

Massage therapist Shell marks ninth consecutive year in business

By Greg Miller
STAR STAFF
gmiller@starhq.com

Luster Shell, a local massage therapist, has been in business in Elizabethton for nine consecutive years.

Shell sees clients in her home office. "I only see people by appointments," she said.

"The business has grown over the years," Shell said. "I've expanded my services, which now include working for Sycamore Shoals Hospital as a massage therapist in their patient-centered care program. I am working for the Franklin Health & Fitness Center. I am one of a total of four massage therapists who work there at different times as their scheduling allows."

Shell describes herself as a work-a-holic. "I discovered that about four years ago when somebody asked me what I did for fun," she said. "I do massages for fun. I read my massage magazines. I go to seminars. I take home study courses. This is all fun. I'm getting paid for having fun."

Shell stresses the sanitary conditions of all of her working environments. "...If you're on a massage table, the sheets have been fresh washed and sanitized," she said. "The face cradle covers are also clean."

In June, Shell plans to go to Asheville, N.C., to learn further details about the Fijian massage. "I think it's a wonderful massage, and I'm looking forward to introducing it here in Carter County for people who would be interested," she said. "It has its limitations. You have to be able to get down onto the floor. There's a big soft pad for you



Photo by Kristen Luther

Luster Shell, a local massage therapist, has been in business in Elizabethton for nine consecutive years.

to lay on, but you have to get down on the floor and then be able to get back up again."

By next year, Shell hopes to purchase a new massage table "that goes up and down" to accommodate clients of different heights.

Shell is a member of the American Massage Therapy Association, the Elizabethton Business & Professional

Women's Association, the Downtown Merchants Association and the Elizabethton/Carter County Chamber of Commerce.

Shell is also available to go to residences, nursing homes and businesses. Thirty-minute and 60-minute massages are available, as are gift certificates for massages. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call 542-0611.

Luster's Massage Therapy rubs people the right way

By Greg Miller
STAR STAFF
gmiller@starhq.com

Luster's Massage Therapy, 511 Range Street, rubs people the right way with a variety of massages.

Massage Therapist Luster Shell offers the basic Swedish relaxation type of massage, the deep tissue massage, and massages for pregnant women and women who have delivered their babies.

The "rock massage" that Shell offers utilizes black Basalt stones. "It is really wonderful," Shell said. "I love the black stones because they really add a different touch of heat and also their own personal weight. To me, it enhances the massage therapist's hand work."

The Japanese hot-stone facial massage is offered to Shell's clients. "It involves your upper chest and your

face," she said.

Shell is looking into the possibility of adding the Ashiatsu Oriental Bar Massage. "It's glorious; it's graceful," she said.

Shell, who plans to add the Fijian massage by Lolita Knight, has eight years experience in massage therapy and 39 years as a hospital nurse. She works for both Sycamore Shoals Hospital (SSH) and Franklin Health & Fitness Center (FH&FC). "Sycamore Shoals has a pilot program for massage therapy in the hospital," she said. "I'm there two days a week, on Monday morning and Thursday morning, trying to help the patients feel better about being there. This is part of the hospital's patient-centered care program. We're trying to make your hospital visit as pleasant as we can, realizing that you really have to be sick and you've got ma-



Photo By Kristen Luther

Massage Therapist Luster Shell offers a variety of massages. Salt scrubs and brown sugar scrubs are also available. Purple is the color of choice at Shell's office, which has purple flower pots and pumpkins.

jor issues if you're in there."

Shell is one of three massage therapists at FH&FC. "We have three people who work different schedules at the health center," Shell said. "We're trying to make ourselves available for as many

people as possible."

In addition to visits in her office, Shell is available to go to residences, nursing homes and businesses. Clients are seen on an appointment-only basis. For more information, call 542-0611.

Women's Health Fair



Photo by Dave Boyd

The National Speaking of Women's Health Foundation Health Fair, dedicated to learning more about health, well-being, and personal safety, took place at the Elizabethton Wal-Mart Friday afternoon.

Healing hands

Massage therapist relieves stress and anxiety for patients

By Jennifer Lassiter

STAR STAFF

jlassiter@starhq.com

Luster Shell has taken her nighttime job and turned it into her career. Shell, a registered nurse for 39 years, has filled a new position at Sycamore Shoals Hospital (SSH) as a licensed massage therapist.

