

Barber Opens Retro Shop

Business start follows a passion for nostalgic

BY DANNY PETERSON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A local barbershop is bringing old school cool to the way they cut men's hair. Classic Men in southwest Portland is a retro-style barbershop that delivers modern and traditional cuts in a nostalgic atmosphere.

Started by Franklin Whatley, who is originally from Cleveland, Ohio, the seasoned barber noticed a shortage of "barber nostalgia" at many shops—the classic stripped poles, badger hair shave brushes, and overall vibe of debonair was slowly disappearing from modern day men's grooming establishments.

That's when he discovered his niche and opened the shop back in 2016, providing men with a range of traditional and modern barber services in a suave and relaxing setting.

Whatley, 37, told the Portland Observer that an interest in haircutting came only natural to him, coming from a large family where he was the youngest of seven barbers.

"Three of my uncles owned barbershops. It was always a fun place, it was always something I looked up to," Whatley said.

Wishing to duplicate the nostalgic feel of Will's Barbershop in Cleveland that one

of his uncles owned, which he worked at for five years, Whatley created his own version in Classic Men.

Terrell Brandon, retired NBA all-star who played for the Cleveland Cavaliers, used to frequent Whatley's family barbershop back in Ohio. Brandon, who is from Portland, became a family friend and has known Whatley since he was 11.

Brandon went on to open up his own barbershop in Portland on Northeast Alberta Street and enlisted Whatley to work there, where he honed his skills over the next decade cutting men's hair.

Whatley went on to teach at Beau Monde Academy of Cosmetology from 2010 to 2012. He would eventually enlist three of his star pupils, Ahmad Lewis, Taryn Jones, and Isiah Simpson, to help him run his shop.

"I tell you man, those guys are great. I love working with them. It's like working with friends," Whatley said. "My business doesn't run without them, they're the back bone of it," he added.

The camaraderie is one signature feature of the shop, Whatley said, where inside jokes amongst his employees, like throwing a "penalty flags" in jest for something out of line said in a conversation, leaves a big impression on customers.

"Classic men barber shop is the kind of place that is not easily forgotten. You're going to think about it for a couple of days," Whatley said.

When asked what advice he



Classic Men in southwest Portland is a barbershop that brings a retro flavor to getting your hair cut. Taryn Jones (left), owner Franklin Whatley, and Ahmad Lewis use a relaxing, yet fun and camaraderie-filled atmosphere to service men getting modern and classic 'dos.

had for up and coming entrepreneurs, Whatley warned they should be ready to lose and learn from it.

Opening his shop was something Whatley described as the

hardest thing he's ever done and emphasized passion as a major driving force.

"You probably got to want it more than you want to breathe," Whatley said. "You

have to persevere," he added.

For fresh cuts and a cool atmosphere, check out Classic Men Barbershop at 8735 S.W. Canyon Lane or visit classicmenpdx.com for more info.

build something beautiful. | beneficial state bank

A Bank Dedicated to Building a Diverse Inclusive Community + more.

Let's build something beautiful together!

We are a triple-bottom-line bank and Certified B Corporation that offers individual, business and nonprofit customers a new kind of bank and the tools they need to build something beautiful.

Portland Branches

1. Downtown Branch 1101 SW Washington	5. Rose City Branch 5636 NE Sandy Blvd
2. MLK Branch 2002 NE MLK Jr. Blvd.	6. Beaumont Branch 4020B NE Fremont St.
3. St. Johns Branch 8040 N. Lombard St.	7. New Columbia-ATM Only 4610 N. Trenton St.
4. Pearl Branch 320 NW 10th Ave.	8. Ecotrust Building-ATM Only 721 NW 9th Ave.

beneficialstate.com
Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender.

AFFORDABLE RETIREMENT LIVING

CHAUCER COURT

1019 SW 10TH AVE
PORTLAND 97205

- STUDIO, ONE BEDROOM, AND MOBILITY IMPAIRED APARTMENTS
- FEDERAL RENT SUBSIDIES AVAILABLE
- NO BUY-IN OR APPLICATION FEES
- AFFORDABLE RENT - 30% OF ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME
- IDEAL URBAN LOCATION NEAR RESTAURANTS, SHOPPING, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, AND MEDICAL FACILITIES

503-224-3559 • WWW.CHAUCERCOURT.COM