



Twenty-eight Pages

Lovingly Bound

with

Twine

Floss

\$2



a fanzine by
Christoph Meyer

#9 The Dental Issue



Page i (front cover): A linoleum block print. It's a tooth – more specifically, a maxillary molar. That's why the roots are pointing up.

Page ii: The table of contents. This page.

Page iii: "You Can't Floss with Twine"

Pages iv–ix: "Ask the Dentist" Readers wrote in with dental questions and Lisa Moster, D.D.S. gives them dental answers.

Pages x & xi: Miscellaneous Dental Brouhaha

Pages xii–xvi: "Dental Marionette" Since so many people are scared of the dentist, I decided to write a weird dental horror story. Super big props to Jim Conaster for doing the illustrations.

Page xvii: "Painless Dentistry" by A. E. Stringer. Weird synchronistic moments make me happy.

Pages xviii & xix: "The Adventures of #8 and #9" Talking teeth comic!

Page xx: There was an article about Lisa's practice in the local newspaper. Reprinted with permission from *The Mount Vernon News*.

Page xxi: Homonym humor! Would you go to a dentist named Dr. Pain? How about Dr. Payne?

Page xxii: Consider this page the letters column. Ahhhh! How precious!

Page xxiii: Real dental stickers! After reading this 'zine, stick them on your shirt or hands and pretend like you just came out of a dentist appointment.

Pages xxiv & xxv: "DIY Amish Dentistry" That title says it all. Do you like the pictures? I drew them myself.

Page xxvi: I don't see enough limericks in fanzines, so I decided to print one in the hopes of starting a new trend in underground publishing.

Page xxvii: "The Worst Twine Disaster in Human History" In 28PLBwT #8 I said that I used sisal twine, but it was in fact jute! I can't begin to tell you how truly and deeply sorry I am.

Page xxviii (the back cover): I always put bizarre, weird, disturbing pictures of me on the back cover. For this issue I've decided to put a bizarre, weird, disturbing picture of Lisa.

All letters received will be considered fair game for publishing unless you tell me otherwise. Real mail only; I don't have electronic mail. Do you make something creative? Send it my way, I love trading. Cash is preferable but checks made out to Christoph Meyer are okay. All contents are by Christoph Meyer unless otherwise noted.

Acknowledgement: "Dental Marionette" first appeared in *Out of the Blue*.

Pie
Subscription Information:

(All prices are postage-paid)

1 issue: \$2 or trade

3-issue sub: \$5

6-issue sub: \$10

BIG dozen-issue sub: \$18

My address will now and forever be:

Christoph Meyer

P.O. Box 106

Danville, OH 43014

You Can't Floss With Twine

Welcome to the 9th and final issue of Twenty-eight Pages Lovingly Bound with Twine. Just kidding. About the "final" part, not the "9th" part. I'm truckin' with 28PLBwT till the bitter end, or at least for another dozen issues because I'm still taking 12-issue *prescriptions* to show how serious I am about this ridiculous fanzine. I've got big plans for future issues but I'll keep them to myself since I tend to get easily sidetracked – this long-overdue issue being an example of plans postponed

I recently received a letter which read in part:

My friend thinks you will burn out... The print run is so high, and so much labor went into it... Because I believe you won't burn out, I'd like to get a 12-issue subscription...

That letter made my day. Whenever I wage my first battle with burnout, I'll just reread that letter and find the strength to soldier on, somehow. Another thing that made me happy was a small incident that occurred at the Portland Zine Symposium. I was carrying my stuff up to the dorm room I was staying in and I heard two amply-pierced disenfranchised youths whisper... "Was that that guy?" ... "Yeah, that was The Twine Guy." **I am The Twine Guy!**

This is a special issue. All of my issues are "special" in the "Special Olympics" sense of the word, but this issue is special in that it is different, though not necessarily differently-abled. If you're a long-time reader, you know that I've been promising to print "Ask the Dentist". Well, here it is! But this issue doesn't just contain one dental column – it's an entire dental issue! I've read many, many, many fanzines over the last couple of years and I've seen all sorts of themed issues. I wanted my themed issue to stand out, so I'm focusing on a topic seldom, if ever, even contemplated: Dentistry! Inside you'll find all sorts of dental fun, including dental fiction! I write lots of fiction but this is the first time I've included my fiction in the pages of this fanzine.

In an effort to stick to the dental theme, I've temporarily forsaken twine. I know, I know. The fanzine has the word "Twine" in the title but I think everyone out there in Fanzine Land can understand that this is an exceptional occasion, which demands something more dental. Twine has many uses, but one cannot floss with twine. (unless perhaps you are missing every other tooth) So this issue is lovingly bound with... **FLOSS!** I have even left the floss binding the topmost hole long and untrimmed so that you may actually use this very fanzine to floss your teeth. Perhaps you just ate an apple and still have an annoying piece of apple skin stuck between your canine and premolar.

So sit back – *way back*. Are you comfortable? Open wide. A little wider please. Now enjoy 28 pages of dental fun. I promise it won't hurt a bit. •

Ask The Dentist

Starring Lisa Mosler →



Here it is! Finally. If you wrote in with a dental question, there's a good chance it'll be answered here. Unfortunately, I made the mistake of not putting all the questions in one pile as I received them, so I'm certain that these aren't all the questions that readers have sent in. Sorry, this is entirely my fault, not Lisa's.

Will there be another installment of this column? Probably. Some day. Feel free to write in if you have any sort of question pertaining to dentistry or oral health. I'll put all submitted questions in one place this time, but I can't guarantee that they'll be answered, much less in a timely manner.

I'd like to repeat the disclaimer I printed in previous issues:

If you have a problem with your teeth then go see a dentist. Lisa is a real life honest-to-goodness dentist, certified and licensed by the powers-that-be to practice dentistry, but this column's sole purpose is to entertain the reader. Don't rely on this column for the diagnosis of your problem. This column is just for fun. Lisa cannot give a proper diagnosis without actually seeing you in her office. Only x-rays and/or an actual exam can effectively diagnose problems. Let me repeat: **This column is published solely for the purpose of entertainment.** Someone needs to make dentistry fun after all and my wife's just the gal to do it.

Note: This disclaimer is serious; small type is for purposes of irony only. Please use as directed.

I only have 3 of 4 twelve-year molars. I am 25 and have not had my wisdom teeth out. They are not causing problems. I only have 3 of them that exist in my jaw and the wisdom tooth that is missing is the same as the twelve-year molar. I was told at one point that I would either have to get a fake tooth where the missing one is or the top one may fall out. Would it really fall out? I get paranoid — he said that it would fall out because it didn't have the tooth that was supposed to be there to hold it in.

