

Poisoned Picnic Information Sheet

The picnic started at 6:00pm. Tuesday evening at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The park is located off of Route 303 in Peninsula and contains several gazebos and picnic areas. The administration and faculty of Nordonia Hills Middle School organized the picnic as a relaxing event before their faculty meeting and the start of the new school year. Many faculty and staff brought members of their family.

Mrs. Belli and Mrs. Wojtecki arrived at 5:30 to help set up. Mr. Yeager was next to arrive to set up the grill. He brought his grill from home and had to take a few minutes to clean it off because it had been used last by his very messy son. Mr. Wessel arrived next from the supermarket where he had picked up the hamburgers. After the charcoal was lit and aluminum foil was placed over the grills, Mr. Yeager began to cook.

At 5:55, Mrs. Belli realized there was only one serving spoon. She left to get some more, returning about 30 minutes later. The other teachers waited for a while, but finally decided to start eating about 6:20.

When all of the food arrived there was a full menu that included baked beans, chicken, ham, green bean casserole, tuna casserole, cherry pie, pudding, potato salad, macaroni salad, corn and hamburgers. Drinks included soda, water, coffee, and tea.

Mr. Wessel was first through the line. He tried:

- Green bean casserole
- Ham
- A hamburger

Mrs. Lindsey was next. She ate:

- Potato salad
- Ham
- A hamburger

The third person through the line was Mr. Dunlap. He ate:

- Green bean casserole
- Potato salad
- A hamburger

Mrs. Scheip was next in line. She sampled:

- Potato salad
- A hamburger
- Cherry pie

Mrs. Belli arrived at this time with more serving spoons. Mrs. Spence came at the same time. She was a little late because she had to be sure the chicken she brought was done enough.

Mr. Capretta went through the line next. He ate:

- Green bean casserole
- Chicken
- A hamburger
- Pudding

Next was Mrs. Bailey, who ate:

- Baked beans
- Green bean casserole
- Macaroni salad
- Corn

The line became a little unorganized at this point and it is not clear who went through next. Mrs. Belli and Mrs. Wojtecki were two of the last people through since they helped to serve.

Mrs. Belli ate:

- Green bean casserole
- Potato salad
- A hamburger
- Pudding

Others in attendance included Mrs. Holan, Mr. Wallace, Mrs. West, Mrs. Riedthaler and Mrs. Sekulich. A lot of the guests said they could not remember exactly what they ate, but Mrs. Holan, Mr. Pilato, Mrs. Riedthaler, and Mrs. Spence all had hamburgers, baked beans, and macaroni salad.

Mr. Wallace, and Mrs. Sekulich had ham, baked beans, corn, and some pudding for desert.

Mrs. Huml, Mrs. Olson, Mrs. Schrembeck, Mr. Pilato, and Mrs. Tylicki have not yet been interviewed. Some other staff members arrived just in time for the faculty presentations, which started at 7:45. These included Mr. Merhar, Mrs. Vinson, and Mr. Wilson.

Some faculty and staff walked around while they ate but most sat in one of the gazebos. The presentations were held in the main gazebo, which was a relief for some of the faculty because it seemed to be one of the few places free of duck and goose droppings.

Even during the meeting, some of the kids chased ducks with their water guns. These kids never seemed to run out of water because the guns held almost a gallon each, but even if they did run out, they quickly refilled them from the river.

Just about everyone at the picnic except those that came for the meeting only were soaked. Since it was a hot day, the only time anyone seemed to mind the soaking was when one of the kids missed their intended target and almost put out the grill. After this incident, which happened about 6:10, the kids stayed away from the main gazebo, where the food was located, and turned their attention to the ducks and teachers walking around.

Nordonia Hills City Schools and police were alarmed by the sickness and deaths that seem to be associated with the event. They have promised a full investigation. Even the waste-water treatment plant just a few hundred yards up the river will have to submit a report on their procedures for water treatment. This is the first time anything like this has happened at the park and officials want to be sure that it does not happen again.

Park managers said that most of the symptoms such as dehydration, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting seem to indicate some type of food poisoning however at this point they cannot be certain.

You are now part of a team of epidemiologists that has been called in to get to the bottom of this mystery. You will need to identify the cause of the disease and prevent any further outbreaks. Time is of the essence, because if left untreated many more people may fall victims as well. The first thing you will want to do is meet with your team members and outline the information you have been given and then decide what additional information you need. Nordonia Hills City Schools have promised complete cooperation in this matter. Good Luck!

Poisoned Picnic Faculty Information Cards

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| <p>Mrs. Huml</p> <p>Brought plates and cups to the picnic. Had chicken, potato salad, pudding, green bean casserole. Became sick Tuesday evening. Symptoms included nausea, vomiting, and dizziness.</p> | <p>Mrs. Bailey</p> <p>Organized a game of volleyball set up by the gazebo. The players were a favorite target for the water guns!! The only foul was when Mr. Wilson stepped on a duck going after the ball. Mrs. Bailey became ill Tuesday evening. She was treated and released from the hospital Wednesday morning.</p> |
| <p>Mrs. Olson</p> <p>Recovering. Became ill Tuesday night and was rushed to the hospital by her husband. Her son enjoyed his water gun, soaking teachers with river water. She loved the burgers made by Mr. Yeager!! Eating at least 2! She also tried some green bean casserole, chicken, and pudding. Her son did not become ill.</p> | <p>Mrs. Tylicki</p> <p>Sampled a little bit of everything. She became ill Tuesday night and finally went to the hospital Wednesday morning. She complained of stomach cramps and nausea. Doctors quickly began an IV to help replenish lost fluids. She briefly went into a coma then slowly recovered.</p> |
| <p>Mrs. Schrembeck</p> <p>Recovering. Had a great time except for when she stepped in duck droppings, which seemed to be everywhere. She didn't even mind being soaked. She tried a little bit of everything to eat.</p> | <p>Mr. Yeager</p> <p>Mr. Yeager took control of the grill. Mr. Wessel soon showed up with the hamburger meat and started making the burgers. Mr. Yeager had some potato salad, green bean casserole, a hamburger, and pudding for dessert. Mr. Yeager became ill, suffering from numbness, disorientation, nausea, and vomiting. He was treated and released after several days in the hospital.</p> |
| <p>Mr. Pilato</p> <p>Arrived late, just in time to grab a burger and some green bean casserole. Most of the utensils and food were already put away or gone. He became ill Wednesday morning and had to leave work around 8:30 am. He suffered from nausea, dizziness, and was so disoriented that she could not drive home. Mrs. Holan offered him a ride home instead.</p> | <p>Mrs. Belli</p> <p>She arrived early with her son and helped to set up for the picnic. After many of the staff arrived, she realized that there was only one serving spoon so she went home to get some more. She returned about 30 minutes later with spoons, (after several faculty had gone through the line) to find her son chasing ducks with the water guns. Both Mrs. Belli and her son became ill.</p> |
| <p>Ms. Wojtecki</p> <p>Helped to set up for the picnic. She had a hamburger, baked beans, pudding, and corn. She and several other teachers spent their time sitting in one of the gazebos talking and watching the children dash about after the ducks. Ms. Wojtecki is lactose intolerant. She became ill just a couple of hours after the picnic suffering from severe stomach pains. She went to bed and recovered over night.</p> | <p>Mrs. Scheip</p> <p>Complained of stomach cramps early Tuesday night. Her condition continued to worsen until she finally had to be taken to the hospital. She was given massive doses of antibiotics. Her condition became worse as her symptoms began to include vomiting and disorientation. She soon found that she could not remember much about the picnic. After several days her condition improved.</p> |