

CHAT ROOM



MARILYN SUTTLE

Parents shift from work to home

Your workday is over. It's time to go home. Shifting your energies from work to home is challenging. Work issues can distract you from being fully present with your family. Unfinished business, problems with co-workers, upcoming deadlines, dissatisfactions with the job, or elevated expectations are just a few of the pressures that, left unmanaged, spill over into your family time.

Without addressing the shift from work to home, the whole family suffers. If the work day was great, you come home feeling good, but when things don't go well, the tension follows you home.

So, how do you close the door on one part of your life and enter the other? Here are some tools to calm your nerves and help you leave the worry and concerns of work where they belong.

Before leaving work, take a few minutes to bring closure to your day. It's hard to let go of unfinished business, but you can do it by focusing on your feelings. Do you have any feelings of frustration, anger, or resentment toward anyone? Do you feel disappointed, satisfied, or overwhelmed by the day's events? By acknowledging the feelings that come up, you are in a better position to see your situation clearly. When feelings are identified, they are more easily released.

When leaving work, set up some symbolic rituals to transition out of the workday and into your family time. As you close the door to your office, the building you work at, or your car door, let it represent closing off that part of your life. Each time you hear that door close, it sets up a trigger.

Triggers really work. A dental hygienist once told me that if I tied a piece of dental floss to my toothbrush, I wouldn't forget to floss my teeth. After taking her advice, I may choose not to floss, but it's awfully hard to forget to floss with that darn string dangling from my brush. Why not apply the same idea by putting a note in your car that says, "Transition time has begun."

The car ride home is a great block of time to release and refocus. Be sure to bring enjoyable books on tape, play your favorite music and sing, or place a fragrant potpourri in the car to pamper yourself a bit. If you need more time to unwind, consider making regular stops at the gym for exercise.

Stop at a book store or coffee shop for some quiet time to enjoy a magazine or newspaper on the way home.

For many parents, the ride home from work includes picking up the kids from school or day care. If so, use your car time to reconnect with them.

Instead of throwing a steady stream of questions at them, simply say, "It's so good to see you." Without the pressure of interrogation, the kids are more likely to open up and share their day with you. Kids respond well to, "Tell me about the best part of your day and the worst part." You may start out by telling the kids about the best part of your day.

Changing your clothes after work physically symbolizes removing work and slipping into family time. Water relaxes. Washing up can represent washing away the tensions of work.

Stress also can be released through physical activity. If you don't have time to walk or go to the gym, engage the family in a race against the clock to clean up or complete chores together.

Are you making a successful transition from work to home? Or does your family complain that they only get the worst of you? When you catch workplace issues mentally spilling over into your family time, give yourself a phrase that will bring you back.

Phrases like, "no worries," "tomorrow's soon enough," or "family time," are quick and easy reminders to stay present in the moment.

Set up time chunks that belong only to family time. Put away the brief case, stay away from the e-mail, let the answering machine pick up your calls while you nurture your loved ones and yourself.

Please see SUTTLE, C7



IT'S ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON



Welcome home: Ned Timmons (second from right) and L.S.S. agents celebrate the quick rescue of U.S. Army Sgt. Christopher Stone (center) at his homecoming parade in Capac, Mich., May 10, 1999. Stone, along with two other soldiers who were part of a NATO task force, was taken prisoner in Kosovo near the Macedonian border several days earlier

Private investigators travel far and near

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI
SPECIAL WRITER

An average day for local private investigators ranges from sitting in front of someone's house watching nothing for 24 hours to being on a heart-pounding, edge-of-danger assignment that includes international espionage.

Images vary from the gumshoe with his feet up on a desk, smoking a cigar in a dimly lit office, to high-tech spies. Add a touch of Magnum P.I. and Rockford and the picture is complete.

The truth is most private investigators lead very different lives from one another depending on the type of work they accept.

Ned Timmons, who founded L.S.S. Consulting, Inc. in Walled Lake, walks on a wilder side than most private investigators.

Making plans: Ned Timmons (center), former FBI agent and founder of L.S.S. Consulting, consults with MST3 Kevin Carroll (left) and Lt. John P. Ross of the U.S. Coast Guard about safeguarding the Ambassador Bridge as part of the Homeland Security River Watch program. The Bristol Bay, an ice-breaking ship, is in the background.

He deals with cases that inspire books, complete with infrared imaging and other high-technology gadgets. Currently, he is working with Lt. Commander Brian P. Hall of the U.S. Coast Guard's Detroit Marine Safety Office in the ongoing protection of the Detroit riverfront and the Ambassador Bridge. Such efforts are part of the Homeland Security River Watch.

Some investigations take this former FBI agent to the remotest areas of the world trying to find the truth behind wrongful deaths. Other days he's delving into workplace violence or corporate embezzlement, including a current case involving more than \$750 million.

