



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"You're not healthy without good oral health" (C. Everett Koop, M.D.)

The board is off to a very busy start of the year. We have been working hard to get our bill passed through the legislature. I have truly enjoyed all my telephone conversations and e-mail from hygienists all over the state. It has been a very rewarding feeling to receive so much positive feedback. Working together I feel we can make a big difference with regards to access to oral health care in the state of Maine.

If unsupervised practice for dental hygienists outside of the dental office were allowed it would permit dental hygienists to modify and integrate dental disease prevention activities into more broadly based health programs, where appropriate.

It would allow a dental hygienist to perhaps act as a case manager to identify and implement effective community-based and clinical interventions. The dental hygienist could develop and provide training for non-dental partners in oral health, such as physicians, nurses, WIC personnel, and health educators. Improving oral health requires the widespread and optimally targeted use of proven preventive strategies throughout the community, school, and office-based interventions. We must build coalitions, develop new partnerships, and broaden constituencies to promote oral health.

I encourage you to attend programs that include people from outside of healthcare. We must look for ways to make a difference in the community. Dental hygienists must advocate not only about issues that affect us as a profession, but also for the needs of those in society who cannot access dental services easily. Experience in any healthcare organization shows time and time again how much need exists in the community. We can make a difference by finding ways to improve the quality of life for those around us. A little human contact does much to overcome the impersonal nature of today's society. As a profession we have the responsibility to advocate for the oral health needs of all individuals. Our profession will also benefit indirectly from the expanding opportunities that will result.

According to the Center for Disease Control approximately 500 million dental visits occur annually in the United States. By the year 2000, an estimated \$60 billion will be spent on dental services. Yet many U.S. children and adults still suffer needlessly from oral diseases that could be prevented.

By the ages of 2-4 years, 17% of U.S. children have already experienced tooth decay, and those with the most serious disease have been shown to weigh significantly less than the recommended weight for their age. Among low-income children, up to 80% of tooth decay remains untreated, resulting in pain, dysfunction, and poor appearance - problems that greatly reduce a child's capacity to succeed.

Serious oral health problems occur among adults, as well. Approximately 44% of elderly adults no longer have their natural teeth and more than 8,000 die of oral and pharyngeal cancer each year.

Such levels of disease - and the high treatment costs they generate - are unnecessary. Proven preventive measures, such as water fluoridation and dental sealants, can markedly reduce dental disease, yet they often remain unavailable to those who most need them.

*Our profession needs to ensure that the limited resources devoted to oral health care are used as effectively as possible.*

We must pay attention to opportunities as they arise and make a significant commitment to learn and adapt in ways that will maintain our value as preventive oral health care providers. In healthcare change is constant. Although we cannot prevent change or control its pace, we can influence its course and content. We are the only licensed professionals whose scope of practice and educational program accreditation is controlled by their employers. The healthcare environment is calling for changes in roles and creating opportunities for different kinds of work and workers. Preceptorship is a good example. Change is a given and our ability to adapt to change is what will lead to our success as a profession.

Subscribing and reading select professional journals and maintaining membership in your professional organization are a must. Involve yourself in active rather than passive learning experiences. Being proactive reflects a deeply felt investment and sense of ownership. Those who are active in their profession will determine the standards and set the policies and future direction of the profession. Surround yourselves with people who are energized. We need caring individuals who are willing to identify the needs of the organization and are willing to work towards a solution. We need people who have a vision or high level view of the dental hygiene profession, its goals for the future and possible paths for getting there.

I am one of those people who continuously seek to make my work interesting and challenging. It's what keeps me energized. I encourage each and every one of you to seek intellectual and professional stimulation. We must continually look for opportunities to develop intellectually and improve our practice skills. As oral health care professionals we have a responsibility to our patients to engage in lifelong learning in order to provide the most contemporary clinical care.

Yours in good oral health,

Bev Litchfield, RDH, BS  
President, MDHA

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newsletter of  
the maine  
dental  
hygienists/  
association

• winter 1999

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### CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Please keep your address current with the Maine Board of Dental Examiners Office or you will not receive important information from the state and may be subject to a fine. Call Irene Boucher today at 287-3333. If you are a member of ADHA/MDHA then you should also call 1-800-243-ADHA and let them know your new address and phone number. ADHA will forward your new address to all publications on the state and national levels (including SCOOP).

## MAINE DENTAL HYGIENISTS' COMPONENT OFFICER ROSTER 1998-1999

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Maine Dental Association  
622-7900

#### American Dental Hygienists' Association

444 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 3400  
Chicago, IL 60611  
1-800-242-ADHA

## MDHA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING DATES

Saturday, March 6, 1999  
9:00 a.m.

Joint MDHA meeting with MDA in Manchester MDA building, jot down ideas you want to discuss with MDA.

Saturday, April 10, 1999  
9:00 a.m.

Location to be announced. MDHA board meeting (finish reviewing recommendations, Scientific Session report & Fall Connection planning).

May 1, 1999  
9:00 a.m.

Location to be announced. MDHA board meeting (misc. business, Scientific Session, Fall Connection planning, preparation for Annual Session).

Saturday, May 22, 1999

District I workshop in New Hampshire.

June 16-23, 1999

Annual Session in San Diego, California.

June 18-19, 1999

Scientific Session, Samoset Resort.

Saturday, August 7, 1999  
9:00 a.m.

Location to be announced. MDHA board meeting (unfinished business, plans for dental hygiene month).

Saturday, September 11, 1999  
9:00 a.m.

Location to be announced. MDHA board meeting (budget meeting).

Date for October meeting TBA

Fall Connection MDHA Annual Meeting.

