



Chef Ann Cooper—The “Renegade Lunch Lady” Shares her Successes and Offers a Roadmap for Change



Chef Ann Cooper, Celebrity Chef, Author, “Renegade Lunch Lady” and Director of Nutrition Services for Berkeley Unified School District was in Oklahoma City on March 10th for a set of programs to promote children’s health and present ways to improve school lunch programs. Chef Ann’s presentations were an incredible success as was the book signing for her new book *Lunch Lessons: Changing the Way We Feed our Children*.

Slow Food OKC, UCO and OK Fit Kids Coalition sponsored a sold out luncheon for 130 people. The luncheon program was tailored to health and nutrition professionals, especially school nutrition directors. UCO generously provided the facilities and the luncheon. Dean Jim Machell of UCO’s School of Education and Professional Studies introduced the program and Chef Ann.

Chef Ann transported over 200 colorful Berkeley Public School Lunch Calendars in her luggage to share with the participants. An ABC Nightline segment featuring Chef Ann was presented followed by a presentation tailored to school nutrition professionals. Chef Ann’s passion and conviction for children and her desire to change the National School Lunch Program rang through her presentation.

Chef Ann had strong words of criticism for the standards the USDA has in place to oversee the school lunch program – suggesting that the CDC of Dept of Health and Human

Services might oversee the program with more attention to nutrition. Additionally, she made a strong case for the need to make childhood obesity and child nutrition a key issue in the ongoing political debate and national, state and local funding priorities.

After her presentation, Chef Ann answered detailed questions about her program successes and challenges for almost 45 minutes. Chef Ann touched on everything from how schools might use USDA commodity dollars better to how her employees have reacted to the changes she has implemented to the importance of offering salad bars in all her schools. Chef Ann received a standing ovation from the audience.

The delicious lunch, prepared by Chartwells, the caterer for UCO, was based on recipes in Chef Ann’s books and included: Vegetable Lo Mein Noodles, Salad Nicoise, Pasta with Ricotta and Tomato Sauce and Chicken Breasts with Asian Seasoning. Desserts included: Peanut Butter and Jelly Muffins,

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Save the Date—The Flavors of Spain and Portugal—Sunday, May 6



Join Slow Food OKC on **Sunday, May 6th from 5-8pm** for what is certain to be an extraordinary culinary experience. We will be presenting a sample of Spanish wines, cheeses, meats and tapas (appetizers) certain to transport your senses to the Iberian Peninsula. Travis Parsons – the cheese lover and Slow Fooder who worked with Atif Asal of the Med Deli to bring us Splendor of Italy’s cheeses last year is back at the helm – joined by Slow Fooder and Spaniard, Pepe Alberola-Ila as consultant.

Over 10 cheeses, chorizo, Serrano ham and Spanish olives will be featured. Our ever faithful, Corey Bauer, of Republic Beverages

The event will be graciously hosted at the home of Terry Byers and her husband, Anders Carlson at 7000 Nichols Road in Nichols Hills. Come and see this fabulous home, enjoy fantastic food and wine and, of course, the company of slow fooders.

Price is \$35 per person or \$30 for Slow Food Members. This event will sell out so RSVP early. Slow-foodokc@yahoo.com or 440-6555. Visit www.slowfoodokc.com for map and more info including menu items.

Annual Oklahoma Sustainability Conference April 20-21

Ideas to Action: Envisioning the Next 100 Years in Oklahoma

In connection with worldwide Earth Day celebrations, Oklahomans will be learning about how they can improve the environment and local economy at the 6th annual Oklahoma Sustainability Network Conference.

Farmers, ranchers, students, architects, city planners, religious, business and community leaders will be among the participants at the Oklahoma Sustainability Conference hosted by the Oklahoma Sustainability Network April 20-21 at the National Weather Center in Norman.

This conference will offer resources, networking opportunities, and information on a variety of topics related to sustainability, including: farming and agriculture; green building; biofuel, wind and solar energy; business and industry; food; climate change; land use; transportation; religion and ethics; activism; ecological footprints; and the natural environment.

"This year we are celebrating Oklahoma's centennial," said Miles Tolbert, Secretary of Environment for the state of Oklahoma. "The conference's focus on sustainability is very well timed, since 'sustainability' is just another way of saying

that we intend to stay a while. In fact, you need to look no further than the headlines about the development of the state's alternative fuels industry and debates over water to see how crucial sustainability is to the state's future."

