

www.rockycreekdental.com Email: rockycreekdental@yahoo.com  
John R. Piccione, D.D.S — Margaret A. Roth, D.M.D

# AL DENTE

Serving you at two convenient locations: 1322 E. Washington Street, Greenville, SC 235-1200  
978 Batesville Road, Greer, SC 675-9399

**Publisher's Note:**

*AL DENTE. Although this term is a culinary term describing the texture of pasta when it's done just right, this term literally means FIRM TO THE TOOTH!*

*This isn't your typical newsletter purchased from an agency. This is all 'home cooking'—a little rough around the edges, more on the plate than is needed, but it's done from the heart!*

*Bon Appétit!!*

## COSMETIC DENTISTRY

In a previous article we talked about the gimmick of laser whitening. Its cost ineffectiveness makes this technique a border line rip-off when you compare it to home technique's success, longevity and the lower costs. One thing we want to warn patients about is that marketing of cosmetic dentistry and reality shows have caused much in the way of misinformation or misperception of cosmetic dentistry. Most dentists in this area are highly ethical and are just trying to do what is best for the patient. In general, we are concerned about conflicts of interest when one limits the scope to cosmetic procedures. Specifically, the concern is not exploring all the options as cosmetic procedures relate to functional outcomes and not informing patients properly about irreversible procedures. Also, there is some protest amongst our colleagues about the ethics of the marketing of cosmetic dentistry, amongst those that profess, by self-proclamation, that they are "cosmetic dentists". **Just a word of warning: there is no such thing as a specialist in cosmetic dentistry.**

There are good reasons why "cosmetics" is not a specialty as it relates specifically to dentistry; namely, all general dentists should balance cosmetics with function at the highest degree possible and not abdicate this responsibility. A general dentist's job description is to provide the art and science of dentistry. The only pure cosmetic procedure in dentistry is whitening. There is a push by some organizations like LVI (The Las Vegas Institute of Dentistry) towards creating a specialty in cosmetics. I happen to disagree with this push. Most medically elective cosmetic procedures manipulate tissue that repairs itself. In cosmetic dentistry, other than tooth whitening and orthodontia, the tissue is removed and replaced irreversibly with a functional prosthesis,



### HELP US!! HELP THEM!! St. Jude's Ranch for Children

July 10<sup>th</sup> was our kick-off date for helping St. Jude's Ranch for children — homes for abused, abandoned and neglected children. There are three ranches in all, located in Texas and Nevada, providing a home-like atmosphere for children 9 months old through 18 years. The *Campbell's* company has offered to buy a new Dodge minivan for St. Jude's with every 1.5 million food labels that are returned to them. (To date 8 vans have been purchased, so it IS possible!) Our goal is to collect 10,000 *Campbell's* labels by the end of December! We are off to a good start, however, we still need your help to reach this goal. For a list of accepted soup and food labels, please stop by either office or call us; we will happily mail or fax one to you. For more information on St. Jude's Ranch for children, visit their website at: [www.stjudesranch.org](http://www.stjudesranch.org). Thank you!!

#### Mission Statement:

- To enthusiastically treat patients with a commitment to sound quality treatments and unyielding pursuit of patient comfort.
- To always ask ourselves how we can improve the care we can provide
- To use the Golden Rule as a means of professional integrity, honesty and patient advocacy
- To grow our family of patients without compromise to our mission

## What is the difference between a DDS and a DMD?

With Dr Piccione and I having different degrees, this is one of the more frequently asked questions around our office. Simply put, there is no difference in our training or qualifications. Some schools prefer to award a DDS, while others offer a DMD. The DDS degree or "Doctor of Dental Surgery" was exclusively given, until Harvard Dental School opened in 1867. Because Harvard's degrees are in Latin, and the Latin translation for the DDS was cumbersome, Harvard decided to grant a DMD or "Dentariae Medicinae Doctor."

However, not all schools followed their lead.

Currently, about a third of the dental schools in North America grant a DMD. The American Dental Association is aware of the confusion, but has been unable to convince the schools to put aside factors like "school pride" and "tradition" and compromise on a degree.

Margaret A. Roth, DMD  
Rocky Creek Dental Care

## OUR HYGIENIST CORNER....

Orthodontics are a reality for many of our patients, and a lot of work goes into shaping a smile. Having the best home care possible while in braces is such an important part of the outcome. There are certain foods that should be avoided such as sticky candy and gum, popcorn, and chips that are too hard and could break the wires.

Brushing and flossing can be a challenge with braces. We recommend an electric toothbrush because the vibrations can help to remove more plaque and food particles that can get caught

around the brackets. If all of the plaque is not removed effectively, there will be decalcified areas on the teeth that look like chalky white spots. Those spots are permanent, even when the braces are removed. Flossing is a must! It does take some time to get the hang of it, but with the help of a floss threader or Superfloss it can be done. Without the help of floss to get clean between the teeth, there is a much higher likelihood of cavities between the teeth. When coming for regular cleaning appointments, our office uses what is called the Prophy

Jet. It sprays a water and powder mixture to help clean around the brackets and wires really well. More frequent cleanings can also be a good option, even as often as every three months instead of six months.

Braces are really such an investment in time, money, and energy. If they are not well maintained and the extra steps taken to insure proper cleaning, the investment can be a waste. The braces will make your smile straight, but keeping your teeth beautifully white and healthy is up to you!  
-Sarah

## COSMETIC DENTISTRY ....cont'd from page 1

and more appropriately should perhaps be called cosmetic prosthetics. The truly cosmetic surgery aspects, like reshaping of the gums and repositioning jaws for cosmetic or orthodontic reasons, involve tissues that can repair themselves. This is usually the job of a highly trained specialist like an oral surgeon or periodontist, not the "cosmetic dentist". Most often this is just an adjunct or component of the total plan.

