

2015 Salad Committee Report

1. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The 2015 Salad Committee consisted of the following volunteers;

Sue Pietropaolo - Chairperson
Jane Bassett
Isaac Chou
Sally Duscha
Gloria Hedlund
Katya Kalogeropoulos
Joy Shen

2. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- * Recruit committee volunteers from 6th grade parent pool (chairperson).
- * Coordinate with organizing committee chairpersons on procurement of salad ingredients, salad bowls, and salad dressing (chairperson).
- * Coordinate salad committee shifts (chairperson).
- * Collect ingredients (if necessary) and deliver to school kitchen.
- * Prepare ingredients for salad assembly (all).
- * Assemble salads both, in advance of, and during serving period (all).
- * Distribute salads on dinner assembly throughout serving period (all).
- * Clean up assembly / distribution area following conclusion of dinner (all).
- * Refrigerate leftovers in kitchen for next day school lunch.

3. PROCUREMENT

For the 2015 dinner, all salad ingredients and bowls donations were acquired through the procurement committee and committee chair. Please note, all communications to donators must have approval from the procurement committee first, as they ensure one point of contact. The salad bowls from the prior year, and additional bowls were supplied to the kitchen for the salad committees' use the day of the event. Based on prior years, our bowl count goal was approximately 1,300-1,400 bowls, which was more than enough.

Salad ingredients were donated partially by Whole Foods Market in Bedford, and partially by Clark Farm in Carlisle. Whole Foods donated pre-washed/pre-cut lettuce (9 cartons containing 3 bags of lettuce each), croutons, and salad dressing. The salad

dressings were available for pickup in advance and delivered to the kitchen, lessening the pickup load for the perishable ingredients the day before event. Scheduling the perishables for pickup the day before supper works well, leaving time to recover if there are insufficient quantities.

The quantities of lettuce were calculated by Whole Foods based on our estimation we would be serving 1,200 people. Also, we requested donations of 45 bottles of Italian dressing, and they generously gave us 4 cases with 12 in each totaling 48 bottles. We put all bottles on the tables the night of the dinner.

The box of croutons WF donated was enormous. We used about 1/3 of the contents. Next year, if WF donates croutons, we should ask for not more than 1/3 of what the donated in 2015.

Clark Farm's donations of cherry tomatoes, carrots and cucumbers were very fresh. The tomatoes needed a simple rinse. Both the carrots and cucumbers needed washing, peeling, and cutting the day of the supper. With a group of 4 people from shift 1, we handled the prepping just fine. Two people focused on peeling cukes, and two people focused on peeling carrots. After the cukes and carrots were washed, one volunteer used a large food processor to slice and place each in large bowls, ready for assembly, while the others started assembling salads.

The prepared salads were loaded on to large trays and stored on a tall rack provided by Sue R. and on salad work station. Croutons were added about 15 minutes before the first guests were seated so they wouldn't get soggy with early prepared salads.

Salad contents note:

Sue Robichaud and Isaac helped decide how many cherry tomatoes we had and calculated the appropriate number we needed to suit 1,200 salads. We found that the tomato count was right on allowing 3 per salad. As for the cukes and carrots, we ran out of both way before evening end. The carrots were gone by 7:00pm and the cukes by 7:30pm. We pressed on and added extra croutons to make up for the reduction in ingredients. No patrons complained that we heard about.

Unlike the previous year, we did not use an assembly line strategy for putting together bowls of salad, but that didn't hinder our success in building salads in advance and on demand. Everyone just chipped in and did what was needed. Overall, we found assembly went very smoothly.

4. SCHEDULING and WORKFLOW

Our volunteers signed up for the salad committee using SignUpGenius which was previously setup by Chair Linda Tonies. The only suggestion that I would make, as

was made last year too, is to somehow include a section to the signup where volunteers can enter their email/contact information.

As for shift assignments, the chairperson sent an email to the six volunteers requesting they break up into 2 groups of three – shift 1) 1:30pm-5:00pm or shift 2) 5:00pm-8:30pm. Fortunately, our team members preferred shifts that fit into 2 groups of three very nicely.

Assembly line note:

Be sure to coordinate with the gluten-free team in how they run their food station. The salad team placed out salads with and without croutons (implying gluten-free was crouton-free). Although some students heard this distinction, others did not, and that added confusion. After a short while, the salad team realized that the gluten-free team served ALL parts of the meal to the server. That process not only made sense, but worked beautifully. In retrospect, the salad chair should have caught this detail in advance of setting salads out for the servers.

When there is a lull in the dinner serving, grab the opportunity to take turns to eat dinner yourselves!

5. SUMMARY

As much as we tried to not overdo the procurement of lettuce, as in previous years, our feedback from Sue R. is that we still had way too much. Her suggestion for following years is to get a bag of lettuce in advance and give it to her so she can determine how much lettuce will be required for the size bowls we use. I cannot praise Sue R. enough on her value and contribution from start to finish in this event! And one more shout-out to Shilpi who stepped in prepping veggies and assembling salads. She was a terrific support.

Also, as thrilled as we were that the cherry tomato donations were right-on, there were not nearly enough carrot and cucumbers to last the evening. It was a bit tedious to peel and cut the carrots and cucumbers. Sue R. suggested that next year we skip the extra veggies and simply get lettuce and Caesar dressing, mix everything ahead of time, and put in bowls. Her concern is that with the decrease in class sizes, the translation will be a decrease in parent volunteers. A simpler salad would save a lot of time and effort.

This year the salad team worked terrific together. Everyone worked tirelessly and with a great attitude. I couldn't have asked for a better group of wonderful Moms and Dad!