

Au Naturel

Schatzi's Design Gallery & Day Spa, LLC

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 4

MAY 2014

Schatzi's is Raleigh's 1st full-service natural hair salon and your gateway to natural hair care beauty. *Au Naturel* newsletter, an essential part of our information sharing services, is a wondrous labor of love that is a joy to create and a gift to you our valued clients and to the public at large.

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SOULFUL UPDATES

Well, spring is in full swing, and North Carolina is truly a most beautiful place!! The spring months illustrate this beauty most eloquently and consistently. I know why God made this my birthplace. I don't imagine that I would want to live anywhere else on Earth. I recall many years ago traveling to Wrightsville Beach and standing in awe. My sole thought was, "The Caribbean Sea has NOTHING on this place! It is literal poetry in motion." No doubt, there are many beautiful places on the Earth plane. But, North Carolina has it all: mountain streams, waterfalls, breath-taking views, bountiful wildlife, picturesque autumns, pristine beaches, island hideaways. My spirit has found an affinity with the verdant backdrop that is the landscape of my life sojourn in this soulful place. I am thankful, and "YES" my favorite color is green! Always has been. ☺

Well as far as updates are concerned, my own brother called me and asked "where's the newsletter"! Am I THAT delinquent?! ☺ My word! I guess it CAN build anticipation. Whew!! Honestly, I have been in a reflective tone--which is surely nothing new. ☺ I've tried to write but, I just couldn't. I really can't force these publications so; I rest in silence when I need to. This publication ever-has-been and ever-shall-be all about love. But sometimes, the vibe is just not right. So, rather than to shift the flow of the universe away from love, I remain silent. I think that's wise counsel for many....

At any rate, I tend to be a very open, free spirit. My intuition and sensing seem to be magnified of late. The downside of that "gift" is that I feel as though I'm becoming a medium of sorts. FREAKY!!! While brushing my teeth this morning, I laughed out loud because this stuff doesn't happen to Black people! ☺ Or maybe it does, but we have the good sense NOT to talk about it! *Whoops!* Some weeks back, I very clearly told God and the universe and anyone else listening, "I'm not the ghost whisperer and I'm not Shirley MacLaine. Y'all have picked the WRONG ONE!" And with that grand pronouncement, I've shut down by imposing a *numbness* within my being—a self-imposed, inner quiet. I've done so in an effort to be as productive as possible and to ground myself—to be peace. Some "gifts" I just don't want! I don't understand them so I'm only too happy to "return to sender, address unknown." And true to the comedy that is my life, I dreamt that I kissed a "*beautiful flower*" that I love and walked away from it forever...to be peace. I then leaped off of the top of a building with sheer

abandon and NO FEAR. And I flew. I flew and glided on the currents of the air, soaring like an eagle. For a time, I looked at life all around me and was amazed at my own liberation and peace, and then I fell rather rapidly into a very deep grave. And woke up. So much for “grounding”! ☺ I even dream in metaphors!! In short, I’ve felt like [Icarus](#). But, I have found a peace of sorts. I embrace life, even when it’s quirky. The Lord is my shepherd...and he’s in control. I have ABSOLUTELY no fear. Only a distant amusement that my life was just **not rich enough**, so I get to be tested in new and creative ways. Oh JOY! ☺

Within the salon, the neo-soul vibe has been eclipsed for a time. I’ve switched channels and am witnessing a beautiful horizon forming all around me. These days, the radio is my best friend. As a result, I feel a type of marrying with my sons’ generation. I love their music!! Divine and deeply inspired. Simple, yet moving. Two songs which have struck a chord with my soul of late are Avicii’s [Wake Me Up](#) and Mumford and Son’s [I Will Wait](#). These artists, in particular, have grasped and resurrected America’s folk culture—merging an Appalachian mountain sound with pop culture. The mélange is absolute poetry!!!! LOVE IT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Who wouldn’t feel moved by Avicii’s [Hey Brother](#)? (I feel a sting behind the eyes when I watch this one.) It’s beautiful. I love this young man. Truly love him. I pray he stays as grounded as he seems. During the recent I♥Music Awards, Rihanna attested to how hard the music industry is. For me however, it’s truly hard to fathom that it could be any harder than anyone else’s life. So, I choose to make my life a living sacrifice. And if there is no reward on this plane, I expect nothing. And I’m cool with that. Life is hard. Period. And we give thanks.

