

?Jam Lady? hauls home more ribbons from Royal

By Chris McGowan

The Jam Lady ? Jan Freedman from the Aurora Farmers, Market ? has again taken home winnings from the Royal Winter Fair.

Ms. Freedman competes annually in three fairs, the Schomberg, the Markham and the Royal Winter Fair. This tiny lady does not slow down for much.

?The entries of jams and jellies have to be in several weeks before the opening of the Royal. They are judged way ahead of the opening of the fair,? she explains.

The Fair gives specific criteria for jams and jellies that are second nature to Freedman.

She knows what the consistency, clarity and texture need to be. She is an artist that has created many different combinations of new jams and jellies, and it is the creativity of it all that entices her to stay in the game.

Freedman is a foodie to the core and enjoys the competition when she enters.

?The Royal gives out ribbons up to 8th and 9th place, but I only recognize up to 4th place,? she said.

She clearly has her own goals. She has in her possession approximately 150 ribbons from the last eight years of competing. She started competing at the Royal in 2009, where she won the Grand Champion title for Jams and Jellies.

?I did not do as well this year,? said the humble Freedman.

She still brought home three ribbons from the Royal; second place for her strawberry pear with vanilla bean, and third place for her chilli sauce which is a fruit/tomato combination containing the traditional celery and onion but also containing peaches, pears and apples. As well, she got a fourth place for her wild blueberry with meyer lemons.

In 2010, she says she fell down the stairs and fractured her collar bone, so she could not produce or compete to the same degree as she would like.

?I just could not enter the Royal or Markham that year? she says.

But the following year she was right back into it. You will find her now indoors at the Aurora Culture Centre on Aurora Market days, filling jam or jelly orders, or conjuring up a new combination of products for us to try. Her energy and creativity is enticing, and her finished product of jams, jellies, and home preserves are unique and delicious.