

ODA Today

A publication of the Ohio Dental Association focusing on dentistry in Ohio

QuickBites

Save the date!

2013 Annual Session
September 19-22, 2013

The 2013 ODA Annual Session will take place from Sept. 19-22 in downtown Columbus. At the ODA Annual Session, dentists have the opportunity to attend various CE courses, visit the Exhibit Hall, and participate in special activities. And registration is available this month! Watch your mailbox for the full program of events and a paper registration form, or visit www.oda.org/events for more information and to register.

Inside

Volunteerism and Dentistry
From the Corner Office, page 2

Oral Health Access Supervision Program gives dentists option in treating underserved
Legal Briefs, page 3

Five secrets to improve your online reputation, page 4

ODA Foundation gives record high amount in grants, scholarships, page 6

Credentialing and re-credentialing with third-party payers
Dental Insurance Corner, page 8

Case students learn about dental practice options at Street of Dreams event, page 9

Opinion and Editorial, page 12

Classifieds, pages 14 & 15

Dentists, students, spouses inform Ohio legislators at the 2013 ODA Day at the Statehouse

Jackie Best
Managing Editor

More than 140 dentists, spouses and dental students participated in the 2013 Ohio Dental Association Day at the Statehouse on March 20 in Columbus.

Attendees met with the offices of more than 80 Ohio legislators to discuss issues affecting dentistry.

"This event is one of the most important and fun events we attend as members of our profession," said Dr. Kim Gardner, president of the ODA. "Our members take time from their busy schedules to come to Columbus and advocate for their profession. If you have not attended an ODA Day at the Statehouse, I encourage you to reserve a spot on your 2014 calendar to attend next year."

This year's Day at the Statehouse saw a record number of students turn out to the event with about 45 students attending from the Ohio State University College of Dentistry and the Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine.

"I was impressed by the significant increase in the number of dental students becoming involved in advocacy, because the future of the field is in their hands very soon," said Dr. DeWitt May, an Ohio Dental Political Action Committee Board member.

Nathan Prueter, a dental student at OSU, worked closely with the ODA to organize the OSU student involvement with Day at the Statehouse.

"As a dental student I'm very excited to join the profession of dentistry," Prueter said. "I hope that educating our legislators will not



Dr. Michael Schaeffer, ODPAC chair (right), and Dr. Matthew Parker (center) meet with Rep. John Becker (left) during Day at the Statehouse in Columbus on March 20. More than 140 dentists, spouses and dental students attended the event to educate legislators about issues important to dentistry.

"This event is one of the most important and fun events we attend as members of our profession. ... If you have not attended an ODA Day at the Statehouse, I encourage you to reserve a spot on your 2014 calendar to attend next year."

— Dr. Kim Gardner
President of the ODA

only advance the profession of dentistry, but most importantly continue to allow dentists to take exceptional care of their patients."

Gardner said one of his favorite parts of Day at the Statehouse is the participation of

so many dental students.

"My appreciation goes out to the deans and faculty of the dental schools who made

See STATEHOUSE, page 4

2013 ODA Annual Session registration opens this month

ODA Staff

The 147th Ohio Dental Association Annual Session is set for Sept. 19-22, 2013, in Columbus, and you and your team can register for this spectacular event starting this month online at www.oda.org/events.

As "The Source" for continuing education and much more, the 2013 Annual Session will not disappoint. This year, attendees will have the opportunity to take continuing education from such leaders in the profession as Drs. Jeff Brucia, David Hornbrook, Randy Huffines, Paresh Shah, David Rothman, Jon Svirsky and Sebastian Ciancio. Also speaking will be Linda Blackiston, RDH; Mary Govoni, RDH, CDA; Amy Morgan of the Pride Institute; Mr. David Weber; and the Ritz Carlton Leadership Center. In addition to great lectures, the ODA Annual Session will feature hard-to-find hands-on workshops for dentists and team members.

Registering for Annual session gives attendees the chance to visit the ODA Exhibit Hall and attend Table Clinics to earn free CE, plus the chance to attend special events including the Thursday evening Welcome

Inside

See page 10 for a pathology column written by Dr. John Svirsky. Svirsky will be presenting three CE courses at the 2013 ODA Annual Session.

Reception; the Friday night BASH!, and all Exhibit Hall events, plus a chance to win the Exhibit Hall door prizes for dentists, hygienists and staff. Registration also includes the opportunity to attend selected continuing dental education seminars that are offered for no additional cost to member dentists and staff. (Please register for any free CE course you plan to attend, so you will be sure to receive a ticket). Registration and a name badge are required to participate in all Annual Session activities.

Register online at www.oda.org/events, or watch your mailbox for the full Annual Session program that will include a paper registration form. Forms can be mailed with payment, or

See ANNUAL SESSION, page 11



The 2013 ODA Annual Session will provide attendees with a wide variety of CE courses. For more information about the courses, events and registration, visit www.oda.org/events.



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The Director's Chair

David J. Owsiany, JD
ODA Executive Director

Volunteerism and Dentistry

April 21-27, 2013, is National Volunteer Week. According to Points of Light – an organization made up of a network of service groups – National Volunteer Week is a time to celebrate people doing extraordinary things through service. Established in 1974, National Volunteer Week focuses national attention on the impact and power of volunteerism and service as an integral aspect of our civic leadership.

Volunteerism can take many forms. Some people volunteer at their church or other faith-based organizations. Some volunteer in service organizations providing food and shelter to the homeless or support for battered women. Some volunteer with their local humane society or scouting organizations, and others help with Special Olympics or other organizations that assist the disabled. Some folks choose to focus their volunteer efforts on supporting military veterans and their families. Other dentists choose to use their expertise in business to support their local chamber of commerce or economic development commission. I personally know dentists who do all of these wonderful acts of volunteerism and more. All of

them support these causes with their time, talent and treasure.

Some dentists use their clinical skills to benefit those in need of dental care – sometimes in far-away third-world countries and sometimes in their own communities here in Ohio. Many dentists provide volunteer care through programs like Give Kids a Smile, through which Ohio Dental Association-member dentists provide more than \$1 million worth of donated care annually to underserved children, or the Dental OPTIONS program, through which Ohio dentists provide more than \$2 million annually in donated services to low-income Ohioans who don't have dental insurance.

In fact, according to the recent ODA Membership Survey, the typical ODA-member dentist donates over \$12,000 in free care to low-income or underserved Ohioans every year. This includes the volunteer care provided through programs like Give Kids a Smile and the Dental OPTIONS program, and in volunteer clinics across the state. It also includes the care dentists provide every day in their offices to patients who are down on their luck or have lost their jobs or insurance coverage.

Dentists also volunteer their time and talents to their profession by participating in organized dentistry, including with their local component dental societies, the ODA and the American Dental Association. The ODA is blessed with literally hundreds of dentists each year who volunteer to participate in ODA activities in order to protect and improve their profession and their professional association. Whether it is serving as a delegate or

VOLUNTEER, page 3

Letter to the Editor

In Memoriam: Bunny Green, CDA, RDH, EFDA, Ed.D.

Submitted by Angela L. Frase
ODEFA President

On Feb. 7, 2013, the course of the Ohio Dental Expanded Functions Association changed forever. With the passing of Bunny Green, Ohio EFDA's lost an important "Captain" and leader. On this sad day in EFDA history, those who knew her vowed to keep her legend alive.

