



The AAPD bids farewell to Editor-in-Chief Milton Houpt, whose term ends with this issue. We thank Dr. Houpt for his devoted service and contribution to the journal.

Editorial Privilege

*P*ediatric Dentistry is now conducting a readership survey, the first in almost 7 years. Preliminary results are quite positive. For example, 70% rate the journal as better than other journals they read, 76% read more than half of the journal and 94% believe that the journal meets their professional needs. Individual comments also are encouraging, such as “quality publication” and “thank you for an excellent journal”.

One quote, however, was somewhat critical suggesting “the editor’s comments should be in keeping with the general thoughts of practicing dentists”. This comment indicated a lack of understanding of the purpose of a journal editorial. The editorial does not serve to merely reflect the status quo, but rather it aims to be informative, deliberative or provocative.

The editorial is *informative* when it attempts to disseminate the latest information; *deliberative* when it resolves to encourage deliberation of timely issues affecting the specialty; and *provocative* when it tries to present ideas that are new and different and might not yet be widely accepted. The editor is provided “a bully pulpit”, a unique and awesome responsibility to motivate readers to consider new, different and even controversial ideas. The editorials written since 1997 were hopefully thought-provoking and in some cases controversial.

Recounting the titles reminds readers of the diversity of topics discussed on this page. They include: “A Patchwork Quilt”, “Professional Renewal”, “Accidents Can Happen”, “Time to Stop Smoking”, “Evidence-based Practice”, “Reading Scientific Literature”, “Gender Shift in Pediatric Dentistry”, “In Search of Perfection”, “Wanted: Sailors and Dental Educators”, “An Insignificant Trend is Insignificant”, “Death Following Sedation”, “Passing the Baton”, “Pediatric Dentistry-The Third Generation”, “Predicting the Future”, “Child Advocacy Does Work”, “Insurance Fraud”, “Soft Tissue is Not Just Kleenex”, “Response to Terrorism”, “Year One Dental Visit-For Whose Benefit?”, “Real Change is Difficult”, “Cost Effectiveness and Risk Assessment”, “To Seal or Not to Seal”, “Developing a Consensus for Restorative Procedures in Pediatric Dentistry”, “To Stay Sharp, Use A Dull Point”, “Academy Awards”, “Dental Research: Bane or Boon”, “19th Congress of the IAPD”, “A Dental Home by Age One”, “Childhood Obesity-A Growing Epidemic”, “What Kind of Dentist Do You Want To Be”, and “New Year’s Resolutions”.

In my first editorial I acknowledged the diverse membership of our organization, with more than 5,000 members from more than 55 foreign countries. Now, in this last editorial, I pay tribute to our leadership who focus on the goal of improving the health and welfare of all children. Their dedication is admirable. I acknowledge also the dedication and competence of our professional staff. They are the people who make our programs happen, and it is their efforts that produce this journal.

In the next issue, the journal masthead will change. New AAPD officers, Board of Trustees, and Editorial Board members will be listed. There will also be a new Editor-in-Chief, Steven M. Adair. Steve is a multi-talented individual. He is a long-time clinician, educator, researcher and author. Currently he is Chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry at the Medical College of Georgia. As a former member of our Board of Trustees, Steve’s long time activities for the AAPD are well known. Most recently, his national behavior management surveys were published in the March/April issue of *Pediatric Dentistry*. At the forthcoming AAPD Annual Session in San Francisco, Steve will be installed as the fifth Editor-in-Chief of this journal. He is an excellent choice and will serve us well.

There are so many individuals I wish to thank personally including the many members of the AAPD Editorial Boards who over the years have spent countless hours reviewing manuscripts and providing constructive criticism in order to improve our journal. They are the unsung heroes who deserve praise for the quality of our publication. I thank the various Boards of Trustees and AAPD Presidents for their support, and the opportunity to serve. I particularly thank the diligent and conscientious staff with whom I have had the pleasure of working. I thank the previous Editors-in-Chief, Steve Wei, Ralph McDonald, and Paul Casamassimo, who fashioned the journal into the world class publication that it is. Finally, I thank the readership that I have had the honor of serving.

Milton Houpt, DDS, PhD
Editor-in-chief