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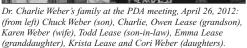
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VALLEY FORGE DENTAL JOURNAL

SPRING 2012







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ON THE COVER... Sunset at Camp 3, 19,700 ft. Aconcagua, Argentina. *Photo courtesy of Dr. Bruce Terry*.



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President's Message

Dr. Charles Incalcaterra, D.M.D. cjidmd@ptd.net

I want to take this opportunity during my first official President's Message to thank you for allowing me to serve. It truly is an honor and a pleasure to be involved in organized dentistry and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the Second District Valley Forge Dental Association.

I want to give you some background about me since many of you may not know who I am. I was born on Long Island, New York and moved to New Jersey when I was 12. After high school I went to Rutgers for my undergraduate degree, then on to UMDNJ in Newark for dental school. It should come to no surprise to anyone, then, that I am a Yankees, NY Giants, and NJ Devils fan. When I first moved to the Lehigh Valley in 1982, rooting for the Yankees was akin to worshipping Satan. It's comforting to know that, at least up my way, there are now more and more NY/NJ fans in eastern PA.

I moved to Pennsylvania in order to complete a one-year General Practice Residency Program at what was then known as The Allentown Hospital – now part of Lehigh Valley Health Network. My plan was to stay in Pennsylvania for one year, then return to New Jersey to find a job or a practice to purchase. Thirty years later I am very happy to call the Lehigh Valley and Pennsylvania my home, the place where I raised my three children. The Lehigh Valley has grown tremendously over the years, and I am excited about all the cultural opportunities here.

I joined organized dentistry immediately after my residency program was over. I've always felt that there is strength in numbers and it was natural for me to become involved with the profession that would support me for the rest of my life. I became president of the Lehigh Valley Dental Society in 1995, was the general chairperson of the Valley Forge Dental Conference in 2000, and then took a few years off from active leadership roles. By chance, John Meci saw me at the 2008 Valley Forge Conference, and asked me if I would be interested in getting involved again. I could make a joke here and say that I was stupid enough to say "yes", but the reality is that I felt it was time for me to step up to the plate again and serve our organization.

I am a general dentist with a solo practice in Bethlehem, and am also one of the co-directors of the General Practice Residency program at LVHN. The split between private practice and the educational institution is at times difficult, but nonetheless rewarding. Helping to teach and guide young dentists along their career paths more than compensates for the time out of the office and the need to "switch gears" between the two jobs. I firmly believe that dental schools are overwhelmed with the amount of material they need to teach in four years, and that the best way to transition from dental school to private practice is by completing a residency program. It is now thirty years since I graduated dental school, and it amazes me how much we have advanced. Implant therapy was not even taught in 1982, nor was rotary endodontics or even infection control for that matter. Think about when you graduated dental school, and what it must have been like thirty years before that. The advances in dentistry are astounding, and our younger dentists need to be well prepared when they enter private practice.

As I write this message, your representatives to the Pennsylvania Dental Association have completed their duties at the annual session in Hershey. They all did a great job representing you at the state level of organized dentistry, and I thank them for their service. The biggest issue we faced is an aging membership and, as a result, declining dues revenues. The Board of Directors was given the authority to make cuts to the PDA budget and set dues in the future, but money will need to be taken out of reserves this year to support the programs that the PDA provides for member dentists. We can only do this for so long until we eventually run out of money. I don't know if there is a short-term fix for this problem, but I do firmly believe that the long-term solution is to recruit more new members and to educate our current members about the value of membership. I'll write more about the benefits and value of membership in a future edition of this journal.

One of my main goals as president this year is to hold a New Dentist Leadership Conference. With support from the ADA we will be putting on a one-day event on Saturday, November 10th at the Sands Hotel and Casino in Bethlehem. There is an adjoining article in this edition of the Valley Forge Dental Journal, so please take a few moments to read about it on page 8. I think this will be an exciting event and I am looking forward to working with a committee of young dentists to put this conference together.

In closing, I'd like to thank our two previous presidents, Rusty Bullock and Karin Brian, for leading the way before me. Their guidance and dedication to organized dentistry is an inspiration to me and they certainly lead by example. Becoming involved is rewarding and worthy. I hope that all of you will consider doing the same at some point in your careers. Maybe one day someone will walk up to you and ask you to serve organized dentistry. I hope your answer will be "yes".

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In Memoriam **DR. BRUCE SINGER**



Dr. Bruce Singer and his wife, Becca

It is with sadness that I inform you that our dear friend and colleague Bruce Alan Singer passed away on Thursday, January 19th at the age of 64.

Bruce Singer was a prosthodontist who practiced in Jenkintown and lived with his wife Becca in Ambler, PA. He was a native of Philadelphia graduating from Springfield High School, Moravian College and Temple Dental School where he also earned his specialty certificate in fixed prosthodontics.

Early in his career, he worked as a clinical instructor and assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Dental Medicine. His incorporation of advanced photography into cosmetic dentistry led to many articles published in periodicals such as the Journal of The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, Pennsylvania Dental Journal and Dentistry Today. For

several years he served as the Director of Scientific Photography in the Dental Division of Albert Einstein Medical Center.

