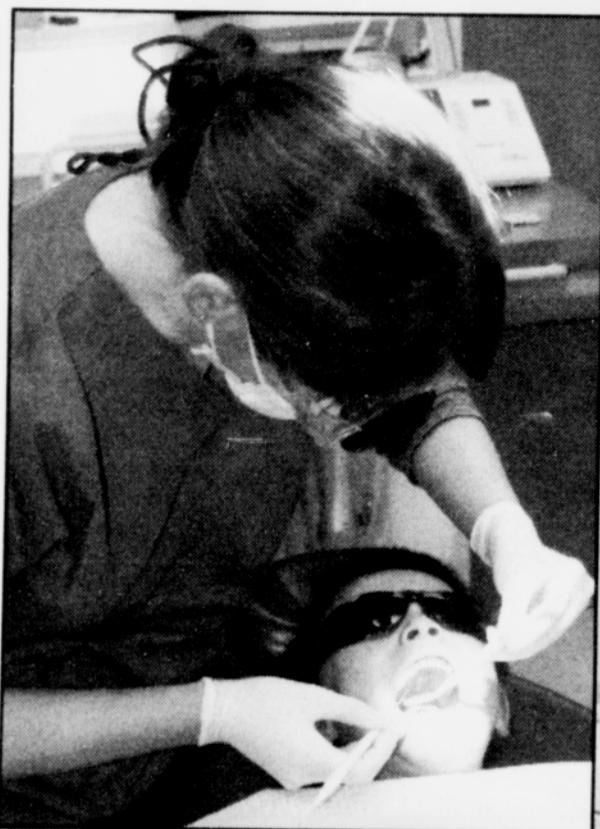
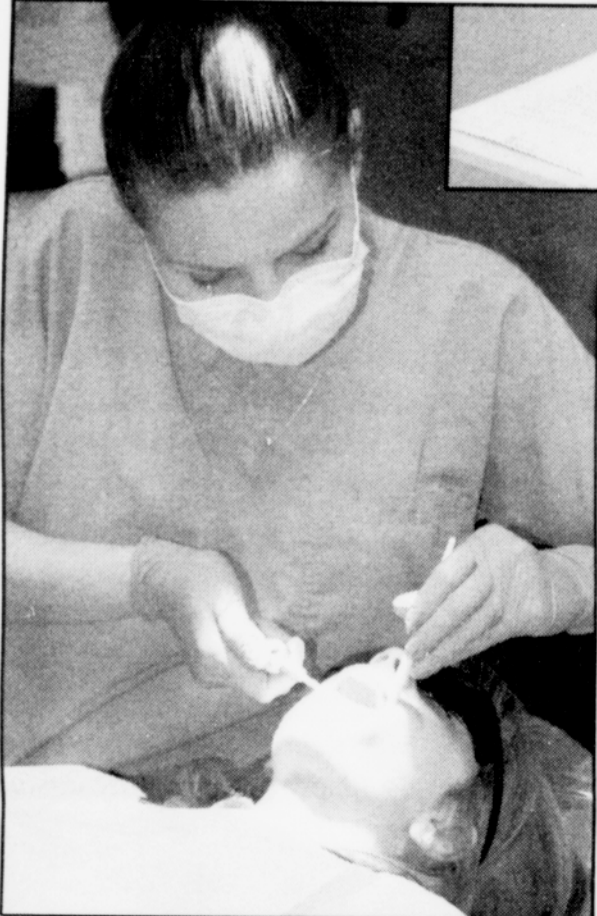


