

▶ THE COMPLETE DENTIST

At the TDA Conference, I proudly hovered around a 22" flat panel television that had been donated to the Jack T. Clark Foundation for a raffle fundraiser. I graciously passed out flyers with donation information and burgundy ribbons for oral cancer awareness. I could recite the Foundation's mission statement, word for word and list each of our "Differential Diagnosis" events off the top of my head. Though new to the Foundation, I considered myself knowledgeable when it came to questions pertaining to Dr. Jack T. Clark. That is, until someone actually asked me, "Who is Jack T. Clark?"

"Hmmm..." I pondered, and referred to the only four sentences that I had ever read about him. "He was one of the founders of the Texas Academy of General Dentistry. He was the first president and is often referred to as the Father of TAGD. Dr. Clark served as the president of national AGD in 1965. He gave a lifetime of service to his community and his profession, advancing the principle of lifelong learning in order to provide the public with the best possible care."



Volunteers at an oral cancer screening event in Richardson, Texas sponsored by the Jack T. Clark Foundation

That's it. That is what I knew about Dr. Clark. What I thought was a well informed answer suddenly seemed vague and thoughtless. It became apparent that, if I want people to find value and integrity in the Jack T. Clark Foundation, I ought to

learn more about the man.

Upon my return to TAGD headquarters, I began to scour the office and dig for information regarding Dr. Clark. It became my mission to learn all I could about him. I came across a couple of articles written about Dr. Clark in the *TexasGP* archives, and I hunted down a couple of dentists who studied under him in a study group during the 1980s. The group included Dr. John Reimers of Beaumont and Dr. David Olsen of Bridge City, both of whom spoke very highly of Dr. Clark. It turns out the Foundation has been on the right track when it comes to promoting the importance of continuing education and community service.

Dr. Clark was born in Wolfe City, Texas, in 1915. He received a Bachelor's degree from East Texas State Teachers College and Texas A&M University. He continued on to Baylor where he received his Doctorate in Dental Surgery (Profiles 3). After completing school, Dr. Clark maintained a continuing education program in order to stay abreast in this constantly evolving profession (Dr. Jack T. Clark 1). Not only

did Dr. Clark educate local dental professionals but he went on to become a nationally and internationally renowned speaker, and was even honored for his continuing education programs in Europe and Asia. In fact, a dental organization in Japan created a Jack T. Clark Foundation for continuing education (Dr. Jack T. Clark 1). Commitment to education and dentistry didn't cease there, however, Dr. Clark played an active role in many different

dental organizations around the state. He served as President of the Ft. Worth Practice Management Study Club, was a member of the Psi Omega Fraternity, and a staff member at both John Petersmith

Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital. Dr. Clark was a founding member of TAGD and served the first two terms as president. He went on to become one of the first 20 members in the U.S. to earn a Fellowship in the Academy of General Dentistry and was the first Texan to earn his Master-ship. Dr. Clark also earned his Fellowship in the American College of Dentists, International College of Dentists and the Royal Society of Health in London, England.



Meg Hulse
Program Coordinator
Jack T. Clark Foundation

*"As a young dentist I hoped to be like Dr. Clark, both professionally and ethically. He was a great leader and a wonderful mentor. In my opinion, he was the embodiment of the complete dentist."
-Dr. John Reimers*

While Dr. Clark has been honored and awarded by dental organizations worldwide, it is imperative to take note that he also gave back to his community and is known for community service. Dr. Olsen explained that Dr. Clark was an exceedingly generous person who was active in community service. He worked on projects that provided dental activities for the indigent so that many who could have never afforded dental care were provided with services that improved the quality of their lives. Additionally, one of the reasons Dr. Clark excelled in his profession was because he understood the importance of hands on education and the value of good doctor-patient interaction both of which, requires practice and repeated efforts.

According to Dr. Reimers, "he would allow young dentists to observe him as
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Complete Dentist continued...

he worked on and communicated with his patients. He knew how to relate to his patients. He had excellent 'chair-side manner.'"

Although, I am sure there is more we can learn about Dr. Clark, the Foundation is off to a great start in fulfilling his legacy of excellent dental education and professional service to the community. The Foundation strives to share his ideals and vision by providing quality educational programs for dental professionals and enhancing the learning environment with hands-on patient screenings.

