

## On The Road Again: Drain—Coos Bay

February 17-20, 2009

by Mary Daly, Program Manager, Tooth Taxi

### Summary

Welcome to our new Tooth Taxi employees **Geneva Alvord**, Certified Dental Assistant and **James Olcott**, assistant. You will hear more about Geneva and James as they will be featured in the DFO Spring newsletter. We are pleased to have them on board and look forward to their contributions which will help to make us more efficient and to further develop our program.



*Dr. Thomas Holt, assistant Tabitha Singleton and a happy Tooth Taxi patient.*

The new team kicked off the week at Drs. Howerton, Hopkins and Kennedy's office in Salem where **Dr. Gabriel Kennedy** held a CPR certification class for Tooth Taxi staff (everyone passed).

The Tooth Taxi set new records for number of students screened (116) and value of free dental services provided (\$32,038) last week at **Madison Elementary School** in Coos Bay. Our new records are attributable to the tremendous support we received from the Coos Bay school community and the volunteer dentists from the Southwestern Oregon Component Dental Society.

Volunteer dentists who worked on the Tooth Taxi at Coos Bay:

Dr. Thomas Holt, Dr. Steven Richardson, Dr. Gerald Brouhard, Dr. Roger Sims, Dr. Sam Scott, and Dr. Sixto Contreras. Dental assistants: Tabitha Singleton, Iva Pissillo, Anne Mills, and Joni Banry. One of our volunteer dentists summed up his visit nicely; he recognized that although the patient only had need for a couple of small fillings, that his work has long term benefits for that student in preventing additional tooth decay. The beauty of having a solid turnout of volunteer dentists helps to ensure that kids with lower levels of decay have the opportunity to receive treatment.

**Arlene Roblan**, principal of Madison Elementary, was very supportive of the Tooth Taxi visit. Madison also hosted the State's DHS Sealant program for 1st & 2nd graders on Friday and two days this week, so Madison Elementary was buzzing with dental services. From conversations that we had with Arlene, both she and her husband are well aware of tooth decay problems in the state of Oregon. Arlene's husband **Rep. Arnie Roblan** (D-Coos Bay), is an Oregon legislator. Arlene also shared with us that Madison Elementary has about 50 families that are categorized as homeless. The 'homeless' category is not the image we immediately think of: living on the streets or under a bridge. Homeless is classified as a temporary or inadequate living situation due to loss of housing: transitional or emergency shelters, hotels or motels, cars, camping, double-up with family or friends, temporary foster setting, to name a few.

In an effort to make a better connection with the schools and to give school faculty and staff an idea of our services, we've started an after-hours open house. Although our first week saw a low turnout we will continue to offer this weekly and see if it helps to educate and build bridges with the schools.

We were visited by *The World*, the Coos Bay daily newspaper. Click on the following link and scroll down to "Dental Drive-By."

<http://theworldlink.com/articles/2009/02/19/news>

Dental drive-by helps schoolkids <<http://theworldlink.com/articles/2009/02/19/news/doc499da-322b273a453647428.txt>>

### Coos Bay school stats

- 116 students screened
- 44 students treated in the van
- \$32,038 value of free dental services provided.

### Summary

Tooth Taxi, September 2008 - February 20, 2009

- 1331 students screened
- 306 students received oral hygiene education in the classroom
- 591 students treated in the van
- \$391,385 value of free dental services provided

### From the student gallery

"I've eaten rubber gloves before."

The lighted mirror donations we received from **SunStar** that we use in our screenings are always a hit with students and teachers. Last week a teacher came out to the van to see if he could get another lighted mirror for one of his students. A little boy in his class had his mirror stolen and he was crushed.

We had an afternoon kindergartner that came in the Tooth Taxi with quite a bit of apprehension. She had an apple in one hand, stickers in the other and then when Dr. Heringer went to take x-rays, he found hard candy in her mouth! She ended up being a cooperative patient and when finished asked "Can I have ice cream?"

Fringe benefits for the week - a beautiful drive on State Route 38 along the Umpqua River, three herds of elk in the elk viewing area, a full rainbow our last day in Coos Bay, and special thanks to principal Arlene Roblan and our volunteer dentists who provided lunches and dinners for Tooth Taxi staff.

Although we were scheduled for Roseburg this week, due to a low turn out of students we made the decision to cancel the Roseburg visit and go to Yoncalla where we had additional students ready and needing treatment from the prior week's visit at Drain/Yoncalla.

Next week on the road: Milton-Freewater, Freewater Elementary School

Click on link for Walla Walla WA newspaper article that came out today:

<http://www.union-bulletin.com/>

Tooth Taxi to roll into Milton-Freewater <[http://www.union-bulletin.com/articles/2009/02/24/local\\_news/090224local02toothtaxiformf.txt](http://www.union-bulletin.com/articles/2009/02/24/local_news/090224local02toothtaxiformf.txt)>

The Tooth Taxi article is preceded by an article addressing children's oral disease in the state of Washington. The newspaper will also visit us on-site next week.

Next week's recap: Yoncalla Elementary School