— Alex Wreck —

4

I am sorry to hear of your predicament, Alex. I hope that the absence of these teeth has been confirmed with an x-ray. While it's unlikely that your top molars on that side will "fall out," they are ensured of slow but steady eruption throughout your life. Top teeth in particular have

a tendency to emerge from the gum and bone until they make contact with an opposing tooth. Chances are your top 12-year molar and wisdom tooth on one side are currently non-functional and will keep erupting until ① You get a fake tooth down below, ② they contact gum tissue on the bottom, or ③ you have the last two top teeth removed. Options 1 or 3 being preferable, 3 being much much cheaper, you could replace the 2nd molar with an implant or a cantilever bridge. I guess you are justified in feeling paranoid - good things will not come of this - but if you don't jump at a pricey replacement, the worst that can happen is sometime down the road, you may lose a tooth you never really used anyway.

Do you get mad when a patient has a cavity? Is it like they've let you down by not taking care of their teeth? Or are you happy cause cavities mean business for you? Or do you feel guilty, like it is somehow your fault? Or none of the above? I've often wondered about this when I'm at the dentist.

--Bill "The Source" Gornall

Bill - I don't get mad about a cavity. Heck, I take pretty good care of my own teeth and am cavity-prone, so I can't be too critical. I can't say I'm happy to find decay, but it does boost business. I often feel guilty and regret telling a person that they need a filling or something more. Particularly if it's a patient's first cavity or if they are always having problems. I hate to disappoint people.

I chipped my tooth. No pain but I panicked and went to the dentist and he recommended a cap. I ignored his advice, now years later all is fine. Still no pain. Or is it a dead tooth? Any future issues?

--Stvyn

(Stvyn also wrote to me with the following, which has nothing to do with dentistry but is very interesting: "Have u had any troubles from the post office recently? Last week a postal clerk freaked out on me saying my package had "excessive tape" which is a sign of a terrorist. A few days later my van died in the postal parking lot. As I was tinkering with it, cops surrounded me --guns ready-- turns out the jumpy postal workers called them in a panic as I was a possible terrorist hanging out in their space. Damn!!")

⑤

Hi! I'm glad to hear that all is well with your chipped tooth. A major concern with a tooth that has fractured due to trauma or deep decay is the possibility of nerve damage and tooth death. Probably not in this case, since you've never had pain from the start. Sometimes, however, you don't see signs of nerve injury for many years (20+ in my experience with patients). Keep an eye out for darkening of said tooth, extreme tenderness to biting or swelling in your gums or lip in this area. If the tooth is an eye sore or awkward to your tongue, you may have it "capped" or possibly bonded with a tooth-colored filling. If it's a literal pain in the future, a root canal will be the key to remove the nerve tissue.
p.s. - Sorry about the uptight postal clerks!

Boy, could I submit a bunch of "Ask the Dentist" questions. I guess the most pressing is "Are toothpicks bad for your teeth?" In the past few months I've gotten addicted to them -- I feel like a 60 year old farmer or something. —Mark Hain

Howdy, Mark. Boy, it's been a while since you asked this question and I bet you don't even use the dang things any longer. In any case, I would say you're not going to cause damage unless you're sticking them between your teeth at the gum line and rooting around like crazy or letting them sit there for a while. In that case, you could initiate periodontal disease by causing traumatic bone loss. If you just let them dangle from your lip like a 60 year old farmer, it's all good. Try the minty ones!

I haven't seen a dentist in 6 years. I have occasional tooth discomfort and I tend to brush too hard causing my gums to recess. I eat a moderate amount of sugar but brush daily and floss about once a week. I still have my wisdom teeth and they experience pain about once a year that goes away after about 2 days. I met people with similar situations. Is this sustainable? —Joe Biel

Let's have a little talk, Joe. First, see a dentist for a check-up, x-rays and a cleaning to put your mind at ease. Gimme a call if you're in central Ohio. Second, aggressive brushing with too much tooth paste is a problem. Recession is not reversible and can result in sensitive exposed roots, root decay, bone loss and tooth mobility. Third, keep up the flossing and try to (6)

brush at least twice daily, 1 minute at a time minimum. Finally, severe, infrequent pain around wisdom teeth is called pericoronitis, or swelling around the crown of the tooth. That is, unless the pain is attributable to decay. The infection usually rears its head when one is stressed or ill and can be eliminated with good old penicillin. The effects of pericoronitis tend to be cumulative, however, and bone loss likes to occur around these teeth. Besides the infection and pain thing, wisdom teeth are fairly nonfunctional and tend towards crippling decay, so I would suggest you have 'em yanked. Sorry to be preachy, but I speak from personal and practical experience. Good luck!

Is flossing really necessary or is it another scam being put upon us by the man? 'Cause I'm damn proud to say that I don't floss and never will. Never!

--Eric Lyden

Eric, I have personally wrestled with this question. Of course I'm supposed to tell people to floss, but if my own husband won't do it and never gets cavities or has gum or bone problems, what can I base this command on? It has been found that some people have much better resistance to the decay- and periodontitis-causing bacteria that are universally present in the mouth. Some people have fewer of these bugs and are less prone to cavities and gum disease. Those of us who are "genetically inferior" may find that if we opt not to floss, we will end up with rotten, loose teeth. In conclusion, The Man and I (you can call me The Lady) say: If you got it, floss it!

I've got dental questions for "Ask the Dentist" -- albeit idle ones. Example: How does one go about getting a set of fangs put in? --Violet Jones

If you want a beautiful and functional set of fangs, you will need to have your top canine teeth prepared and trimmed down to have porcelain fang crowns cemented in. This would involve two visits to a dentist and could cost \$1300 to \$2500. You could also trim down the front incisors for a more complete look. A cheaper, more conservative route would be a "denture" that you could wear over your own teeth that could be removed as desired for job interviews and funerals. Interesting question! ⑦

My girlfriend brushes, flosses and goes to the dentist on a regular basis but still gets lots of cavities. She claims it's because she used to eat salted lemons constantly as a child and the citric acid destroyed her enamel. Is this a possibility?

--Robert Sormani

Congratulations on the pending nuptials, Robert! Not an easy question to answer. Citric acid will certainly demineralized tooth enamel, making it more permeable and cavity-prone. However, when the lemons were cut from her diet I would expect the teeth to remineralize as lost as oral hygiene was good. If decay had already started in the teeth or if fluoride wasn't available though, I can see where those lemons could've been the culprit. See the flossing question too, posed by Eric, for a talk on bad bacteria. Your lovely lady may or may not have a case, but I'd suggest you straighten it out soon - you don't want this to be a lifelong point of contention.

