

Health businesses reflect on 2020

Spas, salons and yoga studios faced challenges

BY SARAH DOYLE

Amy Chadwick's business, Azure Salon & Spa, has weathered catastrophes before but not like the coronavirus pandemic.

The spa is one of many regional health businesses that faced challenges to continue operating during 2020.

"None of us ever thought that we would be closed down out of a state mandate or a national mandate," Chadwick said. "We were shut down for two and a half months."

Staff stayed in contact during the shut-down, checking in on each other through Zoom calls.

"We actually took advantage of that closure time to make some changes inside the salon," Chadwick said. "We replaced flooring and replaced some equipment and repainted, which was really awesome and offered us a fresh start."

Chadwick started Azure Salon & Spa in 2005, with two other hairdressers, a nail artist and a massage therapist. She bought their current business location at the peak of the 2008 financial crisis, when the business was doing well. They were looking at potentially growing to accommodate a few more hairdressers and a nail artist but then everything changed when the market turned. The business went from seven people, to two.

Chadwick found an opportunity to support the business through the Washington State Cosmetology Apprenticeship program, a pilot program that they partnered with to teach cosmetology students. They were one of the first salons to participate in the program.

Since 2009, the business had slow, steady growth and continued to build strong roots in the community. They are back to seven people at the salon.



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Dave Stevens, left, Peggy Stevens and Kimberley Gibbs run RiversZen Yoga.

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