He shared his knowledge of dentistry and photography with many generations of students. He taught and lectured around the country on dental esthetics and dental photography at such meetings as the Center City Study Club, the Greater Washington Study Club, the Yankee Dental Meeting in Boston, at the NYU Dental School International Symposium, the Holiday Dental Conference in Charlotte, NC, the Detroit Dental Society, the Montana Academy of General Dentistry, the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, and the Bavarian Dental Society in Munich.

Bruce was the immediate past President of Montgomery Bucks Dental Society.

He was also a past president of the Delaware Valley Chapter, American Academy of Osseointegration and General Chairperson of the Valley Forge Dental Conference where he also served on the scientific program committee. He was an Associate in the Department of Restorative Dentistry at University of Pennsylvania for many years.

Last year Bruce won a 2011 Great Idea Award from the Pennsylvania Dental Association for his work with young dentists. He had recently merged his practice with Yorktown Dental Associates, led by Dr. Yongkun Kim and Dr. Bernard Dishler, the current President of the Pennsylvania Dental Association. He served as an alternate delegate to the Pennsylvania Dental Society and was slated to be a delegate this year.

Bruce was a superb clinician with a very successful practice limited to prosthodontics and cosmetic dentistry. He was trusted and well respected by his colleagues. Bruce will be greatly missed by his family, his colleagues, his patients and his friends.

In Memory of Dr. John "Jack" Callahan, Sr.

Dr. John Callahan, Sr. died recently at the age of 84. Dr. Callahan was Past President of the Second District Dental Association and the Dental Society of Chester County and Delaware County. Dr. Callahan received his dental degree from the University of Pennsylvania Dental School in 1953 and a Bachelor of Science from Villanova University in 1949. Prior to his College degrees he graduated from Archmere Academy in 1945. Dr. Callahan was a Captain in the Army Dental Corps from 1955-1957, practicing dentistry from 1953 until 2012. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Dental Association and on Staff at Chester Hospital from 1953 until its closure; he was also an active dentist on staff at Crozier Hospital for 5 years, and on Staff at Taylor Hospital from 1957 until the present (Honorary Emeritus). Dr. Callahan was a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus with the Cardinal Dougherty Assembly and a Third Degree Knight of the Marian Council. He was a continuous member of the Ridley Park Fire Co. since 1943, a lifetime member of Springhaven Club, and a past Rotary Member.

Jack Callahan was married for 40 years to the late Virginia "Ginny" (Dawson) Callahan. He was a devoted father, grandfather, and friend to many. The Second District Dental Society recognizes the dedication of Dr. Callahan to his beloved profession.

PDA Distinguished Service Award Presented to Dr. Charles R. Weber



Dr. Weber presented with PDA Distinguished Service Award by Dr. Ron Bushick.

Dr. Charles Weber of West Chester received the Pennsylvania Dental Association's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, at the 2012 House of Delegates meeting on April 28, in Hershey, PA. This award is given to a member dentist who has given unselfishly to the profession and demonstrates what it means to be a PDA member volunteer dentist.

Dr. Weber became involved in organized dentistry in the early 1980's by serving on various committees for the Dental Society of Chester County and Delaware County, where he eventually became President of the local society. He continued to climb the ranks at the district level where he was Chair of the Valley Forge Dental Conference and President of the 2nd District, among many other positions.

Charlie was the 2nd District Trustee and then became President of the Pennsylvania Dental Association in 2004. During his tenure as PDA President, Dr. Weber launched a newly designed website, developed the Transitions newsletter and created the first PDA Leadership Conference, held in 2004. Currently Charlie represents Pennsylvania as the 3rd District Trustee to the American Dental Association.

Dr. Charlie Weber has devoted most of his professional career to organized dentistry and plans on continuing his endless contributions. Charlie is admired throughout Pennsylvania for his dedication, philosophy, and ethical principles. These are the merits that have earned him this prestigious award.

The following is Dr. Weber's acceptance speech presented on April 28, 2012 during the 2nd meeting of the PDA House of Delegates Meeting.

Dr. Charlton, officers, trustees, delegates and guests:

Thank you Ron for that wonderful introduction. Receiving this honor is a very humbling experience. As I look at the long list of previous winners of this very prestigious award, I see many who have influenced my career. I see a gentleman with whom I interviewed at Penn, as well as two who authored textbooks which I used in dental school. I see dentists from the First District who, through the Liberty Dental Conference, showed me the benefits and collegiality of organized dentistry while I was still a student. I see peers and colleagues throughout the state who have mentored me though the labyrinth of organized dentistry. And, as I stand before you today, I have to admit that I have enjoyed every minute of the journey and treasure the friendships and relationships I have made along that winding path.

The real people who truly deserve this reward are not standing before you today. Certainly my wife, Karen and my children deserve my heartfelt thanks for all of their love, support and understanding. Even my grandchildren, Emma and Owen don't get upset when I miss school events or a soccer or baseball game. Without my family's encouragement and yes, occasional criticism, I could not have devoted the time to organized dentistry.

