

Bulletin

SUMMER 2026 | VOL. 58, NO. 3

Inside this issue:
**2026 WMDF
Golf Outing**



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The *Bulletin* of the West Michigan Dental Society is published six times a year (the winter issue, spring issue, summer issue, directory issue, fall issue, and holiday issue). The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are not necessarily the opinions of the West Michigan District Dental Society.

Contributions to the *Bulletin* are welcome and should be addressed to the *Bulletin* Editor at WMDDSBulletin@gmail.com. Requests for purchase of advertising space should be directed to the Advertising Editor, Elaine Fleming, 616-916-8559. The deadline is the first of the month prior to publication.

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Mission Statement

The *Bulletin* is the newsletter of the WMDDS and its mission is to inform the membership of upcoming and recent events, state & local issues related to dentistry, and as a forum for its officers, representatives, and members to discuss appropriate topics of interest to the membership.

Communication & Advertising Policy

The *Bulletin* will publish submitted articles from members and others that relate to the practice of dentistry, small business, social or political issues affecting dentists, or other subjects of interest to the membership. All published items are subject to space restrictions and the community standards of the WMDDS. The editors reserve the right to reject any article or advertisement deemed inappropriate and to edit submissions as they see fit.

Submission & Publication Policy: Articles and advertisements must be submitted no later than the 1st of the month preceding publication date. The *Bulletin* has six publications: the winter issue, spring issue, summer issue, directory issue, fall issue, and holiday issue. Direct submissions or correspondences to:

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ADVERTISERS INDEX

The *Bulletin* wishes to thank our valued advertisers who support organized dentistry by helping to defray the cost of printing and mailing.

Advertising in the *Bulletin* is seen by over 90% of the dentists in the West Michigan District. This includes five of the fastest growing counties in the state: Kent, Ottawa, Ionia, Montcalm, and Mecosta.

For information on advertising rates, call Elaine Fleming, WMDDS Executive Secretary at 616-916-8559. Target your market—advertise in the *Bulletin*!

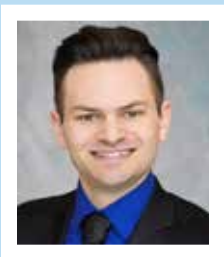
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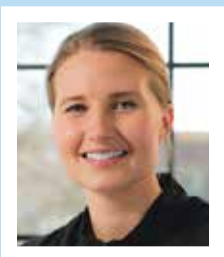
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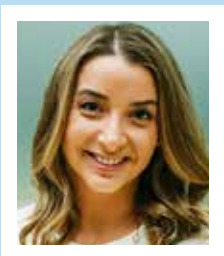
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About the Cover

Team members from Knapp Orthodontics had a fun day greeting golfers and handing out some very cool Knapp Orthodontics swag!

Summer in Full Swing!



By Sabrina Wadood, DDS
WMDDS Editor

As you're reading this issue, August has likely already slipped away but here's hoping for some lingering warm weather come fall! As families and kids get ready to go back to school and say goodbye to summer, you will find in this issue some of our favorite summer moments at WMDDS, most notably about our West Michigan Dental Foundation Annual Golf Outing. I actually played in four different golf outings this summer, and the WMDF Golf Outing surpassed them all by far. Even if you're not a good golfer (or have ever even golfed before) I highly encourage you to consider attending next summer's event.

I also tweaked our Clinical Pearls section for this issue and changed it to a special edition of Practice Pearls as I know we have a lot of business owners who are managing the ins and outs of day to day HR struggles and staff management. I thought throwing in some practice management tips and tricks from local consultants, advisors, or experienced colleagues would be a nice break from just the clinical aspect. You'll see Practice Pearls make a comeback every few issues! If you'd like to be featured in the Clinical Pearls or Practice Pearls section or know someone who should, please reach out to me.

The WMDDS E-board has also been hard at work this summer working on CE programming for the fall and planning a new and improved Silent Bell Award Dinner with a dedicated task force. Please see the Tripartite Update section to see what we have been up to and book your calendar for the 2027 Silent Bell Awards Night. The Silent Bell Awards Night was an annual event to honor a local WMDDS member who has made a long lasting difference in the community throughout their career. For 2026, the event had to take a hiatus due to lack of attendance, and the WMDDS E-board created a "Silent Bell Task Force" to gauge interest in the community and plan a bigger and better event

for 2027 that would re-invent the night and cater to audiences at all stages of their career. Please stay tuned for more information. If you have any feedback on what you have liked about previous Silent Bell events or any ideas on how you think we can make the event better, please reach out to me at wmddbuletin@gmail.com.



