

Figuring out fitness (online)



Yoga, dance instructors keep active through online classes

BY ALYSSA EVANS

On a Tuesday night in late April, Denele Sweet amps up more than 40 of her students for a 30-minute dance practice.

A month-and-a-half ago, Sweet would have been teaching students in-person inside her Warrenton-based business, Encore Dance Studio. Now, she relies on Zoom and Facebook Live to stay connected with her students.

Sweet, like other North Coast fitness instructors, decided to host online classes for students, after she was forced to close her business to in-person classes in mid-March when Gov. Kate Brown issued Oregon's stay-at-home order.

"It was an abrupt change for our families and students," Sweet said. "To keep them active with an activity they love and that we love, overnight we had to change our business model to serve our community with what we can."

Uncertain futures

Business partners Jamie Savva, Djordje Citovic and Trudy Citovic were to officially open their hot yoga studio, The Fire Station, in mid-March after teaching free classes for about a month.

"We were really building up for that grand opening," Savva said. "It was scheduled for Saturday and we had to call it Friday. We didn't know what this was yet but we had to come from a space of keeping people safe. Three days later, all schools were canceled."

The Fire Station hadn't yet started charging for classes. After closing the studio, the trio taught classes by livestreaming it on Instagram for a couple weeks, then moved to Zoom.

The group now hosts 10 classes each week, two of which are kids' yoga classes through a partnership with the Astoria School District. All of the classes are still free.

"We're working to keep pivoting and adapting in a way that helps everyone," Savva said.

Established studios are also faced with the questions of



Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

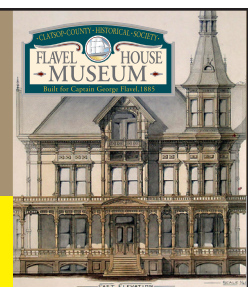
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Denele Sweet stands next to her livestream set up that allows her to teach public and private dance lessons through Zoom. Jamie Savva sits in her garage where she livestreams her yoga classes for The Fire Station. A promotional sign sits outside the Encore Dance Studio in Warrenton.

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