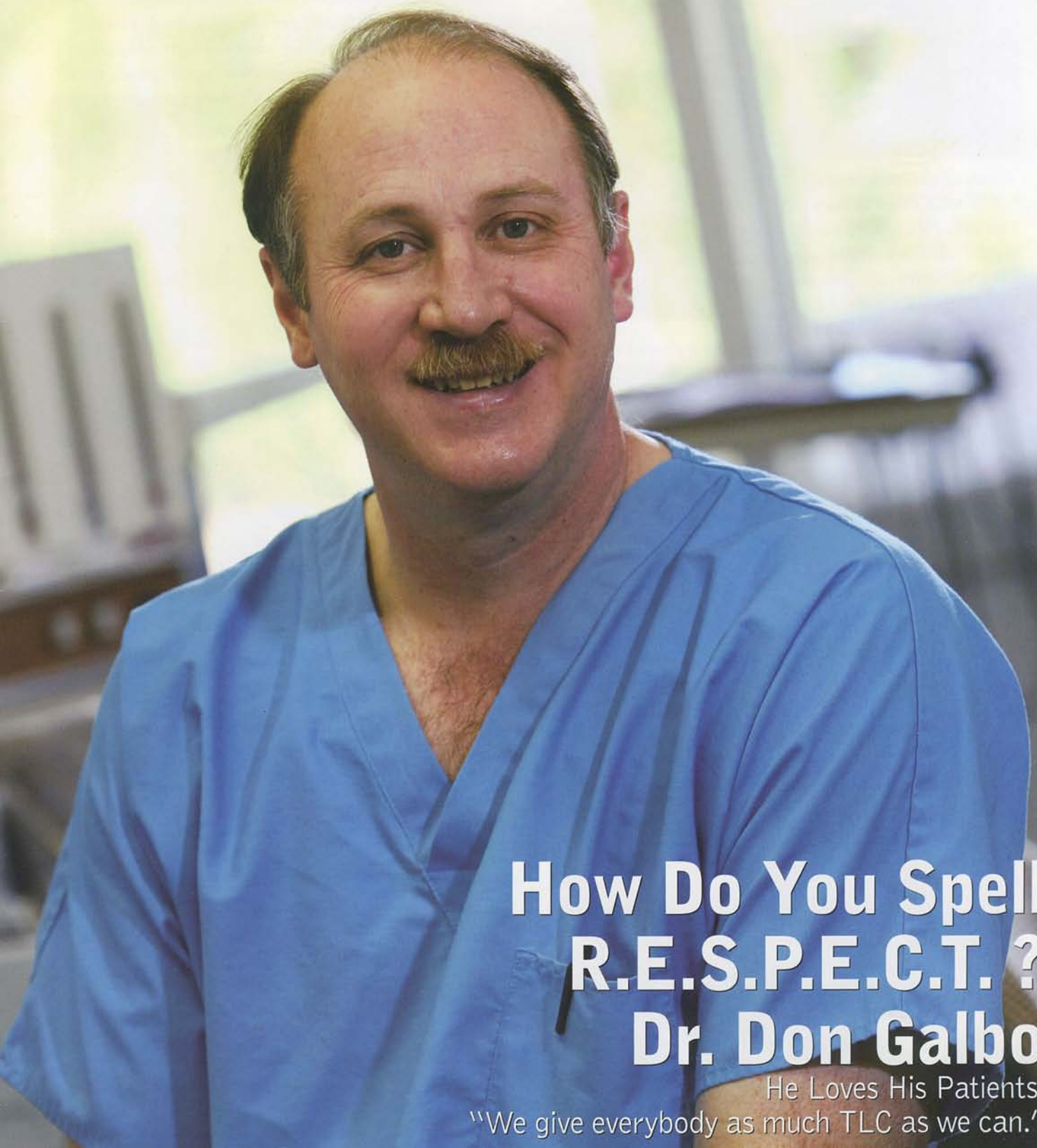


Atlanta Edition

DOCTOR *of* DENTISTRY

A BUSINESS AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR DENTISTS



**How Do You Spell
R.E.S.P.E.C.T. ?
Dr. Don Galbo**

He Loves His Patients.
"We give everybody as much TLC as we can."