Summer Greetings



By Travis Mattson, DDS
WMDDS President

Michigan summer is in full swing, and it's hard to believe August is already here. School starts in just a few weeks, so we're all trying to pack in as much fun as we can before it does.

At the end of July, I had the pleasure of spending the day at the West Michigan Dental Foundation golf outing at The Meadows at GVSU—a beautiful course, a beautiful day, and even better company. If you've never joined us for this event, do yourself a favor and get it on your calendar for next year. A huge thank you to everyone involved in planning, setting up, and sponsoring—this event doesn't happen without you. The mission of the WMDF is one worth celebrating: an organization dedicated to improving oral health through financial support of education and service programs that address needs identified by the dental profession and the communities it serves across Kent, Ottawa, Ionia, Mecosta, and Montcalm counties.

Meanwhile, the WMDDS has been working hard to create value for its members by providing meaningful opportunities for offices and staff to learn and grow—including our fall CE course. You should have received the mailer already with all the details and registration information. You may also notice a change in venue for our fall and spring CE seminars this year. We made this decision to better serve our members' needs, improve the experience, and increase the value of the CE seminars.

From continuing education seminars to practical resources for day-to-day office challenges like supply costs, our committees are working hard to make sure there's something valuable for everyone on your team as part of your membership with WMDDS. Keep an eye on upcoming issues of the *Bulletin* and emails for details as these programs

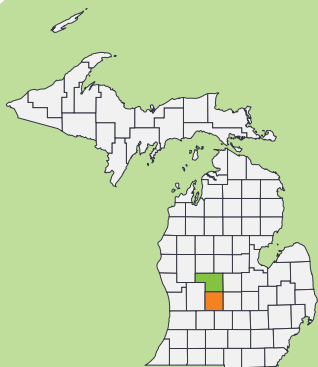
for the WMDDS and the various county societies come together. As always, reach out if there's a topic or need you'd like to see us address.

Here's to a great rest of the summer and a wonderful start to fall and football season!

Go Blue!

Has your Contact Information Changed?

We'll soon be working on the 2026 Directory issue of the *WMDDS Bulletin*. If you have moved in the past year or need to update your phone number, please send corrections to efwmdds@aol.com with *Bulletin* Correction in the subject line.



Ionia/Montcalm County

Sarah Bouwkamp, DDS
WMDDS Ionia/Montcalm County Representative
bouwkamp.sarah@gmail.com

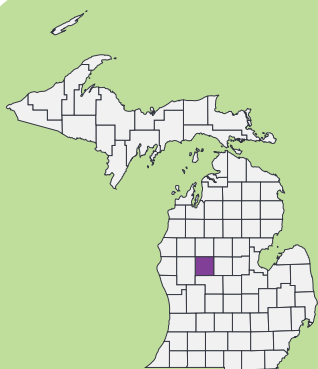
At this time, we are planning another event in the fall. If you have any ideas for events and CE or locations please reach out to Sarah Bouwkamp!



Kent County

Derrick Walker, DMD
WMDDS Kent County Vice President and Representative
derrickjameswalker@gmail.com

Our next CE is lined up: Weds Nov 4 2026 at Watermark Country Club – Local oral surgeon Dr. Andy Baker OMS will be speaking on Full-Arch Implant Rehabilitation: From Traditional All-on-X to Advanced Remote Anchorage. Make sure you pay your dues to KCDS so you can sign up to attend!



Mecosta County

Mecosta County is looking for a new area rep! If you work in the area and are interested in representing your component, please reach out to Elaine Fleming at 616-916-8559 or email efwmdds@aol.com.

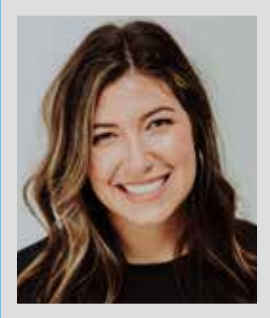


Ottawa County

Tom Anderson, DDS, *WMDDS Ottawa County Representative*
tander7480@aol.com

The Holland/Zeeland Dental Society is still looking for a new leader. I am more than willing to continue to help out and offer guidance. We will have a social gathering with spouses or significant others sometime in late September or early October. Look for an email in the next month. If you would like your email added to our list, please email me, Tom Anderson at tander7480@aol.com.