L.S.S. employees include former FBI, Secret Service, U.S. Customs and U.S. Marshals agents.



"We try to provide a corporate type of FBI. All of our people are hand-picked, and we have counterparts all over the world with whom we network who are the best that I know after spending more than 30 years in investigative fields," he said.

If there's a problem, all it takes is one call to L.S.S. "We have an emergency response team responding to crisis all over the world — whatever you've got," Timmons said.

Caseload varies

Personal safety was one of the reasons Timmons decided to start his own business. "You can only stay bullet-proof for so long," he said. Knowledge and experience help lower the odds of getting hurt.

"I think when you've been around enough crisis you have a feeling for when things are reaching a danger point," Timmons said. "I think you have a feeling on how to handle it. In any of our high-intensity cases we incorporate with the law enforcement agencies and handle it as not to put the client or people at risk."

Caseload at L.S.S. includes drug trafficking; overseeing executives from Fortune 500 companies during international travel; protecting stars like Barbra Streisand and Victoria Secret models; and providing crowd control at major events, like the International Freedom Festival,

Thunder Fest and the Dream Cruise. Kidnappings around the world also are investigated.

"Right now Venezuela is high risk. There were six kidnappings over the weekend that were reported, and a lot go unreported," he said. "We've probably handled more workplace violence, like attempts to drop nerve gas on factories, all over the United States than anyone," he added.

He considers himself lucky to have been assigned to high-profile drug cases, like the Noriega drug trafficking saga in South America, while working as an FBI agent. As owner of L.S.S. he continues to work with worldwide law enforcement agencies.

"Lots of times attorneys have high profile drug cases and they don't want to talk to the FBI, yet they get us involved," he said. "We have clients who have an interest in not letting terrorists into the United States and these clients call us to say how these people are getting in and where they are. I have fugitives still call me who are out of the country."

Other assignments, like handling background checks, are less exciting, Timmons said. Yet, he sees those cases as having major implications for companies.

"One of the key avenues to success

Please see INVESTIGATE, C7

Local pioneers have roots in anti-slavery movement

BY RUTH MOEHLMAN
SPECIAL WRITER

As Black History month is celebrated, Farmington's role is an important part of the story.

Farmington was a stop on the Underground Railroad for slaves escaping forced servitude before the Civil War. In spite of its Quaker origins, Farmington was also the home of men who served in the Civil War.

Quakers are traditionally against fighting of any kind. By pre-Civil War days, many descendants of Quakers and other Farmington settlers belonged to other religious groups.

One group of soldiers from Farmington received special attention. They were the fighting men documented by W. Harvey Wiend, who wrote for the Detroit Free Press. He also taught school at Farmington High after the Civil War.

In a Farmington Enterprise article published in 1934, Wiend wrote about 15 West Farmington men who served with him in the Twenty-second Michigan Infantry under Moses Wisner. Fifteen men from one neighborhood was a large number in the sparse population of that time.

When the Civil War started, President Abraham

Lincoln is reputed to have declared, "Thank God for Michigan." Michigan men rushed to the aid of their country. They endured bad weather, long marches, rebel sharpshooters and disease, which took their toll on the fighting men of the Civil War.

The Wiend family was against slavery. So was Moses Wisner. The Wisner home in Pontiac is now the headquarters of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society. The Wisners named their home Pine Grove, and the estate stayed in the family until 1945. It still contains some of the original family furnishings.

Moses Wisner was an abolitionist and served as Governor of Michigan from 1859 to 1861. He was born in New York state in 1815. In 1837, the year Michigan became a state, he emigrated and purchased a farm in Lapeer County.

Wisner gave up farming two years later and moved to Pontiac, where his brother, George, was already a lawyer. At that time, there were no law schools, so future lawyers like Moses had to study in other lawyers' offices.

Moses Wisner was admitted to the bar in 1844. At that time, he purchased land where he and his wife,

Angolina, eventually built Pine Grove, a Greek Revival house. As an attorney and gentleman farmer, Moses practiced law in Pontiac.

He became a member of the newly formed Republican Party, along with many Oakland County people, including P.D. Warner and Nathan Power of Farmington.

Wisner ran for the U.S. Senate, but didn't get elected. He was elected Governor of Michigan in 1859, however, and returned to Pontiac after his one term of office.

When the Civil War started, his successor, Governor Austin Blair, asked Wisner to organize a regiment. He did, and they trained on the fairgrounds at Pontiac. In September, 1862, the regiment went to Kentucky. On Jan. 6, 1864, Moses Wisner died of typhoid fever in Lexington, Ky. He didn't live to see the end of the Civil War in 1865, after which slavery was abolished and slaves were freed.

The Farmington Historical Society is planning a special visit to Pine Grove on Sunday, March 17. For reservations, call (248) 476-4125. There is an admission fee.