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Employee at the Wheatland Café booth place the apple dumplings on a tray before they are baked.

Food booth owner uses only one kind of flour to make his pastries

Flour is used in cooking and baking across the world in different ways. Often times, people just buy all-purpose flour or wheat flour to make certain food dishes, but Wheatland Café buys only one type for everything they make. Hudson Cream flour.

Darrell Bauer is the owner of Wheatland Café which has been

in business for 30 years now. He and his wife, Shannon Bauer, run the restaurant with a smaller group of people but they get their work done quickly and swiftly.

"Wheatland Café has roughly 15 part time employees," Darrell said. "But my wife, Shannon, and I are the full-time workers here and at the restaurant."

While running a business and a state fair food booth could seem difficult to some, the Bauers and their crew came up with a solution to help manage them both.

"I have had this booth here at the fair for 25 years now," Darrell said. "But to keep both in business, every year we close down our restaurant for 10 days to come up here and then go right back to our restaurant."

Being located in Hudson, Kansas, they have found that Hudson Cream flour is cheaper as well as better to bake their products with. This flour has been in production for over 100 years as it was started in 1905.

"We are located in the city where they make the flour, and it was cheaper because I can just go get it and not have to have it shipped to us," Darrell said. "This flour just seems to bake everything better, I'm not sure exactly why, but that is why we like to use it."

Their café makes cinnamon rolls, bread, apple dumplings and multiple other tasty treats using Hudson Cream flour that are sold throughout each business day.

Shannon runs the back part of the booth here at the fair, which is the bakery portion. She explains that there is a process to making these pastries quickly while good producing good.

"We usually have one person peeling apples, one filling with sugars, another wrapping and someone on oven duty which is the part that takes the longest," Shannon said.



Chainsaw carver brings entertainment to the fair

The Kansas State Fair is home to some of the weirdest attractions, foods, and even life size butter sculptures. One of the most impressive and overlooked of these, however, are the wood carvings made by professional carver TJ Jenkins.

Jenkins started carving as a form of creative escape from troubles in his life. This hobby eventually developed into a full-fledged career for Jenkins.

"I'd been having issues with my parents' health, as well as getting laid off," Jenkins said. "Carving was just something to take my mind off of the day to day monotony. It started as a hobby but it has developed into a career for me."

Despite carving professionally, Jenkins still finds time to make carvings for himself too. Jenkins can create one of his sculptures out of just about anything whether its a stump or a specific order.

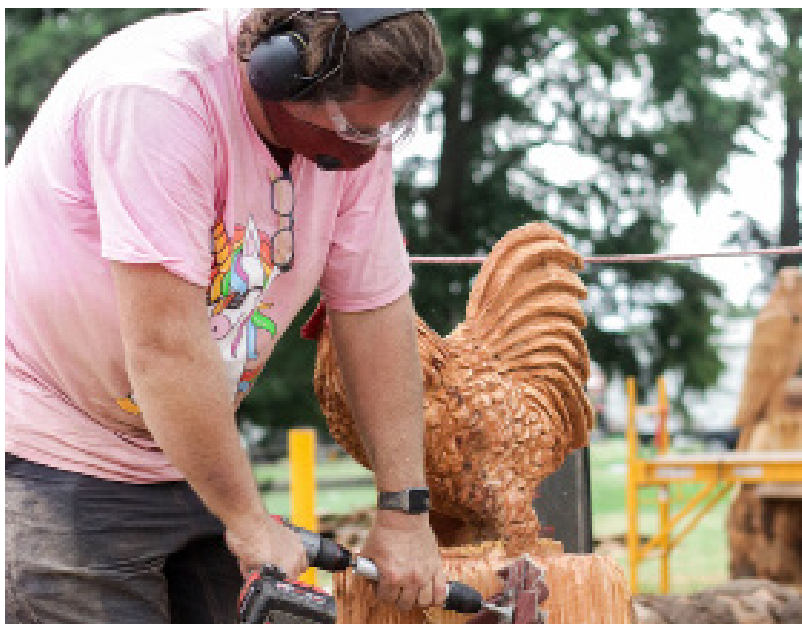
Jenkins' sculptures have ranged from bears holding fire hoses, to Willie the Wildcat, to a canoe used to educate children about Lewis and Clark.

"The canoe was definitely my most time consuming sculpture. I made it in the summer and I was only able to put in four or five hours of work each day before the heat got to me," Jenkins said.

When it comes to his sculptures, Jenkins is especially sentimental about his carving roots.