I can't recall who sent the following question and I've misplaced the letter. It went something like this:

I heard that the suicide rate for dentists is sky high. Is this true? If so, why? Is drillin' and fillin' teeth really that bad?

Hey - I've heard that suicide thing too! You know, as a career dentistry can be stressful, but I'd describe most days at the office as "fun." As for the high suicide rate, here are some theories. ① As suggested by my loving husband, mercury poisoning has been found amongst dentists and this can make one crazy and depressed. In times of old, dentists and their assistants would mix liquid mercury in powdered metal alloys to make amalgam which is silver filling material. This is an exothermic reaction and mercury vapor would be released and inevitably inhaled resulting in ... SUICIDE! Okay - maybe. ② Drug abuse is a problem amongst dentists who have easy access to that delightful nitrous oxide, sedative hypnotics and good old narcotics. Drug abuse could potentially lead to desperate times, particularly to someone risking a lucrative career. ③ Stress may be suicide-inducing in some cases. The stakes are high in dentistry with lots of people putting a lot of faith in their dentist. Other possible influences may be going into

debt, feeling guilt over being a lousy dentist, and reaching the top of one's career with nowhere else to go. I would appreciate others' opinions, but not right now because I'm awfully depressed by all of this.

What's up with flouride? I use flouride toothpaste (el natural -- Tom's) because, well, I guess I've just been brainwashed to think that my teeth need flouride and ther's way too much silver in my teeth. My honey, Peter, however, isn't into our 1 year old Simon using flouride toothpaste because he thinks it's too strong/harsh. What do you think? Second, all the vegan kids I know have rotten teeth. I mean my friend Mel's kid had to have his front teeth removed at age 3 because they basically crumbled. Peter knows kids down in southern oregon in the same boat. I'm interested in what ya'll think of that cuz ya'll are all three vegan, right?

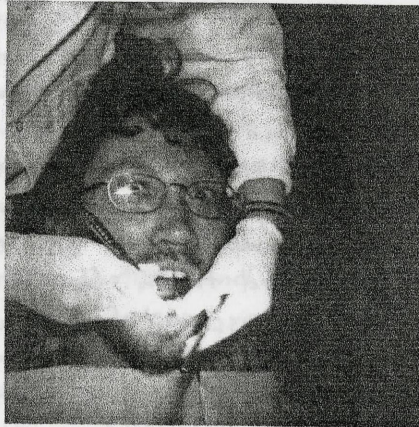
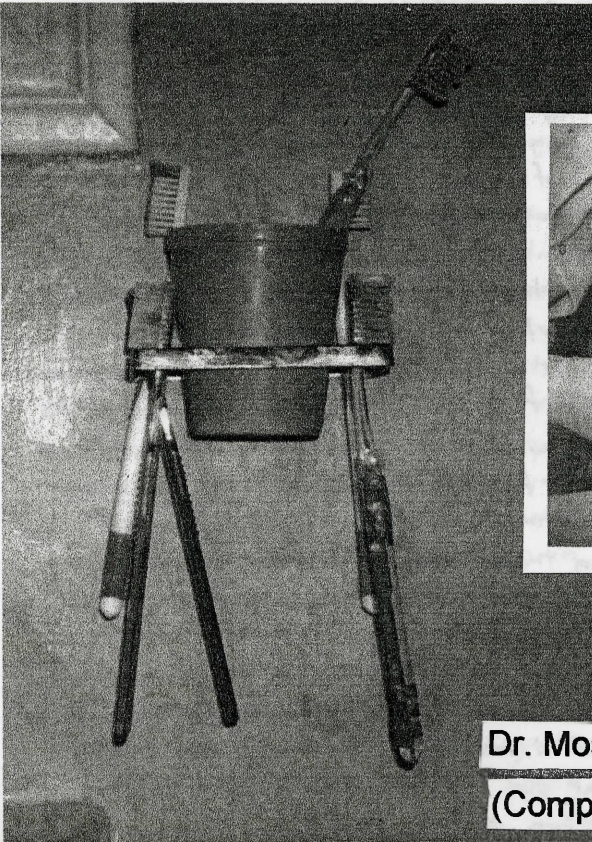
—Caroline Oakley

Fluoride is a naturally occurring ion that has been widely used for decades as a cavity fighter. Limitless research and limited personal experience has convinced me that fluoride is helpful and positive in keeping teeth healthy, but you certainly can get too much of a good thing. We have no fluoride in our Knox County water, and the local communities do have a significantly higher rate of decay than the rest of Ohio. Fluoride incorporates itself into teeth—both as they form under the gums and when they're in use in the mouth—to physically harden and strengthen the tooth enamel, making it less susceptible to decay. It takes an awful lot of fluoride to get too much, but if you do it can cause bodily illness along with malformations and discolored teeth. Using fluoride toothpaste for a 1 year old isn't necessary if your water is fluoridated, but if not, I would consider a dab of fluoride paste. There are great fluoride-free paste alternatives and what really matters is the thorough scrubbing twice daily. A healthy adult with a very low rate of decay probably doesn't need a fluoride paste either. As for vegan tots with bad teeth, I would guess that either their nutrition is poor, they use bottle or sippy cups too much or they don't get their teeth cleaned well. A well-rounded vegan diet should support healthy teeth + bodies. Our vegan 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ year old has fine teeth and I don't know why others shouldn't too. (Kool-Aid?)

Can you fill in the missing words?

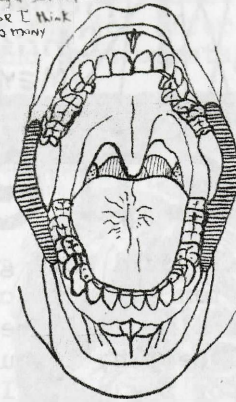
1. A dental _____ will come and get you when it is your turn.
2. Be kind to others and wait _____!
3. The dentist will use a small _____ to check and count your teeth.
4. It is important to brush and floss your teeth _____.
5. Don't eat too many _____ treats or drink too much _____!

