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Business Beat

Lookin' good in the old neighborhood



Co-owners of Richard Scott Salon, Joseph Norris (in tie) and (to his right) Ricky Mason, pose outside their refurbished location, on Mt. Kisco's South Moger Avenue, with their large staff. The Bradford pear tree behind them is one of two dedicated to the community and fire fighters.

By Amanda Hellerman

Richard Scott Salon is back home after being burned by Kisco fire

It took just five months for Richard Scott Salon and Day Spa of Mount Kisco to reopen after a devastating fire last winter.

In spite of the setback, an even finer facility has sprouted from the ashes. On June 26, the business celebrated its reemergence by moving back to its original home on South Moger Avenue. Since January it has operated in excess space provided by some of Richard Scott's competitors.

"This is one of the most emotional things for me. I watched [the salon] burn down," said CEO/Administrator and General Manager Dale San Marco at the celebration. "I put my heart and soul into this place. There are a lot of new things now. We just want people to be very comfortable here. This is a state-of-the-art facility. The staff is amazing."

7,000 square foot space

A private reception area and a new couples massage room, which have long been requested, have been added to the day spa. Other additions include Mystic Tan spray-on tanning booth, coffee bar, expanded pedicure area, expanded gift boutique, new wax rooms, flat panel televisions, improved lighting, and VIP room for celebrity clientele. The new design of the 7,000 square foot salon also affords a more spacious layout. Walls were removed to open up the nail and reception areas.

As the "largest day spa and hair replacement center in all of Westchester County," according to co-owner Ricky Mason, the full Richard Scott staff could not be accommodated by any single facility after being displaced by the fire.

Several surrounding salons had space available, and opened the door to Richard Scott employees. Welcoming them were Zazo Salon, Kids Style, and Adam and Eve in Bedford Hills, as well as Salon Elle in Mt. Kisco. The day spa staff worked out of Saw Mill Club in Mt. Kisco.

"Absolutely everybody was very surprised about everyone that came to our aid," said San Marco. "Our industry is very competitive and it's very unusual for what these people did for us and we are just so amazed and so thankful. Our staff is huge, the average salon is not the size of ours. [The host salons] really felt our

presence there. It's not like one or two new people in the place. It was definitely a huge change for them to adapt to having our staff and they were troupers."

Because of these neighboring establishments' swift responses, Richard Scott employees lost only one day of work after the fire, and were able to continue serving their clientele in the coming months.

"Through technology, we had remote backup on everything and we were able to operate from a central office through our host," Mason explained.

Staff handled crisis well

Richard Scott placed a receptionist at each location, so clients could count on a familiar face despite the changed setting. The salon continued to book appointments and conduct business as usual. In spite of the many challenges that the salon faced in the aftermath of the fire, Mason feels that other businesses can benefit from heeding his staff's reaction to the crisis.

"We brought household items and anything else to help out in addition to reimbursement for having our staff [at the other salons]," said Mason. Over the five-month reconstruction period, he said, "We made a lot of friends in the business." Furthermore, the Richard Scott staff did not suffer the loss of a single employee, but in fact, gained new members.

Richard Scott Salon hosted a private preview party and grand reopening celebration June 21. The salon planted two Bradford pear trees, one in Shoppers Park and another in the promenade alongside South Moger Avenue, as a symbol of its gratitude to the Mount Kisco Fire Department and other fire departments across Westchester that responded to the call. It also honored the local salons that hosted the Richard Scott staff during reconstruction, and the greater Westchester community.

Services old and new

Richard Scott will continue to provide the same services as before, plus new ones. The salon offers hair replacement, haircutting and styling, color enhancement, permanent wave, thermal relaxing, waxing, manicures and pedicures. The spa offers massages, body treatments, facial treatments, microdermabrasion, as well as a variety of spa party packages. The KathrynEllen Professional Make-Up Studio offers application and classes. There is also a boutique that sells a variety of beauty items and fashion accessories.

"I'm sure there will be challenges. It might take about a year to regroup, to get things back in full force," anticipates co-owner Joseph Norris.

Nevertheless, Richard Scott Salon and Day Spa has cause to be optimistic. The website is purportedly receiving more hits per day on average now than it had been before the fire. And, a repeated recipient of Westchester Magazine's Best of Westchester award in a range of categories, Richard Scott has inspired its own distinctive award in the recently released Best of Westchester 2007 edition: "Best Reborn Salon."

Said Mason, "We are going to blow Westchester's minds."

Richard Scott Salon and Day Spa is located at 15-17 South Moger Avenue, Mt. Kisco. Hours of operation are Tuesday & Thursday: 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.; Wednesday & Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; and Sunday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. For additional information, visit www.richardscottsalon.com or call 914-242-1700.