Friday, November 5, 1999 -  
Saturday, November 6, 1999

Scoop deadline to submit articles: May 4, 1999 & September 7, 1999.

Dates and location subject to change, please call a board member to confirm.

# MAINE DENTAL HYGIENISTS UNITE!

The bill we are sponsoring has been submitted as follows:

## A BILL TO INCREASE ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE ORAL HEALTH SERVICES AND BETTER UTILIZE COST EFFECTIVE CARE

- Increase access to oral health care for unserved and underserved populations by removing existing supervision requirements that are barriers to preventive care. (Employment); supervision. 1. Dental hygienists may practice dental hygiene under the supervision of a licensed dentist as an employee in: a dental office, dental clinic, hospital, school, charitable institution, health maintenance organizations certified by the state, dental facility owned and operated by the federal, state or local government, health facility licensed by the state facility providing medical care to the poor, elderly, or disabled that is owned and operated by the state or local government or a bona fide charitable organization or any other settings authorized under regulations adopted by the board. 2. Dental hygienists with 2 years active clinical practice may practice dental hygiene without supervision in settings outside the dental office.
- Increase access to preventive oral health care for Maine's children by expanding locations where dental hygienists can practice.
- Improve regulatory oversight of the profession of dental hygiene by increasing the number of dental hygienists on the board of dental examiners from 1 to 4.
- Figures from 1996 indicate that there are 605 licensed dentists in Maine, and 1075 licensed dental hygienists. There are 5 dentists on the examining board, or 1 per 121 dentists. There is 1 dental hygienist with responsibility for 1075 licensees. This will provide the

citizens of Maine with a more equitable and therefore more effective structure of professional regulation. The dental board cannot adequately regulate dentistry, denturists, dental hygiene, and dental assisting posing a threat to health, safety, and welfare of the public.

- Protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public by ensuring that the citizens of Maine receive preventive oral health care from duly licensed and appropriately educated dental hygienist practitioners. Continuing education: As a condition to renewal of license to practice, a dental hygienist must submit evidence of successful completion of 30 hours of continuing education consisting of board approved courses in the 2 years preceding the application for renewal, and current CPR. (Currently 31 states require current CPR for renewal of license to practice and 26 states require more than 20 continuing education credits.)  
*Education is a lifelong process – it does not stop once you have earned your degree. People in all occupations need to continuously prove their competency and keep their knowledge and skills up to date to ensure that they are performing their jobs well.*
- Defining the dental hygiene scope of practice and educational licensure requirements in the statute will remove public confusion concerning providers of dental services. (We must protect our profession.)

**WE ARE ASKING FOR EACH OF YOU TO CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TO DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS BILL.** You may call your town hall to get the name of your representative.

## UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND - WESTBROOK COLLEGE SADHA NEWS

Our SADHA chapter has been very busy this academic year. We hosted the annual District I SADHA meeting held in Boston on January 23. At least a dozen students presented essays on leadership qualities. Jen Gallo from Forsyth School of Dental Hygiene was selected as the District I student representative to attend the Annual ADHA ses-

sion scheduled in San Diego. Congratulations to all the speakers. This is an inspiring representation of our future association leaders. Our students continue to involve themselves in community service projects and education.

### Calendar

Do you have an event you would like to add to our calendar? Please let us know! Send us a postcard with date, time, location and speaker. Mail to SCOOP, c/o Ruth Collard, Westbrook College, Dental Hygiene Dept., Stevens Avenue, Portland, ME 04103.

**Wednesday, March 3rd**  
Table Clinic Presentation, 6 - 8 p.m.  
Ludke Auditorium, Westbrook College Campus, UNE

**Friday, May 7th**  
The Hygienist Role in Treating the Malignant Disease Patient  
Dr. Muciano and Dr. Hickey, Bangor ME and  
**Friday, May 14th** in South Portland.

**Friday, June 18-19**  
Scientific Session, Samoset Resort in Rockport, ME

**Attention:**  
**Contributors to SCOOP please forward typed articles and announcements to:**  
**Ruth Collard, c/o Westbrook College,**  
**Dental Hygiene Dept.,**  
**Stevens Avenue, Portland, ME 04103.**

**Sales Editor:**  
**We are looking for a volunteer.**  
**MDHA Ex. Board Coordinator:**  
**Christine Corbin-Price**  
**SCOOP Deadlines for 1999**  
**5/4/99; 9/7/99**

We are the experts on dental hygiene and practice. The timing is right for us to pass this bill. Your help and support is creating appreciated by all the underserved people of the state of Maine. I trust that we will individually and collectively resolve to make choices that secure the future of our profession.

Please complete the following:

**YES, I want you to keep me up to date! And I will help the Maine Dental Hygienists' Association organize support for our legislative work in the current session of the Maine Legislature. Here's what I can do:**

- Enclose my check (payable to MDHA):  
 \$100  \$75  \$50  \$25  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Contact my own legislatures about our bill. They are:  
State Rep: \_\_\_\_\_  
State Senator: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I'm not sure who they are. Will you let me know?
- Provide written  or verbal  testimony to support the bill.
- Help in any other way I can. Call me and let me know.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day): \_\_\_\_\_ (pm/weekend): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to:

Bev Litchfield, RDH, 5 Old Neck Road, Scarborough, ME 04074

## **SELF-REGULATION FACT SHEET**

### **What is self-regulation?**

Professional regulation is oversight of licensure and practice of professions by state government to ensure the health and safety of the public. The basic guides for regulation for each profession are found in its practice act. Self-regulation means that state government turns to members of the regulated profession for advice and assistance in carrying out the practice act.