I must thank my friends in Second District for nominating me as well as the Annual Awards Committee for selecting me for this honor. I would be remiss if I did not thank my support team of staff, both in my office as well as the staff in Second District, the Pennsylvania Dental Association and the American Dental Association. They have all worked very hard to make my world function like a well-maintained Swiss watch and I could not function a day without them.

While at dental school, the thought of not joining organized dentistry never crossed my mind. It was something that everyone did. ASDA did not yet exist so we were members of the Student American Dental Association. Maybe it's a generational thing, but I was a joiner and became involved in many student activities. As Editor of the Penn Dental Journal, I wrote an article about the dichotomy of selling tobacco products in the gift shop of the University Hospital. Knowing that the Vice President of Medical Affairs was Dr. Luther Terry, the former Surgeon General and author of the famous anti smoking document connecting tobacco use with cancer and heart disease, I thought for sure that I would have an ally. When I was summoned to his office several days after the editorial was published I felt sure that I would be told that whatever Pulitzer prize they gave to student journalists, I was sure to be a contender. I was brought in to office of leather furniture and large desks, a truly important setting for such an auspicious moment in my young career. I was immediately informed that this ill thought out notion would cost the university thousands of dollars and cause a great deal of turmoil in the hospital as patients who could not smoke during their respiratory treatments might become very belligerent. Although he did agree with me, he said it was not a practical thing to do and would I consider writing a retraction. I said I would not, but would consider writing another article describing our conversation. Several weeks later, the dean of the dental school told me that the Board of Trustees of the hospital was banning the sale of tobacco products. Later smoking was banned in patient rooms and many years later smoking was banned in the hospital. The book Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladewell supports the fact that you do not need many people to actually make something happen. I think my early success with this project encouraged me to take on other causes and help make things happen.

In my third month of private practice, I was censored by the dental society for accepting credit cards, a new thing in the early 70's. I was told that accepting credit cards was unprofessional as professionals only accepted cash and checks (or in the case of Wyoming dentists, gold bullion). Therefore, I would be put on probation for six months. I did go to the board meeting and explained that accepting credit cards was not unprofessional and yes, it might be something that all dentists may do someday.

Installation

Dr. Bernie Dishler Installed as 2012-2013 Pennsylvania Dental Association President



Dr. Dishler receives the gavel from Dr. Denny Charlton at the Induction Ceremony on April 28, 2012.

Dr. Bernard "Bernie"

Dishler was installed as President of the Pennsylvania Dental Association during the House of Delegates meeting on April 28, 2012 in Hershey, PA. Dr. Dishler has been an active member of organized dentistry throughout his career which began at Temple University School of Dentistry. Dr. Dishler has served the PDA as President Elect, 2nd District Trustee, Delegate to the House of Delegates, and Chair of the Council on Membership. Bernie

Dishler is also active nationally at the American Dental Association being involved on the ADA Grassroots Action Committee, and being an ADA Grassroots Action Team Leader. He attended the ADA Washington Conference and served as a Delegate, was a member of the ADA Council on Membership and attended the ADA Membership and Recruitment Conference. Dr. Dishler also attended several ADA Annual Sessions, serving as Alternate Delegate and Delegate. Along the way to the PDA Presidency he also has held the office of President for the Second District Dental Association and was both Chair of the Valley Forge Dental Conference and Scientific Chair along with being a Director for a number of years. As a member of the Montgomery-Bucks Dental Society he also held the office of President.

Dr. Dishler is a member of the Montgomery County Oral Health Task. He is on the program advisory committee at Harcum College Hygiene program and Manor College EFDA program. He is a volunteer dentist for Healthlinks Medical Center, Donated Dental Services, and PDA Senior Dental Services. Bernie served for 2 years in the US Army Dental Corp and has a private practice in Elkins Park. He is a Fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry, a member and Fellow in the American College of Dentistry and a member in the International College of Dentistry.

Dr. Dishler has a great vision for his year as PDA President and is very excited about the plan for the PDA to establish a Mission of Mercy (MOM) event in the spring of 2013 in Philadelphia. The goal is to have a 100 chair two day clinic using volunteer dentists to treat 2000 patients. The mission is completing a million dollars worth of free dentistry for the underserved.

Bernie is married to Lana Dishler, and has 2 children, Joseph Dishler and Dr. Elyse Dishler, married to Dr. Michael Bernstein. He is active in the Jewish Community and usually makes a trip to Israel once a year. The members of the Second District/ Valley Forge Dental Association wish Bernie much success during his Presidency.

