

Sugar Island bakery a finalist in Martha Stewart contest

By Connie Plett

SURF CITY – Samantha Smith doesn't cut corners. She chops and measures and kneads and bakes the old fashioned way, using real butter, milk, fruits, honey and sugar.

Her devotion to real homemade creations has landed her a spot as a finalist in the Martha Stewart American Made contest.

"I didn't even know that we were going to be in the contest," said Smith. "Somebody else nominated us."

After being nominated Smith completed the paperwork and requirements. Earlier this month she found out she was a finalist.

"It was an honor," she said. "I love Martha Stewart."

Through Oct. 13 people can vote up to six times a day for their favorite finalist. The winners will be announced Oct. 17.

Grand prize includes \$10,000 for the winner

to build up his or her business.

Ever since she was a child, Smith could be found in the kitchen baking.

She remembers watching a children's TV show where someone was creating a rose out of frosting.

"I knew right then I wanted to be a baker or the first woman president," said Smith.

"I went with baker, it was easier but I make less money," she said with a laugh.

Smith grew up in Burgaw and went to Topsail High School. When she graduated she began working at a restaurant as a pastry chef. After several years of working for others, and doing baking and catering for herself on the side, she started her own bakery in Wilmington called Sugars on Front Street.

She moved to Surf City last year and found a spot in the center of town.

The business was renamed Sugar Island Bakery and Supplies and at first Smith tried to



Samantha Smith works in her Surf City bakery making breads, cookies, cakes and desserts from scratch. She is a finalist in the Martha Stewart American Made contest. - photo by Connie Plett

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Schools gain higher score after evaluation

Courtesy of Onslow County Schools

ONSLow COUNTY - Officials at Onslow County Schools received notification from the John Locke Foundation today that their recent appraisal of the district's transparency led to the score being raised to an "A."

www.NCTransparency.com was created by the John Locke Foundation in an effort to promote transparency within North Carolina's governmental agencies. The website houses important information from state agencies, counties, school systems and municipalities. It also highlights information it deems important

that was not available when it did the evaluation. Onslow County Schools is currently one of five schools in North Carolina with an "A" Score. Onslow County Schools Superintendent Rick Stout requested the review and was very pleased with the new evaluation. "We're excited that our trans-

parency on the web site is starting to show; this is something that is very important to us," he said. "Going from a D (score) to an A means we are providing a lot more information. The John Locke Foundation is an organization that is very thorough in looking at how a school system is operated, so we are very pleased to have received

an A on their evaluation." A few recommendations were provided in their correspondence on how the school district could further improve transparency which will be taken under advisement. For more information on Onslow County Schools, follow them on social media at <https://www.facebook.com/OCSNC>.

Ten tips for preventing memory loss

By Tricia Odham, FNP-C

It is safe to say that all of us want to live long and happily, and part of this includes the desire to have the use of our mind and memory for the rest of our lives. It is a myth that memory loss is "just part of getting old," and there are things we can do to keep our minds sharp and functioning.

- Use it or lose it - Continue learning for your entire lifetime. Stretch the mind with new information and experiences. This can be accomplished through hobbies, reading, classes, puzzles, and exposure to new things.
- Keep up with current events - Use the newspaper or magazines to stay engaged in

things that interest you.

- Read - A powerful way to keep the brain active is to keep reading. This can help prevent or slow down memory loss.
- Turn off the TV - Studies show that people who watch more than four hours of television per day are more likely to be irritable, restless, and depressed, and to have problems sleeping, paying attention, and remembering things. (For children, this occurs with more than two hours of television.)
- Keep moving - Anything to improve circulation will improve brain functioning.
- Keep blood pressure under control - Healthy foods, healthy weight, limiting salt/sodium, and having blood pressure

checked every six months can keep blood pressure under control. If you already have issues with high blood pressure, be sure it is under control with medication prescribed by your physician and the lifestyle changes already mentioned.