ANSWERS: 1. assistant 2. patiently 3. mirror 4. daily 5. sweet, soda 1. Security Officer 2. naked 3. phallus 4. annually 5. dog, absinth



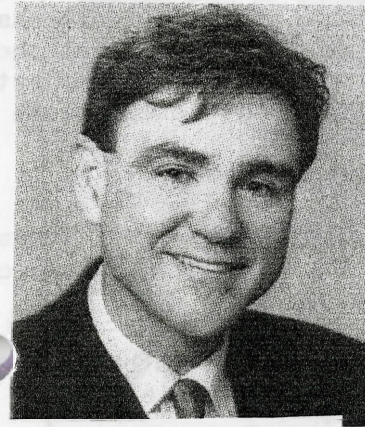
Dr. Moster giving me a COE
(Comprehensive oral exam)

Hi,
Last, I bought some pen and ink the other day, but don't show
Lisa because I think
I drew too many
teeth.

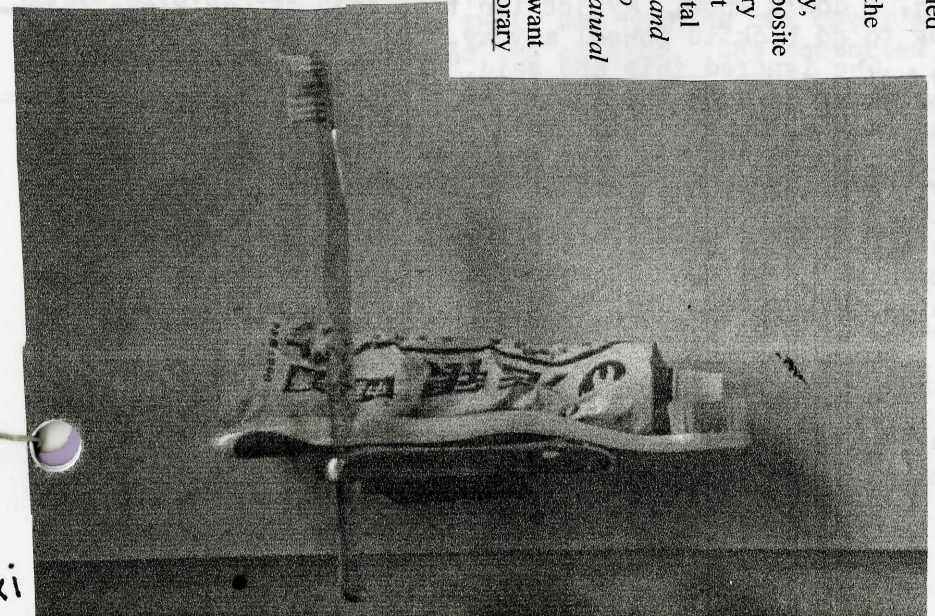


From a letter by Jacob Snodgrass

One day Lisa asked me, "What was the name of your childhood dentist?" "Doug Terry," I answered. "Here, look at this," she said, thrusting a dental journal titled *Contemporary Esthetics and Restorative Practice* into my hands. Inside was an article by the dentist I went to until I was about 18, Douglas Terry. Check out the picture. I remember him from back when he was balding, but it looks like he's grown some new hair. The article, which he co-wrote with a Dr. Uri Yarovesky, bore the cumbersome title of "Optical Integration With Indirect Posterior Composite Resins: The Natural Inlay". I attempted to read the article just because Dr. Terry wrote it, but I didn't make it past the first page. Here's a sentence from the first paragraph of the article just so you can get a feel for what it's like to read a dental journal. "Recent innovations in adhesive systems and procedures, technology, and restorative materials have resulted in the use of bonded restorative materials to reestablish function, shape and contour, color (hue, value, and chroma), and natural light transmission, as well as to recapture strength and esthetics through conservative adhesive tooth preparation." That was just one sentence! If you want to read the article in it's entirety, check out the January 2002 issue of *Contemporary Esthetics and Restorative Practice*.



Dr. Douglas A. Terry,
DDS, FAGD



Dental Fiction by Christoph MEYER

Pictures by
Jim Conaster

Marionette

All they had to do was ask nicely and I would have gladly become their new dental assistant. After all, it sounded a lot better than cashiering at Burger King. If they would have just asked me like polite, normal people, I would have been flattered from being considered for the job. I would have driven over to BK that night and given my two weeks notice, or even just quit right then and there. But they didn't ask me. I'm not even sure why I went to the dentist every six months anyway. I've always had perfect teeth -- never one cavity.

After the cleaning, polishing and x-rays, Ms. Woods, the hygienist, just up and said, "Dr. Stringer has selected you for the position of Dental Assistant."

"What?" I ask, confused.

"I'm sure you'll find dental assisting to be a much more satisfying career than whatever it is you currently do."

Normally, I would have inquired eagerly about the job, but the way it was presented made me understandably nervous. "Oh, I don't know. My job isn't so bad. I was kinda thinking to go back to school anyway."

She ignored this and said, "I'll go get Dr. Stringer." She returned with the doctor -- a grave, grey-bearded man who walked in with both hands buried in the pockets of his white lab coat. His head appeared to be one mass of evenly-trimmed gray hair out of which his strange eyes stared. His eyes were small black holes with pupils so large that they had grown beyond the iris and into the whites. It appeared as if two black dots had been painted in the bald patch between the hair on his face and scalp.

"Pleeez oh-pen vide," he said without any small talk. I had trouble placing his accent.

"About this job Dr. Stringer, I don't knwwaahhww..." But that's as far as I got before he had his fingers and instruments in my mouth.

"Ya, you vill be perfect for zee job." I swear he

didn't have an accent on my previous checkups. I tried to discuss the job offer but could only mumble around the hands and instruments in my mouth.



"And speaking of perfect, I cannot see a single problem in here. You have perfect, healthy teeth." Where did his accent go? Then I felt something tugging on my right wrist. The hygienist had strapped my right arm to the chair. I lifted my left arm but Dr. Stringer forced it down, quickly and expertly, buckling the leather strap tightly.

I screamed and the hygienist flipped a longer strap over my arms and waist. The doctor secured it on his side. I kicked at them, as this was all I could do to defend myself, but I only managed to kick the light on the adjustable arm that hung over me. It

swiveled over the hygienist's head and seemed to get snagged in something, although there was nothing but empty air visible between her head and the ceiling. She contorted strangely as if fighting some unseen enemy, and the light jiggled with her. Her left leg crumpled beneath her with the knee bending the wrong way. Her arms flailed and her head lolled spasmodically as she bent unnaturally from one inhuman position to another.

