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# Bulletin

VOLUME 36, ISSUE 7

JULY 2008

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## Annual Retreat Focuses On Dentistry Image

By Phil Smith

The SCDA Board of Governors and Committee Chairs had their first retreat for the new administration. The event was held on June 13 at the Blue Marlin meeting facility in Columbia. Dr. Jim Mercer organized the agenda to reflect a new focus for the policies and interactions of the dental association and the community.

Invited guests included Mr. Richard Green, with the ADA Washington Office, and Mr. Bob Chlopak, with Chlopak, Leonard, Schechter & Associates (CLS), a public affairs consulting firm. Also present were the representatives from Carolina Public Relations. Mr. John Durst and Mr. Sig Huitt will serve as the SCDA publicity group. This is an alliance with funds provided by the ADA.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Mercer acknowledged that SCDA and its efforts are oftentimes hindered by the public perception of dentists and their care. Although great success has been accomplished from our efforts with GKAS and NCDHM, the general opinion in the public forum is that dentistry is insensitive or uninvolved in the state's care to the needy. The future trends may be affected by public health insurance or an inability to treat patients without insurance.

Mr. Green explained that too frequently state organizations do not have a public relations policy, and when a crisis arises it is too late to respond. The list of examples are numerous and include the "usual suspects" of fluoridation, access to care, auxiliary utilization in underserved areas and toxic products related to dentistry. However, public relations should be a proactive dynamic and not a reactive response. Events can spontaneously arise and swift address is necessary. But in analysis of trends, such as primary care dental techs in Alaska, the positive strategy would be to appeal for appropriate care for the patients. It is not a turf war for dentists, it is a care war on behalf of patients. A significant difference!

Even recently South Carolina has experienced a challenge with insurance payments and reimbursement. The solution for the overage was deferred back to the dentists who provided care. This "reversal" is as much a PR ploy as any other, especially as insurance companies begin to profile treatment and then dictate care based upon the statistics. Understanding and challenging this type of cost containment is an appropriate place for altering perception of treatment and presenting a patient care agenda, not a cost control agenda.

This month Richard Davis and a concerted effort from SCDA and contact dentists were able to defend a number of gubernatorial vetoes that would prohibit funds increases in Medicaid, dental school funding and rural dentist programs. All vetoes were not passed, but the effort launched was a text book PR coup.

As SCDA moves to expand its interaction and service with the state's population, a nimble reaction and a subtle, constant effort must be in place to promote dentistry. Our focus on improved health in the state requires all of us to commit to service beyond our four walls. Patient screening in the student population is an important first step in our being proactive. However, it is the opinion of the leadership of the association that successful events require a constant, positive and informative voice. Dentistry must continue to be the resource and reference for oral health advocacy in South Carolina.



Mr. Bob Chlopak, Dr. Jim Mercer and Mr. Richard Green discussed proactive public relations.

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# White Coat Ceremony & Dental School Events

By Josie Hahn, CDM 2010

The MUSC Class of 2010 has finally finished the seemingly endless and tortuous rite of passage of pre-clinical basic science classes as well as NBDE Part I. On Friday, June 6, these fifty-six aspiring dentists were paraded into St. Luke's Chapel for the celebratory white coat ceremony, which is sponsored by the SCDA. This ceremony marks their transition from preclinical classroom studies into the clinical setting. With family, friends, and loved ones there to watch, each dental student was called by name and "coated" by faculty members from MUSC's College of Dental Medicine. Remarks were made by the college's dean, Dr. Sanders; associate dean, Dr. Javed; Class of 2010 class president, Eric Bryant; and the college's ASDA president, Michael Ammons. Guest speaker and 2001 graduate of MUSC's College of Dental Medicine, Dr. Benjamin Daniel, generously offered time from his busy schedule and family to inspire and motivate the class of 2010. During his speech, Dr. Daniel depicted his journey through his career in dentistry over the past nine years. In an upbeat tone, he described his dental school career and his entry into the workforce as an associate with two dentists in Greenville, SC, before starting his own practice. Dr. Daniel's message was amusingly portrayed by his revelation that patients "expected him to know what he was talking about." Acting upon his revelation, Dr. Daniel spent every penny on continuing education courses to be that dentist who knew what he was talking about. His inspiring words gave strong encouragement to the class of 2010 to do the same and develop a lifelong pattern of learning and improving. Included in the white coat ceremony was the presentation of an honorary doctorate degree to Hal Zorn, the past executive director of the SCDA. Hal's thank you remarks offered words of gratitude to his fellow colleagues as well as words of wisdom to the class of 2010, charging them with the responsibility of actively protecting the profession in the coming years.