We do the best we’re able. We all struggle on our own stage, in our own time and place. We grapple with the [Monster](#) (absolutely my favorite song of late as it so eloquently speaks to my soul) within as we seek to over-ride the ego to prayerfully be whole and complete spirit entities. Some days, I feel that I have conquered the demon within and other times, it laughs in my face and rides me like a wild banshee. And still other times, it just winks at me. I am amused at the thought, yet I have no fear. I only shake my head at the vanity and the sheer futility of the dance. But, it is life. So to find meaning, we must extend our sight beyond the here and now by peering into infinity--God. Sometimes, we’re clairvoyant and other times, we’re too blind to see. At these times, we are compelled to feel and know what is real, though invisible. We must find peace in stillness or implode from our own confusion—all the while knowing that [God is not the author of confusion](#). Here’s one to make you go *hmmm*.

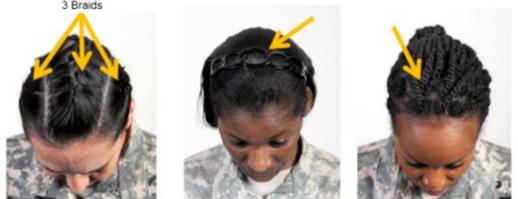
Life is a prayer. I contemplate the majesty of God and life, and I wonder how God sees our weakness. It has all compelled me to contemplate discernment in a way that I have never before been able to do so. There was a time that I would have believed myself most adept at discernment. Today, I know that I am but a child. **I have no answers—only questions.** So to you, the reader: I pray for your own God-sight and your own inner-knowing. I pray that your dance is a passionate one: full of inspiration. I pray that you lead well and follow often. I pray that you welcome all who want to dance with you and help them to see their own beauty in the time that you mutually share the stage. I pray that we all endeavor to see the frailty and weakness in the eyes of our neighbors and lift them up as often and as lovingly as possible. I pray that we learn to forgive. But more importantly, may we know that **true** forgiveness requires that we *remember*. Amen.

ARMY GROOMING STANDARDS CHALLENGE THE NATURAL LIFE

Okay, ladies. Here’s one for the history books. Some of you may have heard of a recent decision by the military to revise their grooming standards, which naturally includes guidance for hairstyling. Well based on the recent revisions, the women of the [Congressional Black Caucus banded together to oppose the new guidelines and to ask that they be reviewed](#).

This news came out a day before my presentation at the NUSOL Natural Hair and Beauty Expo so naturally, I was back to the drawing board to incorporate this example into my arsenal of metaphors on natural hair as the Phoenix rising. It blended masterfully if I may say so myself. The night before, we had a very interesting debate in the salon about the whole affair. My client happened to be ex-military so she acknowledged the need for clearer guidance while the rest of us listened. She recounted how her own sergeant was often seen with her Kevlar (helmet) wobbling atop her braids as she held her rifle ready for battle. In her words, "You can get killed that way, OR get someone else killed." So with that, the debate was largely concluded. After all, is it not, as Kat Williams stated, "a uniformed service"? I get it. But, some things are truly more rational and justifiable than others. Check out the next four pages of guidelines to understand the depth and breadth of my argument:

FEMALE UNAUTHORIZED HAIRSTYLES



- 3 Braids
- Multiple braiding (more than 2 braids) must be small (~1/4") in diameter
- Headband is not plain
- Twists are not authorized

FEMALE UNAUTHORIZED HAIRSTYLES



- Unauthorized device (claw clip)
- Loose, unsecured hair
- Bulk of hair exceeds more than 2" from scalp

FEMALE BRAIDS



- Multiple braiding (more than 2 braids) is authorized.
- Must be of uniform dimension, small in diameter (approximately 1/4"), show no more than 1/8" of scalp between the braids
- Must be tightly interwoven to present a neat, professional, well-groomed appearance
- Foreign material (beads or decorative items) will not be braided into the hair
- Can be worn loose per medium hair length guidelines or secured to the head in the same manner as described for medium or long length hair styles
- Ends must be secured only with inconspicuous rubber bands
- Multiple braids must encompass the whole head
- When braids are not worn loosely, but braided close to the scalp, the braids must start at the front of the head

