

WSDLA *Calendar*
2010

October 8-9 - Members Roundtable Retreat, Tulalip Resort, Casino & Spa

October 8th – WSDLA Annual Meeting/Election of Officers

October 9th - Board of Directors Meeting 8:00 a.m. Tulalip

2011

February - Strategic Planning Retreat & Board of Directors Meeting, LaConner

March 31 - Board of Directors Meeting, Embassy Suites, Lynnwood

April 1-3 NW Lab Forum

June - Board of Directors Meeting, Pacific NW Dental Conference, Seattle

CDT Milestones in 2010

Congratulations to the following CDT's who are celebrating anniversaries of receiving their certification in dental laboratory technology.

35 Year CDT's

Larry Schmidt CDT,
William Brown, CDT,
Thomas Reed CDT
John Gross CDT

30 Year CDT's

Cliff Webster CDT,
Kevin Clemons CDT,
Michael Shelley CDT,
Robert Holmes Jr., CDT

25 Year CDT's

Mark Rogers CDT,
Russ Archibald CDT,
Suzanne Greiwe CDT,
Tim Holbrook CDT

WSDLA October Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat 2010

**October 8 & 9, 2010
Tulalip Resort Casino and Spa**

WSDLA is proud to host the October Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat at the popular Tulalip Resort Casino and Spa on October 8 & 9, 2010. We welcome back two of our most engaging and entertaining speakers, Dave Nakanishi CDT and Tina Janni. They will present information critical to running a successful dental laboratory in today's business climate. In addition, we will hear from three new presenters Bennett Napier CAE, Mark Jackson RDT and Todd McVay. They will be sharing their expertise in the areas of systems, productivity, and practice management.

As the chairman of this meeting my goal is to provide laboratory owner members and senior managers a feast

of real world business experience and take-home action items. We all devote countless hours to continuing education to improve our craft and I would like to personally invite you to join us in October. I am sure this event will provide you with the opportunity and information you need to be successful business people.

WSDLA and its board of directors are dedicated to seeing a thriving dental laboratory industry in our state. By joining us on October 8 & 9 at the Tulalip Resort Casino we will be one step closer to that goal. We look forward to seeing you there! For more information call Peg at 1-800-652-2212 or visit our website at www.wsdla.com. *Leon Hermanides*

The following are our generous event Sponsors:



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AND IT'S ONLY JUNE!!

Leon Hermanides



During the April 2010 WSDLA NW Forum Owners Roundtable, I was gently nudged to take the CDT exam by numerous attendees and presenters. I dismissed the idea of sitting the exam at the time and thought nothing more about it. As a testament to the power of public scolding, I am currently enrolling in the exam to be held at Dave Nakanishi's laboratory in October 2010. I have also encouraged two of my staff members to go through the process with me.

Since the NW Forum meeting, I have become engaged with the NBC Job Task analysis, which is helping to determine

the future of the CDT. The experience has given me a strong commitment to the CDT as an objective measure of competency for today's dental technician. Although some may criticize the CDT, there is a group of incredibly smart and talented people who have been working tirelessly to see through changes that will make this credential a worthwhile and desirable goal for all technicians.

At our WSDLA June 2010 board meeting, during the Pacific Northwest Dental Conference, Steve Hardymon Executive Director of the Washington State Dental Association and the current WSDA President Dr. James Ribary joined us for a discussion of the state of the dental laboratory industry. Among the topics discussed was how to build value for the CDT with dentists to help them identify the competency of laboratories and technicians in the marketplace. We agreed on the creation of a joint task

force to identify barriers to a healthy dental laboratory industry in the State of Washington.

My personal hope is that in the future dentists will understand the value of the CDT and would request the technicians working with them have all the applicable credentials. This should in turn generate a demand for technicians at all levels with CDT credentials. It will also provide an attractive and desirable career path which currently does not exist that will bring the younger generation into the dental laboratory field.

Much has changed for me in the three months since that meeting! I joined the WSDLA and the Board of Directors because I want to see changes in our industry and I am committed to a vision of an industry that does not yet exist. This year we have made great strides forward at both the state and national levels, and it's only June!!!

CERTIFIED DENTAL LABORATORY

Fifty years ago, the typical dental laboratory was a dark, dusty, cramped room filled with smoke and a bottle in the lower right hand drawer. The bench tops were covered with an accumulation of supplies and materials scattered among the half eaten sandwiches, overfilled ash trays and incoming mail. Most likely the equipment, fabricated for other applications, was refashioned for use in the dental laboratory. Over time the desire and need for standards became apparent.

The National Board for Certification in Dental Laboratory Technology started an independent voluntary testing of technicians in 1955. Today there are over 6,500 Certified Dental Technicians in the five specialties: Ceramics, Crown and Bridge, Full Dentures, Partials, and Orthodontics.

