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THE EDITOR'S CORNER

A Centennial for the Profession

I have heard it argued that for any endeavor to be considered a “profession” requires three things: a national organization, an annual meeting, and a professional journal. Obviously, orthodontics meets all three of those criteria through the AAO, its annual sessions, and the *American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics*. On the other hand, I remember being chastised during my early years as an orthodontic faculty member by the late, revered Prof. Faustin Neff Weber for referring to orthodontics as a profession. To Dr. Weber, orthodontics was a *specialty* of the *profession* of dentistry.

One way or another, orthodontics is the second-oldest specialty among all the medical sciences, following only ophthalmology. While it is difficult to nail down a specific day or event that defines the birth of our specialty (or profession), we know for certain that Jan. 1, 2015, marks the 100th anniversary of the first issue of the *International Journal of Orthodontia*, the journal that through several name changes became today's *American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics*. That event, more than any other, signified the maturity of orthodontics as a true academic discipline and thus established orthodontists' place within the society of honorable and distinguished clinicians. The January 2015 issue of the AJODO contains two detailed accounts of the journal's history, written by Dr. Sheldon Peck and the current Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Rolf Behrents, with whom I once had the privilege of working as a junior faculty member at the University of Tennessee College of Dentistry. Together, these two articles provide a fascinating overview of our specialty's first century.

At the time of the first publication of what was to become the AJODO, the practice of clinical “orthodontia” involved modifications of Pierre Fauchard's *bandeau*, wire “dental cribs”, a variety of devices designed to expand the arches and thereby alleviate crowding, and a plethora of removable appliances. Gold was the metal of choice for orthodontic bands and wires, due to its malleability and desirable mechanical properties. During the

century since then, the specialty has seen remarkable advancements in orthodontic devices, materials, and diagnostics. Fixed appliances have evolved from the *bandeau* through the ribbon arch, the edgewise appliance, and “preprogrammed” or “straightwire” appliances to a host of self-ligating and lingual appliances. Gold has been replaced by stainless steel for bands and by nickel titanium, titanium molybdenum, and other exotic alloys for archwires. A variety of “braceless” approaches to tooth movement have become commonplace. When the first issue of the *International Journal of Orthodontia* was printed, an orthodontic diagnosis relied primarily on a routine dental exam, an intraoral evaluation of the occlusion with an emphasis on crowding of the dentition, and an assessment of facial esthetics. Subsequent developments in technology have given us articulated casts, followed by cephalometric radiography and a myriad of analyses from the lateral, frontal, and submental-vertex

aspects. In recent years, we’ve seen the advent of three-dimensional cone-beam radiography and related analyses. Computer imaging now allows us to reconstruct the face, dentition, and occlusion from the skeletal base through the muscles and soft tissues.

Like many clinical sciences, orthodontics has come a long way from where it was 100 years ago. So has orthodontic publishing. Although it is difficult to define what actually constitutes an orthodontic “journal”, a Google query turns up no fewer than 26 orthodontic publications in the world today. All of these came into being after the forerunner of the AJODO; in fact, JCO, nearing its 50th anniversary, is among the oldest. The 100th anniversary of the *International Journal of Orthodontia* is not only a milestone in dental publishing but, as a centennial of the validation of orthodontics as the first dental specialty, a benchmark that we all should celebrate.

RGK

2015 JCO Orthodontic Practice Study

The biennial JCO Orthodontic Practice Study questionnaire is ready for your input. Since 1981, these studies have presented the most comprehensive information about the economics and administration of orthodontic practices in the United States. They are not only an important resource for the specialty, but are also useful to orthodontists in reviewing their own practice management. As usual, results of the Study will be published in JCO in the fall and available in our Online Archive.

The 2015 questionnaire is published in this issue of JCO (pp. 131-137). It is critical to the continuing reliability of the data that as many U.S. orthodontists as possible respond to the survey. Please complete your questionnaire by **April 14**. We need your help to provide the comprehensive overview of the profession that readers expect from JCO.

As in 2013, the questionnaire can be completed online. This year, we are pleased to have

the aid of CSOrthoTrac, Cloud9Ortho, Dolphin, Focus Ortho, Ortho2, and topsOrtho in facilitating your responses. Go to our website, www.jco-online.com, to see instructions for completing the practice activity section of your questionnaire utilizing your own office software. There are two simple ways to enter your responses:

- Access the online form at www.surveymonkey.com/r/2015JCOPracticeStudy. You can use the questionnaire in this issue as a reference, and you can partially complete your online survey and go back to it as many times as you like as long as you use the same computer (once you hit the “Done” button, you cannot revise your entries).
- Mail in the completed paper questionnaire from this issue, using the supplied business-reply form. There is no charge for postage, and we will enter the data for you upon receipt.

In either case, your responses will be completely anonymous and confidential. Remember to complete your questionnaire by **April 14**.