"They say 'don't quit your daytime job until your nighttime job is paying,' well my night time job is paying," said Shell.

Shell began massage therapy eight years ago, in addition to her nursing career at SSH, until recently when they began a pilot massage therapy program. In March, SSH was the first in the Mountain States Health Alliance hospital systems to have a massage therapist in an effort to improve their patient centered care.

"I had a massage after a marathon, once, and I could walk without pain. I wanted to give this to my patients," said Shell. Following her experience Shell took a course at a local school, and after 500 hours of practice and passing a national exam she became a licensed massage therapist.

"Being in a hospital can be stressful, especially for someone who wasn't expecting it. Massage therapy offers them a break, so they can relax and deal with their situation," Shell said.

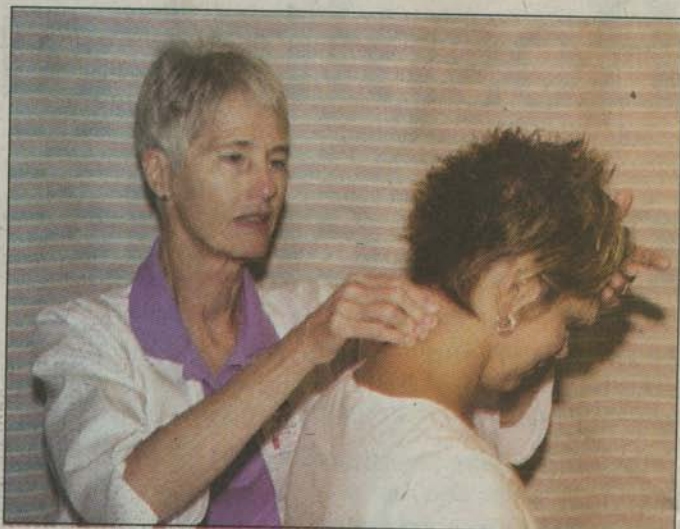


Photo by Dave Boyd

Massage Therapy, a pilot program at Sycamore Shoals Hospital, gives patients a break from reality. Luster Shell, a licensed massage therapist, works hard to relieve the stress and anxiety of a hospital visit.

Shell is requested by many patients, but oftentimes assigned to certain patients by a doctor. "Every once and a while a doctor will see a patient suffering from hospital anxiety and could use a break," said Shell, "so they'll ask me to come and offer temporary relief for the patient."

Shell visits her patients in their room. Being mobile, according to Shell, takes even more stress off the patients. Her visits usually last around 10 to 20 minutes at a time.

All of her patients are alert and consent to the body work.

According to Shell, the future of massage therapy looks hopeful at Sycamore Shoals. Currently, massages are only available for patients, but it's a possibility that staff members will receive Shell's magic touch.

Shell, an Elizabethton native, plans to continue her work at SSH. Massages are available Monday and Thursday mornings at SSH when requested.

542-4151

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BUSINESS REVIEW

Massage therapist Shell offers Fijian massage

By Greg Miller

STAR STAFF
gmiller@starhq.com

"I have a new massage technique that I am really excited about," said Luster Shell, massage therapist.

The Fijian massage "will help your body to be much more relaxed in a much shorter frame of time," Shell said. "It really stretches out the knots. This is very effective for loosening you up. It really helps to loosen up the muscles quickly, and it feels really good. It feels different because the touch of a foot is totally different from the touch of a hand."

"I use my feet to do the massage work," Shell said. "It doesn't use any oil. You wear your clothes, preferably something that's soft. No jeans, because they're too tough to try to work through. Nothing slick, like silk...or slick polyester. Cotton loose clothes is better, short or long sleeves, it doesn't matter."

"There are a few requirements on the client's part, which kind of limits the effectiveness or the workability" of the Fijian massage by Lolita Knight, Shell said. "It's not for everybody."

Clients must be able to lie down on a massage pad on the floor, then get up off the pad. "It's custom made," Shell said. "It's three inches thick. It feels wonderful while you're laying on it, but you have to get down there. I also use pillows to support different parts of your body, depending on how we're working with you."

