Island View

A PUBLICATION OF THE SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY • JULY 2021



FEATURED THIS ISSUE:

Stories and Experiences

from our SBVCDS Members

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The Santa Barbara-Ventura County Dental Society provides referrals to American Dental Association, dental-board licensed dentists in Santa Barbara & Ventura counties.

Locally, member dentists work together to make a difference in our community through programs such as Dentist-With-A-Heart, Free School Screenings, Give Kids A Smile and many, many other programs to promote oral health to your friends and neighbors.

SBVCDS members are members of the California Dental Association and the American Dental Association. They agree to abide by the ADA Code of Ethics, and we stand by the quality of their work. Almost 80% of the dentists in our community are members.



What's the easiest, most fun way to stay on the cutting edge of what's going on in dentistry and stay current with what your colleagues are doing?

We will be having regular drawings throughout the year from among our friends to win various fun prizes. And... at the end of the year, one of you will win \$500!

s Up? SBVCDS Events **Fee Event/Speaker** Day/Date CPR Renewal (HYBRID) at SBVCDS Office\$60 **Jul 20** CPR Renewal (HYBRID) at SBVCDS Office\$60 May 18 CDA Presents, San Francisco Sept 9 - 11 CPR Renewal (HYBRID) at SBVCDS Office\$60 Sep 21 CPR Renewal (HYBRID) at SBVCDS Office\$60 Oct 19 We also offer monthly Radiology Safety Certification courses - Call for details

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sara Cizek, DDS **President**



Greetings!

Welcome to Summer 2021! It looks to be substantially more fun than Summer 2020 - You now have permission to drink Coronas less ironically...

As I'm writing this, I'm personally in the aftermath of my first major social gathering with people outside my household since February 2020. It was outdoors, mask-free, and it was FUN! I found myself hugging people (sorry to all those who got ambush-hugged... should I start hugging for real, so people think I'm a hugger?!), getting caught up with people, and really soaking in all the good vibes of a party atmosphere. (To the host: you throw a heck of a party!)

Our community is undoubtedly moving in the right direction. Businesses are opening up. People are wearing "real" clothes and getting haircuts. Many of our patients are physically going back to work after a year of workfrom-home. As of this writing, our protocols at our offices are largely unchanged but all the guidelines have been so fluid, who knows what they'll be by the time of publication? It is yet another period of great transition!

As with all transitions, you are

encouraged to continue extending grace to those with whom you interact. I feel our community has exemplified extending grace over the last year-and-a-half. Our patients exhibited tremendous amounts toward us and all the changes, some last-minute. Our staff learned new protocols and did it all with N95 masks on. We held a lot of hands (metaphorically, of course) with fearful patients and fearful staff, and managed wild schedule changes. In it all, I think we sometimes forget to also extend grace to ourselves.

So, as we move into summer, I would encourage you to cut yourself some slack. Between the forced mouth-breathing caused by the N95s, employees who want to take some time off, and the patients who are returning to their previous particular demeanors, know that you are showing up and doing a terrific job! Just because the ship isn't quite on schedule doesn't mean it isn't moving in the right direction. So, take a minute, take a breather, take a walk, and stop being so hard on yourself.

One possibility I've newly discovered is to start thanking yourself for all the things you do for yourself. Sometimes this is for things you do every day regardless, i.e. "Thanks Sara, for fitting in that walk at lunch,

fresh air always feels nice." And sometimes this is rephrasing things from a negative to a positive. Instead of "Wow, even my chubby scrubs don't fit right," how about "Sara, yes, thanks for feeding me tacos on all those really hard days." The key is to start being at least as nice to yourself as you automatically are to others. Try it for a week, or even a day, but don't be surprised when the bluebirds of happiness start becoming your back-up singers!

And finally, as always, I hope you remember that we call one of the most awesome places in the world home. I hope the ocean breezes are running through your hair and that you still remember the days of lockdown well enough to enjoy it! I hope things are looking brighter than they have been. I hope your patients and practices are thriving and improving every day, and I hope your social calendar has some amazing upcoming plans!

This quarter's challenge: Invite your new friend on a friend-date!

