

DISTRICT 6 NEWS

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A surprise birthday party . . .

In the fall of 2010, nine past members of the Alliance of the Wisconsin Dental Association gather for a surprise birthday party brunch. In reality, no reason is needed, except friendship. These are lifelong friends who love and miss each other. They are eager to reconnect after several years of separation. Others, who regrettably are unable to attend, feel such a connection to the group that they ask to be remembered through personal messages to one another.

The women celebrating are 40 plus to 90 years of age. Two are widowed, two have spouses who are disabled and can no longer practice dentistry, two have retired spouses, and three have spouses still active in dentistry. None live in the same city and some are more than 100 miles apart.

The thread that binds . . . the Alliance!

For the majority of the five hour luncheon, the conversation is no different than when any close friends reconnect . . . catching up on family, health issues, and milestones in each life. Then, the true thread that binds is discussed. There is a sense of thankfulness between each of them for the organization that brought them all together. Without Alliance involvement, none of them would have met and several became best friends because of it. Each shares their own testimonial.

Several speak emotionally about how an Alliance friend had helped when their dentist spouse was ill or injured by organizing dentists to volunteer office time to cover emergencies or finish treatments or by advising what to do with dental equipment when the office could no longer remain open. All agree that it was through active involvement that personal growth had taken place and leadership skills were developed. Some, in part, credit those skills for professional advancement. Each knows they have a friend in dentistry, one who they can trust for advice and support.

Each one speaks with pride about the service the Alliance has given to the dental community. In Wisconsin, a few programs that started as Alliance projects continue to be sponsored by the dental association. All agree, while giving to dentistry and the public, each has benefited immeasurably and unpredictably through involvement in the Alliance. For this, they are grateful.

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Standing L-R: Kasey Bruch-Nenn, Carol Scheder, Ginger Stanek, Debbie Schrank, Jane Maher, Shirley Waite

Seated L-R: Elaine Ormond, Past AADA President; Patsy Watson; Judy Swanson