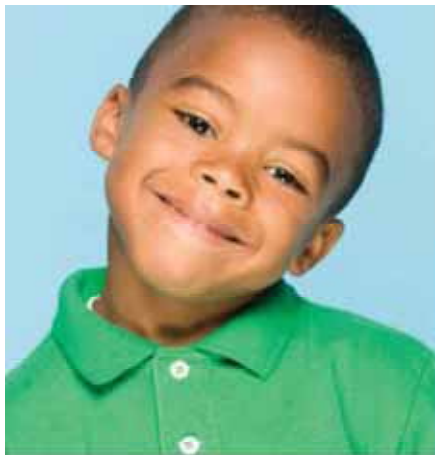
While the third year dental students are beginning their journey into clinics, the first year students commenced their dental careers with summer gross anatomy on June 2. To welcome them into the dental family, the MUSC chapter of ASDA sponsored the freshmen welcome party at the Folly Beach County Park. The Army and Air Force helped to provide delicious Evo's pizza as faculty, staff, and students enjoyed the camaraderie. With each season and semester, the cycle of students continues on MUSC's campus. During the summer, while the rest of the school is somewhat quiet, the dental school is filled with sounds of change.



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## Master Calendar

- Aug. 1**     **SCDA Board Meeting**—  
SCDA Office, 9am-1pm
- Aug. 1**     **Radiation Safety Exam**—  
MTC Airport Campus, 2-  
4pm
- Aug. 8**     **Countdown To Kinder-**  
**garten**—EdVenture
- Aug. 15**    **SCDA Member Benefits**  
**Group Board Meeting**—  
SCDA Office, 9am-1pm
- Sept. 18-21**   **16th District Caucus**—  
Williamsburg, VA
- Sept. 26-28**   **Southern Leadership**  
**Conference**—Atlanta, GA

Please visit [www.scd.org](http://www.scd.org)  
for more events.

## South Carolina Dental Association Bulletin

Vol. 36, No. 7

July 2008

Philip E. Smith, DMD, FAGD, ACD, ICD

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Designer

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## Editorial Comments

*Comments appearing in this section are the renderings of the Editor or credited authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the SCDA. Letters are invited. Brevity is appreciated, and the Editor reserves the right to edit all communications. Letters may be emailed: [philes48@aol.com](mailto:philes48@aol.com), mailed to the SCDA office, or faxed to (803)359-3004.*

The South Carolina Dental Association has 1752 members. Of that number 415 have been practicing ten years or fewer, and another 298 have practiced for twenty years. So a full 41% of our population may not have a first hand knowledge of the SCDA history.

Many of our member dentists do not know about the accomplishments of those dentists that have served us so well. Contributors were dedicated to the betterment of dental health in South Carolina. These same dentists were instrumental in the forging of a viable dental association. They were active in developing legislation that preserved the private practice of dentistry. Beyond that, they were mentors for the generation of dentists currently in the field. So if I may, I would like to share a few names and stories with you.

When I graduated from dental school in December 1973, I moved to Lexington and began practicing with Dr. Barney Austin. He was active in SCDA, and a friend of Dr. Frank Hines Jr. One day I had an invitation from Dr. Hines to join him as we went to the State House for a meeting about Sunset Legislation. This is the legislative window when the Practice Act is open for review and all sorts of things can be introduced. Joining us was Dr. Howard Higgins and Dr. Bill Draffin. Three giants of dentistry and a new dentist...me!

Dr. William "Bill" Draffin was president of the SCDA for the term 1960-1961. Dr. Draffin held most of the state offices in South Carolina dentistry. Many of you probably remember Dr. Draffin as Speaker of the House before Dr. Lynn Campbell. He also served as an ADA Delegate, a Trustee at MTJSC, and was a National President of the American College of Dentists. His influence was significant for dentistry and he had a knack for legislative technicality. He had recommended the following:

- For the future, I would recommend that we delve deeper and more fully into the field of public relations, exploring it with finesse, to establish the greatest possible support with the public.
- I recommend that we set aside \$2000 to set up a scholarship loan system for dental students who have completed at least their first year with good grades.

