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Arts & Crafts

It's fair competition when skill can over-ride tradition

By MOLLY MARTIN

"I've heard of leading on the job, but this is ridiculous," read a sign posted on Doug Peters' office door last fall.

The bit of graffiti was not meant as a complaint about the Selah attorney's work habits. It was, instead, a recognition of his skill as a baker — of bread.

More comments from coworkers surrounded the first place blue ribbon from the Central Washington Fair. "I'm jealous!" "How 'bout some lessons," they said.

The blue ribbon won last year by Peters for his white bread, his first exhibit in the foods department of the Central Washington Fair, was taped with pride on his door.

"I only bake white bread," he says. "I started baking it two

years ago from a recipe my wife found in a magazine.

"One fall evening I just needed something to do, and that's how it started. I bought a book on how to make bread, but never read it. My real specialty is to accommodate a specialty is soup." His wife and four children think Dad's cooking is great.

Peters says he can't recall why he first entered his bread in the fair. "A big, burly gate-man was checking papers and I walked in with my bread and I'm sure he must have wondered, 'What kind of guy is this?'" said Peters. With the blue ribbon as positive reinforcement, he plans to enter bread again in this year's fair.

The bread baking section is not restricted to women, and neither are any of the other crafts and homemaking

departments in the fair, said Mrs. H. J. Templeton,

superintendent. In fact, a special class in the clothing and home furnishings department has been added this year. Arthur H. Wulff, 700 S. 10th St., entered his work in last year's fair, but was not eligible to receive a prize, because it fit in no category. He says.

The 74-year-old retired mail carrier said tatting is a nearly extinct art. "Somedays it's hard even to find a shuttle," he said. The shuttle holds thread in a sewing machine bobbin.

Tatting is much like crocheting, he explained, but it takes much longer and won't ever survive. "Anyone who knows how to tie a slip knot can learn to tat, but you must have

good eyesight. If you can't see, you get a knot and then you're in trouble."

Wulff is finishing a tablecloth to enter in the fair — a project he started last year. He estimated it has taken 150 yards of thread and 120 hours of work. Patterned with hundreds of tiny flowers, each made separately, the tablecloth will some day be a family heirloom. Each of his three daughters and son has put a bit for a piece of his work. "They can all share the cloth when they have fancy dinners," he said.

Wulff learned to tat when he was overseas in World War I. "I saw this Maori man tatting with just a piece of paper and said to myself, 'I can do that, too.'" When he returned to the States, he received more instruction from his wife's sister, but tatting did not become a real hobby till after his retirement in 1958.

Tatting is only one of Wulff's hobbies. "I used to play violin for dances and had my own band," he said. He now collects commemorative stamps and has worked for several years selling tickets at the south entrance to the fair.

Wulff admits he can't compete with younger exhibitors in the crocheted class, but said he doesn't mind competing with women his own age. His observation prompted the addition of a class for exhibitors age 60 and older. Included is a section specifically for tatting table covers. And now that his work has a category all its own, he thinks his chances of winning a prize are pretty good.

All exhibits in the clothing and home furnishings department must be entered in the fair by 8:30 p.m. Sept. 27. Mrs. Templeton said exhibitors are reminded to check entry deadlines for each department, as some of last year's deadlines have been changed.

Departments included in the arts, crafts and homemaking division are the juried and open art exhibits, each with different entry deadlines, baking and canning, embroidery, clothing and home furnishings. Each department is divided into junior, intermediate and adult classes.



ARTHUR H. WULFF . . . tatting up a tablecloth.



DOUGLAS PETERS . . . loafing off the job.