



Robin Rombach/Post-Gazette

Bill and Lori Parker renovated a 100-year-old house and turned it into the Blue Moon Salon and Day Spa in South Park.

Blue moon rises as salon opens doors

Early attempts frustrated; couple find friendly environment

By Jim McMahon

Bill Parker, of South Park, is a firm believer in the story line from "Field of Dreams": "If you build it, they will come."

Parker and his wife, Lori, have established a "feel-good business," their description for the new Blue Moon Salon and Day Spa at 980 Cochran Mills Road, which brought them back to their hometown and is attracting lots of others. Among the new clients: Members of the South Park football team who come in on Saturday mornings for massages after their Friday night games.

Parker is a professional hairstylist who, with Lori, has leased and operated the Hair Cut Express in Bethel Park for 21 years.

After two failed attempts to open a business in that community, Parker heard about a site in an old house on Cochran

Mills Road, which happened to be the area in which he grew up.

"We have always wanted to have a salon like this," Bill Parker said. The two-story Blue Moon features 10 rooms dedicated to pampering and making people feel good about themselves. Among them is an old-fashioned-looking men's barbershop.

"We are in the feel-good business," Parker said. He said he liked the personal contact the profession provides. The business, which opened Aug. 16, offers hairstyling services for men and women, massages, manicures and pedicures, and facials. It has a staff of 14.

It took 15 months of remodeling the century-old wooden duplex structure to transform it into a salon.

The name is attributed to Lori Parker's frustration when an expensive effort to develop the Bethel Park site failed to win zoning approval. "It'll be a blue moon before this ever happens," she feared.

Converting the house into their dream business was a learning experience, even though the Parkers had considerable do-it-yourself skills acquired while fixing the nearby Brownsville Road house in which they raised their three children.

The Parkers note that a number of family milestones occurred during the extensive reconstruction. Daughter Karly graduated from high school and started college, son Derek graduated from college and began work on a master's degree, Bill Parker celebrated his 50th birthday and the couple celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. The family celebrated them all when more than 300 people turned up for their grand opening.

The salon is open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays.

Jim McMahon is a freelance writer.