

# **'It's Like Music To Our Ears:' Hair Salon Owners, Stylists Are Back Open, Following COVID-19 Safety Procedures**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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Area hair salons were as busy as could be since they reopened Monday or Tuesday of last week. For many, it was a relief they could finally get their hair cut or have a professional color application.

The procedure process is much different at hair salons in post-COVID-19 Pandemic times. Most procedures start entry into salons with a temperature check, then a significant amount of paperwork. Many customers wait outside for a signal to come into the shop with no waiting area currently available.

The two-month-plus break was very difficult for hairstylists and salon owners, some of who were unable to claim unemployment benefits. Wade Gibson and James Palmer of

The Salon of Papa Toodles in Alton were extremely happy to have their shop open to customers this past week. Palmer said clients were all smiles this past week to be back in their salon chairs.

Palmer said for area hair salon owners and stylists the past few months were rough after the Stay-At-Home Order was put in place by Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker.

“We as salon owners and stylists were deemed non-essential, which forced us to close our doors for a little over two months,” Palmer said. “This has been the hardest thing to deal with as a small business owner especially when we didn’t qualify for a lot of the programs put forth by the government.

“When the State of Illinois announced we were moving to Phase 3, it was like music to our ears, we can finally reopen. With the reopening, we are taking the recommendations of the CDC and IDPHR for safety and precautions. Our stylists have taken education classes on sanitation such as the Barbicide COVID-19 Certification course, and a few others. The safety of our guests and stylists is our number one concern at The Salon of Papa Toodles. We are back doing what we love. We are vigilantly trying to maximize our abilities.”

Palmer continued and said: “We are making appointments with limited space and the guidelines put out by the state. Guests will notice a few changes (like temperature checks, a COVID-19 questionnaire, and a few others. At this time, salons are not allowed to take walk-ins in the reception area. Call [\(618\) 433-1883](tel:6184331883) or [book your appointment online](#). Our hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday.”

David Smith of Alton has had a shop on Broadway for a long period of time and has a strong relationship with all of his customers.

“The reopening went very well,” Smith said of his Grand Salon on Broadway in Alton. “I take each individual client one at a time with an appointment, they come in wearing masks. Of course, I have hand sanitizer stations all over the salon. My first day’s clientele consisted of haircuts, a perm, and some colors, which proved a little bit difficult with a mask on.

“It was wonderful to see all of my clients, some of which I haven’t seen in so many weeks! I am somewhat lucky as I work by myself in my salon. It’s exciting and a bit scary to pursue a new course of action with our new guidelines after having done this for 40 years! But I am so happy to be doing what it is that I love!”

To make an appointment at the Grand Salon, contact Smith at [\(618\) 530-6171](tel:6185306171).



Blake Flener, a barber at Daryel's Hair Care at 205 S. Main St. in Edwardsville said it was "fantastic" to be open again.

"Everybody has a way longer hair feel right now," Flener said. "We are doing one in and one out and not having people sitting around the shop. Everything is on an appointment basis. We are making an exception if a mom comes in with a little one and we have some older folks who needed assistance getting in the door. We are wearing masks and the people who come in are wearing masks. We make sure everything is



sprayed down between customers, which is a normal procedure here anyway. I am grateful to be back.”

Daryel Buesking, the owner of Daryel’s Hair Care, plans to retire sometime in 2020, Flener said and will be severely missed by his clientele. For more information about Daryel's Hair Care, contact [\(618\) 656-4650](tel:6186564650).

