

# Mall Barbers arrives in Wilbraham after Eastfield Mall closure

The barbershop is located on Boston Road

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WILBRAHAM -- Mall Barbers officially opened its doors on Sept. 11 at its new location on Boston Road.

The barbershop, owned by Maria Gomes and her husband Hector, had been at the Eastfield Mall until the mall closed its doors on July 15.

Their hours are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and closed on Sundays.

Gomes, who's been at the barbershop for 44 years, explained she originally wanted to be a nurse, but within a month of working at a nursing home, changed her mind and went to barber school in Hartford, CT.

The school later directed her to Ciro Bracci, the founding owner of Mall Barbers.

"It was a very busy shop. He had just remodeled it because back in the day, every 10 years, you had to remodel your place; didn't matter if it was retail or service or whatever," Gomes said. "He opened in '68, so in '78, he remodeled the barbershop, and he hired me in the beginning of '79. I came out of barber school, I worked for him and have been here ever since."

Gomes was excited about opening Mall Barbers in Wilbraham, explaining the new location would serve longtime customers while welcoming new ones.

"Everybody comes in and says that this is more convenient for them, so this was the perfect location," Gomes said.

Gomes is also grateful for the support of the town and community.

"It's been great. The support up here's been wonderful. The town of Wilbraham's been wonderful. I didn't have any trouble with getting

the occupancy permit or the business certificate or anything. They were very accommodating. We have no complaints," Gomes said.

Reflecting on the Eastfield Mall, Gomes misses the walkers she saw every morning, her old crew, the interactions and how everybody knew each other, adding she knew a move was coming.

"We'll miss the mall, but business itself since we've been here for three months, we're adapted. We knew it was just time to go in the last few years. We had to find a new home for us to stay in business," Gomes said.

Gomes said she and her husband had considered other locations before the mall's closure.

"We've been casually looking on Boston Road for a long time, just casually, no plans no nothing, and then this location became available Feb. 1," Gomes said.

Gomes stressed the importance of supporting local barbers as the industry "is kind of dying" and more stylists are pursuing careers at salons.

"A lot of the small barbers, they went out of business after the pandemic. In our industry, people tend to stay long. They don't retire at 62 or 65. You just stay, but then during the pandemic a lot of those people closed," Gomes said.

Gomes said Mall Barbers also offers walk-in appointments, sharing how they took care of a client after they couldn't see a barber because they were appointment-only.

"Our business is welcoming. Anybody that comes through the door, we'll do our best to take care of," Gomes said.

Gomes wants the community to know Mall Barbers is open and ready to serve them.

"Our doors are open. We'd love to see them. Our mission is to welcome people, to make them look good," Gomes said.

Gomes also shared this message: thank you.

"I really want to thank the community, business-wise, on the move," Gomes said. "They've been nothing



Maria Gomes, owner of Mall Barbers, and Alicia Paquette, barber at Mall Barbers, smile for a photo inside Mall Barbers during a break from serving clients on Sept. 15. Mall Barbers officially opened its doors in Wilbraham on Sept. 11.



An interior shot of the barber stations where customers get their hair done at Mall Barbers on Boston Road.



An interior shot of Mall Barbers of their stations for washing and shampooing hair for customers. Mall Barbers has been around for 40 years, originally at the Eastfield Mall before its closure on July 15.



A sign Maria Gomes, owner of Mall Barbers, was given during the grand opening of Mall Barbers on Boston Road on Sept. 11. The sign is one of many barbershop-themed pieces on display throughout the interior.

but helpful here in the town; very welcoming, we're very happy to be up here. I definitely want to let them know that I'm very happy to be here and we're here to serve."

To learn more, call 413-543-1738.



An exterior shot of Mall Barbers on Boston Road. They welcome walk-ins and appointments for their services.

## North Brookfield Savings Bank announces new President and Chief Executive Officer

NORTH BROOKFIELD— North Brookfield Savings Bank announced that Kaz Borawski has been appointed President & Chief Executive Officer of North Brookfield Savings Bank effective Aug. 1.

"The Board and I have been impressed by Kaz's extensive and varied banking experience and we look forward to continuing to work with Kaz to grow North Brookfield Savings Bank" said Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees Donna L. Boulanger. "The Board of Directors has been impressed by his commitment to the Bank, our employees, and the community."

Borawski, a resident of Wilbraham, holds more than 26 years of experience in industries including retail banking, investment banking, wealth management, and technology and operations at organizations such as JPMorgan Chase and Mass Mutual Financial. He has spent the last 13 years in community banking with United Bank, Merchants Bank, and Holyoke Credit Union before joining North Brookfield Savings Bank in February 2022 as Chief Financial Officer. Kaz's depth of financial industry expertise and his community involvement will serve the

Bank well.

Kaz shares NBSB's value of continued learning and goes the extra mile to stay in front of industry trends and concepts. Kaz holds a certificate from The New England School for the Financial Studies at Babson College, a Master of Business Administration, with a major in Finance, from Manhattan College in New York City and a Bachelor of Business Administration, with a major in Accounting, from Baruch College also in New York City.

"I would like to thank the Board of Directors for this opportunity to lead North Brookfield Savings Bank," said Borawski. "Our bank has a valued team of employees who are dedicated to helping our customers with their financial needs and I am proud to be the leader of this team. I look forward to building lasting relationships with our customers. North Brookfield Savings Bank is important to the communities we serve, and it has a long-standing tradition of excellence in customer service. The Bank has enjoyed strong growth over the years and has a very strong capital position. I'm committed to continuing that legacy."

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keepers lien:  
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VIN: 2A4GF68406R682118  
COLOR: Gray  
LKO: Carlos Cortes Ramos  
53 Leyferd Terr 2nd FLR

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R & S Assoc. Inc.  
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09/21, 09/28, 10/05/2023

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