

SPORTS
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B2

LOCAL
Sterling finds her
way in the Armed
Forces

A5

SPORTS
Lady Cats roll
through Newcastle,
Wheatland

B1

DOUGLAS BUDGET

\$1⁰⁰

**Wednesday,
February 10,
2016**

Vol. 130 No. 06



Cody Tucker photos

Mae and George Smith stand outside of their downtown bakery Monday morning. The couple has run the Home Bakery on Third Street for 51 years.

sPower racing clock to start on Pioneer Wind Park

By SPIKE JORDAN
spike@douglas-budget.com

Salt Lake City-based sPower will need to start construction this week on the controversial \$120 million Pioneer Wind Park project if it hopes to beat the Feb. 15 expiration date set by the Wyoming Industrial Siting Council. For its part, the company says the long-awaited project south of Glenrock will begin on time.

After several years of delays and a tortured history of lawsuits, hearings, permit extensions and red-tape, construction on the wind park, which is sited on the Grant and True Ranches near Mormon Canyon, is finally moving forward, according to those involved.

"We plan on starting construction this week to keep in compliance with the conditional permit."



**NAOMI
KELLER**

Please see
WIND PARK,
page A-9

Proposed K-12 cuts bring uncertainty to county schools

By Nick Balatsos
nick@douglas-budget.com

Douglas Superintendent Dan Espeland is playing the waiting game this month.

About a hundred miles away in Cheyenne, lawmakers are debating whether to cut \$45 million from school funding.

Espeland, meanwhile, is waiting for the legislative dust to settle to see how his district will fare financially.

Right now, Douglas schools stand to lose about \$280,000 over the next two fiscal years, which is roughly equivalent to the bump the district received a year ago to accom-



**DAN
ESPELAND**

Please see
SCHOOL FUNDING,
page A-12

Baking with Love

By JEN KOCHER
jen@douglas-budget.com

'I told that little doll (at the hospital) that I'm 82 years old and up until then I thought my health was pretty damn good.'
George Smith admitting he was eating six or seven donuts a day prior to heart surgery

George Smith looks forward to Saturdays. It's a day for visiting and catching up with locals. Not too many people rushing in just to grab a dozen donuts before zipping off to work. This morning has been a bit more hectic than usual. It's the first Saturday he's been open in nearly four months. It's clear his customers have missed him.

"What can I get for you, young lady?" George asks, leaning against the glass counter in his trademark fedora.

A young girl leans against her father's leg, biting her bottom lip as she scans the rows of donuts, inhaling the sweet sugary air. This is a crucial decision, and she wants to get it right. The rectangle one. With the stuff on top.

Coconut sprinkles. "Good choice," George tells her, handing her the white bag with her donut.

Her rosy cheeks widen into a smile.

The bell on the door jingles as more customers walk in. A burst of sugary air greets them. It's not even 8 a.m., and already the case is starting to look a bit sparse.

Technically, he's not even supposed to be open yet, but George isn't strict with the schedule. If he's there, it's open. His wife Mae worries about that a bit, but George waves off any concern.

He knows his customers. He's been at this for 51 years.

Not all his customers are cute kids and ravenous, sugar-crazed adults.

In the back room, a tire-size mound of floury dough slowly expands toward the edges of a large wooden table. Round two of the morning begins. Round one started at 3 a.m. George has no idea how many dozens of sweet rolls he makes a day,

Please see
BAKERY,
page A-2



UNITED IN ORANGE

Jen Kocher photo
Emry Igo, 5, celebrates a Denver touchdown in Super Bowl 50 Sunday afternoon. See A-8

This week's weather

	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
High	49	49	55	46	50
Low	27	27	31	33	34

Happy Valentine's Day

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from the front page

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When there are, they don't go into the dumpster behind the Third Street iconic bakery. They go to his other customers, the peacocks.

His friend Anne Rex owns a peacock farm. In the four months that the bakery's been closed, George figures those peacocks must feel like they've had their beaks cut off.

