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Reneé Hughes of Hair Haven

photo by Chris Johnson

Hair Haven: 20 Years of Family-Friendly Service

By Britney Porter

HAVE YOU A "HAVEN" IN THIS SUMMER HEAT? Hair Haven, a family-friendly salon located at 8801 Main St. has been an established haven, err, business for 20 years. Clip, clip here, clip, clip there... a Klean Supreme or an Elated Rage may be what you need to keep cool this summer.

What has kept Hair Haven in style for two decades? It's kid-friendly, according to husband-and-wife owners Joe and Terria Williams. Part of the salon's décor are baby walkers, a pack-n-play nestled in the corner and a TV and VCR to entertain children. "There are so many moms that stay at home here in Frisco," said Terria. "I've

heard customers say, 'I like coming here because I can bring my son or daughter.'"

The relaxed atmosphere allows Terria to avoid "split-ends" as she can be both a mother and business owner/stylist. That's what sets Hair Haven apart from other salons: "an owner is here everyday," she said. She and Joe are practically raising their children, Joe Clayton IV, who just turned 1, and Alexis, 4, in the salon. "There haven't been any challenges [working in a salon]. I can have my kids with me ... that never was a problem," Terria said. Joe oversees operations, including finances, when he's not busy working

as a Merchandising Manager at Sam's Club.

What may cause a "frizzy" are finances. According to Joe, "It's feast or famine. It's not steady income so you have to love to do it."

That's not hard for Hair Haven's newest employee, Carye Phillips, who has wanted to be a hair stylist since she was 4 years old. "I don't work. I get to play," she said smiling. "I've worked in the corporate world where it's about numbers and not people..."

"That's what's kept Hair Haven going for so long," Terria continued.

"We have generations of people coming here," Joe said.

Generations of gossip, too! "A lot of information comes through the salon," said Joe, "but what goes on in the salon stays in the salon." All the stylists burst into laughter. Perhaps this also explains Hair Haven's longevity.

Joe and Terria are the fifth owners of Hair Haven, following Chester and Beth Thomas. In 1999, Joe and Terria were looking for a place to live. "The family orientation of Frisco drew us here," Joe said.

After Terria worked for a month at the Main Street Salon, which is no longer there, she accepted a job at Hair Haven. "I decided to make the move and didn't know it was going to be the last move of my life!" she said.

Soon, the salon was up for sale. "When I was going to school my goal was to have a salon eventually but I didn't know it'd happen so quickly," Terria said.

On May 1, 2001, Joe and Terria took over the salon, splashed a fresh coat of paint on things, fixed the floor and installed extra mirrors. "We did a lot to upgrade the salon and make it more friendly and clean," Joe said.

Among Hair Haven's 2,500-customer base is 110-year-old Nan Elliott.

Okay, she's not 110 but she says she is. "I've been telling my children since I started teaching...they always ask, 'how old are you?' and I say 110 because it doesn't really matter," Elliot laughs.

What does matter is she's been coming to Hair Haven for 20 years! And it's no secret. "I sit down in a chair and say, 'Now, I'm going to tell everybody where I go to the beauty shop so it's your responsibility to make me look nice,'" she laughs and points to a stylist.

Reneé Hughes has worked for Hair Haven for 18 years. She calls the salon her "second home" and the staff "family."

Elliott agrees. "It's comfortable because I know most of the people," she said. "And I don't have to make any decisions. I sit down and they make all the decisions: 'Nan you need your hair colored ... Nan you need this...Nan we need to cut it today' ... and I sit there and enjoy it."

When Elliot is not dirtying up in her flowerbeds, she's dolling up at the salon twice a week. But being an avid Hair Haven customer, she said, is not about beauty. "It's relaxing. It's my therapy."



Hair Haven's Carye Phillips washing a client's hair

photo by Chris Johnson

"Hair Haven is about making people feel better about themselves. Keeping up with the times is essential to keeping customers in style."

For 10 years, Hair Haven has been located on one of Frisco's busiest streets, which also accounts for the salon's success. "It's a great location," said Joe. "It's easy access from Preston and Main Streets."

Frisco resident Dee Hightower was on her way to the vet on Main Street when she spotted the salon. "I

thought, Hair Haven, I really need that," said Hightower, who has been coming to the salon for four years. "It's very family-oriented," she said.

Ever wonder if stylists do each other's hair? Hair Haven's stylists do! Are they honest with each other? "Oh, yeah," the stylists agreed in unison and laughed. (You know you're in a fine hair salon if the stylists trust each other to do one another's hair.)

If hair isn't your hassle this summer and headaches or sinuses are, then collapse into Carye's chair and unwind with an aromatherapy relaxation treatment. Just ask for the T-3 Experience, a deep-clean facial and scalp massage.

Hair Haven, which recently became a Paul Mitchell signature salon, also offers a brow and lash dye. The salon is one of the few in Frisco that offers the treatment. Makeup application, facial waxing and up-dos for special occasions are also available.

Joe said owning Hair Haven is about making people feel better about themselves.

Keeping up with the times is essential to keeping their customers in style. "Right now anything goes," said Terria, who fashions a straight, layered bob. To Joe, the latest trend is long hair with big curls. Carye said her customers have requested super straight hair or a long, soft wave.

Like Carye, if your dream is to be a hairdresser, the Hair Haven staff plans to grow. "We want to add more stylists," Joe said. "We want to take Hair Haven to the next level." The owners and staff envision a full-service, spa-like atmosphere in the future.

So, what does a successful business owner have to say to an aspiring stylist or salon owner? Said Joe: "Don't forget it's about the families that are coming into your salon because the kids you have today are your future clients tomorrow, then their kids...and their kids' kids and so forth."

Britney Porter is a freelance writer living in Frisco.