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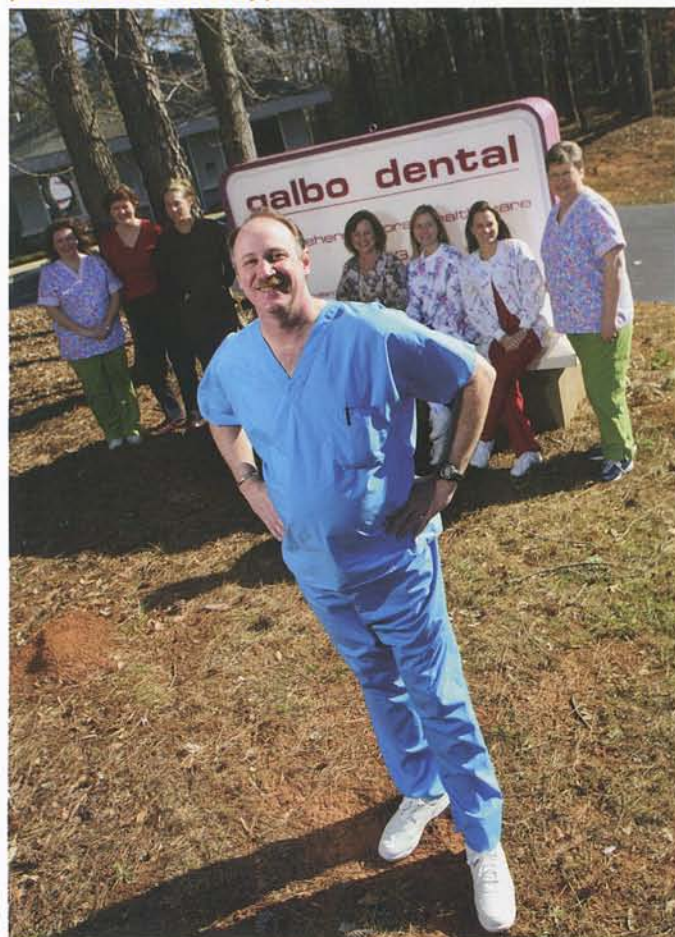
By Mike Kielkopf

As a kid, Don Galbo used to hang out with the New York Yankees. Since 1979, he's worked as a mobile DJ and has done sound production for a variety of Georgia bands and performers, including Atlanta's popular Southern-style hard rock group Drivin' N' Cryin', and Newnan's own country and western crooner, Doug Stone. One of five children, he has a twin sister named Donna, a highly trained German shepherd named Joey, and a Siamese cat named Baby. He started college on a basketball scholarship and still plays competitively at the age of 52. And he's been an active member of the Knights of Columbus for over 30 years.

"We just have a friendly, warm staff that people really find special and are excited to tell their friends about." That staff includes Audrey, Kim, Linda, Shannon, Stacie, Sharon, Suzanne and Eileen. "They all do a fantastic job of combining professional expertise with sincere, personal concern for every patient."



Located in the booming town of Newnan, Don Galbo built his office building to meet the needs of patients like Brittany Dunnivant, who looks forward to a hug each time she sees Dr. Galbo.



PHOTOS BY JEREMY ADAMO



When the summer Olympics visited Atlanta in 1996, Dr. Galbo was the official team dentist for the Ukrainian contingent. He's served as a paramedic and a firefighter, sold pharmaceuticals and started the process to become a Maryland state trooper with thoughts of becoming an FBI agent. But since the age of 12, he was certain that what he really wanted to be was a dentist. And as the folks of Newnan can testify, Dr. Galbo has succeeded magnificently.

"When I was a junior in college," Dr. Galbo recalls, "I was dating a freshman whose dad was a dentist in Frederick, MD. I was questioning going into dentistry. It seemed like there were too many dentists and I wasn't sure I could make a successful practice. That's why I will always remember what her dad said: 'Don, if you treat your patients with human dignity and respect, your waiting room will always be full.' I still like to practice that way. It's the Golden Rule. I couldn't do it any other way."

And his patients clearly appreciate that approach, especially combined with another of Dr. Galbo's mantras: "I just don't want to hurt people." Dr. Galbo says he and his staff are dedicated to making every patient's experience as "painless and comfortable as

possible.” He draws on his own experience as a dental patient for that motivation: “After having just about every dental procedure done as a youngster, I know what it feels like. That’s why we are virtually pain free.”

Dr. Galbo’s trek to Newnan began in Darien, CT, a bedroom community 45 miles outside New York City. He did most of his growing up there where his self-employed dad operated a Venetian blind laundry and painted houses. His mom was a housewife.

“I lived a charmed life as a kid,” Dr. Galbo says. “My dad and I took regular trips to Yankee Stadium, and thanks to my dad’s former playing days with the great Yankee teams of 1936 and ’37, I was hanging out with Whitey Ford, Elston Howard, Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris ... all the great Yankee stars of the ’60s. And the great Yankee broadcaster, Mel Allen, was an especially close friend of my dad’s. He was at our house a lot. That was my charmed childhood.”



When you enter the office you are greeted by the friendly staff. Here network administrator Steve Ransom works on the office software and hardware.

But when he was 14, the charm wore off when Dr. Galbo’s parents divorced. That’s when he moved with his mom to Atlanta. Two years later he rejoined his dad in Connecticut, but his Atlanta experience stayed with him. He knew that was the area he eventually would like to call home.

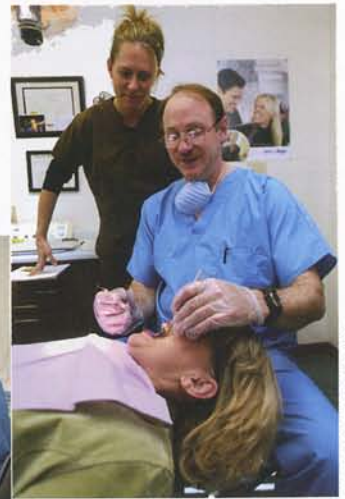
Dr. Galbo’s sisters both live near Atlanta as well. His twin sister Donna lives in Newnan, where she’s a sales manager for the Yokogawa Corp.; and Dr. Galbo’s sister, Maria, lives in nearby Douglasville, GA, where she’s an agent for State Farm Insurance.

