North Carolina Restaurant Pairs History with Fine Food

By Liisa Sullivan

The Corner Kitchen has history and Joe Scully, executive chef/owner, is happy to be in the thick of it. His restaurant sits in an historical home which is in the heart of Biltmore Village, the gateway to the nation’s largest privately-owned home – the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina.

What is now the Corner Kitchen used to be occupied by the Waddell Family, parents of one of the Biltmore Estate’s engineers. And, since early times, this house has been associated with food and entertainment.

“We love the beauty and warmth of these lovely homes that were so carefully designed and built more than a century ago,” Scully said. “Our goal is to convey to our guests that same warmth and to enhance their experience through sumptuous food and friendly service.”

Twists and Turns

A native of Ridgewood, New Jersey, Scully’s road to the Corner Kitchen includes many twists and turns. In 1977, he took his first restaurant job as a host at a very busy Houlihan’s Old Place in Hackensack, New Jersey. It was here where he first learned most aspects of the “front of the house” and eventually worked as a line cook.

In 1987, Scully enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, where he graduated first in his class. He quickly accepted a position at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel, and a year later, was given a fellowship to The Culinary Institute’s Escoffier Room restaurant. Shortly thereafter, he became executive sous chef at the prestigious Cherokee Town & Country Club in Atlanta, where he won numerous culinary competition awards and co-founded two distinct food-manufacturing companies.

In subsequent years, Scully held Executive Chef positions at Indigo Coastal Grill and The Druid Hills Golf Club in Atlanta, as well as at (See CORNER KITCHEN on page 15)

Value Strategies for Operators

Restaurants Push Back Against Supermarkets for Dining Dollars

By Mike Taylor

In the August issue of SFSN, I recapped part of the presentation given by Nancy Kruse during the recent National Restaurant Association Restaurant Hotel-Motel Show. As an expert on menu trends, she is uniquely qualified to discuss key trends and strategies particularly related to these challenging times.

To briefly review, she identified four P’s of the Menu Proposition as Protein, Portion, Premium and Push-back. Under Protein she stressed approaches to adding value, such as using protein as a condiment or add-on to increase value and, perhaps, price. Under Portions she noted the continued expansion of minimania, from appetizers to entrees and desserts, and the importance of options. Under Premium, which places more emphasis on increasing value than lowering price, we discussed Burgers and Beverages. (For further details please refer to last month’s issue.)

The final P is for Push-back. Nancy focused on Push-back Strategies as a way to address the continued threat from supermarkets with their expansion of food service-style offerings. The supermarket food service segment has been growing for several years and is one of the few projected to see an actual increase in 2009, pegged at 7 percent.

Supermarkets have become much more creative in their food service offerings in the areas of selection, product sophistication and space dedicated to Retail Meal Solutions. Many consumers are focused on value, looking for less expensive options to eating out. With the rise in gas prices, consumers are looking to reduce their driving and number of stops. This results in consumers utilizing supermarket food service for both convenience and quality.

So, in the face of more aggressive offerings and the overall (See VALUE on page 8)
Maintaining market share during a recession requires some unconventional thinking. For restaurateurs, that often means offering things to customers that their competitors don’t. More and more today, savvy operators are finding that answer in fresh produce.

Nearly three out of four restaurant operators in a new research study said that emphasizing fresh produce drives more customers to their restaurants. In addition, 46 percent said they look for fresh produce items that their customers can’t buy at a supermarket, in that their customers can’t look for fresh produce items that their competitors don’t. More and more today, savvy operators are finding that answer in fresh produce.

The study was conducted by the National Restaurant Association and the International Foodservice Distributors Association. It was presented at the Produce Marketing Association’s Foodservice Conference & Expo.

Sixty-seven percent of the operators surveyed said they wish there were more fresh produce options available. Sixty percent said they would also like to see more information available on how to incorporate fresh produce in their menus. Forty-one percent said they expect to serve more fresh produce in the next two years, while 56 percent said they expect to serve about the same amount.

Operators also focus on sourcing of fresh produce, with 77 percent saying they prefer to purchase domestically grown fresh produce. Fifty-six percent said they serve locally-sourced produce in their restaurants.

Food safety remains a top priority. Eighty-nine percent of operators said they are willing to pay more for their fresh produce if its safety is guaranteed. Seventy-six percent said they are willing to pay more if the produce they buy is traceable throughout the supply chain.

“This research gives tremendous insight into where we should focus our efforts to increase use of fresh produce in food service, which benefits everyone that touches the plate, with the ultimate beneficiary being the consumer,” commented Bryan Silvermann, president/CEO of PMA.

NRA president/CEO Dawn Sweeney added, “Our new research lays the foundation to move forward with our collaborative efforts to identify new opportunities to serve our guests more fresh produce options on restaurant menus nationwide. Nutrition and food safety are key issues to our industry, and working with the produce and distributor industries will enhance both.”

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Appetizers Help Operators Capitalize on Hot Menu Trends

By Bryan Sullivan

Appetizers are one of the more profitable food items on any menu. When trying to increase sales for your operation – think apps. Both new and tried-and-true starters are abundant. They come in all shapes, sizes, and in a myriad of food categories. And, more importantly, these items can help to boost restaurants’ check averages in these tough economic times.

It’s a simple approach that doesn’t have to mean totally revamping a menu. Appetizers can be run as specials or made into a small “starter or appetizer menu.” This is a sure way to incorporate new and exciting trends into a food service operation.

