

# The Diplomat

American Board of Endodontics Newsletter

Editor: Christopher S. Wenckus, D.D.S.

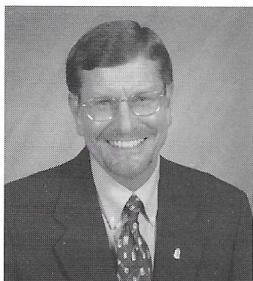
Volume XX, Number 1

Spring 2006

## The Future Looks Bright

By William G. Schindler, D.D.S., M.S.

President



As I write my last president's message, I would like to take a few lines to reflect on my experience as a director of the American Board of Endodontics. Even though I still have

one more year on the Board, I want to tell you what a great honor it has been to serve. I have worked closely with fifteen dedicated individuals since being elected in 2001. Chuck Cunningham, president and Gary Hartwell, secretary of the 2001 Board welcomed me and quickly put me to work. They, along with the rest of the directors, helped me with gentle guidance, an endless wealth of knowledge and most importantly, friendship. I would like to thank the current directors, Drs. Craig Baumgartner, Paul Eleazer, Keith Krell, Linda Levin, Carl Newton, Al Reader, Paul Rosenberg and Chris Wenckus as well as former directors,

Chuck Cunningham, Gary Hartwell, Paul Ashkenaz, Gerry Glickman, Billie Jeansonne and Martin Trope for their hard work and dedication to the specialty. Each of these leaders of endodontics has had a tremendous impact on my personal and professional life. Thank you! If you have the opportunity to serve as a director of the ABE, jump at the offer. Your commitment of time and effort will be very rewarding.

If you count closely, you will see that I have only mentioned fourteen people so far. Number fifteen is Ms. Margie Hannen. One of the best days in the history of the ABE was when Margie was hired as executive secretary of the Board in February 1999. Margie was on staff with the AAE in the Membership Department prior to her employment as the Board's executive secretary. In my last Presidential Report, I focused on many of the changes that have taken place over the last ten or so years. Margie has been there through most of those significant changes, using innovative thinking to constantly strive to make the Board certification process as user-friendly as possible. She has the amazing ability to see a problem, or a better way of doing something, and working through it to a logical resolution.

Margie always has the candidate's best interest at heart. I ask that when you go to the next Grossman Memorial Luncheon, watch her as the new Diplomates receive their pins. You will not have to look any further to see Margie's commitment to the ABE certification process and Diplomat status.

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### ABE 2006

#### President

Dr. William G. Schindler  
San Antonio, TX

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Avon, IN

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Dr. Christopher S. Wenckus  
Chicago, IL

#### Executive Secretary

Margie Hannen  
Chicago, IL



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# The Secretary's Report

by Carl Newton, D.D.S., M.S.D.

The directors of the American Board of Endodontics met in Chicago on November 10-12, 2005, to conduct oral examinations and convene their Fall Business Meeting. The exam was equated for 21 candidates, 9 examiners, 7 different scenarios and 10 questions. The analysis was compared to a benchmark scale used for the past 5 years and 15 of the candidates passed. The overall success rate for 2005 was 79%, a 7% increase from the 2004 total.

The Fall 2005 case portfolio submissions were also equated to a 5-year benchmark scale based on the analysis of 21 candidates, 8 examiners, 3 skills, and 7 case types. Using a standardized pass point after an adjustment for 99% confidence that no candidate who should pass would fail, 20 of the 21 candidates were successful. The overall success rate for 2005 was 91%, well above the 81% five-year average. The detailed instructions now available to candidates and the routine use of the published submission check list have standardized the reporting of the evaluation, diagnosis and treatment procedures and increased the number of acceptable and excellent scores. Success is still highly dependent upon submitting cases that demonstrate a high level of knowledge, technical skill and patient management - in other words, the kinds of cases seen in an everyday endodontist practice. The 2005 candidates are being surveyed to gather further information that this highly successful group can contribute to an assessment that is intended to demonstrate clinical proficiency.

The next submission deadline for the case portfolio is April 1, 2006, for those candidates who are planning to take the oral examination scheduled for November 10-11, 2006, in Chicago. Track 1 candidates are reminded that they have two years from the time they have passed the case portfolio to complete the oral exam. ABE Executive Secretary Margie Hannen does an extraordinary job in tracking candidate's timelines and providing notification but it is still ultimately the candidate's responsibility to maintain their timelines and meet deadlines.

The success rate of the 2005 written examination conducted during the week of November 7<sup>th</sup> was exceptional. The computerized examination was administered regionally to 87 candidates and 84 were successful! This 97% success rate was well above the 85% five-year average after being analyzed closely by Measurement Research Associates (MRA). This is the highest pass rate since the ABE adopted a criteria referenced methodology in 1995. The test itself is validated by the candidates, so in theory, all can pass or fail. We are certainly pleased to see this result and that 100% success is possible.

After their analysis, MRA assured us that this was not an easy exam compared to past exams. Committee members spend many hours developing new questions each year and use a test matrix that integrates the clinical sciences with the biological sciences and insures that each examination is similar in content and covers the entire scope of the specialty. Test questions are anchored to previous exams for long-term comparisons, consistency, and statistical validation.

Analysis showed that this was a very discriminating test and that the outstanding performance suggests that this was a well-prepared group of candidates. The specialty of endodontics is attracting highly qualified students and it is likely that it is the best of these who are pursuing Diplomate status. The Commission on Dental Accreditation also assures that all advanced education programs in endodontics meet the requirements that define the matrix used in the oral examination. This performance is a valuable outcomes assessment of the quality of our graduate programs and their compliance with those requirements.

The ABE also continues to communicate as effectively as possible. Accessing information from the ABE Web site and attending Boardwalk presentations at the AAE Annual Session or during the many director's visits to

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# Meet the New Diplomates

The ABE would like to congratulate the endodontists who were awarded Diplomate status. What follows is a profile of each newly certified endodontist. The Directors hope that their positive and enlightening testimonials will encourage more endodontists to become Diplomates.



**Anita Aminoshariae** received her D.D.S. from Case School of Dental Medicine in 1999 and both her certificate in endodontics and M.S. from the Virginia Commonwealth University in 2003. From 1999 through 2001, she worked for the Navy as a civilian contractor in general dentistry and was later selected to engage in clinical patient work within the U.S. Navy Endodontic Department. Anita is currently in private practice at St. Croix Endodontics, St. Croix, Minnesota. She also is a part-time instructor at the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry in the Post Graduate Endodontics program. Anita enjoys spending time with her husband, Dr. Sean Bates, as well as reading, working-out, swimming and downhill skiing.