"My most enjoyable sculpture is still my first one," Jenkins said. "It was a wooden folk head and looking back on it now, it's not my best, but it's still my favorite. It is the ugliest and also the most beautiful piece I've ever done."

This sculpture was inspired by S.L. Jones, an artist who also made wood carvings.



TJ Jenkins sands down his rooster sculpture after he made his final cuts to the wood.



Finished rooster wood carving by Jenkins located Northwest of Lake Talbott.

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Fair goers talk about their thoughts on carving

Andy and Joy Newlin are regulars of the Kansas State Fair and one of their favorite parts of the fair is coming and seeing the sculptures.

"We love seeing all the little critters they can carve into the wood," Joy said. "The carvers have to be really artistic."

Despite their love for looking at the carvings at the fair, Joy and Andy have

decided that these sculptures aren't for them.

"We have a stump in our yard that we've been thinking about getting carved into something," said Andy. "I don't think we'll do that though; they charge a lot for that sort of thing."

At the end of the day Randy and Joy are just excited to see an unique art form that they can't see in many other places.

"These carvings are really impressive," said Joy. "I'm just really excited we get to see them."



Fairgoers Joy and Randy Newlin pose for a picture.



This Dwarf Hotot bunny sits quietly in it's cage while fairgoers walk by.



This Satin Red intermediate buck gazes around the competition room.



Florida White senior buck waits to be judged during the competition.

Rabbit owners prepare animals all year to compete in state fair

The presence of animal life has always been a key aspect for a state fair. Cows, horses, and the competitions they participate in are staples in most fairs. However, the competitions are by no means just for larger animals.

The amount of participants in the rabbit competitions has continued to grow, and shows very little signs of losing any popularity.

"Last weekend we had close to 800 rabbits in the barn that competed," Vicki Myers, manager of the building that displays the rabbit competitors for the Kansas State Fair said. "Around 50 of them were sent to 'Best in Show'."

Each rabbit is broken up into their breeds and classes within their breed; that is where the first portion of the competition takes place. The rabbits in each breed compete against each other, then from there the best of the best are pulled and sent to the "Best in Show" table.

The "Best in Show" table has rabbits that won from each of the breeds. Each participant then goes through a similar process as before, but with more strict criteria. From there, a winner and two runner ups are then chosen by judges. The criteria for judging has differences depending on the rabbit.

"The way the rabbits are judged depends on the Standard of Perfection, set by the ARBA," Myers said. "Each breed has different standards they are set to and judged upon."

Despite being for such a small animal, the competitions are by no means simple. Breeders that breed to gain rabbits that

can compete have to take special caution so that a resulting rabbit is not flawed in some way unfit to compete. Taking proper care of the rabbit is usually all the means of planning available or needed for competitions.

"Overall taking care of [the] rabbit is the most preparation an owner can do if they want to compete with their rabbit," Myers said. "The main goals is just getting your rabbit to meet that standard."

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A fairgoer attempts to pet the rabbit with her index finger.

Artists at the Kansas State Fair help people express themselves

Artists have long used various styles to express themselves through their art. But often, people want to show who they are through something more stylized than a photo, but they lack the skills to create what they desire. At the Kansas State Fair, however, touring artists offer a variety of different forms of personalized expression for people to choose from.

Tony Shnobrich (stylized as 'Snobrik') is a touring caricature artist who has drawn hundreds of personalized caricatures for paying customers over the past 22 years. Reflecting on his career,

Shnobrich recalls how he often draws the children of vendors who themselves were drawn by him when they were kids.

"People who are drawn to caricatures have more of a sense of humor about themselves, and it's like, you can't get it at Walmart, and your phone isn't going to do it for you," Shnobrich said. "I have this one family of four. I've drawn them for, like, 20 years here. They just like a new one every year. They get to see the age progression as their kids are growing up."

Another artist, Jennifer Quinn, uses airbrush art to help people express who they are through personalized clothing.

"Being able to help people express themselves creatively that wouldn't be able to otherwise is the most fun part of my job," Quinn said. "They might have ideas or something that means a lot to them symbolically that they just don't know how to get out or they are not skilled enough to be able to do. T-shirts mean a lot to people because they can display them."

Art at the state fair may not be considered 'high art', but ultimately the goal is always to help people create a piece of artwork that they feel represents who they are.



Quinn's airbrush trailer displaying her designs of the previous projects she has done for clients.

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Shnobrich's past illustrations of famous T.V. characters, signed 'Snobrik'.



Quinn works on an airbrushed design of a ship for one of her customers at the fair.