

All in the Family

A Wisconsin salon traces its unique roots outside the industry.

by Melissa Segars Hill

Doug Saloga is an unlikely salon owner.

He never worked in a salon or spa before opening **Spargo Salon & Spa** in Pewaukee, Wisconsin, in July 2000. His background was in technology, and he still remains fully employed in that industry, in addition to owning the salon and spa business.

"Doug is really too modest to tell the story," says manager Janice Clark. "Our beginning started with Doug sitting around talking with friends in the salon industry and hearing what they would do differently if they had their own places. So he built Spargo for his friends in the beauty industry."

All four of those stylist friends are now employees of Spargo, and have been since the opening. Clark, a veteran of the retail industry, oversees day-to-day operations. "What makes us unique is that so much of what we are, is our employees," says Clark. "We're driven by the employees' experience and passion for what



Doug Saloga and the Spargo Salon & Spa family.

they do. We have a family-centered atmosphere and we genuinely care for each other."

are challenges every day, but it's not something I've ever regretted."

Better Benefits

The staff has grown in the last six years, from 10 at the beginning to 26 currently, and is due to expand to about 35 when they open their new, larger, location this month. Spargo has an extremely low turnover rate, and to maintain the family feel, the hiring is internally-based, with candidates only accepted on referral from other employees. Saloga's experience in a different industry, he says, gives the business a unique flavor for its employees. Some of the perks he brought with him from the corporate world include two weeks of vacation for new employees from day one, as well as matching employees dollar for dollar on their 401(k) contributions.

"I'm not in the industry to put food on the table. It allows me to listen to the customers and employees and do the right thing," he says. "This is the first business I've owned. There

Creating Client Satisfaction

When the management team focuses on making the employees happy, they're getting the added bonus of making the clients happy, too. "Everyone has a genuine concern for what they do and where they work and clients see that," says Clark. "They like coming here because it's warm and inviting and everyone seems happy to be here." So much so that two years after opening, the business had already outgrown the 2,400-square-foot space. Now, they are in the process of opening an 8,000-square-foot salon and spa—designed with input from the staff, of course. The menu is also being redesigned, with employees helping to create new services.

"They're the professionals, they know the service and the clientele," says Saloga. "They really take ownership of the service and they take pride in doing it at 110 percent." ■

[SPARGO SALON & SPA]

Location: Pewaukee, Wisconsin

Owner: Doug Saloga

Established: July 2000, new location opening November 2006

Website: www.spargosalon.com and www.spargospa.com

Salon setup: 7 stations, one nail room, two massage rooms, two facial rooms and a Vichy shower room; New location: 11 stations, 2 nail rooms, 5 massage rooms, 4 facial rooms, large Vichy shower room, steam room, hot tub, locker rooms

Square feet: 2,400; New location: 8,000

Prices: hair cut \$25-\$40, partial highlights \$65+, signature facial \$85, spa pedicure \$40

Software: Harms Millennium

Equipment/furnishings: Belvedere

Primary hair care lines: Aveda, Bumble & bumble, Graham Webb Classic

Primary skin care lines: Dermalogica, glo therapeutics, glo mineral make-up

Primary chemical services line: Goldwell