

College Notes 2007

**From the President
Donald E. Johnson, D.D.S.
Master Fellow**

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve the College as Chief Executive Officer for the year 2007. Not because I need another page for my Scrapbook, another picture in the magazine, or another plaque upon the wall. No, I truly feel a need to assist and to give back to the profession that has afforded me the opportunity to enjoy a lifetime of satisfaction of service to others.

I entered the dental profession at a time when the delivery of dental care was changing from slow speed to high speed and had the opportunity to work with one of the developers of many of the high speed techniques, Doctor Arch McEwen. With an open mind and a desire to learn I was a willing receptacle for the knowledge the Professors at Emory University were willing to share with their students. As the level of understanding increased so did the level of confidence necessary for me to become a healthcare provider. Over the next forty-five years I was able to critique my efforts and to prove to myself that doing it right is much better than doing it over.

The Professors at Emory also impressed upon me the importance of sharing knowledge with colleagues, as well as the importance of becoming involved with organized dentistry; and reminded me that the profession of dentistry was not a spontaneous creation; but one that required the attention and devotion of many thousands who had gone before.

That dedication, that level of service, that attention to detail is still necessary. The job is not over, never will be. Although dental anatomy and the masticating mechanism still develops and functions the same way, methods of treatment have evolved and new materials open pathways for new procedures. Oversight becomes more important than ever, in order to filter the good from the not so good; and the charlatan from the dedicated dentist.

So where does the ICD fit into this picture? In the beginning, the Founders of the College saw a need to establish a network of dentists, dedicated to the advancement of the profession, in order to communicate emerging ideas, new materials, new techniques and methods without the unnecessary delay associated with periodic meetings and congresses. By selecting those dentists for Fellowship who exhibited conspicuous and meritorious service to the profession, their community, and their families, a quality organization was assured. Now, after 79 years, the judgment of the Founders can be affirmed; the plan was sound.

Is there still a need for the ICD? Good question. Those who look through complacent and lazy eyes see the Goal, as satisfied. Those who look through the eyes of the Founders still see a Golden Opportunity. We still have many areas of the world where there are practicing dentists but no ICD presence. We have many areas of the world, now under development and building centers of education with dental schools; but no ICD presence. Is this good, or could quality be better assured if the ICD was involved? Ultimately the desire is for all of the dental schools around the world to

produce a dental graduate capable of providing a certified level of dental care to those patients in his or her service area.

The ICD can accomplish this task. It will not be easy, but it was not easy for the Founders, who were just two persons with a common idea, and a desire to succeed, to put together the International College of Dentists, now recognized as the pre-eminent international dental organization. Yes, working together, we can accomplish this task. We owe it to our profession to accept this challenge; and that is why I am honored to lead this charge.