

Today's Restaurant

THE TEXAS FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY NEWSPAPER ◆ \$3

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JUNE 2012

Southwest Foodservice Expo celebrates 75th anniversary in Dallas this year

Austin, TX - For 75 years the Southwest Foodservice Expo, produced by the Texas Restaurant Association, has been the gathering place for industry professionals to share ideas, learn about new trends and get up-to-date with the latest product innovations. Attendees at the Southwest Foodservice Expo are guaranteed to find something new, inspiring and innovative on the show floor this year. This year the event will be held on June 24-25, 2012 at the Dallas Convention Center in Dallas.

"Expo brings its audience the best of the best, whether it's networking opportunities, education and professional sessions or live culinary demonstrations by the most revered chefs in the country.

At the 2012 Southwest Foodservice Expo, foodservice professionals can:

- ◆ Connect with hundreds of exhibitors across 500+ product categories
- ◆ Attend free education sessions covering key industry trends, best practices and tools for success
- ◆ Receive industry certifications and enhanced training at Professional Training sessions
- ◆ Network with industry leaders from around the country
- ◆ Be inspired by the outstanding creativity of top chefs in the Culinary Showcase

The Expo 2012, is also happy to announce the addition of Paul Qui, Executive Chef of Uchiko in Austin, to the already illustrious roster of master chefs being presented during the Culinary Showcase.

The Southwest Foodservice Expo is the premier tradeshow of the restaurant industry in the southwest region. Each year thousands of industry leaders gather to network and learn about upcoming trends, glimpse the latest in kitchen and restaurant equipment, witness heated competitions and participate in professional training sessions led by




award-winning chefs, restaurateurs and business leaders.

"The Culinary Showcase has always been one of the most popular events at the Expo," said Mel Forehand, VP Exposition. "To celebrate our 75th anniversary, we have gathered some of the most talented chefs in the industry—a collection of old favorites and new—like Paul Qui. He's developed quite a following and we're thrilled to have him join us this year."

Bottom line, Expo attendees walk away with the knowledge, contacts and information they need to succeed.

The Southwest Foodservice Expo is open to the trade only. No one under the age of 16 is admitted. Rolling carts, wheeled bags and luggage carts will not be allowed in the exhibit hall during show hours. Proof of business ID may be required.

The Texas Restaurant Association - www.restaurantville.com - was formed in 1937 to serve as the advocate in Texas and the indispensable resource for the hospitality and foodservice industry. Today, as a leading business association, TRA represents the state's \$38.4 billion restaurant industry, which is comprised of 40,000 plus locations and a workforce of over one million employees. Along with the Texas Restaurant Association Education Foundation, the Association represents, educates and promotes the growing industry. For more information and a complete schedule of events, visit www.swfoodexpo.com. 



Snappy Salads founder creates Big Sal's concept


Dallas, TX - After years of being asked, "When are you going to franchise Snappy Salads," Chris Dahlander, founder of the award-winning salad-centric chain, Snappy Salads, is ready to franchise Big Sal's, a smaller version designed specifically for non-traditional sites such as airports, college campuses, and malls.

"Big Sal's is a smarter version of Snappy Salads," Dahlander said. "I've taken all of the experiences and lessons learned over the past six years and packed them into an easier-to-run restaurant." Big Sal's is an outcome of a two-year incubation period where new ideas and operating procedures were tested, refined or thrown out in order to create a successful business model.

Big Sal's caters to people who want big portions of food served quickly in a cool environment. Big Sal's offers guests a create-your-own-salad option as well as Big Sal's Favorites that take the guess work out of creating a great-tasting salad. Big Sal's also is known for its Big Baked Potatoes, premium soups, made-to-order wraps, and picnic salads, making it the spot to dine no matter what you want to eat.

This isn't the typical cut-a-bag-open-and-pour-it-out type of operation. Most food items are prepared on site creating a "crave-able" dining experience that more and more guests expect these days. At the same time, the equipment requirement has been minimized so the upfront capital commitment is lower.

"I'm excited to offer this business opportunity to folks who are passionate about serving guests great food in a casual environment," says Dahlander. "We are going to be very selective with whom we decide to partner because we have to ensure their success as well as the brand."

