



# The Composite

Electronic Edition

Volume IV

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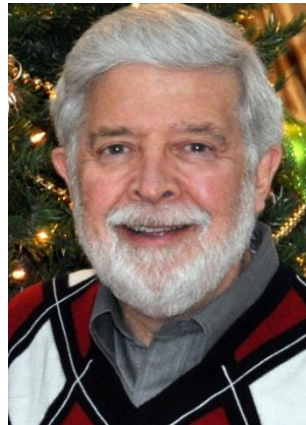
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## Meet the President Elect

### Douglas Beckham, D.M.D., FAGD, FACD



Dr. Douglas Beckham is proud to be a second-generation dentist. His father, a graduate of Emory University School of Dentistry, practiced dentistry in Atlanta until 1961 when he moved his practice to West Point, Mississippi to be closer to family.

Dr. Beckham graduated from Mississippi State University in 1971 with a B.S. degree, majoring in chemistry. At the University Of Alabama School Of Dentistry in Birmingham, he earned the Doctor of Dental Medicine degree in 1976.

Dr. Beckham is committed to learning all he can about the ever-changing field of dentistry, attending more than 50 hours of continuing education every year via local study clubs, and state and national dental organizations.

He is a member of the Birmingham District Dental Society, the Alabama Dental Association, the American Dental Association, and the Academy of General Dentistry. In 2003, Dr. Beckham was awarded Fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry for earning over 500 hours of recent continuing education and excelling on a

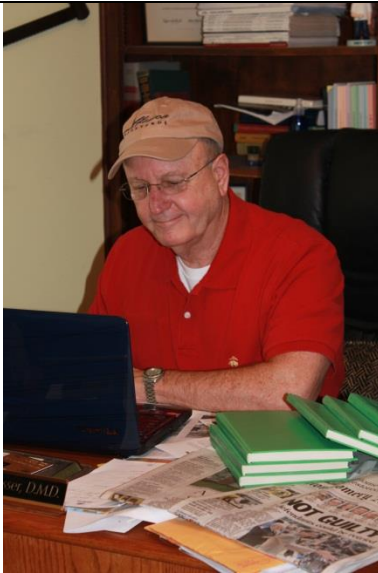
written exam. In 2014, he was made a Fellow in the American College of Dentists. Dr. Beckham has served on the Board of Directors for the Alabama Academy of General Dentistry as an officer since 2007. He also serves on the Executive Councils for the Birmingham District Dental Society and the University Of Alabama School Of Dentistry Alumni Association.

Dr. Beckham has a passion for helping people through dentistry and still looks forward to seeing his patients and the challenges that they present. He enjoys all aspects of general dentistry, such as root canal therapy, extractions, crown and bridge, and implant restoration. He strives to be on the cutting edge in order to offer his patients the highest quality of dental care. He volunteers his services to underprivileged children by working at different dental clinics for children and at the University Of Alabama School Of Dentistry each year, working with the "Give Kids A Smile Program." He also serves on the BDDS Catastrophe Team, filling in for other dentists during times of crisis.

Dr. Beckham has been happily married for 25 years to his wife, Lisa. They have two children and three grandchildren. They devote their time to their family, their respective professions, their church, and outdoor activities of fishing, deer and dove hunting, water sports, and photography.



Doug and wife Lisa and niece Haley



## Editor's Notes

William Chesser DMD, MAGD

### **A 2014 TRIBUTE TO OUR MILITARY SERVICE MEN AND SERVICE WOMEN**

As 2014 draws to a close, your Editor would like to pay tribute to all those who serve or have served in all branches of the United States Military.

Recently our family viewed the movie "Unbroken", which tells the true story of a World War II soldier, Louis Zamperini, who suffered horrific torture in a Japanese Prisoner-of-War Camp.

I had read the book on which the movie is based, written by Laura Hillenbrand, and the book is much better than the movie!

Much of the book involves Zamperini's life *after* the war, and delves into his amazing redemption after a life spent spinning out of control, due to post-traumatic stress disorder. I highly recommend your reading this nonfiction novel.

The survivors of WW II were truly heroes. Journalist Tom Brokaw calls them "The Greatest Generation". This undermines the many generations, both before and after this historic period, who have served our country with honor and valor.

Fairly recently in our history, over 625,000 died in the Civil War. World War I resulted in a loss of 116,516 souls; World War II, 405,399; the Korean War, 36,516; Vietnam, 58,209. Today, as we wage the War on Terror, almost 7,000 have already given their lives.

Of course, these numbers do not include the untold thousands whose lives have been forever changed by physical and mental trauma due to combat.

Each one of us must be aware of the debt of gratitude which we owe to our Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, and Coast Guard service people. In addition, we owe the same debt to our allies all over the world.

