

NEWS FOR THE GENERAL DENTIST

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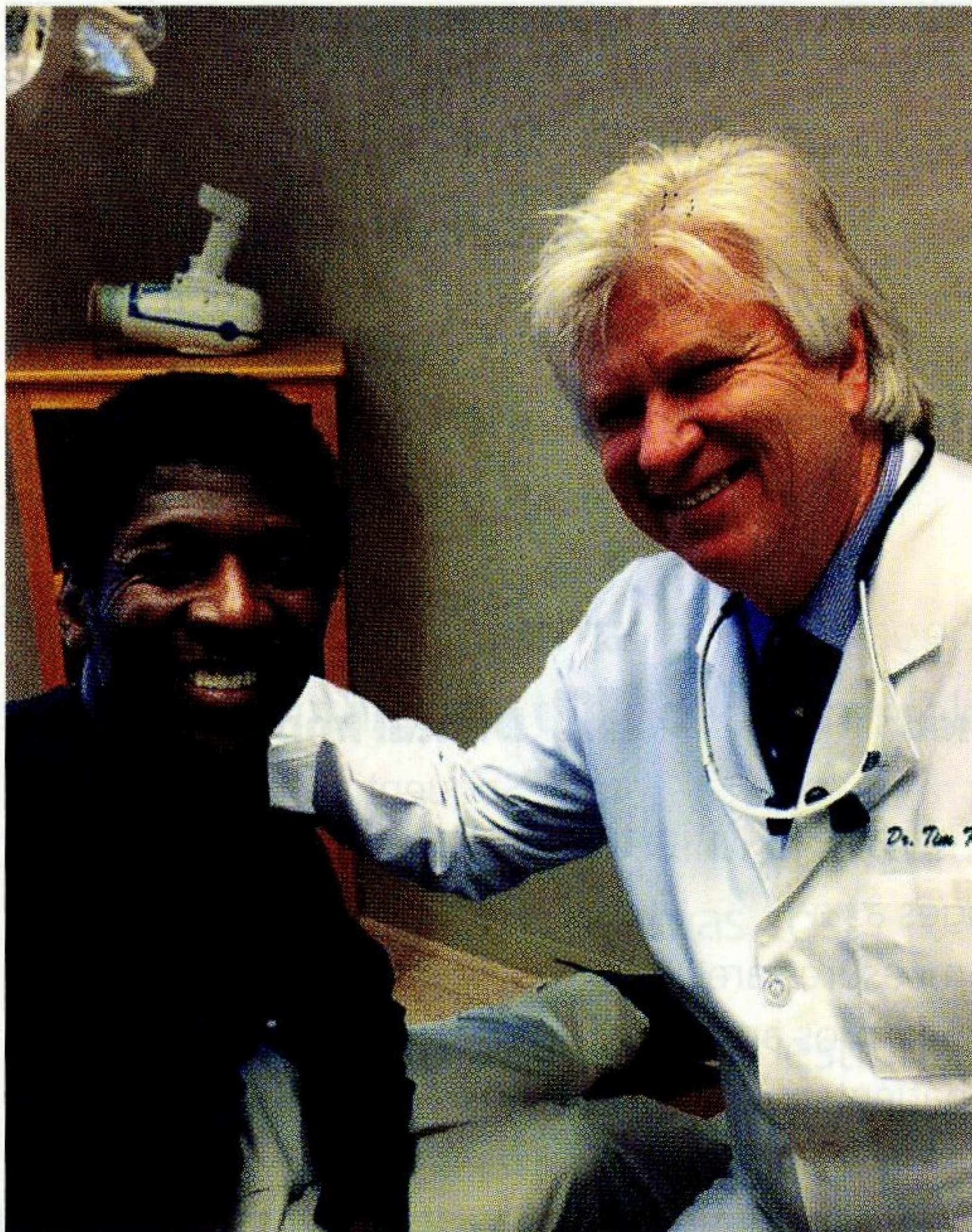
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Giving the Gift of a Smile

In 2016, my life was certainly improved by a popular singer in Detroit whom I helped to smile again.

It all started in May 2015. Carl, who is in his mid-50s, sings on the weekends at Cafe D'Mongo's Speakeasy in the city. It just so happened that while he was performing one evening, my friend, who was in the audience, noticed that he had lost many of his teeth and was likely going to lose more. Eating was difficult for him, and he did not feel comfortable smiling, always closing his lips to avoid showing his teeth.

My friend called me one afternoon after the performance and said, "Tim, I need you to do me a favor." I immediately responded, "Anything for you. What do you need?" I was thinking that I would probably be asked to make a donation to a charity of some sort. Instead, my friend asked that I evaluate and help this talented singer whom she saw perform in the city. Something told her that together we could do something to positively affect this one person's life.



AGD Associate Editor Timothy F. Kosinski, DDS, MAGD, right, and his team worked for more than a year to restore the smile of his patient, Carl, left. Photo provided by Kosinski

Carl was invited to my office for an evaluation, a computerized tomography diagnosis and a treatment plan. After talking with Carl, it was decided that we would give him a new set of teeth — for free. I am fortunate to have a wonderful, empathetic staff and a team of technicians who were all willing to chip in. We moved forward with our treatment plan, removing the infected, disfigured teeth and replacing them with 15 dental implants, top and bottom. Technology allowed us to be efficient, and we were able to virtually design Carl's new smile with computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacture (CAD/CAM) technology. Implant-retained bridges were fabricated and cemented into place.

It's not often we get such a heartwarming response from a patient. "I haven't had a beautiful smile like this in years," Carl told WXYZ-Detroit, which featured his story in a Nov. 24, 2016, news article, "The Gift of a Smile." "I think my teeth are beautiful," he told the station, adding that the best part of the whole thing was being able to eat apples and corn on the cob — and show his teeth again.

Carl's daughter told WXYZ-Detroit she has noticed he is more confident and "able to shine." She also told the news station that she plans to apply to dental hygiene school so that she can help others to smile, too.

Sometimes we forget that we can change people's lives. I can tell you that being able to give this one small gift makes me appreciate the talents that I have been given in a big way.

In reality, giving back to our community does not have to be difficult. We have the ability to do so and sometimes just need a little nudge to realize and fulfill our potential to make a difference. Isn't dentistry a wonderful profession? It sure makes me smile.

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