

# carrier of the month Farmington

Ryan McKelley delivers the Farmington Observer in the Pasadena Park subdivision. He has been delivering the Observer since March 1988.

The North Farmington High School ninth grader's favorite subjects are English and geometry.

His hobbies are swimming, soccer and Tae Kwon Do. He placed first in the Historical Research Contest. He plans to be an astronaut or an astronautical engineer.

Handling money, dealing with people and working hard are some of the things he learned on his route.

Ryan is the son of Dennis and Sandra McKelley. He has one brother, Brandon, 13 and one sister, Meghan, 16.



Ryan McKelley

If you want to be a Farmington Observer carrier, please call 591-0500

# Weaver specializes in her craft

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DAVIS USES the heads and shafts of wheat and weaves them — just like you'd weave anything else — into decorations, wall hangings and jewelry. Actually, it's not as easy as it sounds. First, you've got to get some wheat. Davis is looking for a Michigan source. Until then, she still gets her supply from Kansas.

Patience is truly a virtue with this craft. First, Davis soaks the wheat to make it more pliable. Of course, the art to it all is developing designs, mostly based on ancient designs, such as double hearts.

"It's kind of a tedious thing," Davis said, adding that she enjoys the thread-like detail she uses in her designs.

Davis gets innovative and uses silk hearts — to take designs from a country to Victorian motif — as well as ribbons and bells to achieve just the design she wants.

It's not unknown for Davis to hop out of bed after a night of dreaming of designs and get to work at the kitchen table.

"If I don't do something creative,

I'm terrible to live with," said Davis, a home economics major with a concentration on textiles, who later went into graphic arts. "Once you learn the basics, you take it from there and evolve it."

The ancient art of wheat weaving — found in ancient crafts in Africa, Mexico and England — isn't something Davis learned to do while she lived in Kansas. She learned of it and how to do it while she lived in California 14 years ago. That's when her mother called, from Kansas, and said she found a new craft: wheat weaving.

"SHE SENT me one book and one box of wheat she harvested for me," Davis said.

Wheat weaving was something new for Davis and for California. Her wheat-woven Christmas ornaments soon were being sold out of a beach-front cafe.

Over the years, as Davis and her husband, Mark, and family moved, so did the boxes filled with her artifacts, which always had to be carried to wherever they were going.

"I never have enough room to

hang what I'm making so I give them as gifts," Davis said.

The latest wheat-weaving rush began last summer when her husband attended a meeting to discuss the Festival of Trees at Heritage Park. Some Scout leaders spoke of Scandinavian wheat weaving and how the Scouts could learn the craft and make Christmas ornaments.

"He (Mark) woke me at midnight," Davis said of her husband. "He told them 'Verla is a wheat weaver. All of a sudden, he is volunteering me.'"

She got some supplies and taught the Scouts some basic designs. And that was that. By October, Davis had stockpiles of decorations and other artifacts. "I decided I couldn't have all this stuff in boxes, so I decided to do some shows."

Her next show will be June 14 at Mercy Center, on 11 Mile in Farmington Hills. She's got some of her things in the Olde General Store in downtown Farmington.

"I don't make a lot of money with this, but I like doing shows that benefit the causes I support," Davis said.

HER HOUSE IS decorated with

wheat-woven decorations, including owls and hummingbirds, which have a sentimental value for her. "These are kind of my memorial pieces," she said. The owl honors her grandmother, and the hummingbird her mother.

She best describes how she created a wheat-woven hummingbird: "I did a bird in a tree. I sat and played around with it. All of a sudden, this thing was in my hand that looked like a hummingbird. I do that all the time."

As an ancient craft, wheat weaving has spiritual roots which date back to pagan cultures where wheat was the important crop. Seeds in wheat artifacts used for special holidays were used the following year as a means "to continue the good harvest. They were used as a blessing for the new crop," Davis said.

Christianity gave wheat designs a new lease on life. "To Christians, it means bounty or bountiful," Davis said.

Her next step is probably a book she plans to write about wheat weaving. "I'd also like to do some classes and demonstrations."

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# Golf course withdraws request for clubhouse

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Blowing Center and Langan's Plaza Parlor, 32305 Northwestern Highway, requested the transfer.

"UNDER THE right circumstances, I might be able to support it," Mayor Jonathan Grant said. "I think they (golf course proponents) have a long way to go."

Councilwoman Nancy Bates suggested that neighbors and the golf course owners get together and figure out what's best for both sides.

"When you shake it all out, you (neighbors and course owners) want the same thing."

Attorney Clarence Charest of Livonia, who represented Gummis, told the council that the proposed two-story clubhouse for the public golf course would be about 8,000-9,000 square feet. The planned restaurant would be about 4,000 square feet. A storage-maintenance building also would be constructed.

Liquor was planned to be served in both the restaurant and pro shop. The building would have a residential appearance, similar to the homes in Copper Creek. Parking would be available for 180 cars.

"It would not be fine dining. We wouldn't have all the steaks and escargot. It would be an above-average restaurant," Charest said.

But concerns were immediate. Residents and council members questioned whether the large clubhouse would be rented for banquets and weddings. Residents questioned hours of operation and how that could be controlled.

Confusion also arose over Copper Creek residents' use of the course

since it was part of a planned residential development, which allowed developers to increase the density and build on smaller lots. The golf course was to function as part of the neighborhood's open space.

"I ASSURE WE were not involved with that at all," Charest said. "It's not a private course. It's a public course. We did not make our purchase on that basis at all."

But residents want answers. "We would like some input from the city relative to our rights to the property," said Edward Gerber, who represented residents of the Glens of Copper Creek.

Charest, however, said the golf course is confronted with insurance problems. "The land is private. We don't want to say, 'you have carte blanche to the property.'"

City officials also wanted answers.

"There has to be an understanding. In any other subdivision, this would be open space open to all the residents," councilman Aldo Vagozzi said.

And there is the issue of the clubhouse entrance off Copperwood Drive instead of 12 Mile. "It's far more desirable as far as I'm concerned," Charest said.

City Manager William Costick said the issue could be revisited. Residents wondered — if the entrance is on Copperwood — whether golf course owners would help maintain the private road.

Other residents criticized the closeness of the course to the homes. Gerber spoke of the 250 golf balls he has found in his yard. "Who is liable to the property?"

To the safety concerns, as well as concerns about noise, traffic, trespassing, liability for injuries, residents' access to the course, and hours of operation, Charest responded to the council: "You people allowed it to be built there." He said he doesn't know how to solve some of the problems that are characteristic of a golf course.

But Charest also told the council that perhaps concerns about the golf course and proposed clubhouse are magnified. "We intend to do business. We're cooperative. We don't intend to injure that neighborhood."

Noise, signs and lighting at the course and clubhouse are all controllable by ordinance, Charest reminded the council. "I think we can magnify all those problems if you let fear make the decision."

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