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** This achievement is a reflection of my wonderful mentors, friends and family. I am grateful to the mentorship and guidance that I have had at the Case School of Medicine, US Navy and Virginia Commonwealth University. This accomplishment would not have been attained without the help and direction of Drs. Hartwell, Tordik, Chau, Lindauer, Blundell and Mickel and many other wonderful instructors that I have been associated with throughout my career. I also would like to thank my family (Aminoshariaes, Bates and Cronins) for all their unending love and support during this endeavor. To my dad, who is no longer with us, but always encouraged me to specialize and become Board Certified, I want to say "I did it".

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** The practice of endodontics and medicine is always evolving. Therefore, it is most critical to use the best current evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients. That is what Board Certification means to me.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?** I continue to read and learn more. I look forward to sharing my knowledge and experience with colleagues and students who desire Board Certification.

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**Patrick E. Dahlkemper** is in private practice in Pittsburgh's northern suburbs of Allison Park and Aspinwall, PA. He earned his D.M.D. in 1995 from the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine and his certificate in endodontics from Albert Einstein Medical Center in 1998. Patrick and his wife, Monica, have three children, Alex (9), Tyler (6) and Anissa (4). Time away from practice is spent enjoying his many hobbies and interests: car restoration, numerous outdoor activities, spending time with his children, rafting, hiking, camping. He is also involved with his children's athletic activities: soccer, swimming and basketball.

camera shy

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** I feel like I have finally completed the maximum of what I started professionally. I did not feel like I was honest in my professional endeavors knowing that I had not completed the certification process. I could not justify to myself why not being Board Certified was acceptable.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** When you complete a residency program, you have a very large knowledge base of endodontics. You realize that technology and the science of endodontics continues, and so must your education. To continue to be current, and not rest on your laurels, is what you learn as you go through the certification process.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?** To continue to learn and not take my profession for granted.

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**John C. Dermody** lives in Dublin, Ireland. He received his certificate in endodontics from the University of Maryland in 1995.

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** The feeling is that

# Meet the New Diplomates

of satisfaction and achievement of “a difficult job well done”.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** Now that I’ve completed the process, I have a much greater appreciation and respect for anyone who undertakes it. It is not easy to “lay oneself bare” professionally and submit one’s knowledge and clinical skills to the scrutiny of the Board examiners. It is far easier to avoid it, but I’ve always believed if one is not challenging oneself, one is not standing still but in fact going backwards.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?**

It already has! The process made me question how and why I practiced endodontics. As a result, I instituted changes not only to clinical issues but also to the way I present my understanding of what we are trying to achieve in endodontics to dental colleagues and students.

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**Darlene R. Hachmeister** served in the U.S. Air Force as a general dentist from 1994 to 1999 and as an endodontist from 2001 through 2003. She earned her D.M.D. in 1994 from the University of Florida College of Dentistry. In 2001, she received her certificate in endodontics from the U.S. Air Force Endodontic Program, Wilford Hall in San Antonio, Texas. Darlene is currently in private practice in Melbourne, Florida. She treasures the time she spends with her husband, Kevin, (a general dentist) and their two sons, Liam (5) and Jack (3). Hobbies include reading, working out and vacationing.

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** I feel great sense of personal satisfaction and a tremendous amount of gratitude for the outstanding mentors I have had through this journey, at both the UTHSCSA and the Air Force endodontic programs. And I am very lucky to have the support of my amazing husband and family.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** I am confident that I’m a better clinician for having gone through the process. It has also renewed my enthusiasm for our specialty, which is reflected in my patient care and contact with referring practitioners.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?**

I think Board certification has gotten me into a mindset to continually evaluate my clinical techniques and keep current on the evidence-based literature. Providing the best possible treatment to our patients based on our strong scientific literature can only strengthen the awareness and recognition of our specialty.

**Christopher L. Hugh** attended West Virginia University where he earned his D.D.S. in 1996. In 2002, he was awarded his certificate in endodontics from the University of Iowa. Christopher and his wife, Tammy, are the proud parents of Nathaniel (5) and Abigail (3). While serving with the Air Force, he taught first year AEGD residents at Travis Air Force Base. After separating from the Air Force in 2004, he set up private practices in Hurricane and Huntington, West Virginia. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his family, playing golf and skiing.

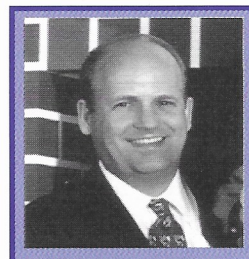
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**Scott A. Janse** has maintained a solo private practice since 1998 and is also part-time faculty at University of Texas at Houston. Scott earned his D.D.S. in 1995, his certificate in endodontics and M.S. in 1998 all from the University of Texas at Houston. Scott and his wife, Maureen, have three children, Scott (6), Mason (5) and Grace (3). An outdoor enthusiast, he enjoys golf and tennis.

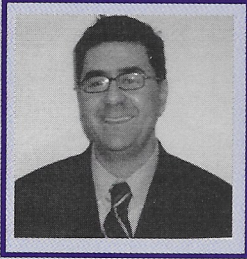
**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** Relieved! It was a bit of a process, and frankly one which I am very pleased to have completed.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** It certainly was an education. The process helped me make coherent sense of the academic and practical sides of endodontics.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?** Hopefully, it will prod me to approach patient care with informed, as opposed to empirical, decision making.



# Meet the New Diplomates



**Bekir Karabucak** is the first recipient of the \$2000 cash award that the AAE Foundation recently approved for all full-time endodontic educators who obtain Diplomate status. He earned his certificate in endodontics in 1997 and M.S. (Oral Biology) in 1998 from the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine. He currently serves as an Assistant Professor and Endodontic Clinic Director at his alma mater. He also serves as the attending endodontist at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Bekir and his wife, Dilek, have one daughter, Defne (8). Among his hobbies are long distance running and cooking.

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** It is a great achievement, it boosts one's confidence. It was a long process, however, I believe the outcome is worth pursuing.

