

## HEALTH

# Powering the human touch with technology

By *Stephen W. Durham*

CONTRIBUTOR

The promise was always that technology would free us. The idea was to spend more time on the things we were born to do as human beings. It was also supposed to make things less expensive.



Stephen Durham

The truth turns out to be that it takes focus to keep technology in its place and keep it from taking up our time, attention and priority.

The best practices of dentistry offer several examples of how we use technology to make expert treatment and the human touch more attainable for more people.

- **Using light instead of steel**

Lasers today do many dental treatments more precisely, more comfortably and with less recovery time than scalpels or dental instruments. Periodontal therapy, especially, is better and easier on the patient now.

Using a tiny filament we can clear out plaque and infection, and prepare the healthy gum tissue to grow properly back around the base of the tooth.

Most people go right back to work, and many can eat whatever they like right away.

- **Unique, individual, and computer-identified**

Computers help us determine each person's unique "perfect bite," the alignment that relaxes neck and jaw muscles and makes teeth work efficiently.

Since more than 90 percent of recurring headaches come from badly aligned teeth, this solution goes beyond what most people think of as "dental." It's a great example of how much of our well-being starts with the mouth.

- **More insight, less exposure**

Using digital radiography instead of X-rays, we get clear, instant pictures of teeth, inside and out, with 90 percent less radiation.

And since there are no negatives to develop, there are no chemicals or film. So digital radiography is healthier for you and for the environment. And that two-way benefit is part of how we handle tooth restorations, too.

- **Mercury-free practice**

Mercury is just not good for people, and the only debate is about how much we can stand.

Here we've practiced mercury-free dentistry from the first, because resin-based composites and porcelain caps restore teeth without the danger of mercury getting in the bloodstream and into our coastal environment.

- **Simple weapon vs. a deadly enemy**

Today, patients just swish a special rinse, open wide, and with a special light, we can screen for oral cancer, seeing immediately if any tissue is abnormal. What a simple, quick, painless way to be on-guard. We offer this to patients in every routine hygiene appointment – and recommend it for anyone at high risk.

Oral cancer is the cause of death for more people than either cervical or skin cancer. And more than a quarter of cases are among people who never smoked.

What makes oral cancer so deadly is that 66 percent of patients are diagnosed when the cancer has already progressed to late-stage.

- **Putting people first**

The key to making technology a servant rather than a master is to keep putting people first. We have that in mind every single day.

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FRIDAY • JULY 18th • 4-9pm

**SUNSET PARTY**  
Bluffton Oyster Factory Park

## FOOD COURT

Bluffton Oyster Co. Seafood, Sigler's Rotisserie & Seafood  
May River Grill, Melly Mel's, Island Noodles  
Joe Love's Lobster Rolls, New York City Pizza & Others

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LIVE MUSIC - "Craig Coyne" & "The Horan Brothers Band"

**OVER 30 DIFFERENT ICE COLD CRAFT BEERS**  
DOMESTIC BEER, WINE, SOFT DRINKS, SWEETS  
AND OTHER GOODIES ALSO BE AVAILABLE

**Sundown Celebration on the May River**  
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well behaved children & leashed pets welcome



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To benefit Palmetto Animal League  
Produced by Bear Foot Sports

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