

Building relationships, one smile at a time

CHESTER • Going to the dentist is probably one of the most stressful events in a person's life. No one really wants to go to the dentist. It is emotionally draining and, for many, an embarrassing event. "Dentistry is probably the number one health service that people would rather avoid," said Dr. Walter Felton, owner of Walter D. Felton, DDS, Cosmetic and Family Dentistry located just off Ironbridge Road at 10611 Greenyard Way. Even though he says, "It is all about the smile," his approach to the practice of dentistry is to find every way possible to make his patients feel comfortable. His new office gives the appearance and feel of someone's living room, not a sterile dentist office. Dr. Felton seems to be accomplishing his goal through high technology delivered in a comfortable and attractive atmosphere.

Dr. Felton has been practicing dentistry for over 26 years, graduating from Baylor University and earning a degree in Dentistry from the Medical College of Virginia (MCV). Felton questions his jump into his own practice right out of school, but knows it gave him the experience to tackle a variety of challenges. When reflecting on his first practice location on Jefferson Davis Highway, he said, "It gave me a lot of experience on a broad range of dental situations."

Dr. Felton first decided to become a dentist during his freshman year of college while volunteering in the dental clinic at a VA hospital in Killeen, Texas, which was close to the Baylor University campus. "Once I saw periodontal surgery, I thought it was awesome, and that pretty much did it for me," he said.

Relocating to Hopkins Road to serve a growing suburban community, Felton continued to build his practice and developed a team of dental professionals that continues to work with him today. One chairside assistant, Jill, has been with him for 22 years, while the financial coordinator, Maxine, has been with



The team at Walter D. Felton, DDS, Cosmetic and Family Dentistry from left: Shonda, Maxine, Julianna, Dr. Felton, Brenna, Sheila and Tara. Jill was not available for photo.

the practice for 21 years. Tara Gore, the office manager, is celebrating her 17th anniversary with the practice. Additional team members include two dental hygienists, Shelia and Brenna, an appointment coordinator, Shonda, and a second chairside assistant, Julianna.

One of Dr. Felton's goals was to build a dental environment that would convey a relaxed, quality atmosphere. That goal was accomplished in September 2009, when he moved into a new building in the courthouse area. Many patients that have been with him since the beginning of his practice have followed and he is happy to admit that he is now caring for some of their children and grandchildren. "I just completed a crown for one of my very first patients... right after his 90th birthday celebration."

Felton's new offices are set up for a comfortable and luxurious feeling for patients. "Our main themes are comfort and technology," he said. "We don't want the feeling of a medical facility. We use all modern equipment, such as digital imaging, and we provide high technology with dental implants, metal-free fillings and crowns, and a variety of other services. Our operatories are all equipped with cable and HD TVs."

The treatment rooms are designed to take the patient's mind off the fear factor of being at the dentist. They have been painted in a variety of colors, from bright to subdued and accessorized by crown molding and hand built cherry cabinetry. The large reception room is divided into two sitting areas with stuffed

leather sofas and oval back upholstery accent chairs. The rich cherry stained wainscot and crown molding is framed by floor to ceiling bookshelves on the west end of the room with a fireplace and a flat screen TV. One of the sets of books on the shelves includes a full-set of *The Book of Knowledge* that must have been saved from Felton's childhood days. The practice

of dentistry has changed dramatically since Dr. Felton first entered the field. "What we do now is not at all what we did in dental school," he said. "Ten years from now, current dental methods will be outdated. Change is happening really fast.

Dentistry is more comfortable and precise than ever before. The use of digital imaging along with the development of better crowns, fillings and implant designs is revolutionary." Felton said that access to continued education has also improved. "Online education is huge," he said. "You can take a live course on almost any topic in dentistry almost on demand."

When asked for his best advice to give folks about their dental care, Felton said, "Find a good dental hygienist." Felton said his job as a dentist is about restoring good looks and good function. It is the work of hygienists that keeps ones' teeth and gums healthy for many years. He feels he has two of the best dental hygienists in the industry.

The practice's mission statement is: "Building relationships, one smile at a time."

Dr. Felton is a dentist whose mission is to provide the best dental care to each of his patients. He understands the emotion it takes for someone who walks through the door and does everything possible to make each visit a little more comfortable. Dr. Walter Felton is accepting new patients. For an appointment call, 717-2099. The practice is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.



Shonda demonstrates the Panroamic X-ray machine. Above, Julianna prepares to sterilize equipment.



Pictured is one of six treatment rooms.



The waiting room is relaxing and comfortable.



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