If ever an organization needed someone to steer them through uncharted territory to the promise land, it was ODEFA. Bunny Green took to the helm when the ship took its maiden voyage in 1978 as the EFDA concept was christened in Ohio. Throughout the 35 year conquest, Bunny remained at the wheel until her last days. She is instrumental in navigating Ohio EFDA's through many storms to the sunny skies we enjoy today as we share our passion with everyone we touch.

To this day, we have Bunny to thank for many of the delegable duties EFDA's perform. Bunny was instrumental in obtaining Registration for EFDA's in 2007, (she was among the first group of EFDA's to become Registered by the Ohio State Dental Board on May 17, 2007!), and continued her legislative work in efforts to achieve Licensure for EFDA's in Ohio. This goal was important to her to ensure that EFDA's would be required to take continuing education classes in order to keep their license current. Continuing education was foremost on her list of important qualities an EFDA must possess.

Bunny walked the walk, as only the best leaders do. She inspired the lives of all who knew her by setting an example of golden standard, by anyone's measure. Throughout her career, Bunny's passion

for the profession began as she became a certified dental assistant, which quickly led her on the path to a fulfilling dental hygiene and EFDA career. Not long after that, Bunny's thirst for knowledge earned her a Doctorate in education from The Ohio State University. She wore the name "Doctor Bunny" proudly!



As an advocate for the utilization of EFDA's, Bunny was very active on the ODEFA Executive Board and served on numerous committees. She was a three-time winner of the coveted Tommasone award given in recognition for her outstanding contributions and continuous commitment to the organization and advancement of all EFDA's in Ohio. Through her advocacy for access to care, Bunny was a published author, and continued to work on local and state levels to improve these issues, even after she became ill.

Bunny's heart-warming smile and infectious laugh will forever be a beacon of inspiration for those fortunate enough to have met her. Her memory will be honored through an ODEFA-sponsored Educational Scholarship Program, which awards one EFDA student each year. Bunny's legacy will live on through the many dental professionals in Ohio who bear the name Expanded Functions Dental Auxiliary. We could not have asked for a better "Captain" to lead us toward our goals.

"The great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, but in what direction we are moving—we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor."

— Oliver W. Holmes

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Legal Briefs

Keith Kerns, Esq. ODA Director of Legal & Legislative Services

Oral Health Access Supervision Program gives dentists options in treating underserved

In 2010, the Ohio General Assembly, with the backing of the Ohio Dental Association and Ohio Dental Hygienists' Association, created the Oral Health Access Supervision Program (OHASP). OHASP allows dentists to utilize dental hygienists in designated underserved locations outside of the traditional office setting under a relaxed level of supervision. Dentists and hygienists can utilize OHASP to increase access to a dental home for those populations who may otherwise have difficulty securing oral health care.

OHASP may be utilized in only certain traditionally underserved locations like nursing homes, schools in dental health resource shortage areas, Head Start programs and WIC clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, VA clinics, local health departments and state correctional institutions among others. In these designated settings, participation in OHASP allows a hygienist to provide basic dental hygiene services to new patients without a dentist present in the facility.

Both dentists and dental hygienists must meet certain qualifications in order to utilize the new supervision level. Dentists must be licensed to practice in Ohio and apply for an OHASP permit with the Ohio State Dental board. A permit costs \$20 and is renewable every two years. Hygienists must also be actively licensed and receive a permit from the board.

However, in order to obtain the permit, hygienists must provide proof that they have met certain educational and experience requirements. Specifically, hygienists must have two years and 3,000 hours of clinical practice experience, have completed a medical emergency course within the previous two years and have completed an eight hour course on the OHASP.

With this training and the authorization of a dentist holding an OHASP permit, a hygienist may visit the locations outlined previously and treat patients prior to those patients being seen by a dentist. However, the authorizing dentist must remain actively involved in patient care and assumes full responsibility for all care delivered. A dentist may not supervise more than three hygienists working under the provisions of OHASP at any one time and the supervised hygienists must have an employment or contractual relationship with the authorizing dentist.

Dentists are required to review the health history of each patient prior to the provision of dental hygiene services to make certain that those services can be safely received by the patient. Facilities and patients receiving care under the OHASP must also be informed that a dentist will not be present at the facility at the time that the hygiene services are provided and that a hygienist is not permitted to diagnose a patient's oral health status.

Patients treated by a hygienist under the OHASP must have a subsequent appointment set with the dentist for the purposes of a diagnosis, treatment plan and the completion of additional dental procedures such as extractions, dental restorations, dentures and other neces-

sary steps to achieve a patient's good oral health. A patient may not receive additional services from a hygienist until a dentist has completed an exam, set a treatment plan and prescribed the need for those services moving forward.

Only limited services may be provided under OHASP. These services mirror the permissible duties that hygienists may engage in under "general supervision" when the dentist is not present in the dental office. The administration of local anesthetic; administration of nitrous oxide; definitive root planning; definitive subgingival curettage; pulp testing; application of cavity varnish; the impression, fabrication, cementation and removal of provisional restorations; and other procedures designated by the state dental board cannot be performed under OHASP.

Legal Briefs is intended to offer information and general guidance but should not be construed as legal advice and cannot be substituted for the advice of the dentist's own legal counsel. Dentists should always seek the advice of their own attorneys regarding specific circumstances.

The state dental board is charged with oversight of the program and monitoring the progress of dentist and dental hygienist participants. The board began issuing permits at the end of 2011. To date, 26 dentists and 54 dental hygienists have received OHASP permits from the board. To learn more about the OHASP program, please contact the ODA department of government affairs at (800) 282-1526 or visit www.oda.org.

VOLUNTEER, from page 2

on a council, committee or task force, these members take time away from their practices, jobs and families in order to serve their profession.

And the ODA's officers give even more of their time by serving as the leaders of the statewide professional association of dentists in Ohio. The ODA's officers spend countless hours every month leading the ODA, implementing the policies of the House of Delegates, directing the ODA's advocacy efforts, overseeing the association and its programs, staff and events and doing whatever else is necessary to ensure the dental profession continues to thrive in Ohio.

Every month, I participate with the ODA president (the 2013 ODA president is Dr. Kim Gardner of Chardon) in giving "ODA Update" presentations across the state to various groups and meetings of dentists, including at local dental society meetings. And, at every such meeting, I hear member dentists tell the ODA's president how much they appreciate the time he or she spends out of his or her dental office to work for the benefit of the ODA and the dental profession in Ohio.

So, during National Volunteer Week, I wish to thank all that you, the members of the Ohio Dental Association, do for your profession, your local communities, your patients and the underserved. Dentistry is truly a caring profession.



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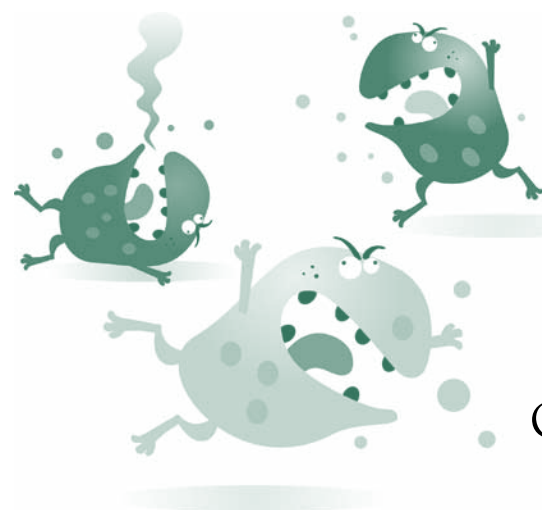
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AN ODA MEMBER BENEFIT



ODA Staff

More than 40 dental students from The Ohio State University attended Day at the Statehouse on March 20 in Columbus. The students were paired with dentists who mentored them while attending meetings with Ohio legislators.

