

Massaging away the work stress

By TOM TEBBS

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Staff Writer*

Household Credit Services in Salinas offers a long list of perks that company managers believe contribute to worker satisfaction and a stable workforce.

One unusual offering is a massage specialist, Carl Siegman, who comes in once a week for scheduled appointments.

Siegman owns We Do Shiatsu, as in shi (finger)atsu (pressure), a therapeutic acupressure massage.

Household advertises the services with signs and in-house employee bulletins.

Siegman uses the company's first aid room. The cost is \$15 for a 15-minute massage, with discounts offered.

One regular customer is Tamara Wood, a credit risk analyst at Household.. Wood has suffered pains in her neck since cervical disk surgery and has been getting shiatsu massages from Siegman for two years, including every week for the past year.

He relieves the pain, not to mention that its relaxing and it relieves stress, Wood said. I cant say enough good things about it. And its a huge relief to have it here at work.

Another satisfied customer is Dale Ricks, the company's security manager. He been stopping by to see Siegman every week for the past six months.

I have a bad back, Ricks said. My muscles are tightened and I have a cramped neck from sitting at my computer. My shoulders really get stiff.

He's just great. He's wonderful. I leave there just drained. I feel so good, loosened up. I can go the rest of the day without any stiffness or cramps. Its a great stress reliever. Siegman has been helping folks get loose here since 1996, when he and his wife, Tamara, moved from Santa Monica. Actor Robert Guillaume, Benson on the television

show of the same name, was one of Carl's celebrity clients.

Ironically, the Siegmans made the move to escape the stress of the hustle and bustle of the Los Angeles area.

They jointly operate Yoga Body & Soul in Pacific Grove, where they teach yoga and provide table massages.

Carl is also employed by the Pebble Beach Co. He does chair and table massage at The Spa at Pebble Beach and Casa Palmero, and he teaches yoga at the Inn at Spanish Bay, where he does chair massages for conventions.

Recently, he's taken his Shiatsu massages to the golf course, giving 10- to 15- minute neck and shoulder massages to golfers before they head to the practice range or tee off.

He took up golf when he moved here, and its gotten into his blood.

He's developed a 2 1/2-hour workshop, Yoga for the Golfer, that he presents at his studio the second Friday evening of every other month. He provided his shiatsu golf massages at the Callaway golf tournament on the Peninsula a couple of weeks ago. And he has provided his services free of charge for local charity golf events at Del Monte, Spanish Bay and Laguna Seca in the last year.

"There's a debate within the profession whether to talk or not while giving a massage, because it is hard for the client to relax when he is talking, Siegman said. He added that he's had to bite his tongue on occasion, wanting to give the golfer some tips about the course while providing a warm-up massage. I would love to work regularly at a golf course, with massage and yoga at a country club or resort. That's my dream, I guess," he said.



Carl Siegman performs Shiatsu on Dale Ricks, security manager at Household Credit in Salinas.