



L to R: Stephanie Morrow, Doreen Rilatos, LaRita Lundy (seated), Sunshine Keck (seated), Marlene Van Noy, and Pam Lane celebrate their “Site of the Year” award from Informatix Laboratories.

Patient Accounts Staff Wins Site of the Year Award

“We would like to thank Informatix Laboratories Corporation for recognizing us with your Site of the Year award. We have worked hard in order to serve our tribal people and community better and more efficiently. We thank you for helping us accomplish that.

We embrace change if it helps us meet our goals of higher service. Version II is a tool that has empowered us in the area of information compilation. We now have the ability to track our patient accounts more quickly and accurately, serving our patients better. Patient Accounts is very grateful to Informatix for designing the check-in system that was introduced to our clinic last May. This check-in system has proven to be a valuable tool in patient information. It has tremendously impacted our billing information, which has ultimately improved our third-party billing revenue. We would like to thank the Informatix team (Vince, Lisa, Steven, Vicky, Pat, Jennifer, and Calvin, to name a few) for going through this time of challenge with us.

The Siletz Community Health Clinic is a fairly complex clinic. We have three full-time providers and four part-time providers. They are supported with laboratory and radiology services. We also have a pharmacy that dispenses over 20,000 prescriptions a year. We have dental services with two full-time dentists and a dental hygienist. We also offer optometry, physical therapy, and health education services. Our patient load is 13 percent non-native. Half of our Native American patients have insurance, so collecting third-party revenues is important to us financially.

We truly regret that we are not here in person to accept this award. There are many people at the Siletz Community Health Clinic who participated in making the Informatix Version II system a very workable system. We would like to recognize Dorene Rilatos, Patient Accounts supervisor; LaRita Lundy, Pam Lane, and Chuvonne Metcalf, Patient Accounts staff; Rayona Zosel, data entry technician; Marlene Van Noy, QI coordinator; Sunshine Keck, site manager; Erin Kirk, Medical Support supervisor; and Casey Bolan, receptionist.”

Editor’s Note: The preceding speech was given on behalf of the Patient Accounts staff at the ILC Users Conference in Las Vegas, Nev., in April. Staff members were unable to attend the conference to accept their award.

Tooth Talk

by Linda Kreutzer, RDH

Power Toothbrushes

A lot of patients ask about battery-powered toothbrushes. Are they better than the old-fashioned way by hand? In some ways yes, especially for children.

Children get bored with brushing. **Anything** that makes this chore more interesting helps a lot. I especially like the children’s power toothbrushes with an automatic timer built in. This means the toothbrush goes for about two minutes then turns off automatically. This encourages kids to brush long enough to do some good, not just a quick “run-through.”

Patients have been telling me about cheap, colorful power toothbrushes for adults and children at Wal-Mart for under \$5. I have yet to find them, but from the good results I’ve seen in the mouths of patients who use them, they work great!

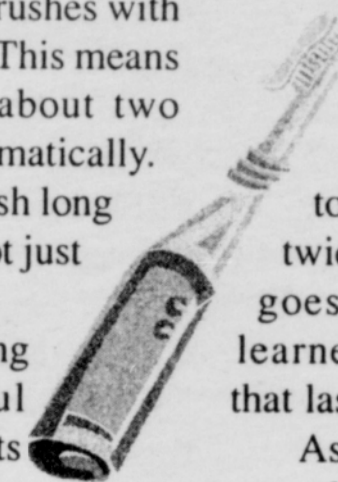
What a range in prices one can find – from a \$98 Sonic Care to a \$35 Oral-B and now these inexpensive ones. The best one is Sonic Care because it’s designed to jet “bubbles” between the teeth, destroying bacteria that die when exposed to the oxygen in the bubbles. This may be a good idea if flossing never happens in your mouth. If flossing

is a daily habit, any toothbrush will do (as long as it has **soft** bristles). Remember, **all** toothbrush heads need to be tossed at around three months. A frayed toothbrush doesn’t work well at removing plaque and may even damage the gums.

Dental hygienists are trained to help people learn the basics of good oral hygiene. Correct toothbrush method is best learned as a child with a regular toothbrush and practiced at least twice daily for life. The same idea goes for flossing because skills learned early in life are the ones that last.

As a hygienist, I encourage parents to make sure their children can do a good job brushing all of their teeth well **before** relying on a power toothbrush. It’s really **not** necessary to use one in order to do a good job, but they sure are nice when kids get in that “I don’t wanna brush” slump!

Technology is making progress in the dental field. Power-flossers have hit the market, proving to be much easier to use and just as effective in reducing gum disease (gingivitis) as flossing by hand. These still are quite expensive, but in time the price will come down.



Join our 100-Mile Club!

Do you want a stronger, healthier body? Are you up to a challenge this summer? Walking is an excellent exercise for just about everyone, and we have an event going this summer that’s guaranteed to get you excited about getting out and moving!

Our 100-Mile Club will officially run for eight weeks between August and October, but we will honor miles you walk in June and July as long as you **keep written track of them** and **someone else witnesses at least half of the miles.**

We will offer some special weekend walking opportunities. We’ll also provide prizes along the way for



accomplishing progress toward your **100-mile goal** – and we’ll have a special awards dinner at the end for finishers!

Look for more information next month, and start tracking those miles!

Sponsored by the Community Health Department and the IHS Diabetes Grant.