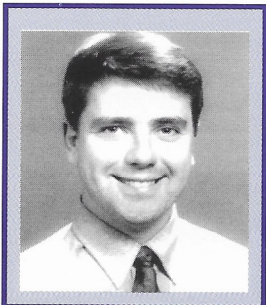
**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?**

Having such a goal raised the bar for me in many ways. I enjoyed going into finer details of the clinical cases and the literature and applying it to my practice and teaching. The overall process was challenging but fun.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?**

I will definitely continue to follow the current literature more closely and base my practice and teaching more on literature and evidence-based dentistry.

**John M. Lies** attended undergraduate at Kansas Newman College in his hometown of Wichita, KS. He entered dental school in 1983 after three years of college. John attended U.M.K.C. and received his D.D.S. in 1987. He then went on active duty in the United States Navy from 1987 to 1996 which included a G.P.R., '87 - '88 and a one-year advanced clinical program in endodontics, (ACP) '93 - '94. In 1996, he was accepted to the VA Medical Center in Long Beach, California where he received his certificate in endodontics in 1998. John currently main-



tains a private practice in Garden Grove, California. John enjoys spending quality time with his wife, Carla, and their three children, Theresa (13), Evan (7) and Jennifer (3). His interests and hobbies include playing golf, mountain biking and computers.

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** I was very excited and relieved. Becoming Board Certified was a long time goal that I had since entering my residency. It was the culmination of a lot of hard work that I feel has paid off in a way that gives recognition essentially to a very worthwhile endeavor of continuing education.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** It was a way to motivate myself to keep up on all the latest techniques and related publications that any candidate would be required to have current knowledge of in order to pass the certification process. My goal was to have this process translate to better care for my patients, and I certainly think it has.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?**

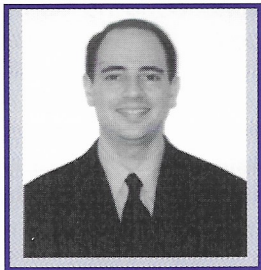
I think it will help me be a better endodontist than I would have been. I will continue to focus on the evidence-based and current literature when making treatment decisions. At the very least, you have more flexibility whether it be for something like state licensure reciprocity or choice to pursue a career in education.

**Sandra R. Makkar** currently practices in Salem and Danvers, Massachusetts. She received her D.D.S. from the University of Michigan in 1995 and her certificate in endodontics in 1998 from Temple University.

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# Meet the New Diplomates

**Michael S. Marmo** received his B.S. at Cornell University in 1991 and his D.M.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine in 1995. After a one-year general practice residency in New York, he completed the advanced dental education program in endodontics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine in 1998. Michael is the founder of Newtown Endodontics and remains active in academics as a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Endodontics at Penn. His hobbies include watching baseball,



foreign film and traveling throughout Italy.

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** I feel a sense of achievement linking my education, practice and teaching experiences.

The accomplishment is also a tribute to my edu-

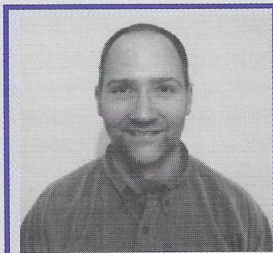
cators at Penn who have prepared me well for this journey.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** Being able to integrate everything you have learned from your residency, through several years of practice experience, is a truly worthwhile process. I will encourage more of my students to become Board Certified. You will be happy that you have done it.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?**

This experience has made me a more inquisitive endodontist. Being able to incorporate the most recent literature with the classics and to be critical about new thinking and techniques has made me a better endodontist. This can only benefit our specialty for the future.

**Samuel V. Mesaros** has been in private practice in Danville, Virginia, since 1996. He received his D.D.S. in 1985 from the University of Michigan. In 1996, he earned his certificate in endodontics and M.S. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Sam and his wife, Jean, have two daughters, Haley (14) and Madeline (9). His time away from work is spent enjoying



physical fitness activities, antique hunting, reading and trying to understand teenage girls.

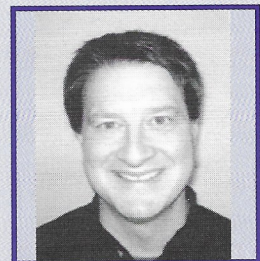
**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** While the end result is personally satisfying, it was the journey that was most rewarding. I have developed a renewed enthusiasm for my profession and am highly motivated to continue to improve and learn.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** I have no doubt that I have become a more competent practitioner after having gone through this process. I feel this has been a win-win situation and I am grateful to have taken part in it. I believe I have also set a good example for my children who have watched me push myself to achieve this goal.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?**

This was a long journey for me, and has changed the way I approach everything from patient care to reading the journals. The whole process forces you to organize yourself and make the most of your time, both at work and home.

**Mark V. Nearing** earned his D.D.S. in 1996 and his certificate in endodontics in 1998 from the University of Michigan. Mark and his wife, Deborah, reside in Gaylord, Michigan, where he maintains a private practice.



**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** I have a very deep sense of personal satisfaction. To be admitted to this group is a great honor for me. I also have a sense of humility. No matter how much I study, I'll never know it all. I have a new appreciation for the depth of the scholarship and the dedication of those who have enlightened us through their research and teaching.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** I think the process was very worthwhile. It provided the motivation to review the literature and to keep current with the science of endodontics. Because I've been in practice about seven years now, it was invigorating to go back and reassess the way I practice and justify my methods. I've modified some of my practice habits since completing the Board Certification process.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?**

# Meet the New Diplomates

The process of Board Certification has revived my interest in endodontics. I have again become a reader of journals. It is dangerously easy to become complacent in one's own practice. By taking the time to review the literature at one's own pace, the task becomes less onerous. I was surprised to find that I could become even more fascinated by this specialty of ours. The Board Certification process has enabled me to objectively evaluate my practice methods from an evidence-based standpoint. I'm not sure I would have taken the time if I hadn't the framework (and the deadline) of the formal Board Certification process. I now commonly ask myself to defend a particular method of treatment and to assess the prognosis objectively.

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**James E. Pastor** currently resides in San Diego, California. He received his D.D.S. from the University of Michigan in 1978. In 1997, he earned both his M.S. degree from George Washington University and his certificate in endodontics from the Naval Postgraduate Dental School, Bethesda, Maryland.

**Michelle A. Schaeffer** is in private practice in West Des Moines, Iowa. She received her D.D.S. from the University of Iowa in 1992. In 2001, she earned her certificate in endodontics from Harvard School of Dental Medicine and a M.P.H. (with a concentration in Health Care Management) from Harvard School of Public Health. Michelle and her husband, Bryon, are the parents of Jessica (13) and John (9). Spending time with her family is her favorite activity. Hobbies include running, tennis, down-hill skiing and baking.