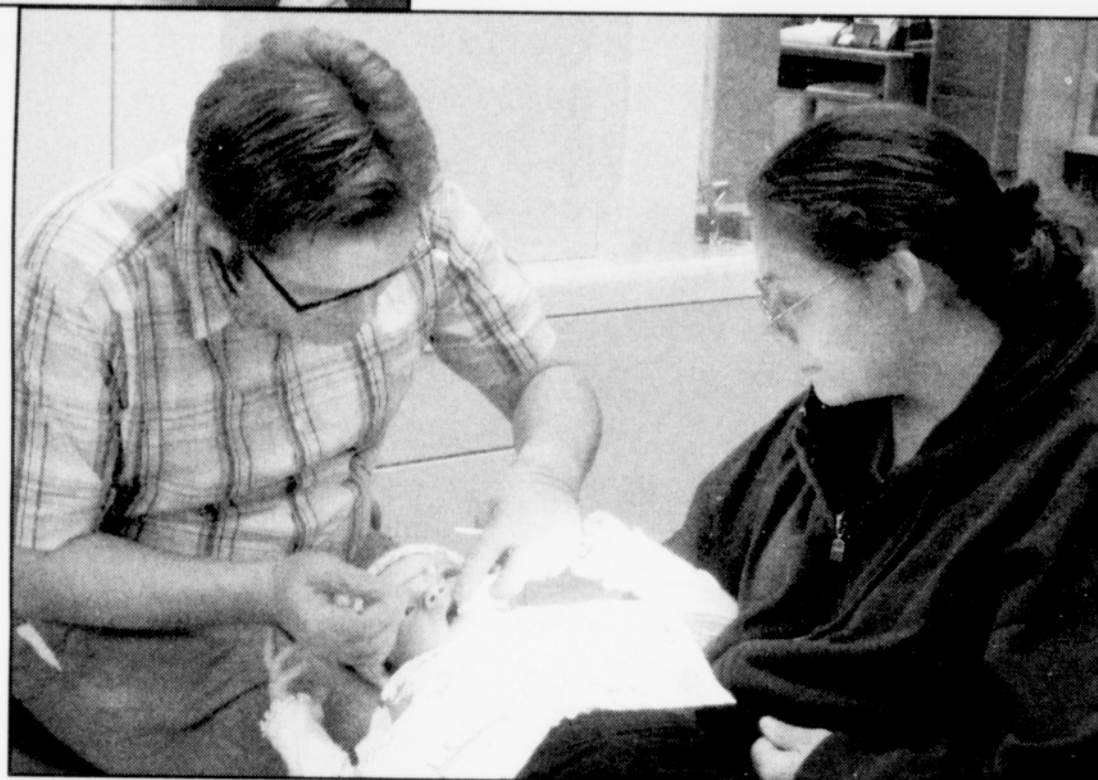


Two big events were held in February at the Siletz Community Health Clinic.

In January the Dental Clinic received a grant from Indian Health Services for the continuation and expansion of the Annual SVS-CTSI Sealant Clinic and a Pedo Training Class and Clinic for



Photos by Natasha Kavanaugh



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Tooth Talk

by Mary Ellen Volansky, RDH, MS

Recall/Examination? I Just Saw the Orthodontist

Is there a reason a person wearing braces would need to see an orthodontist and a general dentist? Isn't an orthodontist a dentist too? What is the orthodontist doing that the general dentist isn't doing? And what services will the general dentist provide that the orthodontist doesn't? What about teeth cleanings?

Orthodontists are masters of creating puzzles of rubber bands and wire, works of engineering wonder constructed to move teeth into a healthier smile. The ADA describes it as "the dental specialty that includes the diagnosis, prevention, interception and correction of malocclusion."¹ Go figure.

General dentists express their skills in smaller maneuvers of engineering wonder – one tooth at a time, for example, excavating a tooth's soft dead tooth structure (decay/cavity) and building metal, plastic or gold structures to reinforce it. And in some cases even carving the material to closely resemble the tooth structure it replaces.

One other difference exists. Dentists check for cavities, diagnose a broad range of pathologies and monitor our overall oral health.

This is the person we go to for the pain that wakes us in the middle of the night, for the sore spot on our tongue and to help us understand what will work for our special oral health needs. Here at the Siletz Dental Clinic, that would be Drs. Molly Francis and Matthew Winkle.

The ADA lists the work of a general dentist as "the evaluation, diagnosis, prevention and/or treatment (non-surgical, surgical or related procedures) of diseases, disorders and/or conditions of the oral cavity, maxillofacial area and/or the adjacent and associated structures and their impact on the human body."²

Whether you've worn braces or not, that's a mouthful.

Do both dentists want us to brush and floss our teeth? Yes. Is brushing and flossing with braces on teeth easy? Yes, just remember brushing and flossing with braces takes more time. "This is due to brushing above, under and behind and around all surfaces of every tooth and bracket."³ This ADA pamphlet instructs us to "be sure to check after rinsing and if your teeth and brackets are not clean and shining ... brush again."

Look for the shining. Food packs into and around the brackets and rubber bands, and once we smile we show the world that donut or pizza. The whole time food is on our teeth, bacteria are eating it and making acids that begin dissolving our teeth.

This dissolving causes white spots, then brown spots, then holes/decay/cavities. This dissolving/decay gives the general dentist an opportunity to construct new metal, plastic or gold fillings. After brushing and flossing, look for shining!

The thing about white spots is that they do not go away. There is no technology to remove them at this time. I have seen white spots in the shape of the bracket that held the person's braces in place. Wouldn't it be nicer – I acknowledge not easier – to brush and floss?

Ask us at the clinic to show you pictures of people whose teeth have these white and brown spots due solely to the lack of brushing and flossing when wearing braces.

Now, about having your teeth cleaned. Yes, it's important. The orthodontist and general dentist agree on this. People with braces generally have their teeth cleaned more often than people without them.

Why? Because it's harder to brush and floss with braces. We want to help you prevent white and brown spots on your teeth. Come into the dental clinic, let us help.

Briefly, straightened teeth bite together more easily and they allow our jaws to rest together comfortably. Both help us to have healthy gums and bones of our mouth. Straightened teeth also are easier to keep clean. Clean teeth are healthier all the way around, whether you have had braces or not.

Note: Moving teeth, whether closer together or to straighten them, has its origins with the ancient Egyptians, whose mummies were discovered with crude metal bands wrapped around individual teeth.⁴ By the 1700s, progress came with advances in tools, appliances and scientific study and research.

1 ADA.org: Dentistry Definitions, p. 2

2 ADA.org: Dentistry Definitions p. 1, at www.braces.org/knowmor/whatis/

3 ADA, Proper Brushing is Vital to Oral Health

4 American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics, Volume 127, Number 2, p. 255