



Essay winner: Pictured (left to right): Edward Norton, Exalted Ruler of the Farmington Elks, contest winner, Dan Xu and her father.

Elks honor essay winner

Miss Dan Xu was the winner in the Farmington Elks' annual Flag Day Essay Contest. She was the third winner among Farmington and Farmington Hills high school students and received \$100 for her entry.

Her winning essay is as follows:

On Sept. 11, when I was in my classroom and I heard what happened to the World Trade Center, I was shocked. I am an international student and this is not my country, but I have special feelings for this land and people. To me the American Flag used to be just a symbol of this land, but the events of 9-11 changed my view of the flag.

Now when I look at the American Flag there is a complex feeling from the bottom of my heart. When I face the Flag I see people who suffered in the World Trade Center. When I face the

Flag I see people who tried as hard as they could to rescue others.

When I face the Flag I see people who gave their lives and support to their country. From the flag I can feel American people are fighting for their country and fighting for what they believe.

The Flag brings every American people together and the whole country together. When they met troubles they didn't submit to the troubles, they stood up for themselves, for their country and for their Flag. A flag is important to a country - it is a mirror that reflects this country and the people who live in the country.

The American Flag is no longer a motionless symbol to me after 9-11 events, it becomes alive because it contains many American people's blood, tears and support.

Hills native has hand in making movie

BY GREG MIGLIORE
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Movie making is as a foreign concept for Metro Detroiter as the automotive industry is for Hollywood.

Farmington Hills native Tim McArdle witnessed this first hand last summer when he worked as an engineer on the set of the Steven Spielberg thriller, *Minority Report*, which opened Friday.

"They're amazed at how we build cars, and we were amazed at how they make movies," said McArdle, who is a customer service engineer for Kawasaki. "That was my 15 minutes of fame."

McArdle helped design and build robots for a futuristic auto plant, which served as the backdrop for an action scene and cost \$3 million. The scene, which took more than two weeks to shoot, ended up being about five and a half minutes. It was shot in Vernon, Calif., which is east of Los Angeles.

Minority Report is set in the future in Washington, where crimes can be detected by police departments and prevented.

It stars Tom Cruise as a detective who is being hunted by another cop (Colin Farrell)

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for a crime he has not yet committed. In the scene, Farrell chases Cruise into the plant and there is a dramatic fight.

McArdle said Cruise was very approachable and that he rented a cappuccino truck for the set.

"He was a pretty ordinary guy," McArdle said. McArdle said Spielberg was easy to talk to as well.

"He's a pretty down-to-earth guy," he said of the Oscar-winning director.

While working on the set, McArdle and his wife stayed at the Renaissance Hotel on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. For lunch, the workers ate things like crab legs and prime

rib and had a Hawaiian luau with a pig roast and dancers.

"It's pretty unbelievable," McArdle said. "It almost wasn't like work. It was pretty plush."

Although it might not have seemed like work, the hours were long. He sometimes worked 13-16 hours a day.

McArdle, 33, is a 1987 graduate of North Farmington High School. He has worked as a customer service engineer at the Kawasaki plant in Wixom for three years.

He was also in the Navy for four years. McArdle is a trouble shooter for robots. His work has taken him across the country and to England and Japan.

"We get to travel all over," he said. "It's cool because it's never the same office every day."

Kawasaki was chosen for the movie because Spielberg has his dirt bikes.

His mother said she was happy for her son because working on movies is uncommon.

"I was excited," said Carolyn McArdle.

"Not too many if us get to do that."

McArdle lives in Garden City with his wife Veronica and their 7-month-old daughter, Kaleigh Rose.

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