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Bob Shallit: Upscale salon aiming for a manly milieu

By Bob Shallit – Bee Columnist

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Bill Gearing figures that men want “quality grooming” – hair styling, manicures, pedicures. But not in an environment that’s “all girlie.”

So this week he’s opening American Male, an upscale salon just for guys.

Gearing, an exec with a local electrical contracting company, already owns a conventional hair salon in the Bay Area. After noticing that men often weren’t comfortable in an atmosphere designed for women, he looked around and found American Male – a Pennsylvania-based salon company that’s expanding nationwide.

Gearing secured a license to open AM’s first local outlet and only its second in California.

The Roseville salon, in a shopping center anchored by a Home Depot, is decidedly masculine, with dark colors, leather chairs and cherry-wood work stations. Three big plasma TVs complete the look.

“It has a country club feel,” say Gearing, who is partnering with his wife, Mimi, and their neighbor Peter Hurley in the venture. “You can go there, relax, have a drink, get your hair done and get a facial.”

The basic service – hairstyling, paraffin hand dip and facial massage – takes 45 minutes and costs \$40. The salon offers extras like highlighting, calling “camouflaging” on American Male’s menu, or hand and foot “detailing” – better know as a manicure and pedicure.

Clients can also get wax treatments to shape eyebrows – or to remove back and chest hair. What about Bikini waxes?

That issue came up, Gearing says. He discussed it with his all-female cosmetology crew. “They said, ‘No, we’re not doing that,’” he says.



Bill, Mimi and Peter



a full service salon for guys