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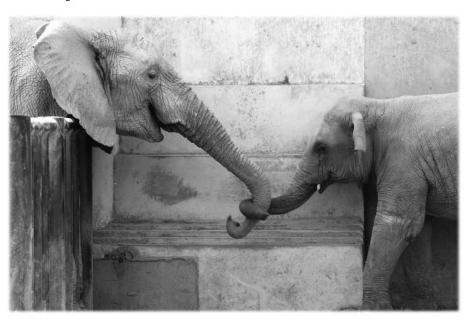
During my probation period, the dental society did consider that perhaps credit cards were the wave of the future. Little more was said about my probation and I continued to accept Visa and MasterCard. Affecting positive change can only make us a better profession. It's a good feeling to control our own destiny and it's a frustrating experience when others tell us the best way to practice. Like that would ever happen! These initial experiences encouraged me to become more involved with my local dental society, with children's dental projects, oral cancer exams and the myriad of committees, councils and task forces that led to the Second District the Pennsylvania Dental Association., and the American Dental Association.

Winston Churchill once said, leaders are not made, they are just people who get cornered. I've even gotten cornered in the Circular Dinning Room, but I have to admit, it's been a great ride, like driving along country roads with the top down on a sunny day. Without organized dentistry, Karen and I would not have the friendships and relationships that we have with so many wonderful people throughout Pennsylvania and the entire country. The Pennsylvania Dental Association has been a part of my life for many years and I sincerely thank every one of you for making this moment possible. This award is certainly the icing on the cake but through the years, you have already given me the ultimate honor of representing you. That has been my privilege.

Again thank you very much for this wonderful honor!

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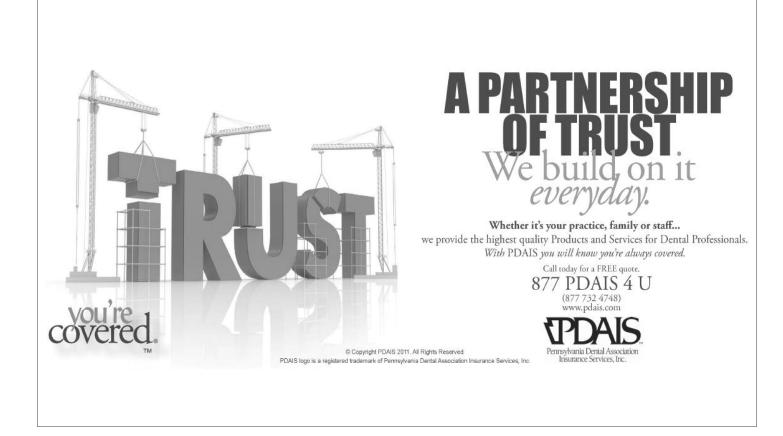
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New Dentist Leadership Conference

by Dr. Charles Incalcaterra, D.M.D. cjidmd@ptd.net

l am excited to announce that Second District is hosting a New Dentist Leadership Conference on Saturday, November 10 at the Sands Hotel and Casino in Bethlehem. The idea for this event came to me from discussions with Dr. Rusty Bullock (then 2nd District President) and Dr. William Cherry (then Lehigh Valley Dental Society President) during the Second District Leadership meeting in 2010. It was recognized that in order to perpetuate our profession we needed to develop young leaders who can be successful in their practices. Thus was born this idea.

At some of the Second District Board meetings over the past few years, President-Elect Dr. Nancy Rosenthal mentioned that the ADA has grant money for something called Membership Program for Growth, or MPG. Nancy is chair of the ADA Council on Membership and she was instrumental in helping Second District to obtain a grant from the ADA to help fund this program. In addition, our ADA Trustee, Dr. Charlie Weber, gave some great suggestions for speakers for this event.

The main speaker for the morning session will be Dr. Chris Salierno from Long Island. Chris is a young dynamic speaker who is involved in the New Dentist Committee at the ADA. Chris will speak on topics that will aid dentists in managing their practices. His topics include case presentations to patients, networking for new patients, managing your office and avoiding pitfalls when creating power point presentations.

Dr. Leonard Tau from Philadelphia will speak on marketing your practice using social media. In addition, there will be a presentation by media consultant Sean Connolly on Public Speaking and How to Deal with the News Media. I've heard Sean speak before and his presentation is excellent.

Although this is being billed as a New Dentist Conference, it is certainly applicable to all practicing dentists. The definition of a New Dentist is one who has graduated from dental school within the last ten years, but anyone can benefit from this conference. So whether you graduated ten years ago or thirty, there will be something for you at this conference to help improve your practice.

We chose Bethlehem for a number of reasons. As I mentioned in my President's Message, the Lehigh Valley has really grown over the past 10 years or so. We are now home to the Phillies minor league team, the Iron Pigs. Next spring we will be home to the Flyer's minor league team, the Phantoms. Our newest additions to the cultural scene are the Steel Stacks arts venue and the Sands Event Center. Both are on the grounds of the former Bethlehem Steel plant. Close to Bethlehem are venues and activities geared for children, such as the Crayola Factory in Easton, or the Discovery Center in Allentown. And of course, what better place is there to avoid the holiday shopping crowds than in beautiful downtown Bethlehem in mid November? The Sands has offered discounted hotel rooms for those of you who would like to stay over either Friday night before the conference, or Saturday night afterwards. In addition to the casino and great restaurants, there is also an outlet center known as the Shoppes at the Sands.