Collegially yours,

Sara Cizek

Sara Cizek, DDS President 2021 SBVCDS

TRUSTEE'S REPORT

July 2021

Dear Members,

As we make our way out of the COVID pandemic I would like to thank our SBVCDS staff and board for all the excellent leadership in helping to guide us though this unprecedented time. All of your hard work has been appreciated.

As we approach some sence of normalcy in our practices and lives I am glad to say CDA Board of Trustees has voted to allow us to meet in person for CDA Presents in San Francisco, September 9-11 at Moscone Center.

Not all things are back to normal for CDA. The CDA House of Delegates meeting is still planned for a virtual meeting. CDA has worked hard to create a platform for this meeting to be as effective as possible to all.

CDA has been working to expand the educational offerings available in an effort to recognize the diverse membership and the way in which they learn, engage and connect with CDA and each other. This is being accomplished through CDA Presents 360 which went live on April 26.

As part of the continuing fight on tobacco, SB 793 was passed in August 2020. SB 793 bans all flavors in tobacco and nicotine products (including cigars and electronic cigarettes). Following the signing of the bill, the tobacco industry successfully qualified a referendum measure against the legislation, putting it on hold until the November 2022 general election.

The board approved endorsing the opposition campaign, known as the Campaign to Protect California Kids. An endorsement will not include an obligation to contribute financially to the campaign. However, CDA will join other health care industry leaders such as the American Academy of Pediatrics California, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Cancer Society, Kaiser Permanente and the Tobacco Free Kids Action Fund.

Stay well,



Lyndon Lambeth

Lyndon Lambeth, DDS Trustee, SBVCDS

CDA Major Issues & Priorities



2021

1. SB 242/AB 454: Health Care Provider Reimbursements – Support

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the ability of medical and dental plans to make record profits during a public health emergency by collecting premiums while paying fewer claims as patients receive less care.

CDA is supporting SB 242 by Senator Josh Newman (D-Fullerton), which would require insurance plans to reimburse health care providers for costs related to the procurement of critical safety supplies, such as personal protective equipment (PPE). The costs of PPE vary throughout the state and have been exacerbated by product scarcity, supply chain disruptions and price gouging. Many providers are paying in the range of \$10-\$25 per patient, adding up to thousands of dollars of new costs every month. Although mask mandates and social distancing requirements are easing, these requirements will not be lifted in medical or dental offices any time soon. Federal and state financial assistance is not sufficient to cover the ongoing costs. With the increased economic burden of safely operating in the current circumstances, there is a risk of patients losing access to care and a constriction of the dental network in our state. SB 242 is needed to ensure that provider practices, which have endured over a year of sustained financial losses, are not also required to bear the cost of these new, medically necessary expenditures entirely on their own. SB 242 passed out of the Senate and is now moving through the Assembly.

While SB 242 focuses on near term relief for health care providers, CDA and the California Medical Association also co-sponsored AB 454 by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D-Pomona), which, in the event of a future catastrophic public health emergency, would give authority to the Department of Managed Health Care and California Department of Insurance to require plans to support providers through various means such as grants, increased rates or payments for increased costs of mandatory infection control measures. AB 454 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee and will not move forward this year.

2. 2021-2022 State Budget

The state's record revenues and federal stimulus funding provide an important opportunity to address oral health needs across the state. CDA advocated strongly for the following ongoing investments in oral health that are included in the 2021-2022 state budget:

- Provides long-term stability for Proposition 56 funded Medi-Cal provider reimbursement rates by
 making them permanent, removing the annual expiration date and providing much-needed
 stability for Medi-Cal providers.
- \$230 million annually in new Medi-Cal Dental program benefits to continue, and expand upon, the most successful elements of the current Dental Transformation Initiative such as silver diamine fluoride, pay-for-performance incentives for children's prevention, and caries risk assessments.
- Fully funds the Office of Oral Health, as intended by Proposition 56, at \$30 million annually, so that the State Dental Director can continue the community-based oral health improvement initiatives outlined in our state's 10-year Oral Health Plan.
- Allocates \$75 million for the High Road Training Partnership initiative of the California Workforce
 Development Board, which will result in training for thousands of jobs, creating entry into careers
 such as dental assisting with competitive starting salaries and long-term growth potential.
 Programs such as CDA's SmileCrew will be eligible to apply for grants from this pool.

