

**NEWS**

Local

Bucks County  
Courier TimesBurlington  
County Times

The Intelligencer

Hometown  
Pennsylvania  
New JerseyNational  
WorldHealth  
Washington  
ElectionsColumnists  
Obituaries  
Opinion  
Lotteries  
Weather[Home / National](#)**Utah Restaurant Bets on Honesty**By **PAUL FOY**

The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY - One World Cafe owner/chef Denise Cerreta ditched fixed prices for the honor system a year ago, and her social experiment is on the verge of showing a profit.

"It's between you and the box," Cerreta said of a money chest that sits next to a water jug and mugs on a serving table. "We continue to grow. We continue to make money."

Melva Sine, president of the Utah Restaurant Association, said many restaurants are moving to a menu-free, size-optional format. But she knows of none that have experimented with the honor system.

[CLICK TO ENLARGE](#)

The One World Cafe depends on the kindness of strangers, rich and poor.

Take the landlord, who lets Cerreta determine her rent: \$1,650 a month for a two-story brownstone, where she lives upstairs. Or "Farmer John" Norborg, a 53-year-old self-employed gardener who tends a spice garden in back of the cafe in exchange for meals.

Another regular donated a quarter-acre lot for a vegetable garden three blocks away; retired oil-and-gas engineer Bill Wood picks up the water bill.

"I eat here all the time. Best place in the world," said Wood, 70, who favors the fruit salad.

Some customers volunteer for kitchen duty, another way to pay for meals.

Al Travland, a 66-year-old masseur, also believes honesty is both the best and most profitable policy. He, too, lets customers decide how much to pay - and insists the concept, though foreign to corporate America, brings out the best in customers, making for good business.

"Sometimes I pay less because I have less money. But I pay more when I

credit, but when her rice cooker burned out recently, a customer offered to fix it.

She says the cafe is worth all the effort.

For years Cerreta ran an acupuncture clinic at her brownstone building, then decided to branch out with a sandwich and coffee shop.

She grew weary of offering the same menu, however, and decided overnight to take down the menu and price board.

"I'm just sick of business as usual," she said.

Later she dropped the acupuncture business, turning spare rooms into cozy dining with an old-world decor.

Business appears to be booming at One World Cafe; the money box is stuffed with bills including one \$20 left poking out. Cerreta stuffs it back into a slot. The chest has an unlocked lid, but she doesn't seem the least bit worried.

[E-mail this story to friend](#)

[Back to Archives Index](#)

[Printer Friendly Version](#)

---

Copyright © 2005, The Leader All rights reserved.  
Read our [terms & conditions](#) and [privacy policy](#) which govern the use of our site.