

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Re: Sequoia General Contracting helps put LaVida Massage on the Naperville map

Dr. Dan Thorstenson said he realized how crucial it was to find just the right location for his new LaVida Massage salon. He said that, when he found an open storefront in Naperville's Springbrook Prairie Pavilion commercial center, he knew this was the kind of upscale site where, along with Whole Foods and other providers of quality merchandise and services, his business would fit and flourish. However, Dr. Thorstenson also realized he would have to conduct another search to find a general contractor who would do his new salon justice.

If you ask Dr. Thorstenson today, he'll tell you that his latter search couldn't have ended better. That search brought him to the door of Mike Stengle's Sequoia General Contracting Corp in Aurora.

"My history with contractors," Dr. Thorstenson, a retired chiropractor, said, "I've had promises that were always broken. Not this time."

He also said that meeting deadlines was only part of the equation as far as what made Sequoia stand out from the crowd. He said that the quality workmanship and attention to detail were indicative of the sense of pride Sequoia brought to the process and demanded from its subcontractors.

A quick tour of the facility speaks volumes about the level of quality construction Sequoia delivered. As soon as a client steps through the front door they are embraced by a warm and relaxing décor that, along with the gentle tones of meditative music, puts them at ease. Unlike massage parlors where, as Dr. Thorstenson explained, sterile white is the order of the day, the walls in the reception area of the salon are painted in a soft green and give way to sandy colored flagstone about three feet from the floor.

Visitors are drawn to the marble toned countertop of the reception desk, adorned with candles and a flower arrangement intertwined with bamboo. The desk is finished with a rich, mahogany front that curves gracefully from the wall on the right to the back wall next to a smoke-glassed door.

That door leads to the central hallway where earthy toned walls are separated by doorways to nine therapy rooms arranged on both sides of the hall. Insulated walls and ceilings ensure that the desired respite of LaVida's clientele is safe from outside noises and conversation.

Everything, right down to the heated massage tables, is designed to shed away the inhibitions of customers seeking a mix of relaxation and rejuvenation.

"This was virgin space when we started," said Stengle, "just four walls."

Stengle said Sequoia understands that the people it builds stores, offices and other commercial buildings for can't put their lives on hold while contractors casually wander through the construction process. He said it's imperative that contractors hold to predetermined timelines. "You do what you have to do," Stengle said. "People have to schedule their lives."

He said that the way to meet schedules while providing superior workmanship is to "surround yourself with good people." At Sequoia, that starts with Chris Obrecht, the company's superintendent. "He (Obrecht) has probably done 25 or 30 major projects here in Napperville," Stengle said.

Dr. Thorstenson said Obrecht was on top of the project from start to finish. He even said he saw Obrecht jump in to help subcontractors keep to their schedules. The final result is a salon which Manager Heather Dugena describes as "absolutely wonderful."

A licensed massage therapist herself, Dugena said Sequoia has created a setting where she and her staff are free to concentrate on their clients. "We're people oriented," she said.

Dugena said LaVida provides a first-rate massage at an affordable cost. In fact, until Jan. 1, 2010, a one-hour massage is only \$39.95, well below the going rate. Even after the first of the year, she said they'll provide massages at a lower price than the competition. Additionally, she said LaVida does not require clients to sign contracts.

"I've heard horror stories where people couldn't get out of these extended contracts," Dr. Thorstenson said. "That's one of the big differences here."

He said that a properly performed massage is more than just a matter of pampering. He said that it is a therapeutic process that helps lower blood pressure, improve circulation and helps alleviate other health-related problems.

"The big thing is relieving stress," Dr. Thorstenson said.

Dugena said that's why the qualified masseuse at LaVida makes a difference. "With some, you're just getting a back rub," she said. "With a qualified masseuse it's about your health and getting the knots out."

Another reason Dr. Thorstenson said he was happy about moving into the Springbrook Prairie Pavilion was that the center had made a commitment to developing wind energy to provide for all the electrical needs of the 270,000-square-foot shopping center.