Oral cancer saga

Eva Grazel urges early detection with her moving story

By Robert Selleck, Managing Editor

Eva Grazel is an unusual late-stage oral cancer survivor: She can speak. Because of that, she feels obligated to tell dentists about their profession’s role in her delayed diagnosis and the heart-wrenching impact the illness had on her and her family.

With cases of HPV-related oral cancer on the rise in young people, Grazel’s message is timelier than ever. According to the Oral Cancer Foundation, oral cancer will be newly diagnosed in about 100 new individuals each day in the U.S. alone, and because so many of the diagnoses aren’t made until long after the cancer has spread, a person dies from oral cancer every hour of every day.

Grazel is tireless in her efforts to increase awareness. Her emotional story, which she shares with dental professionals across the globe, helps further her Oral cancer saga

26,000 expected in Anaheim

California Dental Association spring meeting is global event

Dental professionals from throughout the world will gather in Anaheim May 3–5 at the Anaheim Convention Center for “California Dental Association Presents: The Art and Science of Dentistry.” More than 26,000 attendees are expected, along with nearly 600 exhibiting companies showcasing the latest in dental technology, products and services.

The exhibit hall opens at 9:30 a.m. on all three days, closing at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday and Friday and 4:30 p.m. Saturday. The event features a deep and broad selection of educational sessions for all dentists, dental assistants, hygienists, office staff members, laboratory technicians and dental students.

The scientific sessions include lectures, workshops, corporate-sponsored forums, and express lectures (up-and-coming speakers who are new to CDA Presents).

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Washington, D.C., is the site of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry Scientific Session, May 2–5, at the Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center. The wide variety of educational sessions includes the opportunity to earn up to 21 certified C.E. credits. Photo/By Jake McGuire provided by Destination DC.

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Keeping the faith

By David I. Hoexter, DMD, FACD, FICD, Editor in Chief

Sometimes, you hear about the death of a famous person who was extraor-
dinarly giving, and the story needs to be told. That person is Gary Carter, and I am a New York Mets fan because of him. This is the same Gary Carter en-
shrined in baseball’s Hall of Fame, the same wonderful catcher voted MVP for his accomplishments on the baseball field, the same one who won a World Series championship and received a ring, and the same one who had so much enthusiasm while playing base-
ball that he was called the “kid.”

After his active playing days, Gary managed minor league baseball clubs. His teams almost always won their league championships. I wondered why the parent team, the Mets, never called him in to manage them because he’s teams always played with enthusi-
asm and heart.

Segueing to my opening thoughts, I am a New York Mets fan because of
derstanding of playing ball? Instead, this skinny professional baseball player. Now what
time. His ambition in life was to be a
did last summer

I found out later that unknown to us,
got married and is now a father
search. He finished No. 1 in his class at
to help and to not be able.

Jon’s mother took the idea and
test for the Mets’ clubhouse,
ner to give encouragement to this young
munication, always appreciative of the hope
ance in Jon’s life.

Among others in the clubhouse who
ten people to converse or visit with
forced onto his hospital bed for almost a year.
and encouragement that they were for-
and I never even received so
nted years ago my wife and I had friends

diagnosis of leukemia. Jon was 8 years old at the
tion in life was to be a
all runs and handed him a ball on which he
not met him, but took him to the dug-
look at the Mets dugout before the

Photo 4: Beth Rosner and Hoexter at Allen’s Run for breast cancer patients
in Southampton.

I know what you did last summer

Dental Tribune editor in chief Dr. David I. Hoexter pulls out a few captivating moments from last summer in the famed coastal playground, the Hamptons. Hoexter said, “The land of sunshine, beaches, socializing, high society and fashion saw dentists adding to its exciting flavor.”

Photo 1: Dr. Chester Redhead seen enjoying a cocktail party.
Photo 2: Dr. Larry Rosenthal, Alissa Kaufman and Hoexter at the polo matches in Bridgehampton.
Photo 3: Hoexter’s wife, June, Dr. Joel Kottick and Dr. and Mrs. Sean Massiah socializing in Southhampton.