### **How are dental hygienists regulated?**

For the most part they are regulated by dentists. Dental boards, composed overwhelmingly of dentists, regulate both their own profession – and dental hygiene. In most states dental hygienists hold only one or two seats on the board and often may vote only on certain matters. In fact, across the United States there are more public members – consumers – on dental boards than there are dental hygienists.

This is not the case in Washington State where dental hygienists have been regulated by the Director of the Health Department in consultation with a committee of three dental hygienists and a consumer. Since 1993, Connecticut dental hygienists have also been regulated directly by the health department. Since 1993, New Mexico dental hygienists have been regulated by a committee of five dental hygienists, one dentist and one consumer. The committee is attached to the board of dental health care which must enforce committee rules and findings.

Arizona, California, Florida, Delaware, Maryland, and Texas have special committees to the dental board with powers ranging from advisory or administrative to oversight of rules.

### **How would self-regulation benefit the public?**

States allow professionals to participate in their own regulation so the state can benefit from the expertise of the profession. Dental hygienists are the experts on dental hygiene education and practice. Dentists are oral health generalists, with additional concentrated training in restorative skills. Dental hygienists spend at least two years almost exclusively learning dental hygiene theory and practice.

A dental hygiene board would spend all of its time concentrating on dental hygiene issues and regulation. Dental hygiene concerns are typically ignored by dental boards whose priority is dental practice issues.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Back by popular demand our next course will be *"The Hygienist Role in Treating the Malignant Disease Patient"* which is to be presented by Frank A. Muciano, D.D.S. and Alan J. Hickey, D.M.D.. The lecture topics will include:

Hygienist role in care and treatment of patients who have undergone radiation therapy for malignant disease. Special precautions and preventative measures will be discussed.

Hygienist role in treating patients undergoing chemotherapy for malignant disease. Timing of treatment and precautions on treating the chemotherapy patient will be reviewed.

Maxillofacial prosthetics, an introduction to maxillofacial prosthetic treatment, an overview will be presented.

Dr. Hickey is a 1968 graduate of the University of Maryland and a 1972 graduate of the University of Pittsburgh where he received his D.M.D. degree. He practices Maxillofacial Prosthetic Dentistry in Portland, primarily for patients who are having or have had radiation and/or chemotherapy or surgery for malignant disease.

A dental hygiene board would eliminate the conflict of interest that exists today when employer dentists regulate their own employees and often make decisions based on the economics of the private dental office rather than access to care and competence assurance.

A dental hygiene board would be cost effective. Licensees' fees pay for the cost of regulation. And dental hygiene licensure fees would be directly linked to the cost of dental hygiene regulation.

### **How is self-regulation different from independent practice or unsupervised practice?**

Self-regulation would not authorize independent practice or unsupervised practice. Independent practice is a business arrangement that allows a practitioner to own their own practice. Most states restrict the ownership of dental practices to dentists. Independent practice would not change that, but would allow a dental hygienist to buy, own or sell a dental hygiene practice.

Unsupervised practice means a dental hygienist can plan and initiate dental hygiene treatment without the authorization of a dentist. Unsupervised practitioners are limited to providing dental hygiene services and are required to refer patients to dentists for dental treatment. An unsupervised dental hygienist might be employed by a dentist or health care facility (just as an independent practitioner might work with supervising dentists).

Self-regulation means that dental hygienists, rather than dentists, would serve on whatever state regulatory boards make decisions about dental hygiene. But these regulatory boards can only make the kinds of decisions which the state practice act gives them the authority to make. Nurses have always been self-regulating and their continue to work under the supervision of physicians and continue to be employed by physicians or hospitals.

### **Would consumers be involved in dental hygiene self-regulation?**

Definitely. The wave of the future appears to be increasing numbers of consumers participating in the regulation of health professions. Most regulatory boards have consumer members, and dental hygiene boards would be no different. In fact, dental hygiene policy and legislative activity has traditionally supported consumer involvement on boards.

Dr. Muciano is a 1981 graduate of St. John Fisher College, Rochester, NY and a 1985 graduate of the University of Georgetown, District of Columbia where he received his D.D.S. degree. He practices Maxillofacial Prosthetic Dentistry in Portland, primarily for patients who are having or have had radiation and/or chemotherapy or surgery for malignant disease.

This course will be held in Bangor on May 7, 1999 as well as in South Portland on May 14, 1999 at the Blue Cross/Blue Shield building.

Please watch your mail for the flyers on this exciting course.

We would also like to introduce our new committee chairperson Nancy Mattsson. Nancy graduated from Westbrook College in 1995. She works in a periodontal practice in Scarborough and attends USM part-time. Nancy lives in Scarborough with her husband and her 10 and 11 year-old daughters.

If you have any questions or suggestions that could benefit the continuing education committee please contact Nancy at 883-5195.

## FALL CONNECTION

Hygienists, mark your calendars for November 5th and 6th. This is your annual MDHA meeting. This meeting should be a priority to every hygienist. As professionals this is the meeting where you can connect with other hygienists, get valuable continuing education, and learn the most current procedures to use in your practice. This meeting also lets you know the latest issues affecting the dental hygiene profession.

This event will be held at the Senator in Augusta. All day featured speaker on November 6th will be Donna Morgaine-Hagar, a naturopath and an RDH from Portland, Oregon. She will be making vitamin and herbal recommendations as an alternative or adjunct to current traditional perio therapies. Astra Pharmaceuticals will be doing a lunch and learn about the perio chip on Friday.