The dentist rushed to her aid while I screamed for help. They ignored me and no one came. He grabbed the light and spoke to Ms. Woods, "Calm down, calm down. Struggling will only make it worse." After much wiggling and jiggling, he disentangled the light from the empty space above Ms. Wood. She stood up again and resumed moving normally. I yelled for help but Dr. Stringer said, "No one will hear you. There are no other patients here and we are woefully understaffed so if you would kindly cooperate, things would go much more smoothly."

I continued to scream and kick but they managed to strap down my legs and head. Then Dr. Stringer pried my mouth open with his fingers and the hygienist shoved something between my molars, near the fulcrum of my jaw, which wedged my mouth agape. I quit screaming and attempted to change tactics and beg for mercy but I couldn't form understandable words.

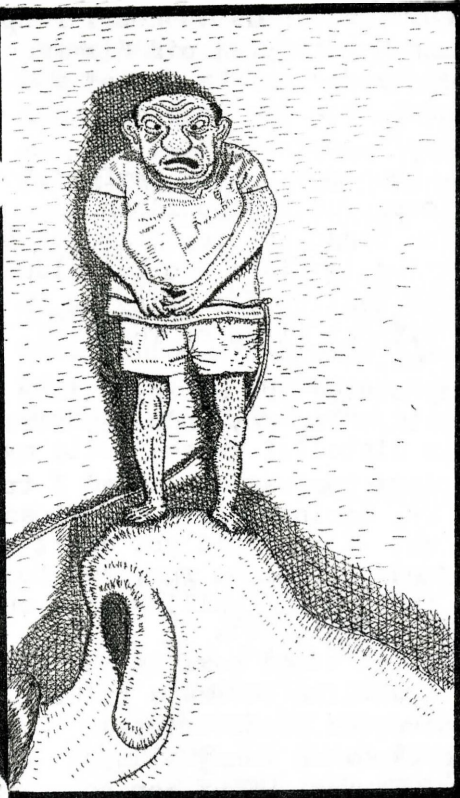
"Hush, hush. Shhhhh. Calm down," said the hygienist as she stroked my forehead. Eventually I quit struggling, not because I was calm, but because the situation seemed hopeless.

"That's fine Ms. Woods," said the doctor. "Get the floss and I'll fetch Dr. Pepput." She grabbed a spool of white floss from the counter and Dr. Stringer walked out of the room. He returned with a small, hard-sided leather case that looked like something a 19th century wonder-tonic charlatan might carry. On the side of the case, in gilded script, was printed "DOCTOR PEPPUT". He set the case on the counter and opened it -- inside was a two-inch tall man wearing a white lab coat. "Dr. Pepput, I'd like you to meet..." Dr. Stringer glanced at my folder to see my name, "...Ms. Rebecca Harret. It says here that she prefers to go by Becky."

Dr. Pepput spoke in a tweaked little voice that sounded like a high-pitched cartoon character. Actually, he sounded like a cartoon character that had inhaled helium, if one can imagine such absurdity stacked upon absurdity. He said, "Nice to meet you Becky. I'm glad you'll be joining our dental team. This little procedure won't hurt a bit. Just relax and open wide." I lay there looking at him, my eyes open wide just like my mouth. He giggled like an evil imp.

The hygienist unrolled a length of floss, held the spool and handed the loose end to Dr. Pepput, whom she placed on my belly. Dr. Pepput took off his lab coat and shoes, then his pants and socks. He tied the floss around his waist, employing a complex knot that he must have learned back in dental school. Then he walked up my body and climbed atop my nose. I stared at him with cross-eyed horror as he dove, hands-first, into my open mouth. I screamed. I tried to spit him out but he wormed and wiggled his way down my esophagus. Ms. Woods held his safety rope, as if he was afraid of getting lost in an uncharted cave.

Over the next couple of hours I felt strange pains in my guts along with sudden waves of nausea. They had me on nitrous oxide but it didn't seem to



help. Dr. Stringer was in and out of the operatory, but Ms. Woods stood over me throughout the ordeal, slowly unwinding the floss from the spool as the wee dentist spelunked deeper and deeper into my gastrointestinal tract. I could periodically feel the little parasite squirming through me until I finally felt a pressure on the inside of my anus. I screamed and squeezed it shut as tight as I could.

"It's okay Becky," Dr. Stringer assured me. "You probably feel a feeling now like you're going to soil yourself. It's okay. This feeling is perfectly normal with this procedure and is nothing to be embarrassed about."

I felt like I had to shit really bad but I held it in as best I could.

"Don't fight it, Becky. Most people make a little mess during this part of the procedure. It's nothing to be ashamed of. You're among friends here -- your new coworkers. Just let it go and it will all be over soon."

Fighting seemed useless and I soon let go. Relief mixed with shame as I felt warm feces fill my panties and leak onto my legs. "Good, good, well done," congratulated Dr. Stringer. "It's all over with now. That was a difficult procedure but you were a real trooper. Ms. Woods, could you please check for Dr. Pepput?"

The hygienist stuck a gloved hand up my skirt. Dr. Stringer said, "It's only proper that I leave this part of the procedure to Ms. Woods so that no one could accuse me of behaving inappropriately with a lovely young female patient."

She pulled out a brownish, wet, smelly Dr. Pepput.

"How did the procedure go?" inquired Dr. Stringer.

"Oh, just peachy-keen! Very smooth riding in there.

If you'll just tie her off Dr. Stringer, I can go get cleaned up and she can finally get out of that chair and stretch out. Sometimes we doctors forget how uncomfortable a long procedure can be for a patient stuck in the chair. But right now I'm eager to take

a shower. Nothing feels better than washing up after

doing one of these procedures. Ms. Woods took Dr. Pepput and placed him in the sink and he stripped off his feces saturated clothes. Ms. Woods turned on the faucet and Dr. Pepput howled. "Ms. Woods! For the love of God! A little more hot please!" She adjusted it and he sighed an elfin sigh, "Ooooooh that's perfect."

Dr. Stringer took the loose end of the floss that trailed from my mouth and began to tie it around one tooth and then another. I tried to fight him but didn't try very hard. Dr. Pepput was belting out "Singing in the Rain" like an off-key Alvin without Simon or Theodore, and the fight was drained out of me.

When he finished with my mouth, Dr. Stringer took the other end of the floss and said, "You may undo her straps now Ms. Woods." I watched in disbelief as she undid my bonds one by one. When the last one was unbuckled I tried to bolt out of the room but Dr. Stringer gave the floss a little tug and said, "Uh uh uh. I'm afraid you can't do that." I stood there paralyzed, trying to run, but found I couldn't move. It wasn't that he was pulling hard on the floss, I just didn't have the will to act.