STATEHOUSE, from page 1

it possible for the students to attend," Gardner said. "Dental students are the future of our profession. Seeing so many of them attend this event and others shows their dedication to the profession in which they want to practice. They bring a fresh perspective to the conversation, and the legislators listen to their message."

Dr. Michael Schaeffer, chairman of the ODPAC Board of Directors, said having so many students attend this year's event made it even better than in past years.

"It was great for them to get their feet wet and understand how important advocacy is to protecting dentistry," Schaeffer said.

Schaeffer said attendance was also bolstered by the fact that several ODA councils and committees held their meetings in conjunction with Day at the Statehouse.

"We inundated the capitol with dentists. That was very good," Schaeffer said.

This year, participants focused on three issues while speaking with their legislators.

First, they discussed the state budget proposal, which currently includes funding for adult dental Medicaid for recipients who are currently receiving Medicaid.

Attendees also spoke out against a proposal being circulated to create a midlevel dental provider in Ohio. The proposed provider would only receive two years of training post high school. So far, no legislation has been introduced to create such a provider thanks to the efforts of Ohio dentists in educating their legislators.

Third, participants spoke in favor of legislation that would prohibit insurance companies from setting fees for services



ODA Staff

Dr. Tom Paumier (right) mentors two dental students from The Ohio State University during a meeting with the office of Rep. Bill Patmon during the ODA Day at the Statehouse on March 20.

they do not cover.

"Our members believe advocacy is the number one reason that they pay their dues to belong to organized dentistry," Gardner said. "I am here because they want me and others who attend to do what we can to preserve the profession of dentistry as they believe it should be."

Gardner added that the legislators appreciate hearing about issues directly from their constituents.

Attendees were provided detailed information about all three issues during two legislative briefing sessions. They also had the opportunity to learn about the issues by participating in an optional conference call prior to the event.

"ODA Executive Director David Owsiany, ODA Director of Legal and Legislative Services Keith Kerns and the rest of the ODA staff do their best to prepare each

attendee with a unified and cogent message to deliver to our legislators," Gardner said. "It is exciting to know that you are making a difference and doing your best to take that message to those who make the laws of this state."

New this year, the event was opened up to a full day. Schaeffer said this made the event even better than in the past because dentists had the option to schedule their appointments in the morning. This gave dentists more flexibility to fit into the legislators' schedules and also allowed dentists to have more control over their own schedules.

"I have been involved in this program for over 20 years and wish every member dentist understood the true importance of this effort," May said.

Five secrets to improve your online reputation

Lance McCollough
ProSites

We have all said it. We constantly think it. Then it happens. So, what do you do when the "it will never happen to me" turns into "what do I do now?" Eventually, reputation management becomes an issue for every business owner, so here are five insider secrets that will help you avert your reputation crisis.

1. Google Alerts – Signing up for Google Alerts allows you to receive notifications every time your predefined keywords are mentioned on the Web. Simply go to www.google.com/alerts and input queries you wish to be notified of (e.g. your practice name, your name, etc.), how often you want to be notified and provide the email address that you want your alerts sent to.

2. Encourage feedback – Feedback builds credibility, regardless of whether it's positive or negative. Positive reviews online can help boost search engine rankings, provide new patients with a sense of trust and can help quiet the negativity of one unsettling review.

An exorbitant amount of negative feedback is bad. Very bad. However, the occasional bad review is not the be-all end-all of your reputation. Though undesirable, responding to a negative review in a courteous, professional manner shows patients that you care and want to solve the issue at hand.

An absence of online reviews is also a red flag. Without a solid understanding of other patient experiences, prospects feel like a practice without reviews is more of a gamble, thus are less likely to select said practice as their provider.

Don't forget about moderating your blog comments too! Your practice blog is a great way to educate patients and prospects about your services; however, if former patients are leaving negative comments about their experiences, you may inadvertently be losing new patients. Luckily, all blog engines allow administrators to moderate comments. Changing your settings and requiring comments to be approved before they're published could prevent you from unknowingly perpetuating negative feedback.

3. Realize it only takes one fatal flaw – Major corporations have had their fair share of meltdowns and know it only takes one negative customer experience to explode online, causing significant damage to their reputation.

When large companies experience negative feedback that goes viral, they promptly respond to the problem, admit they did wrong, vow it won't happen again, and revamp their procedures. Should you ever suffer the setback of viral negativity, follow mega-corporations and proceed to take responsibility, "right" your "wrong" and generate a plan to prevent the situation from reoccurring. Just as the initial negative complaint was publicized online, publicize your renewed customer service policy and remember to always provide patients with superior care.

4. Use available resources – There are free online resources that can help you build your personal online reputation. Brand Yourself is a self-guided reputation management firm that allows users to control the spending they put toward personal reputation management link building. A free account with the company enables users to influence the Google search results for their chosen name, such as "ABC Dental." The user can then link

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Frank R. Recker has practiced general dentistry for 13 years and served as a member of the Ohio State Dental Board before entering the legal profession. Areas of practice include:

- Administrative Law before State Dental Boards
- Dental Malpractice Defense
- Practice-related Business Transactions

Dr. Recker also represents multiple national dental organizations and individual dentists in various matters, including First amendment litigation (i.e. advertising), judicial appeals of state board proceedings, civil rights actions against state agencies, and disputes with PPOs and DMSOs.

A sampling of various cases can be obtained online. Questions regarding representation can also be addressed to Dr. Recker via e-mail at recker@ddslaw.com.

www.ddslaw.com

See ONLINE, page 5

ODASC offers disability income retirement security to ODA members

Submitted by ODASC

If you've already started saving for your retirement, congratulations. You're on your way to fulfilling lifelong dreams and goals. But what would happen to your retirement plans if you became one of the millions of Americans to suffer a disabling illness or injury? Would you be able to continue saving for retirement without your income?

A disability could disrupt your retirement savings in more ways than one:

- Contributions to Social Security would stop.
- Contributions to your employer sponsored retirement savings plan (such as a 401(k)) would also stop, as would any employer matching contributions.
- If you lose your job, you will no longer accrue additional pension benefits.

Fortunately, there is a way to ensure your ability to save for retirement in the event of a disability. DI Retirement Security from Principal Life Insurance Company is an ideal program if you are serious about saving for retirement and have maxed out your personal disability income insurance benefits.

Upon a qualifying disability, DI Retirement Security would pay monthly benefits directly to a trust to help you continue

saving for retirement. This trust then invests the benefits based on your risk tolerance. At a set age (varies by program, but typically age 65 or 67), you would start receiving income payments from the trust. These payments would continue until death or until the funds diminished.

Plus, as a member of the Ohio Dental Association, you qualify to receive a 10 percent Association Discount on DI Retirement Security premiums from Principal Life Insurance Company. Not only are you protecting your dreams for a comfortable retirement – you're doing so at a reduced rate.

DI Retirement Security from Principal Life offers:

- No validation of your current retirement savings efforts
- A non-cancelable, guaranteed renewable policy
- Benefit periods that will coincide with extended retirement ages (such as age 65 or 67)

Principal Life is a financially strong carrier that has a consistent track record of exceptional customer service and claims handling. If the unthinkable does happen, you'll appreciate the quality of the service you receive when you need it the most.

