



Photos by Courtney Gaillard

Irma Jackson has a way with her hands. Here she works on a client at her massage studio on Waughtown Street.



Martin Luther King III

Woman starts hands-on business

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

When Irma Jackson retired as a high school science teacher from the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools more than three years ago, she knew she would go into business for herself. The 30-year teaching veteran chose a second career that took her back into the classroom, temporarily, to learn the art of massage therapy.

"I think (massage therapy) and teaching both provide a service, and that's part of the reason why I was interested in it. When I taught I imparted knowledge and this allows me to help somebody with their health," said Jackson.

This 56-year-old mother of one daughter and grandmother of two has spent most of her life in Winston-Salem.

Jackson has been building her massage practice, Kneads You, since graduating from the Southeastern School of Neuromuscular and Massage Therapy, in Charlotte, in 2001. Now she offers Swedish (relaxation), neuromuscular therapy (deep tissue), craniosacral (light touch), Thai (reflexology) and

seated chair massages. While Jackson doesn't make house calls, she does operate out of Maxx Studio, a hair salon on Waughtown Street. Jackson also offers her services to schools, conventions and businesses.

Depending on the service and length of time, massages will cost

between \$35 and \$120 (by appointment only).

"It's really been an interesting experience because it allows me to actually still see my friends (in the school system) and also earn an income as well," Jackson said.

Earlier this year, she spent six weeks in Thailand studying at the International Training Massage School, where she learned to perform Thai massage. Thai massage is performed on a mat placed on the floor, and it increases flexibility in the body.

Well aware that some peo-

ple are body conscious and uninterested in a stranger touching their bodies, Jackson makes a point to walk clients through the process so that they feel comfortable about her working on them. In a stress-filled world, Jackson encourages people to treat themselves to a massage if not for relaxation purposes then for a stronger sense of well-being. "When you lay on this table, you are just another body. I don't pay attention to how big or little you are," said Jackson. "(Massage therapy) will increase your circulation, it is a destresser, and it will allow you to relax."

Not all massages require people to disrobe completely, like the seated chair massage, said Jackson. Some techniques, like the Tai massage, only require people to take off their shoes and socks.

This massage therapist does indulge in a massage regularly and sticks to a workout regimen, usually yoga, to ensure that she can perform a variety of massages on her clients.

"It is really not easy work. It's really hard work. I'm doing the work, so I have to be in good physical shape in order to do this. I want to be sure that I

am flexible enough (to perform the massage)," Jackson said.

Some clients tell Jackson that they are unable to lay on their backs for a massage due to pains or pre-existing conditions. She recently worked on a client who had the same problem, and halfway through the session, Jackson asked her to turn onto her back - which she did with ease.

"When she got off the table she told me that normally she would not be able to lay on her back like that, so I was pleased," said Jackson.

The proof that she is doing her job well, said Jackson, is when her clients get off the table and feel good.

A year from now, Jackson hopes to operate her massage practice out of another space, which she owns, and she looks forward to teaching massage techniques in the future as well.

"To see that you can bring relief to people who are hurting or in pain is satisfying," said Jackson. "I like what I do. I like the fact that every day is different. There are no two days alike."

To schedule an appointment for a massage with Irma Jackson, call 773-0506.



Jackson



Morial



Holmes Norton

SCLC

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for the People's Agenda.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author David Garrow, who wrote "Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the SCLC," said the organization has been on a long, slow decline because of the aging of its leadership.

"Even though Rev. Shuttlesworth is a crucial historical figure, how many organizations name someone who is 81 years old as their interim leader?" Garrow asked.

But Shuttlesworth, whose work as a young man in Birm-

ingham in the 1950s and '60s was crucial to the success of the Civil Rights Movement, argues the SCLC's time has not passed.

He said he wants to reinvigorate the SCLC and get more younger people involved.

"My problem is that younger people are not as concerned about it as they ought to be and I want to move more younger people into the mainstream of those who fight for justice," Shuttlesworth said. "There is always a concern about any organization, and SCLC has to have action and move with the times."

Davis

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The cities are Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Houston, Memphis, Miami, Detroit and Atlanta.

After the discussions, the CBC will issue a final report on the problems of black men and urge the government to take steps.

Davis said that this is the only way to make black males' lives in America more pleasant.

"We are losing far too many African-American males to drugs, gangs, homicides and an overall sense of helplessness and hopelessness. If we are to reverse these trends, special efforts must be put forth, and we believe that a national look at these issues and problems could provide realistic problem-solving approaches," said Davis.

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