

Wine? Champagne? How about a Pabst?



Susan Terry - Staff Photographer
A sign listing prices for hair cuts and a 10 percent discount for bike riders seeking a hair cut at the salon. Salon owner Beth Adams chats with a customer.

West Asheville hair cuttery offers a free PBR with any haircut

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The Blue Ribbon, a hair salon for men and women in West Asheville, takes the experience of getting a haircut and adds an ice cold PBR while sitting in the barber chair.

"We serve customers a Pabst Blue Ribbon when they sit down," said salon owner Beth Adams. "I decided to serve PBR because I like it, and it's cheap. Beer is our equivalent of other hair salons' wine as a refreshment."

Adams, who opened the salon this past July, said she wanted to own a business with a laid-back vibe and an atmosphere conducive to Asheville's relaxed environment.

"I want customers to walk in and feel like they can just sit down, play cards, talk about whatever they want, drink a beer and get a good haircut," Adams said.

The salon is decorated with old-fashioned furniture, a Pabst Blue Ribbon horse lamp and refrigerator. Customers

can sit and wait on a couch near a magazine rack or on stools at the old-fashioned counter.

Adams plays old rock 'n' roll and country music.

"I don't feel like I'm here to get my haircut," said junior Jon Hall. "I feel like I'm at a friend's place, lounging and drinking a cold one."

Adams said she hasn't received any negative comments about serving beer, nor did she need to get special authorization to do so.

"As long as it's a complimentary beverage, and we're not selling it, then it's fine," Adams said. "People love the Pabst thing. Some people come in here and have a beer at ten in the morning. They are limited, though. We give one beer per person, and we do ID."

The salon's staff includes four stylists, including Adams, and prices range from \$5 to \$26 for cuts and \$45 and up for coloring.

"Prices are reasonable, and we can save you money here," Adams said. "If

you don't want a shampoo you don't have to pay for it, and if you don't want a blow-dry you don't have to pay for it. So there's no pressure in walking out the door with your hair all done if you're getting ready to just go to the grocery store."

Adams, a first-time business owner, said the hardest parts of opening were getting permits and naming the salon.

"I'm glad the beginning process - dealing with the city and getting permits - is done," Adams said. "It was hard coming up with a name, too; that came last-minute. Someone suggested Blue Ribbon, so we just went with it."

Adams said despite the business' slow start, she now has several regular customers and business is great.

"Our clientele is pretty even between women and men," Adams said. "We get a lot of families - we get more kids than I thought we would. But everybody who comes in is laid-back."

Hair products, such as Goldwell, KMS and Joe Grooming, are for sale at the front of the salon behind the counter and candy

dish.

"This place is so quaint," senior Mary Anne Craver said. "The interior is so welcoming and cozy. It seems like a great place to work."

Adams said that she encountered little negative feedback since opening the salon.

"The only negative comments we have run into is at first we were walk-ins only, and we changed that over because people wanted to make appointments. Really the only negative feedback we've had is from people who walk in and we can't fit them in. But for the most part, if people have to wait a little while, they're okay with it."

The Blue Ribbon, located at 506 Haywood Road, offers a 10-percent discount to customers who ride bikes and sells gift certificates in all amounts. Punch cards offer a free haircut after the seventh one.

"People need to get a different price point than a high-end salon or a Super Cuts. They need something in between, and I think that's where we fall in," Adams said.