The reality is that in dentistry, cosmetic treatment is a multi-disciplinary treatment and the options and the pros and cons of treatment should be not exclusive of other disciplines. Sometimes meeting patient's expectations can be accomplished with veneers or just orthodontics, but many times a multi-disciplinary approach is necessary to meet the patient's needs, like an oral surgeon, periodontist and/or an orthodontist, in conjunction with the general dentist. Although these specialists are great sources of information in regards to the cosmetic plan, no one knows you better than your general dentist to guide you through the pros and cons.

When seeking cosmetic care, I agree with some of the marketing tips that may come out of LVI seminars. "Yes, this is big stuff", that can "Change Your Life". So it makes sense to resource your trusted dentist who knows your functional limitations if you are moving toward functional prosthetics to achieve cosmetic results. All general dentists are "cosmetic dentists" that must deal with issues of cosmetics every time a tooth is treated, no matter the reason. Again there is no specialty called cosmetic dentistry. Keep this in mind when you are seeking cosmetic care. Yes, we love doing cosmetic dentistry and we do it very well, but always in regard to your best interest.

More to come next time - John R Piccione DDS- Rocky Creek Dental Care

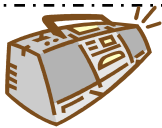
## ARE THOSE FILLINGS KILLING YOU?

We sometimes have patients come into the office who want to have all of their “mercury” fillings replaced. Many times it’s because they look dark, and the patients are looking to improve their smile. Occasionally, it’s because they have read that silver, or amalgam fillings, contain mercury, which has been associated with many health problems. Amalgam fillings are reported to have been used all the way back to 600 AD in China. In the 1850’s they were introduced in America, and there has been debate over their use ever since. Even today, some people, including a minority of dentists and physicians, claim that amalgams are poison and linked to conditions including multiple sclerosis, depression, high or low blood pressure, lupus, leukemia, and digestive problems. However, the American Dental Association has stood by amalgam as a safe treatment.

One must analyze the literature to decide the truth. If you look hard enough, you can find an article or study to back any belief. Most of us know, however, that not all articles and studies are based on sound scientific principle. The rule to remember in toxicology is “only the dose makes a poison.” (i.e. you can drink enough water to kill yourself.) Mercury and its compounds are everywhere in our environment. Nearly 6,000 tons of mercury is released every year from the oceans and the earth’s crust. Also, we are exposed to mercury through eating some types of fish-- in fact, much more mercury than through amalgam fillings. Some “experts” recommend that you have your fillings replaced because the mercury is leaking from your fillings. There have been case studies with patients reporting that they are “healed” immediately after having their amalgam fillings removed. This is curious. Data strongly suggests that mercury levels many times higher than those associated with a mouth full of amalgam pose no risk of adverse health effects. There is evidence that the body’s level of mercury is actually highest immediately after placement or removal of amalgam restorations, suggesting that some of the case studies may be slanted from the placebo effect.

So, some may still ask: “should I get my amalgam fillings replaced?” I believe it depends on your motivation. If you are trying to cure an illness or prevent one, I believe you are misled to think removing them will help. If your goal is to replace them with more esthetic restorations that can last, that is possible. Even though, as previously noted, the highest levels are reported at placement and removal, these levels are still well below all accepted amounts of exposure and considered safe. For ease of mind, use of high volume suction and rubber dam isolating devices makes it even safer. Also, technology in bonding porcelains and composite resins has provided us with alternatives that, in most cases, hold up just as well as amalgam. In fact, we rarely use amalgam today. But don’t be misled. It’s not because we believe they are unsafe, so much as less desired in today’s esthetically driven society.

Margaret A. Roth, DMD  
Rocky Creek Dental Care



### RALPH BRISTOL SHOW

As many of you know, Drs. Piccione & Roth are guests from time to time on the Saturday Morning Show with Ralph Bristol. Tune into WORD FM 1330 at 11 AM on the 5th Saturday of the month (except December). Feel free to call in during the show with any dental questions you might have.

### The Magic Wand

Many patients are scared of even the sight of a needle and syringe. You may have heard about “pain free” or “needle-less” injections. Several years ago, CompuDent came out with a computerized delivery system of anesthetic, which is better known as “The Wand.” Our offices have provided this “Wand” for many years for our patients. Many of you know it from the beeping noise it makes during the numbing process. Basically, it is a pen-sized hand-piece that allows for an even flow of anesthetic in a comfortable, non-threatening manner. The truth is: it’s not the needle that hurts as much as the surge of fluid being pushed into a confined tissue area. That’s why the wand is so much more comfortable. It drips it into the tissue at a rate that the fluid can be absorbed -- meaning less pain for the patient. The wand combined with the topical anesthetics that we place prior to numbing are helping to minimize the fears of many of our patients.

**Rocky Creek Dental Care**  
1322 E. Washington Street  
Greenville, SC 29607  
Phone: 235-1200



\*Beginning in October, we will have affordable electric toothbrushes by Oral B for sale in our office. Ask for details at your next visit!

---

*RECIPE CORNER by Melissa Clarke*

GREEK CHICKEN SALAD Prep Time: 15 minutes Serves 6

3 cups cooked chicken breast, cubed	2 Tbsp. Kalamata olives, pitted/chop
1 cup cucumber, seeded and diced	3/4 cup plain yogurt
3/4 cup cherry tomatoes, halved	1/2 cup mayonaise
1/2 cup feta, crumbled	1 teaspoon fresh oregano
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped	2 cloves garlic, crushed

In large bowl, combine yogurt, oregano and garlic. Mix well.  
Add other ingredients and toss. Chill 1 hour before serving.

Garnish with fresh fruit, such as grapes, apples and orange slices.

