



THE FLORIDA KEY DISTRICT 17 SUMMER 2019

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 28

Florida ICD/ACD/PFA
Breakfast Meeting at Gaylord
Palms 6:30-8:00 am

September 3-6

ICD Annual Meeting,
Convocation and Dinner

Hilton San Francisco Union
Square Hotel

San Francisco, California

FLORIDA SECTION OF THE ICD AT THE FLORIDA DENTAL CONVENTION

The Annual ICD Breakfast Meeting will again be held in conjunction with ACD and PFA fellows in the Orange Blossom Room at 6:30-8:00 am at the Gaylord Palms, Orlando – Friday, June 28. The cost is \$35. Please RSVP to ICD Treasurer, Dr. Paul Miller at molar01@msn.com

A BEDTIME STORY

Once upon a time (okay it was about 40 years ago), in a land not so far away, a letter arrived. It was delivered very unceremoniously in a non-descript envelope – no band, no fanfare. The letter’s language was equally plain and dry, but to the point. It was not even personalized, as it began, “Dear Candidate.” However, the contents would represent the “birth certificate” of a worthwhile career and a wonderful opportunity



years
finally

I was fortunate to share the dental board experience with a fellow “Buckeye,” Dr. Robert Woodworth, aka “Woody.” For better or worse, and due to the military training of my instructors, all my friends at that time were from the distal part of the alphabet. Four years of sitting next to W’s, Y’s and Z’s in the “prosthodontic pits” make for friendships to develop alphabetically – Wilson,

Winter, Woodworth, Wunderlich, Yee, Zoog and Zulliger were the anchors at my dental school. Woody and I agreed to take the Florida boards and then job search in the Tampa Bay area together. I think we traveled and slept in my grandfather’s Ford ranger with a handy pop-top. This was the preferred vehicle over Woody’s fire-prone Dodge Aspen, lovingly called “Meadowlark.” Clearly, we were more comfortable in this strange land of pecan-logs and palm trees if we traveled together.

The first dentist we had contact in Florida was Dr. Robert Cole in St. Petersburg Beach. Some of you might remember him; he was the 1977-1978 FDA president. We were fortunate to find a friend in Dr. Cole, as he was both laid-back and reassuring to a couple really “green” dentists. Woody felt comfortable enough to stay on as his associate for three years and then buy into his practice. Too bad all transitions do not follow this pattern. The senior dentist brings in a junior associate, builds the confidence of both the patients and the associate, and builds good-will into the practice. If he or she is ethical and honest, his patients, new partner and the senior dentist will all be winners.

I, however, could not see the beauty in this cozy practice. I was blinded by the glint of new equipment and the fast pace of a fancy dental practice south of the bay. On my very first day of practice, fresh out of school, I ran nine operatories – alone. Nine. To this day, after nearly 40 years of practice, I have yet to produce what I produced on that first day. It was not at all what I thought dentistry would be like. It might be a preferred style of dentistry for some, but not for me. Fortunately, through the help of a local dental-supply company, I heard of an opportunity with Dr. David Butler in Palm Harbor. This

was a practice with a strong emphasis on quality and was owned by a dentist willing to share his knowledge. I worked with Dave for about three years before gaining enough confidence and capital to venture out on my own. Dave has hired about four associates since then, the latest his daughter, and all of us benefited greatly from his guidance.

I share these stories because each new and old dentist will have a different experience. There will be a common thread, but your career quilt will not be the same. As you transition your career, you will be amazed and surprised by how similar dental educations will yield quite different practice philosophies. There is more than one yellow brick road. Do a serious self-examination and recognize your professional weaknesses and strengths and be willing to work hard to continue improving both. Become that strong and ethical leader. And surround yourself with excellent accountants, assistants and advisors and you will live happily ever after.

Sleep tight. Don't let the bed bugs bite.

Dr. Wunderlich is editor of Florida Section of the ICD. Please send District 17 articles and news to the ICD/ Florida Key Editorial committee at htwdds@gmail.com

LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY DISTRICT 17 (2019)

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Note: Dr. Pruett has agreed to serve out Dr. Boden's term. The office of Vice-Regent is pending.