

## Highlights of 2010 Pancake Breakfast

2010 Pancake Breakfast (PB) went off very smoothly with only a few minor glitches. I hope you have found it as enjoyable as I have, despite waking at odd hours. For those scout families who have missed PB this year, read on and discover what you missed and mark your calendar to be here next year.

### Before Patriots Day:

**New banner:** Did you miss the beautiful banner that Jeff and Joan Shorter put together? It was put together with the Youth group that hosts a BBQ at St. Brigid's front lawn on Patriots Day afternoon.

**New grill:** Hank Manz calmed my nerves when on Sat. setup he showed off the new electrical wiring by turning on the new grill that was generously donated by the parents of Jeff Shorter last year. It worked really well.

**New twists:** Panic set in when just three days before Patriots Day when we could not find the sausages and hot chocolate at the usual places. I was thinking that we might have to go to every single supermarket to buy a few tens of sausages at each to get the 3400 sausages we needed! Luckily, Katie Sultan was quick to find and secure 3300 sausages at BJ in Framingham (that was all they got) and David Frank drove there in the late evening to get them. He also found the large cans of hot chocolate. Thank you, Katie and David.

### Patriots Day:

**Before the Battle:** We served about 40 Minutemen around 4 am before they went to battle the Redcoats. For those who had trouble finding parking spaces later on, you wouldn't have trouble during the very early work shifts of cooking sausages and pancakes. Thanks to the two early crews -- sausages and early pancakes were great.

**Deluge:** All was calm until 6:22 am when a few customers appeared. That was the signal of an oncoming deluge of customers who just finished watching the Battle of Lexington reenactment nearby. Within minutes, the end of the line was out of sight for the next 2½ hours (but we loved it.) Even before that, a few scouts with PB signs were already outside attracting people to come, and, new this year, we now have a very nice looking banner announcing pancakes were just a quick walk from the Battle Green.

**Waiting in line:** When they were inside, they were greeted by two veteran scout parents, serving them hot coffee or tea and making their wait in line much more tolerable. Before they got to the cashier, they were met by a single scout manning the sale of the unique Maine maple syrup from the Rolfsons. With just a few verbal instructions from me at the beginning, the scout (who are you? send me an email and cc your parent) managed to sell all 25 bottles and then, upon leaving a sold-out note on the table, left to help out with the rest of PB. Very nicely done!

**Cashier:** This is the most coveted position at PB, and the JASMs and the almost-JASMs love it. This year they were presented by a problem that I single-handedly created. The cashier box did not have enough \$1 dollar bills to start with, and soon I was told that we needed more dollar bills. So, the cashiers started raiding the donation boxes to get more dollar bills, asked customers to band together to conserve the few dollar bills we had, and even used quarters. I went around begging for dollar bills from parents and I really appreciate the dollar bills that were simply donated to PB. Well done, cashiers for

handling the unexpected problem. Next year, this would be rectified. I will have to think of a different problem for the cashiers!

**Pancakes and oranges:** Like most years, the kitchen could not make pancakes fast enough for the never-ending crowd and customers had to wait a few extra minutes for their pancakes, even though we built up a large number of pancakes before the line formed. However, the wait was not too long and the customers were not complaining. Pancake sizes varied quite a bit this year, so next year we should try to decide on a more consistent size that is good for cooking them and for customers (one suggestion is 5-in diameter.) We ran out of oranges this year a bit too early because some of the pieces were not cut into 1/8-size.

**Syrup:** Last year, we used a lot of syrup and had to go to Stop & Shop more than once to purchase additional bottles. This year we used about half as much as last year, despite having some large-sized pancakes. What happened? Did people decide that too much syrup was not healthy? Maybe, but our new operation was probably the reason. The most significant change was actually a request from customers that it was difficult to pour out the syrup and asked for a spoon. So, spoons went to all tables, and suddenly no dripping syrup and no over-pouring of it. What a simple solution! Thank you to the scout(s) who came to me and related the request. Scouts are helpful and resourceful.

**VIP:** VIP servers Teresa Keh and Lynn Woodhouse and two scouts did an amazing job, keeping the VIPs (Minutemen, Redcoats, Policemen, etc) well fed and happy. This year, the pancake shortage was well handled by getting just a few pancakes from the kitchen at a time instead taking several tens of pancakes at once. The slight change in operation resulted in less friction between the regular serving line and the VIP serving table, and it also prevented VIPs and non-VIPs from overwhelming the VIP table for seconds. It's a win-win solution; moreover, Teresa and Lynn got plenty of exercise going back to the kitchen many times.

**Various crews:** The reason I was so relaxed during the operation was the efforts by parents who did everything practically perfectly, from the kitchen crews led by Mike Ames, the drinks crew who made everyone happy about their drinks until the end (when I decided not to make another 5 gallons of decaf coffee), the serving crews who occasionally had to entertain waiting customers, and the cleanup crew led by Susanna Whitman.

**Scout operation:** Simply well done! The scouts did a phenomenal job in the setup, during the PB, and in the cleanup. I appreciate those who came to let me know things that I did not notice. You were the face of PB to the customers and you did well. Thanks to many scouts who did two (and even three) shifts to keep the operation running so smoothly.

Again, a big thanks to everyone!!!

Franco Wong  
Manager, Pancake Breakfast 2010