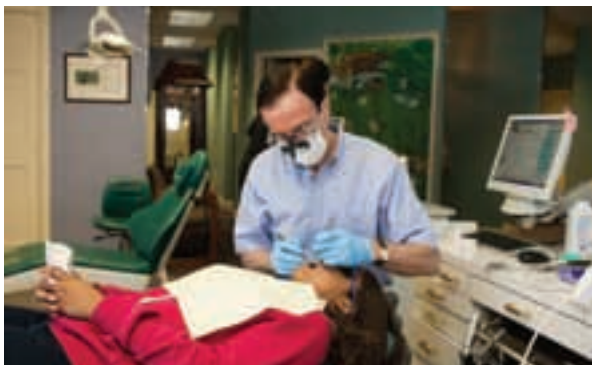




## Taking Experience to the Executive Level

by Chelsea Patten, staff writer, *Orthotown Magazine*



*Dr. Michael Rogers, orthodontist and current president-elect for the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO), practices in Augusta and Thomson, Georgia with his partner (and also son-in-law) Lee Andrews. In an interview with Orthotown, Rogers shares the ins and outs of the practice he started 38 years ago, his agenda as he assumes the president position and his reasons for taking up running.*



Photography by Frank L. Lazenby

### What is your educational background?

**Rogers:** I attended Emory University for undergraduate. I was accepted into Emory University School of Dentistry after two years of college and graduated in June of 1969 with my DDS. I served as a general dentist in the Army for two years after graduation and then did my orthodontic residency at the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry from 1971 to 1973.

### How and why did you get into orthodontics?

**Rogers:** Early on in dental school I became fascinated with how orthodontics could change faces, improve self-esteem and even change career opportunities. When I was a freshman in dental school we had an orthodontic lab and I was one of the few dental students who actually enjoyed bending the wires – that's when I knew this is what I wanted to do.

### What is your practice philosophy?

**Rogers:** Our philosophy is to develop a specialized treatment plan for every patient to reflect their needs and concerns. Particular attention is paid to the occlusion and the position of second molars. When feasible, treatment is started at the appropriate age to obtain optimum results.

Part of our vision statement is to promote and enjoy a low-stress, flexible environment, providing each patient – the heart of the practice – with a wow factor. We have fun as we work and bring the patient into the positive atmosphere. The “down home” fun environment is noted on almost every survey that we receive.

### What is the competition like in your area?

**Rogers:** My area is reasonably competitive, but we always try to make room for new orthodontists and have a cooperative attitude. I think that it is important for everyone to get along and try to be helpful to their colleagues.

### Who is your primary clientele? And how do you market to them?

**Rogers:** We treat about 20 percent adults, 80 percent children. We promote our practice primarily through our former patients. I pioneered a Herbst appliance with Specialty Appliances in the early 1980s for most Class II cases. This treatment seems to be noticed by patients and referring dentists, which improves our patient base through referrals.

Our Internet and Facebook sites are also very active.

*continued on page 68*

**Name:** Michael Rogers, DDS

**Graduate From:** Emory University School of Dentistry, 1969  
Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry, 1973

**Practice Name:** Rogers & Andrews Orthodontics

**Practice Locations:** Augusta and Thomson, Georgia

**Web site:** [www.smilesinmotion.com](http://www.smilesinmotion.com)



**Tell me about your office.**

**Rogers:** The office is approximately 7,000 square feet and laid out in an L shape. Michelle, our patient flow coordinator, analyzes the office efficiency constantly and tells each doctor which chair or area to go to next.

On a typical day, we begin at 7:50 with a staff huddle where we review the appointments, the exams for the day and discuss any schedule openings. From 8 to 10 a.m. we primarily have short appointments with bandings. We reserve the early afternoon for longer appointments; around 3 p.m. we continue with the shorter appointments until we quit about 5 p.m.

**What do you find in terms of technology has the biggest “wow” factor?**

**Rogers:** I was resistant to the change in the early 1990s, but have now come to be very dependent on computers. Using computers for treatment cards and treatment planning is now something I can't practice without. From there, I can say our biggest “wow” factor for patients is probably the Web site. Everyone today is centered on the Internet, so a great Web site is a must. We use it as an educational tool for patients in the office.



**As of May 2011, you will assume the post as AAO president. What are some of your primary responsibilities?**

**Rogers:** I will work with the Executive Director Chris Vranas and the AAO staff on day-to-day tasks which include media requests, member questions and governmental affairs. In addition, I will visit several of the constituencies and plan the

agendas for our Board of Trustees meetings. The AAO has more than 2,500 international members that the president interacts with as well.

As far as the AAO as a whole, the AAO's current and future role is to promote the benefits of oral health care. There is so much information, both good and bad, out in the public domain that it is a dental professional's responsibility to help patients understand the role that trained and licensed dentists and dental specialists play with ensuring appropriate oral health. AAO's role is to collaborate with dental organizations, government entities and dental and orthodontic manufacturers to ensure that the public has the best dental care possible.

**What are one or two things you'd like to accomplish during your term?**

**Rogers:** I plan to work with dental organizations to alter or repeal many of the federal health care components that place unnecessary burdens on small businesses such as 1099 reporting, as well as restoring Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) to higher limits so that the consumer can help pay for his or her own dental and medical care. In addition, I would like to see the AAO market more to the potential adult orthodontic patient. This is a large resource of patients that is largely untapped.

**What do you think is the biggest problem orthodontists face today?**

**Rogers:** Other areas are encroaching on our specialty and we must maintain our position as the pre-eminent resource for orthodontics and orthodontic information. When I started my



*Waiting area including game room*



*Dr. Andrews working on patient*

practice more than 37 years ago, almost all orthodontic treatment was done by orthodontists. This is not the case today.

**What is your favorite feature of Orthotown?**

**Rogers:** I like the message boards because of the interaction and ideas that are developed.

**What do you like to do when you are not working?**

**Rogers:** Before AAO activities I was very involved in golf – I would play two to three times per week. However, with the time constraints and out-of-town activities, my hobby has become running. One can always find a place to run. I jog eight to 20 miles almost every day, approximately 75 miles a week. It is my quiet time and prepares me for the day. I've completed eight marathons, one Ironman 70.3 and one half-marathon in the last 12 months. My marathon events will probably have to slow down next year with my presidential duties but I'm sure that I will work a few in. I will always run Boston.

**Don't forget to post your race pictures and times on the Orthotown Message Boards! Thanks for taking the time to speak with us. ■**




*Dr. Andrews and Dr. Rogers with staff*

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