The bottom line then, is that the Lehigh Valley would be a great place to bring your spouse or family for a getaway weekend. There is a lot to do for everyone and if you haven't visited the Valley before, November is a great time to do so.

Here is the icing on the cake to help you make up your mind about attending this event. Although we are charging tuition for this conference, if you are a non-member, and choose to join the PDA in 2013, or a new member dentist (out of school 10 years or less) your tuition will be reimbursed to you in the form of a dues reduction if you attend. Dental residents who have a letter from their program directors will pay no tuition, so they can come for FREE. New Dentists (graduates of dental school between 2003 and 2012) will be charged \$75 tuition, but will receive a \$75 reduction in their dues in 2013 – making the conference FREE. Non-member dentists - either new dentist or not, will be charged \$200. But if the non-member joins the PDA (or NJDA) in 2013, their dues will be reduced by \$200, making the cost of this conference - you guessed it - FREE. Member dentists who attend this event will pay the low tuition price of \$100.

Finally, this event is not only open to dentists in Second District, but to all dentists in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. This is another reason for holding it in Bethlehem – for easy access from the Poconos, Harrisburg, Philadelphia and New Jersey. All dentists who attend this conference will receive the same benefit - a great day of continuing education, the opportunity to visit an exciting venue and city, and the chance to enjoy another member benefit at a very reasonable cost. Breakfast, lunch and breaks are included. Why would you not want to attend? Registration information will be out soon, but mark your calendars now for Saturday November 10, 2012. It's going to be a great day!

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2012 President's Dinner Honoring Dr. Karin Brian





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DR. HAROLD CROSSLEY, D.D.S., Ph.D.



is Professor Emeritus at the University of Maryland Dental School. A native of Rhode Island, Dr. Crossley received a Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmacy from the University of Rhode Island in 1964. He later was

awarded the Master of Science (1970) and Doctorate degrees (1972) in Pharmacology. The University of Maryland Dental School in Baltimore awarded Dr. Crossley the D.D.S. degree in 1980. The liaison between the classroom and his dental practice which he mentored on a part-time basis in the Dental School Intramural Faculty Practice produced a practical approach to understanding the pharmacology of drugs used in the dental office. Dr. Crossley has co-authored a number of articles and four books FALL dealing with a variety of topics CE within the field of pharmacology. 2012

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Conference Award Winners



Dr. Barry Cohen receives the 2012 Valley Forge Dental Conference Recognition Award from Dr. Karin Brian during the President's Dinner on March 8, 2012 at Margaret Kuo's Restaurant. Dr. Cohen currently serves on the Valley Forge Conference Committee, the Conference Steering Committee and the Scientific Committee and has been for the past 20 years.

> Dr. Edmund "Ted" McGurk receives the 2012 Second District Recognition Award during the 2012 Valley Forge Dental Conference. The Second District Recognition Award recognizes a member for distinguished and unselfish service to 2nd District.







The 2012 Second District Humanitarian Award was received by the Home of the Sparrow. Dr. Karin Brian presented the plaque, a contribution from Second District Dental, and gift cards from VFDC attendees during the President's dinner held on March 8. Patricia McLennan, CEO, and Ginny Parry, Director of Volunteer Services accepted the award for their organization that provides housing and support services for women working to improve their lives and their children's.

GKAS Thanks...

We would like to thank Drs. Andrews; Behnam; Borghesani; Bushick; Dockstader; Funari; Giantonio; Grzybicki; Gutsche; Hudson; Melli; Montgomery; Nelson; Pepe; Pfeiffer; Recupero; Scanlon; Scharlock & Russo; Sierakowski; Smedley; Swenda; and Vignola for their kind gifts supporting our Spring Give Kids A Smile events!

Patterson's Anthony White and 3M ESPE's Robert Dembrosky also donated supplies - many thanks!

With gratitude, Gude for Himmelberger, Dm) Bernadette a. Logan, D.D.S.

Local Happenings



Photo 1: Drs. Cary Limberakis, Charlie Incalcaterra, Nancy Rosenthal (ADA Council on Membership Chair), Bill Calnon (ADA President), Jay Freedman, and Larry Montgomery attend the ADA Membership Recruitment and Retention Conference in Chicago on March 31, 2012.

Photo 2: New Members of the Dental Society of Chester County and Delaware County are recognized at the dinner meeting on April 11, 2012 at the Paxon Hollow Country Club.



Photo 3: Volunteers who participated in the Abington Township PAL Screening and Sealant Day on February 23,2012.





Photo 4: *Dr. Jay Freedman, with staff, treat a patient at the Sealant event.*

Give Kids a Smile Event

On February 23, 2012 Dr. Jay Freedman and Dr. Cary Limberakis partnered with Abington Township Police Athletic League to organize a Give Kids a Smile event. 19 children between the ages of 7 and 18 were treated at the dental offices of Dr. Freedman and Dr. Limberakis providing over \$7,000 in dental care. Treatment included oral examinations, bite wing radiographs, orthodontic screenings, and periodontal exams. If permanent molars and premolars were erupted and healthy dental sealants were placed. All children received Fluoride varnish. Children with dental caries or other dental disease were given a resource guide partially funded thru MBDS and

Montgomery Co. Oral Healthcare Task Force to seek outlets for additional required care.