Dr. Howard B. Higgins was president of the SCDA for the term 1963-1964. Dr. Higgins served on the Board of Dental Examiners, was a trustee to the ADA and also the Vice-President of the ADA for two terms. He was a Fellow in the ACD and represented the ADA in an International Congress in London and Rome. He had recommended the following:

- That the Annual Convention be limited to scientific and clinical programs and business. The House of Delegates duties are becoming
- (Continued on next page)



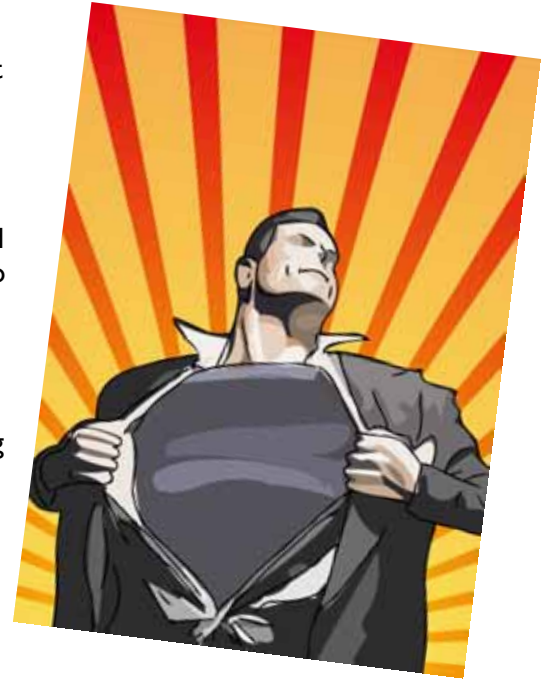
**Dr. Phil Smith**  
Editor

- greater and it is also recommended that more time be set aside for the HOD at Annual Convention.
- A second House of Delegates should be held in January or February. This would keep the delegates from having a rushed agenda.
- The establishment of reference committees to assist the Board and the delegates on matters of importance.

Dr. Frank B. Hines, Jr. was president of the SCDA from 1968 – 1969. He was the “Centennial president”, celebrating 100 years of the SCDA. Dr. Hines was an orthodontist and also served as president of SC Orthodontist Association. He is a Fellow in the ACD.

Dr. Hines is still around Columbia and we had opportunity to chat about his reflections on this article. Frank was very sincere that the things that he and the above dentists accomplished were necessary to move dentistry forward. “At that time, I was the Legislative Chairman but a number of us worked behind the scenes to address critical legislation. Richard Davis and Iris group are good, but back then you would talk to legislators privately and figure things out. I remember getting a call about the make up of the State Board of Dentistry. The Governor wanted to change the make up, and we wanted to keep the number of dentists in control. It required a bit of ‘give and take’ and an intercession by our friend Dr. Percival Everett, but we worked it out to the benefit of all.”

I would like to tell the younger membership that these men had a long view of dental practice. They held on to beliefs that had repercussions 10 and 15 years later. We need to share that dedication; to pass that tenacious spirit for those that come after us. Persevere and preserve practice. Next month I will share another list of dental “superheroes”.



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# SCDA Member Benefits Group Corner

By Mark K. Brown

## PROPERTY COVERAGE FOR YOUR DENTAL PRACTICE

We've recently received several calls here at the SCDA office from members looking for information on their property and casualty insurance policies such as: Workers' Compensation, Business Overhead, Property, etc. Through a little research we discovered that their agent of record was never changed over to the SCDA, so there was nothing we could do in reference to assisting them with their questions.

You may recall in the past we were contracted with an outside group through another association to offer these products to our members. The SCDA decided to move away from that group a couple of years back, but those policies could only be moved at the request of the member dentists.

The past group would not provide us with a listing of our members and which P&C products they had purchased through that agency, so it wasn't possible for us to contact those members individually to remind them of the need for an agent of record change.

This brings us to the here and now, where just a couple of weeks ago we saved one of our members roughly \$1,000 by switching his property coverage back to the SCDA.

Contact us at 800-327-2598 to get these policies transferred back to the SCDA if you haven't done so already. It's a simple process that will allow you to contact your association with any questions about your property coverage and you could save some money as well.



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# President's Message



Greetings fellow South Carolina Dental Association members. We recently held the 2008 – 2009 SCDA Planning Retreat in the Vista area of downtown Columbia. Our focus was improving the Association's public relations and how improving public relations can increase our success in the legislative arena as we deal with a number of local and national issues.

