wonderful watching them grow from children to responsible, adult men," she says.



**Lucille Schultes** is a master in the Walkill kitchen. She makes all of the grill items for the high school. She also assists other team members in all prep tasks, including making the pizza. She serves the hot lunch line, quickly replenishing anything that runs out. "Every minute of her time is spent helping out," says Food Service Director **Christine Clementz**,

who nominated her for this column.

One other thing: Lucille is 75 years old. She became a Whitsons team member last year when the grandchildren she was caring for no longer needed her on a daily basis. Since her high school graduation in 1951, she has worked for both large corporations and small retail stores. In 1999, she moved to Newburgh to help care for her two grandchildren. She was married to her husband Jay for 52 years, who recently passed away three years ago. They have two daughters, one son and seven grandchildren.

"I wish I had five of her," says her immediate supervisor, **Ann Marie D'Alto**. "She is wonderful, always in a happy, helpful mood. She helps everyone in the kitchen and is so fast, she makes a 20-year-old look slow."

Modestly, Lucille says, "I try to do my best in the kitchen. It's different from what I've ever done in my life, but I'm not one to sit still." Lucille admits she was surprised that Whitsons didn't hesitate to hire her at the age of 74, but Christine knows a hard worker when she meets one, and she hired her on the spot. The schedule works out great for Lucille because she is still able to be there for her granddaughter when she gets home from school.

Being part of Whitsons is something Lucille obviously enjoys. She says that her personal philosophy is to take one day at a time and live it to the fullest. When she has some quiet time to relax, she enjoys reading, knitting and quilting. She also has fun playing card games with her friends on weekends.

Interacting with the Walkill students is fun for Lucille, too. "I know a lot of kids in the district and I'm grandma to all of them. This keeps me active." Whitsons is very happy to provide an outlet for Lucille's seemingly endless energy.



# SPECIAL DELIVERIES



**Grace Robles** of the Bronx Culinary Center welcomed second daughter Giana Leigh Samuels on May 11, 2009, weighing 7 lbs. 11 oz. and measuring 21 inches. Pictured with little Giana is proud big sister Gracie. Congrats to the entire family on their addition!

Best wishes go out to Ledyard Schools team member, **Tabitha Benjamin**, on the birth of her son. Aidyn Joseph Benjamin was born on March 30, 2009, weighing 7 lb. 13 oz. Congratulations!



Congratulations to **Marisol Carpio** of UNFCU and her new husband Javier on their beautiful Valentines Day wedding on 2/14/2009. Warm wishes go out to the happy couple!

## School Nutrition Wellness Days

March was National Nutrition Month, and many of our schools partnered with their districts to offer an informative wellness day to promote the importance of nutrition and exercise to the students. The **Harrison School District** celebrated all week, kicking the event off with a booth display and featuring a variety of new healthy items on the menu throughout the week. **Middle Country School District** held their annual Wellness Expo at Newfield High School on Friday, March 13th. The Whitsons team participated in this event by providing students, faculty and the community with nutritional information and healthy snacks. This was a great way to communicate to the district what we are able to provide to the students. Great job, teams!



[Return to TOC](#)

## Whitsons Becomes a Pal to Pal-O-Mine

CEO **Robert Whitcomb** didn't hesitate to agree to help a nonprofit equestrian therapy organization located just one mile from Whitsons' corporate center, as soon as the opportunity arose. When Pal-O-Mine owner Lisa Gatti put out a notice to her volunteers that they were looking for donations to sponsor their annual "Mane Event" barbecue, Whitsons team member and Pal-O-Mine volunteer, **Randi Sachs**, was not at all surprised when Bob said Whitsons would supply all of the food necessary.



Pal-O-Mine works with children and adults with any kind of disability through the magic of horses. Horseback riding serves as physical therapy for a child with Cerebral Palsy, helps autistic children to be more responsive and improve their communication, helps paraplegic and quadriplegic individuals feel a power of mobility they cannot have alone, and brings untold joy to all of the participants, who all gain a feeling of accomplishment by being able to ride. Working the barbecue at the event, Randi was busy every minute selling the burgers, franks, chips and drinks that Whitsons donated. The customers were very happy with their food. Whitsons helped Pal-O-Mine raise \$1,800 that day, and became a friend to a very special neighbor.

[Return to TOC](#)



## Award-Winning Chef

On May 30, 2009, the International Chili Society (ICS) New Jersey State Chili Cook Off was held for the 20th year in Toms River. Research Chef **Michael Joy** of the Islandia Culinary Center, aka "Captain Chaos," and fellow chefs and daughter competed for the 6th year in a row. The team prevailed over 50 plus competitors in the People's Choice Salsa event. The first place finish in this category was an unprecedented 4th year in a row win for the faux military team. In another category, the official ICS green Chili competition, Michael received an Honorable Mention for 5th place. He had placed 3rd in the previous year. As usual, all had a great time cooking and competing in this great annual family event.