Captain Louis Zamperini represents only one story among millions through the ages of American conflicts. Matthew 24:6 states, "There will be wars and rumors of wars." Always remember the sacrifices which our military troops make to insure our freedom, and never fail to thank them for their service.



## *President's Message*

David Skees DMD, MAGD

Here we are at the beginning of another year which mostly brings new beginnings and the setting of goals but sometimes, endings. This may be my "Swan Song" as far as writing an article for "The Composite" is concerned. 2014, in general, has been a "challenging" year for most of us in the dental profession. Challenges usually stimulate and I believe (and hope) that this has been true for 2014. I hope

that this brief article will help stimulate some thinking that will give rise to solutions that will allow dentists to have the freedom to make choices that are good professionally and, as a result, good for those that we treat. From my point of view, it seems that "forces" are pushing our profession in a direction contrary to its history. What are some of these "forces"? Some immediately come to mind— high student debt, the high cost of starting a practice, limitations imposed by PPO's and other "alphabet soup" entities, inability to obtain financing is often a problem', the high cost of technology that exceeds the ability of the solo practitioner to pay for it, and the list goes on. If you, the reader, can add to this list, please do! Problems cannot be solved that are not properly identified and I am sure that the younger ones among us have encountered these problems and more. I left out "access to care" which, when you really look at it (and I hate to say it), means free!

Where does the Academy of General Dentistry fit into all of this? The AGD was founded in 1952 primarily as a continuing education organization. The promotion of quality CE for the general dentist makes for a more proficient practitioner that is better able to serve the public. The AGD is still primarily an organization for the general dentist to promote quality CE but more and more Advocacy is also a major focus and this as a result of some of the "forces" listed above. I have never been an advocate of "group think" and the word "collective" repulses me for the most part but we, as general practitioners, need to come together (hopefully under the umbrella of the AGD) to arrive at solutions that will enable us-to maintain our freedom of choice as far as practice is concerned. In other words, we need to work together so we can practice as individuals and I think that most of us in our heart of hearts would rather practice that way. We pursued this profession as individuals and I think that, in general, we would like to practice that way. In a corporate/group setting, if a "performance review" consisted of the lowest producer "getting the axe", I would be the first one gone! We have enough pressures in that direction in our profession without the "practice model" adding to it! So, as AGD members, we need to put our heads (and hearts) together to arrive at new practice models that will solve some or all of these problems. More and more, I think that the AGO will be at the fore-front of solutions for the general practitioner.

I have mentioned this before, but the awards in the AGD have prestige and can be found in no other organization. These awards, the Fellowship and Mastership, show our commitment to lifelong learning and the importance of being a perennial student of our profession. As time goes by, this credentialing will increase in importance. There are programs in place that will allow an undergraduate dental student to make a large stride toward the FAGD and those entering a GPR can really make a "dent" in the FAGD requirements. The Fellowship requires the taking of an exam but this can be done before completing the required hours and the Study Course available through the AGD is 25 hours credit. Exams are not too bad if you know the answer to the first question! The most predictable and sure way of obtaining the Mastership Award is through a MasterTrack Program. Most of us who have been through a MasterTrack look back on it as one of the most rewarding experiences in our professional lives. Dr. Gordon Isbell is working with the School of Dentistry to get another MasterTrack program started. Please be on the lookout for more information concerning this. Our last award in the AGD is the Lifelong Service and\*Recognition Award. This award recognizes both continuing education above the Mastership (much of it participation) and service to the community and the profession of dentistry. We only have three LLSR holders in Alabama— Dr. Bill Adams of Albertville and Drs. Bill Ingram and Tim Brooks both of Huntsville. Congratulations, guys!

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On to other subjects! One of the great advantages about being a graduate of the UAB School of Dentistry is Alumni Weekend. Alumni Weekend is always a hoot!! Time to meet friends and classmates, great CE (this year is no different— great lineup of speakers!), and the Talent Show put on by the dental students. Last year was a great show— a lot of laughs and SOME REALLY talented students! I encourage all to attend this event and become as active as possible in the Alumni Association. Many of our AGD Presidents have also been Alumni Association Presidents. I would like to thank Dr. Toni Neumeier for allowing Dr. Bobby Babb and I to speak briefly to the Freshmen (now known as D1 students) class at UAB School of Dentistry to promote the AGD. Dr. Neumeier is an "award winning" recruiter for the AGD and seems to have tireless energy! What a great class— energetic, attentive, polite and eager to learn! We need to help them all we can by making sure our profession is still a viable opportunity and freedom to practice remains. Never stand between a dental student and free food!

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I do not know how many of you have seen this but ProAssurance has made loss prevention CE available online. This first one is Dental Infections: Risk Resource Strategies for Control and Prevention. I am in the process of taking this and it is very well done. It is of course done from the legal aspect as to what was done wrong and what was done right. I have found this presentation to be of great benefit legally and clinically. If you are a ProAssurance dentist this is a free offering. ProAssurance has been a faithful corporate sponsor of the Alabama AGD for a long time. Thank you for this cost saving service ProAssurance!