Appetizers have many different names. Sometimes they are called “starters.” The French call them hors d’oeuvres. The Chinese refer to them as dim sum. The Spanish call them tapas. Here in the U.S., we just call them apps. According to Kraft Foods, the following items are among the hottest appetizer trends:

1. Fried cheese
2. Onion rings
3. Chips and salsa
4. Pizza or bruschetta
5. Spinach or artichoke dip
6. Fried veggies
7. Shrimp or shrimp cocktail
8. Sampler platters (A combination of at least three of the above.)

Another study conducted by the NPD Group USA/NPD Foodworld Crest demonstrated that knowing who wants appetizers – as well as what and when — are all key to making the most of the left side of the menu. Insights from their study may also help operators with their serving strategies. They include:

• Dinner is the hottest time for appetizers;
• Adult-only tables order twice the appetizers as tables with kids;
• 35-percent of appetizer sales are on weekends;
• 18 to 49-year-olds order about 60 percent of all appetizer sales;
• Older diners prefer shrimp; and
• Younger diners go for fried cheeses, chicken strips, wings, and nachos.

Use What You Have to Maximize Return

Making something simple seem extra special is what many chefs do best. It has been said that anyone can combine the most expensive ingredients and come up with exciting and flavorful food, but it takes a business-savvy mind with a flair for food to make a profit with lower-cost items.

Operators who don’t want to reinvent the wheel can simply create a sampler platter with existing appetizer offerings. Combo platters or samplers are very effective in times when budgets are tight.

“Customers love the choices,” said Chef Alex Baxenvanis of Fisherman’s Quarters II in West Asheville, North Carolina. “We just added a combo of our most popular appetizers and it is now one of our best-selling appetizer items. We also utilize the products we bring in. Now, nothing sits. The turnover of products is very important and creates great cash flow.”

One other trend that is showing upward movement is the use of local and seasonal items. This can help to keep the cost down and profit up. Using seasonal items makes sense because these items are abundant and cost should be lower. Also the “fad” of farm-to-table and local is no longer a fad, but a steady trend.

Making appetizers in-house can also be profitable if you know how. Customers are willing to spend a little more if they know they will receive a quality item. Chef Ricardo Fernandez of the Lomo Grill in Waynesville, North Carolina, uses this approach for creating profitable appetizers.

“Currently, I use some frozen prepared items for large catered events because of the time constraint and the budget of certain events,” Fernandez said. “But in the restaurant, I make everything from scratch. One of our more popular items this time of year is the West Coast Fried Oysters. We use Guinness Stout to make the batter and serve them with a spicy aioli. We currently price this item at $13.00 a

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86% of people who tried will order on next visit1

91% of people who tried will order on next visit1
Sales of food service equipment and supplies showed continued weakness in the second quarter of 2009, dropping 12.8 percent, according to a report by the Manufacturers Agents for the Foodservice Industry (MAFSI).

The decline marked the sixth consecutive quarter of negative growth—and the sharpest drop in the seven years that MAFSI has been publishing its quarterly Business Barometer.

The sales declines varied regionally. In the south, sales of E&S dropped by 9 percent. Elsewhere, the contractions were more severe: -22.6 percent in west, -13.3 percent in the midwest, and -11 percent in the northeast. The hardest-hit categories were furnishings at -13.8 percent, equipment at -13.7 percent, supplies at -9.7 percent, and tabletop at -7.9 percent.

There was some good news in MAFSI’s report. “...a sizable amount of stimulus money has been earmarked for school food service equipment under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009,” it said.

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Several Southeast chefs have been honored by the American Academy of Chefs (AAC), the honor society of the American Culinary Federation. John Minniti, CEC, AAC, HBOF, retired chef from Treasure Island, Florida, received AAC’s Chair’s Medal. The Lt. General John D. McLaughlin Award went to Brigadier General Jesse Cross, commanding general at the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School in Ft. Lee, Virginia. Michael Rand, HAAC, director of hospitality sales for Barber Foods, and John Minniti were also added to AAC’s Culinary Hall of Fame.

Florida Food Service has promoted Jim Islam to sales manager for street sales, and Randy Armitage to head up the multi-unit department.

KeyImpact Sales/Georgia has added Ed Carter and Matt McKenzie to their sales team.

Bill Dowling has been named director of sales and conference services for the soon-to-open Oasis Hotel at Victoryland in Shorter, Alabama. Bill was named Alabama’s Hospitality Department Manager of the Year in 2008.

Three Southeast culinary students have received scholarships from Women Chefs & Restaurateurs (WCR): Sandra Steward of Ft. Myers, Patricia Dickerson of Sarasota, and Michelle Phillips of Kennesaw, Georgia.

Broker news: Action Brokerage Consultants has been appointed by King & Prince Seafood in north Florida, giving them statewide coverage for that company. Jack Link’s Meat Snacks has named Sharin’ Foodservice Sales in the Carolinas. Domino Sugar has appointed KeyImpact Sales statewide in Florida. International Gourmet Products has been named by Awrey’s/Atkins Desserts in Georgia. Stratus Foods has appointed Hopco in Georgia. Sun Food Brokers has been appointed by Cain’s Foods and Mancini Roasted Peppers statewide in Florida. Cheesecake Factory has named Complete Foodservice Solutions in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle, and Southern Sales Systems in Mississippi and Louisiana. AFM-Pegasus has been appointed by Bunge Oil and Edy’s Ice Cream in Georgia. Domino Sugar has named KeyImpact Sales in Georgia. Sunbelt Foods Company has been named by Best Maid Cookies and Bake ‘N Joy in Georgia.