Kent County Oral Health Coalition

Cassie Harter, RDH, MPH, *Steering Committee of Kent County Oral Health Coalition*
clpawloski@gmail.com | kentcountyoralhealthcoalition@gmail.com

The Kent County Oral Health Coalition has been active this summer! We attended Summer Wonder Bash at Kent District Library in Plainfield where we provided oral hygiene kits and education to families attending the event. We are attending the upcoming Kentwood Back to School Bash with the hopes of doing the same for those community members and families. We recently initiated a partnership with Kent District Library to provide oral hygiene kits to all branches who participate in filling hygiene lockers for community members in need, starting with 200 kits! We also welcomed three new steering committee members this summer, all with a passion for oral health access across the state and county.

New Dentist Forum

Sabrina Wadood, DDS, *New Dentist Forum Chairperson*
wmddsnewdentistforum@gmail.com

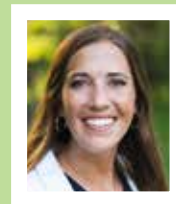
New Dentist Forum: The New Dentist Forum held its annual summer social on August 20 at Thornapple Brewing. It was a great time to catch up with colleagues, meet new faces, and kick off the new CE season. Please save the date for our next event on Oct 8: Legacy and Trust Planning. This event will also be open to members and spouses.



Dr. Sabrina Wadood, Chair

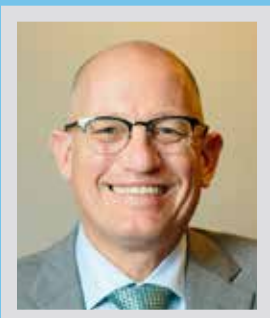


Dr. Art Doering, Co-Chair



Dr. Jayne Kessel, Co-Chair

All correspondence is done through our NEW email address: wmddsnewdentistforum@gmail.com



West Michigan Dental Foundation

Gary Scott, DDS, *WMDF President*
glstds1996@gmail.com

The WMDF Community Grant Committee has received eleven applications for grants for 2026. The committee will be reviewing the applications and will present their recommendations at the October 26, 2026 board meeting.

See pages 8-9 for highlights from the 2026 WMDF golf outing.

Your Membership Working for You!

ADA

- The ADA is actively working on creating new guidelines for antibiotic prophylaxis for surgical dental implant placement procedures. While public comment ended August 21, the recommendations should be released this winter.

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MDA

- Pre-registration, course schedule, and speakers for the Great Lakes Summit will be available this fall 2026. The Great Lakes Summit will be taking place in Grand Rapids again next year, and the dates are May 20-22, 2027. Don't forget to sign up to earn CE right in our backyard! Speaker proposals are also being accepted online until October 1, 2026.
- Reminder! Your membership with the MDA gives you access to a wide array of membership benefits including insurance options for your practice, liability, and property, as well as auto, health, and home. There are also other endorsed services that you can take advantage of—check the full list online on the MDA website.



WMDDS

- WMDDS is still partnering with DHP for exclusive member-only benefits! Please see the flyer on page 11 to see what your membership unlocks for you with DHP. Simply use the QR code on the flyer to sign up. This is a member-only benefit, so you must stay active on your WMDDS membership to participate.
- The Silent Bell Awards have been scheduled for October 7, 2027 at The Goei Center with some exciting changes. Please save the date! Watch for more details.
- WMDDS CE programs have been announced! The first program will take place on Friday, October 23, 2026 from 9:00 am–4:00 pm at Watermark Country Club. The topic is “Oral Pathology in Daily Practice.” It will be presented by Dr. Brent Accurso and Dr. Brent Martin. A registration form is in this issue.





The Silent Bell

A tradition worth keeping. An experience worth reimagining.
Same spirit, new energy!

We're making some exciting changes while honoring the traditions
that made this event special in the first place.