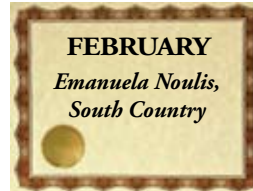
## Team Spirit Promotes Breakfast



On March 24, 2009, students at New Britain's Smith Elementary School were treated to some special guests as part of a promotion of the new in-class breakfast program. Rocky the Rock Cat, the mascot from the Minnesota Twins minor league baseball team, along with Blooper (aka Food Service Director **Michael Koch**), paid a visit to each classroom to sign autographs, as well as express the importance of eating a nutritious breakfast. We also had 25 sets of tickets to a New Britain Rock Cats game that we randomly put in the breakfast packs. "The children who won were so delighted, and it was amazing to see the expressions on their faces. This is truly a rewarding program for the children, as well as for Mike and myself," says **Jeff Taddeo**, Food Service Director. "The ADP for breakfast jumped from 150 to 525. The whole event went wonderfully, and we were really impressed with the results. Thank you to the Twins for helping to make this happen!"

*Return to TOC*

## Team Members of the Month



Here is Luke the Lion visiting the Gales Ferry Elementary in Ledyard on Wednesday, May 6. Pictured is Food Service Director **Joel Hajdasz**.

At **New Britain's** Diloreto K-8 school, they did a Flats promo with Corned Beef Reubens, which included fresh corned beef, sauerkraut, Swiss cheese, homemade thousand island dressing, marble and regular rye. It was well received by the children, faculty and staff.



The whole team at Blind Brook got involved, including Ranger Denise, as Jillian the Giraffe paid a visit this past February and served a rainbow of vegetables to the students in honor of her visit.



Murray the Monkey (aka **Fran Sutter**) joins Ranger **Liz Maldonado** and District Manager **Paul Carlozzo** on a fun visit through East Islip Schools. Murray was a big hit and lots of fun was had by all.

**A GRADUATE AMONG US**  
Congrats to **Lina Contreras**, Assistant Manager at Telcordia, who graduated from Kean University with a degree in Finance in May 2009!

Congrats to **Shinko Suzuki** of the Culinary Center on completing the full Long Island marathon on May 3rd - at 26.2 miles in 5 hours, 2:59 min - coming in overall at 447th - way to go!



Congrats to **Rob Whitcomb!** He made a video for his high school production class, which was sent to Five Towns College for a showcase. His video was chosen as the top ten and sent to the Westhampton film festival! Rob also received an award from County Executive Steve Levy for his work. Great job!

## PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to the following team members on their recent promotions. Keep up the great work!

**Alfonso Perez** was promoted from dishwasher to kitchen helper at Telcordia

**Yormery Ramos** was promoted from dishwasher to salad bar prep at Telcordia

**Rosalie White** was promoted to kitchen supervisor of Smith Street Elementary at Uniondale

**Lisa Speglevin** was promoted from kitchen manager to lead at Brookfield

**Monira Kakar** was promoted from food service worker to cook at Valley Stream North High School

**Ernesto Medina** was promoted from driver to first cook at Mamaroneck High School

**Billie Randall** was promoted to Food Service Manager at Casa Promesa

**Jessica Sanchez** was promoted to Assistant Food Service Director at Casa Promesa

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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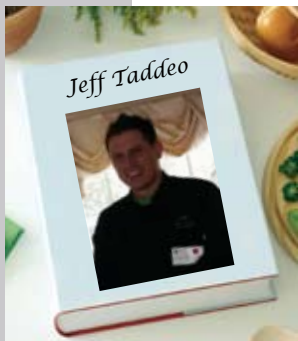
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## From the Kitchen of...

### Thai Style General Tso Wings

#### Ingredients - Makes 1 Dozen Wings

3 tablespoons sesame oil

6 minced fresh peeled garlic cloves

½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

½ cup mango nectar

¾ cup Minor's General Tso's sauce

¾ cup unsweetened coconut milk

4 tablespoons ginger puree

2 each Thai dried hot chilis

1 bunch chopped cilantro

1 teaspoon sesame seed

2 teaspoons orange zest

**Sauce Preparation:** In a saucepan, add 3 tablespoons sesame oil over medium heat. Add garlic and red pepper flakes until toasted. Deglaze pan with mango nectar and combine General Tso, unsweetened coconut milk and ginger puree. Whisk mixture in saucepan until fully incorporated. Add Thai chili and let simmer for 5 minutes

**Wing Cooking Times:** Add 1 dozen Tyson brand thawed wings to 350 degree fry oil and cook for 5 minutes or until internal temperature is 180 degrees.

**Finished Product:** In large bowl add wings, sauce and toss until fully coated. Transfer to serving plate and sprinkle cilantro, sesame seed and orange zest for garnish.

*Return to TOC*