For more information: Contact your Ohio Dental Association insurance representative at 800-282-1256 or email

di@oda.org.

Disability insurance has exclusions and limitations. For costs and complete details of the coverage, contact your financial representative.

While this communication may be used to promote or market a transaction or an idea that is discussed in the publication, it is intended to provide general information about the subject matter covered and is provided with the understanding that The

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ODA Meeting & Event Calendar

Apr.

- 11 Executive Directors Forum
- 11 Executive Committee
- 11 Council on Membership Services
- 11 Council on Access to Care and Public Service
- 12-13 Leadership Institute
- 12 Ad Interim Committee
- 12 Strategic Planning Committee
- 13 ADA Leadership Nomination Committee
- 13 Subcouncil on New Dentists

May

- 1 OPTIONS Steering Committee
- 3 Callahan Commission
- 17 Council on Dentists Concerned for Dentists
- 17 Statewide Subcouncil on Peer Review
- 31 ODA Foundation Board

ONLINE, from page 4

profiles, add backlinks, and manipulate their pages to help rank desired pages while bumping less favorable pages down in the search engine results. To start your free account, head over to <https://brandyourself.com/>.

5. Consider a Reputation Management Professional – A good reputation can take years to build; and you don't want to let negative online reviews destroy it. To prevent this, you may want to consider hiring a company that specializes in reputation management. This type of professional service improves patient satisfaction and your online reputation by allowing you to personally respond to unhappy patient reviews. It also helps to deter negative publicity from being circulated online for prospective patients to see.

Remember to continually monitor what Internet users are saying about your brand. With the ever-increasing popularity of online review sites, it's no longer a matter of "if" but "when" you receive your first negative patient review; and when that time comes, you'll want to respond with integrity to keep your online reputation glowing, but you'll also want to adapt your services and professional approach to prevent a situation in the future.

Lance McCollough is the founder and CEO of ProSites, a leading website design and Internet marketing company specializing in dental-practice marketing. Endorsed by ODASC, ProSites offers easy and affordable website solutions to help dentists successfully market their practice online. For more information, please call (888) 617-7247 or visit www.prosites.com/ohio.

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ODA Foundation gives record high amount in grants, scholarships

ODA Staff

The ODA Foundation achieved a significant milestone in 2012 – the highest amount given for grants and scholarship in a single year, \$94,800 – bringing the total amount awarded for dentistry in Ohio since 1995 to more than \$642,000.

Hundreds of Ohio dental school students have received scholarship assistance through the years – and thousands of Ohioans have improved oral health literacy through community dental health education programs. Countless more uninsured and low-income Ohioans have received free dental care and now have brighter smiles and better oral health thanks to dental care programs in Ohio that received grants from the ODA Foundation.

Chairman of the ODA Foundation, Dr. Jack Spratt Jr. of Lima, said that continued donor support helps the ODAF make a difference to so many.

“It is this generosity that continues to drive our success, and this success is integral to how the Foundation helps the profession of dentistry and those it serves in our state,” he said.

From babies and children to low-income expectant teens to indigent adults to the working poor to uninsured U.S. veterans – hundreds of Ohioans in need of dental care will receive free dental treatment through the six programs that received ODAF grants in 2012.

The ODAF awarded grants to dentist volunteers with the W.D. Miller Dental Society who provide emergency surgical care at Look up Dental Clinic; Nationwide Children’s Hospital Dept. of Pediatric Dentistry as it provides dental screening, care and oral health education to low-income pregnant teens; Access Mahoning Valley, a program of the Corydon Palmer Dental Society through which volunteer dentists provide free care to uninsured residents at evening clinics; The OSU College of Dentistry as it holds a Saturday of free restorative and preventive care to 100 underserved children; The Dental OPTIONS program; and Stark County Dental Society’s volunteer program to provide free dental care and dentures to uninsured veterans. Information on these and other programs funded in recent years can be found online at <http://oda.org/community-involvement/oda-foundation/>.

The 2013 grant application process is now open and ODA members, community organizations, health professionals and others are encouraged to look at the ODAF grant application and guidelines and to apply.

In addition, the ODA Foundation awards scholarships to dental students entering their second, third or fourth year of dental school in Ohio in the late summer. In the past six years alone, a total of \$178,000 has been awarded to 66 Ohio dental school students.

Scholarships are awarded based on demonstrated academic excellence and financial need.

“Our scholarship recipients exemplify the best of the future of dentistry,” Spratt said. “Not only are they at the top of their classes, but they have an impressive history of volunteerism and involvement in organized dentistry at the state and national levels.”

A small number of scholarships for expanded function dental assistants students is also available for qualified

See ODAF, page 7



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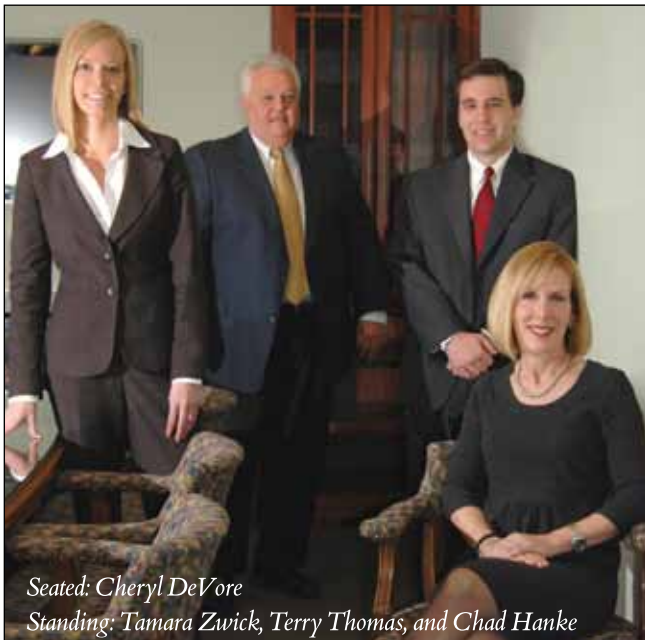
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A veteran who served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force smiles brightly wearing his new dentures, courtesy of the Stark County Dental Society's veteran's program, which received a grant from the ODAF in 2012.

ODAF, from page 6

applicants.

Scholarship and grant applications are posted online at <http://oda.org/community-involvement/oda-foundation/odaf-grants-and-scholarships/> – and must be received at the ODAF office in Columbus by end of day July 9, 2013. Awards will be announced in late August.

One of the primary sources of funding for the annual grants and scholarships is the car raffle – which has returned as a fundraiser at Annual Session this year. This year's raffle again offers four great prizes, including the Early Bird Drawing for \$500 cash to be held Aug. 26 at the ODA office. All tickets purchased by Aug. 19 are entered into the two drawings. The prizes for the second drawing, which will be held Saturday, Sept. 21 during Annual

Session, are:

- First place: choice of a two-year, 10,000 miles a year lease on an Audi A-4 FrontTrak Sedan or Volkswagen EOS Komfort Sedan. Don't need a car? You can choose the \$20,000 cash option instead.
- Second place: 1.23 carat Woman's Diamond Pendant, valued at \$3,000.
- Third place: \$1,000 cash.

Raffle tickets are \$100 each or six for \$500 – and only 700 will be sold. Tickets are available by calling the ODAF at (800) 282-1526, or you can download an order form online at <http://oda.org/community-involvement/oda-foundation/> to fax or mail to the ODA Foundation.

For additional information on ODAF fundraisers, grants or scholarships, call Kathy L. Woodard, director of the ODA Foundation, at (800) 282-1526.