In 1974, NBC, with the assistance of volunteer Certified Dental Technicians, put together guidelines for certifying laboratories. As a separate board, they emphasized health and safety of laboratory personnel, safe operation of equipment, and continuing education of employees in an ongoing effort to

stay current with the theory and practice in the fabrication of dental restorations as well as provide professional support to the dental profession.

The CDL designation signifies an ongoing commitment by the management of the laboratory to good manufacturing practices. This includes adherence to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) laws and the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) for any laboratory which hires employees. It also stipulates that all work be supervised by a Certified Dental Technician in a safe and healthy environment.

The Certified Dental Laboratory program is not the only answer to maintaining an up to date standard in the laboratory. The U. S. Food and Drug Administration's Quality system/Good manufacturing practices specifications (which are required of all dental laboratories) are closely mirrored by the Dental Appliance Manufacturers Audit System (DAMAS) as a way of identifying and tracking the materials in the dental product. The International Organization

for Standardization (ISO), which promulgates world wide proprietary industrial and commercial standards is another system for quality control.

From my point of view, the CDL program's built in check points help make the process of keeping up-to-date with the local, state, national and international standards and requirements easier. The annual self assessment monitoring and regularly scheduled renewal is a way of learning, maintaining, improving quality and service efficiencies as well as the education of personnel in each specialty. What better incentive is there to bring a laboratory up to date and in compliance than the slow down in our economy and aggressive off shore competition?

The Certified Dental Laboratory designation is a check list to help move the laboratory out of the Dark Age, and an organized way to make positive steps into the future. For more information visit <http://www.nbccert.org/>

Edmund J. "Ted" Walker CDT
Past CDL Board Member &
WSDLA President



Steve Gerhauser

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Steve Gerhauser, President WSDLA

very comforting. For me that's a major part of the NWLF.

Our round table discussions are invaluable and this year was no different. Friday we had Tina Jani speak. I had never heard of branding before. Tim Holbrook talked about recycling in the lab. I have never considered doing that. Sunny Kobe Cook shared how to boost moral and team work among employees, which was something I definitely needed to hear. Patrick Tessier challenged us to be better labs and for a better relation with NADL for a stronger CDT program.

Saturday was our removable speaker George McIntosh, CDT and our fixed speaker Brad Jones AACD. We had our Foundations for Success, and finished Sunday with Brad Jones AACD

leading our hands on portion. Then if you add our awards party, scholarship raffle drawing (trip for 2 to Reno, thanks to Arnold Dental Supply), Infection Control and our exhibit hall, we had a full schedule.

Thanks to everyone who put this Forum together and thanks for everyone who came to make it a success. The evaluation sheets came back with high marks. We must be on the right track for next year's Forum! Hope to see all of you there.

Steve Gerhauser
President WSDLA

SensAble TECHNOLOGIES PARTIAL FRAMEWORK COMPUTER PROGRAM

Robert Lathrop, CDT MBA

Partial frameworks are a mainstay in the removable prosthetic arena. They have been fabricated using the same techniques for years. Although very accurate, the technique is very time consuming and techniques sensitive. A proper survey of the model was required. Blocking out the undercuts and duplication of the cast were required. The technician would then wax up, invest, cast, and finish the partial. This technique has been around for decades. It works well, but it takes time.

After all of these years producing partial frameworks using the old techniques, a company, SensAble Technologies, has developed a program which completely changes the way partial frameworks are manufactured.

The technique involves scanning the master model in a 3 shape scanner. Once the model is scanned, the image is loaded into the computer and generated on the monitor. The scanning process takes approximately 15 minutes. The virtual model is checked and any areas that did not scan correctly or completely can be re-scanned and stitched into the virtual model. The unnecessary portions of the model are then removed to arrive at a master model in its

smallest usable form. This increases the processing speed for subsequent steps. The model is manipulated and worked on using a unique 3D virtual touch system. This technology means that the technician can actually feel the digital wax up that is seen on the screen using a haptic device. This device allows the technician to actually "sense" the virtual model, giving the technician the sensation of feeling the model which is being worked on.

The model is then surveyed using the appropriate icon designated in the program. The computer automatically identifies the undercuts on the model and around each tooth. The depth of the undercut is indicated by various colors. The program allows the operator to adjust the tilt of the master model to establish the proper path of insertion which will be best suited for the case at hand. When the path of insertion is OK'd, the technician adds the virtual block out wax simply by the click of an icon. Now all undercuts are blocked out. Using the haptic device, the technician removes the block out wax from the areas where the retentive tips of the clasps will engage the necessary undercuts. Using the workflow wizard icons, the design of the mesh areas and major connector can be drawn on the virtual model.