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, October 7, 2027

The Goei Center

More details to come

IN MEMORIAM

The West Michigan District Dental Society was saddened by the passing of our colleague:

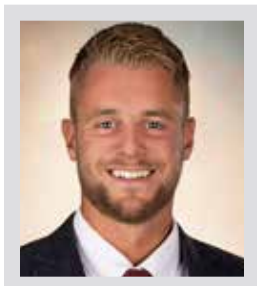
Dr. Arnold Baker

August 8, 2026

Those wishing to make a memorial donation to the West Michigan Dental Foundation in his memory should contact Elaine Fleming at the WMDF office at 616.916.8559, or checks may be sent made payable to:

West Michigan Dental Foundation
5355 Northland Drive, Suite C, Box 142
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525

2026 WMDF Golf Outing Results



Austin Goodyke, DDS
West Michigan Dental Foundation
Golf Outing Chairperson

The West Michigan Dental Foundation held its annual golf outing on Friday, July 31, 2026 at The Meadows on the campus of Grand Valley State University. Thank you to The Meadows staff for hosting another fun WMDF outing for the tenth year! It was a perfect day to be out on the golf course. Blue skies and warm temperatures greeted 137 golfers. It was a very successful day, both in attendance and in the amount of money raised—\$40,003. Many thanks to the sponsors who supported the outing. Special thanks to the Main Event sponsor, First Companies. The Foundation appreciates their support!



Thanks to the volunteers who helped to make it a fun day for the golfers. Please join us next summer for another fantastic outing.

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Golf Outing Winners

Winning Team—Dr. Doug Orzel, Dr. Austin Goodyke, and Andrew Triezenberg

#3 Closest to the Pin—Chris McCone

#7 Closest to the Pin—Dr. Kyle Klooster

#13 Closest to the Pin—Chris Davis

#17 Closest to the Pin—Kurt Van Dyken

#4 Longest Drive Women—Dr. Lexi Gallagher

#14 Longest Drive Men—Drew Van Vliet



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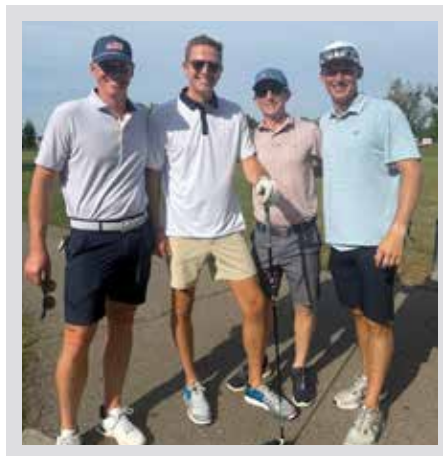
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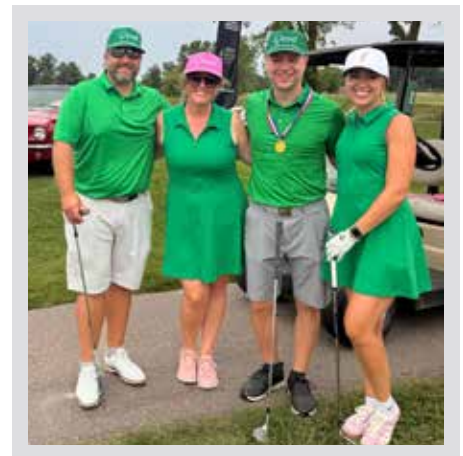


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MDA's Speaker of the House Spotlight

Submitted by Sabrina Wadood, DDS



West Michigan's very own Dr. Daniel Miller was selected to become the MDA Speaker of the House, following in the footsteps of West Michigan's Dr. Deb Peters. The Speaker of the House is an honorable leadership position with the MDA. I asked Dr. Miller what the position entails and why he chose to get involved. Maybe you can be the next representation from West Michigan!

Q: What made you want to get involved in the MDA at this level?

A: I have always believed in the MDA since I became involved during my first year in dental school. I believe advocacy is the best service the MDA provides. In order to continue to move advocacy forward, I decided that I would need to take a leadership role. However, I did not think I would be leading this soon. I quickly learned that simply showing up and saying "yes" creates opportunity and momentum for your leadership journey. I decided the role of Speaker was the best fit for me. The Speaker ensures that each member of the house has a voice and that the proceedings of the house are both efficient and effective. It is my goal to ensure that the actions of the MDA continue to move the organization and our advocacy forward.

Q: What does the Speaker of the House position entail? What are its duties and commitment?

A: The Speaker of the House is a three year term elected by the House of Delegates. The Speaker presides over the House of Delegates, oversees elections, appoints committees of the House, and serves as the House's voice at the MDA Board. As a liaison between the House and the Board, the Speaker has routine communication with components and its delegates. The Speaker serves on the Executive Committee of the MDA, and as an elected officer, the Speaker also serves as a delegate to the ADA House.

