

Community Spot-Lite

BALLA WORLD BARBER SHOP

More Than A Name; It’s An Attitude.

By Val Jones

Look up the term “balla” and you may come up with these definitions: *One who has many skills; one on top of his game; one who prefers the best.* And when you hear the inspiration behind the name of Balla World Barber shop, you realize all those terms apply to the business as well.

Balla World Barber Shop, located just down from Wal-Mart on Yadkin Road in Fayetteville, has been in business since 2000. Owner Keith White recalls how he came up with the name:

“Beauty World was just across the street...and I figured since the ladies had ‘Beauty World,’ we’d give the guys ‘Balla World,’” says Keith. “Plus, I remember hearing a gospel hip hop song in Atlanta whose words were ‘*My God is a balla; he owns everything.*’ I loved that! I decided I’d take that attitude when applying it to my own business and life. I choose to promote a positive image of being a ‘balla.’ I’d rather promote a positive prosperity amongst our young black people as opposed to all the negative stereotypes about being a ‘balla.’”

This energy and attitude permeates throughout the barber shop as you see young professional entrepreneurs very skilled at their craft working together to promote prosperity in themselves and their business. Keith White, Roosevelt “Chief” Hockaday, Tammy Walker and Tracy Williams are some of the best barbers in the city. Their reputation and clientele continue to grow and Balla World continues to shine despite a reclining economy.

Plus, the environment of this barber shop is not as course as some others. The atmosphere almost “dinner-table” like — warm, inviting, respectful, family-friendly. “We are Christian-based and promote a family-oriented atmosphere where we don’t allow any profanity,” says Keith. “We want our customers as well as their children to be able to hear a conversation and not feel offended. Who knows? Somebody might learn something,” he laughs.

Back to what Balla World does best: Cutting hair!! Now everyone knows that a good balla has GOT to have a good haircut. Balla World Barber Shop lives up to its name. “We pride ourselves in providing the razor edge haircut,” says Keith. “This is our signature cut. It’s an old-fashioned style cut that a lot of barber shops don’t offer anymore. It requires applying extra shaving cream with a razor to the hairline to define the edge up. It gives it a cleaner and sharper look. A ‘balla look,’ he laughs.

Keith continues: “We also specialize in the Bigen hair coloring (the look made famous by comedian Steve Harvey). It’s a look a lot of the entertainers are using today to get that precise flawless lineup. Plus, we do all types of shades. We also specialize in female hair cuts. Our female barber Tammy Walker does most of the female haircuts. But we are all skilled at



Roosevelt Hockaday, Keith White & Tammy Walker - (910) 868-8331

doing them. As well, she is skilled at all types of cuts for women and men.”

Tammy adds: “I’ve been cutting hair for 12 years. A lot of guys who don’t know my reputation are sometimes hesitant to sit in a female’s chair. But in due time, they see my work. And I actually think females are better at cutting hair because we tend to be more precise,” she laughs.

When it comes to the ‘young ballas,’ everyone knows they love to be fly on all accounts, including the hair. That’s where Chief (Roosevelt Hockaday) comes in. “A lot of the young folks are always looking for designs in their hair and I specialize in design hair cuts and taper fades,” says Chief. “There’s nothing like seeing your artwork on someone else’s head. I get as much pleasure out of it as they do,” he smiles.

Their passion for work, great skill for their craft and positive attitude for success continue to be great for Balla World business. They have expanded and added four more barber chairs in the back of the shop. And while others are suffering from the recession, they are actually looking to hire.

“We are looking for real sharp barbers who are at the top of their game who want to be a part of the Balla World family,” say Keith. “So if you have the potential to learn and grow...or you are already established and want to be in a professional and comfortable environment, come check Balla World out.”

Balla World Barber Shop is also getting attention for its passion and service to community outreach. This past November 6th, the barber shop staged its 2nd Annual “Balla World Barber Shop Knock Out AIDS Event.”

“The event was quite a success,” says Keith. “We did it in partnership with Cape Fear Regional Bureau for Community. While they were conducting HIV tests, we offered free haircuts that Saturday between 9 and 5 to anyone who got tested. We had 44 people get tested, so we were quite pleased with that participation.”

Keith continues: “I feel there is a need for more awareness regarding HIV and AIDS. It’s something that people sometimes forget about. But it’s a very relevant subject and impacts our community greatly. I do things like this to remind our community that AIDS is very real and a prevalent topic today. I’ve been inspired by people I know who have passed on...people who were healthy one day and the next day they were sick. Thank God they have the medicine now that allows HIV patients to be treated and live a healthy life. But there is still so much more awareness that needs to take place within our community.”

They say everyone has his/her own calling...a ministry that is done through actions. Keith White promotes his “ministry” through his business. “I feel like we’re not only here just to make money. It is important for us to get involved in some social issues that affect our community. I use the barber shop as a basis and platform to do that.”

And when it comes to keeping it real, a REAL balla knows how to do that too. “We give free condoms out at our barber shop,” says Keith. “Sometimes people take it as a joke. But my philosophy is that it is always better to be prepared and protected than to regret it. And that condom you got from the barber shop may be the very one that protects you from HIV or an STD or from spreading something around, protecting the other person as well. It’s those so-called little things that can get lost in day-to-day life that can be some of the most important things in order to save or enjoy one’s life.”

Balla World Barber Shop continues to show that it’s cut out for success as well as cuts FOR success. More than a name, the Balla World attitude comes out in Keith’s final thoughts: “I want to promote alternative choices for our young people to have other than dealing drugs or being an athlete. I wanted to promote being a self-made man and being legit at what you do. You CAN positively do that. In our barber shop and our own lives, we try to downplay that ‘poor mentality’ of thinking you’re ‘big’ but acting small — doing all the wrong things that unfortunately society seems to promote today. Things and actions that will never truly get you anywhere. When you listen to the majority of the hip hop songs, it’s all about selling drugs and being a hustler. But there are other positive alternatives. You CAN be positive and own your own business and be successful. You CAN have nice things like your own home and cars without selling drugs. I believe in that. I’m proof of that.”

GO ‘HEAD BALLA!!!

Looking for a great haircut in a great family-oriented atmosphere? Stop by and see the professionals at Balla World Barber Shop. Located at 4772 Yadkin Road in Fayetteville. Hours of operation: 9 to 7 on most days; 9 to 5 on week-ends. For more information, call (910) 868-8331.

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