We’re saddened to report the recent death of Theodore “Ted” Sanders, a long-time food service sales professional, of cancer. He was 69. Ted was retired and living in Trenton, Florida, at the time of his death, but had worked for many years with Sara Lee.

Do you have a news item for People, Places & Things? Send it to John Hayward, editor, P.O. Box 1504, Tucker, GA 30085 or jhayward@sfsn.com.
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VALUE: Restaurants Push Back Against Supermarkets

(Continued from page 1)
all convenience of location, how can restaurants regain their customer base and push-back against the in-
creasing use of supermar-
kets?

Promote Freshness and Quality. While supermar-
kets try to deliver on some of these points, in general, restaurants have the edge. They’re better able to promote fresh preparation and highlight seasonal and local ingre-
dients. Many supermarket items sit in cases which serve as their visual menu and trig-
ger impulse purchases. But restaurants can deliver that final touch, be it a sauce, fresh vegetable or hot bread. This can be further enhanced by emphasizing quality or fresh twists, such as Carrow’s Fresh Summer Egg White Omelet.

Tout Technique. We mentioned this under Protein strategies, but this is cer-
tainly an area of differentia-
tion. Supermarket kitchens tend to be pretty limited. How many supermarkets toast their sandwiches? Now, even Dairy Queen finds a way to promote technique with their new Iron Grilled Sandwiches. In casual dining, Houlihan’s offers Seared Halibut. Several operators are either doing ta-
bleside prep on selected items or at least adding little touches in front of patrons.

Pamper Them. Kruse re-
minded us that we are in the hospitality business. What restaurants can deliver in service and atmosphere goes far beyond what consumers get in a supermarket setting. Pampering service and friendly and knowledgeable staff can deliver huge bene-
fits. Whatever your operation, there are ways to enhance your delivery of service.

Promote Wellness. Kruse cited two examples for this point. Uno’s Chicago Grill offers an Anjou Pear Salad which is healthy, fresh and unique. Fuddrucker’s fea-
tures “Lighter Options” selec-
tions which include simple approaches like a bunless burger, and more daring choices including salmon, turkey and a veggie burger.

Sample, Sample, Sam-
ple. Kruse pointed to Denny’s and their free Grand Slam promotion. A bit over the top for many operators, but the thought has merit. Sampling in the restaurant setting pro-
vides an opportunity for oper-
ators to show the patron something new. It’s also a treat to the patron – getting something for nothing. You can learn a great deal from the response to the sample; you can stimulate orders and add-ons, and you can gener-
ate goodwill. In a time when hanging on to your current customer base is critical, pro-
viding an unexpected reward can do nothing but good.

Surprise and Delight Them. In addition to Sam-
pling and Pampering, adding new items can provide a

The healthy eating trend is influencing restaurant menus. This Anjou Pear Salad is featured at Uno’s Chicago Grill.

Adding new items can liven up menus. IHOP recently added Cheesecake Pancakes.
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2225 Riverdale Road College Park, GA 30349
by Liisa Sullivan

It’s a problem that any school teacher can talk about – students skipping breakfast at home and then coming in ill-prepared to learn. And even if breakfast is offered in the school cafeteria, many still don’t participate. The reasons vary, but schools can capture those breakfast skippers by “Expanding Breakfast” outside the cafeteria and enhancing their wellness policies while they’re at it.

Many schools are doing just that. And in Florida, they’re being honored for it through the Expanding Breakfast Awards. The program is sponsored by the Florida Department of Education-Offices of Food and Nutrition Management and the Dairy Council of Florida.

Currently, less than 30 percent of Florida students eat breakfast at school. Yet, eating breakfast has been associated with higher standardized test scores, better student behavior, greater school attendance, better health, and improved weight control. The Expanding Breakfast Awards recognize schools that promote eating breakfast in creative ways. This includes alternative points of service such as breakfast in the classroom, grab-n-go breakfast, breakfast after first period, breakfast at the bus stop, and other creative options.

The Dairy Council received 50 requests for its 2008-2009 Expanding Breakfast Awards from 24 school districts across Florida. The entries revealed many creative and dedicated school food service professionals.

First Place - Dixieland Elementary School, Lakeland

Dixieland’s “To Go” breakfast concept started when Cindy Wickham, school nutrition manager, noticed that late arriving students were missing breakfast. With the support of Dixieland’s principal, Debbie Henderson, the “To Go” concept was created to allow students to pick up a bag breakfast and go to the classroom to eat.

“I couldn’t have done this without the support of Ms. Henderson,” Wickham said. “She was also frustrated that children would either miss breakfast or miss classroom time while eating their breakfast. This program is a win-win situation.”

Staff supports the program by going with students to get their “To Go” bag while teachers provide space in the classroom for students to eat during learning time.

“In some cases,” Wickham said, “the children will ask for the ‘To Go’ instead of the regular breakfast. ‘I can’t turn them down, I’m just happy that they want to eat.”

“To Go” bags usually include two packs of graham crackers, one ounce of cheese, a milk carton and juice pouch. Or, children can have leftovers from the served breakfast, such as a biscuit with egg and cheese, wrapped in foil.