3. AB 526: Vaccine Administration and COVID-19 Testing – Sponsor

CDA is sponsoring AB 526 by Assemblymember Jim Wood, DDS, (D-Healdsburg), which amends the Dental Practice Act to allow dentists to administer COVID-19 and flu vaccines. This bill would codify the existing Department of Consumer Affairs waiver that allows dentists to administer COVID-19 vaccines during the current COVID-19 public health emergency. Specifically, it would allow a dentist to independently prescribe and administer influenza and COVID-19 vaccines approved by the FDA in compliance with federal vaccination schedule guidelines.

Additionally, AB 526 would align the California Department of Public Health regulations with federal law so dentists can obtain the appropriate state licensure alongside their Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments certificate, which will allow them to conduct COVID-19 rapid tests to screen their patients and dental team members when such tests become widely available and appropriate for use in the dental office.

AB 526 passed out of the Assembly and is currently moving through the Senate.

4. MICRA Repeal Ballot Measure - Oppose

The Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act allows injured patients to receive unlimited economic damages for all past and future medical costs, lost wages and lifetime earning potential. MICRA also allows up to \$250,000 in noneconomic damages and includes a limit on attorneys' fees, stabilizes liability costs and reduces incentives for frivolous lawsuits against health care providers. A group of trial lawyers have qualified a ballot measure for the November 2022 election that would essentially eliminate MICRA's protections. This measure would undeniably raise health care costs and reduce access to care for those who need it most, including people who use Medi-Cal, county health programs, safety-net providers and school-based health centers.

CDA is part of <u>Californians to Protect Patients and Contain Health Care Costs</u>, a broad coalition including physicians, nurses, hospitals, safety-net clinics and other health care providers committed to fighting this initiative.

5. AB 733: Increasing Oral Health Care Through Medical-Dental Integration – Co-Sponsor

CDA and the California Dental Hygienists Association are co-sponsoring a collaborative effort to help improve access to care for Medi-Cal dental beneficiaries without a dental home. AB 733 by Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco) seeks to expand access to oral health care for Medi-Calenrolled children and pregnant people by allowing RDHAPs to partner with physicians in medical settings to provide fluoride treatments and oral health education and to coordinate care with dental providers and the dental care system. CDA and CDHA are working with stakeholders including the California Society of Pediatric Dentists, CMA, Children Now and the American Academy of Pediatrics-California on this collaborative effort to expand access to care and improve medical-dental integration. AB 733 is a two-year bill as CDA continues to work with stakeholders.

6. AB 1400: Single-Payer Health Care - Oppose

CDA is committed to improving the state's health care delivery system and to extending health coverage to all Californians. We are eager to work with lawmakers on solutions the state is capable of implementing to achieve universal coverage and protect the significant progress made under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which allowed California to achieve a larger reduction in its uninsured rate than any other state. Introduced by Assemblymembers Kalra, Lee and Santiago, AB 1400 would replace Medicare, Medi-Cal, all private insurance and the Covered California exchange with one state health care program. CDA has numerous concerns with such a proposal including the lack of any funding details and the great difficulty the state has

meeting its existing obligations to underserved patients in the Medi-Cal program. Creating the single-payer health care system proposed in AB 1400 would also require passage of a ballot measure by voters and approval from the federal government and could require hundreds of billions of dollars in new tax revenues. The bill did not receive a hearing this year and will not move forward.

7. AB 1163: Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Local Tax Preemption - Co-Sponsor

Sugar-sweetened beverages are the single largest source of added sugar in the American diet. They are also a significant driver of various health conditions including tooth decay, which affects more than two-thirds of California children (making dental caries the most common chronic childhood disease). CDA and a coalition of more than a dozen leading health care organizations are pursuing legislation, AB 1163 by Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian (D-North Hollywood), to return power to local cities and counties, allowing them to pass local sugary drink excise taxes if they are appropriate for their communities. When the legislature passed a statewide preemption on these local taxes in 2018, the state eliminated a popular and helpful tool that municipalities could use to raise additional revenue and improve public health — dual policy objectives especially important in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. AB 1163 did not receive a hearing this year and may be reconsidered next year.

