

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Brookfield Zoo 2

Vote for the WSDA 2009-2010 Board! 3

Government Affairs 3

Membership Update 4

WSDA Awards Dinner 5

WSDA Leadership 5

Presidents' Message

Hello, WSDA members!

It is hard to believe that my two year commitment to the WSDA Board is over! As I look back over my time spent as President – Elect and President I am proud to have been a part of such a wonderful district. The memories, friendships, and professional contacts I've acquired during this time make me certain I will continue to be involved in WSDA.

As I mentioned at the April 30th Dinner Meeting, I appreciate the participation of our board members, the time lent by our committees, and the attendance of the members at our monthly programs. It is satisfying to see our hard work come together and know that we are offering our members a wide array of interesting continuing education hours. This year WSDA members were offered over 15 continuing education hours. What other district offers cutting edge topics, a pediatric seminar, a trip to the zoo, and a delicious dinner all in one programming year? Not to mention, we have a spectacular newsletter and communicate countless opportunities over our listserv.

Although it is time for me to pass the gavel to Paula Milas Sochacki, I would like to take this final opportunity to encourage each and every member to participate in WSDA in some way during the next programming year. Maybe you'll attend your first program. Or, perhaps this is the year you will offer your talents to one of the committees. I hope that becoming involved with our association will be as positive of an experience for you as it has been, and will continue to be, for me. There is no amount of involvement that is too small – just let us know how you'd like to help!

As our profession continues to move forward and evolve it is encouraging to be surrounded by such a talented and diverse group of dietitians. Be proud of your association and your talents! Get involved with WSDA!

Thanks for a great two years! See you next year!

Melissa

Melissa O'Brien, MS, RD, LDN
2008-2009 President
West Suburban Dietetic Association
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The Art and Science of Animal Nutrition : Brookfield Zoo

Susan DuPraw, MPH, RD

Over 30 WSDA members enjoyed a field trip to Brookfield zoo on March 21, 2009. Members had the opportunity to meet and hear Jennifer Watts, PhD, who is one of 20 zoo nutritionists in the United States. She and her staff are responsible for the planning/feeding of approximately 2000 animals at Brookfield Zoo.



Dr. Watts discussed the similarities and differences in the anatomy and physiology of exotic animals and how that affects their diet formulation. Some animal species at the zoo are susceptible to iron storage disease as well as fatty acid, Vitamin D and calcium deficiencies as being zoo inhabitants they are not in their natural environment. For example, egg-laying birds at the zoo need increased calcium in their diet prior to laying eggs to help make their eggshells more viable and strong.

Individual preferences of some animals at the zoo are considered when planning meals such as a gorilla that dislikes grapefruit and some elephants who won't eat



oranges. Carrots are the number one vegetable served in zoo meals, and Whole Foods Market in Hinsdale does provide donations of fruits and vegetables to the zoo. This offers the opportunity to provide more variety in their diets.



Some animals need supplemental nutrition such as the ant eaters who are fed a nutritional paste of oatmeal consistency as they are not exposed to enough of their natural ant supply to meet their nutrient needs.

Behavioral enrichment using feeding strategies provides exercise and keeps the animals stimulated. Some strategies include novel food items such as frozen ice cubes flavored with carrot juice, hiding foods in their habitat to provide forging time or providing food "puzzles", once solved, the animal is rewarded with the food item.



Tour participants now have a better understanding of the analytical and field research needed for determining exotic animal diets.

Government Affairs

Lisa Eaton-Wright, dietetic intern, Benedictine University

Hopefully IDA will have a legislative consultant in place by early June who can monitor legislation that affects our profession. This individual will be able to identify bills over the summer and provide an update in the fall. Stay tuned!

ADA is seeking input on planning the 2010 Public Policy Workshop (PPW). The most recent *On the Pulse* has a link to that survey - it's only 12 questions. So if you haven't signed up to receive ADA's *On the Pulse*, do so now. For more information on the survey and Public Policy Issues, visit the ADA Web site at www.eatright.org, and click on the green Advocacy & the Profession tab, then click subscribe to *On the Pulse*.

In addition to our ailing economy, healthcare reform continues to dominate the discussions in Washington. It is important that we as current and future healthcare practitioners stay abreast of the discussion so that we can address the issues when the time comes, be it in preparation for a future PPW or informed decision making in your workplace.

Kathleen Sebelius, former governor of Kansas, was sworn in on April 29 as the 21st Secretary of the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). The HHS is the US government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves.

