



Senator Jared Carpenter welcomed Rockcastle County Middle School to Frankfort during the Kentucky Youth Assembly (KYA) last week. Carpenter spoke with the group about their experience in the program, his role as State Senator, and congratulated Rockcastle's 6th grade students who received the outstanding premier bill award.

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Warm up the season with Kentucky Artisan made bourbon-themed gifts

Kentucky's 200-year old tradition of distilling and its wonderful array of bourbons has inspired artists and food producers to create a variety of bourbon-themed gifts and products. Many are available this holiday season at the Kentucky Artisan Center at Brea and at other Kentucky retailers.

From specialty sauces to seasonings and candies – Kentucky bourbon adds a unique flavor and exciting taste to foods and recipes. This is the premise behind one small artisan specialty-food business, Bourbon Barrel Foods. It is owned and operated by Louisville entrepreneur Matt Jamie, who developed the nation's first soy sauce micro-brewery.

"We're using non-GMO soy beans that are sourced from within Kentucky, and soft red winter wheat that is the same that Maker's Mark and several other distilleries use in their bourbons," Jamie said. "We use repurposed barrels from Woodford Reserve distillery to ferment and age our products in."

One of the first Bourbon Barrel Foods products, Jamie said, was bourbon smoked sea salt.

"I had seen chardonnay smoked sea salt, and since we're the gateway to 'Bourbon Country,' I thought we needed one that was bourbon. We smoked our sea salt in bourbon barrels to create our bourbon smoked pepper and bourbon smoked paprika."

And the list goes on, with many Kentucky producers creating exciting bourbon specialty foods. Not only can you find marinades and sauces for grilling, but also flavored coffees, desserts and candies. Gethsemani Trappist Kentucky bourbon fruitcake is a traditional favorite along with chocolate covered bourbon cherries by Kentucky Chocolates. Also popular are Kentucky bourbon balls, including those made by Ruth Hunt Candies, made with mint julep and Woodford Reserve bourbon.

Jason Cohen, of Louisville, is a visual artist who

works to utilize old or discarded materials in his furniture designs. He now creates a line of furniture using recycled bourbon barrels. Matthew and Karine Maynard, of Maynard Studios, have also developed a line of "Small Batch Furniture" that combines bourbon-barrel wood and their hand-forged ironwork.

A variety of bourbon cookbooks are available, such as "The Kentucky Bourbon Cookbook," by Albert W.A. Schmid, and "The Kentucky Bourbon Cocktail Book," by Joy Perrine and Susan Reigler, offering recipes for new and interesting bourbon concoctions.

Recent years have also seen publication of great books about the history of bourbon with beautiful photos by Kentucky photographers. Discover the history of this craft in Michael R. Veach's book, "Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey: An American Heritage," take a visual tour of Kentucky's distilleries in Leon Howlett's, "The Kentucky

Bourbon Experience," and learn the history of Maker's Mark in, "The Ambassador of Bourbon," by Bill Samuels Jr.

These and many other bourbon-related products are available at the Kentucky Artisan Center at Berea, where everything is made in Kentucky. Visitors can also stop in the center's lobby to find information and talk with staff about Kentucky's famous distilleries. You can also pick up the "Official Guide to Bourbon Country" which offers details on touring, destinations of interest and special dining choices throughout the bourbon-producing areas of the state.

The Kentucky bourbon industry is in its largest expansion phase since Prohibition, with \$265 million in new distilleries, warehouses, bottling lines and visitor centers either completed or underway in the past two years. With bourbon enjoying such popularity, the Kentucky Artisan

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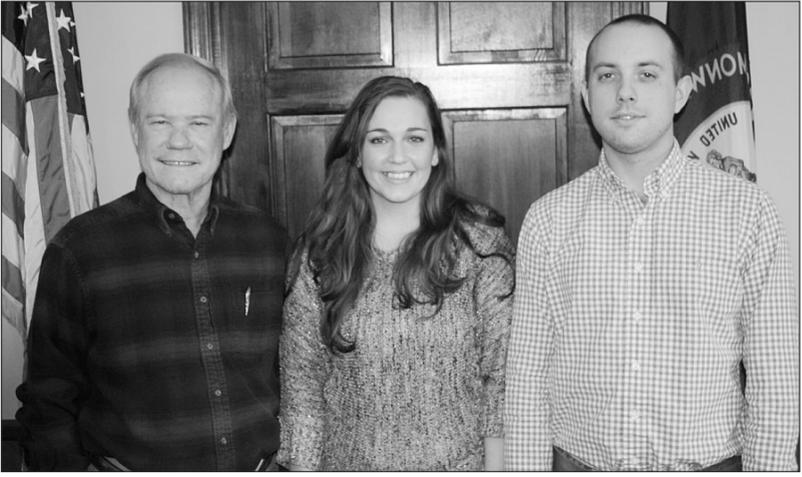
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