Two keynote speakers will bring national expertise to the event. On Friday, April 20, Victor Davis Hanson will speak about the importance of food and farming to sustainability, moving away from the agro-industrial model and returning to agriculture's traditional role in society. Hanson is a nationally syndicated columnist and Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

On Saturday, April 21, Doug McKenzie-Mohr, co-author of *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing* will discuss how to take the ideas of sustainability to a broader audience through focused social marketing.

McKenzie-Mohr will also lead a half-day, intensive workshop on the same topic.

Additional featured speakers for the Oklahoma Sustainability Network Conference include:

- Alan Hart, principal of VIA Architecture of Vancouver,

architect and urban designer for transit infrastructure projects in Vancouver and Seattle.

- Mike McAnelly, senior planner for Carter and Burgess of Dallas and consultant for central Oklahoma's Fixed Guideway Study.
- Bob Waldrop, founder of the Oklahoma Food Cooperative and local advocate for social and environmental responsibility.
- Jim Garrison, president of Wisdom University in San Francisco and president/cofounder of the State of the World Forum with Mikhail Gorbachev.
- Dr. David Karoly, Williams Chair Professor of Meteorology at the University of Oklahoma, lead author and review editor of the recent UN report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

"The challenge is to accept that global warming is real, it will increase in the future, and policy choices that we make now will affect the climate that our grandchildren will experience towards the end of this century," said Dr. Karoly. "The opportunity for Oklahomans is to use this infor-

mation wisely, to seize its benefits, to plan for adverse impacts, and to take advantage of business opportunities in Oklahoma."

Each year, the Oklahoma Sustainability Network offers lunch and snacks made entirely of locally grown foods. Buying enough local produce to feed a crowd of more than 300 people requires conference coordinators to place their catering orders several months in advance. Coordinators say it's worth the extra effort, because it supports the local economy, ecology and equity and is highly valued and enjoyed by attendees.

"This difficulty is indicative of why we need this conference," said Jennifer Gooden, conference coordinator. "Part of the Oklahoma Sustainability Network's mission is to make it easier to buy locally-grown and produced goods. Buying local produce should be as easy as walking to your neighborhood grocery store." Slow Food Co-founder, Kamala Gamble will be catering this conference – and we ALL know her cooking is incredible.

For more information or to register, visit www.oksustainability.org or call (405) 632-2066. There is even a link to register online. The Oklahoma Sustainability Network Conference is presented by the Oklahoma Sustainability Network and hosted by Sustainable OKC.

Also, we recommend you sign up for their very valuable and informative email list.



Future Travels with Slow Food—Slow Food Nation May 1-4, 2008, San Francisco, CA

How is a heritage turkey different from its factory farm counterpart? What is a Blenheim apricot and why should we preserve it for posterity? How can we all enjoy local, affordable, and sustainably produced food? The answers will be apparent at the first Slow Food Nation, a celebration of American food organized by Slow Food USA for May 1-4, 2008 in San Francisco.

San Francisco is poised to be at the center of a movement with global implications. Experts such as Alice Waters and Michael Pollan, author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, are anchoring the task force planning the four-day celebration, which will embody the values of the Slow Food movement and illustrate how food and agriculture form a complex global tapestry of cultural, political, and environmental issues. In addition to education through taste, the event will offer a wide range of activities for all ages, including talks, forums, workshops, and films that will teach people the importance of preserving traditional foods and production techniques—and alert them to

the broader implications of their eating choices. A marketplace of over two hundred farmers and artisans from across the country will showcase the range of traditional American foods. Attracted by the simple pleasures of the table, participants will leave having learned how American food production affects global issues, including greenhouse gas emissions, childhood obesity, famine in the developing world, and the disappearance of the small farmer. Attendees will emerge with a broad-based vision of the life-enriching benefits of a sustain-

able approach to food and life, as well as the tools and personal connections to implement that vision.

Questions? slowfoodnation@slowfoodusa.org. Maybe a group of us in OKC can make the trip together next year?

