

Trend Benders Hair Studio LLC: A Hometown Salon Built on Skill, Heart, and Lasting Connections

FRUITPORT, Mich. — In an era where high-end salon services often come with high-end price tags, one local business has quietly spent three decades proving that quality doesn't have to break the bank.

Trend Benders Hair Studio LLC first opened its doors on July 11, 1996, under the ownership of Karen Dupont. From the very beginning, Karen built the salon on a simple but powerful idea: exceptional hair care should be accessible and affordable for everyone.

"Back then, there was a growing belief that you had to pay top dollar to get great service," Karen said. "We wanted to bend that trend—and that's exactly what we set out to do."

The salon launched with a team of five stylists, creating a close-knit environment that quickly became a staple in the Fruitport community. Over time, that team evolved, welcoming new talent such as Angela Odmark, now Angela Smith, who joined fresh out of cosmetology school, and retaining Laurel, who still works at the salon to this day.

What followed was more than just a working relationship—it became a professional family. For years, the team at Trend Benders grew together, adapting to changes in the industry while maintaining the welcoming, down-to-earth atmosphere clients had come to love.

As the business matured, so did its structure, eventually transitioning into a self-running chair rental salon—giving stylists independence while preserving the sense of community that defined the space. The chair rental model itself is flexible, offering options that range from full-time rental to just a few days a week, and even occasional arrangements. This approach has helped stylists remain in their careers as their availability changes over time.

In the course of life, however, there were some other changes. Angela married and, due to her husband's career, moved away, stepping away from the salon for several years. During that time, she kept fresh with her hair skills at other venues, gaining valuable experience. But the connection to Trend Benders never faded.

When the time was right, Angela returned to her hometown in nearby Spring Lake with her family—and back to the salon where her career began.

Meanwhile, Karen found herself entering a new season of life. With a growing desire to spend more time with her grandchild and scale back her workload, she debated selling the business outright, but that didn't feel right.

"Selling a salon often means breaking up a family," Karen explained. "And that was something I never wanted to do."

Instead, Karen chose to pass the salon on to Angela, keeping the business within the family-like team they had built over the years. Karen herself didn't step away completely and continues to work at the salon three days a week. It was a meaningful way to ensure continuity, with the hope that one day Angela may have the opportunity to do the same for someone else.

The transition, by all accounts, was seamless. Today, Trend Benders continues to serve the Fruitport community, not just as a place for hair care, but as a testament to what can happen when business is guided by relationships rather than transactions.

After more than two years since that transition, and fast approaching the business' 30th anniversary, Karen and Angela want to share their story—one of resilience, loyalty, and a commitment to community.

In a world driven by profit margins and competition, Trend Benders stands as a reminder that sometimes the most meaningful success comes from investing in people—and trusting them to carry the vision forward.



Angela Smith and Karen Dupont

Rose Dillon is a friend to many

By Mariann Cooper

Our daughter, Kim West, and Rose were friends who went to the same church for several years. When our church needed someone to play the piano/keyboard, Rose stepped forward to join our church and offer her abilities.

When the township needed a Treasurer, Rose accepted the challenge. She campaigned and was elected in 1996. All total, she has won eight consecutive elections. She also freely helped senior citizens with their Homestead and Home Heating Credit forms for many years. In 1996 she volunteered for United Way, Special Olympics, and Palmer School Program with D&W Stores. She also volunteered at Shettler School. She had been in retail, retail management, and accounting for over 20 years previously.

Over the 28 years that Rose has served as Treasurer of Fruitport Charter Township, she has taken on more responsibilities as Fruitport grew. The work load increased and she continued to take on more and more of the duties, always willfully and to the best of her ability. She could never say no to anything or anybody if it was within her ability to do so. The seniors always appreciated her help.

As time went on, Rose also became involved with the Fruitport Library Board and served as the Chairperson. They had joined under the umbrella of Muskegon Area District Library (MADL) but as time passed, Fruitport was not receiving a fair portion of the benefits of the funds that were collected, and Fruitport Township was a huge contributor. Eventually it was determined that if Fruitport wanted to do anything financially, they would have to pull

out of MADL. Rose contributed to the effort to make Fruitport Library independent again which put them in a position to think about enlarging, moving, rebuilding, etc. The library board is working on that possibility now, and Rose has resigned from that to make more time with family, etc.

After speaking with Tony Moulatsiotis, Muskegon County Treasurer, he informed me that Rose created the Muskegon County Treasurers Association shortly after being voted into office. The goal of their monthly meetings was to help each other with problems they were facing, rotating meeting facilities and later, she brought in speakers who contributed to the treasurers with anything new that may involve them to understand possible new procedures. They would invite speakers and many people would attend to learn what was discussed. Tony admires her and has great respect for Rose.

Rose had received a Public Finance Administrator Certification from Central Michigan University, and Michigan Public Treasurer Certification.

Rose has taught Children's Sunday School and has been Treasurer of First Congregational Church for several years, and has done a wonderful job presenting details for our board to observe.

Rose has also been a member of the Fruitport Lioness Club, a subsidiary of the Fruitport Lions Club. She has been actively involved in the Old Fashioned Days Senior Dinner.

Rose has always been kind and gracious. When you knew her, you would always know she was listening to you and would try to help in any way she was able.



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