Nearly 4,000 dental professionals gathered at the Gaylord Palms in Orlando (Florida, USA) for the 2009 Annual Session of the American Association of Endodontists (AAE). The meeting, held from 29 April to 2 May, offered specialists and general practitioners an opportunity to learn about the newest products and techniques. From the opening session, when a military drill instructor motivated attendees to get on their feet and reach for new heights, to the closing celebration, featuring a rousing performance by the Beach Boys, attendees seized the occasion to get revitalised!

Dr Louis E. Rossman, President of the AAE, officially opened the meeting on Thursday morning with a vigorous and heartfelt speech that was fitting for this year’s theme—Engage, Energize, Educate. Dr Rossman’s message to endodontists was clear: it’s all about confidence. “Not everyone in dentistry recognises the advances in our specialty, and many teeth that could be saved are simply being yanked,” Dr Rossman said. “It is our duty to get out and deliver a message of confidence.”

Furthermore, he said it is the responsibility of endodontists to emphasise the benefits of saving natural teeth and to trumpet the advances in the specialty that continue to make root canal therapy ever more beneficial to the patient. At the same time, he said, endodontists should immerse themselves in knowledge of implants, so that when a decision has to be made between root canal therapy and an implant, the endodontist can offer an opinion based on credible knowledge. Ultimately, he said, it is all about what is best for the patient.

After the opening session, attendees crowded into the exhibit hall featuring products from scores of exhibitors. Many companies launched new products. Discus Dental Smart Endodontics introduced its LightSpeedCRX and LightSpeedMRX instruments, which are designed to clean and shape the coronal third and middle third of the canal. These new files complement the LightSpeedLSX files, which are used for the apical third. Discus also unveiled its new HotTip cordless warm vertical compaction device, which is used with the HotShot for obturation of the canal.

Many attendees visited the SybronEndo booth to investigate the company’s Twisted Files, which are now available in new sizes. There was also a great deal of interest in the RealSeal 1 bonded obturation system available from Sybron.
Of course, before the canal can be cleaned, shaped and filled, the practitioner needs to see what he or she is up against. Companies offering magnification equipment showcased the latest in microscopes and loupes. Seiler Precision Microscopes offered demonstrations of a prototype for a brand new scope model with many new features and benefits.

A new anaesthetic delivery device—the Anesto—was unveiled by Innovadontics, a distributor of W&H products. Designed to be quick and easy, the Anesto delivers anaesthetic first to the soft tissue and then to the hard tissue. The developer of Anesto Dr Hamid Abedi was on hand to offer demonstrations.

There were also many educational offerings at this year’s AAE meeting. For the first time, the AAE presented a Master Clinician Series, featuring live non-surgical endodontic techniques in a theatre-in-the-round setting. Series presenters included Dr James K. Bahcall, Dr L. Stephen Buchanan, Dr Giuseppe Cantatore, Dr Richard E. Mounce, Dr Ali A. Nasshe, Dr Clifford J. Ruddle and Dr G. John Schoeffel. In all, more than 100 educational sessions and more than 197 hours of continuing education credits were offered. An all-day pre-session symposium Integration of advanced surgical procedures in your endodontic practice was held on Wednesday.

At a luncheon on Saturday, Dr Rossman passed the reins of leadership over to incoming AAE President Dr Gerald N. ‘Jerry’ Glickman. Before officially taking office, Dr Glickman told Dental Tribune that he is looking forward to working with the AAE board and its members over the coming year for the future of the specialty. “It is our goal as endodontists to work with general dentists, other specialists, our dental schools and the public to continually address the need to preserve the natural dentition as long as possible,” Dr Glickman said. “Ultimately it is about saving the natural tooth.”

The Celebrate Orlando! event on Saturday evening concluded the meeting with a performance by the Beach Boys at the Hard Rock Live at Universal Studios.

The 2010 AAE Annual Session will be held in San Diego from 14 to 17 April.