Q: What are some reasons you would encourage others to get involved at the local or state level?

A: The MDA can only continue being impactful if it continues to have new leaders with different viewpoints. The MDA needs to find ways to have more members say "yes" to leading. This will require new flexibility and understanding to account for what today's volunteer leaders need. I have a newborn at home, and the MDA has worked with me to make the role of Speaker fit into my new life as a dad. I hope my time as a leader helps others in similar family situations. If you want to lead but feel there is something preventing you from accepting a leadership opportunity, talk to the MDA about it. You could be the person who helps redefine the role so others can say "yes." Like most things in life, the perfect time for leadership does not just happen. If you choose to make accepting a leadership opportunity a priority, you can find a way to do it, and the MDA can help.



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Fluoride Started Here — and the Fight Over it Never Really Ended



By Mario AMC Ferrari DDS, M.Sc.D.,
M.Sc.I.H., PhD, SFHEA
Grand Valley State University,
Department of Public Health

Dr. Mario Ferrari received a Community Grant from West Michigan Dental Foundation in 2025 and recently submitted the outcome report for the project. He is also on the Kent County Oral Health Coalition Task Force. Here is a short report he wrote about the project and what it entailed. He is presenting a report at a few symposiums as well. Dr. Ferrari can be reached at ferrarma@gvsu.edu.

Here's a bit of history worth wearing with some West Michigan pride: on January 25, 1945, Grand Rapids became the first city in the world to add fluoride to its drinking water. What started in our backyard went on to prevent cavities for hundreds of millions of people, and the CDC would later name it one of the ten great public health achievements of the twentieth century.

And almost from day one, people fought it.

In the 1950s, opponents called fluoridation a communist plot (yes, really, it's the gag behind Dr. Strangelove and his "precious bodily fluids"). The costume has changed every decade since, but the resistance never actually went away. It just waited. And right now, it's back in force: in 2025, Utah and Florida became the first states to ban community water fluoridation outright, bills to do the same were introduced in roughly twenty more, and federal agencies have begun re-reviewing the science and walking back the longstanding recommendation. Eighty years after Grand Rapids led the way, the thing we thought was settled is anything but.

So last year, twelve graduate students from public health, pre-dental, and nursing set out with the Kent County Oral Health Coalition to understand today's version of that fight. With support from the West

Michigan Dental Foundation, we surveyed 123 residents across 36 Kent County zip codes (in five languages) and sat down for nine long-form interviews. We went in expecting to find a knowledge gap. We found something more useful.

Most people already believe fluoride is safe, about 63% told us so, which lines up with national surveys showing roughly eight in ten Americans either support fluoridation or aren't opposed to it. And when we asked who they trust for oral health information, one answer beat every website and every influencer: you. Dentists and providers were the number-one trusted source. Meanwhile, only about a third of people even wanted more information handed to them.

Sit with that for a second. If most folks think it's safe, and they trust us most, why does fluoridation keep landing on ballots and in bans?

Because the people pushing back aren't missing facts. Think of the patient you've shown a flawless radiograph to, decay right there, treatment plan, who still doesn't schedule. It was never about the X-ray. Across every interview we did, supporters and skeptics alike, two things came up universally: people wanted transparency, and they wanted to be part of the decision. Not a lecture, a conversation.

That's what we mean by a "trust gap, not a knowledge gap." You can't fact your way out of a relationship problem (ask any marriage counselor).

And here's the part that should get our attention: the exact language our skeptics used, consent, "my body," "nobody asked me," is the same language now written into state bans, which are being marketed as "informed consent" and an end to "forced medication." The concern we heard around a kitchen table in Kent County is the concern reshaping policy in a dozen statehouses. It isn't fringe. It's the front line.

A couple of things worth carrying to your chair

Skepticism isn't one thing. We found at least five distinct flavors, institutional distrust, wellness-minded caution, faith-based concern, protective parents, and the conspiracy-adjacent. The parent asking, "is this safe for my kid?" needs a very different conversation than someone who distrusts government. One script won't fit all.

The best argument is the one nobody's making. The strongest case for fluoridation, that it protects children who can't get regular dental care, never once came up in our skeptic interviews. Both sides love kids. We're just not connecting that dot out loud.