This year we are going to try to have informational booths which we hope to include facial-cranio massages, facials, ergonomics, and other topics of interest to hygienists. We also hope that these services can be used as referrals for our patients. If anyone has any ideas or knows anyone that is interested in these booths, please call me at 469-2454 or email at [Flossem@aol.com](mailto:Flossem@aol.com). Ideas and comments are welcome.

We are looking for a committee of five people to help plan the Fall Connection. If you are interested, please call. If you are part of this committee you may attend the Fall Connection at no charge.

*Marie L. Doucette, RDH  
Vice President, MDHA*

## MAINE HYGIENISTS ATTEND INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Two Maine dental hygienists attended the 14th International Symposium on Dental Hygiene in Florence, Italy. The July 1998 meeting was spectacular. Marji Harmer-Beem, Assistant Professor of Dental Hygiene was a scientific contributor to this prestigious event. Susan Lindsay, President of the South Coast Component brought greetings from the dental hygienists of Maine to international colleagues.



Marji Harmer-Beem, far right, and Susan Lindsey, far left, dine with colleagues from Switzerland.

## UPCOMING SURVEY

This March, all Maine dental hygienists and dentists will be mailed a survey about tobacco cessation interventions provided in their offices. The results will be used to identify needs, particularly continuing education needs regarding tobacco cessation. Moreover, we can compare our state with other states as well as with national data.

Similar surveys have been done in Massachusetts and nationally. The response have only been 36% (MA), 47% (national), and 55% (ADA). Hopefully, our response rate will be higher. If all Maine dental hygienists and dentists complete the survey, there will be a statistically significant baseline.

The Center for Community Dental Health (CCDH), based in Portland, is conducting the study. CCDH received a three-year grant from the State Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health to address tobacco issues with the dental community. This study is one of the objectives included in the grant.

One of the other main grant objectives for this year includes providing training and resources in appropriate tobacco cessation interventions to CCDH clinic staff. CCDH operates five low-income dental clinics in Portland, Saco, Sanford, Auburn, and Farmington.

CCDH's Tobacco-Free project has formed an advisory committee. Melissa Stevenson is representing MDHA. Other hygienists on the committee include Bunny Mills, Carol Johnson, Bonnie Vaughn, and the project coordinator, Debbie Andrews. If you have any questions or comments regarding the project or survey, please do not hesitate to call Debbie Andrews at CCDH: 874-1025 or e-mail her: [ccdhtoba@maine.rr.com](mailto:ccdhtoba@maine.rr.com) or contact any of the other four hygienists.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

*Debbie Andrews, RDH, BS*

## ADHA SPONSORS MAINE REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHICAGO LEGISLATIVE WORKSHOP

Jan Starr of the American Dental Hygienists Association called together 25 representatives from states around the country to attend a Legislative Workshop to educate various states concerning legislative threats and opportunities to the practice of the dental hygienist.

Marji Harmer-Beem attended the September weekend workshop for MDHA. Data concerning distribution of manpower in the state, the legislative process, government insurance programs and practice acts were discussed.

Speakers included a senator from Illinois, lobbyists, statisticians, and ADHA staff.

ADHA compiled an invaluable resource for Maine to be ready for legislative threats, the initiation of bills, and sunset reviews of our practice act. Unfortunately, the profession needs more concerned dental hygienists to protect the dental hygiene scope of practice by being informed and educating the Maine State Representatives and Senators about access to care, quality care, and preventive care issues. For more information please do not hesitate to contact Marji Harmer-Beem by telephone, 865-6641, or by e-mail [mharmer-beem@mailbox.une.edu](mailto:mharmer-beem@mailbox.une.edu).

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
**1999 RDH OF THE YEAR**  
**AWARD RECIPIENTS:**  
**CHRISTINA CORBIN-PRICE, RDH**  
*(Immediate Past Treasurer, MDHA)*  
 &  
**JOANNA BRADLEY, RDH**  
*(Immediate Past Secretary, MDHA)*



Left to right: Joanna Bradley, 1998-99  
 MDHA President Melissa Stevenson, and  
 Christina Corbin-Price

Receiving the RDH of the Year Award for 1999 was a great honor. My contributions seem small compared to others who have received this honor in past years. However, to be recognized shows that contributions big or small are important to our profession and are appreciated by fellow hygienists. Friendship and professional growth are rewards of being involved I have prospered in these areas and I am grateful that my efforts to promote the profession of dental hygiene are appreciated. Thank you for this honor.

*Joanna Bradley, RDH, BS*

Dear fellow hygienists,

I would like to thank MDHA and my colleagues for awarding me RDH of the Year '99 at the Annual Meeting in November. It was a surprise and an honor to receive such an award. Serving for MDHA has also given me great pride in knowing that we as hygienists have so many dedicated executive board members and volunteers. Local anesthesia would not exist if it weren't for the hard work of so many hygienists! The experience and friendships that I have gained over the years has certainly helped me grow professionally.

*Christina Corbin-Price, RDH, BS*

## **MDHA WELCOMES YOU TO JOIN NOW!**

As the largest professional association representing the interests of dental hygienists, the American Dental Hygienists' Association has the vast pool of resources to meet your needs.

Membership in ADHA is tripartite, which means that when you become a member of ADHA, you automatically become a member of your state constituent, and your local component society.

**If you join now, you can take advantage of a special one-time offer. Optiva Corporation will provide complimentary sonicare toothbrushes to the first 25 individuals from Maine to return membership applications with dues payment to ADHA before March 31, 1999.**

Only through your participation can ADHA positively impact your future. Your membership is your insurance for a rewarding career in

dental hygiene. I encourage you to review the material in this newsletter about membership benefits.