Dental device giant takes form in Japan

Kuraray, Noritake merger reported

By Daniel Zimmermann, Group Editor, Dental Tribune International

A new dental device giant is taking form in Japan. According to business reports, Kuraray and Noritake are merging their dental operations. The transaction has been filed for clear-
ance by the Japan Fair Trade Commis-
sion and is expected to be finalized this
month, representatives of both compa-
nies said.

Kuraray’s dental business, which is owned by Kuraray Medical, a fully
owned subsidiary, is composed of bonding agents and fillings based on
polymer and organic synthetic technol-
yogy. Noritake Dental Supplies currently distributes dental ceramics in more
than 50 countries. Both companies are
reported to achieve combined sales of
approximately $104 million worldwide
and to hold a 40 percent share of their
respective market segments in Japan.

Under the agreement, both business-
es will be joined in a new holding com-
pany and effectively merged sometime
in April. It is also reported that Kuraray
will be taking a two-thirds majority
in the new company.

Kuraray Medical President Sadaaki Matsuyama said that with the merger
his company wants to strengthen its
share in domestic and overseas mar-
ks. Overall, the company aims to
boost sales to nearly $245 million in the
next seven to eight years, Matsuyama
said.

According to industry reports, do-
mestic medical and dental device sales
in Japan have declined in conjunction
with a lowering in demand for dental services. In particular, dental patients
are buying fewer higher-end products
and services, such as implants and ce-
ramics.

With annual sales of $20 billion, the Japanese market for medical and den-
tal equipment is the second largest in the world. The country imports only 20
percent of such equipment.

Photo/ Raymond Kasprzak, www.dreamstime.com

The Mets had a winner who taught how to give without worrying about material rewards.

Photo/ Raymond Kasprzak, www.dreamstime.com

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screening-awareness campaign, based at www.cixtepprevenire.org. It’s been 13 years since Grayzel’s diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma and the radical treatment that took a third of her tongue, her entire left sternocleidomastoid muscle, much of her saliva flow and nearly her life. But it’s her account of how the illness affected her relationship with her two young children that is perhaps the most transfixing. Today, she calls herself lucky, not just because she’s alive and cancer-free, but also because unlike so many late-stage survivors, she literally kept the tip of her tongue, physically enabling her to clearly and passionately articulate her message.

Grayzel spoke with Dental Tribune shortly before her appearance at the 2012 Yankee Dental Conference.

Aren’t oral cancer screenings already part of a routine dental checkup?

The American Dental Association’s guidelines say every checkup should include an oral cancer screening. But the guidelines do not say what an oral cancer screening entails, such as how many steps or how long it should take. As a result, some dentists might think they are doing oral cancer screenings, but they may be falling short. Did they pull out the tongue for lateral inspection? Did they feel the palate to see if it was soft and hard in the right places? Did they ask the patient to say “Aah” so they could look at the symmetry of the back of the throat? Did they check the lymph nodes under the chin? Did they feel the neck for enlarged lymph nodes? Did they flip the lips out to look inside the lips and cheeks? That is all a part of it. If patients don’t get that, they should personally demand it.

With just 3 percent of cancers in the U.S. occurring in the oral cavity and pharynx, why are enhanced awareness and comprehensive screenings by dental professionals so critical?

Oral cancer kills. It’s critical that dentists serve their patients right by providing the best care possible. After I was diagnosed, I wanted to know why the heck the dentists I had turned to didn’t know what was staring at them from my later-due tongue. You didn’t have to look way back. It was right there, a huge ulceration that was there for months.

Dentists are not mandated to have any continuing education in the early detection of oral cancer, which is dentistry’s deadliest disease. The state of New York is the only exception, requiring one-two-hour course to maintain licensure. It’s more than critical, it’s criminal for dentists not to do screenings properly and thoroughly, to do that they need current education keeping up-to-date in detecting the early signs. The tagline for the Six-Step-Screening campaign is, “If you’re not getting it, ask for it!” If enough patients demand it, dentists will have to change what they know about oral cancer to provide the best care for their patients.

Would mandated C.E. requirements in oral-cancer screening have made a difference in your case?

(Source: University of Granada)

Late-stage oral-cancer survivor and master storyteller Eva Grayzel speaks throughout the world, primarily to dental professionals, advocating for improved early detection of oral cancer. She also uses fables and tales from around the globe to teach, empower and energize. Photo/Provided by Eva Grayzel