Which brings me to the real lesson. We tend to treat fluoridation like a battle that was won in 1945 and filed away. It wasn't. It's more like oral health itself: you don't brush your teeth once, declare victory, and coast for eighty years. You do the small, unglamorous maintenance every single day, or things quietly decline. Advocacy works the same way, and it works. Where dentists have shown up to local hearings and spoken plainly, boards have voted to keep fluoride. Where we've stayed silent, we've lost ground. Being proactive isn't a campaign we run only when there's a threat on the calendar. It's the daily brushing of public health.

You are already the most trusted voice in the room. The time to use it is before the question reaches a ballot.

We're grateful to the West Michigan Dental Foundation for making this work possible, and to the twelve students who cut their teeth on community research doing it. We're now turning the same lens on a new question: why so many eligible residents don't use the free and low-cost dental care already available to them. If that overlaps with your world, or you'd just like to compare notes, I'd love to hear from you.



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West Michigan District Dental Society 2027–28 Notice of Election

(Written mail-in ballots will be sent 30 days following this notice)

In accordance with the West Michigan District Dental Society by-laws, the Nominations Committee presents the following slate of candidates for the positions of Alternate Delegates and Delegates for the 2027 Michigan Dental Association House of Delegates and WMDDS offices for 2027–2028. By-laws require that a written notice of the names of the nominees for elective offices be published 30 days before the election. A mail-in ballot will be used for the election.

Six (6) of the following will be elected to a two-year term as Delegates to the 2027 MDA House of Delegates, and the remaining will serve a one-year term as Alternate Delegates.

Dr. Thomas Anderson

Dr. Ben Bouchard

Dr. Patrick Condit

Dr. Jocelyn Davis

Dr. Austin Getz

Dr. Megan Huyghe

Dr. Brandon Jankowski

Dr. Kristen Kemmer

Dr. Bardha Krasniqi

Dr. James Papp

Dr. Thomas Phares

Dr. Stephanie Sakowicz

Dr. Scott Van Slambrouck

Dr. Sabrina Wadood

Dr. Liz White

Dr. Phillip Wisniewski

Completing the delegation in accordance with the WMDDS by-laws are the following members:

Automatic seats: Dr. Travis Mattson, Dr. Rachel Sinacola

Elected for a two-year term in 2026: Dr. Joe Fazzio, Dr. Lexi Gallagher, Dr. Michael Palaszek, Dr. Lauren Vanderhoof, and Dr. Taryn Weil

The Nominations Committee further recommends the following candidates to fill the following Society offices for 2027–2028:

Dr. Rachel Sinacola, President

Dr. Liz White, President-elect

Dr. James Papp, Secretary/Treasurer

Dr. Bradley Robinson, 2nd year Director

Dr. Joe Fazzio, 1st year Director

Dr. Sabrina Wadood, New Dentist representative

Completing a 3-year term in 2027–2028: Editor of the WMDDS *Bulletin*

Dr. Sabrina Wadood

Completing the WMDDS Board are area representatives from affiliate societies in Kent, Ottawa, Ionia/Mecosta, and Montcalm counties who are appointed by the affiliate societies.

The Nominations Committee shall include as a nominee for any of the above-mentioned positions the name of any West Michigan District Dental Society member in good standing for whom a petition, signed by fifteen (15) active members of the Society, has been submitted. Petitions should be delivered by November 1, 2026 to the chairperson of the Nominations Committee, Dr. Thomas Anderson, Nomination Committee chairperson at tander7480@aol.com.

Oral Pathology in Daily Practice: Essential Knowledge and Skills for the Dental Team

Presented by Drs. Brent Accurso & Brent Martin | Friday, October 23, 2026 | 9:00 am to 4:00 pm | Watermark Country Club | CE Credits: 6



Dr. Brent Accurso is an oral & maxillofacial pathologist with CTA Pathology, a specialty pathology practice serving clinicians nationwide. He attended the University of Michigan for his undergraduate and dental degrees, completed a GPR at Carolinas Medical Center, followed by specialty training in oral & maxillofacial pathology at The Ohio State University where he also received a masters degree in public health. He has been in private practice since 2011

and has taught at several dental residency programs in addition to regularly providing continuing education to community dental practitioners.



Dr. Brent Martin is an oral & maxillofacial pathologist with CTA Pathology, a specialty pathology practice serving clinicians nationwide. He received an undergraduate degree in dental laboratory technology and went on to complete dental school at Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine, as a Health Professions Scholarship recipient with the United States Army. He then went on to complete post-graduate training in oral and

maxillofacial pathology at The Ohio State University. After residency, Dr. Martin returned to military service and retired from the Air Force in 2025.