I invite you to become a member of the American Dental Hygienists' Association. To become a member, simply complete and return a membership application. I look forward to welcoming you to ADHA.

*Michelle J. Gallant, RDH*  
*Membership Chair*

P.S. The complimentary sonicare sonic toothbrushes will be mailed to eligible applicants after the end of the campaign, March 31, 1999.

*The American Dental Hygienists' Association and MDHA do not endorse any specific products or services, including those provided by exhibitors or used to promote an association activity or event.*

## PROFESSIONalism

Now that I have your attention, you must be wondering how we could print an article without proofing the title; something probably came to mind when you discovered the error in the typing of the title. We all have preconceived notions of what the word professional means. Webster's Dictionary: pro-fee-sion-al (adj) 1 engage in a specified occupation for pay - N. a person who is a professional. A profession is an occupation requiring advanced academic training, as also stated in the dictionary. Given that information, let's engage in some lively discussion.

When you profess, it means to believe in something, to affirm its being. Do you believe that you are a dental hygiene professional? If you answer yes, then why are you a professional? Is it because you look professional and what does that mean? Is it because you faithfully read all the journals cover to cover? Is it because whatever the doctor requests of you, you have it done yesterday? Is it because you remember everyone's birthday - both employees and your patients? Is it because you now hold the opportunity to obtain a permit to administer local anesthesia, or have had advanced training in periodontics and routinely perform and interpret culture results? Is it because three dental assistants in the office have gone on to dental hygiene school and looked to you as their mentor? Was it because you visited a patient of yours in the hospital because she had no one to comfort her after her surgery? Perhaps you are a professional because you took the time to write specific instructions for a caretaker of your patient with Alzheimer's and called the mother who shared with you her 19 year-old daughter was diagnosed with breast cancer. Our employers, are they acting as professionals when they support our dental hygiene efforts and encourage continuing education? Are our neighbors and friends acting professionally when they lend support when we need it most, or they volunteer at shelters despite their own family commitments and 40-hour work weeks? Am I professional because I attend state board or local component meetings? Do I qualify if I have earned 20 continuing education credits?

At some point in our dental hygiene profession, we are faced with important issues. We struggle with conflicts of work and family commitments, the fact that our philosophy may vary with our employer, or when we no longer have the "fire" to challenge the issues of hygiene. Have we fooled ourselves into thinking that not much has changed in the last few years and that continuing education has become boring? Do we no longer have the drive because we have succumbed to becoming a janitor of our patients' mouths; or is it because we have let our employer pressure us into the managed care syndrome and we are trying to convince ourselves we can do it all in 40-45 minutes? Are we burnt out simply because we no longer enjoy doing dental hygiene, but push ourselves for the paycheck at week's end.

I have been challenged by a lot of the above myself. When my practice was facing financial challenges, the dentist said he could try and remain open but it would mean being at half-pay. It was a struggle and there were days I got fed up, but it resulted in being one of the most enriching experiences of my career. The patients were all aware of our situation and they repeatedly inspired us and shared many thoughts, admiring us for sacrificing for the good of practicing quality dentistry. Only then did I realize how much I enjoyed the profession of hygiene and it wasn't just a career or money for food on the table. It was a passion for the field.

No one ever said anything worthwhile was going to be easy. Each day is a new challenge with more obstacles to overcome. It is in the strength of dealing with those obstacles that we now have the opportunity to show the state of Maine what it is we dental hygienists are all about, and what we have to offer our communities. I refuse to believe that any dental hygienist is "hygiening" for the pay. Once there was that awesome feeling in your heart that you would make a difference. It will happen if we can ask questions about ourselves and be honest in our assessment of what it truly means to be a PROFESSIONAL. The initiative to increase

the CEUs to thirty was done in the best interests of our patients who are the beneficiaries of all the technology and our standard of care. We are at a crossroads in our profession. We can be responsible for maintaining our professional ethics and the honor attached to calling ourselves professional. We look with hope to the relationship with the dentists that they will view our assertiveness not as a threat, but that we are seeking to be managers of our own profession. We can make this a reality but only if we make it so.

"NEVER reject a possibility because you see something wrong with it!  
NEVER reject a possibility because you won't get the credit!  
NEVER reject an idea because it's impossible!  
NEVER reject a possibility because your mind is already made up!  
NEVER reject an idea because it's illegal!\*

NEVER reject an idea because you don't have the money,  
manpower, muscle, or months to achieve it!  
NEVER reject an idea because it will create conflict!  
NEVER reject an idea because it's not your way of doing things!  
NEVER reject an idea because it might fail!  
NEVER reject an idea because it's sure to succeed!"

- Robert Schuller

Obviously being a professional will have different connotations for all of us, with no single answer being correct. We are all a complexity of our life experiences; all to be equally honored for the gifts we bring to the profession.

