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Q&A with owner of Granny's Kitchen Fudge Puppies

Pioneer Press
Updated: 09/28/2011 05:02:41 PM CDT

Occupation: Owner of Granny's Kitchen Fudge Puppies, an online business and Minnesota State Fair booth (grannyskitchenfudgepuppies.com).

Age: 57

What did you want to be when you grew up? I didn't know - I just knew I had this passion for cooking. I belonged to 4-H and took home purple ribbons constantly. Now, I have a library of cookbooks and fall asleep reading them. I could have been a chef in another life.

What was your first job in food? In 1991, when I started Granny's Kitchen, the Fudge Puppies booth at the Minnesota State Fair.

Who's Granny? That's my mom. She lost two daughters in two weeks - one of my sisters died of cancer and the other was sitting at a stoplight and a monster truck ran over her car and killed her. My mom was in such grief I decided to invite her into the business and give her something to live for. I always teased her that she was the beauty and I was the brains of the business.

How did you wind up opening a booth at the State Fair. My goal always had been to get into the Fair. It took me five years, and then it was like winning the lottery. It has been 20 years now, but I feel like life has just begun. I just started selling Fudge Puppies online. People have been bugging me for years to make them available year round.

What's your favorite Fudge Puppies flavor? I think it's this year's white

razzie, a waffle with white chocolate in the batter and gourmet raspberry sauce drizzled over it. I'm very proud of that creation. It took me four months to find the perfect raspberry sauce. I finally found it in Switzerland, and it's very expensive.

Have a good cooking tip? Use top-quality products and practice, practice, practice.

What's something few people know about you? I'm really introverted and shy, but when I'm passionate about something, you can't shut me up. And I'm passionate about my business. I love that I'm 57 and the world is still at my feet and I can keep creating.

What's something in your career that you wish you had done differently? I wish it hadn't taken so long to get into the Fair. But I feel like I was torn in 50 million directions. My husband has a car dealership, and someone had to be home to raise the kids. It is what it is. But now, it's my time.

What's your favorite restaurant? Ciatti's in St. Cloud, where I live. They make everything from scratch. I'd rather pay the big bucks and go for something that's quality. I grew up on a farm and can taste preservatives and chemicals. I have a strong palate.

If someone were to play you in a movie, who should it be? My favorite actress is Meryl Streep. I adore her. She can play any part and nail it.

What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten? I don't eat weird food. I'll try different foods, but if it's pickled chicken feet or something like that, that's of no interest to me.

What's next? I've got to really build my online business and sell dealerships to people who are trying to copy me and don't do it well. I've got other irons in the fire right now, too, but I don't plan on retiring and moving down South. I want to keep

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