Oral Pathology in Daily Practice: Essential Knowledge and Skills for the Dental Team equips dental professionals with the knowledge and practical skills to recognize common oral lesions through their clinical and radiographic presentations while using accurate descriptive terminology for documentation and communication. Participants will explore important oral-systemic connections that frequently manifest in the oral cavity and learn effective strategies for the entire dental team to discuss biopsies, referrals, and billing with patients in a clear, confident manner. Through real-world pathology cases presented by Drs. Accurso and Martin, attendees will gain practical clinical insights they can immediately apply in everyday practice.



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per non-member dentist – \$500 _____

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5355 Northland Drive NE, Suite C, Box 142 | Grand Rapids, MI 49525 | Questions? Call 616.916.8559 or email efwmdds@aol.com

Practice Pearls

Submitted by Sabrina Wadood, DDS

The Problem in Your Practice Probably Isn't a Staffing Problem

What I keep seeing inside dental practices, and what actually moves the needle.



Brandi Marzolino
courageandjoyatwork.com

Brandi Marzolino is based in Grand Rapids, MI and is an executive leadership and performance coach, fractional COO, keynote speaker, and workshop facilitator for dental practices and DSOs. She's the founder of Courage & Joy at Work, the Empowered LeadHERship Experience for Women in Dental, and the host of The Real Talk of Dental podcast. She's 20+ years deep in the dental industry, and works with owners and teams on the place where operations and leadership actually meet. Her holistic and integrated approach has leaders and teams experiencing profound growth and clarity and finally knowing what to do.

You've hired well. You've paid for the CE, the team-building day, maybe even a consultant, and you still feel like you're pushing a boulder uphill every Monday.

Here's what I've learned from coaching dentists and their teams: most of the problems that look operational are actually human. And most of the human ones trace straight back to the leader. Not because you're doing it wrong, but because no one ever told you the two were connected.

Let me show you the patterns I see most.

Your best people got quiet, and you called it a performance problem.

A high-potential team member brings you an idea. It gets overruled, or ignored, or quietly absorbed into someone else's plan. It happens again. So they stop bringing ideas. They do their job, keep their head down, and wait.

From where you sit, it looks like they checked out. It looks like a performance issue. It's not. It's a safety issue, and the conditions for it got built at the top.

People rarely leave over money first. They leave over feeling invisible. Quiet isn't the same as content.

Your core values are framed on the wall, and nobody lives by them.

Almost every practice has them: integrity, excellence, family. Beautiful, but completely disconnected from how the office actually runs.

Real values don't show up in a meeting—they show up in the friction, in who gets held accountable and who doesn't, in whether the policy

still applies when the busy doctor is running behind, and in whether the person who's crushing it ever actually hears it from you.

If your values don't drive who you hire, coach, reward, and how you live, then they're just wall art. I've yet to work with a practice that lives and practices their values fully.

You're running five jobs and reviewing yourself on one.

You're the clinician, the owner, the HR department, the person the whole building emotionally orbits. Then you go home and you're a parent and a partner, too. You hold the emotional weight of several different ecosystems.

And somewhere around three in the afternoon, a voice says: "how are you this far in and still this behind? When will you catch up? Should you just quit?"

You're not behind. You're under-counting the roles you play and the jobs you have.

And here's the part that matters for everyone downstream: your team feels your energy before they hear your words. Walk into a huddle with your nervous system stuck on high alert, treating everything like an emergency, or feeling annoyed and over-taxed emotionally, and the room absorbs it. Urgency is contagious, but so is being calm.

So what actually helps?

Not another system or a proven framework I bolt onto your practice regardless of who you are. I'm suspicious of one-size-fits-all, or the traditional coaching models, because I've watched too many of them fail honest, hardworking people. I've also been there, done that, and know the ick behind traditional consulting models.

What helps is smaller and harder but is actually sustainable in the long term, not just for a three-year run.

Give real authority, not just responsibility. If you hand someone a decision and then override it the moment it makes you nervous, you

haven't delegated. You've set a trap. Hand off the process, not just the task.

Explain the why. People don't change behavior for rules. They change it for reasons. If you're repeating the same correction for the third time, it usually isn't defiance, it's that nobody connected the instruction to a reason that made sense.

