

Eden Day Spa and Salon to open in Currituck

By Cindy Beamon

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CURRITUCK — A new beauty and wellness academy offering classes in massage therapy, nail care and other day spa services is expected to open at the start of the new year.

In addition, Didario, a long-established hair salon and day spa in Currituck, will be moving to the same new location and changing its name to reflect its new line of organic products.

Owner Mary Didario said she is hoping to open the new Eden Day Spa and Salon at 2870 Caratoke Highway this week. The business will be moving only a short distance from its present location of 15 years at 2815 Caratoke Highway near Currituck's Historic Courthouse.

At the new 5,400-square-foot location, the hair salon and day spa will operate downstairs while the new Didario Academy will occupy the upstairs.

The new salon will feature Aveda organic products while the new academy will be connected to an internationally-known training program by Dermal Institute.

"It's a true wellness approach to the school and the salon as well," said Didario.

Didario has plans to convert the old Currituck location into a bed and breakfast, and possibly a wedding chapel with a "pamper room" for the wedding party to have their hair styled and nails done.

The new academy will offer classes not available elsewhere in the area, said Didario. In addition to massage and manicures, the course work will include "aesthetics," from skin polishing to waxings, makeup and anti-aging techniques to acne treatments.

Local residents are also likely to benefit by getting discount rates from students learning the new trade, she noted.

Building up the academy to its 20-student capacity could take some time, said Didario. She plans to start out by offering continuing education courses before launching the full program as a Dermal Institute partner school. The Dermal Institute provides the curriculum, products and training for instructors. The program includes 350 hours of classroom training and 300 hours of hands-on training.

By January, the upstairs should be equipped and ready for new students, said Didario.

Downstairs, the new salon will soon offer hairstyling, massage therapy,

Downstairs, the new salon will soon offer hairstyling, massage therapy, manicures and pedicures.

The new location has opened up the opportunity for the Currituck salon to become an official Aveda Concept Spa and Salon. Aveda offers its own line of 98 percent organic products and training for hair stylists and spa personnel.

“I think people are realizing we need to be more in tune with nature and healthy products,” said Didario.

The special line of products is already available at Didario’s two Eden Day Spas in Corolla and Duck. With the new location in Currituck, residents will no longer have to travel to Norfolk, Va., or the Outer Banks to get the same quality of service and products, said Didario.

“I don’t want people to have to go to Virginia to get those services. They can come here to get them,” said Didario.

On Wednesday, a master educator from Massachusetts, was training four stylists on hair color techniques using the Aveda products. The product line allows stylists to customize hair color by mixing primary color pigments.

Didario’s new business expansion won a N.C. Rural Center grant for its job-creation potential. The \$20,000 grant requires the new enterprise create three jobs; Didario said she expects she’ll be hiring possibly triple that number once the new salon and school opens. Currituck provided a \$1,000 match.

As an economic incentive and Didario herself was required to contribute \$40,000 toward renovations for the new academy.

Didario said the new salon and school is a longtime dream, but Didario acknowledges some risk in her new enterprise. Didario, who has operated salons for more than 30 years, said the opportunity opened up when the previously vacant Lea Condominium Building became available through foreclosure. The Rural Center grant will also be helpful; the grant money will just about cover the bond payment she needs to open up the new academy.