

RURAL DENTAL: Program helps Oregon's most vulnerable

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she says. Anesthetic is not a convenience for a child who's anxious about having her teeth worked on — it's a necessity for procedures that can take hours.

"We don't put kids to sleep for two teeth," Slaughter said.

The patients she sees are "some of the worst cases we've seen — with extensive rot and damage.

"These kids need every tooth in their mouth fixed," she said.

Slaughter acknowledged that some people question the necessity of taking radical surgical action to fix immature teeth. But she notes that oral health is a significant factor in systemic health — infections and disorders in the mouth can compromise overall health. And significant problems with immature teeth can cause adult teeth to grow in a compromised state.

And the children are often in a significant amount of pain.

"A lot of people dismiss it as, 'Oh, it's just baby teeth,'" she said. "But it has far-reaching implications if we don't

take care of them."

Slaughter and Post typically work on three cases per visit and handle from 10 to 12 per month. That's down from 16 per month due to budget cuts.

Slaughter says the ability to fly out of Sisters Airport is vital to the program. Her husband, Jerry, is usually her pilot, but she's working on getting her license.

"I'm hoping to fly solo by the summer," she said. "My whole goal is to be able to fly myself."

The region's severe winter weather precluded flying for several months, which reinforced for Slaughter how important it is to be able to simply fly for an hour to get to cases.

"I drove all winter to do this, and if I had to do that every day, all year, I wouldn't be able to do this," she said.

The work is satisfying, especially when Jessica knows she's helped relieve pain. But it's challenging on multiple levels.

As a CRNA, Slaughter puts in a secure airway on every patient, which makes the procedure very safe. But sometimes she sees circumstances that are tough to grapple with.

"You have kids that grow up around people smoking



PHOTO PROVIDED

Cases are among the worst Sisters woman has seen.

marijuana, and they're really resistant to drugs," she said.

The condition of a child's teeth is often a symptom of general neglect, and it's tough to see that and realize that not much is going to change. Intervention is often not in the cards.

"Our child welfare system is broken at best," Slaughter said. "They're overwhelmed... This is one of the most vulnerable populations in Oregon. It's a frustrating job. I'm not surprised by it, but it's hard to see it day after day."

In part because of their vulnerability, the children tug at Slaughter's heart strings.

"They're honestly some of the cutest kids you've ever seen," she said. "It breaks your heart; it really does... Most

people don't want to hear this stuff but it's out there and it's horrible. It's heart-breaking."

Just as it does for first responders, facing realities most of us don't see leaves wounds and scars. Slaughter takes care of herself with runs on the trails of Sisters Country and by providing wellness services through her Sisters business, Hope Aesthetics.

She recognizes that she's working against the weight of dysfunction and long-term neglect, but she takes comfort in knowing that she is relieving pain and, if only temporarily in many cases, improving the health and well-being of a child.

And that keeps her on the wing, headed out into the Oregon outback to help children in need.

Agenda

Sisters City Council
City Hall
520 E. Cascade Ave.
Wednesday, April 12, 5:30 p.m. workshop

1. Review Draft Ordinance for Vehicles for Hire — R. Allen & P. Davenport

2. Review Draft Ordinance for CEC Franchise Agreement — J. Green

3. Other Business — Staff & Council

6:30 p.m. regular meeting

- Resolution No. 2017-04: Supporting the City Of Sisters grant application to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for the rehabilitation of pathways and approaches to the Creekside Park and Campground bridge over Whychus Creek.

- Accept a temporary water line easement from Sisters Airport Property, LLC.

- Accept an on-site water line easement from Sisters Airport Property, LLC.

- Accept a fire hydrant water line easement from Sisters Airport Property, LLC.



The Center

The Center is the premiere location in Central Oregon for diagnosis and treatment of problems associated with the musculoskeletal system, which includes bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, muscles and nerves.

Since 2012, Dr. Timothy Bollom has been seeing patients in Sisters at St. Charles Family Care. He treats patients of all ages and diverse backgrounds, with a focus on comprehensive diagnosis and treatment of knee and shoulder disorders. From simple arthroscopy to total joint replacement, he utilizes minimally invasive techniques and a sports medicine philosophy of returning patients to normal activity as quickly as possible.

The Center is home to some of the region's most highly skilled orthopedic surgeons, neurosurgeons and specialists, who offer a comprehensive range of musculoskeletal services. Our board-certified physicians have specialized training in a multitude of specialties including orthopedics, neurosurgery, physical medicine and rehabilitation, sports medicine, and occupational medicine. From conservative measures to sophisticated, minimally invasive surgical techniques, our dedicated doctors and staff offer the care you need for the best possible outcome.

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Dr. Timothy Bollom in Sisters

Fellowship trained in sports medicine, Dr. Bollom treats patients of all ages and diverse backgrounds, with a focus on comprehensive diagnosis and treatment of knee and shoulder disorders.

Dr. Bollom's next three clinic days are: Wednesdays 4/19, 5/17, and 6/21

The Center Sisters at St. Charles Family Care, 630 N Arrowleaf Trail

The Center's expert team of neurosurgeons, orthopedic surgeons, occupational medicine providers, and physiatrists are here to keep the Sisters community healthy, active and strong. **Whatever your passion, find strength here.**



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