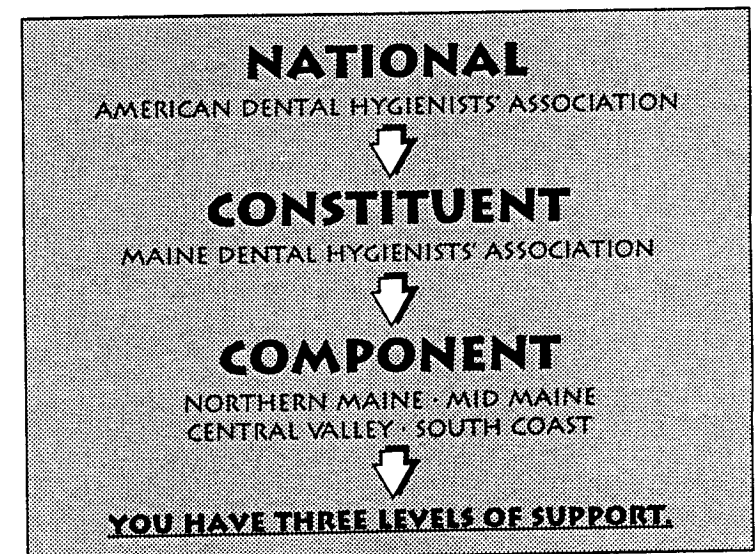
We need all of you NOW for as much or as little as you might be able to offer. Call ANY of the officers on the executive board. We look forward to all dialogue. Criticism is welcomed, as long as suggestions/solutions are offered. The success of the enormity of the tasks that lie ahead will only be as great as the vision of the registered dental hygienists in this state.

Thank you to all of you for helping me to become the professional I dream of.

Here's to OUR dreams!

Mary Lynne Murray-Ryder, RDH, BS  
President Elect

\*Some of the greatest ideas are impossible because they are illegal today. You should never violate the law, but don't reject an idea because of this, we might be able to get the law changed! Many laws are inadequate so work to get them changed.



# THE 1999 MDHA NEW OFFICERS

## PRESIDENT

**Bev Litchfield, RDH, BS**

Bev received her Associate of Science degree in Dental Hygiene from Westbrook College in 1977 and her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Westbrook College in 1994. She is currently pursuing her Master's degree from St. Joseph's College in Health Service Administration. Bev is the clinical/business coordinator for the Pediatric Dental Practice of Dr. John Willis in Falmouth, ME. She is a pediatric clinical dental hygienist and has worn many other hats in the office for the past 19 years. Bev is a member of the American Society of Dentistry for Children and wishes to let everyone know that pediatric dentists recommend that children begin routine dental visits by age ONE so that any problems may be detected, treated early, or even avoided completely. Bev is the 1977 Alumni class President & on the Alumni Board of Directors at Westbrook College/UNE. She is also a student associate of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Bev lives in Scarborough with her husband Warren and four children Serena (23), Ben (18), Justin (14) & Andrew (12). We have Ben to thank for the creation of our webpage. Bev enjoys working with youths of all ages and has in the past been a youth group leader at St. Maximilian Church. Bev can be reached by e-mail [blitchf1@maine.rr.com](mailto:blitchf1@maine.rr.com) or phone 883-7155, or in the heat of the summer you will find her somewhere on Casco Bay on the family boat "Where's Waldo."

## PRESIDENT-ELECT

**Mary Lynne Murray-Ryder, RDH, BS**

Mary Lynne holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Dental Hygiene from Westbrook College (1983) and an Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene from Westbrook College (1979). Mary Lynne has been a full-time clinician in private practice since 1979, and enjoyed a part-time clinical instructing position at Cape Cod Community College (1981-1982). Mary Lynne has had extensive training in adjunctive periodontal therapy as well as alternative periodontal therapy. In 1997 Mary Lynne collaborated with the University College Dental Hygiene Department to institute and chair "MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY ALL YEAR ROUND" program in cooperation with Spruce Run (shelter for battered women and children). Mary Lynne is currently employed with Dr. Robert Kassa, D.M.D., Bangor, ME. Mary Lynne can be reached at e-mail [mainesgumal@hotmail.com](mailto:mainesgumal@hotmail.com) or phone 848-7519.

## VICE PRESIDENT

**Marie Doucette, RDH**

Marie earned her Associate degree in Dental Hygiene from the University of Maine in 1996. She presently is working four days a week

for Dr. Wayne Wibby, D.D.S. in Bangor, ME. Marie lived in Florida & California before deciding to settle in Maine after getting married in 1982. She now lives in Bucksport with her husband, Michael Swazey, and has two boys Garrett (16) and Bronson (13). Marie and her family enjoy skiing, snowboarding, rollerblading, jogging and going to their camp in the summer. Marie looks forward to being your Vice President of MDHA and working to get the word out to the public about our profession, educating people about dental health and encouraging hygienists to support their professional organization. Marie can be reached at e-mail [flossem@aol.com](mailto:flossem@aol.com) or phone 469-2454.

## TREASURER

**Lorraine Klug, RDH**

Lorraine is from Calais, ME after eight years in the US Navy as a dental technician; she went to hygiene school at University College in Bangor. Lorraine was very active in SADHA, serving as President-Elect and President. Lorraine was the recipient of the MDHA Graduate Membership Award. Lorraine lives in Ellsworth with her husband and six-year-old daughter. Lorraine is employed at Dental Associates and can be reached at 667-0828.

## SECRETARY

**April Bechard, RDH**

April is a 1995 graduate of Westbrook College and has been working full-time in a general practice ever since. April is currently employed by Dr. Jeff Finegold, and lives in Yarmouth. Every six months April goes to the Freeport Nursing Homes and sees patients. "It gives me a feeling of self-worth just knowing the residents appreciate my visit." Being brought up in Madewaska with a strong family background has given her the opportunity and drive to be a leader in this profession. April is looking forward to her new role as secretary on the board. "We can get things done!" April can be reached at 846-6582.

## IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

**Melissa Stevenson, RDH**

Melissa graduated from the Dental Hygiene program at Westbrook College in 1994. She is the immediate Past President of MDHA. With the Maine Component, she has attended ADHA Annual Sessions as Delegate/Alternate Delegate for Maine since 1995, which have included: Phoenix, Atlanta, New Orleans & San Diego (1999). She works in administration at the Center for Community Dental Health in Portland. "Thank you all for your questions, comments, phone calls, and guidance during my years as an officer of MDHA. It is my pleasure to continue to represent the Maine Dental Hygienists' Association in the capacities in which I am currently involved."