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Dental Insurance Corner

Credentialing and re-credentialing with third-party payers

Christopher A. Moore, MA
ODA Director of Dental Services

The Ohio Dental Association routinely receives calls from ODA member dentists' offices regarding the form they are asked to complete in order to either be credentialed by a third-party payer they want to contract with or re-credentialed by a payer they already contract with. The calls usually concern the dentist's legal obligations to complete the form, time needed to finish it and general astonishment at the length of the form.

The Ohio Department of Insurance has designated the form developed by the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) as the universal credentialing form for the state of Ohio. CAQH is a not-for-profit organization seeking to simplify the gathering of credentialing data into a single repository that may be accessed by CAQH participating organizations.

The governing administrative law,

Ohio Administrative Code 3901-1-58, requires all credentialing and re-credentialing of physicians, dentists and other health care practitioners be performed using the electronic or paper CAQH credentialing form. All dental third-party payers, including Medicaid HMOs, are required to accept the CAQH form for credentialing and re-credentialing purposes and none may require a dentist to provide any additional information than is required by the form.

Dentists are likely to only encounter the CAQH form when dealing with a third-party payer's credentialing or re-credentialing process. Failure to complete the form in a timely manner could delay or prevent the dentist from being able to join into a network or result in the plan's likely termination of the dentist's participating provider agreement if already in a plan.

If a dentist decides to not re-credential with a plan, then he/she may be better served to terminate the contract with the organization themselves instead of not

completing the necessary re-credentialing paperwork and waiting for the plan to terminate the dentist.

CAQH reports that nearly 700 of the country's health plans, hospitals and health care organizations, including all of Ohio's Medicaid HMOs and their dental benefit administrators, many Ohio health insurance companies and numerous Ohio hospitals, utilize the CAQH Universal Provider Datasource for provider credentialing. A complete list of CAQH participating organizations may be found at http://www.caqh.org/ucd_health_participating.php.

There is no fee for dentists to use the CAQH database. CAQH participating organizations pay an annual participation fee and a fee to access the credentialing data.

All data submitted by dentists through CAQH's online service or paper application is maintained in a secure data center. Dentists maintain control of their data at all times and are given multiple opportunities and reminders to update it as needed.

Changes to the dentist's record can be made anytime by requesting a change form by phone or by directly accessing the dentist's information online.

CAQH maintains a toll free number (888-599-1771) and email (caqh.upd-help@acsgs.com) to assist dentists in utilizing the service.

Only the dentist is able to revise his or her information through the service and participating organizations must receive authorization from the dentist to access his or her information.

Dentists must complete the entire form before CAQH participating organizations can access their information. The form, however, does not need to be completed all at once. Partially completed forms may be saved and finished at a later time. CAQH estimates it takes about two hours to complete the CAQH Universal Provider Datasource for the first time.

Once the form is completed, the dentist can transmit it electronically to CAQH participating organizations or print hard copies to forward to non-participating organizations.

Registering with CAQH via an insurance company

If the dentist contracts with, or is in the process of contracting with, a CAQH participating insurance company, then he/she must work through that company in order to gain access to the CAQH database and can not directly register with CAQH on their own.

Dentists who do not have a CAQH provider ID number should contact the insurance company they are credentialing with to request the insurer add the dentist to the organization's CAQH roster. CAQH will then send the dentist a welcome kit that includes a CAQH provider ID number.

Direct registration with CAQH

If the dentist does not contract with a CAQH participating organization, then he/she may directly self-register with CAQH. The self-registration request form may be obtained at <http://www.insurance.ohio.gov/Consumer/Documents/Provider%20Self%20Registration.pdf>. Once completed, this form should be sent to CAQH either via email to info@caqh.org or fax to 1-202-861-1454. CAQH will then send the dentist a welcome kit within 5 to 10 business days from receipt of the request.

"Dentists who utilize CAQH's online database may save themselves a lot

See **INSURANCE**, page 10

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Editor's note: Dental Insurance Corner is intended to offer information and general guidance but should not be construed as legal advice and cannot be substituted for the advice of the dentist's own legal counsel. Dentists should always seek the advice of their own attorneys regarding specific circumstances. ODA members who would like to submit a dental insurance related question, problem or concern may do so by sending the appropriate information to the ODA Dental Insurance Working Group, 1370 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215, or 614-486-0381 FAX, or chrism@oda.org.

Case students learn about dental practice options at Street of Dreams event

Jackie Best
Managing Editor

Eighteen dental students from Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine participated in the Street of Dreams on March 13.

The Street of Dreams program is a collaboration between CWRU, the Ohio Dental Association and the Greater Cleveland Dental Society where students have the opportunity to tour several dental offices in the Cleveland area to learn about their options post-graduation.

"This event allows the students to receive practical, real life insight into various dental practice models to help them in determining what they may wish to achieve in the future," said Sara Fields, director of alumni relations at the Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine. "This is a very valuable program and we appreciate the Ohio Dental Association sponsoring it for our students."

Dr. Tom Kelly took the students – all in their third or fourth year of dental school – on tours of five different dental offices in the Landerbrook Dental Professionals Building in Mayfield Heights.

The dentists and staff members who opened up their offices for the students to tour during the Street of Dreams event were Dr. Ryan Wenger (Wenger Orthodontics); Drs. Marius Laniaskas and Richard A. Miller; Dr. Jason Schermer; Dr. Scott Alperin; and Dr. Bill Nemeth.

Participating students included Hussam Ahmed, Nicole Apollon Chirouze, Jessica Chrzanowski, Caleb Conrad, Garred Gomez, Daniel Hall, Ying Huang, Roshan Jacob, Erik Johnson, Hyuna Lee, Hyun Suk, Lee David Noh, Naghmeh Pashmini, Jasmin Pathiyil, Lauren Primiano, Blake Sessions, Alan Tang and Jeff Wells.

"The Street of Dreams was an awesome experience for our dental students," Fields said. "The dentists who participated allowed the students to tour their office, shared information on how they run their practice and answered students' questions about running a dental practice."

Following the tour, students and den-



At the Street of Dreams, dental students from Case Western had the opportunity to tour five dental offices to learn about their options after graduation. The March 13 event was a collaboration with CWRU, the Ohio Dental Association and the Greater Cleveland Dental Society.

ODA Staff

"This event allows the students to receive practical, real life insight into various dental practice models to help them in determining what they may wish to achieve in the future."

– Sara Fields
Director of alumni relations at
CWRU School of Dental Medicine

tists had an additional opportunity to network during an informal reception.

"After the tour, the networking continued at Champps Restaurant. This allowed the students to have deeper conversations," Fields said. "Our tour guide, Dr. Tom Kelly, told the students the benefits of organized dentistry, and through the networking at Champps, they got to meet Greater Cleveland Dental Society leadership."

The Ohio State University College of Dentistry will participate in a Street of Dreams event with the Columbus Dental Society on May 10.

For information about how to get involved with the Street of Dreams program, please contact Karli Hill, ODA director of membership and marketing, at Karli@oda.org.



Dr. Scott Alperin speaks to Case Western Reserve University dental students as they tour his office March 13 during the Street of Dreams event.

