



Now that's relaxing: Above, Samuel Cerrito relaxes in a hot tub after his massage. At right, Edward van Dusen of Northville gets the treatment from Lana Lammn.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LAMMIEUX

Stressed-out workers give massage the business

BY MARY RODRIGUE

STRESS in the workplace can be pervasive — extending beyond the daily deadline pressures of the office thanks to car phones and fax machines. So where can a tense person go to get away from it all, short of Timbuktu?

More local business people are turning to massages and other relaxing treatments to combat office anxiety.

"We are all really under a lot of stress at work. We have to be fit mentally and physically all of the time," says Tamara, owner of Tamara In Town Spa in Farmington Hills.

"A lot of business people who are into health and fitness and good nutrition are looking to massage for stress reduction."

"It's therapeutic," she said. "It's an ancient art of healing. Before there was Advil, people got rid of stress by human touch."

Her clients have included Art Moran auto dealership sales staff, Computware employees, and a group of agents from the local Century 21 office.

Although women still make up

the majority of spa clients, the spa is no longer the playground of the idle rich. Tamara estimates 85 percent of her female clients work full time and need to unwind.

"At night instead of meeting at the bar for a drink, they come here for a mini treatment — the hydrotherapy tub, or a body massage. We can custom create any package."

Men are also discovering the pastime.

Sam Cerrito of West Bloomfield became a client just over a year ago, introduced to the place by his girlfriend.

"I work in sales in Ann Arbor.

I'm running around a lot, driving, going in and out of places," he said. "I need to loosen up. Massage is great. When I leave here, I feel more relaxed. It gives my self-confidence a boost. When I go out and talk to clients, I feel better about myself."

Cerrito, also an avid sand volleyball player and in-line skater, visits the salon once every two weeks for a massage and a facial.

For Edward van Dusen, manager of Kennice Bashir Salons in Farmington Hills and Birmingham, a 30-minute shiatu massage is an oasis during his 60-hour work week.

"I'm on my feet all day, going

back and forth between the two locations," he said. "The massage just helps me to relax. I also work out three to five times a week. I get knots in the back of my neck. Even a 15-minute massage relieves that."

Clients have ranged from policewomen and firefighters to television newscasters and attorneys. Tamara counts comedian Tim Allen, composer Marvin Hamlisch and Barbra Streisand among her clients. Local newscasters Rich Fisher and Mike Holfeld and attorney Geoffrey Fieger also visit

the spa on Northwestern Highway near 14 Mile Road.

"There's one divorce attorney who brings his women clients here the day before their court date," Tamara said. "It relaxes them and makes them feel better about themselves."

"I have people say it makes them a better wife, mother and worker. Instead of working like a dog every day of the week and taking a one-week vacation a year, they can take these spa mini vacations."

"A lot of people still take better

care of their car or their computer than their body."

Back pain, exhaustion, sleepiness and headaches can all be symptoms of stress, she said.

"You can never get rid of stress, but this is one way to cope," she said.

Reflexology, a method of therapy that uses foot massage; shiatu, described as pressure point massage; and aromas therapy, which uses oils of flowers, herbs and plants applied to the body during massage, are just a few of the therapies offered.

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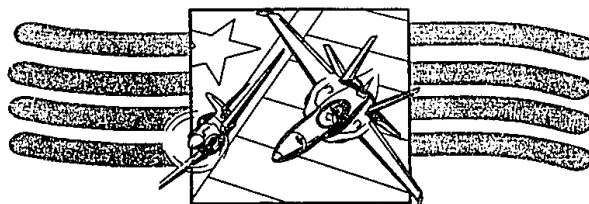
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