The SCDA is the leading voice for oral health in South Carolina but it is a voice that is not always heard clearly. In fact what little press we get is usually negative. The SCDA has and will continue to lead in many areas – Give Kids A Smile, Children's Dental Health Month, oral screenings, and other programs at our state's children's museums. We have built a coalition with DHEC on water fluoridation and other issues. We are active participants in the Oral Health Coalition and Advisory Council addressing children with special health care needs, social marketing, early childhood and older adults, school based programs and water fluoridation. We are focusing on the oral health needs of the most vulnerable populations in South Carolina and working to improve access state wide. We are active in Medicaid reform, fluoride varnish program age one visits and potential changes to the workforce. We continue to be active legislatively improving access and protecting the public. (See executive Directors column relating to the Legislature elsewhere in this issue of the Bulletin.) I have touched on just a few areas where getting the word out with improved public relations would benefit the Association.

We will continue our effort this year to work for a mandatory oral screening for all children entering public school kindergarten, improving funding for programs that help increase access, workforce changes and dental access blitzes across the state for adults. Crafting our message and not letting others define us will be critical for us to succeed.

The American Dental Association 2006 House of Delegates was aware of the tremendous challenges facing individual states and passed resolution 41H-2006 that directed the ADA to initiate a nationally coordinated state targeted integrated public affairs plan at an estimated 3.8 million dollars. The resolution called for the public affairs plan to partner the ADA with selected state dental societies facing significant advocacy issues. South Carolina and the SCDA were selected as one of the states for the initial program. A professional public affairs approach is important in controlling difficult issues related to dentistry such as scope of practice, workforce, and access to care. The SCDA benefitted last year from the ADA's expertise and experience in dealing with these issues in other states. They conducted focus groups of potential SC voters testing specific messages related to workforce issues. We have signed an agreement with the ADA to expand this relationship through 2008.

Our planning retreat had SCDA representation from all SCDA areas of activity including task force and committees. We focused on utilization of these new resources available to us and integration of our Public Relations Task Force chaired by Jeff Gardner into this process. A number of out of town guests attended our retreat. Richard Green from the ADA Washington Office who most recently designed and currently oversees the ADA Integrated Public Affairs Program and Robert Chlopak of Clopak Leonard Schechter and Associates (CLS) representing the outside public relations agency working with the ADA nationally on state issues. These two individuals gave us insightful commentary on a variety of issues from Maine, Alaska, Minnesota and other states that directly or indirectly affect us here in South Carolina.

Over the last six weeks the representatives from the SCDA, ADA, and CLS interviewed a number of local public relations firms to increase our local presence. The agency Carolina Public Relations was selected to give us local expertise and access we have not had previously. Carolina Public Relations is one of the oldest, most established public relations and marketing communications firms operating in the Carolinas with health care experience. Sig Huitt and John Durst representing Carolina PR also attended the Planning Retreat and will be invaluable in helping us craft our message and gain access to state and local media as well as editorial boards. All of the new resources will work hand in hand with our outstanding lobbying team of Richard Davis and Ashley Smith to complement them in the legislative process.

I look forward to working with our lobbying team, the ADA, CLS, Carolina PR our PR Task Force, the various SCDA Committees and Task Forces and you to enhance our legislative efforts and get our message out as we lead in improving oral health in South Carolina.

I welcome your suggestions and comments at [jmercerc@sc.rr.com](mailto:jmercerc@sc.rr.com).

Until next time continue your *Heritage of Commitment* and *Make A Difference*.  
Jim



**Dr. Jim Mercer**  
President

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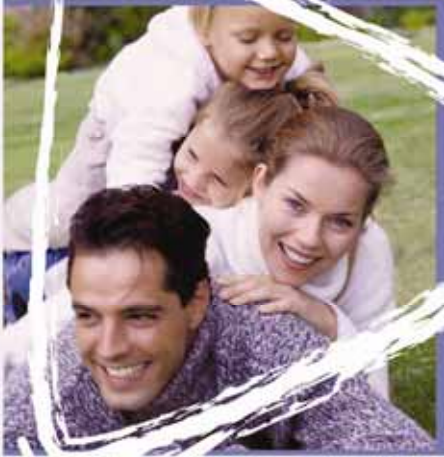
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## Hal Zorn Honored

Hal Zorn, Past Executive Director of the SCDA, was recognized during the dental class White Coat Ceremony at MUSC. Mr. Zorn was awarded an honorary Doctor of Dental Medicine by the college for his many contributions and support of the dental community and the school. The presentation was made by Dean Jack Sanders and Dr. James Edwards.

