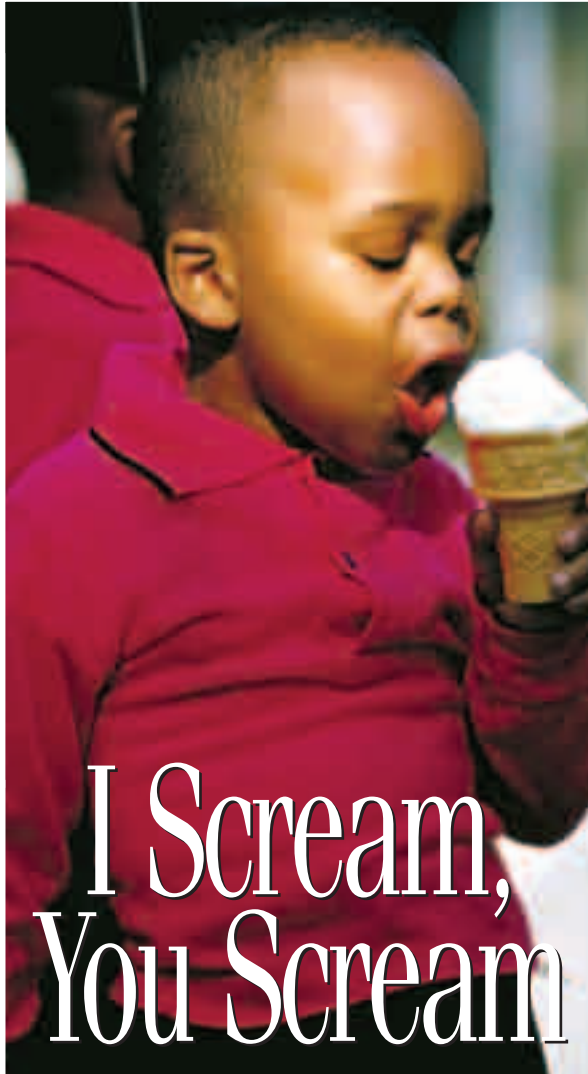


lifestyle: CUISINE



We all scream for ice cream, and this year we've got something exceptionally exciting to scream about. As the summer heat drives islanders to the ice cream stands, few appreciate the enormous impact that the cone had on modern ice cream. Just try eating it with your bare hands.

Yes, the ice cream cone was officially introduced to the United States at the World's Fair in St. Louis back in 1904. We must say officially, because variations of it were already prominent in Europe, and the World's Fair at which it was introduced featured no less than 50 ice cream stands featuring cones, indicating the recipe had gotten out well before hand.

However, ice cream history is full of ambiguities. The hand-cranked freezer was invented by Nancy Johnson, who forgot to patent it and thus William G. Young became the new inventor when he patented the "Johnson Patent Ice-Cream Freezer" two years later.

Stories of the confection's origins credit its invention to the Greeks, the Romans, the Chinese, the Italians and the French. This may be due more to the whimsy of ice cream experts than anything else (they don't call it Good Humour for nothing). Häagen-Dazs was created in 1960, the name

being chosen simply because it sounded Danish. It's actually gibberish.

Here on the island, we're blessed with a bevy of ice cream options, offering desserts from ice cream to gelatos to sherbets. But what, exactly, is the difference between them all? Surprisingly enough, the federal government has felt the matter weighty enough to step in.

RICH & CREAMY CLASSIC

Ice cream is a mixture of milk and sweeteners, with stabilizers and emulsifiers added to keep the texture where it should be. Under federal regulations, ice cream must have 10% milk fat or higher, and weigh 4.5 pounds per gallon. Regulations for frozen custard are basically the same, but this "French ice cream" also contains at least 1.4% egg yolk solids.

SWEET SHERBET & SORBET

But what do the feds have to say about a legal sherbet? Proper sherbet weight is six pounds to the gallon with a milk fat content between 1% and 2%. It is generally sweetened with fruit and contains more sweeteners than ice cream. Incidentally, a sorbet is similar but contains no dairy.

BY ROBERT DRAKE