The peacocks, of course, aren't the only ones who've missed George's confections. A staple in downtown Douglas for decades, Home Bakery is the last original business of its era. George is determined to keep it running.

"The community needs it," he says in his trademark booming voice — an oddity coming out of a man barely topping 5 foot and change with a slight frame.

His baking area is expansive and, like George himself, refreshingly corporate-free. There are no signs on the walls reminding you to wash your hands. No time clocks or lists of rules. It feels more like grandma's kitchen. Clean and homey. A pair of recliners flank a coffee table covered with coffee mugs and an open newspaper. A barely audible television set on top of a cabinet is tuned to the news.

Mae sits in one of the recliners as she does every day, keeping George company while he works. She used to be an active partner in the business but in recent years her knee surgeries have made it harder for her to walk. After years on her feet trying to keep up with the spry 82 year old, it's still hard for her to sit still and watch George work, but she has no choice.

She shrugs. Out front, their 17-year-old great-granddaughter Kylee runs the front counter as she does on Saturdays while George fidgets with various chores around the kitchen.

"He can't sit still," Mae laughs. "He's always got to be moving."

Last Saturday morning, he was getting ready to install a couple of new sinks that are on their way here from Nevada, paid for by Mae's earnings from a recent trip to Vegas where she'd gotten lucky on the slots.

"This was a big win for me," Mae said, describing several hours at a slot machine. "I'm cheap so I stick to the quarters."

"I didn't ask her how much it cost her to win," George smiles, shaking his head.

Mae's happy to see her money go toward the sinks. It is, after all, a family operation and everyone has to do their part — even friends who happen by at the wrong moment.

A woman pokes her head around the corner into the kitchen and tells George and Mae that they better not be taking any more breaks.

"We've sure missed you," she says, walking over to give them both hugs.

George laughs. "I don't plan on doing any more sitting around, believe you me. I'm done taking any breaks."

His recent four-month "rest" was doctor ordered. He was recovering from a heart condition he didn't know he had, one that resulted in a triple bypass, following what



was supposed to be a routine check by a cardiologist in preparation for prostate surgery.

"They call it a widow maker," Mae says, shaking her head as she explains the blockage of a main valve that wasn't working in George's heart. "We were really lucky."

The cardiologist sure didn't like the sound of George's diet, which at the time had consisted of six or seven donuts in the morning with a cup of coffee.

"I thought that she was going to fall over when she heard that," George laughs, "but I told that little doll that I'm 82 years old and up until then I thought my health was pretty damn good."

He still eats donuts every day but now he limits it to two or three. And he throws in a little fruit and cereal, too.

It's always been hard for him to swallow "orders," doctor-mandated ones or otherwise. In fact, a discipline problem was what accidentally drove George into the baking business. As a teenager George got into a lot of fights with his younger brother Wayne. They were close in age, only 18 months between them, and there was a lot of sibling rivalry

and competition. One day, George and Wayne were in yet another fight in the front yard. Their dad had finally had it.

Their dad pointed to one side of the street and told one brother to go that way and the other one to hit the opposite side of the street. Wayne found a parts store needing help. At age 13, George found a bakery.

He's been baking ever since.

"I've cleaned a lot of pans in my day," George says, rubbing his hands together. "Boy, have I done some scrubbing."

Prior to buying Home Bakery in Douglas, George and Mae had owned a bread bakery in Nebraska.

When they moved to Douglas, they bought only the bakery until Beef Bolln offered to sell them the entire building.

"Smith, you want to buy this place?" Bolln asked.

"Sure, but how on earth would I ever get the money to do it?" George responded.

Beef then walked out of the building, returning a day or two later to tell George that he needed to get over to Scott Layton's office to sign the note.

The cost? \$12,000. George thought he'd never get it paid off.

The first thing he did when he bought the building was convert the eight apartments upstairs into a three-bedroom apartment, where they raised three kids and have lived ever since.