Breakfast is served until 7:50 a.m. so anyone who comes in after that time, can receive a “To Go.” For children who receive free lunch, breakfast is free as well. For full pay students the cost is $1 per day; for reduced pay, 30 cents.

The “To Go” concept was started three years ago. Breakfast participation has risen steadily each year for an approximate 8-percent total increase.

Wickham explained that she has worked to get the children and their parents excited about breakfast. She sends out notes to parents, decorates the cafeteria’s bulletin board with sayings about the importance of eating breakfast, and puts together colorful food collages.

Second Place — Piedmont Lakes Middle School, Apopka

Challenged with starting a new breakfast program, (See BREAKFAST on page 11)
Fort McCoy School encompasses Pre-K through eighth grade. With so many students that have different needs, the school has had to develop multiple ways to reach the varied population. They provide breakfast in the classroom for their younger grades and “grab-n-go” for their older students. Items typically include hot biscuit sandwiches and cereal bars.

“More than 70 percent of our student population at Fort McCoy qualifies for free or reduced meals, so the need for a healthy breakfast is very important in this close-knit community,” said Rob Hensel, school principal.

Fort McCoy has doubled its breakfast participation and has gone from a “C” school to an “A” school. “Our cafeteria manager, Brenda Powell, has been instrumental in overseeing this program and ensuring its success,” Hensel said. “Teacher cooperation is also very important. Sometimes the kids will grab something if arriving on a late bus and walk with it on their way to class. The teachers will allow the children to quietly finish their breakfast in the classroom, and sometimes with the younger children, they will help them to open milk and cartons, etc.”

Anyone in a Florida school can apply for the expanding Breakfast Awards, including nutrition managers, nurses or administrators. Applications are currently being accepted for the 2010 awards. First place is $5,000, $2,000 for second place, and $1,000 for third place. For more information, visit: www.nutritionexplo- rations.org/sfs/programs_breakfast.asp.

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Piedmont Lakes’ breakfast program demonstrates innovation not only with the menu items, but also packaging and customer service. Since November, the staff has been feeding more than 250 students daily with the use of a breakfast cart.

“Sometimes the cart is waiting outside when the kids come off the bus. This has allowed students who may not have had breakfast at home to eat before class,” said Patrick McCarty, senior manager of Orange County Public Schools’ Food & Nutrition Services.

Reduce pay students pay $0.30 per meal and full pay are charged $1.25.

Students have a choice of chicken biscuits, assorted cereal and toast, cinnamon French toast, a super bun with cheese square and assorted fresh fruit, juice and milk. If a student is running late, they can pick up a “Grab ‘N Go” bag that includes a breakfast cereal bar with cheese wedge and breakfast milk. If a student is running late, they can pick up a “Grab ‘N Go” bag that includes a breakfast cereal bar with cheese wedge, breakfast and go to the classroom to eat. Since then, breakfast participation has increased by 8 percent.

Dixieland Elementary created a “to go” system three years ago that allows students to pick up a bag of breakfast and go to the classroom to eat. Since then, breakfast participation has increased by 6 percent.

“Teacher cooperation is also very important,” said Brenda Powell, principal of Fort McCoy. “Sometimes the kids will grab something if arriving on a late bus and walk with it on their way to class. The teachers will allow the children to quietly finish their breakfast in the classroom.”

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Florida Food Service Food Show

Crystal River, Florida

August 7, 2009

Florida Food Service, Randy Armitage; S & S Foods, Roger Bass; Florida Food Service, Buddy Hines

Old Town Cafe, Alina Raspovic, Marcia Harrison; Florida Food Service, Richard Cayson

Manatee Lanes, Lars Lango, Marc Grasso; Florida Food Service, Tim Ursham

Florida Food Service, Barry Bass; Chicken Koop Rest., Bill Ullah; C & G Brokerage, Alan Edwards

Florida Food Service, Jose Ariet; Cowboy Restaurant-Robert Helms

French’s, Don Rae; Jeff’s New York Deli, Steve Wallenstein

Holten Meat Co, Nick Neff; Florida Food Service, John Luthin

Ramada Inn Jacksonville, Mark Langston; Simmons Food Sales, Estelle Simmons; Royal Foods, Terry Davidson

Elliano’s Coffee Shop, Ellie Stewart; Crown Sales, David Coppinger, Cheryl Sims

Farmlands Foods, Keith Lawrence, Julie Bannister

Florida Food Service, Mev Iljazi; Three Coins Diner, Dino Tsontzos
It’s September and we’re well into school mode. Isabella, along with thousands of other Florida Catholic schoolchildren, said farewell to summer on August 13th and headed back into the classroom. With that said, it is also time for Pat and me to gear up for the morning breakfast battle.

I came from a household where breakfast was mandatory. Prompt attendance was expected and no leftovers were the only two rules. No choice of fun breakfast cereals or exotic fruit pairings – just the ubiquitous plain bowl of oatmeal with some fruit on top. It was usually raisins or sliced bananas and very rarely, blueberries or strawberries. Alongside that was a glass of whole milk and white toast with butter and jelly. For me, that meant toast that was so smothered with jelly it was hard to find the bread underneath.

Pat came from a household where everyone ate a full Southern breakfast. That meant eggs sunny-side up cooked in bacon grease, peppered bacon, grits with lots of butter, and buttermilk biscuits with more butter and jelly. A cholesterol feast! For some reason, they were not into milk and drank lots of orange juice instead.