**How do you personally feel now that you have received Diplomate status?** Delighted! This was a long-term goal I made for myself when starting my endodontic residency. There are many individuals that deserve recognition that influenced and



helped me to attain my goal. I have to give credit to my program director, Dr. Robert White; my ABE mentor, Dr. William Johnson, my partners in my endodontic practice and my husband and children for their love and support throughout the process.

**Why do you think the overall process was worthwhile?** It is important to the specialty of endodontics to become Board Certified.

**How do you think your achievement will affect you as an endodontist in the years ahead?** It has made me more confident as an endodontist.

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**Mark B. Sweet** resides in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Dr. Sweet attended the University of Iowa where he earned both his D.D.S. in 1986 and his certificate in endodontics in 2002.

# Examination Schedules

## Written Examination

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
May 30 - June 9, 2006 (The test is offered over a nine-day period Monday through Friday)	In association with Measurement Research Associates, Inc. and Pearson Vue, the ABE Written Examination is administered as a computer-based test at Pearson Vue Testing Centers located throughout the country.

## Case Submission Date

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
April 1st and October 1st.	Portfolios are accepted for review twice a year – April 1 <sup>st</sup> and October 1 <sup>st</sup> (portfolios must be received in the Central Office on or before the current submission date to be included in that examination review cycle). Notebooks received after the current submission date will not be reviewed until the next submission date (provided that the Case History Eligibility period is current).

## Oral Examination

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
March 27 & 28, 2006	Honolulu, HI
November 10 & 11, 2006	Chicago, IL
April 23 & 24, 2007	Philadelphia, PA
November 9 & 10, 2007	Chicago, IL



## 2006 Annual Session - Special Events

### Louis I. Grossman Memorial Luncheon

Dr. Charles Bertolami, featured speaker

Thursday, March 30, 2006

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Sponsored by the College of Diplomates of the American Board of Endodontics, this year's luncheon will honor the following 23 new Diplomates. We encourage all Diplomates attending the Annual Session to join the ABE Directors, Directors of the College of Diplomates, AAE Executive Committee and our new Diplomate's family members as we join together to honor and recognize our new Diplomates who have reached the pinnacle of our profession – Diplomate status.

Dr. Anita Aminoshariae	Dr. Sandra R. Makkar
Dr. Brian E. Bergeron	Dr. Michael S. Marmo
Dr. Patrick E. Dahlkemper	Dr. Samuel V. Mesaros
Dr. John C. Dermody	Dr. Philip L. Michaelson
Dr. Ariel A. Diaz	Dr. Mark V. Nearing
Dr. Mark E. Dinkins	Dr. James E. Pastor
Dr. Darlene R. Hachmeister	Dr. Ronald A. Sabins
Dr. Christopher L. Hugh	Dr. Michelle A. Schaeffer
Dr. Scott A. Janse	Dr. John P. Smith
Dr. Bekir Karabucak	Dr. Michael G. Stevens
Dr. John M. Lies	Dr. Mark B. Sweet
	Dr. Catherine E. Wurm

### ABE Boardwalk

Friday March 31, 2006

12:45 – 2:15 p.m.

Join the ABE Directors for a panel discussion focused on the Certification Process. We look forward to meeting with current and future Candidates, having the opportunity to discuss the Certification Process and to clarify any concerns and/or questions.

Highlights include:

- The sequencing of the Certification Process.
- Web site Resources
- Our new category, Prospective Board Candidate
- Computerized Written Examination – structure of the examination – expanded examination dates
- Case History Portfolio – the importance of using Case History Portfolio Guidelines in the preparation of the portfolio
- Oral Examination – how the examination is structured and administered.

## 2006 Annual Session - Special Events

Oasis  
Booth 409  
Exhibit Hall – Hawaii Convention Center

Thursday, March 30, 2006

9 a.m. – 11:45 a.m., 1:45 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Friday, March 31, 2006

8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 1, 2006

8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Stop by to speak with an ABE representative at the AAE Oasis, located in the Exhibit Hall. Our 2006 CD-ROM containing the procedural guidelines for Board certification, examination instructions and schedules, helpful hints from recent Diplomates (suggestions for how to study, how best to approach each exam and where to look for additional guidance) is available for all visitors.

For more information about ABE events at this year's Annual Session, contact Margie Hannen, ABE Executive Secretary, at 800/872-3636, Ext. 3007, or [abe@aae.org](mailto:abe@aae.org).

## President's Report - continued

*continued from front page*

Watch her face light up with tremendous thrill and excitement as the secretary of the Board presents the pins to the new Diplomates. The specialty, the American Association of Endodontists, and in particular the American Board of Endodontics, are so fortunate to have Margie as the ABE executive secretary. Thank you Margie for all that you do for our specialty of endodontics.

In my opinion, the future looks very bright for the American Association of Endodontists and the American Board of Endodontics. The ABE has a close and very supportive relationship with the AAE. The Board of Directors for both organizations have great respect and admiration for each other. Past and present ABE Boards have taken great pride in making necessary changes to streamline the very difficult process of achieving Diplomate status. The current Board is dedicated to continue its evaluation of the certification process. This is a dynamic process. I am personally excited to see the increasing numbers of endodontists who have dedicated their time and effort to achieve Board certification. It is my hope that all endodontists will pursue and successfully complete the process for their own professional growth and for the continued health of the specialty of endodontics.

There are many reasons to pursue Board cer-

tification that include improving your medical knowledge about patients, keeping current with the rapid changes in new materials and techniques, and challenging ourselves to reach for the top. But probably the most important reason is that the process forces you to increase your knowledge to justify the treatment philosophies and procedures you perform daily. This increase in knowledge comes from a biologic understanding and scientific rationale for these treatment procedures.

There is no doubt that Board certification involves a tremendous amount of work and sacrifice, but achieving Diplomate status gives you a great deal of pride. Just look at the testimonials in this edition of *The Diplomate*. You can feel this pride jumping off the pages.

Let me conclude with a quote from Theodore Roosevelt – "It is only through labor and prayerful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage, that we move on to better things." I encourage all endodontists to expend the energy and muster the courage to pursue Diplomate status. The pride felt when achieved will overwhelm you!

I would like for you to share your comments and thoughts with me as President of the ABE. Please contact me at [Schindler@uthscsa.edu](mailto:Schindler@uthscsa.edu) or (210) 567-3394 if you have questions or suggestions.

