

excellence in a comfortable setting



# Hammerlee Dental Care Newsletter

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## On Our Website You Can:

- Check your scheduled appointments or make an appointment request
- Complete necessary forms
- Refer a friend
- Learn about our staff and services
- Access a wealth of dental health information
- Read our previous newsletters
- Provide valuable feedback and contact us

## News Updates

As usual, there's a lot going on at Hammerlee Dental Care!

Autumn kicked off with the wedding of our hygienist, Deena. She and her husband, Matt Pribonic (of iRock Fitness) married on a beautiful September Saturday along the shores of Lake Erie. Congratulations Deena and Matt!

Also in September, our hygienist, Linda, hit her 25 year anniversary at HDC! Linda says she's looking forward to 25 more years here at the office.

October brought the Her Times 5K. Jennifer, Lisa, Alesha, Beth, Nancy, Deena and Linda all were at Presque Isle for the chilly morning event. A big thank-you goes out to Doleski & Wolford Orthodontics for sponsoring area dental offices' participa-

tion in the event and the yummy breakfast by the warm fire in the pavilion!

There's baby news here at HDC also! Our Business Manager, Alesha, is expecting! Alesha is having a baby boy and he is due April 3rd. He will join his big brother, Colton, and Alesha has been feeling great!

It seems like every newsletter we talk about our commitment to continuing education and staying on top of all of the latest, and this is no different. In October, Drs. Bill and Adam attended the Pennsylvania Academy of General Dentistry's four day PEAK program at Station Square in Pittsburgh. Dr. Bill is working towards his Master's in the Academy of General Dentistry. Our staff attended the Erie County Dental Associa-

tion's "Dentalpalooza", which included 5 hours of coursework followed by great food and laughter (and dancing!). A few days later, most of the team trekked to Cranberry, PA for the Henry Schein Expo where we all split up and different took courses in the afternoon and visited with corporate exhibitors to see all the latest products and technology. Six of our hygienists made the trip to Monroeville in November for the PDHA Annual Session. This five day event included many courses, networking sessions, corporate exhibits and social functions. Also in November, most of the team attended three courses in Erie. The Age One Dental Visit Course, Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting Course and the Healthcare Providers' BLS CPR recertification.

## Our Hygienists at the Pennsylvania Dental Hygienists' Association 91<sup>st</sup> Annual Session

Three Hammerlee Dental Care hygienists made a big impact at the PDHA Annual Session in Monroeville in November!

Dana Shaffer, RDH, BS, PHDHP was installed to the office of President of the state

Constituent of the ADHA. Amy Hart, RDH, BS, PHDHP received the Community Dental Health Award and Linda Straub-Bruce, RDH, BSEd, PHDHP received the Academic Effort Award.

Linda is now President of the

Northwestern Pennsylvania Dental Hygienists' Association and Amy is serving as the Secretary. Linda is also the Website Manager for the PDHA. Great job ladies on all of your hard work!



**Left: Dana Shaffer gives her Presidential Speech at her Installation Ceremony**

**Right: Amy Hart and Linda Straub-Bruce received their awards from Monica Konig (center), PDHA Awards Committee Chairperson**



## Service Spotlight: Endodontic (“Root Canal”) Treatment



**Root canal procedure: unhealthy or injured tooth, drilling and cleaning, filing with file, rubber filling**

Each tooth has a pulp in its core that provides a blood supply, nutrients and nerve fibers to that tooth. The pulp tissue can die when it is diseased or injured. If that dead or dying pulp is not removed, your tooth can get infected which sometimes causes an abscess. An abscess is a pus pocket that forms at the end of the tooth, at the root tip, in the jawbone. An abscess can cause damage to the jawbone in the surrounding area. Endodontic treatment, commonly referred to as root canal treatment, can save that tooth.