## PAST PRESIDENT/LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

**Marji Harmer-Beem**

Marji received her Associate of Science degree in Dental Hygiene from Westbrook College in 1977 and her Bachelor of Science in Education and her Master's degree in Adult Education from the University of Southern Maine. Marji is an Assistant Professor of Dental Hygiene at the University of New England. Marji has practiced as a clinical dental hygienist in general practices as well as periodontal practices. She is currently the legislative chair of MDHA and encourages all dental hygienists to contact her in regards to current legislation sponsored by MDHA. She is a member of Sigma Phi Alpha Dental Hygiene Honor Society and participates as a trainer for Maine PANDA: Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness. She is also a member of Maine Public Health Association. Marji lives in South Freeport with her husband Paul Beem and their two children Lucas (17) and Emily (15) and the family golden retriever, Oslo. Marji can be reached by telephone 865-6641 and by e-mail [mharmerbeem@mailbox.une.edu](mailto:mharmerbeem@mailbox.une.edu).

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Carolyn Kimball • Laura Thibzudbzu  
Leeann Webb • Jasmine Verrier  
June Toole • Tara Patterson  
Sara Lemieux • Jennifer Babb  
Angela Clizbe • Deb Barnes  
Christine Joule • Christopher Dorr  
Crystal Daigle-Vaso • Tracy Leavitt

## WOULD YOU WORK FOR HALF YOUR PAYCHECK?

The American Dental Association (ADA) met in San Francisco in October and adopted resolutions that are expected to have a negative impact on the dental hygiene profession. What this means is: the ADA is in favor of eliminating the three and four year dental hygiene programs and in favor of the preceptorship program that Alabama and Kansas have. This implies that the dentist would be training dental hygienists. If your practice is like most that I am familiar with, I would say that anyone without any training will be called a hygienist. Does your dentist have time to train a person to be a hygienist? Does your dentist have the credentials and background to act as a dental hygiene educator? This will translate into lower wages. This will also compromise your patients' dental hygiene.

Issue number two is that dentists support dental assistants doing prophys, or supergingival polish. This has already been passed in some states including Vermont. The New Hampshire dental association is in favor of this practice. The hygiene schools are now teaching assistants to polish teeth. This issue is knocking at our door! How many of your patients think that their teeth are being cleaned when you polish them? If we do not educate our patients to know the difference between a polishing and a scaling, then they will not feel the

neglect in care they receive when hygienists are eliminated and assistants start cleaning teeth. Wouldn't it make sense to a dentist to pay an assistant to clean teeth versus a hygienist? These issues are threatening the scope of dental hygiene in the state of Maine. When these issues go before the legislature and we try to defend our profession, we will not be a persuasive enough. The MDHA is only represented by 25% of the hygienists in the state of Maine, the dental association is represented by about 85%. Who do you think will have a louder voice?

Hygienists in the state of Maine are not self-regulated. We do not control our education, the dentists do. This means if the dentists decide we no longer have to have any training to be hygienists, then that is what will be! This is a very real issue. Is \$175.00 a year too much to pay for your job security? It is time, as a professional, to join your organization. We need to be united and support our profession. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to call any member of your executive board. We would be more than happy to help you with these issues and to hear your concerns.

*Marie L. Doucette, RDH,  
Vice President, MDHA*

## UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

At MDHA's Annual Meeting in November, an individual caught my attention. During one of the continuing education programs a hygienist remarked that she has been practicing in the same dental office for 23 years.

That individual was Vicki Laplant. I had a wonderful conversation with Vicki and would like to share some of that discussion with you.

Vicki graduated from the first graduating class of the Dental Hygiene Program at University College. She has been a member of ADHA for over three decades! She lives in East Dixfield with her husband Tom and her 16 year old son, Craig. Vicki and Tom have been married



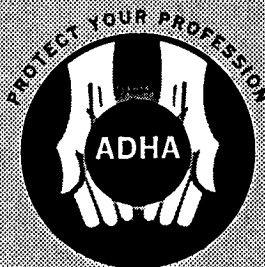
**Vicki Laplant**

for 22 years. She enjoys hunting, fishing, and camping with her family.

Vicki works in Rumford with Dr. James Orono, and Dr. Philip Bretz. Each year she visits local school in her community to promote good dental health. When asked why she has been happy in the same practice for so many years she responded, "It has been wonderful to be able to stay in the same practice for so many years. It's been possible because the people I work with value my opinion and treat me so well."

So many things impressed me about Vicki. She seems to do everything longterm: work, marriage, ADHA membership. Next time you are at a continuing education program or luncheon ask the person sitting next to you a few questions. He or she may be someone like Vicki Laplant!

*Michelle J. Gallant*



**JOIN ADHA AND RECEIVE A  
COMPLIMENTARY SONICARE  
TOOTHBRUSH!**

See additional information in this issue of SCOOP.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS

## 1. What are the benefits of membership?

- **Security** – Through membership, you will help to secure a future for dental hygiene. ADHA is working to protect the value of your educational credentials and to preserve the integrity of your license. Only through uniting in one voice can ADHA continue to represent the dental hygienist effectively.
- **Access to Information** – Members receive a subscription to the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*, ADHA's official publication that brings you scientific and technical articles on clinical practice, research, and education. In addition, members receive the association's magazine, *Access*, that helps you stay on top of the issues that are important to dental hygiene.
- **Continuing Education** – ADHA membership offers you a discount on continuing education through self-study courses, the ADHA Annual Session, and Constituent and Component continuing education functions.
- **Professional Contacts** – As part of your dues, you automatically become a member of your state Constituent and local Component organizations. These groups sponsor meetings and activities for your personal and professional benefit. By attending local, state, and national membership functions, you have the opportunity to form new friendships and develop professional contacts.
- **Insurance** – Your membership will provide you with the opportunity to apply for several types of insurance such as professional liability, disability, and major medical at comprehensive premiums.