8. Direct-to-Consumer Orthodontic Consumer Protections

Providing dental care that involves the movement of teeth without a proper evaluation, including X-rays, can lead to serious patient harm, such as loose or cracked teeth, bleeding tongue and gums, gum recession or a misaligned bite. With the emergence of new direct-to-consumer (DTC) business models offering various dental services that are ordered without an in-person clinical examination, it is imperative that dental treatment continues to meet a uniform standard of care regardless of whether a dentist provides treatment through telehealth or in person. CDA continues to advocate for consumer protections that ensure that DTC orthodontic business models have the same level of dentist oversight and patient safety as the virtual dental home model and in-person dental care. CDA will continue to work with the appropriate enforcement entities, including the dental board, to push for increased patient safety while pursuing improved statutory and regulatory enforcement.

9. Dental Plan Transparency

Over the past several years, CDA has worked to improve transparency of dental benefit plans for dentists and consumers. AB 1962 (2014) required commercial dental plans to annually disclose to the state how much premium revenue they spend on patient care versus administrative costs, known as a dental loss ratio (DLR). The reported data show a wide range of premium revenue spent on patient care, with a quarter of all California dental plans spending less than 50% of premiums on care and some plans even falling below 10%. SB 1008 (2018) built upon this by requiring all dental plans to use a uniform matrix to disclose their benefits directly to consumers, similar to the one used by medical plans. This provides plan beneficiaries with a uniform summary of plan details, including covered services, reimbursement levels, estimated enrollee cost share, limitations and exceptions. In 2019, CDA successfully sponsored AB 954 (Wood, D-Santa Rosa), which requires dental benefit plans to be more transparent about the common practice of "leasing" access to a network of contracted dentists from another dental benefit plan to provide clarity for patients and providers, reduce confusion and help preserve trust in the dentist-patient relationship. These transparency measures help level the playing field for consumers and providers, are consistent with standards that apply to medical plans and help hold dental plans accountable for how they spend premium dollars.

Updated July 2021

To the friends I've made while working for SBVCDS,

August 20th will be my last day working at the Santa Barbara Ventura County Dental Society as the Administrative Secretary and the Vendor Relations Coordinator, just 11 days shy of my 6-year mark working for an organization that has filled me with pride and joy. I write this message as a thank you to my colleagues and the members whom I have had the pleasure of working with these last few years. Thank you for welcoming me into an exclusive community of professionals who put the needs of their community before anything else. Thank you for trusting me to put together your Centennial Celebration and all the other social and CE events! To my SBVCDS team, thank you Linda and our Board, for



showing me the true meaning of leadership; Thank you Felipe, for teaching me a thing or two about exceptional teamwork; and thank you to Jessica from the Foundation, who showed me the impact one organization can make in a community. I cherish my time at SBVCDS greatly and I hope to continue the relationships I have built with our members, Board, and staff!

Mayra De Leon

Mayra will be leaving SBVCDS to work for the Santa Rosa Island Research Station while finishing her last semester at CSUCI to graduate with a BA in Environmental Communications. If you have contacted the society at any point in the last 6 years, you likely had the pleasure of working with Mayra. We will miss her creativity, her organization and graphic talents, and her professionalism and kindness. As we all know, finding someone dedicated every day to helping the office be a wonderful place to be; and to constantly improve the office is a treasure. We thank Mayra for her wonderful work with us at SBVCDS and though we will miss her, we wish her the very best in her future endeavors!

REFER A NEW MEMBER ...and get new rewards!

A CDA member's personal experience with our support, advocacy, education and protection is a powerful referral tool. And, there's no better time to introduce a colleague to the value of organized dentistry.

With 27,000 dentists working together, our community is growing stronger than ever. Our newest benefit of membership, tdsc.com, leverages that shared strength to deliver big savings on 25,000 dental supplies through one easy-to-shop site.

Share the benefits by referring your colleagues to join CDA and encourage them to shop and save. The more referrals, the more group purchasing savings for everyone!

The more new members you refer, the more rewards! Get started today!

Share the online application link:

cda.org/join

Member get a Member Program:

You'll be rewarded up to three ways for every successful referral:

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'IT FEELS GOOD TO BE ME:'

Oxnard Woman Gets Smile Back



WES WOODS II Ventura County Star Published June 27, 2021

Alyssa Lopez, 28, of Oxnard, speaks with Dr. Hessem Siavesh at Greater Ventura Oral & Facial Surgery in Ventura

All Alyssia Lopez wanted was just to eat a salad for lunch. But for the 28-year-old Oxnard woman to eat grilled chicken and crunchy greens, she needed a two-day surgery.

