

# Au Naturel

Schatzi's Design Gallery & Day Spa, LLC

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## *SALON UPDATES*

### Stealing Home Base

The completion of this month's issue of Au Naturel feels a lot like stealing home base. The reason is that after weeks of indecision and hesitation, I finally made the mad dash for newsletter completion on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. I feel that I've slid into home base just as the catcher tagged my leg while clutching the ball. The umpire, squatting over me spread-eagle, sweeps his arms sideways and yells "Safe!" As I rise to standing with a self-satisfied grin and brush the dust off of my clothes, screaming fans can be heard cursing, "No, Ump. Bad call! She's out!!" After all, September is just about OVER!! Isn't it? How can that be fair? Why produce a newsletter in the last moments of the month and call it relevant to the month of September? Why not call it the October issue? Well in short, because it's still

September AND because it's *my prerogative*. (Yes, Bobby Brown is singing in the background of my mind as I bob my head left and right.☺) Okay, I'm in a silly mood.

Honestly speaking, I have no good excuse for this month's delay. I was just kind out of the writing vibe. Sure, I've been writing: grant proposals, letters, emails galore...but not the newsletter. Until now. This month started out with a bang. I attended the most beautiful wedding I've ever been too! My own cousin Khalid Hawthorne and Janelle Bass tied the knot on Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup>. I love Janelle's people. Hailing from Liberia, they are DOWN!! I LOVE THEM!! I've not danced that much and that joyfully in a very LONG TIME!! If the love in that room is any sign of what they have in store for

## *Poetically Speaking*

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If you've been reading our newsletter since the Olympics, the attached link may be interesting to you. It is an [exceptional poem](#) by a young woman who chose to voice her outrage at the recent Gabby hair affair that I posted in last month's issue. Many of you have probably seen it by now. But if not, here it is. (Delores, sorry I waited so long to post it.) The poem is beautifully delivered and brought me to tears. Check it out. At the end, I could only clap and wipe the tears. Yes, I'm a big cry-baby! And I'm cool with that. ☺

their future, they will live happily ever after INDEED!!!!

Later in the month, things started to feel a bit overwhelming. *Courage* was an appropriate theme for that week-end. Out of necessity, I put down everything that was not an imperative. On the 15<sup>th</sup>,

I took the added step of making an impromptu visit to my girlfriend's house in Maryland. God so aligned the Universe that our full day of clients turned into a book full of cancellations and rescheduled appointments. I was honestly never so relieved to see cancellations in my entire LIFE! Jamie very generously took my remaining clients for me and I hit the road. With Anthony Hamilton keeping me company, I was in MD in no time. (By the way, he is in concert at the Greensboro Coliseum on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>. Quality time with my Grandma and Aunt, wonderful companionship and the soulful sounds of the great philosopher extraordinaire Sir Anthony Hamilton: What more could I ask for?! ☺) The

songstresses are really taking a back seat these days. Anthony is the man of the season. Everyone in the salon has been laughing at me because I will do an all-day Anthony Hamilton vibe with the 5-CD player and won't think twice about it. He has so much wonderful music. His songs resonate with an intensity and sheer honesty that is humbling, and his voice is truly a gift from God. Check him out if you haven't lately. My favorite during the past few weeks has been "Life Has A Way." At the writing of this missive, I'm all over "Broken Man," although I love "Pass Me Over," "Pray for Me," "Diamond in the Rough," and "Whose Lovin' You." "I Did It For Sho" is ICE COLD and oh so clever! And "Sista Big Bones" makes

any woman smile, whatever her size. What man puts "vittles" in his song lyrics? The man is straight southern! Heralding from Charlotte, NC, how could I not love and vibe with him?! Okay, that was a major digression. But, if you haven't bought your tickets, there's STILL TIME. Anyway, Anthony definitely helped to bring me "Back to Love" (*pun so intended*). Great CD!

Within the salon, we give thanks for life and love and beautiful people and beautiful music. As we go rolling merrily along, life is good. I hope you are too. Peace and Love. Schatzi

photo that hides her face because it's not about

## ***THE BEAUTELESS EFFECTS OF TRACTION ALOPECIA***

### **Time for Some Honest Truth-Telling**

Okay, I was truly hesitant to include this photo in the newsletter because it feels a bit too much like "airing dirty laundry" or "looking up a woman's dress." Not COOL!! But, edification requires full understanding so I present this image to teach rather than to chastise or point the finger of judgment. For this reason, I won't state the name of this celebrity though many will recognize this beauty anyway. I've intentionally selected a



Photo from uptownmagazine.com

the WHO. It's about the WHAT.