**Hal Zorn and Dr. Jack Sanders, Dean of the Dental College at MUSC during the White Coat Ceremony**

## Executive Director's Notes

### SCDA Membership Hits Back to Back to Back Homeruns !!!

If you have been around me much, you will know that I love baseball. Despite the problems the sport has encountered in the past years, it still serves as America's favorite past time. In the prime of baseball season, the SCDA membership had a bottom of the ninth rally and won as the 2008 South Carolina Legislative session came to a close.

The hard work began several weeks ago, when I received an email late one evening from our lobbyist that the Medicaid reimbursement and Rural Incentive Program monies had been vetoed by the Governor. The SCDA began work on these two initiatives in early January with a meeting with the Speaker of the House, Representative Bobby Harrell. From there, the SCDA testified before the House Ways and Means Committee on the need for these additional funds. Work continued throughout the legislative session and all seemed well until this email was received.



**Mr. Phil Latham**  
Executive Director

Immediately, your SCDA went into action with its lobbyist and sent a Legislative Action Alert to inform the membership of these vetoes and what was needed of the membership to over ride them. The very next morning, I received a phone call from Richard Davis informing me that another bill, the Dental Lab Bill, had just been vetoed by the Governor. This situation had now become a crisis. Three major bills we had worked on for months were about to go down. Phone calls and additional emails began to go back and forth between the SCDA, the Board of Governors, the Dental Lab Association, the ADA, our lobbyists and many others to write another legislative alert to the membership for immediate action.

If you have not heard, the SCDA was successful in over riding all three vetoes. It is not something our lobbyist or the SCDA did alone; it was because of you - the membership. We heard constant comments from legislators informing us that they just got a call from their dentists, some even asked us to tell the dentists to quit calling. A message was sent and the message was heard loud and clear.

What does this say? Get involved and stay involved. We have a very good relationship with the South Carolina legislators and as you all know we have the best lobbying team in South Carolina. Add that to our contact system and we have seen great success.

Can we now sit back and relax? Absolutely NOT! We need involvement now more than ever as we prepare for the 2009 legislative session and beyond. If you are not a current contact dentist and want to be one or just want to be on the list to act when needed, please let me know.

Some of you may be saying, "I would have called had I known about the situation, but I didn't check my email or I don't have email." I cannot express how important this feature is. In today's world, there is no time to call or fax each and every member to inform them what has happened and what is needed. Response is needed immediately and action is required immediately. The only way to handle that type of immediate action is through email.

Many of our members already check their email two to three times a day and if you are not doing that, you may be missing out on some very important information that affects you or your practice. I strongly encourage you to begin checking your email daily. If you are not receiving email correspondences from the SCDA, let us know, so you can be added.

As details are worked out on these three major legislative wins, information will be passed on to the membership. I want to personally thank each one who did call a legislator and ask them to vote to over ride these vetoes. I also want to thank Richard Davis, Ashley Smith and their entire team in helping the SCDA during the recent 2008 legislative session. We look forward to working with them for many years to come.

*"We need involvement now more than ever as we prepare for the 2009 legislative session and beyond."*



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# Tech Talk

By Christy J. Meador

**2008 Membership Dues**—Membership renewal has come to an end. Those of you who failed to pay will be receiving a letter from the ADA giving you **one last chance** to pay your dues. If you fail to pay on or before July 11, 2008, you will not receive SCDA/ADA publications in August, your name will not appear in the ADA online directory or the SCDA printed directory as a member, your user name and password will not work on the website and **most importantly**, if you have any benefits through the SCDA/ADA they will end. Don't let this happen!

**Did you know...Dental Fun Facts**—2600 BC: Death of Hesy-Re, an Egyptian scribe, often called the first “dentist.” An inscription on his tomb includes the title “the greatest of those who deal with teeth, and of physicians.” This is the earliest known reference to a person identified as a dental practitioner.



