

Finding the right hue for you

Penfield resident Julie Allen is co-owner of Bella Bleu, a color consulting studio with headquarters in Pittsford.

By **AMY CAVALIER**

acavalier@mpnewspapers.com

Penfield resident Angie Carpenter said she always thought she was a "true fall" when it came to wearing the right color for her skin and hair tones.



ALLEN

Carpenter said she realized the importance of the colors in her wardrobe about 25 years ago. Based on a book called "Color Me Beautiful," by Carole Jackson, she determined she was a "true fall" and stuck to wearing clothing colors in that palette for years.

More recently though, Carpenter started to expand the colors of her wardrobe. About that same time, a friend of hers, Penfield resident Julie Allen, opened up a new business called Bella Bleu which specializes in color analysis. When Carpenter went to see her, Allen told her she was more of a "light spring."

"I always thought I was a fall, so I challenged her a bit," Carpenter said. "She spent some extra time with me and I was convinced - maybe through the course of the years and my changes in age - I was a light spring. I very definitely saw myself as she saw me. It was a sig-

For more information

Bella Bleu is located at 32 1/2 S. Main St. in Pittsford. It is owned by Julie Allen of Penfield and Kerry Stich of Pittsford. Call (585) 813-8024 for an appointment.

nificant change for me."

Allen and Pittsford resident Kerry Stich have been doing color analysis in their homes for over a year. In September, the two opened a studio in Pittsford.

"Color has power," she said. "Color is also energy. As we feel the beauty and other energies from music, we also want the same in color. It's finding the harmonious colors that each of us were innately born with, with our skin color, our eyes and our natural hair color."

A two-hour consultation involves Stich and Allen draping clients in different colored fabrics to determine their personal tone and palette. Clients of Bella Bleu get a 64-color swatch book which they can use when shopping for cosmetics, accessories and clothes.

Allen said people who have more carotene in their skin tend to look better in "warm" colors while people who look good in "cool" colors most likely more have more melanin skin. Both carotene and melanin are skin pigments according to Allen.

"It's the same theory as with blue- or yellow-based

cosmetics," she said.

Over the years, the science of color has evolved, Allen said. In the 1970s, she said, people were grouped as either a winter, spring, summer or fall when it came to their color palette.

"It failed because 80 percent of our population is neutral, which means they're not a true season," she said. "They fall somewhere in between."

Allen and Stich learned about the value of color analysis when they had one conducted for themselves about two years ago.

"It profoundly changed my life," Allen said. "I gained a lot more self confidence and felt better about myself. I noticed a change in my complexion, in my eyes and how I looked. I could wear less make-up. So my desire was to share it with other women so we can look better, feel better about what we're wearing and save money buying clothes we don't look good in."

The two women studied with a woman in Connecticut who is a color consultant and an artist who's studied color theory. With a background in human

resources, Allen said Bella Bleu was the perfect business for Stich and her.

"We all know an impression of an individual is made within a couple of seconds of when you shake someone's hand," she said.

Carpenter said she's happy that Allen and Stich are sharing their expertise.

"When I wear my colors, people do stop and comment," she said. "I believe that I feel better when I present myself in the most positive light and I think that comes across."