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2013 ODA Annual Session Speaker Spotlight: Dr. John Svirsky

Pathology Puzzler

By Dr. John Svirsky

A 72-year-old white male presented to an oral surgery office for biopsy of a clinically expansive, radiolucent lesion (Figure 1) of the right mandible. There was hyperplastic tissue around tooth #31, which was mobile. The lesion appears to be a 4 cm by 3 cm well-circumscribed radiolucent lesion with a sclerotic border. The patient experienced no pain or paresthesia and the lesion rapidly developed over three months (according to the patient). The patient's past medical history includes management of high blood pressure, muscle spasms, prostate issues secondary to prostate cancer and osteoarthritis. His medications include Caduet®, losartan, 81 mg aspirin, cyclobenzaprine, nabumetone, NSC-24 Prostate™ formula, PreserVision®, fish oil and calcium supplements.

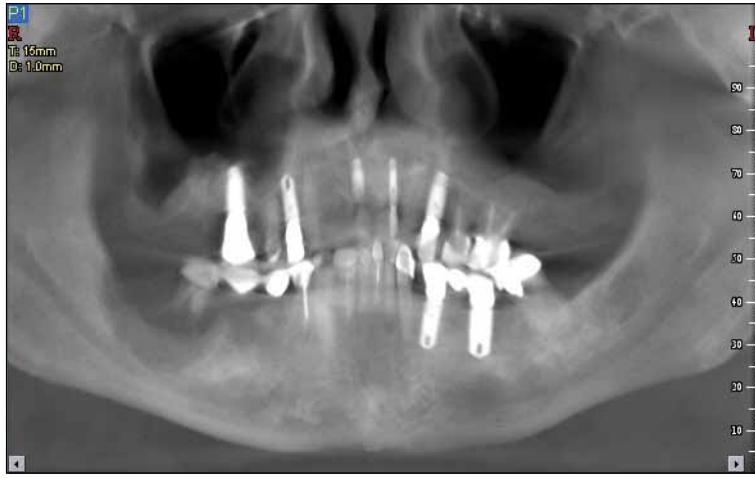


Figure 1: Clinically expansive radiolucent lesion of the right mandible, 4 cm by 3 cm, featuring a sclerotic border.

Based on the radiographic findings, which of the following could be considered in a differential diagnosis?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Ameloblastoma | 6. Metastatic disease |
| 2. Central giant cell granuloma | 7. Periapical pathosis |
| 3. Odontogenic keratocyst | |
| 4. Odontogenic myxoma | |
| 5. Squamous cell carcinoma | |

See PATHOLOGY, page 11

Editor's note: This column is the first in a three part series. Watch future issues of the ODA Today for columns submitted by 2013 ODA Annual Session speaker Dr. John Svirsky.

John Svirsky, DDS, MEd

Dr. John Svirsky is a professor of oral pathology at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry and a diplomate of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.

Svirsky will be presenting the following courses at the 2013 ODA Annual Session:

Come In and Catch It: The Review That Sticks

- When: Friday, Sept. 20 from 9 a.m. to noon.
- Support provided by P&G
- This is the perfect review course that covers the recognition, diagnosis, and treatment of the 30 soft tissue lesions that every dentist and hygienist should know and treat appropriately. A number of the entities only require recognition. The classic lesions that have been forgotten since school will be brought back to life, and your diagnostic confidence will be reenergized.

Bugs That Will Eat You

- When: Friday, Sept. 20 from 2 to 5 p.m.
- Support provided by P&G
- This course delves into unusual systemic diseases with oral manifestations. Areas covered will include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, tuberculosis, and a potpourri of bacterial, viral, and mycotic infections. Surprises will appear. Get ready for a memorable oral pathology experience.

Lumps, Bumps and Lesions For All Seasons

- When: Saturday, Sept. 21 from 9 a.m. to noon.
- Support provided by P&G
- Dr. Svirsky will discuss unusual cases, diagnostic challenges, the oral health effects of tobacco products and alcohol, premalignant and malignant lesions, and new diagnostic techniques. Tobacco advertising will be exposed and the link between human papilloma virus (HPV) and oral cancer will be discussed.

For more information about the courses that Svirsky will be presenting and to register, plus a full schedule of Annual Session events, visit www.oda.org/events and watch your mailbox for the full program of events.

The 2013 ODA Annual Session is Sept. 19-22 in Columbus. Registration and more information, including a full listing of speakers and events, can be found at www.oda.org/events.

INSURANCE, from page 8

of time when they have to credential or re-credential," said Dr. Sharon K. Parsons, chair of the ODA Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice. "Dentists who are unable to utilize this online resource, however, should keep a copy of their completed credentialing form to use the next time they need to be credentialed or re-credentialed by an insurance company, PPO, Medicaid HMO, etc."

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Is it a dual-rep brokerage firm? NO. You cannot serve two masters. Dual-rep firms charge buyers hefty fees, and as a result, their strategies usually negatively affect the final selling price and/or terms the owners agree to when selling. In addition, if a buyer has to choose between two similar practices- where one requires a substantial fee to a dual-rep firm, and the other does not- which practice and brokerage firm will they choose?

Is it the equipment/supply companies who are also brokering practices? NO. In most cases, the owner is selling and retiring. The supply companies want to please the buyer in order to gain or retain their business post-closing. Whatever the terms, their priority is to get the deal done in order to pick up the buyer as a new client, at whatever cost to the seller.

Is it your accounting firm that also owns a practice brokerage company? NO. This could be the biggest conflict of interest that exists. Sellers look to their accountants for advice asking, "Is the price or taxstructure acceptable?" Will the accountant advise their client against a "bad" deal if a large commission is on the line to their firm, or to a brokerage company they are partners with or are profiting from?

Is it the firm that has successfully represented sellers for over a decade? YES!

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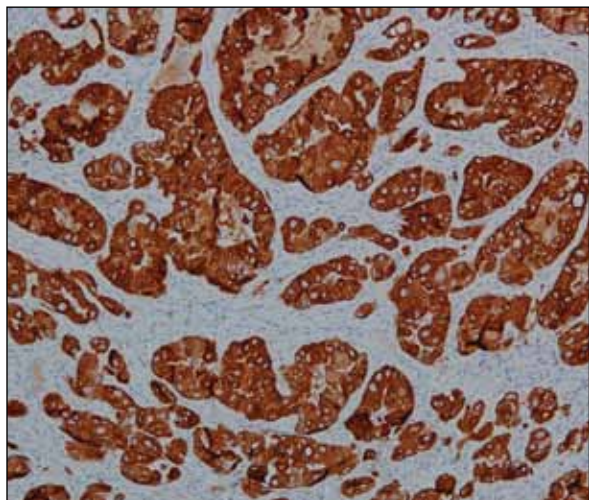


Figure 2: Hematoxylin and eosin stained slide showing a glandular malignancy replacing the normal cellular architecture.

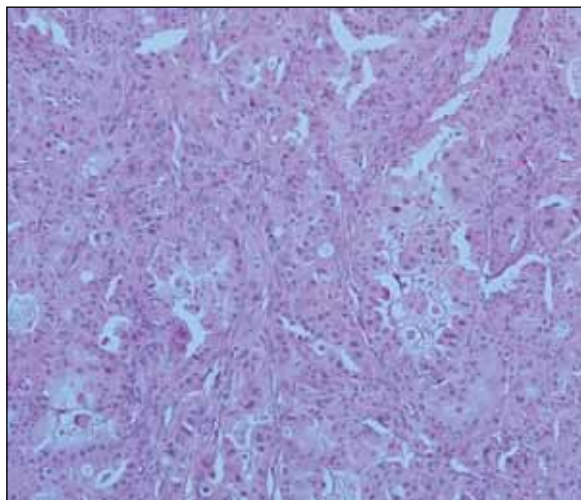


Figure 3: PSA (prostate specific antigen) immunohistochemical stain showing negative findings. The islands of the tumor would stain brown in a positive stain. The second prostate stain was also negative (PSAT).