Drs. Rusty Bullock, Christina Gregory and Ronni Bruck along with 2 Abington hospital residents, Drs. John Amazan and Christie Chavez provided treatment along with Drs. Freedman and Limberakis. Staff from both dental offices and 16 Manor College EFDA program students and program directors Diane Meehan and Kathy Malone volunteered for the event. Lieutenant Molloy, head of Abington Township Police Community and PAL coordinator, Peggy Myers and several additional PAL volunteers, including Dr. Freedman's office manager Jan Harris, participated as well.

Aconcagua Summit Day

by Dr. Bruce Terry

My alarm just went off. It seems like I just fell asleep. I fumble in the dark to find my iPhone buried under four layers of clothes beneath my head. They have served as my pillow for the last twelve nights on this mountain. I find my phone and stop the alarm. It's 3:30 am. It's pitch black and cold as I open the zipper on my sleeping bag. I was really quite warm considering it was nearly zero degrees outside. I'm waking up in a three man tent at 19,700 feet as I prepare to summit Aconcagua in the next twelve hours.

My other tent mates John and Phil from Louisville, KY, are also unzipping there sleeping bags. I can barely remember meeting them for the first time at the Plaza Hotel in Mendoza Argentina twelve days ago. Along with three younger guys from Florida and a female banker from Basel, Switzerland we made up this season's 13th climbing team for Aventouras Patagonicas. We had a wonderful steak and Malbec dinner the night before we left for the mountain. We learned about each other; who did what, married, children, etc... We sized each other up, who was the strongest, who had the biggest ego, who might not make it. Secretly we all know that good karma has a lot to do with success on the mountain. We joked about being the lucky thirteen.

The guides are boiling hot water from melted snow. They started at 3:00 am and it will take another forty-five minutes before its ready. We will each get two liters of water to carry for the next fifteen hours and a little extra for hot tea now.

Three people in a tent no bigger than your kitchen table is a sight to behold. Clothes are strewn everywhere. "Is this sock mine?", Phil asks. "Smell it, I said as I give myself a morning bath with Wet Wipes inside my bag". *3:45 am*.

I found my headlamp and turned it on. I feel pretty good as I wake up. I find my medical kit under my down jacket and pull out my finger pulse oximeter. I slip it on and wait. One second, two, five. Pop - pulse is 99 and pulse ox is 70. If I were back in Wayne my wife would have called 911. The others check with similar numbers. We are not deterred; we have been oxygen deprived since we left base camp elevation of 13,300 feet seven days ago. 3:55 am.

"Hot water soon", says our guide, Aike. He and our other guide Marianna are both in their late 20's. They have summited this mountain more than seven times each. Every day we ask them to tell us what's ahead. How steep, how far, were common questions as we left for base camp. We left the road and hiked for three days, twenty-four miles and 6,000 feet to arrive at a well-established base camp with a fulltime cook and an outhouse. There was even Internet access during the day when the solar panels worked. As I slide out to the cold vestibule to use my pee bottle I wish I had a bathroom. 4:05 am.

John, Phil and I began the process of putting on all our layers. If you packed properly and didn't over pack with weighty items you never used, you should be wearing nearly every article of clothing you own. Depending on the weather we will be able to peel layers off later. The temperature for this trip was very nice. We were warned that winds of 50 mph and temperatures of minus 20° F were not uncommon, but we were enjoying global warming at its best. We have had sunshine each day allowing us to hike with very few layers, but when the sun goes down it gets cold fast. We have been told that we will approach the summit on the glacier and will be on ice for most of our summit day. We were told to put our boots and crampons on as we left Camp 3. Have you ever tried to put on double plastic boots, crampons and long gaiters, in the dark, in the middle of the night, in zero degree



weather? Breathe, breathe. I grab a Pro Bar, 392 calories, one of eight I will eat in the next twelve hours. *4:20 am*.

"Hot water ready!" the guides yell. With my boot and crampons on I carry my pee bottle off into the distance to empty it. Otherwise it will be frozen when I return from the summit later today. I return to the tent to grab my two other water bottles (author note: Mark one bottle for Pee and try not to mix them up!). Aike fills both bottles and I put one in an insulated sleeve. The insulated water bottle will fit inside my down parka now, and the other will go inside my backpack. If I am lucky it won't freeze up before I have a chance to drink it. The others are exiting their tents. We are not talking, we are saving our

energy for what lies ahead. We have been talking for twelve days; we know what's next. Aike says, "Leaving in fifteen minutes." Last night at dinner he told us that we would be leaving at 5:00 am, no exceptions. Aike said it would be cold and he was not going to wait for anyone who was not ready. 4:45 am.

Our appetites were not so good at this altitude last night. The menu of instant mashed potatoes with sundried tomatoes and dried mushrooms was hard to swallow. I know from prior trips that food gets bad near the summit and our appetites diminish with altitude. I tried and managed to eat my portion as best I could. Sitting inside our tent we heard the shout of "Seconds" and we just laughed.

