

New Haven Dental Association NEWSBRIEF

A BULLETIN FOR NEW HAVEN DENTAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

FEBRUARY 2010

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NHDA Website
www.newhavendental.org

NEW HAVEN DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Eli's on Whitney at

2392 Whitney Avenue Hamden, CT

THURSDAY, February 4, 2010

**“Dental Education: Where are we Now
and Where are we Going”**

**Dr. Monty MacNeil, Dean, University of
Connecticut School of Dental Medicine**

**PLUS
MANDATORY CE REQUIREMENT:
Access to Care
(DVD will be presented during Meeting)**

*Cost: \$38 payable to the New Haven Dental
Association*

Cocktails at 6:00, Dinner at 6:30

*Dinner Choices: Prime Rib, au jus
Chicken Florentine
Tortellini Primavera*

Please RSVP by February 2
to Dr. Tam Le at (203) 248-4080,
or by email at wecare@hamdenfamilydental.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues:

As I sit to write this month's message, I cannot help but to think of what has happened yesterday with the election of Republican Scott Brown to the Senate. Yes the people of Massachusetts, or liberal-achusetts, have spoken and while no election is decided upon one issue, the majority of people in that state have used this election to speak out against the Obama healthcare reform plan. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not advocating the Democrats plan and I'm not knocking it either. That's not my role here. Truth is, I don't have enough intelligence to gather a position on it one way or the other (though I do know there's gotta be some fixin' done at some point). What I do find most interesting is that once again in our great country the people have exercised their voice about how they feel about a very decisive, well let's just call it what it is, a very heated issue and you can feel the shock waves from Cape Cod to Los Angeles.

While it may not be making headline news, things are really starting to heat up around here in our small world. As I've been discussing up till now, the access to care issue and the incorporation of a possible mid-level practitioner (DHAT, ADHP, etc) in Dentistry is at the forefront of the profession's politics. Recently, the House of Delegates for the CSDA has proposed an idea to initiate a pilot study to evaluate the effectiveness, cost-benefit analysis, and need for a mid-level practitioner for the state of Connecticut. This action has spurred an intense amount of emotion (anger) in certain pockets of the state as well as from many other states, and amongst various committee groups which serve the CSDA as many have interpreted this action as an endorsement of a mid-level practitioner. Let's be very clear here that there has been no endorsement of any kind. The defeat in the legislature last year for a mid-level practitioner came from our ability to say to lawmakers that we really don't know what positive or negative affects a DHAT or an ADHP will have on dental care for low-income individuals. Nevertheless, the professions opposition to this has led many to think that we are "obstructionists" in the access problem, that we are careless people "protecting our turf." That's understandable as up till now we have not offered a constructive solution to the problem. Sure we asked for more re-imburement for Title 19 patients and achieved it for the 18 and younger group but that's not going to happen for the adult population. Not with the budget problems this past economic blow has given us.

So in reality, I believe this is a brilliant maneuver. It puts the ball back into the legislators' court and says to them "Listen, we should objectively look at whether this major change in the delivery of dental care will be helpful or harmful, will it serve the needs it intends too, what will it take to train a mid-level practitioner, and can it be sustainable?" Because if we don't initiate this kind of study, the fear is that some other state may one day make an ADHP legal without such a study and the advocates in Connecticut will point to it and say "look they did it in such and such state, let's do it here." And that's not how change should be made, not without good science and good understanding.

But believe me; I'm not trying to convince you one way or the other. My plea to you is if you feel strongly about the initiation of a pilot study, for it or against it, then simply sit down and write a letter to me and I'll pass it on to our delegates who vote on your behalf. Because we don't vote like they do in Massachusetts and it's critical that the majority of the membership be heard.

Lastly, I'd like to bring to your attention that the February meeting will be held at Eli's on Whitney in Hamden. Please try to make it as it will be an informative meeting and CE credits will be given for 1 of the 5 mandatory CE requirements. I also had the pleasure of speaking with Dr. Perry Opin, an orthodontist in Orange who is the current speaker of the House of Delegates. Please give the interview a read.

Regards,

Barry

Interview with CSDA President Dr. Perry Opin

1) What is your current position for the CSDA and who has guided you in organized dentistry?

