



New

Dimensions

[life beyond orthodontics]



Solving Mysteries

Orthodontist Dr. William Silver uses forensic dentistry to help medical examiners find answers

Bringing Health and Hope to Needy Children in Central and South America

Dr. Julian Metts Jr.'s virtual hospital has served nearly 5,000 children since 1999

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New Dimensions

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Panorama

Gratifying personal encounters add to the richness of life. One person can indeed have a tremendous beneficial impact on many people.

Dr. William Silver of Miami, FL, and Dr. Julian Metts of Richmond, VA, are excellent examples of how one person can make a difference. Each is pursuing his distinct interests and helping others in unique ways. For both men, though, their life experiences as orthodontist's led them in these new directions.

Upon retiring from his orthodontic practice, Dr. Silver forged a new pathway in the field of forensic odontology. Today, he is an active volunteer in the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Office. He also serves with the Disaster Mortuary Response Team, which is part of the National Disaster Medical Service. In addition, Dr. Silver and his colleague Dr. Richard Souviron collaborated to write the book *Dental Autopsy*, a handbook for investigators, dental students, attorneys and medical examiners.

For Dr. Metts, a trip to Guyana in 1991 changed his life. While there, he and five members of the South Richmond Rotary Club encountered children with terrible health problems. The impact of this visit led Dr. Metts to found the International Hospital for Children (IHC), a non-profit humanitarian organization that links worldwide pediatric surgical, diagnostic and preventive resources to heal critically ill children in developing countries. Nearly 5,000 children have received care through this organization.

Enjoy this latest issue of *New Dimensions*.

SOLVING MYSTERIES

Orthodontist Dr. William Silver uses forensic dentistry to help medical examiners find answers

Many people watch fictional forensic investigators on TV's "CSI Miami," but Dr. William Silver, 80, is the real deal. Now in his second career as a forensic dentist with the medical examiner's office in his hometown of Miami, this second-generation orthodontist has traveled from ground zero to Beijing sharing his knowledge and helping investigators identify the deceased.

His experiences are not quite as glamorous as those on TV, but they carry their own brand of mystery and intrigue.

"There is an element of mystery and a certain fascination when dealing with the remains of a person who is unknown. You know that this person had a life and that life was blotted out. You work to fill in the blanks," he said.

Dr. William Silver reviews the findings from a dental autopsy. Dr. Silver, a retired orthodontist, is the deputy chief of forensic odontology for the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner Department in Miami.

As the deputy chief of forensic odontology for the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner Department, Dr. Silver is involved in one of the busiest and most prominent medical examination laboratories in the world. With a morgue that can hold up to 400 bodies, Miami's medical examiner team has 12 forensic pathologists and half a dozen forensic dentists.

Dr. Silver and his colleagues preserve the records of unidentified persons by taking photographs, X-rays and charting all teeth; in addition, they identify bodies by comparing the original antemortem records and the postmortem dental records whenever possible.

Furthermore, Dr. Silver serves with the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT), which is part of the National Disaster Medical Service (NDMS). He's been part of disaster recovery teams that identified remains after 9/11 in New York City and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Dr. Silver has been an AAO member for more than 50 years. His father, Dr. Edward I. Silver, also was a 50-year AAO member.

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Forensic Fascination

Dr. Silver's interest in forensic dentistry began over a dozen years ago when he had a thriving orthodontic practice in Miami. He took a forensic odontology class at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) and began volunteering at the medical examiner's office in his spare time.

When an investigator came to his orthodontic office seeking help to identify an accident victim, forensic dentistry became personal. Dr. Silver identified the person; it was his patient.

"For me, it brought a personal attachment, a connection to a real live person that I knew," he said.

When Dr. Silver retired from his practice in 1998, he began to forge an apprenticeship with Dr. Richard Souviron, the chief forensic odontologist at the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Office.

Dr. Silver plunged into forensic odontology. It wasn't long before he began speaking at various sheriff departments and medical examiner's offices, as well as teaching courses. He has even traveled to China to give a lecture to the Beijing Police Department about forensic dentistry.