Whether that is because they were loyal Floridians or her father owned citrus groves or they just hated milk, I cannot say. But to this day it is difficult for Pat to drink milk of any kind. She just doesn’t care for it unless it’s mixed with chocolate ice cream and made into a thick shake.

In both our households, eating breakfast was not a matter of choice. Both our fathers, despite their extremely different backgrounds, had the same mindsets when it came to breakfast. They both believed that it was the most important meal and it set the tone for the entire day. Way before the USDA took a stance on the importance of breakfast, both our fathers took up the banner and ran with it.

Once I left home for the Culinary Institute of America, I ate the typical student breakfast. Coffee, coffee, and more coffee. If I ate anything at all, it was usually fast food fare because it was cheap and readily available. It also meant that I didn’t have to waste time cooking and washing dishes. I was too busy trying to survive the punishing load of classes I was taking, in addition to working part-time and trying to build my resume with extracurricular activities, to deal with breakfast.

When Pat went off to college it was pretty much the same routine as far as the fast food fare goes, but substitute lots of carbonated drinks for coffee. She and her siblings were not allowed to drink carbonated beverages growing up, so she became a ‘fizzy addict’ as soon as she hit college. It’s an addiction she continues to fight to this day.

When we became parents, we knew on an intellectual level that breakfast was a very important meal. We read the reports and were well acquainted with the statistics. I was a professional chef. I definitely knew how important breakfast was for adults and children. And, I could quote you nutrition facts until you sagged with boredom.

Simply put, children who eat a good breakfast are more alert in the classroom. They learn at a faster rate and retain more of what they have learned. We battled our own children when it came to eating breakfast before hitting the school trail each morning. Since we had segued into adults who did not eat healthy breakfasts, it was difficult to enforce breakfast with our children. Pat tried (See KIDS on page 16).
Chefs Find Challenging New Careers at Senior Living Communities

Every morning, chef Alon Hershkowitz’s favorite diner sings his praises for creating an exceptional breakfast experience. And it’s the same when this customer returns for lunch and dinner.

But Hershkowitz and his favorite diner aren’t the average chef and customer that one might see in a local restaurant. The Palace is among a select group of senior housing communities that are dispelling the old-fashioned stereotypes of older adults and institutional dining experiences — and raising the bar to meet their residents’ growing expectations.

In demand are chefs with extensive culinary back- grounds needed to create dining rooms that rival area restaurants.

The Israeli-born Hershkowitz offers a wealth of knowledge and talent to The Palace, having a resume that includes several of south Florida’s leading hotels and country clubs, including The National Hotel in Miami Beach. Under his culinary guidance, The Palace marries residents’ desires for comfort foods such as meat loaf and brisket with Hershkowitz’s flair for creating French, Italian and Mediterranean specialties.

“We have a captive audience dining every day in the same restaurant,” Hershkowitz said. “Their dining experiences have to be special. Every night they tell their families what they had for dinner. Since joining The Palace, I’ve taken the menu selections up a notch and have received rave reviews from residents and families.”

Senior Resource Group, another retirement living provider, shares The Palace’s commitment to providing exceptional dining experiences. The Solana Beach-based company recruited Roger Dikon as executive chef of The Carlisle Palm Beach, a resort-style senior living community in Lantana, Florida, which it manages and operates. Prior to joining The Carlisle Palm Beach, Dikon served in the same capacity for PGA Resort in Palm Beach.

“One of the keys to cooking for seniors is to have a presentation that is appealing to the eye,” said Dikon, who has worked at the community for more than two years. “They are no different than any customer who’s ‘wowed’ by orchid garnishes and other visual cues. It’s important to use top quality cuts of meat and seafood, and the freshest vegetables.”

Resident favorites include ethnic dishes such as sweet and sour cabbage soup and calf’s liver with grilled apple, bacon and onions. They also enjoy Asian roast duckling apricots, Veal Osso Buco and Hawaiian teriyaki dishes.

As people age, there’s a natural decline in their senses of taste and smell. The chefs compensate by increasing the intensity of the dish’s flavor and aroma with fresh, roasted garlic, herbs and special sauces and purées.

“Dining has to be both enjoyable and healthy,” said Hershkowitz, whose quesadillas were especially popular with Oscar winner, Jamie Foxx. “We understand the need for limited to most no sodium and sugar intake, and use no-salt seasonings. We also offer a wide variety of sugar-free desserts.”

While neither chef could have predicted a career in the senior housing industry, the move has had significant rewards and advantages.

“Business is constant.” Dikon said. “While hotels and restaurants may suffer through the slow season, it’s enjoyable to know that we maintain a steady flow of diners no matter what night of the week, which keeps our staff on their toes at all times.”

The chef, who was selected to cook for the Dalai Lama when he visited the Hawaiian Islands, also likes being able to personally get to know his customers and their preferences and special requests. He finds working at The Carlisle less stressful, and with the earlier dining schedule, his restaurant staff is able to spend more time with their families.

Hershkowitz agrees, “My wife wanted to see me more. Now that I’m able to be home by 7 p.m., she’s much happier.”


**Corner Kitchen**

(Continued from page 1)

the United Nations in New York City. He has been in the business for 32 years.

Local Focus

Under Scully’s direction, The Corner Kitchen has become a prime destination for local diners. For breakfast, the cream cheese scramble with smoked salmon is highly sought. For lunch, the Rueben is world class. And for dinner, guests love the mushroom-dusted Halibut (when available).