"I use my feet, and work on you while you are laying there, on your stomach, on your back and on your side. This work is for the people who really want the deep tissue work. It's not for the older people who have fragile bones. It's basically not for pregnant females, because I think it's too much work on her trying to get up and down; at a certain point in your pregnancy, you're not going to be able to do it. It's much better to do something like the Swedish work for that."

Various parts of the foot are used during the massage. "I even use my toes, the inside of my instep where they refer to it as the bunion bone...and also use the ball of my foot," she said.

Shell works for both Sycamore Shoals Hospital (SSH) and Franklin Health & Fitness Center (FH&FC).

In addition to visits in her office, Shell is available to go to residences, nursing homes and businesses. Clients are seen on an appointment-only basis. For more information, call 542-0611.



Photo by Kristen Luther

Massage therapist Luster Shell is now offering the Fijian massage to her clients.

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Shell: State of Tennessee has specific requirements for licensed massage therapists

By Greg Miller
STAR STAFF
gmiller@starhq.com

Specific requirements must be met to qualify as a licensed massage therapist in the state of Tennessee, according to Luster Shell.

"Tennessee has had the Massage Licensure Law since 1995," said Shell, who is in her ninth consecutive year as a licensed massage therapist. Shell began attending massage therapy school that same year.

State licensing requirements have changed over the past decade. "They are requiring more testing, there are more fees, and they are increasing the requirements for the qualifications, to ensure that we are doing a good job, both legally and ethically," Shell said.

Requirements to become a licensed massage therapist in Tennessee include completion of a state-approved, 500-hour course. "You have to pass an examination, currently the National Massage Therapy Board exam," Shell said. The required studies include ethics, anatomy and physiology, business management, and different types of massage. Students must perform a specific number of massages and earn CPR and first aid certifications. Regular continuing education credits are also required.

Either a high school diploma or a GED is required prior to attending massage therapy school, and licensed massage therapists must be at least 18 years old. Local schools include Holston Institute of Healing Arts, Sunset St., Gray (423-239-5043), or Reflections of Health School of Massage, 2406 Susannah St., Johnson City (423-929-3331).

Shell does not advise anyone who does not enjoy working with people to begin a career in massage therapy. "Basically, you have to be a people person," she said. "If you're not a people person, if you don't like working with people, you're not going into the right type of an area to work."



Photo by Kristen Luther

Specific requirements must be met to qualify as a licensed massage therapist in the state of Tennessee, according to Luster Shell, a licensed massage therapist. Shell is pictured reviewing a massage therapy book, as she sips on a cup of coffee at The Coffee Co. For more information call 542-0611.

"wonderful" profession. "There are many opportunities out there," she said.

Shell works for Sycamore Shoals Hospital as a massage therapist in their patient-centered care program. She is also one of three massage therapists who work for Franklin Health & Fitness Center.

Shell performs a variety of massages. The most popular styles include the hot black stone massage, Japanese hot stone facial massage, and the relaxing Swedish massage.

Massage Therapy Association, the Elizabethton Business & Professional Women's Association, the Downtown Merchants Association, and the Elizabethton/Carter County Chamber of Commerce.

Thirty-minute and 60-minute massages are available. Gift certificates for massages at The Coffee Co. in downtown Elizabethton are also available.

Shell's office is located at 511 Range St. She sees clients by appointment only. For more information, or to schedule an

Local massage therapist uses feet to rub people in the right direction

By Greg Miller

STAR STAFF

gmiller@starhq.com

Using the Ahh...Shiatsu method, local massage therapist Luster Shell uses her feet to rub people in the right direction.

Shell recently completed a three-day training session for Ahh...Shiatsu.

According to Shell, the technique's "earliest origins are in India. However, it has undergone many modifications. Originally, the practitioner held onto two ropes suspended from the ceiling. The client laid on a straw or reed mat.

"In Japan, it was modified using bars suspended from the ceiling. The therapist 'walked' on the client's back. In the United States, it was modified for Western culture and is still in the process of continued modification."

Shell is very "excited" about the technique. "It came to Western attention in California by Ruthie Hardee," she said. "She was a massage therapist there. She worked on people in the movie industry, stunt people, prop people, big muscular men. She was able to get down into the major sore areas by using her hands or her elbows."

