

Local stylist works her magic on hair

By Lisa Mitchell

Of The Chronicle

Hairstylist Dawn Scherr, of South Whitehall, brings smiles to her clients' faces and brightens their day by giving them a fresh-from-the-salon hairstyle.

"I've wanted to be a hairdresser ever since I was a second-grader," she said. "I use to cut my mom's hair. I just started with a little bit. She'd tell me what to do. I can't believe I was only 11."

While her mother, Irene Scherr, was not a professional hairstylist, she was always fond of cutting and styling other people's hair. She let Dawn cut and color her hair at an early age, encouraging her daughter's interest.

Dawn began studying at Allentown School of Cosmetology on Hamilton Boulevard in 1974 a few nights a week. Meanwhile, she continued playing field hockey at school.

"I can't believe what I did and how I did it," she said.

She graduated from high school the following year and finished her cosmetology studies a few months later. She immediately found herself working at Diane Spitko's Beauty Salon on Levens Road in North Whitehall.

"Diane was a big part of my education. She was a good hairdresser and I



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Hairstylist Dawn Scherr, of South Whitehall, cuts a client's hair, while talking about her first haircut experience, at age 11, for her mom.

learned a lot from her," said Dawn.

After about 12 years, Dawn decided to open her own shop. Hairizons by Dawn debuted on Walbert Avenue in 1988. She was there for about six years before she was forced to move.

Dawn returned to Diane's shop until she could relocate her business, but soon discovered that Diane wanted to take a break from the industry and offered up her location. Hairizons by Dawn found its new home on Levens Road.

"I went full circle," said

Dawn. "It's funny how it all worked out."

Now she cuts, colors, perms, and styles her clients hair in the same shop where she started her career nearly 30 years ago.

"I like the creativity and I like to be around people," she said. "I also like it because it makes people feel good. [A new hairstyle] boosts people's morale."

Dawn described herself as someone who enjoys helping people. Styling people's hair allows her to help others with their self-esteem. She also likes the challenge.

"I think to be a good hairstylist, you almost have to be an engineer," she said. "You have to be able to figure out how to cut the sections of hair to make it lay properly."

Hairdressers also need manual dexterity, creativity, technical knowledge, and an openness to learning new concepts.

Dawn learned much of her trade while working part time for Zotos International. Between 1979 and 1997, she attended national and international conferences to learn from industry leaders.

Dawn learned various techniques every year, watching hair trends evolve from geometric, precise styles to the more choppy, layered look of today. She had to evolve with the times.

"It was hard to change my thinking with my philosophy," she said.

Good communication is one of the most important elements of good styling.

"Ninety percent of the time you can avoid a potential problem with the final outcome by communicating," said Dawn. "A lot of people don't know how to express what they want. You have to pull it out of them."

If you ask Dawn, the best part of the job is seeing a client's satisfied smile when she finishes her work.

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