Captivating Cases

Some of Dr. Silver's most interesting cases have involved photo identification and bite marks. With photo identification cases, the forensic odontologist attempts to identify remains by looking at the teeth in a photograph. Bite-mark cases are often criminal cases where an attacker or subject has received a bite, and the odontologist works to make a connection between the victim and the attacker, while also identifying the intensity of the bite.

He especially finds it gratifying to be able to provide identifications for court cases where the person accused was found guilty.

"It helps to bring about truth and some form of justice," he said.

Although he enjoys his work as a forensic odontologist, he points out that it is primarily a volunteer position. He sees it as an opportunity to help those who have no way to repay the favor.

"I see it as a mitzvah, a blessing ... when I work with the deceased. When you do a kindness for another person, they have the opportunity to thank you. But when you do something for the deceased, they have no way to thank you. You aren't doing it to get thanks."

"There is an element of mystery and a certain fascination when dealing with the remains of a person who is unknown. You know that this person had a life and that life was blotted out. You work to fill in the blanks."

- Dr. William Silver



Dr. William Silver has been involved with forensic odontology for more than 12 years. After retiring from his orthodontic practice in 1998, Dr. Silver forged an apprenticeship with Dr. Richard Souviron, the chief forensic odontologist at the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Office.

Double Diplomate

Surprisingly – or perhaps not – for someone who deals with death all the time, Dr. Silver has a witty sense of humor. He stays vibrant by playing tennis three times a week and spending time outdoors boating and fishing.

But even if he is officially retired, he keeps adding accomplishments to the already long list, which includes being named Dentist of the Year in 1997 by the Florida Dental Association.

In 2007, Dr. Silver added a second “diplomate” to his credentials when he became a diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Odontology. He already is a longtime diplomate of The American Board of Orthodontics (ABO), having become, in 1962, one of the youngest to pass the ABO exam. When he took the odontology boards at age 78, he was the oldest person ever to pass that exam.

Disaster Response

In August 2001, he joined DMORT. One month later, the terrorism attack on the World Trade Center took place.

“I went to New York to do dental identifications of the bodies. I was at the World Trade Center disaster for two weeks; that was all that they would let anyone be there, and that was enough for anyone,” he said.

Interestingly, Dr. Silver points out that one half of the first 1,000 identifications made at ground zero were dental identifications. Dental identification is the least expensive and fastest method, while DNA testing is much more expensive and time-consuming. He also explains that dentists are one of the most important parts of a medical examiner identification team.

When Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, DMORT called Dr. Silver to duty again to assist in Mississippi and Louisiana.

“It was quite a different experience for Hurricane Katrina. When I was working in New York, you could separate yourself from ground zero, but with Katrina, ground zero was everywhere. There was no way to escape. We were staying in tents or in hotels with no electricity and working in refrigerated trailers all day long.”

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Dr. William Silver charts results from a dental autopsy. Miami's medical examiner team has 12 forensic pathologists and a half dozen forensic dentists.

Sharing Knowledge

After a decade of working together, Dr. Silver and co-worker Dr. Souviron have collaborated to write the book *Dental Autopsy*. The book, to be published in June 2009, is a handbook for investigators, dental students, attorneys and medical examiners. It covers everything from crime scene intake to remains exhumation, plus teaches how to work with fresh, decomposed and skeletal remains.

“We used the material from all of our experiences at the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner’s Office and the mass disasters that we’ve participated in,” Dr. Silver said. “What we’re trying to do is create a book that will help medical examiners and dental students to learn what dental autopsy is and what the responsibilities are for the dentist.”

Since many medical examiners do not have access to a forensic odontologist, Dr. Silver explained, they often have to take on those responsibilities. The book is written for a broad audience, using less technical terms. It shares how to identify teeth, resect the jaw and keep proper records for investigations.