Dr. Galbo also has two older brothers. Bob lives in Clearwater, FL, where he’s a computer hardware and software specialist, and Gerry is a golf pro in Chapel Hill, NC.

An outstanding athlete himself, Dr. Galbo says his basketball

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Dr. Galbo says, “The technological advances have been stunning: endodontics for root canals, improved medication for sedation and monitoring, and the intraoral camera for educating patients like Stacie Cranston.”



PHOTOS BY JEREMY ADAMO

teams have won plenty of trophies over the years, many of which adorn his office. “I started my undergrad career at Mt. Saint Mary’s College in Maryland on a basketball scholarship, but it didn’t take long for me to realize basketball and premed were too much. I knew I wasn’t going to make the NBA, so I gave up my scholarship during my freshman year and focused on academics. I didn’t quit playing basketball though. My intramural team won a lot of championships, and I’ve just kept on playing. I love it.”

He also loves his patients. “We give everybody as much TLC as we can without being fake about it. Our staff is gentle and warm and professional. Most people appreciate that and seek it out. We just have a friendly, warm staff that people really find special and are excited to tell their friends about.” That staff includes Audrey, Kim, Linda, Shannon, Stacie, Sharon, Suzanne and Eileen. “They all do a fantastic job of combining professional expertise with sincere, personal concern for every patient.”

Nonetheless, several years ago, Dr. Galbo’s office was one of three dental facilities in Newnan that was burglarized. “The guy smashed in our window, messed up

Linda Vitale oversees the bulletin board that treasures the photos of Dr. Galbo’s patients.



PHOTOS BY JEREMY ADAMO

our files and ripped our cash register out. Since then we've had a safe bolted to the floor. That's such a violated feeling. I guess the guy thought dental offices would be an easy score, but he was caught within 36 hours."

A far better memory for Dr. Galbo is his work with the Ukrainian Olympic team. "That was the chance of a lifetime — to live in the Olympic Village, to meet the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States, to meet Ukrainian pole vault champion and 1988 Olympic gold medalist Sergei Bubka, still the only person to vault 20 feet. All that was a great honor.

"We invited the medical staff who accompanied the Ukrainian team to our dental offices and we had a little ceremony. We played the national anthems of Ukraine and the U.S. and raised both countries' flags. A few hundred people were there to see it."

After 24 years in dentistry, 21 in private practice in Newnan, Dr. Galbo has seen a major evolution in the profession. "The technological advances have been stunning: endodontics for root canals, improved medication for sedation and monitoring, the intraoral camera for educating patients. Probably the single biggest advancement in my career is the CAD/CAM system I use for milling and designing one-visit inlays, onlays, veneers and crowns. It's absolutely incredible technology." And he's trained hundreds of doctors in its applications. Dr. Galbo also maintains a website, www.galbodental.net, that he says is most valuable in providing information and patient education.

So where does dentistry go from here? "Lasers are starting to prove their worth," Dr. Galbo says. "I don't think they'll replace dental drills anytime soon. Lasers are expensive and the advantages just don't justify the costs. But they're showing great promise and will eventually be more cost effective. Digital X-rays are great, but expensive. That will probably be my next upgrade."



A fond memory for Dr. Galbo is his work with the Ukrainian Olympic team. "That was the chance of a lifetime — to live in the Olympic Village, to meet the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States, to meet Ukrainian pole vault champion and 1988 Olympic gold medalist Sergei Bubka — still the only person to vault 20 feet." Dr. Galbo is shown here with memorabilia treasures that were given to him.



"Treating your patients with human dignity and respect" will continue to keep Dr. Galbo's waiting room full.

For those youngsters in high school who might be considering dentistry, Dr. Galbo offers this advice: "Make sure you study — and enjoy — your science. And make sure you really want to work with and help people. It's true you can still make a good living as a dentist ... probably in the top 5 percent of wage earners in the country. But if you're just thinking about making money, you might want to look elsewhere."

Dr. Galbo says his current personal goal is to begin financial planning for retirement, while his professional goal is to earn surgical implant certification. Given Dr. Galbo's record, that shouldn't be a problem. Every two years — for 32 years — he has re-certified in advanced cardiac life support. He's also believed to be one of only two dentists ever to be named chief of staff of a hospital in Georgia. He achieved that distinction while spending three years working for the U.S. Public Health Service at the Stewart-Webster Clinic in Richland, GA, just after graduating from the University of Maryland Dental School.

Now, 24 years later, dentistry has seen vast technological advances. Expertise in those leading technologies combined with a nearly pain-free style and daily application of the sage advice he received as a junior in college — "treat your patients with human dignity and respect" — are continuing to keep Dr. Galbo's Newnan waiting room full. He couldn't do it any other way.

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Hygienist Suzanne Carter.