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Summer Program for your Kids (K-8th Grade) with a Slow Food Approach

Looking for something exciting and fun for your child K-8th this summer? Keystone Adventure School and Farm – located on a farm at NW 190th and Western may be a great place for your child this summer. Summer on the Farm (a day camp) is designed to give children a place to spend their summer learning, working, socializing and having fun. Keystone's summer program will give children opportunities to read, write, do chores, learn responsibility, work in a garden, interact with real farm animals, build homes for incoming animals and live and work in a real farm environment. Children spend time each day feeding and watering horses, goats and chickens. They are responsible for all the animal care including brushing the

animals, collecting eggs, bathing animals and other things. Keystone's education approach is focused on learning through real life experiences. Some Slow Food OKC parents will be sending their kids there this summer. For more information contact Keystone Adventure School & Farm at 216- 5400

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Los Sabores de España y Portugal: Tapas, Wines, Cheeses, Chorizo and Ham Sunday, May 6th, 5pm

*Coming this Fall
3rd Annual Slow Food Fall Picnic at the Harn Homestead
Sunday, October 7, 4pm*

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fresh fruit with granola and whipped cream. The idea that this kind of a menu might be available and enjoyed by public school children was inspiring.

After lunch the group enjoyed presentations by Anne Roberts of the OK Fit Kids Coalition, who shared the legislative changes the group has been able to lobby for and ultimately pass in the OK legislature. Improving vending machine offerings in schools and implementing the Farm to School program were two of the most important pieces of legislation in recent years. Chris Kirby, of the Oklahoma Farm to School program, delivered a spirited presentation about the program. Chris highlighted the pilot successes and the wonderful opportunities for the Farm to School program in the coming years. To finish off the program, Chef Jeff Denton, Nutrition Director of Ponca City School District gave the group an overview of the changes he has made in his school district. All three of the Oklahoma presenters showed the audience how much positive momentum and interest there is already in our state.

We have received incredibly positive feedback about the event from the attendees...as one attendee said “the en-

tire program was fantastic.” One of the school districts represented has emailed us stating that it plans to use Chef Ann’s approach as a roadmap to transform its lunch program to be a leader in the state.

In the afternoon, Chef Ann made a second presentation to a group of 50+ concerned parents and community members covering much of the same material – with more of a focus on what the general community can do to get more involved in their local school lunch programs and in improving the health of our children. Chef Ann recommended parents get involved by 1) reading and understanding your child’s school wellness policy (all schools are mandated by law to have them) and 2) find out how the schools are implementing those wellness policies. Another step would be to ask to review the contract bids for food service which must, by law, be renewed each year. Make sure the contracts spell out fresh fruits and vegetables and limit processed foods. Anne Roberts, of OK Fit Kids Coalition agreed to facilitate a set of follow on community meetings.

As one of the participants in the afternoon program said “Chef Ann, what an incredible lady.... You all have such a wonderful and inspiring vision for our future. I have an insufficient command of the English language to tell you how much I appreciate and am humbled to have been able to participate

this weekend.” Another participant emailed us saying “The event was wonderful and one of our group is already working on the Wellness Policy in her school.”

Slow Food OKC received significant press coverage for this event including TV interviews with Chef Ann on Channel 5, several articles in the Daily Oklahoman as well as an article in the OK Gazette. Many thanks to all the reporters who were interested in covering this event!

Slow Food OKC would like to especially thank UCO for sponsoring the event. UCO has a nutrition college and, therefore, had the vision of inviting nutrition professionals. UCO also made all the space available and provided the lunch at no cost to participants. Slow Food OKC thanks Anne Roberts and Ameyka Pittman of Oklahoma Fit Kids Coalition for their support of the event. We also thank Chris Kirby of the OK Farm to School program and Chef Jeff Denton of Ponca City Public Schools for their presentations. We thank Chef Gene de Long of OKC Public Schools for his help and Full Circle for supporting the book signing. Most of all, we thank Chef Ann who came to OKC without a charge because Slow Food OKC asked her to! *We can’t express our gratitude enough.*

www.chefann.com is FULL of great articles!

Visit the Slow Food OKC website: www.slowfoodokc.com

We are trying to keep our Slow Food OKC Website up to date after a short hiatus of “slowness” on our front. New features include: a button for upcoming events on our home page, maps to events, a news tab on the home page which will have: archived copies of our newsletters, “Slow Food

OKC in the news” and, time permitting, articles of interest to slow food members. We also hope to update our OK Resources tab in the near future. Other things we’d like to add include the ability to register and prepay for events online in the future and a “join our email list”

section.

If you have comments or input for our website please feel free to email us at slowfoodokc@yahoo.com.



Join Slow Food www.slowfoodusa.org