When the shape of the mesh and major connector are approved, the "apply" button is pressed. The mesh and major connector appear on the virtual model. Clasp arms and finish lines are added in a similar fashion and adjusted to the technician's liking. The wax up is smoothed using the smooth tool creating a well contoured and smooth wax up.

Once the final approval is done, the data for the partial is transmitted to an approved printing facility where the partial is printed using a special resin material. The resin partial is then invested and cast using your preferred partial framework alloy.

The great thing about this system is the time savings for the technician. There is no need for conventional surveying, blocking out and duplication of the master model, refractory models, and waxing by hand. All of those steps are done on the virtual master model and can be completed in less than 5 minutes. The time saved for the entire partial fabrication is considerable.

For more information concerning the SensAble system, call or write to:

SensAble Technologies
15 Constitution Way
Woburn, MA 01801
1(781)937-8315

OUR MEMBERS

Wes Brandon, CDT

Ron Cox, Sr. CDT

A lifetime of Dental Technology

At the annual meeting of the Washington State Dental Laboratory held during the Lab Owners Retreat in October at the Tulalip Resort and Casino, Ron Cox Sr. was granted life membership status by a unanimous vote of the membership. Ron was nominated by Robert Holmes, Jr. CDT and Michael Chapman, CDT and the Board of Trustees approved and referred the nomination to the membership for approval.

Ron's career in dental technology began with his Army training at Fort Sam Houston in 1966. He served in Korea and left the service in 1969. Upon coming to the Seattle area he started work at the Moss/Malone Dental Laboratory

on Capital Hill. During that time he also taught at the Seattle Dental Assistants and Technicians school under Al Jennings. The lab subsequently moved to Lake City and was purchased by Ron in 1970. In 1980 Ron moved to Totem Lake where he operated as Totem Lake Dental until 1998 selling the laboratory to his son Ron Jr. Moving to Moses Lake Ron started TNS- The Next Step- a dental laboratory focused on case planning and implants. He then sold TNS in 2008 to son Wes and truly retired from the bench.

Ron earned his CDT in 1973 in both Ceramics and Crown and Bridge. As an active member of WSDLA, Ron served in many capacities over the years. He served as President in 1977 and was a Trustee on the National Board for Certification from 1980-82. He also served as President of the Dental Laboratory Owners Business Association in 1995-96.

Ron was a member of several study clubs as well as instrumental in their

formation. His commitment to better dentistry was a major factor in the development of radiopaque diagnostic markers for surgical stints for use in implant placement. Ron received a patent for this invention in 1995. In 1997 his contribution to dentistry earned him the Harry Hagman Inventors Award for his invention of the radiopaque diagnostic marker.

Ron is currently enjoying a traveling retirement with his wife, June, as well as playing a little golf. He told me it is nice to be able to sleep in until nine and not have to worry about getting the work out the door. Together they have four children Tami, Ron Jr, Wes and Kim and six grandchildren. Wes and Ron Jr. have followed his path to careers in dental technology, a fact that makes Dad proud. Wes remembers his Dad as a great teacher in the lab and in life always willing to share his wealth of knowledge with others.

“Do You Have A Web Presence?”

by Michael Dominguez CDT

In 2008, 389 labs were known to operate in the State of Washington. Of those 389 labs only 28 had a website listed. That's 7% of the known labs in the state have a website. . . listed. Surveys have a habit of missing information and since this was done in 2008 we can hope that the real number is higher. However, incidental omissions and a couple of years later won't bring up that number significantly.

There are many assumptions as to why labs don't have websites. Some of the popular reasons are that owners don't see the need, too much money and upkeep, and the standby-they're old luddites. It is most likely a combination of reasons. In any event, we already stand on statistically shaky ground and it might be best to leave the amorphous deciphering to conjecture and concentrate some energy on the labs that DO have websites.

The great thing about labs that do have websites, is that they are easy to find and ask questions. Questions like- Why the heck did you even get one? Well, I had some questions for Tim

Holbrook, owner of Seabrook Dental Lab and Ania Mazewska, Seabrook's marketing whiz.

Ania stated "visibility" as the main goal for getting a website. "The internet is a powerful tool to drive people to your site and gain info about your business and what your lab has to offer." "It's our 'business card.'" Tim added, "Also, it's the face of the lab. The quality of the lab is represented (by the style.)" Tim also has downloadable documents that customers have access to. If they need a mailing label, just click and print, Rx? Click and print. It is also a good way to promote any specials or special events.

Seabrook has both the doctor and patient in mind when it comes to their website. Ania agrees and adds that many patients visit the website and ask their doctors about Seabrook or even call Seabrook asking for a referral. Tim launched the website around 2002. The site is attractive and easy to use with all the pages you would expect from a dental lab website, i.e., Smile Gallery, Testimonials, Maps, Products, and Links.

