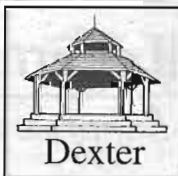




Debi Scroggins with franchisee Nancy Hansen at the new Dexter Bearclaw.

## Bearclaw Coffee Co. goes wild

*Dexter owners opening several regional outlets*



**H**usband-and-wife entrepreneurs Debi and Doug Scroggins did a lot of traveling during the twenty years they worked for

Northwest Airlines (she as a gate supervisor, he on the loading ramp). Self-admitted coffee junkies, they noticed the proliferation of drive-through specialty coffee bars on the West Coast. When Northwest offered them early retirement packages, they jumped at the chance to bring the concept to Michigan. In June 2002 the couple opened **Bearclaw Coffee Co.** at North Territorial and Dexter-Pinckney roads. The name was inspired by Doug's childhood in Alaska.

Business was good—good enough that when a Chelsea family who own a small hotel in South Haven asked the Scrogginses about putting in an espresso machine, they turned the opportunity into a coffee shop there. That was followed by the company's first franchise, in the Irish Hills. This year they're adding a sit-down shop in downtown Dexter (already up and running in the former Clockworks coffeehouse spot), a Chelsea drive-through on Old US-12, an Ann Arbor drive-through in a former gas station at Washtenaw and Stadium, a store in Ypsilanti, and a combination coffeehouse and drive-through in

Brooklyn plus another on Woodward Avenue in Detroit.

The Scrogginses will own the Chelsea drive-through. In addition to specialty coffee drinks, they plan to offer hot chocolate, chai tea, frozen lattes and cappuccinos, and fruit smoothies, along with pastries, bagels, biscotti, cookies, and muffins. "We're building on the end of the strip mall, where you can fly in, fly out, and get your lattes," Debi says. She expects the location to open in early November.

The downtown Dexter location is operated by franchisees Nancy and Ryan Hansen. A part-time Washtenaw County deputy sheriff, Nancy Hansen often stopped at Bearclaw on North Territorial to get a latte on the midnight shift. Facing the possibility of layoffs at the sheriff's department, the Hansens began talking seriously about Ryan's dream of opening his own restaurant. After doing some research, the Hansens found the ideal location when Clockworks went up for sale.

Over the next few months, the Hansens want to change the layout of the coffeehouse, adding rustic design elements like log furniture, split-log chair rails, and, of course, bears. For now, they're concentrating on the menu, adding nine sandwiches made with Zingerman's bread, plus wraps and seasonal soups. They also serve ice cream from Ann Arbor's Washtenaw Dairy.

Running a coffeehouse is a third job for both Hansens. Ron is a construction supervisor, and Nancy still works part-time with the sheriff's department. In addition, they live on a working farm—Nancy is the fifth generation of her family, the Farrells, to farm it. They have two children, but Nancy somehow also finds time to coach Little League.

*Bearclaw Coffee Co., 8074 Main, Dexter, 426-8002. Mon.-Fri. 6 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat. 7 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 8 a.m.-4 p.m.*

*Bearclaw Coffee Co., 12855 East Old US-12, Chelsea, no phone yet. Daily 5 a.m.-6:30 p.m.*