



Cosmetology school to bring makeovers to old dealership

By Doug Schorpp | Friday, June 27, 2008

The former Ron Buysse Dodge car dealership building on Brady Street in Davenport soon will have a new tenant.

The Davenport Academy, a Paul Mitchell Partner School, will open a cosmetology school this fall at the property at 4114 Brady St., said Deron Gregory, who will own the franchise operation with his wife, Judy. They also are about to open their second hair salon in Las Vegas, he said.

Gregory said they purchased the Buysse building for \$1.1 million. Gutting and renovating the interior is expected to cost another \$1 million, he added.

"We have been affiliated with Paul Mitchell for 25 years. We chose to use that certain brand 25 years ago," Gregory said. Both of his salons are Paul Mitchell-focused businesses.

Paul Mitchell salons and products have been in existence for more than 25 years and operate all over the world. Gregory said about five years ago, the salon chain began opening schools for cosmetology, skin and nail care. Today, he said there are about 100 such schools.

"Basically, Paul Mitchell asked us if we wanted to buy a franchise," Gregory said. "They gave us a list of cities for possible sites."

There were several dozen choices. Eventually, they chose Davenport because of the demographics, he said. The building will allow for several classrooms and a large clinic floor where students will be trained by providing services to customers.

"We will open with 15 to 30 students," he said. "Every six weeks, we will have another class of 15 to 30 students." Eventually, he expects to have 100 or more students at any given time.

Gregory said he, his wife and his sister will travel back and forth from Las Vegas to operate the school along with permanent staff in Davenport.

Within a year of the opening, Gregory said they plan to open a Paul Mitchell skin care academy that will graduate licensed skin care therapists.

Gregory said he will post banners on the building next month announcing when they will begin accepting student applications.

Pleasure Pools & Spas recently purchased the northern half of the former Buysse dealership, which closed in September 2006 when it was purchased by Kimberly Car City. Construction of the new Pleasure Pools building is expected to begin this summer.

Peg Hopkins, a real estate agent for NAI Ruhl & Ruhl Commercial Co., said the west side of the Buysse building contains 4,500 square feet that Gregory hopes to lease for retail purposes.

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