Only a few minutes left before we leave. Last minute mental checklist. At this altitude it's easy to forget things. The brain is slow to process everything due to the lack of oxygen . I remember reading that at 20,000 feet there is roughly fifty percent oxygen available when compared to sea level. Too late, here we are! Check, double check, triple check. Extra batteries for my headlamp, check.

Energy bars and water in my parka and backpack, check. Extra gloves and hand warmers, check. Camera, check, everything zipped and secure, check, ice axe and poles, check. Boots tied and crampons secure, check. Later today someone will have their crampon come loose and fall off. We will wait for fifteen minutes in the snow while he gets it back on and secure. We are all now standing around in the dark with headlamps on. Somebody asks if I remembered to put on sunscreen, "Oh, shit!" Who remembers to put on sunscreen at 3 am when it's zero degrees outside? Aike shouts, "Let's go!" It's 5:00 am.

Breathe, step, breathe, step. It's cold and I am wearing six layers on my upper body. The trail out of camp is steep. We are not going to arrive at the summit until 2 pm if we are lucky. As we leave camp, we become a centipede of headlamps along the steep rise in front of us. I have seen these headlamp trails before. On Kilimanjaro, Elbrus, Mount Blanc. It's always the same. Leave before dawn to get to the summit early and avoid the bad afternoon weather. However, on Aconcagua we leave later, because it's often too cold to travel in the dark. One trade off for another. Breathe, step, breathe. 5:05 am.

We have walked for nearly ninety minutes. During that time there was no talking. Nothing to say as we try to wake up mentally and physically. The trail was steep but not technical. During that time I was thinking about our two days in



base camp. We had a great cook, Chemello, and an actual dining tent with a table and chairs. When I met Chemello we had just arrived and he had pulled out a pizza from the oven for us to enjoy. He had a smile from ear to ear and a pair of sneakers so worn and torn that the tops were just loose flaps. I had brought a pair of sneaker to cross the river twice on our way to base camp and I would not need these for the remainder of our trip. I presented them to Chemello after dinner. You would have thought I had given him a million dollars. Over the next two days I found extra portions on my plate during meals and special snacks . Eating several steak dinners before and after our trip and with the extra food from Chemello, I still managed to lose 10 lbs. during the trip. The morning light has been increasing for the past 30 minutes, but the sun has still not appeared. We arrive at Independencia, our first rest. We are at 20,500 feet. Time to eat and drink. 6:30 am.

We stop for an unusual break of nearly 20 minutes. Normally this can't be done because it's too cold and the wind is too strong to stop . But today it's calm and warmer than usual at five degrees Fahrenheit. My water bottle has been tucked into my parka to prevent freezing. I removed my summit mitts. They resemble boxing gloves and have prevented my hands from freezing. I unzip my parka and take a drink. Breathe, drink ,breathe. Then I reach in one of my pockets for my energy bar. I smartly tore open the energy bar package the night before so that I wouldn't have to fuss with it in the cold. Breathe, breathe, chew. Ever notice that chewing and breathing is hard to do? We sit and stare at one another as the sun struggles to peak out. Everyone seems in good spirits with a small smile and we make eye contact with one another. Aike yells, "We go in 5 minutes!" I finish my energy bar and drink more water, still warm in the bottle from earlier. I zip up my parka, put on my pack, grab my ice axe and stand up. Ready to go. 6:51 am.

A few days ago we asked our guides about the summit path. We were told that after Independencia we would hike a long traverse to the "Cave", a natural formation of rock providing a break from weather and wind. Shortly before we arrive we would cross the "Windy Pass" so named for the fierce winds that are usually present. I am worried about this area. Back in Mendoza I met climbers returned from their summit experience . A group of three from Ohio never made it to the summit. Their cheeks were red, purple and swollen. They were suffering from severe windburn and partial frostbite. There had been a bad storm that they endured up to the Cave. At that point the weather report was worse than earlier reported. They made the tough decision not to attempt the summit. One of the climbers retold the story and seemed relieved that they did not push further. He said that he was scared and cold and was happy when the decision to turn around was made.

Our guides were relying on weather reports from base camp and from Miguel, a logistics person with our expedition company, who checks weather from several sources and reports back by 2-way radio to Aike twice a day. We have enjoyed fantastic weather on this trip, thanks in part to global warming and La Nina. We were told to expect good weather today, but a storm was moving in by afternoon and we should try to summit and return by early afternoon. Our guide was telling us that timing was everything. The other groups at our camp and below were one or two days behind and would not be able to summit due to a weather system coming in. We would be the lucky ones.

