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News

The Quint

5 Questions For 1 Chattanooga

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Ain't Nothin' Closed for Jeff Atkins

The Market Street Bridge closed for reconstruction on September 18 to much fanfare – and no small amount of worry from North Shore merchants, who fretted that the closure, combined with other road construction, might shut them off from customers. Two months later, it seems as good a time as any to see if those concerns were valid. So The Pulse rang up Jeff Atkins, the owner of Bridge Salon, to ask if he still had any business. Turns out he did.

1. Have you seen any impact on your business from the Market Street Bridge closure?

Actually, I haven't. It seems like traffic's increased.

2. Why do you think that is?

I'm not really sure. I noticed a slump in September, but that was normal. It's when school starts, and everyone's finishing vacations and such. But this last month, it looks like traffic has increased. Coolidge Park is extremely busy.

3. Do you think business owners are less worried about the bridge closure at this point?

Well, I don't know. There's so much construction going on around us that I don't think it's specific to one event – such as the bridge – or two or three streets east or west of your business. There's a lot of construction going on right now in North Chattanooga. It's hard to gauge it right now, too; with the holidays coming on, there's always an increase. So it's a weird time to be saying, "With the bridge closed, how is it affecting [business]?"

4. Is anybody saying that they are having a hard time finding you?

We don't seem to have any problem with it.

5. Is the North Shore a better place to get a salon treatment?

I'm uncomfortable with the word "better," but I definitely feel a community swelling here. I am a Chattanooga, and I haven't noticed anything like this in 10 years. It's incredible.

– Aaron Mesh

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