Why do you need to know this? The Secretary of the HHS will play a key role in reforming our healthcare system. However, there are others who will also play key roles, and two of them have written must-read books. Former Senator Tom Daschle wrote *Critical: What We Can Do About the Health-Care Crisis*. I highly recommend this book if you'd like some insight into what our future system might look like. *Healthcare, Guaranteed* by Ezekiel J. Emanuel, M.D., Rahm Emanuel's brother, also offers up solutions for our broken health care system. Both of these gentlemen have ties to Washington and will, I suspect, play significant roles as the health care reform dialogue continues.

How about healthcare policy blogs, does anyone have a favorite or two? I do and I'd like to share them. *Health Care Policy and Market Place Review* by Bob Laszewski is a review of the latest developments in federal health policy. For information on the latest health care reform proposals and how we'll pay for them (yes, it will cost us), subscribe to this site. Another excellent blog site is *Nutrition Viewpoint, Perspectives on Food and Health* by Susan Finn, PhD, LD, RD, FADA. There are some great postings here on health care transformation and contemporary nutrition-related topics that I'm sure will be of interest to the registered dietitian.

Remember, it's your profession. Own it! Advocate for it!

**Sign up for
On The
Pulse to
stay abreast
of current
issues!**

Remember to Vote by May 30th for your 2009-2010 WSDA Board of Directors!

Visit the WSDA website at www.eatrightillinois.org/Districts/wsda.asp and click on the link to vote or go to http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=VqSHLVhFzUQWSex8kufDiw_3d_3d

Membership Update

Megan Murphy, MPH, RD, LDN

We have just completed a great membership year for WSDA. At the end of the year, we had a total of 150 members. We added on quite a few members halfway through the year, so we are hoping they will join us again next year.

This newsletter will be my last as WSDA membership chair. I will be passing the baton to a new membership chair. It has been a pleasure serving WSDA in the past two years. I was sitting at the April Dinner meeting thinking about how so much has changed during my time as WSDA membership chair. At the first dinner meeting I went to prior to becoming chair, I recognized a few faces. At this past dinner meeting, I sat with friends and felt such a close bond with my fellow members. It has been truly wonderful being a part of WSDA.

The person who has volunteered to be membership chair next year is Michelle McGurn. Michelle joined WSDA prior to the February Seminar this year and expressed interest in learning about becoming membership chair.

Michelle states she decided to join the WSDA because she feels that dietitians need to be “involved to foster change and promote knowledge”. She feels that the WSDA and ADA are wonderful organizations to learn about the field of nutrition and to meet other dietitians. Michelle decided on a career in nutrition in high school after she had taken a few culinary classes and was considering a culinary career. After she had taken a nutrition class, she decided that nutrition was a field that could end up being a career, not just a hobby. She studied Nutrition and Food Science at Dominican University and completed her dietetic internship at Mt. Mary College. She is also working on earning her masters Degree at Mt. Mary College and works as a Clinical Dietitian at Roseland Community Hospital. At Roseland, Michelle works all units of the hospital assessing patients, providing nutrition education and recommending nutrition support for the optimal nutrition of her patients. She hopes to finish her Masters degree in a few years and to continue working in the field of nutrition. In her spare time, Michelle also volunteers with the American Cancer Society and is helping with the West Suburban American Cancer Society Walk and Roll on May 17th. You can find information at www.walkroll.org.

Thank you so much for two wonderful years!

Contact me regarding membership at megcmurphy@hotmail.com.





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WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.EATRIGHTILLINOIS.ORG/DISTRICTS/WSDA.ASP

WSDA Spring Dinner and Awards Reception

Thank you to all of the WSDA members who attended the April 30th dinner meeting. It was a wonderful evening full of great food and conversation with our peers as well as an informative presentation "Go Green On Your Plate: Environmental Impacts of the Food Choices We Make" from Kimberly Kirchherr, MS, RD, LDN, CDE with Jewel-Osco.

Additionally, congratulations to our awards winners!

- WSDA Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year: Deepa J. Handu, PhD, RD; Assistant Professor, Benedictine University
- WSDA Outstanding Dietitian of the Year: Sylvia E. Klinger, MS, RD; Nutrition and Food Consultant



Left to right: D. Sowa, D. Handu, M. O'Brien, S. Klinger, P. Sochacki



Kimberly Kirchherr, Jewel dietitian