The traverse to the Cave is long and slow. Breathe, breathe, step. We stop three times since Independencia, and it took nearly four hours. Each time was the same; drink, eat, go. No more than 10 minutes at each stop. As we approach the "Windy Pass", Aike laughed and said that he had never seen it this calm. We also laugh and think about all the anxiety leading up to this area. The sun has been up for a few hours and we have all removed two layers and changed our large summit mitts for regular ski gloves. We arrive at the Cave at 11:00 am. Elevation was 22,000 ft. We rest for nearly thirty minutes since the weather is good. Breathe, drink, breathe, drink, breathe, eat . Another group of climbers was just leaving for the summit. We were the second fastest group that day. There would be others behind us. It was late in the season and there are fewer groups climbing today. Breathe, breathe, drink, drink. 11:00 am.

We're told to leave our packs and parkas at the Cave as the weather was good and would hold until we returned. It feels lighter without my pack, but I am still breathing hard as we leave. As I walked I was thinking about all the hours I had logged on the Stairclimber at the Philadelphia Sports Club in St. David's. I was the one with a backpack for sixty to ninety minutes at a time, six days per week for months prior to this climb. Without trying I did attract a fair amount of attention. Someone asked if I was training to be a firefighter. Someone else asked if I was joining Outward Bound. Each time I answered, "No, I am climbing Aconcagua in Argentina." Each person I told gave me the same strange look. They had no clue where I was going. Breathe, breathe, step.

Each hour passed and we were getting closer. Aike was now pointing to the summit and we were getting excited. It helped at this point to see our goal. The terrain was a mix of ice, rock and snow and it was steep. Breathing was really tough. I was thinking of the hours spent on my treadmill at home breathing from my MAG-10 Mountain Air Generator. It's about the size of an indoor humidifier and sucks the oxygen out of the air. My wife would say that it was sucking the life out of me! At least twice a week I would put on my heavy mountain boots, crank up the incline on the treadmill and strap on the mask from the MAG-10. I would dial in an altitude of 16,000 ft and watch my 0₂ rate drop on my finger pulse ox. My wife and kids would laugh at me. Can you blame them? The summit seems so close now but with each step another follows. Breathe, breathe, step.

I am sure that from above we must look like a group on a walk around the intensive care unit at the hospital. We are moving so slow. Breathing to keep the muscles going. I want to sit down and take a break, but we are so close. Just a little further. We stop at a rocky incline. Our guide turns to us and points. "There, just up these steps, the summit". I can't believe it! With the last of my strength I climb the rocks to the summit. 22,841 ft., but who's counting? All of us! The summit is bigger and wider than I expected. The best part was that we all made it! We will be the only group of the fifteen other summit attempts by Aventouras Patagonicas to have all members summit successfully. Now I could sit down and rest. But not before the traditional man-shakes and hugs. Rarely do we yell when we make it. There is no strength for that. Most of us will cry out of joy. *1:50 pm*.

Once we have taken in the enormity of our accomplishment we must do the ritual photographs of every combination. Me and him, and me alone, and me with the guides and all us, and this one with a flag and this one with a message, and so on... As we left the cave it was sunny. Near the summit the clouds began to form. Now, at the summit it's snowing lightly. We need to leave. 2:15 pm.

So twelve days, countless miles and nearly 16,000 feet up we have conquered Aconcagua. As I leave the summit it occurs to me that I am only half-way. Oh well, at least it's easier breathing going down. Breathe, step, step.

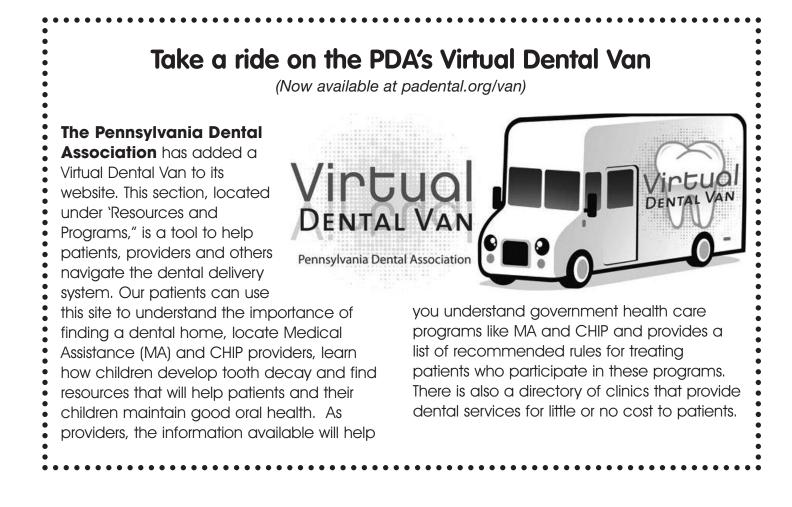


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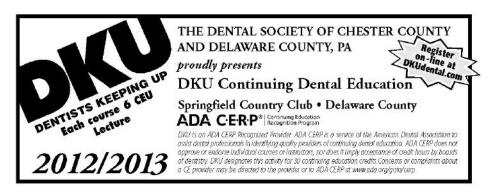
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Dr. Tieraona Low Dog • Your Best Medicine, A Practical Guide to Health and Well Being (AM); Nutrition for the Dental Team (PM)
Dr. Paul Child • Technology Trends and Techniques—Implants, Esthetics, Ceramic Crowns and more
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