# Helpful Hints

*Whether you are taking your final exam, or just starting your journey toward certification, these helpful hints from the new Diplomates will provide great insight into the quest for Diplomate Status. No one can shed light upon the certification process like those who have climbed that mountain -- and reached the summit!*

## GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

Do it! For reasons outlined above.  
(Dr. John Dermody)

When taking the written or the oral you won't know everything. Stay focused when those questions are asked and don't panic. Remember that your colleagues won't know everything either.  
(Dr. Michelle Schaeffer)

Stay active in your specialty by attending the AAE annual sessions, organizing or joining local study groups, and teaching at a local endodontics programs. Having a Board Certified mentor is another positive bonus to give you encouragement and guidance throughout the process. Teaching is a great way to stay current with questions, seminars and presentations by residents and dental students.  
(Dr. Michael Marmo)

Start the process as soon as you can after residency. Consider attending a review course midway through the process; this will lighten the load when studying for Orals.  
(Dr. John Lies)

Try to enjoy the whole learning experience. Out of necessity, I had to postpone Board Certification for a number of years after my residency. As a result, I was forced to learn more and update my practice during the process. This was very rewarding for me and a benefit for my patients. Do not underestimate the importance of your family and their support.  
(Dr. Samuel Mesaros)

Just do it. If you think you are good, you'll be even better. There is so much to learn and your schooling only scratched the surface. Do yourself the favor of experiencing again how exciting it is to learn.  
(Dr. Mark Nearing)

Start early and have a plan. A study partner is helpful or at least someone who has or is taking the examination that you can call and complain to.  
(Anonymous)

Team up with friends and colleagues throughout the certification process. This helped a lot in preparing our case portfolios and studying for the orals.  
(Dr. Bekir Karabucak)

Set realistic time goals for when you want to accomplish each step of the process, stay organized and meet your goals. Review courses like Einstein, U of Michigan, others are valuable for collecting the information to study and know where the science of endodontics is progressing.  
(Dr. Patrick Dahlkemper)

Don't delay any step of the process. I found it very easy to come up with reasons that I could not complete the next step. This procrastination only made it more difficult. In reality, each phase of the process is very doable with a bit of focused work.  
(Dr. Scott Janse)

## WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Take it as soon as possible after the residency when your knowledge base is fresh.  
(Dr. Darlene Hachmeister)

Do it early. Preferably during the final year. It was not possible when I was a resident and I feel this is a significant improvement in the process.  
(Dr. John Dermody)

Board review courses are very helpful when studying for the written exam. The book "Inflammation" by Trowbridge is also helpful.  
(Dr. Michelle Schaeffer)

My advice is to take this exam at the end of your endodontic program or shortly afterwards. You are more geared to the types of questions asked on the written exam after an intense academic program and review. Also, review journals other than the JOE since questions come from diverse endodontic sources.  
(Dr. Michael Marmo)

# Helpful Hints

## WRITTEN EXAMINATION (cont)

Read and review your residency notes and current literature (the past 5-10 years) from JOE, OOO, Endodontics, Dental Traumatology, International Endodontics Journal (use PubMed search).

(Dr. Anita Aminoshariae)

Take the written exam as soon after residency as practical, so all the information you have studied is current. Attend a review course.

(Dr. John Lies)

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the past few years of current journal articles. Consider taking a review course. Being able to take the written close to home is a huge improvement with respect to time away from work, expense and stress.

(Dr. Samuel Mesaros)

Take as soon after your residency as possible.

(Anonymous)

Take the written examination shortly after the residency program while your basic science knowledge is still fresh. Basic science is difficult to review but is an important part of the written examination.

(Dr. Bekir Karabucak)

Take it as soon as possible.

(Dr. Patrick Dahlkemper)

Certainly, the ideal time to take this exam is as soon as possible following completion of one's residency.

(Dr. Scott Janse)

## CASE HISTORY PORTFOLIO EXAMINATION

Pay particular attention to the small details and present the cases so they look worthy of your expertise.

(Dr. Darlene Hachmeister)

Keep records of all potential cases. When writing the cases follow the criteria to the letter and do a little writing-up on an ongoing basis; trying to write all the cases in a short period of time can be a bit overwhelming.

(Dr. John Dermody)

Find someone who has completed the Board process in recent years and look over their cases to get an idea of what is expected. Do this during residency, when cases are treated and when getting the case ready to submit. Write up some of the cases as the recalls are done, rather than having it all to do at once. Ask a Boarded individual to look over your cases, to catch any mistakes that might be present in your portfolio, about a month before you plan to submit. This may give you time if you need to find another case.

(Dr. Michelle Schaeffer)

Start collecting cases for the required categories during your residency. Make sure you have a recall protocol in place so you do not limit yourself by not having adequate recalls. Within reason, take as many films as possible since you will want these when you prepare your portfolio. Also, changing jobs is a common occurrence in the first few years of practice, so make provisions to obtain x-rays and charts if you leave a certain location.

(Dr. Michael Marmo)

Ask another Diplomate to review your cases.

(Dr. Anita Aminoshariae)

Treat every case as a potential Board patient. Find an efficient way to organize and track your progress whether it is manually or by computer. Find a mentor that can help you look over cases as you write them up and look over your portfolio at the end.

(Dr. John M. Lies)

This was the toughest part for me. Keep an eye out for the interesting cases and start collecting them early. I found that if I explained to my patients what I was trying to achieve and made them part of the process, they were more than happy to help me as far as following through with permanent restorations and coming back for recall appointment.

(Dr. Samuel Mesaros)

Don't be intimidated by how "common" some of your cases may seem. When you were in school, every difficult case that turned out really nice got filed away as a "board case". If you've been in practice for a while, you do difficult cases by the hour. Your perspective has changed, but that

# Helpful Hints

## CASE HISTORY EXAM (cont)

doesn't mean the cases aren't as good. Submit what you have. No one can have a stellar portfolio in every respect.

(Dr. Mark Nearing)

Gather cases during your residency. Take advantage of residency and use the ABE format to write difficult cases.

(Anonymous)

Document every case as a Board case and start documenting during your residency program. It will be easier to put together a good case portfolio.

(Dr. Bekir Karabucak)

Start to prepare cases from the beginning of your career. Have a system to track cases so that you can get recalls, and pick the best cases from many options.