Scully said they try to buy local products as often as possible. The idea is to get the best ingredients for their menu items. They use Haw Creek Honey, Hickory Nut Gap Farms Meats, and produce from Flying Cloud Farm and Katydid Farms.

“It’s more expensive, but the taste is there and we think our guests can tell the difference,” Scully said.

“We also recycle and compost, effectively reducing our impact on the environment,” he added. “We try to be supportive and caring to our employees, helping them wherever possible. This creates an atmosphere that is positive. I know our guests can feel the ‘vibe’ and that means a lot to us.”

**A Conversation with Joe Scully**

Who is your culinary hero? Mark Erickson CMC

What are your favorite cooking techniques? Grilling for the flavor; curing and smoking for the technique; and I always love a high volume night on the line.

What three ingredients could you not live without? Salt, pepper and herbs.

What would you order as a last meal? Devilled Chicken – the way my mom made it.

What is your most valuable kitchen tool? A rubber spatula because it saves the most ingredients.

What do you consider your greatest culinary achievement? Opening the Corner Kitchen with only four days in the kitchen prior to opening day.

If you could sit down for a meal and talk with anyone about food, who would it be? Ruth Reichl, Editor in Chief at Gourmet.

What is your main philosophy when it comes to food? Don’t do too much to good ingredients; use a soft touch.

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**No other brand has the flavor, quality and tradition of Cades Cove BBQ.**

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**Corner Kitchen**

Chef Joe Scully is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America. Originally from New Jersey, he has been involved in the restaurant business since 1977.

**Hot Salmon Cakes**

For each order:

2-3 oz. Salmon Cakes (see recipe below)

**Method:** Pre-scoop and press the salmon cakes (can be frozen). Sprinkle thawed cakes with Panko bread crumbs and sear until golden brown and hot throughout.

**Salmon Cakes:**

**Ingredients:**

- 10 lbs. Salmon (Atlantic salmon, belly and tails)
- 10 each Eggs
- 1 cup White Wine
- 1 each Yellow Onion (large diced)
- 1/2 bunch Celery
- 1/2 cup Lemon Juice (give or take)
- 1/8 lb. Fresh Dill
- 2 Tbsp. Dry Mustard
- as needed Panko Bread Crumbs
- to taste Salt and Pepper Mix

**Method:** In a bowl, toss salmon in the white wine and season with salt and pepper. Spray a sheet pan with pan spray and oven roast until just cooked and flaky. Cool and break up the salmon (not too much). Combine the onion, celery, salmon, mustard, lemon juice, dill and eggs. Stir in just enough Panko to bind the cakes. Season to taste. Do a taste test.

**For service:** Scoop the cakes to three ounces each. Dust with Panko on the outside and griddle sear until golden and hot throughout. Place onto salad (see below).

**Cucumber Noodles**

4 cups Euro Cucumbers (Cut long on a medium mandolin blade)

1 cup Apple Vinaigrette
to taste Salt and Pepper mix

**Method:** Toss the cucumber noodles in a bowl with the vinaigrette. Do small batches; this does NOT age gracefully.

**Salad**

1 cup Arugula

1/4 cup Tomato
to taste Salt and Pepper mix

**Method:** Toss the arugula in a bowl with the vinaigrette. Center on the plate. Surround with 2 tbsp. of Horsey Sauce.

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**Details:**

September 2009, Southeast Food Service News 15
KIDS: Breakfast is Crucial to Learning

(Continued from page 13)

individual cereal boxes, granola bars, yogurt, and fruit cups. It was a daily war that began in elementary school and continued into high school. In fact, the only time they seemed to enjoy traditional breakfast fare was around 11 p.m. when they were out with friends. Now they are parents and waging their own wars. We’ve been there and we understand the difficulties they are facing. All of them work – two are deputies with the county and one is a culinary arts student with a full-time job. Getting everyone up, dressed and out the door in a timely basis early in the morning (and not one of them inherited my early morning rising gene) is already enough of a battle. Trying to fit a healthy breakfast in there is almost impossible.

They rely on the breakfast foods their mother used with them, although some of those items have morphed into new offerings. Instead of fruit cups they have fruit smoothies. Instead of basic granola bars they have granola bites, soft granola bars, fruit granola bars, organic granola bars, and a whole host of granola offerings. Yogurt cups have evolved into an entire display area in the dairy section. They come in a bewildering array of flavors and styles and holders. You can buy them by the cup or squeeze them out of a tube. With or without fruit, exotic flavors, and toppings abound.

Pat and I have learned to eat breakfast. It’s oatmeal with brown sugar for Pat and oatmeal with ground flax seeds and blueberries for me every morning. We actually sit down together and enjoy our time with each other eating breakfast and reading the two local newspapers. Every once in a while we get a little crazy and have cold cereal instead of oatmeal.

Since Isabella splits her time between her mother’s house and ours because of her mother’s 12-hour shifts with the sheriff’s office, we are reliving the breakfast battle. Isabella views breakfast with the same bored detachment her mother did. She knows she is not getting the same attention her mother did. For years, she is with us until she is out of the house each morning. Every once in a while we get a little crazy and have cold cereal instead of oatmeal.

She likes yogurt and fresh fruit, which is great. Until recently she loved milk, until her best friend told her it was yucky and now we have added that little tussle to the morning melee. Isabella eats fine the rest of the time. It’s just the breakfast table that continues to be a challenge. But we’re up for it, I assure you.

