Recollections of seasons past and present

By David L. Hoexter, DMD, FACP, FICD, Editor in Chief

Reflections this time of year may evoke a simulacrum of dental meetings with innovations, such as the presentation of new techniques (revived and modernized from dental cosmos publications) or new again computerized mechanisms to treat patients.

Perhaps it may evoke the excitement of seeing our kid and colleagues once again, while laughing over past experiences. Usually, large gatherings of dentistry are destined to place in large, new convention centers. We may recall previous meetings held in large hotels, warmer and more personal, and reminiscent of some personal history.

Now, large dental meetings command large convention halls, acquiring more economic support. These convention centers have different size rooms that are adaptive to different crowds, computerized luxuries that entail all that we need to know without asking questions, and details of where and who will be presenting, and which group is actually meeting and at what time. Still, they are impersonal and all-consuming.

I inquire, while reading the myriad lists of organizations at our meetings, “Where did all of these initials come from?” Societies, study clubs and state organizations — state ones next to national, adjacent to international, with so many initials.

While the daylight disappears earlier, there is a slight coolness in the air, and the excitement of seeing friends grows once again. I think of hugging a classmate, a teacher, a lost colleague, and it brings a smile as a leaf starts to descend.

The article ‘Alphabet Soup’ I had written previously with enthusiastic reception, is being republished in this edition and perhaps will be published annually until the oscar rift dental meeting inundates our dental assemblies.

Alphabet soup

Proposed: Colorful communications

By David L. Hoexter, DMD, FACP, FICD, Editor in Chief

A dilemma. We now have so many dental groups that we have almost run out of letters from the alphabet. As group after group abbreviates its name, we are at a loss to tell one from another without a scorecard. Either we need a new alphabetical language or more exotic sounding dental organizations with as yet, unused letters.

History relates its alphabet beginnings to Mesopotamia, where early transcribers used grooved lines on a ball, or gourd-like container. These scratches of lines became the beginnings of written communication.

Flashing forward to mobile communications of today, where time pressures have abbreviated words, and we have a lingo all of our own. Abbreviating is a modern necessity.

To begin with, you cannot tweet — under twittering rules — over a certain number of characters. Also, texting so-called “textisms” you would like to share? Is there a way to do so?

To help ameliorate this confusion I am proposing a Hoexter’s Index, which would not be confused with the AO, aAP, or the American Association of Orthodontics. Unfortunately, unless we have a color chart, we will be just as confused, but it will be much more colorful.

This is only a suggestion, and any thoughts or other solutions would be received and considered for publication as well. There is an obvious problem. Let us communicate and help correct it.

To conclude, Rodney Dangerfield, the famous comedian, once described his son eating alphabet soup that his wife, a horrid cook, had made. The boy separated letters to spell “HELP”!! Let’s help our profession abbreviate with colorful understanding. OIC.