During a root canal, the dentist makes an opening in the top of the tooth, removes the pulp and cleans the canal. The canal may be treated with medications to kill germs in it and fight infection. The empty canal is then filled with a special material called gutta percha that seals it off to protect it. Dr. Hammerlee may or may not prescribe an antibiotic for you depending on your individual circumstance. Once the endodontic therapy is completed, a crown is usually then placed over the tooth to strengthen the

tooth and re-build the tooth’s integrity. This procedure completes the restoration process. Good oral hygiene is still essential for a tooth that has under-gone root canal therapy due to the fact that it still has the ability to decay.

Most of the time, a root canal is a relatively simple procedure with little or no discomfort involving one or possibly two visits. Best of all, it can save your tooth and your smile!

*“Baby teeth fall out, usually one at a time, over many years.”*

## Children’s Dental Health: The Value of Baby Teeth

Ofentimes, people wonder why baby teeth matter and why we recommend restoring baby teeth that have decay. This first set of teeth are necessary for chewing and, thereby, good nutrition. They are important for speech development with can be tied to self-esteem. Additionally, they have another very impor-

tant role, saving space for the permanent teeth.

Baby teeth fall out, usually one at a time, over many years. This allows the permanent teeth to replace them and emerge through the gums when it’s their turn to erupt.

If a baby tooth is lost too early, other teeth can drift

into the space and make it difficult for the underlying permanent teeth to erupt into its proper place. This can also lead to crowding or malocclusion. If a baby tooth is prematurely lost, a space maintainer may be in order to hold the place until the permanent tooth is ready to emerge.

## Feature Patient: Amanda Rodriguez

Amanda Rodriguez has been a dancer for over 20 years. She has been the Director and Owner of Little Dance Studio for the past two years. Amanda has been a dancer at Little’s since she was 6 years old and has been teaching dance since age 16.

Amanda’s amazing dancers are well-known in the area. They do an annual show at the

Warner Theater each June entitled “A Little Wonderland” and it’s one they just performed at the Festival of Trees this past weekend.

Amanda is a newlywed and has a boxer named Nesta. Each summer, she travels to New York City to further her education. To check out Little Dance Studio, click [HERE](#) to visit their website.



**Amanda Rodriguez**



## Did You Know ...

... that our Business Manager, Jennifer, has a custom cake business?

Jennifer LOVES to bake. She realized making these creations was a fun stress reliever and way to decompress. One year, Jen made some amazing cheesecakes for Christmas gifts and they were enormously popular. Everyone told her that she should have a business selling these delicious delights and that inspired her!

One year later, Jen has her business up and running and has made a wide variety of custom cake cheesecakes and

cookies. She's made a peanut butter cup cheesecake, a jewelry box shaped cake, a Lightning McQueen cake, Punxsutawney Phil groundhog cupcakes, cheesecake cuffins, Christmas sugar cookies, doughnut shaped cakes, a book shaped cake and more!

Jennifer created a beautiful sunflower shaped cupcake design and entered it into the Waterford Fair. Her creation took a second place!

You can follow Jensation Cakes on Facebook by clicking [HERE](#).



**Jennifer and Punxsutawney Phil groundhog cupcakes**



**Birthday cakes shaped like doughnuts were a big hit!**



## Prevention is the Key: Dry Mouth with Alan Carr, DMD

The best way to treat dry mouth – known medically as xerostomia (zeer-o-STOE-meuh) – depends on what's causing it. You can do some things to relieve dry mouth temporarily. But for the best long-term dry mouth remedy, you need to address its cause.

To relieve your dry mouth:

**Chew sugar-free gum** or suck on sugar-free hard candies to stimulate the flow of saliva. For some people, xylitol, which is often found in sugar-free gum or sugar-free candies, may cause diarrhea or cramps if consumed in large amounts.

**Limit your caffeine intake** because caffeine can make your mouth drier.

**Don't use mouthwashes that contain alcohol** because they can be drying.

**Stop all tobacco use** if you smoke or chew tobacco.

**Sip water** regularly.

**Try over-the-counter saliva substitutes** – look for products

containing xylitol, such as Mouth Kote or Oasis Moisturizing Mouth Spray, or ones containing carboxymethylcellulose (kahr-bok-see-meth-ul-SEL-u-lohs) or hydroxyethyl cellulose (hi-drok-see-ETH-ul SEL-u-lohs), such as Biotene Oral Balance.