(Dr. Patrick Dahlkemper)

Maintain an organized log of your potential "Board" cases beginning now. It can be very difficult to find that "perfect" case many years after it is completed. The same also holds for recalls. You are more likely to have the patient return in the immediate year(s) following case completion as opposed to some years later.

(Dr. Scott Janse)

## ORAL EXAMINATION

Commit yourself to spending as much time as possible to thoroughly evaluate how you would handle ANY case that presents to your office.

(Dr. Darlene Hachmeister)

It is very fair and by the time you get there you will be well prepared for it. Trust your knowledge, keep focused and answer the question as asked.

(Dr. John Dermody)

Start studying about three-four months before the oral exam. Ask a mentor to give you a mock oral exam about one month before the actual exam. This not only makes you ready one month earlier, but also allows time before the exam to strengthen any weak areas. (Dr. Michelle Schaeffer)

Start studying as soon as possible. I started reviewing the literature about six months before the exam date and intensified the review as the exam date came closer. Having a study partner is also an advantage as the exam date comes closer so you can see any deficiencies in your knowledge base. Spend time with current literature especially if you have completed your residency years ago. Review any medical conditions or medications from patients that you are not sure of. Ask yourself to justify why you are doing certain procedures as you practice. My best advice is to pace yourself for this marathon, since you will have other things going on with family life and in practice. Once it is all over you will be happy that you did it!

(Dr. Michael Marmo)

Have conscientious, explicit and judicious reasoning for everything you perform in your practice, and provide the research(s) to support those principles. Practice, practice, practice. Verbalizing your thoughts is paramount to succeeding, and mock boards are the best way to do that. I want to thank Drs. Mickel, Bowles, McClanahan, Hartwell, Law and Mattscheck for arranging mock-board examinations.

(Dr. Anita Aminoshariae)

Use PubMed, or other computer data bases to cross reference authors, especially for current literature. When taking the exam, it is important to have an organized way to gather all initial information when the test starts. It should be practiced in a way to consistently not leave out any critical information; i.e., medial history, blood pressure, etc. Do not forget to ask for more information from the examiners as necessary, whether it is a radiograph(s), or even a clinical picture, if indicated. Try to get the first part of the exam off to as smooth a start as possible. This will help you to stay calm and recall information as the exam progresses. Try to find a study partner and/or ask someone qualified to conduct a mock exam. The right strategy in taking the oral exam, is as important as what you know.

(Dr. John Lies)

Remain calm. I was humbled and a bit intimidated by the examiners. Once the actual exam began, I was at ease and had a feeling that they wanted me to be successful. To prepare for this part, focus on

## ORAL EXAMINATION (cont)

the cases that you treat everyday in your practice. Be critical of the health history evaluation and how it may affect dental treatment. For each step in your treatment, be able to support why you do what you do.

(Dr. Samuel Mesaros)

I wish I knew then, what I know now about the orals, I'd have been much more relaxed. It's a conversation with other endodontists. It's not an interrogation! I most enjoyed studying for the orals. The amount of material is overwhelming, but it is fascinating. Don't dread the oral exam, look forward to it. If you've been in practice and you've done some review, you'll be fine. You'll be surprised at what you already know!

(Dr. Mark Nearing)

Start early. The examiners are helpful and not intimidating. Use the case history format to remember to ask all pertinent information about the presented case.

(Anonymous)

I found the study aids on the Web site of the College of Diplomates very helpful. It helped me to identify and review my weaker subjects.

(Dr. Bekir Karabucak)

Multiple review courses will show you what is current and where you should focus your studying. Note cards and PubMed are very helpful. Starting early allows you time to become familiar with research and help you organize and connect the studies. Ask yourself why you do what you do and if there is a scientific rationale for your decisions.

(Dr. Patrick Dahlkemper)

Take your time preparing. Hopefully, the information will become second nature, so that under a bit of pressure it can be recalled with little effort.

(Dr. Scott Janse)

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## THE DIPLOMATE

Published twice yearly (Spring & Fall) by  
The American Board of Endodontics  
211 E. Chicago Avenue Ste 1100  
Chicago, IL 60611

President: William G. Schindler, D.D.S., M.S.  
Editor: Christopher S. Wenckus, D.D.S.  
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c/o American Board of Endodontics



Member of the American  
Association of Dental Editors

## Secretary's Report - continued

*continued from page 2*

universities, sponsored by the College of Diplomates, have been shown to be factors improving outcomes on all parts of the exam. Director Chris Wenckus reported that a large and attentive group of graduate students attended his abbreviated Boardwalk presentation at the annual APICES meeting in Chicago on August 9. The next Boardwalk is scheduled for Friday, March 31, 2006, in Hawaii from 12:45 – 2:15 p.m.

Beginning in January 1, 2006, there were some new and exciting changes in the administration of the ABE written examination! Previously, completion of an ADA-accredited endodontic program was required before a candidate was qualified to take the written examination. Effective January 1, 2006, a new category, Prospective Board Candidate, was established so that students enrolled in an ADA-accredited endodontic program can register to take the written examination in the year of graduation.

Historically, the examination has only been offered one day per year. We are also pleased to announce that the 2006 examination will be offered starting on Tuesday, May 30 through Friday, June 9, 2006, (the test is being offered over a nine-day period – Monday through Friday). The additional examination dates provide two important benefits: the opportunity to choose a date that fits the candidate's schedule and offers additional seating availability at Pearson Vue testing centers.

Prospective Board Candidates have until the end of the year the written examination was taken to submit a Preliminary Application, a notarized copy of their endodontic certificate and payment of the Preliminary Application fee required for Board Eligible status. Once the ABE Credentials Committee approves the Preliminary Application, candidates will be declared Board Eligible and the results of the written examination will be released. The results of the written examination are only available to Board Eligible Candidates. It was necessary to establish a firm deadline of February 20 for registration, well in advance of the scheduled test, since the regional testing centers have limited space and can fill up rapidly. Every effort is made

to place candidates as close to home as possible.

Both the ABE and AAE Boards of Directors have approved revisions to their bylaws that permit the ABE to have a controlling interest in the nomination process of electing new ABE Directors at the AAE Annual General Assembly Meeting. Dr. Ashraf F. Fouad has been nominated to replace Dr. Paul Eleazer who completes his second term in 2006. Drs. Carl Newton and Al Reader have also been nominated to serve another three-year term.