Earlier this month, Lopez underwent two, 90-minute surgeries for her upper and lower jaw at the Greater Ventura Oral & Facial Surgery offices in Ventura.

"A salad ... just to experience that again," Lopez said.
"It's like you never know what you miss until you can't have it anymore."

Before the procedures, Lopez only had four teeth, making most meals a challenge. Two days afterward, she got her smile back.

"It feels good to be me and not worry about what someone's going to think if I smile," Lopez said on Friday. "I forget to even grab my mask now because why do you want to cover that up? It looks and it feels so good you don't want to cover it up anymore."

AN 'AMAZING OPPORTUNITY'

Lopez entered the Greater Ventura Oral & Facial Surgery's contest in fall 2020 with hundreds of others. She was selected in March as the winner of a free smile makeover worth between \$50,000-\$60,000.

Lopez works at a mental health facility dealing with patients who have alcohol and drug addiction and other abuse issues.

Dr. Hessam Siavash, of Greater Ventura Oral & Facial Surgery in Ventura, said Lopez was selected because she had a vision of how she wanted to improve her life, her family and community.

"That was the whole theme of this thing. We're providing ... a second chance, changing people's lives," Siavash said.

ARTICLE CONT. 'IT FEELS GOOD TO BE ME:' OXNARD WOMAN GETS SMILE BACK

Lopez said her partner Vanessa Archibeque sent her an advertisement for the second chance contest through Facebook messenger. Lopez was called back in December.

"I had to submit a lot of pictures, my information and why I want this. I honestly forgot I had even done it," Lopez said, adding that the pandemic began before she heard back.

She described the surgery as an "amazing opportunity."

Lopez has a 10-year-old son and is planning to get married to Archibeque next August.

Going about life with nearly all of her teeth missing has given her low self esteem.

"I've been too embarrassed to even have a party where everybody was paying attention to me," Lopez said. "Even my son's parent-teacher conference, I'll just do it on the phone rather than do it in person. ... It made me embarrassed like I don't want to do that."

Lopez said she was "nervous, excited and thirsty" before the surgery because she was unable to eat or drink for at least nine hours.

Siavash said Lopez's medical procedure replaced decayed and missing teeth with dental implants.

"It's a big deal," Siavash said. "The advantage of these dental implants is we're able to restore her smile."

'WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD'

Lopez said she used to wear dentures with a special kind of glue for it to stay in place. The glue would sometimes ooze in her throat and she did not have enough money to fix it.

"I always threw up," Lopez said. "...Sometimes I didn't want to do it because of how horrible it was."

Siavash said Lopez's lack of access to good dental care was a key reason why she had just four teeth and had to wear dentures at age 28.

"That has repercussions later in life," Siavash said.
"When you lose teeth, you actually lose bone, you lose your support structures. So your lips are sunk in; your facial aesthetics changes. So a lot of things will happen to her in the next 15 to 20 years if she doesn't do anything about it."

Dr. Saj Jivraj, of Anacapa Dental Art Institute in Oxnard, who installed Lopez's teeth, said there would be slurred speech immediately after the surgery.

"We're changing the whole mouth," Jivraj said. "We warn patients. The beauty is the mouth is very adaptable. Within four to six weeks they're back to normal."

Lopez received temporary teeth and will get permanent teeth in about four months, Siavash said.

When the permanent teeth are installed with the implants, patients are told to eat soft food like salmon, Jivraj said. The implants use a regular toothbrush and a water pick for cleaning the teeth and get cleaning and hygiene checkups every six months.

"We're not going to look behind; we're going to look forward," Jivraj said. "We're going to find a solution that works for you. All they have to promise me is to take care of their teeth."

Lopez said it was painful recovering earlier this week but she was getting better on Friday.

"It's still an adjustment," she said. "I'm still learning to talk again, and it feels different. I am swollen in my cheeks and stuff. But it feels pretty good, and it looks pretty good."

Wes Woods II covers West County for the Ventura County Star

MEMBER NEWS! Do you have a story or achievement to share? Let us know and get highlighted in the next issue and on social media!