After 8-years of eating pasta, hamburgers, and enchiladas, Chris looked at himself in the mirror and saw something that he didn't want to be - fat. As Director of Marketing for Brinker International's Romano's Macaroni Grill, Dahlander decided it was time to create a restaurant based on his needs: fast and healthy. He opened the first Snappy Salads in March 2006 and the first Big Sal's in August 2009. Since then, he has opened two additional Snappy Salads locations and three Big Sal's - www.BigSalsSalads.com - restaurants. 

Garbanzo's announces first Texas franchisee

Denver-based Garbanzo Mediterranean Grill, a fast-casual restaurant concept specializing in fresh, authentic Mediterranean cuisine, announced the awarding of a franchise opportunity to Texas-based franchisee Blue Jean Food Group (BJFG).

Opening Garbanzo locations in the San Antonio and Austin, Texas areas, BJFG has rights to develop up to 15 restaurants. The first location is slated to open in San Antonio in late summer 2012.

BJFG is a family owned and operated restaurant group, which currently owns the full service seafood restaurant Pelican's Landing in Port Aransas, Texas, and previously was involved in the Big Boy concept, also in Texas.

"We could not be more thrilled about joining with Blue Jean Food Group to introduce Garbanzo to the San Antonio and Austin markets," says Bob Bafundo, Garbanzo director of franchise development and operations. "Blue Jean Food Group is a top-rate operator with tremendous experience and knowledge of the San Antonio and Austin markets, ideal for launching and establishing our fresh, authentic Mediterranean concept in their home state. We welcome them to the Garbanzo family and anticipate a strong and successful relationship."

Garbanzo has strict qualification criteria for potential franchisees. Only experienced, successful multi-unit restaurant operators who are well capitalized and interested in additional multi-unit growth with the Garbanzo brand are considered.

"Expanding the concept beyond the borders of Colorado is a major landmark in the history of Garbanzo," adds Bafundo. "Our brand has received consistent

See **GARBANZO** page 5

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What's Going On



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JUNE 2012

TEXAS

The Texas Restaurant Association announced the appointment of **Malcomb Gardner to the position of Chief Operations Officer, Texas Restaurant Association (TRA)**, effective immediately. Gardner has held executive and senior management positions over his twenty-five year career in corporate, private, state and non-profit business sectors. He joins Texas Restaurant Association from the Office of the Governor – Economic Development and Tourism Department, where he served as Director of Recognition and Education Initiatives for small business. He was responsible for promoting small business initiatives, education and recognition programs statewide. “Malcomb’s rich background in association and corporate management will be a tremendous asset to the Texas Restaurant Association as we continue to grow to better serve our members and the Texas restaurant industry,” said Richie Jackson, TRA CEO. “He is a great addition to our team.” Locally Gardner served as chair of the Northwest Business Council, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce board member, Seton Northwest hospi-

tal advisory committee, Goodwill Industries executive board member, and is affiliated with the Mount Sinai Baptist church.



Restaurateur **Amin Dhanani of Z & H Foods has opened his third Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen in San Antonio.** The new franchise restaurant is located at 2225 S.W. Military Drive. Dhanani now operates a total of 15 Popeyes franchise restaurants in Texas. He and his family have been Popeyes franchisees for the past two years.



Apple Houston Restaurants, Inc. has recently finalized the acquisition of 21 Applebee’s restaurants across

East and South Texas, with exclusive rights to build in the territory. The acquisition comes on the heels of the grand opening of the parent company’s newest location in Saginaw, Texas, in

December and brings the number of Applebee’s restaurants owned by the franchise to 63.



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Huddle House has signed franchise agreements with Pilot Travel Centers, LLC, to open five new restaurants in the next eight months. The first of the restaurants is opening this May in Frystown, Pa., with additional openings slated for Anna, Texas and other areas.

Pizza Patrón, Dallas, announced that it will be rebooting its franchising push in 2012 targeting strategic new markets and adding more stores in existing ones. The company will continue to hold fast to its core philosophy of growth through franchise distribution. The company’s goal is to open 50 new stores within the next two years,



reaching a pace of one store opening per week by the end of 2014. Responsible for the goal, Victor Vazquez, the company’s franchising and business development manager, has been tasked with ramping up exposure and store development in 2012 in underpenetrated Hispanic markets in which the company already has a footprint.