The AAE Foundation had established faculty recruitment and retention as a high priority in funding and is very active in identifying opportunities for support. They have approved a \$2000 cash award to any full-time faculty that earns Diplomate status. The ABE sincerely appreciates this gesture as an indication of the value of Diplomate status as a measurement of achievement to University Tenure and Promotion Committees. The AAE Foundation continues to justify the confidence that members have shown with their gifts and pledges and the ABE is thankful to have such a supportive partner in promoting the highest standards of care. We hope to recognize many educators with these awards.

The Credentials Committee reported that 98 Preliminary and 66 Final Applications were approved during 2005. Retired status was approved for six Diplomates this past year. There are currently 764 Active Diplomates and 262 Retired Diplomates. Twenty-three new Diplomates have been invited to receive their pins and be recognized at the Louis I. Grossman Memorial Luncheon on Thursday, March 30, 2006, at the AAE Annual Session in Hawaii. Dr. Charles Bertolami will speak on "Why Our Ethics Curricula Don't Work: A Wink vs. A Blink." All Diplomates attending the annual session should join the ABE Directors, the Directors of the College of Diplomates, the AAE Executive Committee, the program directors and the proud families of the new Diplomates in recognizing this achievement.

## Prospective Board Candidates

The ABE is pleased to welcome our new Prospective Board Candidates and look forward to their participation in the Board Certification process in the years to come. We hope to have the opportunity to meet all of you at the 2006 Annual Session, March 29-April 1 in Hawaii!

While the process to become a Diplomate requires significant dedication and commitment, becoming a Diplomate is a goal every endodontist can achieve. We encourage all candidates to read the Helpful Hints and Testimonials in each issue of the newsletter. Excerpts from our newest Diplomates clearly define the value of Board Certification – “It has made me more confident as an endodontist. This can only benefit our specialty for the future. At the very least, you have more flexibility whether it be for something like state licensure reciprocity, or the choice to pursue a career in education. It allowed me to understand the wealth of knowledge that is needed to be an endodontist and what it will take to maintain the knowledge. Definitely, I will continue to follow the current literature more closely and base my practice and teaching more on literature and evidence-based dentistry”.

The following is a quick review of the procedures for transitioning from a Prospective Board Candidate to Board Eligible status.

Prospective Board Candidates have the remainder of the written examination calendar year to submit a notarized copy of their endodontic certificate along with their Preliminary Application and the remaining \$125 application fee (the \$125 Prospective Board Candidate Application fee and the \$125 fee submitted with the Preliminary Application fee total the \$250 Preliminary Application fee required for Board Eligible status).

Once the Preliminary Application is approved by the ABE Credentials committee, the Candidate will be declared Board Eligible and the results of the written examination will be released to the candidate. Irrespective of the outcome of the written examination, the time lines of the Board Certification process will be in effect. All the relevant policies, procedures

and deadlines involved are available from both the Central Office and our Web site ([www.aae.org/certboard](http://www.aae.org/certboard)) making the certification process as clear and predictable as possible.

Written examination results are released only to those Prospective Board Candidates who submit a Preliminary Application by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the examination year, the results are considered null and void if a Preliminary Application is not submitted within the required time frame.

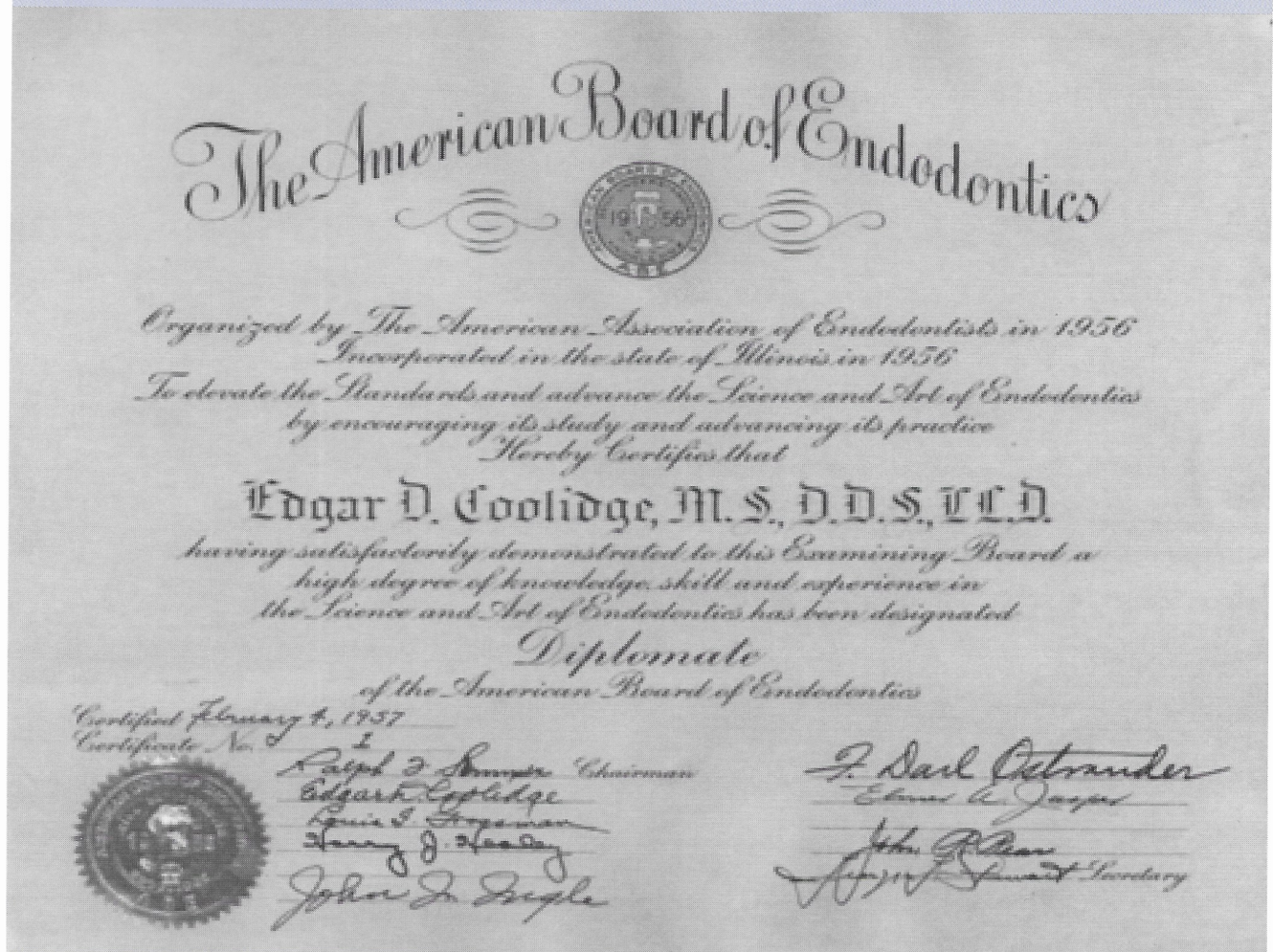
Prospective Board Candidate status expires if the candidate (1) does not participate in the written examination or (2) participates in the written examination but does not submit a Preliminary Application by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year of graduation.