LESSONS LEARNED IN MY 90 YEARS JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE

PROLOGUE

I came bouncing into my new world at Sibley Hospital, Washington, DC. on May 27, 1931. I apologize to



my dear mother, Sarah, for her discomfort during her labor. Like all proud Father's, my Dad, Harry, passed out cigars to his cronies.

I would go on to be the first of five boys, to be forever known as "The Berger Boys".

I grew up in Washington, DC during World War II, where everyone on the Home Front supported our brave men and women heroes fighting in foreign lands to keep the world safe protecting democracy. I still have fond memories recalling our elementary class reciting "The Pledge of Allegiance" before starting our daily class learnings. I remember saving my pennies to purchase five cent War Bond Savings stamps. They would be pasted into a booklet until it reached \$18.75 in stamps and then purchase a \$25 War Savings Bond.

Following the end of the War, Dad bought a 1948 Pontiac 2 door sedan and the Berger Boys, with Dad driving and Mom feeding us sandwiches, set off on Route 66 bound to golden California and the fabulous world of Hollywood make believe. We swelted from the heat as we approached New Mexico.

Auto air conditioning at that time was only an exterior swamp cooler attached to the car's window to cool us off.

The Family settled in Studio City, right off Coldwater Canyon and Ventura Boulevard. Following graduation from North Hollywood High school, I attended UCLA as a pre-dent student. I was always very athletic and tried out and did make the UCLA Frosh Football traveling team. We had several Blue-Chip athletes that went on to make All American status.

LESSONS LEARNED



Now comes what was to be the first of several important Life Learning Lessons: "never give up".

While I was trying to keep up with Chem 1A and German 1 classes. I was committed to 3 hours of daily football practice that began to affect my studies. I told my Dad it was too much and I was going to drop out of football. He taught me "never give up" and work a little harder, which I did. This was to be my fist lesson learned during my 90 Years

Journey and remains with me today, "never give up, keep working hard and you will succeed".

During my second year at UCLA, the Korean War broke out and I

joined the Air National Guard in Van Nuys as a Medic. Within a few months, my unit was activated, sent to Texas and from there sent to the UN Hospital in Nagoya, Japan. I was assigned to the orthopedic department to help care airlifted MASH battlefield wounded UN soldiers.

As the war was beginning to wind down, I was granted early separation from active duty and after 15 months of service returned home.

Now for life's learning lesion #2. My Dad, now in his early 50s, stood in line at UCLA to register me for the fall session 1952. I returned home late in August and started my fall classes in September. I now had a new direction in my life that was forged from my military experiences caring for seriously wounded warriors. I excelled in my studies

and made applications for dental school in 1954. I was accepted to several dental schools, including **New York** University School of Dentistry. Having never been to New York, the challenge was too great not to take



My dad and me

advantage of this opportunity to study dentistry while living in the "Big Apple".

Here comes Life's Learning Lesson

#3. Our Dean, Dr. Raymond Nagel, was a Prosthodontist from Boston. He was always immaculately dressed and spoke with a beautiful Bostonian accent. He lectured the freshman class that that no matter what ever life may deal you, no one can never take your dental education away from you.

I still remember our first year at dental school, Anatomy, BioChem, Dental Materials, and Histology, yes those were the "days". I studied hard and began to enjoy my dental education. Dean Nagel and my Dad were both right, "I never gave up".

Now for Life's Learning *The love of my life* Lesson #4. It was meeting Syril, soon to become my Life's Soulmate. We met at a birthday party at the during my 4th year at dental school. I was smitten by her brilliance, beauty, and great humor. I won her heart and we married in New York. Syril was a Syracuse graduate who excelled in athletics and had amazing communication skills. She helped supporting us during the fourth year at NYU. Following graduation, we returned to California to begin our dental practice in Simi Valley. Yes, Lesson #4 was I "never gave up" pursuing Syril until she accepted my proposal to marry her.

Here comes Life's Learning Lesson #5. We worked hard in building our dental practice in Simi, while at the same time Syril brought into our blessed world two beautiful sons, Herschel, and Daniel. We encouraged them both to follow the same work ethics that were taught to us by both of our parents. It has paid off in multiple dividends. Herschel practices dentistry, with his wife Laura, at my same location in Simi. Herschel is a Past President

of the Santa Barbara-Ventura Dental Society. Daniel is an Endocrinologist practicing in Santa Barbara's Samsun Medical Center and is in constant demand for presenting lectures to fellow physicians.