September is ‘Better Breakfast Month.’ Stay away from the fast food offerings, as they are usually loaded with sodium, fat and empty calories. They also add up to a healthy chunk of the family food budget.

Take the time to ensure that your children (and grandchildren) don’t leave the house until they have eaten a healthy breakfast. Fresh fruit, yogurt, multi-grain cereal, pancakes, or whatever you have the time to fix - and they have the inclination to eat. Like so many other things we do for them that drive them crazy now, they’ll thank us for it later.

Chef Lucardie can be reached at plucard1@tampabay.rr.com.
Travis Black Angus
Ground Beef Patties
Travis Meats Inc. has introduced Black Angus Ground Beef Patties. Your customers are sure to appreciate these top quality, juicy, Black Angus beef patties. Four sizes are available – 3.2 oz., 4 oz., 5.3 oz., and 8 oz. They’re packed in a 20 lb. box.
For more information, call 800-247-7606 or visit travismeats.com.

Jones Natural Cherrywood Smoked Bacon
It’s a natural that your customers will love – the sweet taste of cherrywood combined with the quality of Jones bacon. The Natural Cherrywood Smoked Bacon is twice as sweet as Jones’ original hickory bacon. This bacon is cut from lean, hand-selected pork bellies, then slow-smoked using cherrywood, providing a wonderfully rich and sweet flavor in every slice.
For more information please call 800-635-6637 or visit jonesdairyfarm.com.

Bakery Chef ® Toaster Biscuits™
Are you looking for a new twist for your on-the-go menu? Try Bakery Chef Toaster Biscuits from Ralcorp Frozen Bakery Products. Ready to serve in less than two minutes, Toaster Biscuits offer hand-held convenience for breakfast, lunch or anytime snacking. They’re so versatile they can be prepared in a standard-sized or conveyor toaster, TurboChef®, standard oven, or microwave. They’re individually frozen and sleeve-packaged, so one or several can be prepared at a time.
For more information, call 1-800-533-6637 or visit theporkexperts.com.

Hatfield Bone-In Loin Chops
Hatfield Meats has introduced Chef Pleaser Center Cut Bone-In Loin Chops. The marbling score on these 10-ounce chops is comparable to USDA “prime” steaks. They’re cut from an eight-rib center, with the chine-bone removed. Operators can menu them as a center cut bone-in pork strip steak.
Packed 16 pieces per case, 10 lb. net weight.
For more information, call 1-800-523-5291 or visit theporkexperts.com.

Cavendish DakotaSkins®
Your customers will think you made them yourself. New DakotaSkins from Cavendish Farms have a hearty skin-on appearance and look like they just came from a country kitchen.
The fantastic look and flavor of DakotaSkins add a rustic appeal to any dish like steak, ribs or chicken. Even sandwiches and burgers.
DakotaSkins are available in Thin Cut Skin-on and Regular Cut Skin-on varieties. For more information, call 800-561-7943 or visit cavendishfarms.com.

New Cakes From Vie de France®
Vie de France has introduced two new, delectable cakes for food service. Chocolate & Mascarpone Pearl features chocolate chiffon cake with Crème de Cacao syrup, layered with mascarpone mousse and enrobed with a delicious layer of chocolate.
The 10" cake is pre-scored for convenience.
Pear William is vanilla chiffon cake layered with pear Bavarian mousse and pear chunks, topped with a caramel miroir glaze and sliced toasted almonds. It’s 10" and pre-cut.
For more information, call 1-800-446-4404 or visit viedefrance.com.

SunButter® From SunGold Foods
SunButter® is a great tasting alternative to peanut butter. Made from specially roasted sunflower seeds, it’s completely peanut free, tree-nut free and gluten free.
SunButter has 1/3 less saturated fat, and more iron and fiber than peanut butter. It also provides 27 percent of the recommended daily requirement of vitamin E in one serving.
All of this is derived from sunflower seeds, which are also a great source of protein.
For more information about SunButter, call 1-877-873-4501 or visit sunbutter.com.

Introducing the new and improved Franks® RedHot® Buffalo Wing and Buffalo Sandwich Sauces.
The benchmark for Buffalo has been raised:
• Irresistible Flavor and More Balanced Heat Profile
• Thicker, Richer Recipe for Better Cling
• Now with No Trans Fat, Zero Calories, Kosher Certified, and No Dairy Allergens
For more information, call 800-442-4733 or visit frenchsfoodservice.com.

It’s New

Travis Black Angus
Ground Beef Patties
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For more information, call 800-442-4733 or visit frenchsfoodservice.com.
VALUE STRATEGIES

(Continued from page 8) a multitude of choices all along the dining spectrum, and supermarkets have aggressively moved into the mix. The strategies discussed apply no matter the competition and reinforce ways you can differentiate yourself and add value. The better you do this with your target customers, the more you will keep them coming back. Mike Taylor is an independent marketing consultant. He can be contacted at mikei.taylor@yahoo.com or via his website www.michaeltaylor.com. You may also contact Nancy Kruse at nancykruse@aol.com.

APPETIZERS

(Continued from page 4) plate and it sells like crazy.” So, remember that appetizers are a sure way to increase sales and check averages without reinventing an operation or spending tons of money. Appetizers are a fantastic way to experiment with current food trends and to spice up tried and true staple menu items. In news that will come as a surprise to no one, the restaurant industry’s economic challenges continued to persist in June, according to the National Restaurant Association (NRA).

