

More businesses re-open for Phase 2



Canine Divine owner Tammy Wojcik grooms a client's poodle on Wednesday, June 17. The pet salon re-opened on Monday, June 8, after being closed through phase one.

Photo by Kyra Planetz



From l., patrons Jon Buettner, Greg Wheeler, and John Butorac chat over lunch in the Peace Arch City Café dining room on Friday, June 19.

Photo by Kyra Planetz



360 Salon owner and stylist Miranda Thompson colors client Myca Cuevas's hair on Friday, June 19.

Photo by Kyra Planetz



Bayside Beauty stylist Liz Ulrich cuts client Rose Dalton's hair on Friday, June 19. Dalton, who has been a client at the salon for 15 years, was excited to get her first haircut since the shop re-opened on Tuesday, June 9.

Photo by Kyra Planetz



Outdoor dining at CJ's Beach House.

Photo by Molly Ernst

BY KYRA PLANETZ

For many, the start of phase 2 in Whatcom County on June 5 meant finally being able to get a haircut or go out to dinner. But for local businesses, it was more than just a step toward normalcy.

Many businesses re-opened their doors on June 8, like Canine Divine, a pet grooming shop in Birch Bay. Owner Tammy Wojcik said being closed during phase 1 not only had a financial impact but really affected the animals she usually grooms. Wojcik said

because animals can't take care of themselves, pet grooming should have been considered an essential business. According to Wojcik, coat trims and nail clips are necessary to maintain a dog's health.

"Grooming has a tendency to be looked at as a fluffy, foo-foo kind of thing instead of a necessity," she said. "If anything, what I've learned through the shutdown is that it's anything but."

Not only is grooming necessary for animals but 360 Salon owner Miranda Thompson believes it's important for humans too. For

elderly clients, Thompson understands that touch is something to look forward to. The stylist said her favorite part of her job is making men and women feel beautiful. With the clientele she has accumulated over the years, Thompson said not working during phase 1 was difficult, but she's thrilled to be back.

"In the last two weeks that I've been back, to see how happy everyone is to get their hair done, it's just amazing," she said.

But even with loyal customers, one industry in Blaine is

still working through the effects of Covid-19: Restaurants. Peace Arch City Café owner John Quimod said 65 percent of business to his restaurant comes from Canadian tourists. Though the café has plenty of local patrons, with the border being closed until at least July 21, Quimod said it has been a struggle to stay afloat.

The business was open for take-out during phase 1 and, according to Quimod, phase 2 is a bigger hurdle because of the extra safety precautions staff must take. Quimod said although they're not

making much of a profit, they are breaking even and serving their community.

"That might be the new measure of success for a restaurant in a small city like Blaine that doesn't have a big population core," Quimod said.

Though businesses are beginning to re-open, things aren't quite back to normal just yet. As of June 26, a statewide public health order requires masks to be worn while gathering in a public setting.