FORENSIC DENTISTRY RESOURCES

To find out more about getting involved with forensic dentistry, Dr. Silver offers these tips:

- ▶ Contact your medical examiner’s office and ask if anyone in the dental field is working with them. If so, Dr. Silver suggests connecting with that person.
- ▶ Take a couple of courses. Dr. Silver suggests the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (www.afip.org) or the University of Texas internship residency part-time program (www.utforensic.org/fellowship.asp).
- ▶ Get involved in local forensic meetings and groups.
- ▶ Check out the American Academy of Forensic Science (www.aafs.org), the American Society of Forensic Odontology (www.asfo.org) and the International Association for Identification (www.theiai.org).
- ▶ To help out with disasters, contact the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (www.dmort.org). According to Dr. Silver, DMORT has 10 districts in the country and participants don’t have to be experienced. DMORT work pays a daily rate, but you have to be ready to go when you are called.



Dr. William Silver also works with emergency response teams. Here, he is attending a training session of the Florida Emergency Mortuary Response System.

Forward Focus

As for his future, Dr. Silver has his priorities in order.

“I just had my eightieth birthday, so my plans are to keep having birthdays,” he said. “I want to keep doing what I am doing. I want to keep playing tennis, keep my good health and keep working with the medical examiner.”

He also plans on getting another boat, spending more time with his grandkids and starting work on the second edition of *Dental Autopsy* soon.

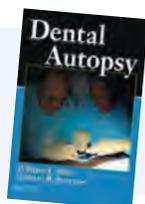
He’s proud of his family’s legacy in orthodontics.

“My father was among the early pioneer orthodontists in Boston who started practicing in the 1930s. I have his 50-year AAO pin right next to my 50-year AAO pin, so together we have 100 years in the AAO.”

Now Dr. Silver is using that half century of experience to help recreate a person’s life.

“As an orthodontist, you make lives better. With forensic odontology, you recreate a person’s life again, using the same basic dental skills. It’s very rewarding,” he said. “We can’t bring a person back to life, but we can bring a life back to a person. That’s what we’re doing every day.”

For more information on Dr. William Silver’s book, *Dental Autopsy*, go to www.amazon.com.



Your benefits as an AAO retired member

VALUE OF AAO MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES INTO YOUR RETIREMENT

As a retired member of the AAO, you continue to receive many of the same benefits and services as you did when you were an active member, plus you receive a few extra perks. First, your AAO membership is provided at no charge to you, in honor of your years of service to the specialty. In addition, you enjoy free registration for the AAO Annual Session, where your presence is welcomed.

You also continue to receive:

- ▶ 24-hour access to the AAO member Web site, www.AAOMembers.org, which is complete with information and resources for members;
- ▶ regular publications, both print and electronic, that deliver news about the specialty and orthodontists – *New Dimensions* is designed especially for you;
- ▶ a discounted subscription to the *American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics* (AJO-DO) for \$33 per year (contact Sherry Nappier, manager of membership services, at 800-424-2841, ext. 518, or snappier@aaortho.org);
- ▶ access to the AAO reference library through www.AAOMembers.org;
- ▶ a free membership directory upon request (contact the AAO Order Department at 800-424-2841); and
- ▶ other benefits, including AAO-endorsed credit cards through Bank of America, quotes on AAO-endorsed long-term care insurance, and access to AAO-approved Medjet Assist, a medical evacuation service for travelers. For more information on these endorsed and approved programs, visit the AAO member Web site, www.AAOMembers.org.

Through its programs and offerings, the AAO helps you stay connected to a network of thousands of active and retired orthodontists around the world.

Bringing health and hope to needy children in South and Central America

DR. JULIAN METTS JR.'S VIRTUAL HOSPITAL HAS SERVED NEARLY 5,000 CHILDREN SINCE 1999

“I always told the kids that came into my office to look for something where you can make a difference, and we’ll have a better place to live. I’d like to think that I made a difference. The Lord started this. I was only the messenger, and I was glad some people listened.”

– Dr. Julian Metts



When Dr. Julian Metts Jr., 75, starts talking about helping children, his soft Virginia accent is lifted with joy and enthusiasm. This recently retired orthodontist is truly a man on a mission.

He didn't go looking for the mission; the mission found him.

It all started with a trip to Guyana in 1991.