A naked, dripping Dr. Pepput stood next to the sink and put on a dry little lab coat like it was a bathrobe. I stared at him, unable to move, as feces dripped out of my skirt and onto the floor in runny clumps.

"Have a heart," said Dr. Pepput. "Let her go clean up. It sure does feel good to take a nice, hot shower, I know." He turned to give me a wink.

"Of course, where are my manners," said Dr. Stringer as he handed over the dirty end of the floss to Ms. Woods as if handing over the reins of a horse. "Take her to get washed up." Then he turned to me, "You're a very beautiful young woman Ms. Harret and I think it would be more appropriate if Ms. Woods saw to this. People like pretty dental assistants you know. It's nice to have someone pretty to look at while you're having an uncomfortable procedure done."

XVI.

It actually turned out to be the best job I've ever had -- the pay is decent and the work, although routine after awhile, isn't too hard. It's almost as if I don't have to concentrate on it at all. I daydream and my hands seem to move of their own volition. And before I know it, the workday is done. It's like I don't even work. I just sit back and relax and the work somehow takes care of itself. There's a complete benefits package with, of course, a great dental plan since Dr. Stringer will do any work for free. But a lot of good that does me -- I've always had perfect teeth.

So, when I finally started laying out this dental issue I remembered "Dental Marionette" and thought that it would be an interesting addition to 28PLBwT #9. The day I started laying it out I received in the mail a lit-mag called *The Chaffin Journal*. As I flipped through it, randomly reading poems and short stories, I came across a poem entitled "Painless Dentistry". One doesn't often see poems about dentistry. It was funny and I was going to show it to Lisa, but then I noticed something. Something wasn't right. The poem was by A. E. Stringer.

I had used the name Stringer in my story as a not-so-subtle reference to puppeteering. I've never heard of any Stringers and it never occurred to me that it could be a real surname. The coincidence was too much. I wrote a letter to A. E. Stringer and requested permission to reprint "Painless Dentistry" in 28PLBwT, which he kindly granted. Here's the poem:

PAINLESS DENTISTRY

By A. E. Stringer

He lays his polished instruments
on your chest and says *Open please*.
The pain-killing needle hurts most,
deadening deep inside—exactly
where he now begins to drill,
bee in your mouth. *Let me know
if you can feel this.*

When he wonders how's life, you
garble out the same old story: *hine,
hine*. He hums along. With a larger
tool, he fills the hole he's made.
Swish. He suctions the last nerve
out of your mouth: *ptua very much*.
One of you walks away smiling.

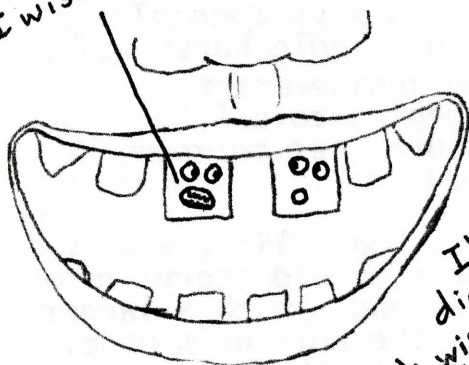
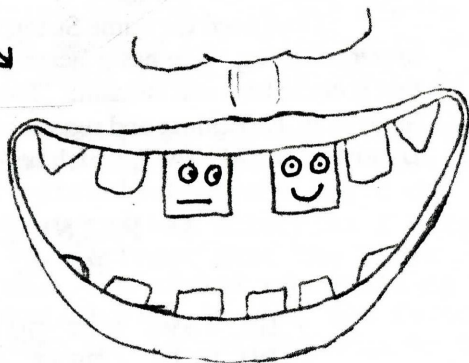
About Mr. Stringer: A. E. Stringer published his first collection of poems, *Channel Makers*, with Wesleyan University Press. His work has appeared in such journals as *The Nation*, *Antaeus*, *Ohio Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, and others. And now his work has been published in the most prestigious journal of all, *Twenty-eight Pages Lovingly Bound with Twine*.

Postscript: While reading through *The Chaffin Journal* I came across a second poem about dentistry entitled "Love Me Like A Dentist". Two dentistry poems in one lit-mag? What's going on? Unfortunately, this poem was not written by a Mr. Pepput or a Ms. Harret. It was written by Holly Day. Ms. Day appears to have fantasies about her dentist overstepping the boundaries of the patient/dentist relationship, as evidenced by this excerpt: *pistons pushing in, pulling out – "Does this hurt? / Does this?"*

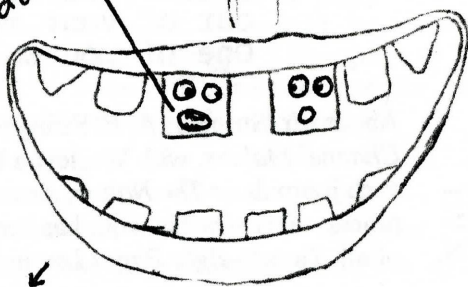
The Adventures of
#8 and #9

Today's Episode.
**SUBGINGIVAL
IRRITATION**

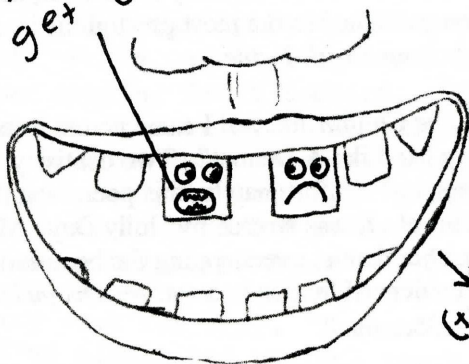
I hate you #9!
You're a good-fer-nuthin'
decalcified lowlife and
I wish you never erupted!



I'm glad there's this
diastema between us. I only
wish you could be ortho-
dontically moved so it
would be wider!



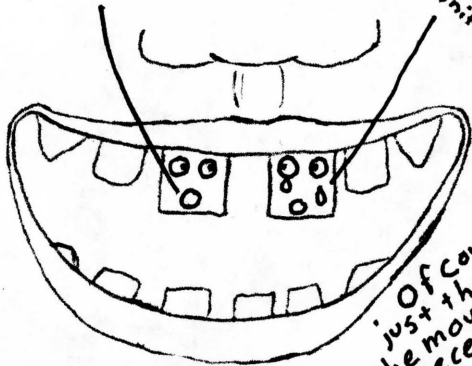
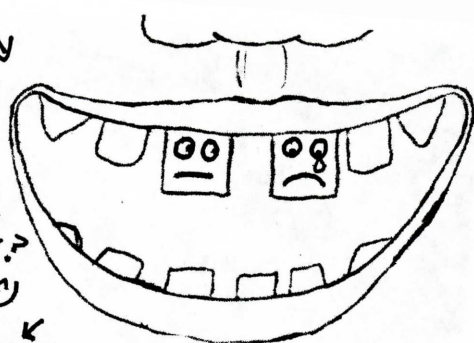
As a matter of
fact, I hope you
get extracted!



