

# More than child's play

*Mequon salon caters to the younger set*



Photos by Dan Davidson

Above, stylist Colleen Samolyk puts the finishing touches on a new 'do for Ella Hafner, 4, of Cedarburg; below, Ella's brother Nicholas, age 2, reserves judgment on his haircut.

**By Dan Davidson**  
*News Graphic Correspondent*

**E**lla Hafner of Cedarburg placed her hands gently on the steering wheel of a topless blue jeep while she watched morning cartoons on a flat-screen TV.

Ella is 4 years old and appears mostly oblivious to the reason she is situated where she is: She is getting her hair cut.

Just Kidding, which owner Lynn Hollowell opened on Mequon Road in Mequon on April 1, caters to kids who demand a little more from a hair cut than just getting their hair cut. They also want to be amused and distracted from the necessary but unfortunately common business of personal grooming.

To that end Hollowell has replaced legacy barber shop chairs with brightly painted and zippy-looking jeeps and aimed them in the direction of the cartoon characters bouncing on a screen a few feet down the roadway.

These distractions, Hollowell said, are especially beneficial for youngsters who are getting their ears lowered for the first time.

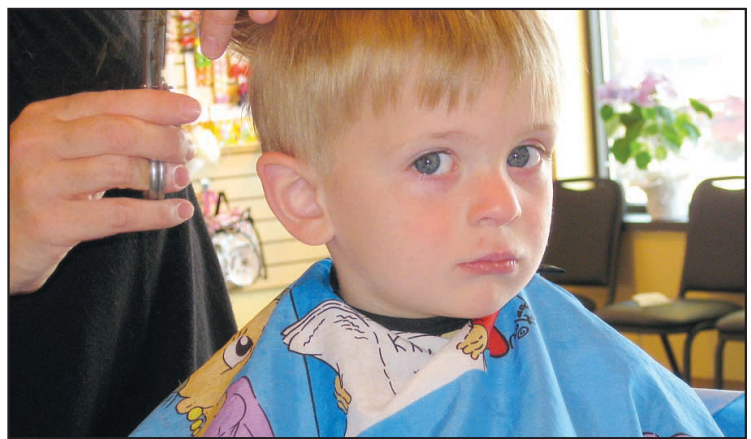
"It helps with the little ones who are a bit apprehensive,"

said Hollowell, who also owns a Just Kidding shop in Whitefish Bay. "We have a safari theme and the small kids can go in one of three types of jeeps and watch their favorite cartoon. There are also a variety of toys to play with. A lot of times moms have trouble getting their kids out of the store."

Hollowell bought the Whitefish Bay operation five years ago but closed the accompanying kids clothing store as it wasn't a profitable end of the business. But the hair cutting operation proved so successful she decided to open another, this one near the corner of Port Washington and Mequon roads.

Besides haircuts and hairdos, Hollowell hosts glamour parties, which entail treating a youngster and her guest to glamour hairstyles, manicures, glitter make-up, dress-up clothes and jewelry and some goodie bags to take home.

Alternatively, and for a bit more money per participant, the group of youngsters can book a tea party. Once again guests will get the hairstyle treatment along with the manicure, glitter and dress-up clothes and jewelry. But they will also sit down to an elegant Victorian table set with linen, china and silver.



The menu will include seasonal fruit, mini desserts and silver dishes overflowing with candies and finger sandwiches, beverages, of course, as well as a goodie bag to take home.

Hollowell has been organizing these feasts at the Whitefish Bay store, and is now bringing them to Mequon.

"We have parties booked for the next two weeks," Hollowell said. "The business in Mequon is building already."

There are eight stylists employed by Just Kidding, along with four receptionists who answer phones, take appointments and ring people out. The Mequon store is 1,000 square feet and accommodates six cutting stations.

"Just Kidding, which first started 18 years ago, was probably the original child's hair salon," Hollowell said. "Now they are popping up all over."

"Most people don't want to cut kids hair. They move a lot, they cry. But this is what we do and we give them a prize when they are done with their haircuts."

"We specialize in first haircut packages. We take pictures and award certificates, and maybe for the girls some butterfly clips and fairy dust in their hair. We make it friendly for the kids. It's an event. And the kids look great," Hollowell said.

Boys and girls are served. Just Kidding can be reached at (414) 962-2524.