

STYLIST SEEKS CURE FOR HIS GRANDSON

By Carisa Biesecker

Seeing Ezra Mougli for the first time, your mind might race to visions of him having been abused, having been in a life-threatening fire or something of the like, but you would be wrong.

Regarding people's stares, Riverview resident Pierce Simeone says, "That is the thing that gets to you the most," revealing that his two-year-old grandson actually suffers from the debilitating disease known as



"CHILDREN CAN GO THROUGH \$5,000 IN BANDAGES A MONTH, AND MANY DON'T MAKE IT TO SEE [AGE] 20," STATES PIERCE SIMEONE IN REGARD TO DYSTROPHIC EPIDERMOLYSIS BULLOSA, A DISEASE HE IS BRINGING AWARENESS TO ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, AT MANE STOP HAIR STUDIO IN BRANDON, HOSTING A FUNDRAISER ON BEHALF OF HIS AFFECTED GRANDSON, EZRA MOUGLI, 2.

(checks preferred) starting at \$30 for women and \$20 for men, all proceeds will be contributed to the Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa Research Association, Inc. (Debra of America). Residents who attend the event will have the chance to win raffled prizes, including hair care products from sponsor Chromastics as well as professional grade hair styling tools, and enjoy refreshments.

Simeone's hope is to raise \$1,000 through the support of 100 residents.

Debra of

America originated more than 30 years ago and today offers those facing EB hope through research, care, guidance and financial aid. With almost \$0.90 of every dollar going towards the nonprofit's programs and research, families affected by EB hold onto the hope that one day a cure will be found. Currently, more than 500,000 children and adults are affected by some form of EB.

"This is going to bring more awareness to people so we can help find a cure for Ezra and the other children before it is too late," adds Simeone. "If you don't know what it is, please come and support us and find out."

Residents are encouraged to visit www.debra.org to make a donation. To make an appointment (walk-ins are welcome), call 401-1384.

dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa (EB). This disease affects the most vital element of the human body – the skin, which is blistered, torn, wounded and scarred due to defective genes. Daily the sufferer's body must be soothed with creams and wrapped in bandages to help stave off this infringement upon his or her own being, which is nonstop. The worst of it is that the simple act of touching, the one thing that shows humanity in itself, hurts.

To help bring awareness to the toddler's condition, Simeone is hosting Ezra's Fundraiser for Research and a Cure for EB, putting his 34 years as a hair stylist to good use. On Sunday, August 8, residents are invited to Mane Stop Hair Studio, located at 823 E. Brandon Blvd. in Brandon, from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. to get their hair cut. With tax-deductible donations

FORMER BODY SHOP OWNER USES TRADE SECRETS TO REMOVE DENTS

By Jennifer Silverstein



TROY ALEXANDER, OWNER OF DENT HOUDINI, IS ABLE TO FIX A DENT IN A CAR ON-SITE AND WITHOUT REMOVING ANY OF THE PAINT. "WITHIN A MATTER OF MINUTES, YOU OFTEN DON'T EVEN KNOW IT WAS THERE," HE SAID.

If your vehicle has dings, dents or paint damage, local Lithia resident Troy Alexander, owner of Dent Houdini, LLC, can make it disappear like magic.

In the cosmetic body business for 27 years, Alexander offers mobile body and paint repairs and is certified in paintless dent removal as well. "Most minor damage doesn't require body shop work," Alexander said. "Within a matter of minutes, you often don't even know it was there."

Alexander, who owned a body shop in Atlanta years ago, later trained in the paintless dent removal, where dents are massaged out of the metal by working from behind the panel using a variety of specially designed tools. This maintains the factory finish, as this process eliminates the need for sanding, filler and repainting. Heavier

damage can also be fixed by appointment at Dent Houdini's farm location in Lithia.

Though Alexander worked in the corporate automotive world for years as a franchise owner, he's now a one-man show and proud of it. He prefers to maintain customer satisfaction by keeping his expertise local. He said, "My family and I have

lived in Lithia for the last 10 years and have our roots here now. Most of my business comes from referrals by happy customers, friends or neighbors, and that's fine with me."

He went on to say, "Dent Houdini's goal is to come to you and fix your car on the spot without hurting your wallet. The worst thing people do is attempt to hammer out their own dents, which ruins the metal's integrity. If you have damage, leave it to a professional to repair, otherwise it might be more expensive to remedy down the line."

For a free estimate on mobile paint and body repairs, call 728-9674 or visit www.denthoudini.net. Repairs begin at \$75 and major repairs vary according to the damage but are usually much lower than commercial quotes.

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