

Everything a woman could want

Area businesses showcased at Women's Expo

BY CHRIS MAZZOLINI
DAILY NEWS STAFF

Dr. Connie Odom beckoned a pair of ladies over towards the Metro Medispa booth and the dentist-style chair behind it.

As of yet, no needles were in sight.

"What are you going to do to me?" one woman asked, tentatively examining the various brochures spread across the table top, and the looping video displaying a variety of before-and-after fills and peels.

"Make you look even more beautiful than you already are," Odom replied.

Welcome to the Women's Expo, a convention-style gathering Saturday at the American Legion building in Jacksonville. Sponsored by Freedom ENC, the parent company of The Daily News, the expo is designed to bring area businesses and area women together in the common



THE DAILY NEWS/DON BRYAN

Keeping a youthful look: Linda Blasi receives a botox injection from Dr. Connie Odom at Saturday's Women's Expo.

interest of purses, pedicures, pots and pans and, even, botox injections.

That's one of the services offered by Metro Medispa, a mobile cosmetic lab that will bring

botox, chemical peels, lip fillers and various forms of hair removal right to your front door in an RV.

The expo, Odom said, is a way to get the word about this service to women. They did a botox injection for a woman early Saturday at the expo, and one of Odom's booth workers had the procedure done on her crow's feet to show browsers what it was all about.

Other booths had similar demonstrations.

All About U Salon and Spa offered haircuts for the price of a donation to the Onslow County Women's Center. Half of the proceeds from the expo are also going to the Women's Center.

Besides demonstrations, the convention offered various information sessions including talks about finances, safety and nutrition and weight loss. Some vendors offered a wide variety of jewelry, make-up, cookware and crafts.

Beverly Smith and her daughter, Ashlyn Hansley, of Jacksonville, came to the expo for "free stuff and fun," as Hansley said.

WOMAN/ FROM 1B

"Just curiosity," Smith said. "And seeing if we can have some fun and spend some money."

Those are soothing words to the 95 vendors who set up shop at the expo to hawk an abundance of wares and services.

"It gets my name out there," said Robyn Harrington, the owner of Totally Toes, a pedicure business in Jacksonville. It opened only five months ago and is still trying to establish a customer base.

"I am by appointment only, so the only way people will hear about me is through the expo, and advertising and customer referrals," Harrington said.

Smith and Hansley were both pleased about having a female-centric day in an area overrun with men.

"I think it's neat," Smith said, adding a little truth serum about the few males who showed up for the expo.

"They're checking out the women. You know it's true."



THE DAILY NEWS/DON BRYAN

Geared for women: Women visit a number of booths set up by businesses at the American Legion building for the Women's Expo on Saturday