

Fast Food Fattening

BY BECKY CHARLES

"I eat at home"
Correspondent

"Two all beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, on a sesame seed bun" - 563 calories (53% from fat) + 1,010 mg sodium

It's Sunday, dinner time in the cafeteria. As you walk the final fifty feet to the door of Founders, you ask a couple of pale-greenish friends "What's for dinner?" They look at each other and weakly mumble some familiar, but not appetizing, words about what they had eaten. They also add some wise words about what to avoid in your encounter with the most dreaded meal of the week. As you stroll into the cafeteria encountering more pale-green faces, smelling the likes of shepherd's pie, and seeing the unfamiliar mixes of vegetables, you and your friends opt for McDonald's or Hardee's instead.

If you knew what you were eating at those fast food restaurants, you would probably take your chances in the cafeteria instead. However, consumers don't know what they are really buying when they order a Hardee's bacon cheeseburger nor can they easily find out what is in their McDonald's Big Mac. You can, however, rest assured the ingredients are not as innocent as catchy commercial jingles might lead you to believe. Children sing the jingles merrily on their way to school and adults enthusiastically hum the tunes around the house. Why not - these are all wholesome, nutritious ingredients, right? How enthusiastic would you feel if you knew that a Big Mac alone contains 563 calories, 53% of which

are derived from fat? When you gulp down that Big Mac you have eaten the fat equivalent of 8.7 pats of butter and over 1000 mg of sodium (the amount required by the body in an entire day). The Big Mac is not the only example nor the worst example of "fat" food. The June 1985 issue of Nutrition Action listed calorie, fat, and sodium contents for foods from many fast food chains. Nutrition Action, published by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (a nonprofit, public interest organization), also listed the "worst" and "best" of fast foods. The foods in these categories were judged according to calorie content, the percentage of fat contributing to the calories, sodium content, and cholesterol amounts. The worst foods were: Roy Rogers' Crescent Sandwich w/Ham - 7.5 pats of butter of 442 calories (58% of them from fat) and 1,192 mg sodium; Wendy's Cheese Stuffed Potato - 9 pats of butter or 590 calories (52% from fat) and 450 mg sodium; McDonald Chicken McNuggets - 5 pats of butter or 314 calories (54% from fat), 525 mg sodium; Hardee's Bacon Cheeseburger - 11.1 pats of butter or 686 calories (55% from fat), 1,074 mg sodium; McDonald's Sausage biscuit - 10.4 pats of butter or 582 calories (61% from fat), 1,380 mg sodium. The best foods were: Long John Silver's Baked Fish - .5 pats of butter of 151 calories (12% from fat), 361 mg. sodium; and Jack in the Box Shrimp Salad - .3 pats of butter or 115 calories (8% from fat), 460 mg. sodium. It's too bad that there are no Jack in the Box restaurants in this area. However, Long John Silver's is not too far away (the nearest located at 2623 Battleground Avenue). An honorable mention



Guilford's own fast food row.

Photo by Rolf Orsagh.

went to Arby's Roasted Chicken Breast - 1.9 pats of butter or 254 calories (25% from fat), 930 mg. sodium.

Names can disguise a food's true nutritional worth. For instance, Nutrition Action indicated that while the term "salad" suggests few calories and little fat, Long John Silver's Seafood Salad has 386 calories (67% of them from fat); Hardee's Shrimp 'n Pasta Salad has 362 calories (72% from fat). There are however some truly good salads available. For instance, Wendy's Salads with reduced-calorie dressing live up to their names.

Most fast foods, however, serve up generous amounts of cholesterol, saturated fats, and sodium, all of which are known contributors to heart disease. Some of the foods also contain additives to which many people are allergic. Things like monosodium glutamate (MSG), Yellow 5 (an artificial coloring used in many fast foods), wheat, corn based

sweeteners, nuts, peanut oil, milk solids, sulfiting agents, and eggs are prevalent in these foods. When I asked the managers of the New Garden Road McDonald's and Hardee's, they were unable to tell me which additives were used in their products nor did they have a clear idea as to how a customer might find out what additives were used.

Customers can write to a fast food chain and ask if a specific ingredient is used in any of its products. However, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) wrote to the major fast food chains asking for product ingredients. Only Arby's responded with such a list. Other companies (McDonald's, Arby's, Burger King, Hardee's, etc.) did not respond to repeated inquiries or said they would not give out lists of products ingredients but would tell a customer with allergies which products contained a specific substance. Some companies said they had no information available about their ingre-

dients or they considered the information to be confidential.

The CSPI has petitioned the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to require all fast food chains to disclose the ingredients on all products that come in packages. It would also be nice if information such as fat content and cholesterol amounts were included on the ingredient labels. If legislation such as this succeeds, and hopefully it will, then we will be made aware of what we are eating. Maybe the resulting loss in sales would convince the convenient food chains to begin dishing out nutritious foods instead of their current "hazardous to your health" meals. The CSPI urges those interested to write Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio) at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. Explain to the Senator that you wish for the CSPI's petition to become a reality. So, hopefully, when the next "Whopper" craving or "Big Mac Attack" overcomes you, you won't fear for your life.

Spanky Voted In

At the end of last semester, the Computer Services conducted a campus wide contest to help name the VAX that the students use. They wanted the students to be able to name their own system.

There were over 100 entries collected. The purpose of naming them is for code names to send as an "address," it is basically for future use when more VAX computers are purchased.

The following list is a summary of the entries:

The Winner: The Little Rascals, with "Spanky" being the first to be named.

Most Original: "Shake, Rattle, and Roll."

Most Unoriginal: "Names of the Planets."

Most Nominations: "The Brady Bunch."

Most bizarre: "Cheeses?"

Cutest: "Bill and Bev."

Person Submitting Most Entries: Robert Hong.

Cleverest: "Liz Taylor and her husbands."

Most Risque: "Types of Contraceptives."

Most New Wave: "Devo."

Most Granola: "Names of spices."

Cute but too long: "Little Baby Guilford."

Too Seasonal: "Santa and his Reindeer."

Thank you to all who participated.

Computer Services

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SWAT

Are you interested in meeting new students? If so, applications are now being accepted for the Student Welcoming and Advisory Team (SWAT). SWAT is responsible for helping to plan and carry out the new student orientation programs in the fall and spring. If you are responsible and enjoy meeting, greeting, and guiding new people at Guilford, then SWAT is for you.

Applications can be picked up from Olive Jenkins in the Center for Personal Growth, Founders Hall Basement.

ACOA

Have you ever found yourself wondering what "normal" is? Are you afraid to be out of control? Do you knowingly or unknowingly create crisis in your life when things are going too well? In your intimate relations do you still give loyalty even though loyalty is no longer deserved?

If these things sound familiar to you and your parents or grandparents were/are alcoholics then you may want to join the ACOA group on Monday nights at 8:00 p.m. in Room 203, Founders Hall. We are not affiliated with Al-Anon, but are a group designed specifically to meet the needs of the adult child.