Are you ready for Life's Learning Lesson #6? After nearly 35

years of Clinical dentistry, capped off with earning my Masters in Academy of General Dentistry, and with Syril's blessing, I decided I wanted to move into another direction in the profession of Dentistry. I wanted to give something back to



The lesson learned was that you are never too old to try something new that is both mentally and physically challenging. Remember, "never give Up".

And now for my final #7 Life's Learning Lesson. For those of you that can still recall Frank Sinatra's melodious September Song lyrics, "...the days are dwindling down to a precious few".

During Covid-19, like so many, I was secluded in our Palm Desert home. To keep my mind active, I

sought out as many live webinars and self-study CE courses as I could complete every day. As this was one of my final bucket list goals, it was important for me to keep my Dental License on active status. I realized it was important for me to maintain my dental education and challenge myself to keep my mental faculties still functioning at a high level.

FPILOGUE

I have much to be thankful for as I have now reached 90 years of relatively good health.

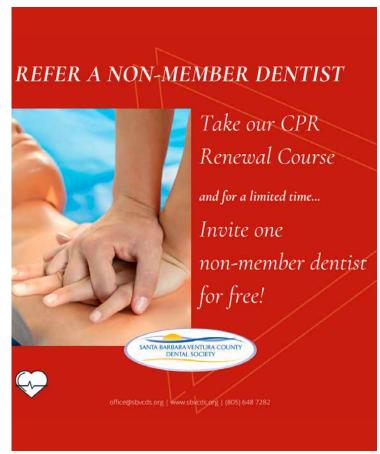
Herschel and Laura have taken their dental practice to the next level while giving us 3 Granddaughters, all college graduates. Daniel and Emy have given us a grandson, just graduated from Berkeley and will follow his Father into medicine, and a granddaughter that will attend University of Washington.

And yes, my most wonderful journey through life has been with my Soulmate for over 63 beautiful years, Syril. There is not a day that I still do not remember our first meeting. Though we are not as spry as we were in those days, we still tell each other how much we love one another every day.

And finally, as I know most of you are much too young to have heard Jimmy Durante, the famous dance and comedian with his famous radio sign-off of in the 1940s-50s... "Goodnight Mrs. Calabash... Wherever You Are", so I will also sign-off with the same "Goodnight Mrs. Calabash...Wherever You Are".

I hope I have I have given all sustenance by joining with me my "Life Lessons Journey through 90 years of a wonderful and amazing life".





IMPORTANT REMINDER

REGARDING RADIOLOGY CERTIFICATION COURSE



During the month of August, SBVCDS will not be taking any new registrations for our Radiology Certification Course. We will resume registering students starting September 1st, 2021.

All pending x-ray evaluations will be graded and processed by July 31st or (if arranged accordingly) after August 31st.



For inquiries, call 805-648-7282 or email office@sbvcds.org





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In the foyer of the USC School of Dentistry waiting room is a large display case, that you may have walked by many times, with a picture of a young man and below is the citation of The Medal Of Honor he received for his heroic action during WWII in Saipan. He was 26 years old and in the prime of his life, yet he gave his all so that his comrades could live.





Michael Walsh
The Epoch Times
May 31, 2021
Updated: June 7, 2021

Commentary

U.S. Marines moving positions during battle in Garapan, during the Pacific Campaign of World War II, on Saipan, circa 1943–1945. (U.S. Marine Corps/Getty Images)

A SOLDIER FIGHTS SO THAT OTHERS MIGHT LIVE

The Medal of Honor citation says it all: "As the perimeter began to be overrun, it became increasingly difficult for Captain Salomon to work on the wounded. He then saw a Japanese soldier bayoneting one of the wounded soldiers lying near the tent. Firing from a squatting position, Captain Salomon quickly killed the enemy soldier. Then, as he turned his attention back to the wounded, two more Japanese soldiers appeared in the front entrance of the tent.

"As these enemy soldiers were killed, four more crawled under the tent walls. Rushing them, Captain Salomon kicked the knife out of the hand of one, shot another, and bayoneted a third. Captain Salomon butted the fourth enemy soldier in the stomach and a wounded comrade then shot and killed the enemy soldier. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Captain Salomon ordered the wounded to make their way as best they could back to the regimental aid station, while he attempted to hold off the enemy until they were clear.