Prospective Board Candidates who notify the Central Office prior to the written examination that they are unable to participate in the examination may apply for Board Eligible status with the submission of a Preliminary Application, notarized copy of their endodontic certificate and payment of \$125. Candidates will not be required to submit an additional fee for the written examination as long as they (1) did not register or (2) cancelled their registration with Pearson Vue at least one business day (24 hours) before the examination was scheduled.

Prospective Board Candidates who participated in the written examination, but did not submit a Preliminary Application by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year the written examination was taken, may apply for Board Eligible status by submitting a Preliminary Application to the ABE upon completion of his/her advanced endodontic program. Preliminary Applications are available from the ABE Headquarters Office or may be downloaded from the ABE Web site: (<http://www.aae.org/certboard/certificationprocess/abeapplicationinfo.htm>). Processing requires a completed application, a notarized copy of the endodontic certificate and payment of \$250.

*Whose name is on Diplomate certificate #1?*

American Board Trivia, or, Questions that won't be asked on any Board exam.



Actually, there are two Certificates with number 1!

*(more on next page)*

# The American Board of Endodontics



Organized by The American Association of Endodontists in 1956  
Incorporated in the state of Illinois in 1956  
To elevate the Standards and advance the Science and Art of Endodontics  
by encouraging its study and advancing its practice  
Hereby Certifies that

**Edgar D. Coolidge**

having satisfactorily demonstrated to this Examining Board a  
high degree of knowledge, skill and experience in  
the Science and Art of Endodontics has been designated

**Diplomate**

of the American Board of Endodontics

Certified November 11, 1964

Certificate No. 1



R. B. Sommer Chairman  
Louis S. Grossman  
L. A. Lucas  
Robert Kesel  
Milton Siskin

G. J. Stewart  
J. F. Healey  
John S. Ingle  
George Stewart Secretary

Note the dates on the two certificates. Why the two certificates? And what significance are the dates? The American Board of Endodontics was incorporated in 1956, but it was not recognized and approved by the Council on Dental Education until 1957(1). The first examination was not given until 1964. The reason for the delay was because endodontics did not gain official recognition as a specialty until 1963.

The nine men who signed the first two certificates reads like a who's who of pioneering endodontists. They are (followed by their certificate numbers):

The February 4, 1957, certificate:

Ralph Sommer (Chair) #2

Edgar D. Coolidge – he signed his own certificate!

Louis Grossman #3

Harry Healey #4

John Ingle #5

Darl Ostrander #7

Elmer Jasper

John R. Pear #8

George Stewart (Secretary) #9

November 11, 1964, certificate:

Ralph Sommer (Chair) #2

Louis Grossman #3

Laurence A. Lucas #12

Robert Kesel #10

Milton Siskin #13

Harry Healey #4

Jacob Freedland #11

John Ingle #5

George Stewart (Secretary) #9

The American Board of Endodontics does not have the information on who owns certificate #6. Perhaps it is Elmer Jasper.

About Edgar D. Coolidge...who was this man? The following is reprinted from *A Historical Sketch of the Department of Endodontic, 1965-1999* by Nijole A Remeikis, DDS, FICD, (first female Diplomate and former department head of endodontics at the University of Illinois) with her permission:

"Dr. Edgar D. Coolidge was born July 15, 1881 on a farm in Galesburg, Illinois. He

attended Knox University [sic] from 1901-03 and received his DDS from Chicago College of Dental Surgery (Loyola) in 1906, where he remained as a instructor in Operative Dentistry and Techniques until 1913. From 1913 -23 he was professor and head of Materia Medica and Therapeutics at University of Illinois, College of Dentistry. Dr. Coolidge returned to his alma mater as Professor of Therapeutics, Preventive Dentistry and Oral Hygiene in 1927 and served in this position until 1948. For nearly 50 years he was associated with Loyola University, until he retired in 1959. Dr. Coolidge had a private dental practice in periodontics and endodontics."

Dr. Coolidge was a student most of his life. In 1925, he received a Bachelor of Science Degree, which was followed by a Master of Science degree from Northwester [sic] University in 1930. During this period of his life, he researched to quell the controversy about the pulpless tooth and pioneered in placing endodontic practice on a sound and rational foundation. In 1948, Dr. Coolidge received the honorary degree of L.L.D. from Loyola [an honorary doctor of law degree]. This was followed by a Doctor of Science degree in 1959.

Dr. Coolidge was one of the initiators in organizing the American Association of Endodontists. In the AAE he served on the Advisory Committee and on the first Constitution and By-laws Committee. Dr. Coolidge was a Charter Member of the American Association of Endodontists as well as an Honorary [sic] member of the Association. On February 4, 1957, he received the first Diplomate Certificate by the American Board of Endodontics, which he signed himself in addition to others.

In 1946, Dr. Coolidge encouraged the members of the AAE that "the members of our association must inform themselves more and more about the nature of the tissues that we are called upon to treat. We must understand what provision nature has made to protect itself and to repair it injuries. We must take up the task of assisting nature by removal of obstacles that hinder or prevent her own mechanism of healing."

In perhaps Coolidge's last scholarly paper (2), he admonished the profession to

keep challenging our concepts. He noted that great progress has been made, but there are still many doors to open, much like what we face today. Dr. Louis I. Grossman summed up the man thus: "Dr. Coolidge will always be remembered not only as a dentist, teacher lecturer, author and researcher but also as a father figure and as a friend. One can only speak of him with words of endearment." (3)

1. Grossman LI, Endodontics 1776-1976: a bi-centennial history against the background of general dentistry. JADA July 1976; 93:78-87
2. Coolidge ED. Past and present concepts in endodontics. JADA Dec. 1960; 61:676-688
3. Grossman LI. Pioneers in Endodontics. J Endod August 1987; 13:409-15

CS Wenckus, editor, *The Diplomate*

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