This version of Ahh...Shiatsu has been developed by Michelle Nave. It utilizes a one-foot tech on the client at a time.

The technique, according to Shell, is very beneficial for those who need a deep massage. "We can push through down into the deep layers of tissue that are really sore," she said. "This technique allows me to go as deep as needed. And it's not painful."

By using the various parts of her foot, "I can press into a broader area but have a deeper effect with it," she said. "My whole weight can actually come down on an area if necessary. The purpose of the bar is to help me keep my balance. I can put as little weight as I need to. I don't walk on you. I don't have both feet on you at the same time."



Photo by Kristen Luther

Using the Ahh...Shiatsu method, local massage therapist Luster Shell uses her feet to rub people in the right direction. Shell's private office is located at 511 Range St. She sees clients by appointment only. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call 542-0611.

The technique is "contraindicated" for certain people, including those who recently underwent surgery, those who have osteoporosis, as well as pregnant women.

Massage therapists who perform the Ahh...Shiatsu method must have regular pedicures, according to Shell. "I have to have one about every 2 to 4 weeks," she said.

Shell works for Sycamore Shoals

Hospital in the patient center care department and also for the Franklin Health & Fitness Center.

Thirty-minute and 60-minute massages are available. Gift certificates for massages at The Coffee Co. in downtown Elizabethton are also available.

Shell's private office is located at 511 Range St. She sees clients by appointment only. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call 542-0611.

Luster Shell: Massage therapy becoming viewed more as a professional profession

By Greg Miller
STAR STAFF
gmiller@starhq.com

As a profession, massage therapy has become viewed as a more professional profession, according to Luster Shell, licensed massage therapist.

"In the 10 years that I have been in practice, massage therapy around here is no longer mainly considered to be the 'red light' stuff," Shell said. "People are using it as part of their basic health care plans and systems. Day spas are becoming very popular here, not just for the beauty aspects, but also for the health part of it.

"We're changing our attitudes about how we live and what we do. Baby Boomers are getting older. They are beginning to realize that old age is not for wimps. You still have to work at it to keep your body in shape, to keep your aches and pains at bay. If you're going to enjoy these golden years, you're going to have to do something. You can't be a couch potato all the time, you're going to have to be active. You're going to have to maintain yourself like you maintain your house and your car.

Massage is definitely a part of that program because it helps those sore muscles you get from all this activity...Massage can help make that more bearable."

Shell is "excited" about the upcoming American Massage Therapy Association's national convention in Atlanta, Ga. She is enthusiastically looking forward to both the classes and the shopping opportunities.

Shell works for both Sycamore Shoals Hospital and Franklin Health & Fitness Center. She sees clients in her office by appointment only on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

Shell is a member of the American Massage Therapy Association, the Elizabethton Business & Professional Women's Association, the Downtown Merchants Association, and the Elizabethton/Carter County Chamber of Commerce.

Thirty-minute and 60-minute massages are available. Gift certificates for massages at The Coffee Co. in downtown Elizabethton are also available. Shell does a variety of massages, including back massages, especially for senior citizens. She does in-home chair massages for seniors.

Shell, whose office is located at 511 Range St., always rubs her clients the right way. She sees clients by appointment only. For more information about the massages, call 542-0611 or log onto the Web site, www.lustersmassage.com.



As a profession, massage therapy has become viewed as a more professional profession, according to Luster Shell, licensed massage therapist. For more information about the massages, call 542-0611 or log onto the Web site, www.lustersmassagetherapy.com.

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Luster Shell, massage therapist, offers variety of hand, foot massages

By Greg Miller
STAR STAFF
gmiller@starhq.com

Massage therapist Luster Shell offers a variety of hand and foot massage services.

According to Shell, Swedish massage, a massage given by hand, is good for stress release and improved circulation. Light to moderate pressure is applied for this massage.

Prenatal and postnatal massages "help the women to feel more comfortable."

Infant massage teaches parents to massage their own babies, Shell said.

Hot stone-lava dance is "a soothing massage with heated Bassalt stones" and is "a deep penetrating combination of heat and pressure massage that promotes a wonderfully relaxed state."

Hot stone foot massage is "a relaxing treat for the feet," Shell said.