Traction alopecia is a real problem within the African American community. I see it EVERYWHERE!!! I see it when it's a fetus, in its infancy, in childhood and full maturation. I wrote an article highlighting this issue in the [July Issue](#) called "Transitioning Taboos: Spotlight on Weaves and Extensions." It is most prevalent among women who wear braids and weaves regularly and frankly, IT'S NOT HOT!!! AT ALL!! I was recently in a store with Jamie doing some quick shopping and saw some young ladies with braids. We gave out our cards and the "twenty questions" began. We weren't in a hurry, so we happily took our time answering them. One young lady, who was clearly more vocal than the others, went into a discourse about how she has someone who does her hair and she's sure that we can't beat her price for the style that she was wearing. I asked the price, and concurred, "No, we can't beat that price. But, sometimes we get what we pay for. Your stylist is not doing a good job of protecting your edges which are just starting to recede." She then became very self-conscious and started looking in the store window at her reflection. "No, they're not!" A type of panic had taken her that quickly, and I felt sorry for pointing out the problem. She was too insecure to receive that information in the way that it was delivered. I should have known. I was truly sorry. At any rate, she felt her edges and again, denied the truth. I acknowledged that she was in denial and told her that she really didn't have to stay where she was going. She just needed to move forward with knowledge, awareness and, possibly, an alternative. **Note to self:** Don't do that again.

What's saddest to my soul is that traction alopecia is completely unavoidable. We don't

have to destroy our edges to don a fashionable flair. Yes, we can take breaks from natural hair with alternative styles, but they should not be the dominant style in our coiffure arsenal. When Hollywood beauties can abuse their hair to this point of departure (*pun intended*), we must realize that the ways of Hollywood are not necessarily the ways of reasoned, sound judgment. When I look at this photo, it tells me that these sisters don't have much choice about how they wear their hair—IF they want to stay in the limelight. I mean, who would willfully CHOOSE this result! This woman is paying a pretty price for her fame and fortune and the outcome is anything but pretty. Some would argue that Hollywood sirens are well paid so the trade-off is worth it. To me, this look is totally unacceptable for someone whose hair is being styled by paid professionals on a daily or weekly basis. But, I know that it's a reality that many women face every day.

So, you may think: Don't you provide weaves in your salon? If so, isn't that counter-intuitive to the entire message of "Embrace the Beauty of You?" The answer is: Yes, we do weaves in our salon. And no, it isn't. Recently, sew-in weave services were added to our style portfolio much to Brother Siddiq's **great** chagrin. He is Heaven-bent on getting them off of the services menu, and I laugh out of pure empathy for where he's coming from. He loves Black women, purely unadulterated and unadorned. In his words, "Why do we need to have this service?" I respond, "Because there's a demand for this service by women transitioning and by those who just want a break from styling. If we don't offer the alternative (which is professionally done, i.e. not damaging, and comes with advice about maintenance), we force them to go to others who will care much less about their natural birth rite than we do. If we send our

sisters into the streets to find the alternative, can we be upset when they come back to us damaged and abused?" Surely not. So, we style with love and intention to protect the crowning glory, all the while praising the beauty of the inner woman that shines through and above all else. I think he feels me to some degree, but reluctantly so. I ain't mad. Frankly, I like the challenge. It keeps me on my toes. Even if I am gritting my teeth the whole while. ☺ Just kidding.

All the same, this phenomenon is truly epidemic. I could go into a long discourse about how and why it occurs, but honestly, I don't want to sound hyper-critical. People are people, and we all do the best we know how. In addition, advice taken out of context can often be as problematic as saying nothing. Suffice it to say that if your hair is so tight that you have a headache and/or bumps around your edges, think again. Those bumps are your hair being pulled at the roots. Literally! Secondly, avoid glue like the plague. That seems rather obvious on the surface but I'm amazed at how much we've been led to believe that glue is an acceptable styling agent for hair. Go figure! In fact, when the Cosmetology Board was going to require glue-in (bonded) weaving for the natural stylist practical licensing exam, I SAW RED!!! I wrote a rather pointed 5-page missive to the Board to openly challenge this decision among others. I made many arguments, but on the subject of glue-in weaves, I wrote:

*The bonded method uses an adhesive which is synonymous with "glue." We have seen the after-effects of many professional and amateur adhesive services. The result is often the same: regression and breakage. My question is: Do Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic, Indian or European women put glue in their hair? If so, how is that process regulated? If they do not, why should the service be encouraged for African-American women simply because it is a*

*prevailing practice among many misinformed individuals who seek a "Eurocentric" look at all cost? I feel that if the Board seeks to regulate this service, it will have the responsibility to likewise mediate complaints. This area, in my view, is a slippery slope. I therefore do not feel that the bonded method should in any way be encouraged by the Board.*

When I received 'no response,' I went to a Board meeting only to be told by the platinum blond Acting Executive Director that "We got your letter. And we have natural hair care experts to advise us." I thought, "Hmm." "Thank you" was my only response to her words. A few months later, I saw the ED position posted on the State jobs website, and I almost put in my application out of spite. (**Note to self:** I really do need to get a handle on my vengeful nature.) Anyway, the practical exam did NOT require glue-in weaves—only sew-ins. So, there was a degree of progress made at the end of the day, though surely not as much as I would have liked.