I've always felt that it is important for all professionals to give back to their profession and the public. I've been blessed through the many years I've been in practice to hold a number of volunteer positions. Presently, I am serving my third stint on the Board of Governors of the State Dental Association. As many of you know, you've been kind enough to elect me as your Speaker of the Connecticut State House of Delegates. I've previously held this position as Speaker of the House of Delegates of the American Association of Orthodontists, so this position is not new to me, although it does have its own challenges. I think it's important for everyone in our Society to know that you have many members who give freely of their time in many different capacities at the state and local level. Realizing I cannot mention everyone I would like to recognize a few including Dr. Kurt Koral, Dr. Shelly Natkin, Dr. Michael Margolies, Dr. Bruce Cha, Dr. Gerry Alexander, Dr. Richmond Hung, Dr. Barry Weiss, Dr. Doug Rollins, Dr. Walter Russo, Dr. Dean Cloutier, Dr. Nancy Summer Lerch, Dr. Joe Tagliarini and Dr. Alvin Berger amongst others all who are serving with distinction at various levels and positions of the Connecticut Dental Association, The Mission of Mercy, and so many other worthy projects. We all owe you a great deal of gratitude for your many-fold selfless acts making the patients we are honored to serve, and our profession, better.

2) What do you see as the future of Dentistry?

As for the future of dentistry, considering the reforms in our health care system, I'm looking in my crystal ball and it is fuzzy. However, I believe there is a great likelihood that there will be a number of issues that are going to affect the practice of dentistry now and in the future. Because of the State budget crunch, there is a real possibility that, with the exception of emergency care, all title 19 dental care for adults will be eliminated. This is extremely unfortunate. As all of you know, the most inefficient and costly way to treat a dental patient is on an emergency basis. The Council of Legislation, as well as many of our key contact members are working hard to try to prevent this from happening. It is really sad that in spite of the extremely positive reaction of State dentists participating in dental care for the financially disadvantaged, this may occur.

3) What is your view on the current actions taken by the House of Delegates?

In my humble opinion, your House of Delegates acted responsibly by their deciding to study expanded duties (DHAT and EFDA). By doing so, dentists will now have the ability to steer this ship and help our State Legislators make informed decisions about these issues in the best interest of the public. It should be made clear that the House of Delegates simply agreed to study these issues. The study is very complicated and will take a lot of time and effort to come to any conclusions. Lastly, I have concerns for possible future manpower shortages in dentistry. I am sure that most of you are aware of studies done regarding this issue. It is interesting, however, of how many silver haired dentists have postponed their retirement because of the present economic crisis. This creates a problem for the recent graduates, as many graduates are finding it very difficult to find a position in our profession. I am told that this will clear up in the future, but only time will tell. To all of you, I can assure you, your future is bright in our wonderful profession. You provide a wonderful service to the public and I applaud you for it. Barry, I certainly thank you for asking me for this interview. I look forward to continuing service as your Speaker of the House of Delegates.

Upcoming Meetings

March 4 - Mr. Ted Lovejoy, Estate Planning, DVD CE will be offered

April 8 - Mr. Larry Peck, Developing and maintaining a Positive Attitude

May 5-7 - CSDA Annual Meeting Mohegan Sun Casino, Uncasville, CT

May 13 - Annual Meeting and Banquet

New Haven Dental Association
Dr. John Dean
123 York St.
New Haven, CT 06511

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

Volunteers are needed for the Connecticut Mission of Mercy project in Middletown, CT March 11th – 14th, 2010.

Please register by going to:

<http://www.csda.com/CTMOM/CTMOM10.html>

Consider making CTMOM a “Friends and Family project”. Encourage them to join you in volunteering for CTMOM. Registration deadline is Feb. 21. Any questions- contact Dr. Gerald Alexander (203) 782-0677

Please consider a donation if you cannot volunteer. Make checks payable to The Connecticut Foundation for Dental Outreach.

Wed. March 10 - laying of floor, delivery of equipment and supplies

Thurs. March 11 - set-up of clinic

Fri. March 12 - Clinic

Sat. March 13 - Clinic

Sun. March 14 – Breakdown

CTMOM 2010-Middletown

IT WON'T HAPPEN WITHOUT YOU!