

FOOD NOTES

Free breakfast for testers; Steve's opens in Meridian

BY DANA OLAND

doland@idahostatesman.com

If you're taking the ISATs this month, you can stop by McDonald's in the Treasure Valley, Mountain Home and Weiser for a free breakfast on test day, Monday, April 9.

"Yum." My wife wanted contrast, some crunch to cut through the density of meat and bread. And while I love pickled anything, the gastrique took over the mild greens and wintry tomato.

That alternative is offered in the "classic" topping, which my sister and I preferred. I was completely won over by the house-made quick pickles and relish. But the smoked iceberg lettuce makes no sense to me — smoke flavor holds onto fats and proteins, which is why it is so often wedded to cheese and marbled meats like pork ribs or fish like salmon. The more delicate the vessel, the less likely the smoke will even matter. The point here is moot: I didn't taste a hint of smoke anywhere.

On this we agreed: All of the burgers were a bit dry. Certainly this has something to do with the leaner-than-feedlot grass-fed beef and bison, which should earn some points. But, still,

Most distinguishing of all — even better than the fries — was the tremendous service, the friendliness of everyone, cooks included. Every employee smiled at us. They all seemed happy to be doing what they were doing. My wife and I had been debating whether to try the house-made sodas, and after we'd sat down with beers instead, the gentleman behind the counter brought us each an orange-basil soda to try. "We just changed the recipe," he said, "and I think it's awesome."

If they can replicate this at every location, it will not be long before Boise Fry Company is recognized for being the truly model business that it is.

Go between 6 and 8:30 a.m. and, while supplies last, receive a free Egg McMuffin, apple slices and choice of low-fat milk or fat-free chocolate milk.

Students younger than 15 must be accompanied by an adult.

NEW BREAKFAST PLACE IN MERIDIAN

Steve's Cafe opened two weeks ago at 2483 E. Fairview Ave. in Meridian. Owner Steve Vincelli and chef Daniel Le Comte serve up a home-style breakfast and lunch from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. daily.

Steve's is based on his parents' popular cafe in Helena, Mont.

"We're passionate about food and about taking care of people," Vincelli says.

The signature menu items include house-made chicken and pork sausages, including Italian sausage made from the Vincelli family recipe, huckleberry-stuffed French toast, house-made huckleberry syrup and corned beef. Phone: 887-1133. Online: StevesCafe.com

GO GREEN AT CHIPOTLE

Chipotle Mexican Grill is offering an Earth Day special.

From now until April 14, you can purchase a Chipotle lunch bag for \$18 at Store.Chipotle.com. It's made from recycled bill-



Provided by Chipotle

Chipotle Mexican Grill will give you a free burrito on Earth Day if you buy one of the restaurant's recycled lunch bags, made from billboard vinyl.

board vinyl used to make Chipotle signage. Every 20,000 bags divert 78,000 square feet of the stuff from landfills.

In return you will receive an eco-friendly card redeemable for a free meal on Earth Day (Sunday, April 22) at the Boise Chipotle, 205 N. Milwaukee St.

Proceeds from the bags will go to the Chipotle Cultivate Foundation, which supports sustainable agriculture, family farming and culinary education.

BLOODY MARY FOR BRUNCH

Restauranter John Berryhill will add a Bloody Mary bar for his Sunday brunch, served from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Berryhill and Co., 121 N. 9th St., and Sunday breakfast at Berryhill's Bacon, 915 W. Idaho St., in Boise.

You can order your

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