So to salon clients, I say: Come into the salon and get a free consultation on braids and weaves. We'll be happy to explain to you how and why this phenomenon occurs and give you advice about how to avoid this occurrence in your own future. Then, you can choose to stay with us or go back out into the community as you like. It's your decision. Our consultations are free, and we're frankly happy to share information. On the surface, we may never profit directly from having shared this information but, we profit indirectly. Natural beauty is effortless and is yours for the taking. Where beauty abounds, we all are the indirect beneficiaries. And with this information: At the very least, you can go back out into the community armed with the information that you need to safeguard your interests...and your edges.

## GIVING THANKS FOR THE GIFT OF BEAUTIFUL COMPANIONS

### A Well Deserved Word of Praise

While watching a Joyce Meyer video recently, I was reminded of who I am and what I always want to remember to do. Her topic: giving thanks. So appropriate! I feel it's been ages since I've done this with all sincerity as it relates to the salon. So, I want to take a moment to give thanks to the beautiful people that have strong leadership roles within the salon: Jamie and Siddiq. Jamie is our lead stylist and is humility personified. I could learn a few lessons from Jamie on meekness. She wears it well. I often receive compliments about her from clients who want to know, "Who is that gentle soul who answered the phone when I called?" She is truly a gentle soul but don't let the smooth taste fool you. She is a **STYLE GODDESS!** We lovingly call her the "Style Diva" because she can crank out just about anything you can think of. Yet, she will always bend and adjust to fit the client's preference. She is a true artist and magician. To have her talent *sans* arrogance is truly RARE in this industry. Trust me on that score! It is a

priceless, rare gem. Since Siddiq's arrival, she is coming out of her shell even more. I'VE even been amazed at her boldness of late! It's inspiring. We give thanks for her gifts and willingness to share them.

We are also blessed to have wonderful company in Siddiq who has taken on a *salon manager-type* role which has unburdened me of MUCH stress. I tend to be a perfectionist who doesn't like surprises or uncertainty. Here is where Siddiq fits in like a glove. He is absolutely reliable, consistent, funny as all get out!!, intuitive and thoughtful beyond measure. For instance, one client came in late one evening and needed to be styled in a private room as she is Moslem. Siddiq respectfully went upstairs until she was settled into a private space with another stylist. When 8pm came, he discretely approached me while I was styling my client and said, "Schatzi, the sister is probably fasting as its Ramadan. Sunset is at 8:15pm. She will surely be hungry. I got some more granola bars, juices and some other healthy snacks.

You may want to offer them to her." I nodded acknowledgement of his advice, monitored the time, and offered the client the snacks at the appointed time. She was ecstatic and relieved as it would be another hour before her hair was done. I smiled and shook my head at his thoughtfulness and concern. He demonstrates it effortlessly and daily!! He's also a master DJ. One client recently said: "Where did you get him from?!" I shrugged, shook my head and said: "He just appeared out of nowhere." And that is the truth! God is so good. We give thanks.

Honorable mention also goes to Andrea Bynum who is a wonderful sounding board full of great marketing ideas, and Kamice Somerville who contracts for straightening and weave services. We are thankful that they add their talents to our salon A list. Thanks ladies.

In all, we give thanks for beautiful relationships, and we give thanks for you the reader and the client, who make our efforts worthwhile. Be blessed.

## *FINDING PEACE*

### **An Invitation to a Health and Wellness Series by Jasmine Hawthorne**

As a public health professional, I see, read about and understand the negative effects of poor health all too well. It seems that we're becoming so rushed in our daily lives that being in a state of stress is seen as "normal." Unfortunately, living in a constant state of stress has detrimental effects on our mind, body and spirit. It's important to counter these negative effects with positive action and energy. The *Finding Peace* Workshop series is designed to do just that.

This workshop series will introduce you to the concept of health & wellness and represents an expansion of the Thursday *Night at Schatzi's* Yoga series. We will explore viable options for health and healing that work best for your lifestyle and your level of motivation. We will focus on understanding *good health* and learn approaches

to health and healing. As being active is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle, Yoga will be offered on-site as well. Topics to be covered include:

- Meal Planning and Healthy Eating Tips
- The Health Balancing Act
- Holistic Health and Relaxation Techniques
- Diabetes and Hypertension
- Positive Thinking
- Physical Activity and Nutrition

It is important for us to foster this type of attitude so that we take responsibility for our own well-being, rather than pushing so hard that we lose our ability to maintain health & healing. Please join us every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at 7pm.

We hope to see you there!

*Schatzi's is Raleigh's 1<sup>st</sup> full service natural hair salon and is your gateway to natural hair care beauty. Embrace the Beauty of You.*

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