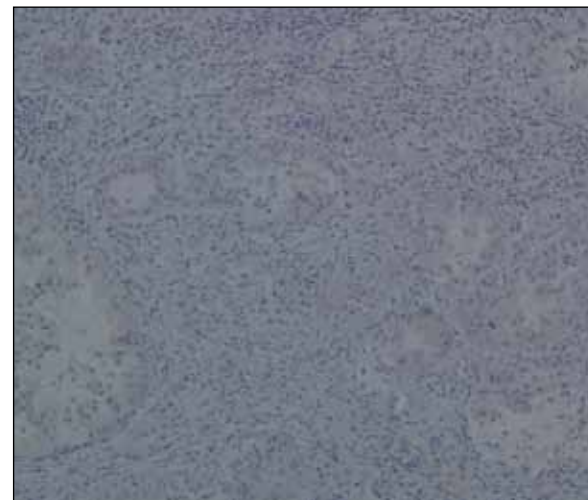


Figure 4: CK7 (cytokeratin 7) was strongly positive with the tumor islands picking up the brown stain. This finding along with the lung mass suggests a metastatic lung lesion of the mandible.

PATHOLOGY PUZZLER, FROM page 10

Based on the radiographic appearance all of the following could be considerations, although squamous cell carcinoma and metastatic disease were unlikely.

A biopsy was performed and the histologic appearance was that of a tumor composed of nest and cords of a glandular malignancy completely replacing the normal tissue architecture (figure 2). It did not appear of salivary origin and the histology suggested a metastatic adenocarcinoma. With a previous history of prostate cancer, this was the primary consideration. The patient did not have symptoms of bone pain and there were no findings to suggest other lesions. Immunohistochemical stains were ordered

to rule out metastatic prostate (PSA (figure 2) and PSAT) and the patient was sent for a PET (Positron Emission Tomography) to determine other lesions. Immunohistochemical stains that are positive will stain brown. In this case both prostate stains were negative (figure 3).

The PET Scan revealed a large lung mass and additional stains were ordered. CK20, Napsin A and TTF were negative. However CK7 was positive (figure 4 staining brown) and this was consistent and suggestive of a metastatic lung process. The lesion was signed out: Adenocarcinoma, favor metastatic lung.

The radiographic appearance suggested an ameloblastoma, odontogenic

myxoma and central giant cell granuloma due to this being a lesion showing expansion. The location is characteristic for an ameloblastoma and odontogenic myxoma, but the age of the patient is much older than typical for these entities. Central giant cell granulomas (CGCG) also expand, but are more likely in the anterior regions of younger patients. CGCG associated with hyperparathyroidism typically show irregular bone loss without expansion. The cortication shown in the radiograph is suggestive of a cystic process. An odontogenic keratocyst does not normally expand and an apical lesion of this size would normally have symptoms. The radiograph had a local-

ized appearance which would normally rule out a squamous cell carcinoma or metastatic disease.

This case really surprised us, especially in a patient without any other symptoms. Typically metastatic lesions do not show up in the mandible without involving multiple other areas. This lesion also appeared well circumscribed and showed cortication. This again proves "tumors do not read text books" and the patient is a case of one.

This interesting and unusual case was submitted by Dr. Amir Naimi, an oral surgeon practicing in Northern Virginia.

This article was reprinted with permission from the Virginia Dental Association.

ANNUAL SESSION, from page 1

faxed with a credit card number. Please only register once – do not mail your registration if you have already faxed it in or registered online. Registration forms must be mailed by Aug. 31 or faxed by Sept. 6. Online registration is available through the end of the meeting.

Pre-registration is advised for all attendees – not only will it save you money, but you will also avoid standing in line on-site and the risk of being closed out of popular CE programs! To be eligible for reduced registration fees, registration forms and payment must be postmarked by Aug. 2. Pre-registration materials, including name badge and event tickets, will be mailed in late August. For any registrations received after Aug. 16, badges and tickets must be picked up at the ODA on-site registration area.

You can register your entire office on one registration form and pay for everyone with one form of payment! It's simple: Fill out the primary registrant's information including the name of your dental practice. Then list the name of everyone who is registering – including the dentist – and their course and event choices. If you need to add more courses or events than there is room for on one line, just



Seth Eberhardt (DPM) with his brother and ODA members Drs. Kyle Eberhardt, 2013 Annual Session Chair Bruce Grbach and Zachary Mellion at the New Dentist Reception, sponsored by the Ohio Dental Political Action Committee, during the 2012 Annual Session. This year's New Dentist Reception will be at 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 19 at Bar Louie.

take up two lines for one registrant. If mailing or faxing your registration, you can send in as many forms as you need – just photocopy the form. A ticket for the Table Clinics, the BASH!, Exhibit Hall door prizes for dentists, hygienists and staff, and any appropriate give-a-ways will automatically be sent with your registration. One pre-registration confirmation and packet will be sent to the primary registrant with all

of that group's information.

Attendees can also register on site, but plan to be at the ODA registration desk no less than one hour before your first CE course begins. Be sure to select alternate courses in case your first choices are sold out.

Special registration categories

The ODA will once again offer an Exhibits Only Pass on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2013. Any dentist or staff member can register for no fee. This registration category gives attendees who may not wish to attend any CE courses the opportunity to shop in the Exhibit Hall. The Exhibits Only pass is good only on Saturday, and does not include any advantages of other registration categories. Registrants in this category may not register for any CE courses – free or paid, can not attend the Table Clinics, can not receive any CE credits, or receive any other benefit included with other Annual Session registration categories and fees. Exhibits Only passes must be picked up at the onsite registration desk during Saturday Exhibit Hall hours, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 20, 2013.

All students, including dental students, dental residents, dental assisting students and dental hygiene students, must submit a copy of their student ID or ASDA membership number in order to register as a student.

Dental students pay no registration fee and may attend any CE lecture course at no cost, space permitting. Posted fees for hands-on courses apply. Dental residents who are ADA members pay no registration fee and may attend any CE lecture course at no cost, space permitting. Posted fees for hands-on courses apply. Dental residents who are not ADA members will be charged posted non-member fees or can join the ADA at the reduced dental resident fee. Registration fees are waived for dental hygiene and post-secondary dental assisting classes attending Annual Session as a group. Every group of five students must be accompanied by an instructor or appropriate chaperone while in the Exhibit Hall. The pre-registration fee for post-secondary student dental assistants attending individually is \$5, and increases to \$15 on-site. Hygiene and assisting instructors, or students registering individually can call the ODA to register or for additional information at (614) 486-2700 or in Ohio, at (800) 282-1526.

ADA members in the Retired Life category do not pay a registration fee if registered before the pre-registration deadline. A discounted \$50 registration fee applies after the pre-registration deadline of Aug. 2, including on-site registration. Dentists in this category can audit any CE lecture course at no charge, space permitting; but to receive CE credit for the course, the member must pay the posted course fee.

Spouses of ADA member dentists who do not work in the dental office may register for free.

Non-member dentists may apply a portion of the registration fee toward 2014 ODA membership dues. To take advantage of this offer, contact the ODA membership department at (614) 486-2700.

For a cancellation refund, written requests must be received by the ODA no later than Sept. 1, 2013. A \$20 service fee will apply for each cancellation. Refunds, no matter when submitted, will be processed two to four weeks after the 2013 Annual Session. Refunds will be made via the same method of payment, when possible.

