



Intercom

duke university medical center

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 4

THANKSGIVING, 1967

DURHAM, NC

All This to Cook the Turkey



The Dietetics Team, (left to right), front row: Lillian Crabtree - Office Accountant, Mildred Rigsbee - Senior Supervisor, Carrie Johnson - Ordering Supervisor, Hattie Dark - Head Cook, Hattie Jones - Baker, Ruby Reid - Charting. Back row: Ruth Lecina - Dietetic Intern, Jessie Smith - Patient Food Service, Junious Century - Storage & Receiving, Charles Cameron - Main Kitchen Dish Room, Blossie Barnes - Staff Cafeteria, Mary Lou Pate - Asst. Director.

As Thanksgiving, 1967, rolls around, the Dietetics Department of Duke Medical Center is busily preparing for the big event. You guessed it...turkey and all the fixin's will be the main item of the day. Throughout the entire hospital - from the little child patient to the sophisticated grownup - people will be giving thanks as they enjoy this extra special meal. However, very few of these happy eaters stop to think of the number of man-hours it takes to bring this food before them. 246 people make up the Dietetics Department, and all work together to prepare dinner for over 1,000 people.

Several days before, a special Thanksgiving menu is written by the dietitian. She is concerned with how things look and taste. She must also use her knowledge of nutritive value and human body functions in sickness and health so that the menu fills any dietary prescription. Some patients may not be able to eat their turkey in the usual form; Old Tom may be cut up, chopped, blended, or even made into baby food! After the menu has been written for everyone, the ordering process begins. First, the food service supervisor estimates from past records and her experience how many servings will be needed of each item. Then, every ingredient in every recipe must be ordered. The shopping list for the meal: 900 lbs. turkey, 120 qts. of pumpkin, 20 qts. whipping cream, 2 lbs. pumpkin pie spice...etc. (Unfortunately, we aren't eligible for Green Stamps!) Office personnel contact

local suppliers and arrange for the order; the primary objective is always quality before price. This is especially true when dealing with hungry patients with a desire for a "homecooked meal". When the orders start to arrive the Storage and Receiving personnel are kept busy. The bundles must be handled with "tender loving care" and stored in just the right way at the proper temperature until the cooks are ready to begin preparation.

The day before Thanksgiving, Old Tom gets thawed and cleaned by some of the cooks, while others prepare fresh cranberry sauce. At 5:00 a.m. Thanksgiving morn, while the rest of the hospital is still quiet, things are buzzing in the kitchen. Old Tom is popped into the oven, oops, twelve ovens; the dressing is set to bake in six other ovens. Everyone in the kitchen is busy preparing the extra special menu items. 50 pumpkin pies, made at 3:00 a.m. by our bakers, have just come out of the oven, the candied sweet potatoes are browning, and the cranberry sauce is divided into servings.

The deadline of 10:00 a.m. is fast approaching as the food is portioned out into pans for seven kitchens and the cafeteria. At last our meal is on its way to the Thanksgiving table. Each kitchen has picked up its food cart; each item is served on an individual tray in a conveyer belt assembly area, then each tray is checked by a food service supervisor and a dietitian to see that it corresponds to a diet prescription; four trays out of ten must be modified in some way. Finally, Old Tom and the fixin's are delivered to our hungry patrons. Turkey, oyster dressing, candied sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, fresh rolls, pumpkin pie and a tray favor made by the dietetic interns...The preceding has been brought to you for your enjoyment by the Department of Dietetics.

A way to say thanks

This issue of INTERCOM is devoted to saying "thanks" to the many people behind the scenes who help keep this medical center going. It is a known fact that people who are the "front-runners", the "newsmakers" or the "spokesmen" of our medical center rely heavily upon the hundreds of other people who daily devote their time and energies to the smooth functioning of the internal machinery of this amazing, compassionate institution dedicated to health services, health training, and health research. If we did not have the people behind the scenes, this institution could not exist, just as the same would be true if we did not have the "newsmakers" and the "spokesmen". It is good to be thankful for each other. -Chaplain Aitken