Pet massage is another hand massage. Shell says, "Pet massage is muscle therapy for your dog, and the owner can be taught to do this therapy which is a wonderful bonding experience for the two of them. Not recommended for cats."

The Fijian massage is a foot massage. Clients remain fully dressed for the massage.

Another foot massage is Ahh...Shiatsu Bar Therapy,

out the usual pain associated with deep tissue massage. The even pressure that is easily applied with the foot...gives the therapist control without injury to the therapist's hand or the client's body."

The Fijian massage and the Ahh...Shiatsu Bar Therapy "are great massages for large muscular people."

Shell is looking forward to offering the Siddah hot oil massage in the near future.

Shell also offers:

- Chair massages, in which the client's head, neck, back and arms are massaged.

- Salt scrub massages, which "exfoliate, soften and cleanse the skin."

- Japanese hot stone facial massage "uses the highly polished, warmed semi-precious stones." Pure olive oil is used to lubricate the face.

Now in her 10th year as a licensed massage therapist, Shell works for Sycamore Shoals Hospital in the patient center care department and also for the Franklin Health & Fitness Center.

Thirty-minute and 60-minute massages are available. Gift certificates for massages are available at her office or at The Coffee Company in downtown Elizabethton.

Shell's private office is located at 511 Range Street. She sees clients by appointment only. For more information,

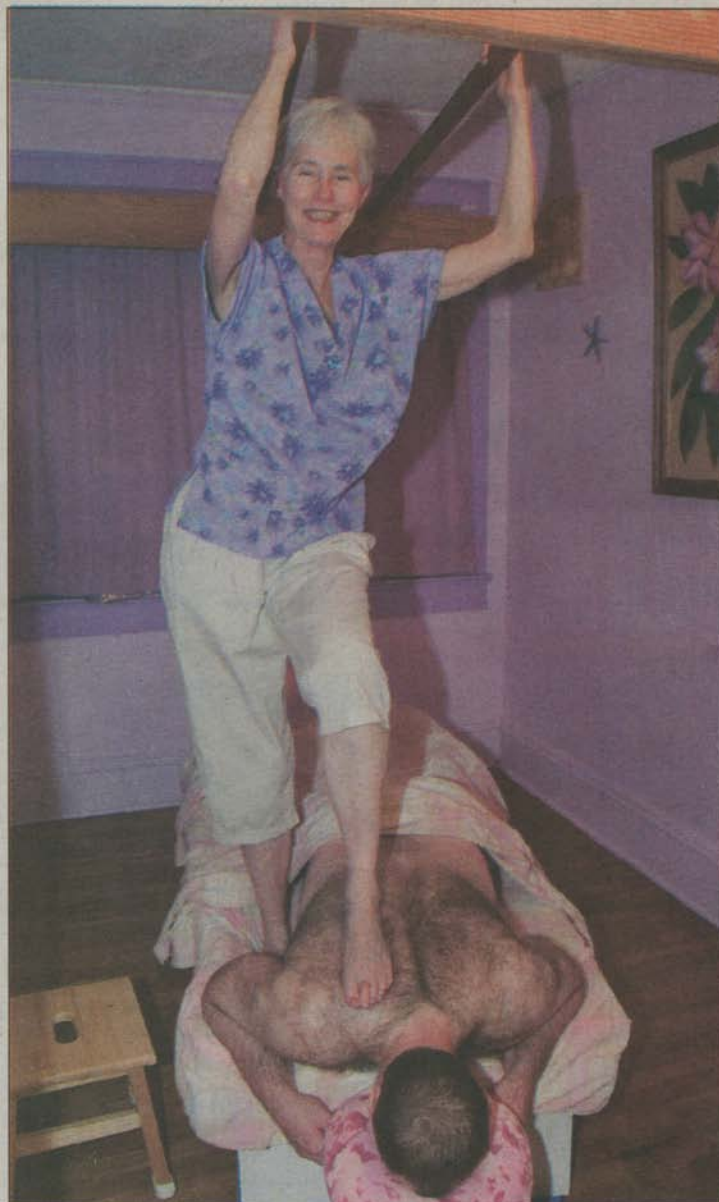


Photo by Eveleigh Hattfield

Terry Dalton, Jr. gets a massage from Luster Shell, massage therapist. Shell's private office is located at 511 Range