

Gayla Wigs provides quality products to women suffering hair loss

By Chevalier Mayes
Villager Staff

Tears filled Gayle Stan's eyes when she talked about how many times her customers have called back to thank her and to tell her what a difference her work has made in their lives.

Stan is the owner of Gayla Wigs, located inside woodlands Medical Supplies in Suite 300 at College Park Plaza. She is a trained and certified wig savvy professional. Her store offers a large leading designer-style selection of wigs for women who are experiencing hair loss from chemotherapy treatments.

Stan said her main goal is to get those women suffering from any type of hair loss back into the community and feeling better about themselves. With every new customer, she has the opportunity to impact a life. It is this role that she deems her "calling".

"I'm very appreciative that I work here today so that I can let people know what is available in this area for chemo patients, alopecia, girls who have disorders where they pull all their hair out, brain surgery, hormone replacement therapy and medication mix," Stan said. "There are just numerous reasons why women come here."

To go out to a professional job is just almost impossible when you don't have hair. I am giving them a light at the end of the tunnel. So this has been a very rewarding experience for me. They can go back out with their husband and children and feel like they fit back in because you do not feel that way when you're so ill."

Gayla Wigs offers a selection of wigs ranging from machine-wefted wigs to monofilament wigs, which is the type of wigs that give the illusion of a real scalp.

The hair on the wigs is synthetic and made from a fiber called Kanekalon, which resembles human-grown hair and allows the wig to retain body, color and shape.

Stan said the Kanekalon fiber makes the hair easy to care for and is washable. No hot irons, hot rollers or anything is necessary for care, either, making the wigs low-maintenance for their owners. After the wigs are washed and shaken out, it is ready to be put back on as soon as it is dry.

Stan said the service she offers is "individualized, personalized, and customized." Her customers are able to choose the hair color they want, which are air brushed with four to five different colors mixed together to set the shade. More than 50 different shades are available. She said she is even trained to unweft the wigs and fit them to the customer's liking.

Stan takes time out to measure for the proper wig size by measuring from ear to ear, back to front and temple to temple and she is

trained to do a lot of detailed construction on wigs for the complete customization for her customers.

Donna Gross, a customer of Stan's, said Gayla Wigs helped restore her femininity in a time when she needed it most.

"My experience with her (Stan) was very pleasant," she said. "She made me feel like everything would be OK. It makes us feel a little more like a woman. After you lose your hair, you feel different. The wigs she has are very nice."

Jeanne Spielvogel was one of Stan's first customers after she relocated to The Woodlands and it didn't take her long to become a repeat customer.

"She does a very fine wig," she said. "I've had two of them made already.

"I like her work. What she does makes us better able to face society with hair, rather than without."

Wigs (From 9c)

Stan is also trained and certified to build breast prostheses for breast cancer patients. A breast prosthesis is an alternative to reconstructive breast surgery and requires silicon replacements that are carefully matched to body type, skin type and size and can be adjusted if a patient loses or gains weight.

Stan said depending on the woman's age, physical condition and breast size, an external prosthesis may be the best alternative and could provide a good balance to the body. She said patients seeking an external prosthesis may be the best alternative and could provide a good balance to the body. She said patients seeking external breast prosthesis will need to show proof that their doctor is in agreement after their chest wall has healed for about four to eight weeks.

Stan was working for a medical company in Austin when she began to develop a plan for a new business in The Woodlands. She wears wigs herself and they are constantly being admired by female patients she was helping fit with prostheses.

Her first-hand and professional knowledge about wigs helped point many of the women in the right direction and one day, while she was commuting between her Woodlands home and her Austin job, the plan to put her knowledge and skills to work closer to home began to formulate in her mind.

Stan opened Gayla Wigs in The Woodlands in September 2004 and has been a success ever since.

But it isn't just success that Stan strives so hard to achieve in her career. She enjoys most of all the privilege of aiding someone when they most need her in their life. She said she is grateful the Woodlands Medical Supplies agreed to embark on this journey with her as well.

“I love my job,” she said. “Helping and sharing with many (people) going through a difficult time ... My life has purpose and significance every day.”

Stan said emotions run high when facing something as traumatic as cancer and hair loss. Being able to take at least one superficial care away from a patient suffering so much worse, is a reason enough to carry on, Stan said.

“I just had a woman call and she said, “You don’t know how important this is to me; to make me feel good about myself and that I can feel pretty and fit into society,” she said.

Stan said she accepts all types of insurance for the external breast prosthesis including Aetna, Humana, United Healthcare and Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

For the “ultimate alternative hair experience,” Stan advises that anyone interested make an appointment so she can personally fit the wigs and take care of any other concerns the customer may have.

All personalized fittings are privately conducted.

Business hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. and on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call Gayle Stan at (291) 782-1555.