

COMMUNITY LIFE

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KATHY O'DONOGHUE

There's a method to this mom's messy madness

I am a slob. Neat friends have confirmed my suspicions: I am a pack rat and collector. I keep too much junk and throw away too little.

My husband, also a closet slob, has tried in vain to help me out. He has explained the principles of keeping a day planner, in which I should write every minute of every waking day. I say, forget it. I love sticky notes and have a million of them around to prove it.

My basic problem involves piles of papers. Important papers I may need sometime in the future. And I'm not the sole creator of these piles. My counter starts out clear, then a few sticky notes happen by, some school papers, junk mail, add to that field trip permission slips, three or four fund-raiser packets, a couple newspapers, and voila! A pile is born.

My friend, Heidi, a nontank, says she'd love to get her hands on my clutter. But at this point in my life, I don't know an alternative way to operate. I'm really not familiar with any other than the pile system, so what good would Heidi's help be? I'd probably be confused and dazed for weeks.

I've considered the possibility of starting a Clutterers Anonymous group, but frankly, I don't have the time. I've got too many other pressing engagements calling to me from my piles. Besides could I rely on others to show up for the meetings or would they misfile the information in a pile somewhere?

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Dressy geese make a splash

■ These cement geese, equipped with a complete wardrobe, are showstoppers.

By MARY RODRIQUE
STAFF WRITER



When Deb Watson started dressing the decorative cement geese in her front yard, she never anticipated the stir they would cause.

Motorists passing her home on Grand River, west of Farmington Road, did double takes when they saw the dapper one of a kind lawn ornaments.

"People would write me letters, or stop and knock on the door wanting to know where they could get a goose," she said.

Although she bought the cement geese from a statuary shop, their clothes were of her own making — frilly dresses, rain slickers and outfits for every special holiday.

A crafter for a number of years with experience making dolls, bears and birdhouses, Watson decided to expand her repertoire to include the well dressed geese. Thus Deb's Crafts was born.

"I put up a sign and started to sell craft shows," she said.

Now, four years later, Watson's dining room serves as her office. A large rack of sample outfits hangs in one corner. Shelves are loaded with accessories. And a peek in her backyard reveals several geese and geese ready for dressing.

"We (Deb and her husband, Ben) now make the geese ourselves. We cast the molds and paint them," she said. "The statuary companies that make the geese couldn't keep up with our demand."

The adult geese are 27 inches tall. The goslings are 10 inches high. Watson admits she got the idea to



STAFF PHOTO BY DOMINIC CENTONATI

Goose Lady: Deb Watson sits between Uncle Sam and Betsy Ross, two of the dozens of goose costumes Watson creates and sells from her Farmington home based business. She also makes the cement geese.

dress the geese from what she had observed down South.

"Holiday outfits are very popular, so are occupation costumes. I did one for the chiropractor across the street. Graduates in a variety of school colors are big sellers this time of year."

Painted, the cement geese, which weigh about 70 pounds each, cost \$35, unpainted, \$30. The goslings cost \$12 or \$10 respectively. Outfits, which are handmade, cost \$15 and up, depending on how elaborate

they are. All baby goose outfits are \$10.

"We do a lot of special orders," said Watson. "We've done the Farmington band uniform, the A&W bear. I recently did a Marine Corps uniform for an 80 year old man who had served in the Marines."

"The most popular costumes are the slickers and the snorklers. They're weather resistant. We recommend Scotchguarding the outfits."

Customers like to place the geese

in their garden, or put them on the front porch or in the front yard, she said.

"The idea is that they make you laugh," said Watson.

Her own front yard is adorned with a couple of geese dressed in red, white and blue. They are Betsy Ross and Uncle Sam, complete with a top hat.

Watson's catalogue offers more than 160 outfits, everything from a biker to an Amish girl. She has cus-

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