The proximity to the store makes getting to work easier—typically he's there before 3 a.m.—but also ensures he spends a lot of time there.

He's ready to retire, he says, but so far can't find a buyer for the business. Nor can he find a baker willing to take it over. Between the hard work and long hours, not too many people are interested, though he's gotten a lot of help over the years from his daughter Sheri Leinweber.

He doubts he couldn't have made it without her. There were a lot of lean years but he made it work, including taking a job as a maintenance man at the courthouse, which he did for 25 years while Sheri and Mae ran things at the bakery.

You do what you have to do to get through the busts in this oil and coal town, he says. He's seen a number of the booms and busts here during the last 51 years. The current one is just another one to him.

After all of these years of working, he hasn't really given retirement much thought, though he does enjoy fishing.

For now, he's just tickled to get up in the morning and watch the dough rise.

POPPING FOR PRIZES



Jen Kocher photo

American Legion Post #8 Commander, Kandy Gorsuch, is poised to pop the last balloon in this year's Super Bowl fundraiser. For \$1, patrons bought balloons for a chance to win prizes with all proceeds going to Wyoming Cares, a state-based agency that provides assistance to Wyoming residents in need.

CALLING ALL INCOMING 2016/2017 KINDERGARTNERS (Parents/Legal Guardians) Kindergarten Roundup

Douglas Primary School Library
Thursday, February 25, 2016
5:30 - 7:30 p.m. in Primary School Library

Last name beginning A - M
5:30 - 6:30
Last name beginning N - Z
6:30 - 7:30

Your child must be 5 on or before Sept. 15, 2016. Bring the originals of your child's Birth Certificate, Immunizations, & Social Security Card. (We request that you do not bring non-kindergarten children)



Rolling Hills house burglarized

By PHILLIP HARNDEN
phillip@glenrockind.com

It was a shocking Sunday for one Rolling Hills resident who came home to find intruders had invaded his home.

Glenrock Police Department was notified of the burglary on Rimrock Road on Sunday afternoon when the homeowner returned to find his home had been broken into.



JULIE WICKETT

The resident's name and exact address are being withheld while the investigation is underway. The victim had been gone for several days, making it difficult to narrow down the precise day and time the theft occurred.

"It appears to be a crime of opportunity," Police Chief Julie Wickett said. "I don't believe we have a serial burglar in town."

Investigators believe that at least two people were involved.

A large locked gun safe was moved, but the thieves were unable to get it out of the home. Some damage to walls occurred in the attempt.

Investigators also assume the thieves knew the victim was gone during the time the robbery took

place. Wickett doesn't anticipate more burglaries, but offered some tips to help protect against these types of crime.

Glenrock offers a vacation house watch list for those whose homes are going to remain empty for longer periods of time. Longer term vacationers or snowbirds may sign up, getting extra attention on their empty home, as well.

"For those who are going to be gone for a few days, we encourage them to request extra patrols," Wickett said. "We are happy to make those checks in Glenrock or Rolling Hills."

To request extra patrols, call dispatch and inform them of the dates you will be away, she added.

Wickett said some of these types of crime may be averted if patrolling officers know the house is supposed to be vacant.

"It gives them more information to investigate if when they see something that may otherwise seem normal," Wickett said.

GPD also advises alerting trustworthy friends and neighbors to your absence. They may notice suspicious activity before an officer is able to check during a routine stop.

More information on this crime will be released as it is available.

If you know anything about the burglary in Rolling Hills, please contact the Glenrock Police Department at 307-436-2777.

Valentine's Day Dinner for Two

Make your Valentine's Day one to remember with a dinner for two at the Arbor Café.

Saturday, February 13
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
\$30 per couple

Everyone who attends will have the option to be entered in a drawing to win a trip for two to Deadwood, SD on March 18th. Must be 21 to enter.

Dinner includes:
8 oz Flat Iron Steak
Baked Potato
Broccoli
Dinner Salad
Dinner Roll
Cheesecake

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