Looking back on AAE17

Annual session in New Orleans gives endodontists plenty to celebrate

By C. John Munce, DDS, FICD

The 2017 annual session of the American Association of Endodontists — AAE17 — offered the perfect opportunity for attendees to partake in educational offerings, to learn about the latest technological advances and to have some fun. The lecture halls offered a wide range of possibilities, and there were lots of products and new technology available from exhibiting companies.

The meeting, held April 26 to 29 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, gave endodontists a chance to talk shop, to make new friends and reconnect with school colleagues, and to recharge batteries.

During the President’s Breakfast, AAE President Dr. Linda G. Levin summed it up well when she reminded her fellow specialists of their important work by saying, “Saving teeth is what we do — and we do it well.”

In what will certainly be considered a highlight of AAE17, two live endodontic microsurgeries — one mandibular, one maxillary — were performed by Dr. Syngcuk Kim as hundreds of attendees watched in 3-D.

The General Session featured local residents James Carville and Mary Matalin, who regaled attendees in a no-holds-barred back and forth on today’s charged political climate.

The story of Munce Discovery Burs

By C. John Munce, DDS, FICD

From the time I completed my residency in 1988, and even into the early 2000s, no long/stiff/narrow-shafted troughing bur existed. To meet this ongoing need for a troughing bur, in 2003 I began modifying the shafts of existing latch-type, slow-speed round carbide burs by necking them down at chairside as needed for a specific clinical case (Figs. 1, 2).

At the pre-session meeting of the 2005 AAE Annual Session in Dallas, I demonstrated in clinical videos how these unique long/stiff/narrow-shafted round troughing burs were made at chairside using both high- and slow-speed handpieces operating simultaneously to “hand-mill” the shaft to a 1 mm diameter, and I suggested that colleagues should do the same.

To ensure interested colleagues would be able to see and test these fledgling troughing burs, and then make the burs themselves as demonstrated, I had 1,000 of them manufactured and handed to attendees as they exited the hall.

I already had a small clinical products company, CJM Engineering, and so in early 2006, after trying to literally “give” the troughing bur idea to several bur manufacturing companies without success — in one instance, the new-products committee of a large dental bur company concluded there was simply no market for such a bur — I decided to begin manufacturing and distributing these burs myself through CJM Engineering (Fig. 3), still the manufacturer and exclusive worldwide distributor of Munce Discovery Burs today.

Here’s a timeline of the introduction of significant features of the Munce Discovery Bur line since its inception. Each of the modifications was born of my own interest in solving a clinical dilemma.

The story of Munce Discovery Burs continues on page D2.
enence in applying these burs in diverse clinical circumstances combined with the freely offered suggestions and requests for modifications from colleagues around the globe.

2006
• A friend in the dental instrument manufacturing business, Lonnie Graybill of Integra-Miltex, suggested the name, Munce Discovery Burs, and it stuck.
• The Munce Discovery Bur line started with 34-mm-long burs only, and in only four head sizes: #1/2, #1, #2 and #4 (Fig. 3).
• At that time, we produced only the 3-mm-diameter shaft on all four head sizes.

2007
• We added the 29-mm-long Shallow Trougers to the line.
• To distinguish the two different lengths, we began referring to the burs as Munce Discovery Bur Deep and Shallow Trougers.
• We added our tiniest head size, #1/4 with a head diameter equal to a tip of a #90 K-file — and a 93-mm head size, to both Deep and Shallows.
• We added 3 mm “sounding” shafts to the Deep.
• We introduced the 31-mm-long #6 Endodontic Cariesectomy Bur.
• Although “trouging” as an endo-specific operation associated with ultrasonic tips was already developing its own vernacular within the endodontic community, the specific vernacular for troughing when using burs was different and was a feature of the Munce Discovery Bur.
• We added our tiniest head size, #1/4 with a head diameter equal to a tip of a #90 K-file — and a 93-mm head size, to both Deep and Shallows.
• We added 3 mm “sounding” shafts to the Deep.
• We introduced the 31-mm-long #6 Endodontic Cariesectomy Bur.
• Although “trouging” as an endo-specific operation associated with ultrasonic tips was already developing its own vernacular within the endodontic community, the specific vernacular for troughing when using burs was different and was a feature of the Munce Discovery Bur.

2010
• Four head sizes: #1/2, #1, #2 and #4 (Fig. 3).
• A cotton plier insertion ledge (Fig. 6).
• The trademark stiffness of the shaft and facilitates cement-line dissection around points and silver points while the 2.35-mm diameter of standard slow-speed burs. This problem is greatly reduced with the narrow shafts of Munce Discovery Burs (Fig. 4a, b).
• Target area — that place where the head of the bur is to perform its work, and the target area becomes much more visible because of the narrow/radial/narrower shaft as mentioned above.
• Shaft stiffness — a necessary feature of the positive control provided by these burs. Other long-shafted burs have shafts that are too narrow, sacrificing control and leading to “noodling” under troughing and other operations (Fig. 5).
• Noodling — not a feature of the Munce Discovery Burs. This undesirable feature was specifically designed out of the Munce Discovery Bur shafts (Fig. 5).
• Heatless and virtually non-breakable — important features that distinguish these burs from ultrasound tips.

2015
• A cotton plier insertion ledge (Fig. 6) was added at the transition from the 2.35-mm-diameter portion of the shaft to the 1-mm-diameter portion to facilitate ease of insertion of the bur into the spinning handpiece while protecting the color band from abrading under slippage of the cotton plier, which would otherwise occur.
• We modified the head geometry (Fig. 6) to prevent catching on the overture when planing dentin walls, reducing the risk of ledgeing and perforation.

2017
• We continue to resist the suggestion by some to downgrade this unique specialized bur from a carbide-tipped bur to a stainless-steel bur in order to reduce costs on the expectation of perhaps increasing sales volume. Our view is that this would be a shortsighted strategy that would lead to an inefficient instrument, subsequent standard clinical results and dissatisfied clinicians and patients.

From necessity, to idea, to sketch-on-a-napkin, then invention, technical drawing, prototyping, bench-testing, collegial input, tweaking, manufacturing, marketing and worldwide distribution, CJM Engineering has always listened to the needs of clinicians in our specialized discipline and endeavored to be the best that we can be in the multi-faceted process of not just being a pass-through for somebody else’s products but rather a company that delivers previously nonexistent, high-quality products invented by an endodontist for endodontists and endo-savy dentists worldwide.

Although it may seem to be a simple product at first glance, in reality, a truly complex instrument such as this doesn’t pass-through for somebody else’s products but rather a company that delivers previously nonexistent, high-quality products invented by an endodontist for endodontists and endo-savy dentists worldwide.

Although it may seem to be a simple product at first glance, in reality, a truly complex instrument such as this doesn’t pass-through for somebody else’s products but rather a company that delivers previously nonexistent, high-quality products invented by an endodontist for endodontists and endo-savy dentists worldwide.

Although it may seem to be a simple product at first glance, in reality, a truly complex instrument such as this doesn’t pass-through for somebody else’s products but rather a company that delivers previously nonexistent, high-quality products invented by an endodontist for endodontists and endo-savy dentists worldwide.