

WOODEN SPOON 2017

Middle School Students Learn, Run a Business, and Give Back Profits go to the Interfaith Outreach Food Shelf

Plymouth, Minn. (June 2017)- The West Suburban Summer School (WSSS) is pleased to announce the 4th year of the Wooden Spoon Project as one of the classes in its Summer Program. This one-week class teaches the basics of running a small business and provides a hands-on opportunity to manage the Rock Elm Tavern in Plymouth over lunchtime on **Wednesday, June 21st**. Proceeds will benefit Interfaith Outreach <https://www.iocp.org/>

This project dates back to 1997, when Suzanne Graft, a Wayzata School 5th grade teacher at Oakwood Elementary, Plymouth, incorporated a business curriculum into her class and collaborated with Peg's Countryside Café www.pegscountrysidecafe.com in Hamel, where the students would work. The students learned basic skills and ran the business themselves. After determining the profit, the students went to a local grocery store, purchased food and delivered it to the Interfaith Outreach food shelf. Shortly before her death in 2010, Suzanne shared with her family and colleagues her hopes for a re-launch of this restaurant project. The "re-launched restaurant" opened in the gym at Oakwood Elementary School as The Wooden Spoon. This was the venue for the project from 2011 to 2013. In 2014, WSSS added the project to its class list and has done so every summer since.

For the past three years, Peg's Countryside Café has been the venue for WSSS. As an opportunity to grow the program in a new community, The Wooden Spoon will open at Rock Elm Tavern www.rockelmtavern.com this year.

Troy Reding and Brad Sorenson opened Rock Elm Tavern in September 2015. They support a variety of worthy causes and partner with local organizations to facilitate a positive impact in the community. "We are incredibly excited to work with the students and help continue this amazing learning experience."

The Wooden Spoon will be open from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Reservations are appreciated but not necessary. The profits, tips and donations will all be given to Interfaith Outreach. If you are unable to attend and wish to donate, please do so directly to Interfaith Outreach <https://www.iocp.org/> and indicate "The Wooden Spoon" on your donation. We appreciate your interest and support. Thank You!

About Graft's Grill Production

Twenty years ago, Suzanne initiated Graft's Grill as a complete classroom curriculum and community partnership. Her passion for experiential learning and community service is an enduring legacy that benefits students and the community. Students direct every aspect of the program and choose a worthy organization to receive the day's profits. As part of the curriculum, guest speakers teach students about launching a business, human resources, finance, food preparation, food safety, and general business management skills. To learn more about Graft's Grill, visit <https://www.facebook.com/A-Grafts-Grill-Production-405692789780256/>.