Dr. Metts, of Richmond, VA, along with five members of the South Richmond Rotary Club, traveled to Guyana in South America to scout out the possibilities of helping a small country in which they could make a difference.

The trip changed Dr. Metts' life.

"Mothers would show up with their sick children and ask if we would bring them back to the U.S. with us. These children had terrible health problems. Some needed open heart surgery, others brain surgery. These were children that would die if something wasn't done," he said.

Vision to Reality

Thoughts of the children were always on his mind. Dr. Metts and his Rotary group were able to bring some children to the U.S. for treatment, but they were only able to help a few children in a year. For Dr. Metts, it wasn't enough.

In 1999, he founded the International Hospital for Children (IHC). This "virtual hospital" provides medical and surgical treatment to needy children in six countries in South America and the Caribbean through a network of volunteers.

In addition to sending surgical teams to countries in need, the IHC also brings children to the U.S. for advanced surgeries, leasing hospital space from several hospitals throughout the Richmond area. Today, the IHC serves some 1,300 children through 24 medical missions each year.

To raise funds in the early years, he and a friend, pediatrician Dr. Frederick Rahal, visited friends and business acquaintances throughout Richmond.

"We'd go see several people a day. We didn't have a lot of pictures to show people. We just told them our plan. We asked them to join in and help support us to help

get the hospital off the ground. That's how we started, and we're still doing the same thing: meeting new people and telling them about how they can help the children," he said.

Dr. Metts and Dr. Rahal originally raised \$200,000, which was enough to hire an executive director and get started.

"We became a facilitator between the child, the doctor and the hospital, bringing them all together," he explained.

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Photo by Ariel Skelley and Todd Wright

A child in Guatemala is comforted by a nurse following surgery. Teams of U.S. medical professionals provide care to needy children through the International Hospital for Children.

Orthodontist by Day, Crusader at Lunch

All the while, Dr. Metts was still practicing orthodontics. He'd treat his patients during the day, spending his mornings and lunchtime on the phone for IHC.

"One of the things that kept me going was the excitement of being an orthodontist and working with children and teenagers. I loved the day-to-day thrill of seeing the first patient. I was always glad to be at the office, even if I was tired, and I was still somewhat sad to see that the day had ended," he said.

"I think we've got the best setup that could ever exist for reaching out to the Third World. The way it works is efficient, which allows us to help more kids."

— Dr. Julian Metts



Photo by Ariel Skelley and Todd Wright

In December 2008, Dr. Metts retired from his practice in Chester, VA. Dr. Metts sees his work with IHC as an extension of his work as an orthodontist.

"With the IHC, you're still looking after patients and caring for them. For me, it's the icing on the cake to have the Lord open up that door with the IHC," he said. "In fact, I don't think I would have had the opportunity to be involved with the IHC if I hadn't been an orthodontist and if I hadn't been in the South Richmond Rotary Club. Now I have been able to work with the people on our board and more than 150 volunteer doctors."

Changing Lives

Now, a decade later, Dr. Metts's vision for an international hospital has led to the treatment of nearly 5,000 critically ill children.

"I think we've got the best setup that could ever exist for reaching out to the Third World. The way it works is efficient, which allows us to help more kids," he said.

Dr. Metts tells story after story of lives saved. Reopening a young girl's scarred esophagus so she could eat again. Removing a brain tumor from a baby. Repairing a hole in a child's heart. Helping children to live.

"These mothers and fathers love their children as much as we love our children. These parents are no different than me or you. They want an education for their child, and they want them to be healthy. But they're distressed because they have children that have a seemingly incurable problem, and they're not able to do anything for them. That's the answer that we have with IHC: helping these children with critical surgical needs," he said.

These days, Dr. Metts is involved in fundraising for the charity. He explained that the IHC has seen a sudden drop in donations in the beginning of 2009. It's the first time in the organization's history.

"Our revenue went down about 80 percent in the last two months, so I'm beating the bushes, turning up rocks and making phone calls. We have to get it done because we don't want to have to cut back on our services to children. It's jolted us a bit, but I'm sure we're going to do all right. I know we will."

