



Imagination Stimulation: JaZams

Some gifts elicit a “wow;” others warrant a “JaZams!” The exclamation is actually the brain-child of Joanne Farrugia and Dean Smith, the visionaries who brought the unique toy store concept to Princeton, NJ, and Pennington, NJ. The two JaZams stores showcase handcrafted toys, games, dolls, puzzles and literature that stimulate imagination and creativity to a degree that Bratz dolls just miss. A little over a decade ago, Farrugia, a self-described Rutgers dropout, decided to combine her two loves: children and books. The result was a venue serving babies to young adults with an assortment of quality merchandise, events and a hefty library of books – their biggest seller – and toys designed for special needs. Signature picks also include an 18,000-piece puzzle, popular Corolle dolls and Rodys, the Italian-made inflatable hop toys. The energy reverberates through Pennington and Princeton’s Palmer Square, where earlier this year JaZams was the epicenter of a back-to-school block party that included live performances, crafters, food and a showing of, appropriately enough, Toy Story . Such commotions are a regular thing for the stores, which host book signings and events throughout the year. JaZams, 15 Hulfish Street, Princeton, 609-924-8697; 25 Route 31 South, Pennington, 609-730-9690; www.jazams.com.

Photo (left and center) by Elina Yudlevich / Photo (right) by Bruce Dennis



Opposites Attract: Blush Hair & Make-Up Studio

He’s a talented hair designer known as much for his calm demeanor as for his loyal following in Bucks County. She’s a driven esthetician who once sported a supersized ‘80s do and now exudes an equally gargantuan ambition – and a wicked knack for eyebrow shaping. Opposites attract, and the result is bigger than the sum of its parts for Blush Salon & Make-Up Studio owners Steve and Jennifer “Jay” Davis. The duo, who met while working at David J. Wittchell in Newtown are now navigating the expansion of their family – they have two children; one born this year – and their other baby, the salon, which recently underwent a second renovation. Blush, a staple in Yardley since 2002, is now an exclusively AVEDA salon, includes 10 hair stations, a plush retail and reception area and private rooms for pedicures, manicures, body waxing and airbrush tanning complete with flatscreen TVs and other luxurious amenities. In addition to nurturing hair and body, Blush brightens the soul – the company supports Locks of Love and has created a Makeover of the Month program in which a deserving person receives a complimentary styling. Blush Hair & Make-Up Studio, 40 South Main Street, Yardley; 215-321-6186; www.blushaesthetique.com.



Back to Basics: The Environmental Home Store

Feel good and green whenever you ingest a soy product? Why stop there? Spray some soy foam into the walls as insulation, or take it a step further by walking on some recycled bamboo or es-banko cork flooring. Thanks to Todd Ballantyne, owner of the Environmental Home Store, a home can be as earth-friendly as your diet. Ecologically-sound raw materials like radiant heat, wheat-board, American clay and Sorghum plant are now parlayed into home products, from laundry purifiers and countertops to carpeting and fireplaces, that help reduce our footprint on the earth and make it easier to sleep – in organic bedding from the EHS, of course. Responsible earth dwelling is also evident by the company’s participation in GreenFest Philly and the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Festival, both held in September. Lauded as the Best Green Resource for 2008 by Philadelphia magazine and now sporting a new location that opened in Doylestown in October, the EHS is on a (recycled) roll. The Environmental Home Store, 320 North Broad Street, Doylestown; 550 Carpenter Lane, Philadelphia; 215-844-4733; www.environmentalhomestore.com.