

Royston, Kenneth



Whittler

Kenneth Royston, a whittler from Houma, Louisiana, has participated in the Natchitoches - NSU Folk Festival for years. At the festival, he first demonstrates his whittling with his father, Leo Royston. Usually children learn folk traditions from their parents, but in this situation, Leo learned the craft of wooden chain carving from his son Kenneth. Leo Royston once said, "The most important thing I've learned about wood carving is that you need plenty of patience and band aids!" The carvings that Kenneth and his father make are usually long wooden chains made from a single piece of wood (one contains 72 links), and wooden balls trapped inside of boxes. These brain teasers are created from basswood. Kenneth has made and donated many items to the Louisiana Folklife Center, such as a flip-flop toy, a tic-tac-toe game, several puzzles, and a wooden drill, which are kept on display at the Folklife Center. He has also aided with the Louisiana Toys and Games Contest.

Kenneth Royston was inducted into the Louisiana Hall of Master Folk Artists in 2000.

Researched and rewritten by Samantha Sullivan.