Since 2002, Tim has taken the dental lab website one step further and

launched americasmiles.com. With americasmiles.com he has provided a regional support site for dentists and their patients. By regional, I mean there is a specific site under the americasmiles.com umbrella for Seattle, Kent, Bellevue, Everett, etc. What these sites do is help make Seabrook and their doctors more visible to people searching for dental information on the web—a truly valuable and powerful tool for the lab.

What does it mean? What value does it add to the lab? Well, they currently track the number of visits to their site at about 10k per day. Those are just hits to the site and don't include impressions from searches, facebook visits, or google and yahoo ads. They review monthly reports on the web activity to see what is important to the visitors and base marketing strategies on that info.

Tim and Ania are without a doubt ahead of the curve, especially when we look at the numbers above. They use their site as place for information, documents, and promotion. They see a void of web presence from our industry and are doing their best to fill it. Go to www.seabrookdentallab.com to check it out!



WHO ME?????

by Sandra Stuart

Who me???? Yes, you. We need you. We need you to become a part of Washinton State Dental Lab Association. We need your input, your knowledge, your unique experiences, your problem solving ideas and your innovations. Without each of us bringing our rich history and our experiences to this organization, there would be no future benefit for any of us.

Yes, the investment is worth it. How do you evaluate the advantages? How do you qualify the value of human input? The real payoff is sometimes not easily quantifiable. But, you will take away more than you can begin to imagine.

Who are we? We are 2nd generation lab owners and neophytes struggling with day-to-day problems of understanding the industry. We are one person lab owners and large lab managers. We are world-class speakers and bench-anchored introverts. We are old dogs and we are the next generation with diverse backgrounds and talents and

strengths. We are soccer dads, and part-time moms, workaholics and part-time retirees. We are you.

So, what value can you see in investing your time and money into this association? What is the function of this organization? And, what is the function of its members? Would you come away with anything of value?

Sit around a lunch table at a conference and just listen. What you'll hear is peer-to-peer communication, information sharing, strategies explored, discussion of emerging technologies, ideas for circumventing barriers, indispensable solutions, marketing ideas and volumes and volumes of information. Those are empowering conversations that no consultant could provide at any cost.

E-mail five members from your member list regarding a long-term problem that needs a solution, or about an equipment failure, or even a question regarding a new product. Then watch how quickly you have your answer.

Pick up the phone and call one of the members in your neighborhood and head for lunch together. You've got a problem employee and need some suggestions on how to resolve the issue within legal guidelines. Tough questions? Someone has already found the answers. And, there's more.

You now have a platform, a voice in driving the industry, in what goes on inside legislation for your industry, a voice for effecting and directionalizing industry-wide change. You have an opportunity to share your deeper understanding of the problems and strategies unique

to us. You have access to product comparisons, education, business solutions. This is what empowers us to successfully operate our labs at a higher level, a more efficient level. And, there's more.

I've seen members step in and help with the work when the owner was facing months of chemotherapy. I've seen others step up to the plate when a new lab opened and they needed people to help install the equipment so they could hit the ground running. I've seen a lab who had an equipment failure while the manager was in the middle of a conference, petitioning if anyone out there had a temporary solution. They found it. I've seen employee-starved labs find someone willing to help until a permanent solution was found. There has been employee sharing and problem solving and an abundance of support.

As we migrate to a new and exciting future, and as we face off-shore issues, as technology takes its biggest leap this industry has seen, there are answers. They live in each of us. We have a strong organization and we need you to help make it even stronger. We need you to encourage those of us coming up through the ranks, to offer up your pool of information, to be a part of creating the future. This is what empowers us to, in turn, empower you. That's the real pay-off.

To Join WSDLA, contact Peg at 1-800-652-2212 or email: peg2@mashell.com



Hello WSDLA Members and Friends,

Your Laboratory Association is moving right along with the Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat 2010 and plans for the Northwest Lab

Forum 2011 at the Embassy Suites in Lynnwood. We have signed up some excellent speakers that should both entertain and provide you with good state of the art information on the dental lab-

oratory industry. One of our goals is to offer high value and relevant continuing education to our membership and the industry. When you look at the speakers for the Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat in 2010 and the NW Lab Forum in 2011, I think you will agree.

Your elected Board of Directors works hard for the association and is always willing to listen to your comments and try to act on them. Remember, the Board

meetings are open to the membership. You are welcome to attend. If you are interested in helping, we welcome additions to the Workshop Task Force, the Marketing Committee, the Technology Committee and always welcome articles for The Contact!

See you at the Roundtable Retreat!
Peg
Executive Director

WSDLA 2010 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

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