Toothbrush fashioned from a tree branch

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# ADA Promises a “Rip-Roaring” Session

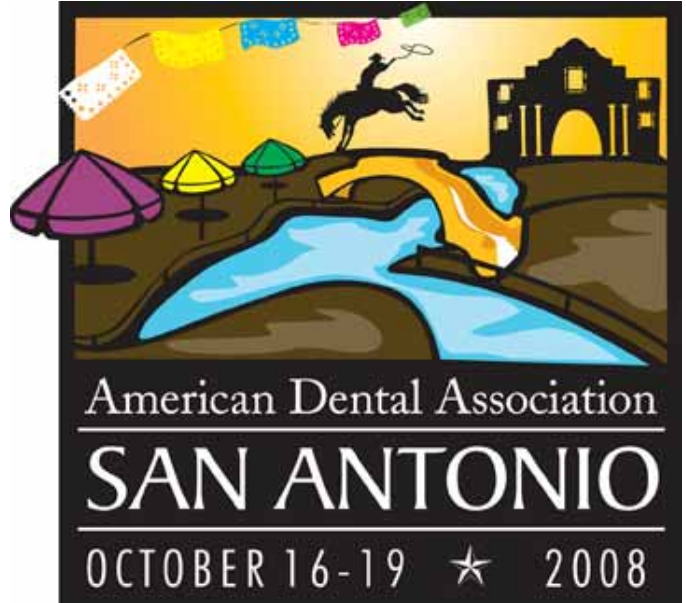
By Phil Smith

The ADA is ramping up for the spectacular 2008 Annual Session on October 16-19. This year the site is the Harry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas, and the location is unique in its offering. Those who have never been to San Antonio may be surprised to learn that this great city is one of the top ten destinations in the country for vacation travel. There are numerous historical, cultural, and entertainment opportunities in the city. The Alamo and the River Walk are “must see” locations and both are within walking distance to the convention.

The ADA has crafted a long list of speakers and topics that will satisfy every educational interest. There will be an abundance of participation courses as well as some pre-seminar workshops. Last year the Council on Annual Sessions began a new direction in meeting events as it introduced the Education in the Round format. Attendees could watch live patient surgery and I-Cat radiology protocol. This year ADA will again offer the cutting edge educational opportunity. The San Antonio meeting also marks the introduction of ADA365, an interactive web-based program for all registrants. There will be more than 50 courses that enrollees can connect with and receive pre-course conversations from presenters or course classmates. This is a first of its kind in the nation and ADA’s innovation is already receiving raving press.

There are plenty of rooms but it is important that dentists be aware that housing in San Antonio is spread around the city. Central lodging is at a premium, but good rooms are available. For those who may prefer to visit SeaWorld or other perimeter tours the airport hotels offer great value and convenience. As always, shuttle service will be abundant and hours of operation have been extended to accommodate those attending the Caucus or House of Delegates meetings. Access to housing requires that a person be registered for the meeting. Collateral meetings and convocations for associated organizations such as the ICD and the ACD will also benefit from early registration.

It is important that all wishing to attend register early. It is also worth considering that air reservations be made soon. San Antonio is a destination airport and flights will usually not be as frequent as other airport locations. Do not miss out on another of the American Dental Association’s Annual Sessions.



**Umbrellas along San Antonio’s famous River Walk.**

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Wanted: General Dentist as associate in Growing Low-country practice. Call 843-549-2121.

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Seeking experienced, FT registered Hygienist. In addition to oral procedures, must maintain aseptic work area, be organized & self-motivated, coordinate patient flow with front & back offices, educate staff on dental hygiene & other issues while promoting a safe, minimal stress environment. Must follow universal precautions and all OSHA & HIPAA requirements. Top salary, full benefits, 401K & more. 2 years of experience required. Contact Floretta Sutton at 803-255-0200 or [aharper@esourceshr.com](mailto:aharper@esourceshr.com).

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S.C. Dept. of Corrections is looking for full-time or part-time dentists. Contract or State employee. Please contact Dr. Doug McPherson at 803-896-8559 if interested.

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Dental Assistant needed - PT with X-ray & Nitrous certification. Exciting position in busy Mt. Pleasant

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All ad copies and cancellations must be received by the 5th of the month prior to the publication (starting July 2007, no later than 7 business days prior to publication), which will occur on the first of the month, with remittances accompanying the ads.

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General Dentist needed for mature and rapidly growing practice in Columbia, SC. Four Day work week, modern equipment and highly motivated staff. One year experience required. Send resume to PO Box 11007, Columbia, SC 29211.

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Wanted: General Dentist needed in Columbia, SC for 1 or 2 days a week to perform all facets of dentistry including endo and oral surgery. Please contact Kathy at 803-313-3691.

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Lexington—well established group General practice needs associate. Buy-in opportunity immediately or in the future if desired. Clean, modern office with digital x-rays. One year experience required. Send resume to PO Box 11007, Columbia, SC 29211.

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