Looking Ahead

Regardless of current circumstances, when Dr. Metts looks to the future, he dreams big.

"I would like to see the IHC with connections in all of the Third World countries, in places that don't have the facilities, medicine and surgical care. I might not live to see it, but that's my desire – that all children who have critical surgical needs will have that opportunity," he said.

Although Dr. Metts has propelled this vision into reality, he takes no credit. He simply wanted to make the world a better place.

"I always told the kids that came into my office to look for something where you can make a difference, and we'll have a better place to live. I'd like to think that I made a difference. The Lord started this. I was only the messenger, and I was glad some people listened," he said.

For more information on the International Hospital for Children, go to www.healachild.org or call 804-282-8830.

International Hospital for Children

Reaches Out to Critically Ill Children



Photos by Ariel Skelley and Todd Wright

(Top) A team of doctors from the International Hospital for Children performs heart surgery during a mission to the Dominican Republic.

(Left) A nurse carries a child who has just had surgery.

WHAT

The International Hospital for Children (IHC) is a non-profit humanitarian organization based in Richmond, VA.

HOW

IHC links worldwide pediatric surgical, diagnostic and preventive resources to heal critically ill children in developing countries. IHC also helps build indigenous health care capacity – saving children’s lives now and transforming pediatric health outcomes for years to come.

VISION

Every child, regardless of geography, will have access to lifesaving critical care.

FOUNDED

1999

LOCATIONS

Guyana, Belize, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Honduras

ANNUAL SURGERIES

562 heart surgeries and evaluations, 139 orthopedic surgeries and evaluations, 59 neurosurgeries and evaluations, 93 ophthalmology surgeries and evaluations, 300 plastic reconstructive surgeries and evaluations, 88 urology surgeries and evaluations, 48 general surgeries and evaluations

AVERAGE SURGERY COST

\$1,250

TOTAL CHILDREN TREATED

4,788

American Association of
Orthodontists



The AAO and the eight constituent organizations make it easy for you to reconnect with old friends and colleagues. The organizations offer great destinations, excellent programming and exciting social events through their annual conferences. Even better, you can register for the AAO Annual Session at no charge before the early registration deadline.

**American Association
of Orthodontists
110th AAO Annual Session**

April 30 - May 4, 2010
Washington Convention Center
Washington, DC

INFORMATION: www.AAOMembers.org

**Pacific Coast Society
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Session**

October 22 - 25, 2009
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, Arizona

INFORMATION: www.pcsortho.org

**Northeastern Society
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Session**

November 12 - 15, 2009
New York Hilton
New York, New York

INFORMATION: www.neso.org -
Registration opens June 1.

**Southern Association
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Meeting**

September 23 - 27, 2009
The Homestead
Hot Springs, Virginia

INFORMATION: www.saortho.org

**Great Lakes Association
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Session**

October 29 - November 1, 2009
Sheraton Centre Toronto
Toronto, Ontario

INFORMATION: www.glao.org

**American Association
of Orthodontists
111th AAO Annual Session**

May 13 - 17, 2011
McCormick Place
Chicago, Illinois

INFORMATION: www.AAOMembers.org

**Rocky Mountain Society
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Meeting**

October 8 - 11, 2009
Eldorado Hotel and Spa
Santa Fe, New Mexico

INFORMATION: www.rmso.org

**Middle Atlantic Society
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Session**

November 3 - 6, 2009
Borgata Hotel
Atlantic City, New Jersey

INFORMATION: www.maso.org

**Midwestern Society
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Meeting**

October 15 - 17, 2009
University of Minnesota
Radisson University Hotel
Minneapolis, Minnesota

INFORMATION:

Contact Kristi Burmeister,
MSO Executive Director,
at 636-922-5551 or
msortho@charter.net or
visit www.msortho.org.

**Southwestern Society
of Orthodontists
2009 Annual Session**

November 5 - 8, 2009
J.W. Marriott Cancun
Cancun, Mexico

INFORMATION: Contact the SWSO
office at 812-923-2700 or visit
www.swso.org.
