



## Hammerlee Dental Care

# Hammerlee Dental Care Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 6

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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

Hammerlee Dental Care is starting out 2014 in an "interesting" way. Our assistant, Renee, was the first one to the office on Monday, January 6th. She came in to find that a water pipe had burst in the ceiling and ran all weekend! It was a genuine flood here in the office.

Our office suffered major damage, with Dr. Bill's office being the hardest hit. Our reception room, bathrooms, front desk area, supply room and hallways were all significantly damaged. Our 7 month old digital panorex x-ray machine was, unfortunately, ruined. We were closed for a week and a

half but completed our re-build at a record pace and we are grateful to all of our contractors, suppliers and insurance adjusters for all that they did for us. We are especially thankful for our wonderful staff members for working through all of the mess and construction. Most of all, we are appreciative of our patients for all of the understanding and support during our closure and apologize for any inconvenience for those who needed to reschedule their appointments.

We are all back together here at Hammerlee Dental Care and look forward to

you coming in to see our fresh look! Gone are our burgundy chairs and old wall art. We're excited to get your feedback also, so stop on in and tell us what you think!

We have a new team member on board. Alesha Walter joined us in January. Alesha is a dental assisting student at Fortis Institute. She will be a regular fixture here on Thursday afternoons, however, she began her full time externship with us on February 17th. Her externship will last about six weeks and will fulfill her requirement to graduate from Fortis. Welcome Alesha!

## ECDA Staff Appreciation Night

The Hammerlee Dental Care team was grateful to be a part of the Erie County Dental Association's Staff Appreciation Night at Junior's Last Laugh in February.

The staff is so grateful to Dr's Bill and Adam for such a fun night out! Our dinner was delicious and the four comedians were a trip. The headliner for the evening was Bobcat Goldthwait.

The annual ECDA event is something we all look forward to. Not only is it fun for our team to go out together, we also enjoy getting together for a night out with all of our friends in the local dental community.

Stacie, Linda, Alesha, Amy, Dana, Beth,

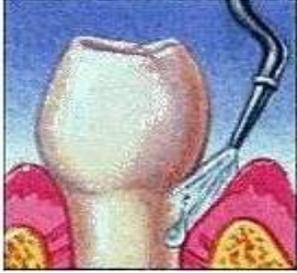
Jody, Renee and Deena say "THANKS AGAIN!" to Dr. Bill and Dr. Adam and we look forward to next year!



**The Hammerlee Dental Team at ECDA Staff Appreciation Night**



## Service Spotlight: Subgingival Irrigation



**Subgingival Irrigation**

Periodontal disease is a bacterial infection of the supporting structures of the teeth. Treatment for periodontal disease or “gum disease” is dependent on the stage of the disease. Oftentimes, that treatment includes subgingival irrigation, usually in conjunction with other treatment(s).

Subgingival irrigation is a simple procedure in which a solution is used to flush bacteria out from below the gumline. This reduces the bacterial count below the

gumline which can lead to less inflammation, bleeding and better oral health and fresher breath.

We use a blunt-tipped irrigating cannula which has a “port side” to deliver the medicament exactly to the area we want to apply it to. It is a very comfortable procedure.

Typically, Chlorhexidine is the solution we chose. It is active against a wide variety of oral bacteria. In certain circumstances other solutions may be used instead,

such as tetracycline, Betadine, saline, metronidazole and peroxide compounds.

Subgingival irrigation with Chlorhexidine or other solutions can be called upon for other types of infections in the mouth as well, such as gum abscesses, infected injury sites or infected partially-erupted wisdom teeth.

Subgingival irrigation isn't only for infection. Some circumstances call for irrigation with a fluoride solution to ease sensitivity or combat tooth decay.

**“It’s a fact of life that children need to go to the dentist at regular intervals, so helping them overcome their fears sets them on the path to avoid carrying this fear into adulthood.”**

## Children’s Dental Health: Soothing Fear of the Dentist

Every child has different fears in varying degrees. A certain amount of fear is healthy and understandable.

Some kids come in to our office ready and excited for their first dental appointment. Others have anxiety and are very reluctant. It’s important that we reassure our frightened youngsters and help them through these times. It’s a fact of life that

children need to go to the dentist at regular intervals, so helping them overcome their fears sets them on the path to avoid carrying this fear into adulthood. Some tips to help include:

- ◆ Start early so your child will get used to visiting our office for simple checkups. This helps your child get to know us and become more

comfortable,

- ◆ Teach your child good dental hygiene so that trips to see us are minimal,
- ◆ Try hard not to transmit your own fears to your child,
- ◆ Avoid “scary” words like “hurt” or “shot”.

Validating, reassuring and comforting your child can do wonders!



**Derf Hopsecger**

## Feature Patient: Derf Hopsecger

Derf Hopsecger has been involved with music for nearly five decades. As a bassist, pianist, synthesist and vocalist he has performed styles as varied as power-trio rock, jazz, classical, big band and opera with various stops in between. He has performed at New York City’s legendary Birdland as well as the Chautauqua Institution. He has sung with the Erie Philharmonic Chorus and Presque Isle Chorale, accompa-

nied The Lettermen and been a vocal soloist in Joe Negri’s Mass of Hope. As a composer he has composed and recorded the soundtracks for a number of projects at WQLN Television in Erie, Pennsylvania. These include ‘Unforgettable Erie’, ‘Remembering Erie’ and ‘Pennsylvania Behind Bars’, which was nominated for a regional Emmy Award.