## 2. I can't afford the dues.

- Considering the benefits just mentioned, how many of those things would one person be able to obtain on an individual basis for less than the cost of membership?
- After all the time and hard work you've put into your career, doesn't \$3.85 (these are average dues, put in your own) a week seem like a small investment to protect your future and improve the quality of oral health care for the public which is part of the dental hygienist's professional commitment?
- ADHA offers a quarterly payment plan that allows you to receive membership benefits immediately and extend annual dues payment over a 12-month period on a quarterly basis. With the EASY 4 Payment Plan you have 2 options for paying your quarterly payment: (1) The EASY 4 Payment Plan with your MasterCard or VISA, or (2) The EASY 4 Payment Plan with electronic withdrawal from your checking account. Both these plans give you the choice of making your dues payment easily affordable by making smaller payments throughout the year.
- By supporting ADHA, you will help to secure a future for dental hygiene. In these times with issues such as preceptorship (on the job training) threatening your career, membership is essential! (Mention what your state is doing legislatively to protect dental hygiene.) Only through uniting in one voice can ADHA continue to represent the hygienist effectively.

## 3. I don't have the time. What is expected of me if I join?

- A member is expected to adhere to the Principles of Ethics and Bylaws of the Association, and support the mission and goals set forth by the Association.
- The benefits of membership are limited only by your involvement. Find out what the nonmember doesn't have time for – attending meetings, continuing education, and meeting other

dental hygienists? The value placed on their career goes hand-in-hand with the value placed on membership in the professional association.

- You are not required to actively participate in ADHA. In today's fast paced world, not all members are able to do so. They support the Association and the dental hygiene profession by contributing money, not time.
- Becoming active in the Association can give you the opportunity to acquire and develop new skills and interests such as leadership, public speaking, etc.
- No state makes it mandatory to belong to ADHA in order to hold a dental hygiene license, however, it is beneficial to become a member of ADHA so that you will be informed on the issues that affect you and your profession.

## 4. I only want the publications. Can I just get those?

- Considering what the subscriptions cost versus the cost of membership dues, it is more advantageous for you to join ADHA as an Active Member because you will receive a subscription to both magazines as well as have access to all other benefits offered by the Association. A subscription to *Access* is \$45 a year (10 issues) and a subscription to the *Journal of Dental Hygiene* is \$40 a year (4 issues) for nonmembers.

## 5. Can I join only the state and local organizations?

- No. According to the bylaws of the Association (voted upon by the House of Delegates) tripartite membership is required of members. That means that members must belong to his/her national, constituent, and component (where applicable) associations. Annual dues pay for membership in all three organizations.

## 6. What does ADHA do for me?

As part of ADHA's ongoing service to all aspects of the profession – research, education, legislative, access to care, public relations – the number of our activities continue to grow year by year. For example:

- With the support of ADHA, Iowa and New Mexico recently obtained self-regulation.
- ADHA has been instrumental in expanding our role as oral health care providers. Currently, dental hygienists may provide services under general supervision in 34 states and can administer local anesthesia in 25 states.
- We've also stood between hygienists and preceptorship in Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, and Texas by defeating pending rules or legislation that would have allowed untrained personnel to perform dental hygiene services.
- During the month of October, ADHA will operate the staffed oral health hotline again to celebrate National Dental Hygiene Month. Dental hygiene experts will answer questions, dispense personalized oral healthcare information, and offer special patient-education materials to consumers across the country.

# SIGMA PHI ALPHA

## DENTAL HYGIENE HONOR SOCIETY



## Call for Abstracts for Presentation of Papers

Dental hygienists are invited to submit abstracts for review and possible presentation at the MDHA meeting at the Samoset in June. Topics should pertain to the practice of Dental Hygiene. They should reflect research, a comprehensive literature review or other original scholarly work by the author. Abstracts should be 1/2 - 1 page typed and must include the following:

- Author name, address, phone numbers, also FAX & e-mail, if any
- Title
- Purpose of the study
- Significance of the topic
- Statement of methods used for research and/or journals reviewed
- Conclusions reached

Abstracts will be reviewed by the Presentation of Papers Committee. Usually, the Presentation of Papers includes a 15 - 20 minute summary of the scholarly work followed by the same amount of time answering questions from the audience.

Submit abstracts to:

Sigma Phi Alpha Presentation of Papers Committee  
c/o Ann Curtis

University College of Bangor, 29 Texas Avenue, Lincoln Hall, Bangor, ME 04401-4324

The deadline for submitting abstracts is March 15, 1999. Authors will be notified by April 15.

### **HEALTHY HABITS – Why Stretching Makes a Difference**

**By Christina Corbin-Price, RDH, BS**

Your muscles need good circulation to keep them supple and injury free. Much of the work we do tightens the muscles and stops the blood from reaching the areas of our bodies that have the greatest stress. By taking 5 minutes every four hours and/or 90 seconds once an hour to stretch, you'll not only avoid injury, you'll feel better and be more productive.

Christina practices full-time and currently is co-owner of Davison, Price & Associates, Dental Ergonomics. Offering individual ergonomic evaluations and education, she may be reached at 207-642-4910.