I consider it a privilege to work with the dental professionals of Texas who give back to the community and carry on the spirit

of Dr. Jack T. Clark.

The Jack T. Clark Foundation is a non-profit organization that operates solely through grants and donations. All contributions to the Foundation are greatly appreciated. If you would like to donate simply use the envelope provided in this issue.

"Presidential Profiles." *TexasGP* 1964: 3.

"Dr. Jack T. Clark First Texas Dentist to Receive Mastership From Academy."

TexasGP October 1973: 1.

The Jack T. Clark Foundation would like to thank everyone who participated in the raffle of a 22" flat-panel TV by donating to the Foundation, and congratulations to Dr. Deborah Worsham who was the lucky winner.



The Jack T. Clark Foundation offered free oral cancer screenings to the public during Cowboy Round-up USA in Amarillo, Texas.

▶ IT IS SO SIMPLE



John Chandler, DDS, MAGD

All providers of oral health care are aware of oral cancer; however, I am not sure if all oral health care providers are aware of the importance of routine oral cancer screenings. It appears

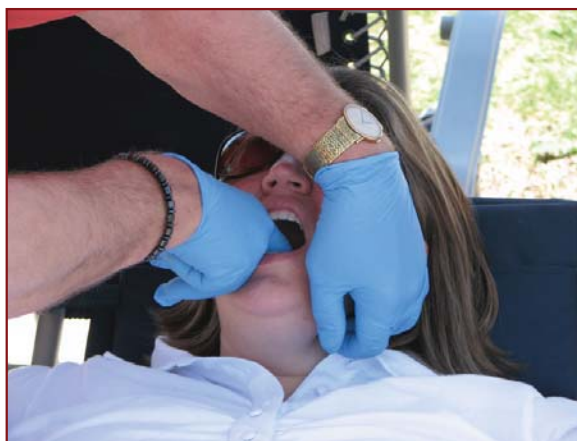
that the screenings are not performed in all dental offices on a routine basis. I suspect that many offices do screenings, but do not explain to their patients what they are doing or the significance of it.

The reason for performing oral cancer screenings is obvious to most, but I will share some facts that lend the importance to the reason that it should be done routinely. The overall survival rate for oral cancer has been reported to be 57 percent, but with early detection of localized lesions the rate jumps to greater than 80 percent (Silverman). Also, the recent age trend in oral cancer indicates that younger patients with no risk factors are now affected, the tongue being the most common site (Silverman). Therefore,

it is now important to screen all patients, rather than those who are just high risk due to alcohol and tobacco use.

The Jack T. Clark Foundation focuses on the recognition of the importance of oral cancer screenings. In collaboration with the TAGD and the Dental Oncology Education Program, the Foundation provides brochures and free oral cancer screenings for the public at events throughout Texas.

There are several avenues to use for oral cancer screenings, such as performing visual and manual palpations of the head and neck area, Toluidine Blue vital staining, ViziLite a chemiluminescence product, CDx brush biopsy, and VELscope, the latest viewing device. All of these techniques are solely for screening, not diagnosis. The



diagnosis comes from a surgical biopsy that determines whether the tissue has developed into cancer or is at some stage of tissue change, pre or non malignant.

My personal office procedure has been, for many years, to do visual and manual palpations of all areas of head and neck for all patients at initial visit and at all re-care visits. To help patients recognize they are being screened for cancer, I use 2x2 gauze and ask them to stick out their tongue. I highly recommend doing this as it brings to light what we are doing. All patients appreciate the fact that we do this routinely. If I see a suspicious area, I refer my patients to the local oral surgeon, Dr. Stephen Davis, who has a very strong interest in oral pathology. Over the years we have discovered lesions that needed a biopsy and fortunately for those that were diagnosed with cancer, we have had early diagnosis with long term survival.

It is so simple. Through routine oral cancer screenings and proper follow up, we have our most effective method to reduce the morbidity and mortality from oral cancer.

Silverman, Sol. "Oral Oncology Conference." MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston. 1 Mar. 2006.