Hemingway Restaurant & Bar is one of the newest hospitality innovations in Cedar Park, located near the new City Hall Complex on Cypress Creek Road. Hemingway Restaurant & Bar (HRB) features a premium full bar, draft beers and a large wine selection as well as the very essence of regional Texas faire served in a uniquely central Texas décor. Hemingways is located at 500 Cypress Creek Rd., Ste 170.



Trinity Executive Chef and Partner Ryan Hildebrand announced

See **WHAT’S GOING ON** page 8

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Appell Pie Objectivity

Howard Appell ♦ Today's Restaurant Publisher

I was shaving this morning and I noticed that over time one of my sideburns had grown longer than the other. It took time to grow that long but I never saw it until this morning. Why didn't I see it? Why did none of my friends or wife see it and tell me? It started me thinking about what else was "growing" that I didn't see in my business.

What about things that are "growing" in your business that you don't see? One good way to take a look at what you are doing is to stand in the front door of your restaurant and look at the facility as if you were a customer seeing it for the first time. Take an objective look. The old adage is "people eat with their eyes first." Your customers can tell you the problems at a glance.

When you stand back and look start with the appearance of the dining room.

1. Floors - Are the carpets torn, spotted or generally dirty?
2. Walls - Is the paint chipped, wall-paper coming off or torn? Are pictures outdated?
3. Tables, Chairs and Booths - Are the seats ripped? Is the layout inviting? Are there tables waiting to be cleaned?
4. Is the dining room your office? The booth or table in the back should not be the place for your laptop and papers to be seen by customers.
5. Does the restaurant have a theme?
6. Does the wait staff wear uniforms or what ever they decide to wear?
7. Are the salt & pepper shakers etc.


clean and not sticky to the touch?

If you see any or all of these items you need to do a quick make over to correct the problems. Consult a designer or friend with a sense of style.

Once you enter the door and correct the appearance problems you need to look at your Marketing Plan or lack of one. You need to connect with your potential customers using every means available today in this fast paced technology based economy. Collecting data on your customers will lead you to increased sales.

E-Mail Addresses - Almost everyone has an email address and you have to find a way to get your customers to submit their address to you for future use. A few years ago I wrote about the High School Club started by a restaurant that led to huge sales increases by collecting data and using it. (Contact me for details).

Data Collecting, Advertising, Loyalty Programs, Coupons and Public Relations should all be included in a well-rounded Marketing program. If you need help running any of these pieces of your Marketing puzzle consult a professional.

Taking an objective view of your Business on a regular schedule will avoid the loss of business that will occur when any of these items are neglected. Running a successful business is a 24/7 job but you need to take the time to make corrections on the fly. 

Calendar Events

Upcoming industry affairs

MON 1

Send your Calendar Event info to Today's Restaurant!

June

24-25 ♦ Southwest Foodservice Expo (TRA SHOW)
Dallas Convention Center ♦ Dallas, TX ♦ 800.395.2872 ♦ scascio@tramail.org
www.swfoodexpo.com

July

13-15 ♦ 26th Annual Taste of Dallas
Fair Park ♦ 3600 Grand Ave ♦ Dallas, TX ♦ steve.moore@tasteofdallas.org
www.tasteofdallas.com

September

9-11 ♦ All Things Baking
George R. Brown Convention Center ♦ Houston, TX ♦ nboland@allthingsbaking.org

15-16 ♦ The Metropolitan Cooking & Entertaining Show
Reliant Center ♦ Houston, TX ♦ www.MetroCookingHouston.com

22-23 ♦ MetroCooking Dallas
The Metropolitan Cooking & Entertaining Show ♦ Dallas Convention Center
Dallas, TX ♦ www.MetroCookingDallas.com

23 ♦ Texas Monthly BBQ Festival
City Terrace At The Long Center For The Performing Arts ♦ Austin, TX
bbqfestival@texasmonthly.com

24-25 ♦ 16th Americas Food & Beverage Show
Miami Beach Convention Center Hall C ♦ 1007 N.America Way, Ste 500
Miami, FL ♦ 305.871.7910 x201

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GET INVOLVED! Today's Restaurant accepts contributions for our monthly articles and features including Calendar Events, New Openings, Under the Toque and What's Going On? Call or email for more info on how you can get your business or product featured in Today's Restaurant!