**Try a mouthwash designed for dry mouth** – especially one that contains xylitol, such as Biotene Dry Mouth Oral Rinse or ACT Total Care Dry Mouth Rinse, which also offer protection against tooth decay.

**Avoid using over-the-counter antihistamines and decongestants** because they can make your symptoms worse.

**Breathe through your nose,** not your mouth.

**Add moisture to the air at night** with a room humidifier.

Saliva is important to maintain the health of your teeth and mouth. If you frequently have a dry mouth, taking these steps to protect your oral health may

also help your condition:

**Avoid sugary or acidic foods** and candies because they increase the risk of tooth decay.

**Brush with a fluoride toothpaste.** Ask your dentist if you might benefit from prescription fluoride toothpaste.

**Use a fluoride rinse** or brush-on fluoride gel before bedtime.

**Visit your dentist at least twice yearly** to detect and treat tooth decay or other dental problems.

If these steps don't improve your dry mouth, talk to your doctor or dentist. The cause could be a medication or another condition. Medications are one of the most common causes of dry mouth. Long-term relief from your dry mouth may mean stopping or changing your medication or its dosage, or addressing underlying health issues.<sup>†</sup>

<sup>†</sup> Reprinted from: The Mayo Clinic, with Alan Carr, DMD, at: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dry-mouth/expert-answers/dry-mouth/faq-20058424>; Accessed November 18, 2014

*“Avoid sugary or acidic foods and candies because they increase the risk of tooth decay.”*





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**Dr. William D. Hammerlee and Dr. Adam J. Hammerlee**

Dr. William Hammerlee has been a dentist in Erie, PA since 1984. Raised in Corry, Pennsylvania he is a graduate of Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky and The University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine in Pittsburgh, PA. Dr. Hammerlee is a member of the American Dental Association, the Pennsylvania Dental Association, the Erie County Dental Association, and a Fellow in the Academy of General Dentistry.

Dr. Adam Hammerlee grew up in Erie and is also a graduate of Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky and The University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine in Pittsburgh, PA. He is a member of the American Dental Association, the Pennsylvania Dental Association, the Erie County Dental Association, and the Academy of General Dentistry.

*To opt-out of e-mail correspondence, please send an e-mail with your preferences to: [info@hammerleedentalcare.com](mailto:info@hammerleedentalcare.com)*

*The contents of this newsletter are for informational purposes only. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your dentist or physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have.*

## **Q&A: I get anxious about dental appointments, what can be done to help me relax?**

Many people are anxious about visiting the dentist, so you are in good company. It is not uncommon to see dental visits put off or avoided for this very reason. Serious anxiety can prevent you from seeking preventive care and taking care of issues in their minor stages and that can bring significant consequences to your dental and overall health.

The good news is that dentistry has evolved tremendously and patient comfort is a top priority here at Hammerlee Dental Care.

Distraction techniques can be very helpful. You can bring your personal music player and headphones to listen to during your appointment. Feel free to tell us your favor-

ite channel and we'll put it on the television in your treatment room for you. Relaxing, deep breaths are helpful as well.

We use the most effective anesthetics here at the office, including topical gels and creams that can be applied to the tissues for a numbing effect.

Another option is nitrous oxide, commonly referred to as "laughing gas". This can relax you during your dental procedure and leaves no lasting effects, so you are able to drive yourself to and from your appointment.

We do offer oral sedatives and Dr. Hammerlee would be happy to discuss those options with you.

The important thing is to



communicate your fears or concerns with our team. We are here to help you! Sometimes, just discussing a difficult dental visit from your past can help you open up and relax, plus it will help us better understand your specific concerns. We want you to have a stress free experience with us.

*For more information about this topic and other dental information, please visit our website and click the "Dental Health Online" link. If you have a question about our office that you would like to see featured in our Q&A section, please e-mail it to: [linda@hammerleedentalcare.com](mailto:linda@hammerleedentalcare.com)*