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A LIFE

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⌘ D.D.S.

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CHANGE A SMILE, CHANGE A LIFE

Dr. Gist's "Give a Smile for Life"
Program a True Team Effort

by tammy adams



When Grapevine resident Cindy Baldwin's girlfriends told her they had nominated her for a smile makeover with local cosmetic/restorative dentist Dr. Greg Gist, she had no idea what to expect. But five years later, Cindy has the sparkling, beautiful smile she's always dreamed of and a heart full of gratitude for the generosity of others.

"It was a long, long road," Cindy said. She underwent orthodontics, jaw surgery and extensive dental work that required the services of several area specialists. "But I'm so thankful for everything that was done for me. It's truly overwhelming when I think about all the people who were involved in making this happen."

COMPASSION & COMMITMENT ARE A WAY OF LIFE

As the first dentist in Southlake, he has practiced dentistry since 1984 in the same location on N. Carroll Road. Dr. Gist started "Give a Smile for Life," his private charity program, in 1985.

"The focus of the program is to serve a segment of the community that would not otherwise be able to afford this level of restorative and cosmetic dentistry because of special circumstances," he said. "We cannot help every needy individual, but we can help those that the Lord sends in the timing he orchestrates."

Some of the cases Dr. Gist has seen were caused by the ravages of poverty and poor nutrition, while others have been the result of domestic violence or abuse, drug addiction and even developmental and congenital deformities.

The cases we have selected over the past 23 years are all accomplished at NO cost to the patient," Dr. Gist said. "Cindy's treatment was NO exception."

A TEAM EFFORT

Cindy's treatment began in December of 2001 with periodontal therapy and "surgical temporization" of all involved teeth. The next phase involved orthodontic care by Dr. Monte Collins, a former classmate of Dr. Gist at Baylor College of Dentistry.



Orthognathic jaw surgery, performed by Dr. Ron Caloss, a maxillofacial surgeon at U.T. Southwestern medical branch, came next. Dr. Caloss performed upper and lower jaw surgery to correct Cindy's congenital jaw alignment, extract hopeless teeth and place chin and cheek implants to enhance facial contours and aesthetics. Grapevine maxillofacial surgeon, Dr. Dean White, made arrangements with Harris HEB Hospital for a complimentary operating room, nursing care and extended private room stay.

Dr. Collins of Johnson and Collins Orthodontics finished Cindy's orthodontic alignment prior to Dr. Gist's reconstructive dental phase.

In 2004, Dr. Gist began crown and bridge treatment: root canal therapy, crown and bridge fixed prosthetics and cosmetic dentistry including bonded, all-porcelain veneers on all of Cindy's front teeth.

Periodontist and implant surgeon Dr. Brent Gabriel of Grapevine placed surgical implants. Dr. Gist explained, "Dr. Gabriel's expertise enabled me to perfect Cindy's bite and smile design with final restorations that were permanently fixed in her mouth. Now, Cindy can smile, chew and function without the need for removable dentures of any type."

Dr. Gist finished restorative work last month. Dr. Gist's own personal master ceramist, Mr. Kirk Randolph, CDT, owner of Randolph Dental Laboratory of Ft. Worth, Texas, did the metal and ceramic fabrication. "Kirk's artistic talents and knowledge of Cindy's case was so important in the successful outcome," Dr. Gist said.

"This treatment took quite a bit longer than a normal case of this magnitude, because of scheduling challenges in all the participating offices that donated their services. But after five years of hard work and commitment by the compassionate doctors of Northeast Tarrant county, Cindy has a smile that she could only dream of and has been able to save her remaining teeth and function normally without dentures or 'removable appliances' of any type," Dr. Gist said.

A LIFE FOREVER CHANGED

Cindy, a single mom of two teenagers, serves as nursery director and preschool teacher at First United Methodist Church in Grapevine, where she is a member.

In 2001, when friends from her Sunday school class, Debbie Price and Sue Schultz, told her they had nominated her for "Give a Smile for Life," she could not believe the magnitude of the blessing. "This has definitely restored my faith in believing that normal people can have extraordinary things," she said.

When Cindy was unable to work because of treatment and recovery, the church paid her anyway. One sweet friend, Cally McCormick, cheerfully drove her to and from many, many dental appointments. Cindy's sister cared for her after her surgeries.

"I thank God every day for this experience that Dr. Gist has given me," Cindy said. "I have benefited in so many ways, and I think my children have benefited too, because they see the change in me and my confidence."

Cindy's treatment cost totalled well over \$125,000! Yet, she did not pay a penny. Dr. Gist said, "I would like to thank all of the participating doctors, technicians, hospital staff and team members who gave of their talents, time, money and hearts for the care of one of our favorite patients of all time, Cindy! They are the reason Cindy will have a 'Smile for Life!' To God be the Glory!"

Dr. Gist's dental practice is located at **2379 North Carroll Road in Southlake**. For more information, call **817-488-7512** or visit him online at www.southlakesmiles.com. 

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