"Captain Salomon then grabbed a rifle from one of the wounded and rushed out of the tent. After four men were killed while manning a machine gun, Captain Salomon took control of it. When his body was later found, 98 dead enemy soldiers were piled in front of his position."

So who was Benjamin L. Salomon, the man who practically single-handedly took on the entire Imperial Japanese Army on Saipan on July 7, 1944, and fought to his last breath so that others might live?

The first and last answer is, he was an American, doing what Americans have always done best—fighting for the country he loved. Born in Milwaukee in 1914, Salomon studied at Marquette University and the University of Southern California, where he attended dental college and went into private practice. Drafted in the fall of 1940, shortly after FDR instituted the first peacetime draft in U.S. history, Salomon was inducted as a private into the U.S. Army.

The young dentist quickly proved adept at marksmanship with both rifle and pistol, and was quickly promoted to sergeant and given command of a machinegun unit. With America's entry into the war after Pearl Harbor, Salomon was promoted to first lieutenant and—despite his talent for war and against his wishes —transferred to the Dental Corps.

Now, a member of the 105th Infantry Regiment and promoted to captain, Salomon hit the beach on the island of Saipan in the Marianas Islands. Under heavy, desperate Japanese resistance, there wasn't much work for a dentist, so Salomon volunteered to replace his battalion's surgeon, who had been wounded.

Saipan was critical to the Japanese defense of their home islands, and they were prepared to make the Americans pay dearly for every inch of it. The Japanese commander, Yoshitsugu Saito, had ordered his troops to fight to the last man, and each to kill at least 10 Americans before falling.

"Whether we attack or whether we stay where we are, there is only death. However, in death there is life. I will advance with you to deliver another blow to the American devils and leave my bones on Saipan as a fortress of the Pacific," he said.

The Medal of Honor citation puts the dire situation into context.

"The Regiment's 1st and 2nd Battalions were attacked by an overwhelming force estimated between 3,000 and 5,000 Japanese soldiers. It was one of the largest attacks attempted in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Although both units fought furiously, the enemy soon penetrated the Battalions' combined perimeter and inflicted overwhelming casualties. In the first minutes of the attack, approximately 30 wounded soldiers walked, crawled, or were carried into Captain Salomon's aid station, and the small tent soon filled with wounded men."

This was war at its most elemental. The Japanese, with no hope of help and nowhere to run, hid in caves by day and attacked by night. The Army and Marines fought the most brutal war imaginable, with flamethrowers and bayonets and bare hands, in addition to rifles, sidearms, and machine guns. The Japanese would attack in waves, kamikazes of the infantry, attempting to overrun the American positions as the GIs pressed forward.

Salomon's mobile hospital was set up near the front

lines in the early dawn of July 7, just meters between the forward foxholes and the sea. The Japanese burst out of their concealed positions and sent the Americans reeling back. The hospital was soon filled with the wounded as the fighting raged all around it.

Salomon realized his position was untenable and ordered the wounded evacuated while he stayed behind to cover them. It was at this point that his ability with guns and weaponry came into play.

"Everybody's dead out there," he was reported to have said. "I can do these guys more good out there than I can in here. I'll hold them off until you get them to safety. See you later."

When they found his body, it was riddled with bullet and bayonet wounds, many of them apparently inflicted after death by the enraged enemy. Where Saito had demanded that each of his men kill 10 Americans, one dauntless American had killed more than 100 Japanese.

Salomon's Medal of Honor was delayed by bureaucratic misinterpretation of the Geneva convention, which outlaws identified medical personnel from taking up arms; Salomon was wearing a Red Cross armband when he died. But in fact, doctors are allowed to fight in defense of their wounded and so, on May 1, 2002— nearly 58 years after his heroic actions—President George W. Bush officially awarded the medal posthumously to Captain Benjamin Lewis Salomon.

The citation concludes: "Captain Salomon's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army." And, it must be added,

upon all Americans who put their country before themselves.

Do we still have such men today?

Michael Walsh is the editor of The-Pipeline.org and the author of "The Devil's Pleasure Palace" and "The Fiery Angel," both published by Encounter Books. His latest book, "Last Stands," a cultural study of military history from the Greeks to the Korean War, was recently published.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

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