What's Going On from page 2

plans to open **Brande** (pronounced "brand"), a new restaurant concept located in the Montrose/Westheimer corridor, in Houston. The new structure, described as "a contemporary building with a rustic farmhouse feel," will be designed by Houston's MC2 Architects, the same group that helped create Triniti. It will be located at 903 Westheimer, the former home of Ruggles Grill, and will offer an extensive selection of charcuterie, crafted breads, pastries and dry aged meats. On the beverage side, Brande will feature craft cocktails and an eclectic wine and beer list focusing on American producers. Anticipated opening is Fall 2013.



Simplot is excited to introduce three new cuts to their line of Simplot Sweets® sweet potato fries. A food that's suited for almost any menu, Simplot Sweets® are an excellent source of vitamin A, are

cholesterol free and contain 0g trans fat per serving. Plus, featuring a crisp outside and true sweet potato flavor inside, Simplot Sweets® are better from the beginning. Always farm cured, Simplot® sweet potatoes are harvested at their peak and cured naturally right on the farm to allow the starches to convert to sugars. Then, only at the peak of sweetness, they are ready to become Simplot Sweets®. To learn more

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visit www.simplotfoods.com/sweets or call 1-800-572-7783 for a product presentation.

◆◆◆◆
The new clamshell containers, from Inline Plastics Corp., which are designed to fit most automobile cup holders, are ideal for convenience stores, supermarkets, and delis. Typical applications for the containers include fresh-cut fruits and vegetables, bakery items, yogurt, parfait, and a variety of snack goods. The new



containers' crystal clear design promotes attractive product merchandising that highlights the quality of its contents. The perimeter seal closure of the container provides increased product shelf life, improved leak resistance, and better protection of its contents. All Safe-T-Fresh®



containers incorporate a tamper-resistant locking mechanism and an exclusive patented tear-strip hinge that the consumer removes to gain access to the contents of the container. This innovative, industry first design eliminates the need for shrink-bands or wrap-around labels to prevent product tampering, as well as protecting the product better than many types of flexible packaging, according to the company. More details are available by calling 800.826.5567.

◆◆◆◆
U.S. restaurants have added 562,600 new jobs in the past two years, and eateries now employ about 180,000 more workers than they did at their pre-recession peak, according to a National Restaurant Association analysis. In a separate survey, 24% of restaurant owners said they plan to further add to their staffs in the next six months.

◆◆◆◆
 Steton Technology Group announced the release of **Steton 360 Franchise Edition**, the latest addition to its popular Steton 360 product line. The new Franchise Edition has been designed specifically for food service brands and enables franchise operators to conduct self-assessments based on specific corporate operating standards. Steton 360 Franchise Edition - www.steton.com - is designed to complement corporate assessment and third-party audits and provides even deeper insight into what's working and what's not across the entire retail operation. Steton 360 Franchise Edition uses the latest mobile technology and business intelligence tools, making it easy for operators to identify performance gaps, make adjustments, and see progress in real-time. "Experience shows that small and consistent improvements in food quality and guest experience can increase same store sales on average by as much as \$11,000 annually," said Dennis Derrick, Steton Vice President of Sales. "As a franchisor operating hundreds or even thousands of restaurants, the system-wide increase is dramatic and amounts to tens of millions of dollars."

◆◆◆◆
Stonefire Authentic Flatbreads' A #1 selling naan in North America is now available for Foodservice & Chefs, for foodservice customers across the U.S. and Canada. Armed with the largest commercial tandoor oven in the world capable of the searing heat required for true Indian flatbread, this family-owned bakery with over 40 years of experience, invented a new technology that perfectly mirrors the intense heat of this ancient oven and use a cooking method that dates back centuries. The naan is ready within seconds of being placed in the tandoor. Free of preservatives, artificial colors, additives, trans fat and hydrogenated oils, Stonefire's™ naan is hand stretched and prepared in small batches with Ghee (clarified butter) and fresh buttermilk, following a traditional recipe. Stonefire's naan is available in original, whole grain and garlic. Visit www.stonefire.com for additional details.