He has studied piano locally with Vienna Cocuzzi & Basil

Ronzitti and voice with Susan Huster. Current involvements include the praise band at Grace Church Erie, The Erie Opera Theatre, the Luther Memorial Bach Festival Choir and the DH Jazz Express and the Board of Governors for the Erie Philharmonic.

Derf lives with his wife, Rita. They have two daughters and one grand-daughter. He is a Controller at the Knox Law Firm.



## Did You Know ...

... that our hygienist, Dana, is from Punxsutawney?

Dana grew up there and is a graduate of Punxsutawney Area High School, as is her husband. Actually, Dana and her husband, Doug, Dana and Doug were even crowned the Groundhog Queen and Groundhog King in 1979!

Punxsutawney is a town with a population under 6,000 people, but it boasts a very famous resident ... Punxsutawney Phil. Phil is that magical groundhog well

known for his annual weather predictions.

Dana makes the pilgrimage back home and to Gobbler's Knob every February 2nd (every year that she's able to at least!) and was in attendance for the 2014 event. The Groundhog Day festivities are a Punxsutawney tradition that dates back to 1886 and draws in crowds up to 40,000 people.

Dana has met Phil, up close and personal, and has actually petted him. One of her culinary specialties is her

famous groundhog cookies (a favorite here at the office).

Dana assures us that no groundhogs are hurt in the groundhog cookie making process!

Dana may be from Punxsutawney, but she's an avid Pittsburgh sports fan. She loves the Steelers, the Penguins and the Pirates.

Next February 2nd, when you see Phil on TV making his winter weather prediction, look close ... you may see Dana in the crowd!



**Dana (2nd from left) and friends are all geared up for the Groundhog Day festivities!**

## Prevention is the Key: Gum Disease & Alzheimer's

A Link Between Gum Disease and Alzheimer's?

Here's another reason to take good care of your teeth: Gum disease may be linked to Alzheimer's disease, a small new study suggests.

Researchers analyzed brain samples from 10 people with Alzheimer's and 10 people without the brain disease and found gum disease-related bacteria in the brain samples from four of the 10 Alzheimer's patients. No such bacteria was found in the brain samples from people without Alzheimer's.

"This clearly shows that there is an association between oral bacteria and Alzheimer's disease, but not causal association," study author Lakshmyya

Kesavalu, an associate professor in the College of Dentistry at the University of Florida, said in a university news release.

The study is the first to show such a link, the researchers said.

Bacteria in the mouth can enter the bloodstream during chewing, brushing, flossing and dental procedures. The bacteria can travel in the blood to the brain and can potentially lead to brain tissue degeneration that appears similar to Alzheimer's, the researchers said.

The study was published recently in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*.

Previous University of Florida research on mice found that gum disease-related bacteria was able

to move from the mouth to the brain.

About 64 percent of Americans aged 65 and older have moderate or severe gum (periodontal) disease, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Alzheimer's disease, the leading cause of dementia, affects more than 5 million Americans and is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, according to the Alzheimer's Association. †

† U.S. News & World Report. "A Link Between Gum Disease and Alzheimer's?".

<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/news/articles/2013/10/08/a-link-between-gum-disease-and-alzheimers> (accessed February 10, 2014).

**"Gum disease may be linked to Alzheimer's disease, a small new study suggests."**



**Visit the Alzheimer's Association for more information:**

[www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

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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:  
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*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'm pregnant, should I still come in?



**Maintain good oral  
health for you  
and your baby**

Absolutely!

During pregnancy, it is especially important to take good care of your teeth and gums. Pregnancy causes hormonal fluctuations that can make you more sensitive to the normal bacteria in your mouth. It is during this time that you are more at risk for developing gum disease. It is safe to get your teeth cleaned while you are pregnant, actually, it is also highly recommended.

Inflammation, anywhere in the body, results in increased levels of certain inflammatory markers and hormones circulating through the bloodstream to all parts of the body. Some studies suggest that this could lead to a higher risk of premature birth, and low birth weigh babies, although research continues.

It is important to maintain good oral health before, during and after your pregnancy. It is important to let us know that you're pregnant (or if you think

you might be) and any medications you are taking, when you come in for your appointment. Although many authorities feel it is safe to have x-rays (with a lead shield in place), have local anesthetic or have dental restorative work completed, we prefer to err on the side of caution and delay these items until after the baby is delivered. If there is an emergency that can't wait, we will consult with your obstetrician to determine the best course of treatment for you and your baby at the stage you are in.

Pay attention to your gums, and report any changes to us such as bleeding, swelling or tenderness. Morning sickness can also cause issues with the teeth and gums. We can work with you on strategies to keep your gums healthy during your pregnancy.

The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends that pregnant women eat a balanced diet, practice good oral hygiene and

schedule regular dental visits and periodic professional teeth cleanings. They also recommend avoiding elective x-rays or elective dental work such as tooth whitening.

The second trimester is considered ideal for dental work if it is necessary. The first trimester is the most crucial time in your baby's development, and during the third trimester it may be more difficult for you to lie in the dental chair, especially for more extended periods of time.

Your overall health is crucial during pregnancy, be sure to include your oral health in your care routine and keep us informed of any changes.

*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)*