(to top right)

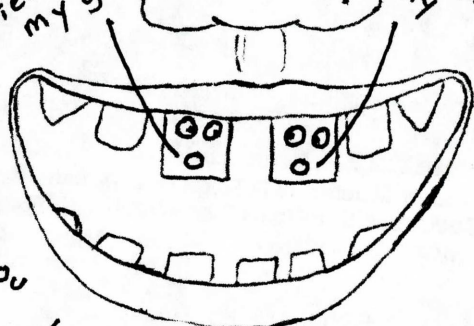
Oh, #9! Don't start salivating on me. You know I love you.

Really? (sniff sniff)



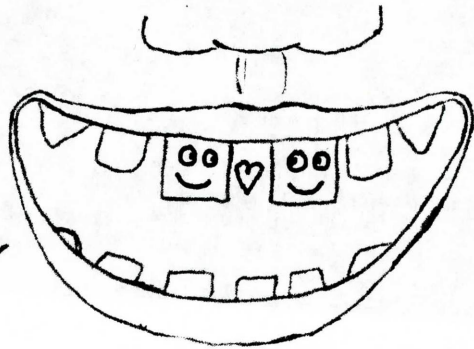
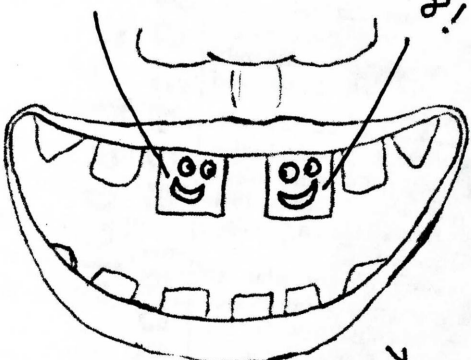
Of course I do! It's just that when we went to the movies last night, I got a piece of popcorn stuck under my gingiva.

Oh, these are the worst! Nothing a good blessing won't fix. Do you really love me?



Of course I do #9!

I love you too #8!



XIX

The End



Dr. Lisa Moster, D.D.S. gave a patient a free dental exam for "Doctors with a Heart," on March 1. (Photo submitted)

MOUNT VERNON — On March 1, Dr. Thomas M. Gilbert, D.D.S.; Dr. Lisa Moster, D.D.S.; and their staff donated their time and abilities for a free day of dentistry. The "Doctors with a Heart" event has been held for 13 years in conjunction with National Dental Health Month in February.

Cleanings, fillings, extractions were performed for 50 patients from Knox County and surrounding area. These are people who recognize the need for good dental care, but don't have dental insurance or other benefits which allow them to afford it.

With the 50 patients treated this year, over \$5,200 of care was provided. Over 13 years, 459 people have been seen and \$36,400 of dentistry has been performed. Gilbert and Moster credit their dedicated staff for the success of the program. This includes Anita

Martin, Kelly Looney and Kathy Byers in the front office; hygienists Barrie Fearn and Tammy Armintrout; and clinical assistants Lisa Lazzaro, Sonja Moore, Mona Stimpert, Brenda Holsinger, JoEllen Link and Tammy Baer.

"We appreciate these ladies donating their time and talent every year. The patients love them and they do such a wonderful job," Gilbert said.

Gilbert and Moster plan to continue to offer this day of free dentistry annually, due to the great demand and need for it.

"In 90 minutes, we schedule this full day of dentistry and the phones never stop ringing," said Gilbert.

Knox County dentists who are interested in participating next year can contact Gilbert's office at [redacted] for more information.

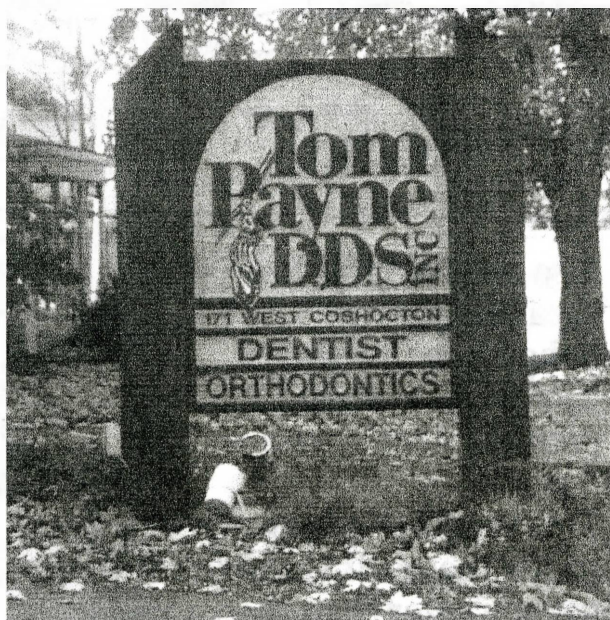
Local dentists donate time and services for free day of dentistry


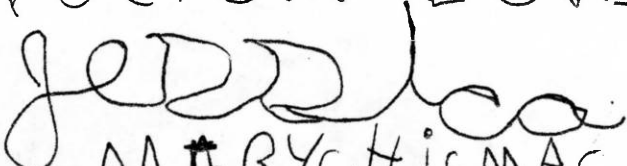


Unfortunate Homonyms

These two dentists with such unlucky surnames practice in the nearby towns of Mt. Vernon and Johnstown. In an era of “painless dentistry” it’s refreshing to see that two dentists are keepin it real and kickin it old skool.

Imagine sitting in the waiting room at the dentist’s office and a dental assistant walks in and says, “Dr. Payne will see you now.”



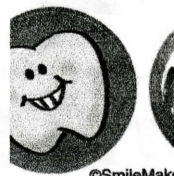
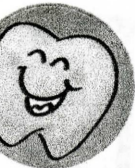
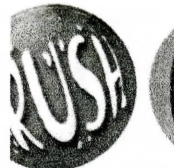
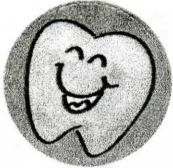
DEAR DOCTOR
I LIKE YOU VERY
MUCH. YOU ARE
MY  DOCTOR.
AND THANK YOU
~~for~~ for THE
LETER YOU ARE
A VERY NISE
DOCTOR. ♡ LOVE

MERYCHRISMAS



Lisa received this heart-breakingly sweet handmade Christmas card from a young patient.