FINALLY, I would like to remind all of you to carefully read any correspondence from the Alabama State Board of Dental Examiners. It is easy to overlook "administrative details" that are very important. After all, the AGD is here to help! Several of our AGD Board Members are also Alabama Board of Dental Examiners members.

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It is the beginning of a new year and that is a great time to evaluate where one is in life both in and out of the dental profession. Reaching goals in the practice of dentistry is harder than ever for most of us. Do not become obsessed with practice goals and fail in what is REALLY important. It seems that the most important things in one's life are seldom urgent and that which is urgent is seldom important. If we are not careful, the "tyranny of the urgent" can rob us of a lot of the joy of living! God's best to you all and I will see you at Alumni Weekend and at Sandestin August 6-8!

David L. Skees DMD, MAGD



President David Skees with Scott Herndon who has done CPR recertification for many years.

President David Skees receiving the 2014 CE Award of Excellence from AGD President Dr. Linda Edgar



# ALAGD 2014 in Review

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ALAGD has had a banner year. Dr. David Skees is to be congratulated for an outstanding year as our 2014 President. He orchestrated an exemplary Annual Review of Dentistry in August with a fine lineup of instructors in continuing dental education, as well as many enjoyable social events for all our families.

David accomplished this while dealing with serious health issues. Our prayers go out to him and his family as he continues to strive for good health.

Our Executive Director, Dr. Howard Gamble, is also dealing with health problems, and we all continue to offer prayers for him and his family.

The annual AGD meeting in Detroit saw ALAGD awarded two Constituent Awards—the CE Award and the ACE (Academy Constituent Editor's) Award. Kudos to Dr. Toni Neumeir for her monumental efforts at dental student recruiting.

We were also excited to have some “new blood” working with us at the August Annual Review. Several 2014 graduates joined us to help achieve a successful event.

In February, 2015, Dr. Douglas Beckham will be installed as the 2015 President of ALAGD. Doug has already planned a wonderful C.E. program for our August 6-8 Review. Highlighting the meeting will be the popular Madow Brothers' presentation. Enter these dates in your planners now!

The 2015 Annual Session will be held in San Francisco June 18-21. Here is your chance to visit a beautiful city, hear some challenging C.E., and share the West Coast with your family and staff members. This will be a great year to become involved in AGD. We need your help!



Executive Director Dr. Howard Gamble presenting the 2014 Alabama AGD Dentist of the Year to Dr. Gordon R. Isbell, III of Gadsden.



AGD President-Elect Dr. Carter Brown delivering his Presidential address to the 2014 AGD meeting in Detroit.

ALAGD President-Elect recognizes Dr. Tony Neumeier for outstanding effort in member recruitment





Dr. William Chesser, Editor of the Alabama Composite receives yet another ACE Award for outstanding work as ALAGD Editor



Nrew AGD President Dr. Carter Brown being recognized by his home Region 19 for being the “Big Cheese” for 2014-2015.



2014 ALAGD Delegation at the 2014 AGD Annual Meeting in Detroit.



Dr. David Skees receives his traditional Green Jacket which is presented to Past Presidents of the Alabama Academy of General Dentistry



AGD National Officers attending the 2014 ALAGD meeting in Sandestin. Left to right they are AGD President-Elect Dr. Mark Donald of Mississippi, Region 19 Direct Dr. Glen Miller of North Carolina, and AGD Region 19 Trustee Dr. Carol Wooden of Georgia.



AGD President Dr. Carter Brown in conversation with Dr. Michael Reddy, Dean of the Alabama School of Dentistry.



One of ALAGD's most talented members, Dr. Gary Myers with one of the many fantastic displays he creates each year for the annual meeting at Sandestin. Dr. Myers is also Treasurer of the ALAGD, Vice President of the Alabama Dental Association, and Vice President of the UAB School of Dentistry Alumni Association. Dr. Myers has served the national AGD in numerous capacities.

**THE ALAGD THANKS OUR  
2014 CORPORATE SPONSORS**

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**SILVER:**  
**Dental Team Performance  
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## Meetings planned for 2015



### **2015 Alumni Weekend**

Thursday, February 5, 2015 - Sunday, February 8, 2012

Wynfrey Hotel 1000 Riverchase Galleria, Birmingham, AL 35244

More information at [www.dental.uab.edu/alumni](http://www.dental.uab.edu/alumni)



### **ALDA's 146th Annual Session - June 9-14, 2015**

More information available at [www.aldaonline.org](http://www.aldaonline.org)

### **42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Review of Dentistry**

*August 6-8, 2015 at the Grand Hotel, Sandestin Resort*



Featuring the usual host of great speakers featuring the Madow Brothers

More information available at

[www.alagd.org](http://www.alagd.org)