**The Traveling Food Truck: Auntie Ruth’s Doughnuts & Pretzels**By: Paige Hill

Johnson City is filled with restaurants and food trucks to satisfy any and all cravings. Amidst all these hot spots, Auntie Ruth’s Doughnuts and Pretzels have paved their way and made an astounding reputation, souring past their competitors.

This business started in 2007 and the owner never thought it would have turned out to be what it has become today. They sell huge homemade doughnuts, soft salty pretzels, fresh squeezed lemonade and fresh brewed sweet tea, out of a food truck that has their recognizable logo on the side. They also have many twists to their original doughnuts that are featured each week.

Auntie Ruth’s business is based out of Chuckey, Tennessee but travels through Virginia and other parts of Tennessee to various locations each week. They post their locations and what events will be held each week on Facebook so their followers can always come find them.

This food truck’s reviews are almost always spectacular. On Facebook, they have 5 out of 5-stars out of 1,552 reviews. On Yelp, the food truck also has another 5 out of 5-star rating.

Many people seem to follow them regularly to purchase some of their delicious goods, even when the truck is out of town.

Despite the plethora of places they are attending this weekend, they gave a visit to Blountville, Tennessee. To kick start the weekend, the food truck was at the Sullivan County Clerk’s Office which is near the Pizza Plus and Pal’s in Blountville.

The address to this event was 3258 Highway 126, Blountville, Tennessee. Auntie Ruth’s was open from 9 a.m.- 3p.m. and were selling all their usual goodies.

They had announced on their Facebook page that they were having a featured specialty doughnut at the event and they did. It was a Bavarian Cream Filled doughnut. One of the workers mentioned that it had been a hit and they had a hard time keeping them in stock.

“Auntie Ruth’s Doughnuts are one of a kind, and my friends and I are in love with them,” Maddie Brown said. “We try to find them as much as we can, despite having to drive to them occasionally.”

People line the streets and the smell of doughnuts and pretzels can be smelt in the entire town. This goes for every event that they go to, people are surely aware that something delicious is being cooked.

On their social media page, they often reference the delicious fragrances that they hold. In the post about their location in Blountville, they said to follow the “delectable aromas,” and it would be easy for people to find them.

“As soon as you get out of the car, if this doughnut truck is around, you will know it,” Lincoln Laster said. “We love coming to buy their doughnuts and we always take some home with us.”

When stepping up to the food truck, and seeing all the doughnuts and pretzels being made, it is reassuring that these products are fresh. Auntie Ruth’s mention their freshness and start cooking first thing in the morning. This way their customers do not have to worry if they are getting doughnuts or pretzels from the day before, and how could you speculate this when watching them make the product?

“The freshness of the doughnuts is what always gets me and the people I came with,” Sicily Laster said. “The doughnuts are always so warm and literally huge. We split them when we come because they are that big.”

This food truck is targeted for everyone, all ages, shapes and sizes. The customer service is always friendly and inviting, which seems to leave a mark.

“I feel like the workers here are enjoying what they are doing and that makes me like them even more,” Lincoln said. “My friends and I talk about this a lot, and it seems like the workers like the products as much as we do. Which is a plus.”

“I love coming to see these people, I have come so much, some of them recognize me.” Maddie said. “I always flip-flop between doughnuts and their pretzels. I can’t really make up my mind on which is better.”

The doughnuts have always been popular, however; recently the pretzels have made a name for themselves and have been climbing up the totem pole to the doughnut’s popularity.

“The pretzels are always warm, soft and salty, which is needed to be the perfect balance.” Maddie said. “Sometimes, I get both just so I can have something sweet and salty.”

Auntie Ruth’s Doughnuts and Pretzels have proven that food trucks can be in huge demand even with the high level of restaurant competition that the Tri-Cities hold. The customers love their products and the amount of great customer service and hospitality. This truck has been on an up rise the past few years and doesn’t look like it will be slowing down anytime soon.