Regulate yourself before the hard conversation. People feel a conversation before they hear a word of it. Decide what you're walking in with. "Help me understand" lands differently than "what's wrong with you," and your team can tell which one it is before you open your mouth.

And count what you're actually carrying, then talk to yourself the way you'd talk to anyone else doing that much.

None of this is soft. It's the opposite. The practices that run well aren't the ones with the best systems on paper. They're the ones where the leader did the quieter and harder work of connecting who they are, what they want, and how they want the business to run to how the office operates and how the people in it actually feel. You can't renovate the second floor while the foundation is still shifting or on quicksand.

So here's my question for you. That thing in your practice you keep hoping will fix itself: do you already know what it actually needs?

You probably do but don't know how to do it. Getting to really know yourself and telling the truth will help with that.

The classified ad rate is \$10.00 up to and including 30 words; additional words 15¢ each. Space permitting, WMDDS members may place ads free of charge as a membership service. Ads should be submitted in writing and sent with payment to Elaine Fleming, WMDDS, 301 Waters Building, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Telephone numbers and hyphenations count as two words, abbreviations count as one word. Ads received after the first of the month prior to publication may appear in the following issue.

Seeking Associate Dentist in SE Grand Rapids

— We are an incredible team-driven, patient focused dental practice looking for a great, outgoing, fast learning Associate Dentist to join us in becoming Grand Rapids' premier oral health facility. At Precision Family Dental we value our team above all else and we are looking for a fabulous associate who is a team player, wants to take great care of their patients, and have some fun. We are looking for someone with a minimum 2 yrs experience or GPR/AEGD and who is excited about technology and learning, but open to all applicants. Looking for someone who is interested in finding a great home where they can grow their skills as they prepare to take over their own practice or become an owner in this one. This will be a 3 to 4 days/week position with an occasional evening or Saturday to help support the needs of our community. If interested please respond with CV to Doctor@pfdgr.com.

Opening for a Part-Time or Full-Time Associate in West Michigan

— Looking for an associate to help with our growing practice. We are flexible with the days available. We have an amazing team and are open to a partnership. To learn more please contact westernmichigandentist@gmail.com.

Associate Dentist Needed — Burton Dental Associates PC, located in Kentwood, Michigan is seeking a dedicated associate dentist to join our team either full time or part time. In this role, you will provide high quality dental care to our patients and perform various dental procedures. Our office has a friendly and warm atmosphere. Our staff come from a diverse ethnic background and are bilingual. Our practice caters to the child, adolescent, adult, elderly and special needs. If you are passionate about patient care, have a strong work ethic, and thrive in a team-oriented environment, we would love to hear from you. Join our dedicated team to maintain optimum oral health in the prevention of oral disease. Interested candidates should submit their resume, cover letter and credentials to burtonda2013@gmail.com.

Modern Medical Office Space Available — in the heart of downtown Ada. Bright, open layout ideal for dental, medical, or wellness professionals. High-visibility location. Second floor, approx 2,000 sq. ft. Elevator access. Contact Todd Schaal: 616-822-6477 for details.

Pediatric Dentist Needed — Grandville Pediatric Dentistry seeks a Board-Certified Pediatric Dentist to join our established, privately owned West Michigan practice. Step into a full schedule supported by an experienced team and collaborative environment. Provide compassionate, high-quality care while educating families and building lasting relationships. We offer competitive compensation, benefits, professional growth, and a clear path toward long-term career advancement

and potential ownership. Email grandvillepediatricdentistry@gmail.com to learn more!

Associate Dentist Needed — Established, high-demand rural Michigan practice seeking an experienced Associate Dentist to join our team 2-4 days per week. We are currently booked out months in advance, offering immediate production opportunity and strong earning potential from day one. Our office is supported by a strong hygiene program, loyal patient base, and an experienced clinical team that values efficiency and patient-centered care. If this opportunity interests you, please send resume and questions to hannahnelsondds@gmail.com.

Amann Girschbach Ceramill DRS Mill, Excellent Condition — Low-hour unit (~150 hrs), well maintained and fully operational. High-precision milling for a wide range of indications. Includes design laptop and software license; compatible with most existing scanners. Price: \$35,000/obo. Contact: drtravis@banderdentalgroup.com.

Medical/Dental Space for Lease in Caledonia, MI — 2,972 sq. ft. ground floor white box suite. Space shares a building with an endodontist and the property with a general dentist. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Brent Medema at brentmed@gmail.com.

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