“In its monthly Restaurant Performance Index (RPI), NRA said the industry’s overall performance declined by .05 percent in June from the previous month. ‘While there are signs that suggest an improvement may be on the horizon, the latest figures indicate that the restaurant industry’s recovery has yet to gain a firm foothold,” said NRA’s Hudson Riehle. “Restaurant operators continued to report declines in same-store sales and customer traffic in June, and their outlook for sales growth in the months ahead remains mixed.’ The RPI is based on responses to NRA’s Restaurant Industry Tracking Survey, which measures indicators including sales, traffic, labor, and capital expenditures.

Restaurant operators continue to report soft same-store sales, with June representing the 13th consecutive month of declines. Only 22 percent of restaurant operators reported a same-store sales gain between June 2008 and June 2009, down from 26 percent who reported a sales gain in May. This was the lowest reading since NRA began doing the RPI.

Restaurant operators also reported negative customer traffic in June, marking the 22nd consecutive month of traffic declines. There was some good news in the RPI, though. Restaurant operators reported that capital spending activity remained relatively steady. Forty-two percent of operators said they made a capital expenditure for equipment expansion or remodeling during the three-month period from April-June, compared to 41 percent in the previous period. But overall, restaurant operators said they are less optimistic about the economy compared to recent months. Twenty-six percent said they expect economic conditions to improve in six months, down from 34 percent who reported similarly the previous month. Meanwhile, 26 percent of operators expect economic conditions to worsen in six months, up from 17 percent who reported similarly the previous month.
Nature Valley® Soft Baked Bars

Nature Valley® made these bars with Foodservice Operators in mind.
- Minimal prep - just place, bake and serve
- Can be served warm or at room temperature
- Each compact case contains 2 great flavors - less space, less waste, more variety.

For information, visit generalmillsfoodservice.com

Salmon Magic Seasoning

Chef Paul Prudhomme’s Salmon Magic is a unique blend of carefully selected herbs, spices, salt and sugar with subtle accents of dill and dry mustard seeds. The balance of flavors combines to enhance the natural goodness of salmon or any other type of fish, shellfish or seafood. Whether you are grilling, baking, broiling or bronzing Chef Paul’s Salmon Magic adds the right flavor.

For more information call 1-800-457-2857 or visit chefpaul.com

Vie de France 3-Inch Individual Tartes

Vie de France has introduced 3” individual tarte for food service. These mouthwatering tartes are made with an array of premium ingredients. The Apple Cinnamon Tarte uses New York State apples. The Blackberry Peach Tarte features New York State Blackberries. The Chocolate Pecan Tarte boasts the smooth crunchy pecan halves. They all have 0 grams trans fat per serving.

For more information, call 1-800-446-4404 or visit viedefrance.com.

Allens® FrySiders™ Green Bean Fries

Discover one of the most exciting new appetizers in food service – FrySides Breadcrasted Green Bean Fries from Allens.

With fun, full flavor and terrific texture, this high-margin finger food is ideal for jump starting guest checks. Plus, these unique, delectable fries go from their resealable bags to the table in just minutes.

For more information, call 1-800-234-ALLEN or visit allens.com.

El Preferido® Queso

Add the delicious taste of El Preferido Cheese to your menu – it’s made with the finest ingredients and aged perfectly for a premium taste. Shredded, it makes a flavorful topping for salads, quesadillas and burritos. Melted, it’s a delicious base for cheese dip and other appetizers.

For more information, call 800-486-4717 or visit elpreferido.com.

Hatfield Quick Ribs

Hatfield Quality Meats has announced a new addition to their Red’s Legendary Line, Quick Ribs. Quick Ribs are individually quick frozen to ensure freshness, flavor and tender juiciness. The ultimate in convenience, they can be prepared in as few as four minutes in a fryer, or 12 minutes in a convection oven.

Sold unsauced, Quick Ribs are a versatile addition to any menu, allowing for signature flavors from spicy or sweet sauces to savory rubs.

The Red’s Legendary Line also includes the popular Ribeez, Baby Back Ribs and Pulled Pork.

For more information, call 1-877-3HATFIELD (342-8343) or visit theporkexperts.com.

Frank’s Red Hot

Spice up your menu with Frank’s Red Hot. The heart of Frank’s sauce is grown in two regions, handpicked and inspected for quality. Each pepper must age one year to develop that unique Frank’s flavor and then are cooked with a proprietary system to maintain their flavor notes.

With over 80 years of experience it’s no wonder Frank’s Red Hot is the #1 choice among professional chefs.

For more information call 1-800-442-4733 or visit frenchfoodservice.com

Cavendish Farms® SweetCut™ Fries

Sweeten your profits with Cavendish Farms SweetCut sweet potato fries. Served as a side or as an appetizer with your signature dip, SweetCut fries offer a natural, sweet taste and vibrant orange color. Customers love their crispy flavor and the added health benefits – they’re a good source of Vitamin A, fiber and potassium.

For more information, call 800-561-7945 or visit cavendishfarms.com.
IN TODAY’S ECONOMY, IT’S GOOD TO HAVE SOMETHING YOU CAN COUNT ON.


Our unique coating gives Clear Coat fries enhanced heat retention, long hold times and crispy, plate-clearing taste.

You be the judge: try Cavendish Farms Clear Coat fries today. Discover why your customers and your accountant will rave about these fries.