

Changes

With this issue of *Quintessence International* the baton of editorial leadership is transferred. To assume the position of editor-in-chief from my friend Richard Simonsen is simultaneously daunting and stimulating.

For the past 13 years Dr Simonsen has ably guided QI into its well-deserved position of international esteem. Mr H. W. Haase, publisher, is legendary for his pursuit of comprehensive excellence in dental publishing. His journals and books all reflect that commitment, and I am very pleased to become a part of his publishing activities.

The evaluation of dental literature has been a major part of my professional life. Both as a private general practitioner and as a dental editor, I have had the chance to watch dentistry emerge over the past 30 years into what is arguably the world's best health profession. It has achieved that distinction because its members around the world have worked tirelessly to make it so.

As nations develop, the importance of oral health becomes increasingly evident. Individuals who do not enjoy basic oral health are diminished as productive citizens because the morbidity of oral disease can be debilitating physically, emotionally, and financially. In all nations healthy people are more able to contribute to personal, family, and national responsibilities. Dentistry, then, is a profession of noble calling, and it grows as a profession by constant lifelong learning on the part of its members. The world's dental literature is the primary way we continue to learn. With that responsibility in mind, all of us who toil in the arena of information transfer are committed to the presentation of timely and accurate materials for the profession's consideration.

In that sense, there will be no dramatic immediate changes in QI. My style is one of evolution, not revolu-

tion. With such a strong and prestigious base to build upon, this seems an eminently sensible approach.

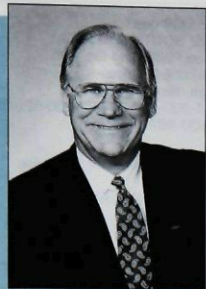
That said, however, rest assured there will be change. To paraphrase former US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, "the country needs . . . bold persistent experimentation. . . . take a method and try it. If it fails . . . try another." In this age of explosive information growth where the half-life of new knowledge is less than a decade, new ways to transfer knowledge are required all around the world. Consequently we will focus part of our future editorial thrust toward personal strategies for lifetime professional development.

Some of my favorite adjectives for lifelong learning are (1) patient-centered, (2) comprehensive, (3) sequential, (4) curriculum-based, (5) predictable, and (6) sensible. We will strive to create a relevant thread of continuity through our articles, to the extent that over time they merge to form a document that fulfills the adjectives above. In this manner, readers will be able to find some respite from the avalanche of new and often contradictory information that arrives at our desks monthly.

We hope to elicit an increased number of interpretive, clinical, review-type articles to tie the research views together into a clinically relevant package of information. This in turn will create the curriculum-based sequential, comprehensive databases upon which we can base our critical thinking and clinical decisions. The end result is better, more predictable patient care, which is good for all concerned.

Bill Wathen, DMD

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Editor-in-Chief



William F. Wathen, DMD, is the Vice President of the Center for Professional Development at Baylor College of Dentistry, a member of The Texas A&M University System. He is

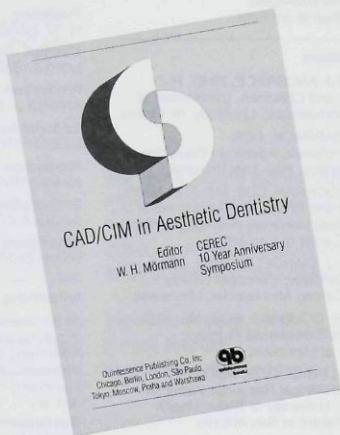
also an Associate Professor in the Department of General Dentistry at Baylor.

Prior to joining at Baylor College, where he also served as Associate Dean for External Affairs, Dr Wathen maintained a private practice in general dentistry for 23 years after serving an internship in the Air Force. He graduated from the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry in 1967. His career in dentistry also includes 20 years as a dental editor for several publications, such as the *Journal of the American Dental Association*, *Texas Dental Journal*, and *Dental Study Club: Journal of Continuing Dental Education*.

Dr Wathen has received several awards including the President's Award, Texas Dental Association; the Texas Dentist of the Year Award, Texas Section of the Academy of General Dentistry; and the Distinguished Service Award, Fort Worth District Dental Society. He was also elected into the Fort Worth Dental Society Hall of Fame. Dr Wathen has special interests in clinical research in periodontics, occlusion, and restorative dentistry and in self-directed adult learning and curriculum development.

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