A bridge to excellence

It’s an exciting day here in Columbus. With more than 1,500 dental hygienists from across the United States gathered around the Greater Columbus Convention Center to check out the latest in cutting-edge education and the best new products in the industry, there is no better place to be if you are looking to enhance your skills in the hygiene profession.

Especially today, when the doors to the exhibit hall will open for the first time, allowing access to all the top exhibitors showcasing the most recent advancements in products and services in dental hygiene and oral health care.

Make sure you head over to the Ansell/Microflex booth (No. 219) to check out the company’s MICRO-TOUCH DENTAL GLOVE series. These examination gloves were developed specifically for the needs of dental professionals, according to Ansell, are certified for use in oral examinations for patient safety and peace of mind and are tested for biocompatibility and feature inner coatings to promote hand health.

Another can’t miss is Designs for Vision (booth No. 113), which is introducing an advanced photonics design that provides uniform light distribution with maximum intensity. The company’s patent-pending headlights, available in wired or wireless versions, optically focus the light from the LED to provide 45 percent more light with uniform distribution.

A look at downtown Columbus. Photo/khabbit, freeimages.com

Cultural-competency lessons from dueling ‘Lady Liberties’ and candy-preference data

New C.E. requirements for dental professionals prompt range of views on diversity

By Patricia Walsh, RDH
Editor in Chief, Hygiene Tribune

Our office has, in its staff room, what I like to call the “temptation table.” During the holidays, it is usually chock-a-block with sugar-laden treats. Some are gifts from grateful patients, some are from local specialists, and some are just a coworker’s leftover Halloween candy. There was a day this past season when a dental assistant brought in a bag of Sour Patch Kids. I stared at the bag thinking, “Who eats these?” I’ve never chomped on a Sour Patch Kid, but I’ve never met a piece of chocolate I didn’t like. The age difference between me and the assistant wasn’t that great, and we seemed to have similar non-confection food tastes. It wasn’t until I went on the internet that I realized how diverse and unexplainable the sweet choices across America have become.

The website www.CandyStore.com came up with a report by analyzing 10 years worth of sales data gathered from the site’s customers, applying a heavier weighting on data from the months leading up to Halloween.

* See LESSONS, page 2
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New MICRO-TOUCH DENTA-GLOVE series is designed just for dentistry

By Ansell Staff

Ansell, a global leader in protection solutions and maker of the popular Microflex® and MICRO-TOUCH® examination gloves, has launched its MICRO-TOUCH DENTA-GLOVE® series, a highly diversified portfolio of dental examination gloves, which, according to the company, outperforms the competition. MICRO-TOUCH DENTA-GLOVE is the first series of examination gloves developed specifically for the needs of dental professionals, according to Ansell.

Certified for use in oral exams

All products in the series are certified for use in oral examinations for patient safety and peace of mind and are designed with the most advanced film technologies to meet the unique demands of the dental profession, the company asserts.

The products are tested for biocompatibility and feature inner coatings to promote hand health.

For more details about MICRO-TOUCH DENTA-GLOVE examination gloves or to request a free sample, you can visit www.ansell.com/DentaGlove.

Here in Columbus

To learn more about the MICRO-TOUCH DENTA-GLOVE examination gloves and for free samples, stop by the Ansell/Microflex booth, No. 219.

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The CandyStore.com map is very surprising. Bubble gum is the No. 1 choice in Montana. Milky Way tops the list in Mississippi. (Is everyone trying to quit smoking in Montana? And doesn’t a Milky Way melt in that southern heat?) Perhaps preferences have to do with ad placement, marketing dollars or the proximity to a particular candy’s manufacturer?

Always the hygienist, I wanted to see if decay-rate data might correspond to a choice of “sticky sweet” vs. “chocolate” — but I figured there were too many variables for adequate scientific comparison. I’d like to believe that the Almond Joy candy bar came out on top in my part of the country because of the health benefits of almonds. We’re all somehow balancing the evil of sugar with a tiny bit of coconut fiber and some healthful nuts. Or maybe they just taste great.

Dental professionals in my state are now required to obtain C.E. credit in cultural competency. Even the smallest towns in America can have a broad range of ethnic differences and a divergence in dental attitudes. A New England town of 7,000 might have a large Tibetan population because of a single volunteer having started work in Katmandu some 30 years ago. Ditto for a cluster of Somali refugees in Minnesota. A while back, I was surprised while in Long Beach, Calif., to see street signs in Khmer, the official language of Cambodia.

Giving non-English speaking patients access to adequate, unbiased care is part of our national health-care heritage. Helping non-English-speaking patients to understand disease and treatment has become a legal requirement.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers free online courses that meet ADA/CERP cultural competency requirements. Find the courses at www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov. There is a dropdown menu under the “Education” tab where you can select “Oral Health Provider.” Three courses provide culturally and linguistically appropriate (CLAS) service guidelines for dental practices.

National CLAS standards are explained on the website via video enactments, statistics and personal stories. A pre-test is offered at the outset of each course to assist the health-care professional with personal growth assessment.

It took me about two and a half hours to complete all three courses, but keep in mind, I was at one point putting the whites into the dryer and starting up the darks in the washer. Online courses are such a great rainy-day activity, are they not? You can start and stop an HHS course at your own pace.

Upon completion of a quiz with a passing grade, the site will email you documentation of the continuing education credits you earned.

I first heard about the cultural competency requirement after a weekend in New York City. I live in a tiny town surrounded by pine trees — yet I somehow made it from one end of Times Square to the other happy and unscathed. Shouldn’t that count for something, I thought? (Perhaps not.)

Apparently we live in a world of predatory capitalism. Even the Statue of Liberty impersonators who pose for tourist photo ops were having a turf war. Fist fights among the “statues” have been reported. There were multiple Wonder Women wearing not much more than body paint. Bigger-than-life Disney characters seem to come at me from nowhere while I gazed down at my cell phone map.

Goofy darn near pushed me into a South American flute player. The colorful Ecuadorian just smiled — a universal sign for “it’s OK” that transcends linguistic barriers.
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Get your FREE SAMPLE at Ansell.com/DentaGlove

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