

#### Editor

Eugene L. Gottlieb, DDS

#### Associate Editors

Harry G. Barrer, DDS

Sidney Brandt, DDS

#### Contributing Editors Board

J.W. Barnett, DDS

Charles J. Burstone, DDS

R.S. Callender, DDS

W. Kelley Carr, DDS

T.D. Creekmore, DDS

Harry S. Galblum, DDS

Warren Hamula, DDS

Thomas F. Mulligan, DDS

Paul L. Ouellette, DDS

Ronald H. Roth, DDS

R.P. Scholtz, DDS

J.M. Servoss, DDS

R.L. Vanarsdall, DDS

Jay K. Weiss, DDS

Dr. Jack G. Dale

(Canada)

Dr. Jorge Fastlicht

(Mexico)

Dr. A. van Hillegondsberg

(Holland)

Dr. James P. Moss

(England)

Dr. Edmondo Muzj

(Italy)

Dr. Ane Ten Hoeve

(Holland)

The material in each issue of JCO is protected by copyright. None of it may be duplicated, reprinted, or reproduced in any manner without written permission from the publisher, J.P.O. Inc.

Address all communications to the JOURNAL OF CLINICAL ORTHODONTICS, 1828 Pearl Street, Boulder, Colorado 80302. Phone (303) 443-1720. The Journal of Clinical Orthodontics is published monthly by JPO, Inc. Subscription rates: INDIVIDUALS — Domestic: \$34.00 for one year, \$60.00 for two years, Foreign: \$39.00 for one year, \$70.00 for two years. INSTITUTIONAL (multi-reader, hospitals, clinics, libraries, schools, government agencies, businesses) — Domestic: \$44.00 for one year, Foreign: \$52.00 for one year. STUDENTS — \$17.00 per year. SINGLE COPY — Domestic: \$5.50. Foreign: \$5.75. All orders must be accompanied by payment in full, in U.S. Funds only. All rights reserved. 2nd Class postage paid at Boulder, Colorado and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send form 3579 to the JOURNAL OF CLINICAL ORTHODONTICS, 1828 Pearl Street, Boulder, Colorado 80302. Phone (303) 443-1720.

## the editor's corner

Whenever I get the chance, I speak with people I meet who are wearing orthodontic appliances to find out what patients' and parents' attitudes are about orthodontics. I want to pass along my latest such experience with the understanding that it does not contain universal doctrine, but is merely an interesting incident — a conversation with the mother of two teen-age orthodontic patients I happened to meet at the base lodge on a skiing trip.

The mother was a divorcee and her two teen-age daughters were living with her. Since I had been giving some thought to the impact of divorce on children and especially with reference to its affect on the cooperation of children in their orthodontic treatment, I said to her, "Divorce has many traumatic ramifications and one which I am sure most people don't even think about is the effect that divorce has on the cooperation of children in their orthodontic treatment. Orthodontists must have a certain amount of cooperation from patients between office visits in carrying out instructions and wearing their appliances properly and brushing their teeth, and in keeping their appointments on time. Well, parents are involved in that process, supervising their children to see that they remember to do what they are supposed to do and, often, in chauffeuring them to the orthodontic office for their appointments. Frequently, divorce interferes with that process just because the family unit is disrupted and the parents are unavailable or preoccupied; and, also, the very nature of the divorce of parents has a devastating



## EDITOR'S CORNER

effect on many children causing them to feel alone, helpless, unloved. Such children could care less about schoolwork or orthodontic treatment. They drop out. This leaves the orthodontist with the frustration of not being able to accomplish what he knows could be accomplished and greatly prolonging treatment time for no good purpose. How does this work in your case? Do your girls cooperate with their orthodontist?"

"Yes, they do."

"Did you make any special effort to anticipate a possible problem such as I described?"

"I had two orthodontists recommended to me in our town and I took the girls to both of them. They both did complete workups with all the records. Their diagnosis sounded just about the same to me. But, I let the girls decide which one they wanted to go to."

"What was the basis of their decision?"

"One orthodontist was all business. He was very brief in his explanation. He gave the impression of being very efficient, but the girls chose the second orthodontist, mainly because he was friendly and spent some time explaining to them, not to me but to them, just what was wrong and what was involved in fixing it and why it was important that it be done. He also told them that this was not something that was being done to them or even for them, but with them. They were mighty impressed with that."

"Now that the girls are under treatment, are you and they satisfied that you made a good choice on that basis?"

"Oh yes, because he follows along in treatment in just that way. He never does anything but what he explains in advance what it is going to be and why.

And, if they have a problem or a question, they feel free to call him themselves. I don't even get involved in that. He speaks directly with them and they just have this comfortable, friendly relationship. They feel like he really cares how their treatment is going to come out and he has them caring too."

"Does he ever communicate with you?"

"Oh yes. He calls me on the phone periodically and gives me progress reports on how the girls are doing."

"Do you like for him to do that?"

"Yes."

"Do you like that method of communication as against say a letter or a report card of some kind?"

"Yes. I like the personal contact. Why, you know, when one of the girls had teeth extracted, it was three weeks after our appointment with him, but somehow he kept track and he called us in the evening after the extractions were done to find out how Cathy was feeling and whether she needed any pain medicine. It's just a small thing to pick up the phone and call to give a progress report or to find out how a patient is doing, but it means a lot to me and my girls. We know we made the right choice. I wish he had been around our town when I was a youngster, but my parents never even thought about orthodontic treatment for me. I wish they had."

"It's not too late. Why don't you talk over your own orthodontic problem with the girls' doctor. You might be surprised to find out that you can still be treated. Make it a threesome."

"Hmm. I might just do that."

Sometimes I think that we are so busy getting our patients to be missionaries for orthodontics, that we forget to be missionaries ourselves. □