- Feed your brain - Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains should be a part of everyday meals. Antioxidants in foods reduce inflammation all over the body, including the brain. Fish oil or flaxseed oil (Omega 3 fatty acids 1000-3000 mg per day) also protect the brain from inflammation effects.
- Avoid alcohol - Alcohol is poisonous to the brain by killing healthy cells. Dementia, once it starts, is made much worse by using

alcohol. Avoiding it, or using it rarely, can help to prevent it.

- Classical music - Studies have shown enhanced learning in adults and children by exposing the brain to classical music. Try Pachelbel, Bach, Beethoven, or Handel.
- Set goals - Many people withdraw from life as they age, and they stop challenging themselves to be involved in life. It is important to write down goals and keep working toward something satisfying. Stay tuned in!

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning is young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young." Henry Ford

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keep it mostly wholesale and didn't even put up any signs. "That didn't work," she said. The bakery's popularity grew and the hours of operation were expanded from two days a week to five. But that doesn't mean

Smith takes a day off. She is in the kitchen at 3 a.m. every morning and works seven days a week. "I have to get there early to make the dough and let it rise," she said. "Everyone loves homemade cinnamon rolls. Plus I like the quiet peacefulness." Her husband and mother work the retail side of the shop; she's the only one

allowed to bake. "I don't let anyone else do any baking," said Smith. "I'm kind of a control freak in the kitchen. If I am the only one doing the baking I know that everything is consistent. People want things to taste exactly the same every-time they come in. If I'm the only one baking, everything tastes the same every time." Because everything is made fresh daily, there are no day old baked goods at Sugar Island. "If people are going to indulge, it better be good," said Smith.

On the days the bakery is closed to the public, Smith concentrates on wholesale baking and fulfilling orders for shipping. She said she loves Topsail Island and Surf City because of the slower pace, the friendliness and sense of community. "It's just a happier place," said Smith. "I love the people here." Her old fashioned way of baking is reflected in the front part of the bakery where old books and recipe books line the walls and antiques can be found throughout.

The bakery also sells local books, pottery, jewelry, coffees and more. "I like to support the local artisans," Smith said. "I also get my ingredients from area farmers and producers." The Martha Stewart American Made contest is not the first time Smith has been recognized. She has also had such honors as having the bakery featured in Our State Magazine, named The Best Place to Buy a Thanksgiving Pie by WWAY TV3 and named the second best coffee house in the country by Huffington Post.

Smith seems humbled by the attention. She said she is doing what she loves and cannot see any downside to owning a bakery and making delicious food. "It's a happy job and I get to see a lot of happy people," she said. "Most of the time when people are eating a cookie, they are happy." Sugar Island is located at 206 N. Topsail Drive in Surf City. Information on voting for the bakery in the Martha Stewart American Made contest can be found on Sugar Island's website sugarislandnc.com.

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spring and fall. Holly Ridge Police Major Gerald Bryant told the town council at this month's meeting that change might come that would make disposing of medications even easier.

"In the past anyone wanting to dispose of medications had to come to the police department. Now it looks as if the Drug Enforcement Agency might relax its rules and put drop boxes at pharmacies," he said. He said that might make it more convenient for people to get rid of their unwanted medications.

Police Blotter

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1 - DWI	1 - Harassment
3 - Possession of Marijuana	3 - Other Traffic
3 - Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	1 - Phone Harassment
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Fishing report

By Captain Marc Hairston

Just as the Kings, Tarpon, Spanish and Bluefish hit the beach, here comes Eduardo bringing a pretty good swell to mess things up for a bit. This is the third hurricane/tropical system to affect our coast this year. This past week we were catching all of the above close to the beach. The area piers also had good catches of King Mackerel, Spanish Mackerel, Tarpon and Bluefish. There was a lot of bait on the beach bringing in these fish, including Menhaden, Glass Minnows and Ribbonfish. The Kings were eating mostly Bluefish and Ribbonfish. The Grouper have started biting better since the full moon. The Wahoo were biting pretty well this week and should be getting better. They also had a run of Spots off the beaches this past week. The Spots should start biting inshore as soon as the water cools a little. The Flounder, Trout and Drum have been biting well inshore. We will see the nearshore bite getting back to normal as soon as the weather stabilizes a bit. Keep your chin up though, fall is here and it's time to go fishing!



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