Entering into fun

[Points of interest]

- And we’re off! The 154th annual Chicago Midwinter Meeting is officially under way, and there is fun and education to be had around every turn.

Open up the Chicago Midwinter app on your smartphone, and you will find more than 200 courses, hands-on workshops, lectures and live-patient demonstrations taking place during the next three days.

Take a walk near the general registration area and come away with souvenir Mardi Gras beads, being distributed in honor of this year’s theme, “A Midwinter Mardi Gras: Celebrating Innovation, Camaraderie and Diversity.” (Don’t worry: No flashing is required at this event!)

And later this afternoon, head to the opening session to be entertained by acclaimed former television late-night show host Jay Leno. You can find him in Ballroom W375E, with the session beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Scouts earn ‘Oral Health Action Hero’ patches with America’s ToothFairy

By America’s ToothFairy Staff

Scouts across the nation are now becoming “heroes” in their communities, thanks to America’s ToothFairy and DentaQuest. A donation from DentaQuest allowed 2,000 scouts to earn an “Oral Health Action Hero” patch at no cost for their participation in America’s ToothFairy’s Health Education and Resource Outreach (HERO) Program.

“We are focused on positive, lasting health changes at the community level,” said Steve Pollock, president and CEO of DentaQuest. “The HERO Scout Patch Program is an excellent way to teach children how to adopt preventive habits, develop an interest and awareness in oral health.

[Note to your patients]

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[Page 16]

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Attendees enter the exhibit hall during the 2018 Chicago Midwinter Meeting. (Photo/today file photo)
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and advocate for positive health changes in their neighborhoods. We are proud to incentivize participation in the program with the Scout patches and recognize the important work of these young community heroes.

This America’s ToothFairy program engages participants in addressing oral health issues unique to their geographical area by conducting research; teaching children, teens, parents and community leaders about the importance of oral health; and promoting positive oral health behaviors in their communities.

Through the program, scouts choose three oral-health related activities from a list of projects focused on changing perceptions, behaviors and the environment of children’s oral health. Once the activities are completed and a brief report submitted, scouts receive their “Oral Health Action Hero” patch. Examples of activities include:

- Holding a Smile Drive to collect oral care products for children in need.
- Providing a dental health presentation at a local health fair.
- Visiting a dental office to learn how dentists and dental hygienists help patients maintain good oral health.
- Presenting dental health education lessons to younger scouts.
- Conducting healthy food or water demonstrations.
- Planting a smile garden.

“Our HERO Program is designed to engage youth in projects that build important leadership skills and encourage healthy behaviors within the community, which aligns nicely with the goals of scout troops across the nation,” said Jill Malmgren, executive director of America’s ToothFairy.

“We are happy to call these scouts true Oral Health Action Heroes for protecting and saving the smiles of children in their communities.”

Since the program began, America’s ToothFairy has awarded more than 25,000 scout patches to scouts across the country. For more information, visit www.americastoothfairy.org/programs-resources/hero.