FEMALE TWISTS & DREADLOCKS

- Twists
 - Defined as twisting two distinct strands of hair around one another to create a twisted rope-like appearance
 - Although some twists may be temporary (can be easily untwisted), they are unauthorized
 - This includes twists formed against the scalp or worn in a free-hanging style
- Dreadlocks
 - Defined as any matted or locked coils or ropes of hair (or extensions)
 - Any style of dreadlock (against the scalp or free-hanging) are not authorized
 - Any unkempt or matted braids or cornrows are considered dreadlocks and are not authorized

When I first read these guidelines, I got hot around the collar and had to readjust my posture in my seat. In short, these guidelines oppose every aspect of a natural Black woman. First, why are twists not authorized? In my mind, that's insane and not easily justified by anyone who knows anything about hair. Why? Because braids ARE authorized. How can braids be authorized and twists are NOT? Twists are defined as two strands rotating around one another to create a twisted rope-like appearance. Why are three strands braided seen as "more acceptable" than two-strands, and thus authorized? If I were a woman in the military right now, I would intentionally three-strand twist my hair—creating the same rope-like appearance but using three strands instead of two, and challenge ANYONE to define it as a twist rather than a braid! In my view, twists are superior to braids because: they can be more quickly completed; more easily loosened; and are less damaging to the hair when small. I

would defy anyone telling me I have to braid rather than twist my hair. And that explains why I kept MY b---- a-- OUT of the military!!!—among other things... Non-conformist to the core, though surprisingly conservative. Go figure! Still, I grappled in my mind to understand the logic of this reasoning and could only conclude that White or other non-Black ethnicities CANNOT by definition twist their hair (without it unraveling and generally looking unkempt); but they can braid it. So, the guidance is directed squarely at the Black women. Call me paranoid? WELL, CRAZY BEGETS PARANOIA! So, I'm in good company.

Slide 2 says the “bulk of hair exceeds more than 2 inches from the scalp.” Well, that’s what natural black hair does BY DEFINITION. We were born that way. So in short, the guidance is saying, “Don’t be what you are.” Don’t get me wrong. I understand the need to secure a Kevlar but the guidance should be more about the hows and wherefores of doing that than the texture and nature of the hair itself. My lectures often talk about the technical differences between barbering and cosmetology within the beauty care industry. This illustration squarely says, “Chic, go to the barber.” And many do.

As far as dreadlocks are concerned, I would argue that the guidance should speak to the size of the locks and the ability to secure them much more than it should speak to the entirety of the style technique. The range of style capabilities with dreadlocks is multi-dimensional. If I wear small sisterlocks and keep them braided and secured, would anyone even know that I have locks? Insane! It’s hard to imagine that this is the Army’s best guidance in March 2014.

Based on the firestorm that ensued, word is that [the Army is now reviewing its new hair rules](#). It just goes to show, you can arrest our men, you can kill our children and you can abuse us in the workforce, but DON'T TALK ABOUT OUR HAIR!!!!!!! Cause we'll take you down with a quick-ness! Yes, I said it. But then, I'm conflicted about it all. Yes, I'm glad sisters took a stand and are seeing action arise accordingly. But then, it's kind of bittersweet in my mind because there are so many other things in life that have not garnered the quick response of the Congressional Black Caucus—though surely worthy. So ultimately, I see this action as a back-door maintenance of the “status quo.” After all, the military can't afford to have Black women silently opting out of military service. That would amount to a loss of 31% of all females serving, though Black women make up only about 16% of the female population in general. So, I'm compelled to ask about the motives of these CBC women. In the end, I keep this all in perspective by reminding myself that the military IS about killing people. So ultimately, I summarize the whole affair as a: “Render unto Caesar...” and keep it moving.

ABOUT US

As the first natural hair salon in Raleigh, NC, *Schatzi's* is a *one-stop shop* for all of your natural hair care needs. With a warm and nurturing ambiance for clients to “Embrace the Beauty of You,” *Schatzi's* is located in the Park on Millbrook Condominium complex, near the intersection of Six Forks and Millbrook Rds.

Schatzi's design gallery provides services that nurture natural hair with talented Board licensed stylists who are happy to guide you through and beyond the transition process. Our two-floor art gallery is provided courtesy of local artist Jasmine Hawthorne.