Registration materials are scheduled to be in the mail and available online at www.oda.org/events this month.



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The Explorer

Matthew J. Messina, DDS
Executive Editor

Buyer Beware

Just when I think that I'm becoming more savvy and aware of the potential risks of living in the Internet age, another surprise comes along and forces me to raise my alert level again. I'm pretty good at realizing that I haven't won the South African Lotto and that no Nigerian Prince is emailing me wanting to send money out of the country. Imagine my surprise when a controversy walked into my office with a smile on her face and a glossy catalog of dental products!

The issue at hand concerns "gray-market" dental products. The thorny subject involves terms like "certified retailer" and "authorized dealer." And I thought purchasing dental supplies was the easy part of dentistry!

"Gray-market" products include branded goods intended by the brand owner (e.g. DENTSPLY) for sale in one national market that are instead diverted and resold by unauthorized distributors to another market. There are estimates that 5-8 percent of dental supplies sold are gray-market or completely counterfeit.

As an example, the way this sometimes works is that a product, let's say impression material, is intended to be sold in China. The manufacturer ships the product to Shanghai, but the impression material is purchased there and re-routed back

to the U.S. and sold by another company. Often, these products are repackaged, so that the dentist purchasing the product cannot tell if the products are outdated or expired. The gray-market products may have been compromised by improper shipping or storage in non-temperature-controlled facilities, thereby resulting in compromised product efficacy.

It can be nearly impossible for a dental office to spot a product that has been altered or repackaged. To the naked eye, the packaging appears identical to the official packaging, including lot codes that match legitimate sequences sold to authorized dealers. The FDA is responsible for policing this situation, but no action is currently being taken by the FDA to stop this activity. The manufacturers have released information to help dentists make informed buying decisions. Some manufacturer websites (e.g. 3M) list the authorized dealers for their products. Others, like DENTSPLY, have created an Unauthorized Dealer List.

It is impossible to say whether gray-market products are inherently unsafe or lack effectiveness. The critical issue with gray-market products is the unknown. One thing that is certain is that manufacturers have declared that gray-market products do not carry the warranty or support of materials purchased from authorized dealers. This statement from DENTSPLY is typical: "The sources used by these dealers to obtain DENTSPLY products are unknown. DENTSPLY does not warrant products purchased through these dealers as the product is of unknown origin, quality, and/or may have been sold out of its original packaging. To ensure safety and efficacy, DENTSPLY strongly encourages dental practitioners to avoid purchasing DENTSPLY products from unauthorized sources."

There are several ways to attempt to

identify potentially gray-market dental supplies. It is incumbent on the dental office to verify the distributor. If the company selling the product does not have a recognizable name, we need to do our homework and confirm that the retailer is indeed authorized by the manufacturer. If the product is selling for significantly below known market price, then the dental office needs to verify the source. Suspicious packaging that is smeared, smudged, or appears to be altered in any way should be investigated. Is the product marked "for export only" or "not registered for sale in the European Union or United States?" We should check the expiration date on packages when they arrive. Patients expect to be treated with first quality materials.

Dental supplies are a significant expense in the running of a dental office. We should make every effort to be as efficient as possible, remaining savvy consumers. It is the responsibility of each dentist to determine the correct business practices for his/her office. I don't intend to tell you how to practice or with whom to do business. However, it is important to educate ourselves before we buy. The ordering of dental supplies is often delegated to a staff member. This is a good time to sit down with that person and discuss policies on product ordering. As Gordon Christensen has said, "Questionable products and unknown, unauthorized distributors should be avoided."

The cost of overcoming potential problems for patients that may be caused by inferior products can be far greater in the long run than any amount of money saved in the short run. If a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is. Sad as it is for me to say, the policy in the dental office has to be Caveat Emptor; Buyer Beware!

Dr. Messina may be reached at docmessina@cox.net.



Between the Lines

Ken Jones, DDS, JD
Guest Columnist

Denial

"I believe in looking reality straight in the eye and denying it." Garrison Keillor (1942 -)

It's hard to believe it's only been eight years since Lori died. You remember Lori, don't you? She put her car into a light pole. She and her boyfriend, Harry, were my initiation into the world of crystal meth and other illegal drugs.ⁱ

I saw Lori's mom last week in the local grocery store. She still has custody of Lori and Harry's three kids, even though Harry is recently out of jail. Mom is still convinced that Lori was an innocent bystander to Harry's meth use and drug sales. But, she says Lori would have wanted Harry to take care of the kids. She says the jail time might have made Harry into a good father. That's her denial.

I spoke to Harry's probation officer. He said Harry hasn't yet made an attempt to get involved in his kids' lives, and, since he's probably going back into the drug scene, that's OK. I guess he still thinks he can quit whenever he wants to because he doesn't have a meth problem. If so, then that's his denial.

Some of us deny that we, too, may be active participants in our patients' drug abuse. I still find dentists who prescribe 30 Percocet or Vicodin when referring a patient for endo or extraction, even

though the patient will be seen the same day. I still see specialists who almost demand that patients be sedated for every procedure, and routinely give large amounts of post-op narcotics when ibuprofen will do very well. I talk with criminal defense attorneys whose clients know well which dentists are the easy touches. I talk with prosecutors who know the very same list.

We deny a lot of realities of life. A while back, I gave a drug abuse CE talk to a group of dentists and dental staff. When I finished, a rather upset attendee proceeded to let me know how wrong I was about his patients and his community. Today I got a call from that same dentist, apologizing. He'd started to pay a little more attention to his patients and started to listen to his staff just a little bit more. It also probably helped him recognize his abject denial when his son was picked up for reckless driving and was found still smoking a joint when he finally pulled over.

As these stories show, often, our denial isn't just drug related, it's responsibility related. Many of us deny the pervasive lack of parental accountability that increases the caries rate and reduces good oral hygiene among society's young and often single-parent families, many of whom are on Medicaid. To be honest, though, many of you deny it because you don't ever see those patients. Not enough ready cash and good insurance plans. Or as one dentist told me, "My talent's too valuable to waste on someone who won't take care of it."

Maybe it's time to stop denying our own responsibilities. Maybe it's time to act like professional health care providers and to help educate the public. Maybe a discussion with a parent and child in your operatory could stop just one family from

the devastation that peer pressure and drugs can cause.

Maybe a friendly word of advice could stop a 16-year-old from having, if not the first, then maybe the next couple of kids before mom and dad are out of high school. Maybe not. But, just maybe, it would give them a chance to be productive citizens instead of a drag on the economy that the rest of us pay for. Maybe we could help reduce the future number of 47-year-old great-grandmothers who head four-generation, single-parent families, all on governmental assistance.

In reality, dentistry's claim to fame has been prevention. We should be good at it. I won't deny that we can't do it all on our own, but who says we can't help?

Dr. Jones may be reached at jones-ddsjd@aol.com.

ⁱNeither Lori nor Harry are their real names.

ⁱⁱODA Today Sept. 2005.

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Johns Dental Lab	5	Richlak, Lawyer & Co.	11
Lighthouse PMG	13	Smile Brands, Inc.	8
Midwest Dental	5	Sunbury Seminars, Inc.	9
National Practice Transitions Network	10	Superior Dental Care	10
ODASC	2, 7	Thomas Law Group	6
OSHA Review Inc.	3	Wickens, Herzer, Panza, Cook & Batista	3

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