This is part of a drawing inside the card. It doesn't get any cuter than "I won't a hug".

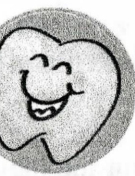
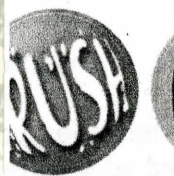
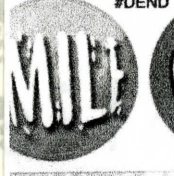




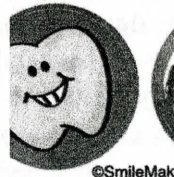
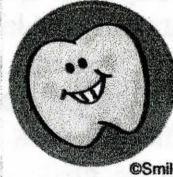
©SmileMakers
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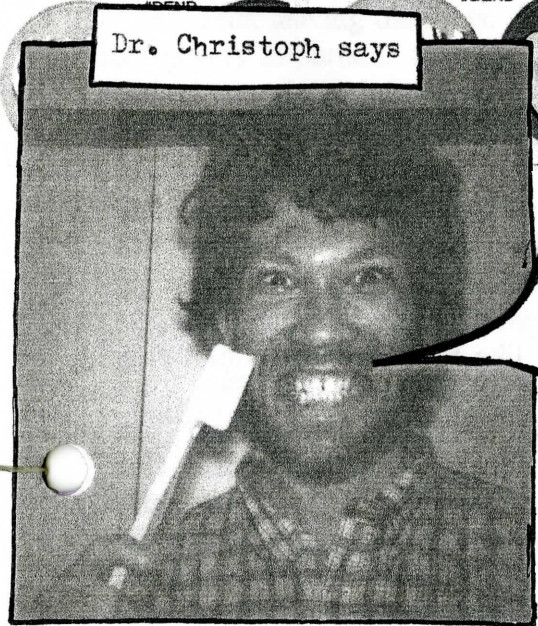


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Dr. Christoph says



You've all
been very
good patients.
Here's some
Stickers.

xxiii

DIY Amish Dentistry



I. Horsefile

An Amish boy broke his molar. The tooth itself didn't hurt but the jagged edge of the molar was cutting into his cheek. Rather than go to the dentist, his father took a horsefile (the kind one uses to care for a horse's hooves) and filed it down himself. Strangely, the tooth suddenly began to hurt and the boy had to go in to see the dentist. Once there, he nonchalantly explained what his father had done.

II. Gasoline-Powered Dentistry

Some folks from the American Dental Association came into my wife's office the other day, asking everyone there if they had heard any reports of a rogue Amish dentist who was practicing without a license. They had heard nothing about this man but it gets one thinking... What would it be like to have work done by an Amish dentist?

Amish always do things in groups, like a barn raising. Our neighbors hired some Amish to build a deck onto their house. One morning their yard was suddenly swarming with Amish guys carrying lumber and hammering away and by the end of the day, the work was done. During that day they had their gas-powered table saw running loudly. Remember, Amish folks don't like to use

electricity so they often hook up electric devices to gasoline engines. Imagine sitting back in the Amish dentist's chair, a kerosene lantern hanging over your head in place of the retractable overhead lamp. Once he's diagnosed the trouble (without x-rays of course), he pulls on a cord and suddenly the room smells like gasoline and exhaust. As he holds the smoking gas-powered drill over you, he says in his charming lilting accent, "Now open wide. This won't hurt one bit."

III. Full-mouth Extraction

An Amish lady went to a dentist and after examining her options for saving her few good teeth, decided to get dentures instead. But when she found out what it would cost to have all her teeth extracted, she went home to "think about it".

The lady and her father decided that they could save some money by pulling the teeth themselves and then go back to the dentist to get fitted for dentures. So her father takes a pair of pliers and pulls out all of her teeth, or so he thinks. I'm not sure what kind of anesthetic was used.

Well, he didn't actually pull out her teeth. When he cranked on them with his pliers, all that he did was break the crowns off all of her teeth, leaving the roots. Removing even the tiniest pieces of root is very important. Soon her face was swollen and infected and she had to undergo intensive antibiotic treatments before the dentist could even attempt to fix the damage.



Yo Punk!
The name's
Yoder!



There once was a dentist from Danville

Who claimed there was no tooth she can't fill

She was Pennsylvania Dutch

Said "this won't hurt too much"

As she honed dental tools on her anvil

The Greatest Twine Disaster in Human History



On page 27 of 28PLBwT #8, I printed a little thingy about the Sisal Binder Twine I was allegedly using to bind that issue. Lisa bought a massive 2,500 foot spool of haybailin' sisal twine for me; it was a thing of pure beauty. I stared longingly at that twine while I laid out issue #8. And I gazed upon its twiney magnificence while I chopped the pages, did the covers, collated the cut pages and punched the holes. Then, finally, I grabbed the lovely twine and cut off some lengths of beautiful sisal so that I could bind the first few copies.

After binding half a dozen copies, I knew something was amiss. I carefully inspected the bound copies and discovered that the twine wasn't holding! I pulled on the knots and they easily came unbound. The sisal wasn't holding its knots! I tried triple tying it. I tried quadruple tying it. I tried pulling the knots really, really hard to secure them tightly. Nothing worked.

Sisal twine just doesn't hold a knot well. It's a beautiful twine – very rugged and stringy. I like it a lot but, alas, it is destined to bind hay bales, not fanzines. Sisal has a waxy texture which doesn't knot as well as the rough-dry texture of jute and hemp, or the soft-tight fibers of cotton.

So I had to remove the twine from the issues I had bound and find a different twine. I went with my old standby, jute. Though I usually prefer a thicker, triple-ply jute, I decided to go with a double-ply for the sake of variety. So if you read a copy of 28PLBwT #8, it was bound with double-ply jute instead of sisal binder twine.

I had already printed the fanzine by the time I discovered the shortcomings of sisal, so there was no chance to change what I had written. I published a twine lie, and for that I am sorry. Truly sorry. But I'm going to try to make it up to you. All you twine-lovers out there want to see and feel a real piece of sisal twine so I'm taping a piece into each and every copy of this issue. Touch it, feel it, love it.

Only one out of ten dentists
recommends Aim brand toothpaste
for healthy teeth and gums

...



... but I wouldn't trust that one if I were you.