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Sunny Street's aggressive growth plans for Texas

The fast growing breakfast-lunch chain Sunny Street Cafe® has signed a 40-store development agreement for Texas with Cafe Management Systems, marking Sunny Street Cafe's most aggressive statewide expansion effort to date.

The restaurant chain has tapped industry veteran Robert Andersen to grow the brand in Texas over the next 10 years. Currently, two to four new restaurants are slated to open in the next 12 months in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area under Andersen's management. Target development areas include Tarrant, Collin, Denton and Dallas counties.

"Sunny Street Cafe has tremendous growth potential in Texas, and Robert is the right individual to fast track development of the brand in the state," said Scott Moffitt, president of Sunny Street Cafe. "He has achieved remarkable franchise system growth results with other brands and has a proven track record in launching emerging restaurant concepts."

Andersen's company Cafe Management Systems, which has exclusive Sunny Street Cafe rights in Texas, will be responsible for all day-to-day operations and marketing support for existing and new restaurants in Texas. He also will recruit qualified multi-unit developers and single-unit franchisees to open additional restaurants in Houston, San Antonio, Austin and Dallas/Ft. Worth.

In addition to Cafe Management Systems, Andersen is the CEO and founder of Jackhammer Franchise Development Company, which provides sales and development expertise for emerging restaurant concepts. He has helped successfully launch the franchise programs for Boston Pizza, Cowboy Chicken, MOOYAH Burgers & Fries and Twin Peaks Restaurant chains. He is also the president and owner of Vesta Restaurant Group, a restaurant development and operations company, which operates Cowboy Chicken restaurants in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area.

"Breakfast/lunch is a fast growing segment, and Texas is underserved in that day part," Andersen said. "Sunny Street Cafe offers fabulous fresh food, superior customer service and a focus on the local community."



The chain features signature dishes, such as "big as the plate" Buttermilk Pancakes, Stuffed Biscuits and Gravy as well as other unique daily offerings like homemade grits and the Tex Mex Omelette. Additional healthy choices include fresh cut fruit, fresh salads and real fruit smoothies.

Community groups and associations also can host semi-private breakfast or lunch meetings or utilize the restaurant's catering and takeout menu.

"Full-service catering is a natural extension for us, and it helps boost our restaurant sales," said Moffitt. "Our franchise also offers attractive work hours for owners, managers and employees. You can enjoy a successful business and also have time to enjoy family and friends and to give back to the community."

Sunny Street Cafe targets locations in suburban retail strip centers, anchored by grocery stores in new developments. New restaurants are approximately 3,500 square feet to accommodate heavy weekend crowds. Currently, there are four Texas locations in Murphy, The Woodlands, Haltom City and North Richland Hills.

Sunny Street Cafe® operates 14 franchised locations in Ohio, Texas and Missouri. Franchise opportunities are currently available for both first-time owners and existing franchise owner/operators and developers. Online: www.sunnystreetcafe.com. 

Garbanzo's from page 1

interest from experienced franchisees since inception in 2007, and we have been very fortunate to sign deals with numerous groups across the country. We only see that interest continuing to grow as more and more companies recognize the demand and enthusiasm for fast-casual Mediterranean in their areas. This year will be one of many firsts for Garbanzo franchising as we enter new markets, and we look forward to announcing those deals over the next few months."


"I am very excited to be bringing such a unique concept like Garbanzo Mediterranean Grill to the San Antonio and Austin markets," shares Michael Ahlstrom, Blue Jean Food Group president. "With the fresh-food movement growing, these communities are seeking a healthy, tasty alternative to the common-place, processed-food fast food restaurant."

"Joining with a solid organization such as Blue Jean Food Group furthers our franchising goal of selecting quality operators over quantity in

order to strategically grow the Garbanzo brand nationwide," said Garbanzo founder,

Alon Mor, president and CEO. "And for seasoned restaurateurs, Garbanzo offers an original, high caliber concept with distinctive menu offerings for their portfolios."



Garbanzo offers guests a variety of authentic Mediterranean items with an emphasis on flavor, freshness and quality, and a healthy trans-fat free menu. Guests can customize every meal with items such as pita, laffa, falafel, shwarma, hummus, seasoned rice, sauces and dressings. Salads and sauces are prepared on-site daily, and the pita are made from scratch throughout the day in every restaurant. Additional ingredients are bought locally or imported from the Mediterranean region. 



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