

Blueprint for a Green Practice

By **Susan Elliott-Smith** based on interviews conducted by **Christine A. Hovliaras-Delozier, RDH, BS, MBA**

Environmentally aware dentists and dental hygienists share strategies for improving the impact of oral health care on the environment

Twenty minutes into a tour of a start-up dental practice to gather ideas for his own new dental office, Fred Pockrass, DDS, began to choke. It wasn't the price tag of building a new office. It wasn't the overwhelming responsibilities of launching a new business. It was decorating products.

"I had never had that kind of experience before. I thought it was really odd," Pockrass said. After some research, Pockrass and his business partner and wife, Ina, learned that certain decorating products, such as paints, carpets and wallcoverings "off-gas" or emit fumes. It was another environmental pitfall the couple wanted to avoid in building their eco-friendly practice.

"It struck us as odd that the healing professions have been slow to consider the health and wellness of the environment in which these services are provided. Not to mention the effect on the professionals who work in the environment everyday," said Pockrass, who, while always ecologically minded, had never experienced the off-gassing phenomenon before. He had already made the decision to make his new practice sustainable or able to support itself with renewable resources. Adding toxin-free furnishings to his dental practice became another step toward his goal. It was not a small feat to consider for any health care service provider. His business, called Transcendentist, the first known eco-friendly practice in the United States, opened in 2003 in Berkeley, Calif.

Transcendentist is among a handful of sustainable dental practices that have been making headlines in North America for their dedication to eco-friendly procedures. Another, Front Street Dental in Stratford, Ontario, Canada, was launched by Ali Farahani, DDS, in April 2007. Farahani chronicled his research in a study cowritten with a fourth-year honors student from the University of Waterloo – the MIT of Canada. Farahani wanted to show that creating a sustainable practice was justified and reasonable. An end result of his hard work was First Street Dental's status as the first eco-friendly practice in Canada.

"Unless a building has sewage and effluence – black, green and gray smoke coming from it – we don't think of it as an environmental issue," said Farahani. "That's kind of the general mindset right now." He wanted solutions for the environmental pollutants of dentistry.

"Not that dentistry is the worst!" Farahani added. "At whatever point we enter this consciousness, we realize there are things going on of which we should be aware so we can leave a lighter footprint."

The obvious pollutant is mercury. The dental industry is the third largest user of mercury in the United States, using approximately 40 metric tons of the element each year to produce silver amalgam fillings — which are 50 percent mercury by weight. Dentists' offices are also the largest source of mercury pollution to the nation's wastewater treatment plants.¹

In addition to this, traditional radiology uses toxic chemicals, and the simple day-to-day actions of running a business produce large amounts of waste that should be reused, recycled or reduced in some manner.



Dr. Fred Pockrass and Ina Pockrass at Transcendentist

Sustainable Dentistry

"It took a lot of thought to put this package together because no one had really done this before," said Pockrass of his quest for eco-friendly products for his dental practice. Ina Pockrass, in particular, did a lot of research into the products selected.

"You cannot just go to Home Depot or Ace Hardware to find these products," he stated. "These things don't exist in one location." After his eye-tearing experience in the newly constructed office, Pockrass was determined to find products that would not choke patients or staff. One of their first choices was paint that did not contain harmful Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs).

"We painted our offices, and the next day it did not smell like it had just been painted," Pockrass noted. To continue the clean-air environment, he added lab floors composed of the no-VOC flooring Marmoleum, an all-natural floor covering that is hypoallergenic, biodegradable and free of formaldehyde. For other areas, he used carpets made from natural organic wool, wood floors finished with water-based varnish and wallpaper composed of by-products of paper production and installed with water-based pastes. All the furniture in the Transcendentist office is made from recycled or reclaimed wood.

"If [eco-friendly resources] didn't exist, we had them created for us," Pockrass noted. He found a number of innovations along the way, including participating in a local program called Smart Lights, which allowed the Transcendentist offices to convert all of their high-energy consuming office lights to energy-efficient fluorescent lighting.

"We also offset all of our power consumption with windmill-generated electricity," he explained. Transcendentist employed a company called 3phases Energy Services, (www.3phases.com) to produce a carbon-neutral footprint.

The practice also purchased energy-efficient appliances (washer, dryer, dishwasher) that enabled the staff to sanitize their custom-made cloth bibs, sterilization towels, cloth headrest covers, ceramic cups and other reusable products that are typically plastic throw-aways in other practices. In addition, all reusable cloth items are washed using environmentally safe detergents.

The life-span for a towel in the practice is about three years. The retired towels are donated to American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)-run shelters. They also reuse and recycle lab boxes and just about everything coming into the practice.

In other reduction measures, the fully integrated virtual office captures patient charting, billing and radiography in a digital format. This paperless environment is a time saver, according to Ina Pockrass.

"We don't have to pay someone to pull a paper chart or put the doctor's notes into the chart. [The charts] are not filed in the wrong place. Vanessa Sorrells, RDH, and [Dr. Pockrass] type their notes right in as they complete the procedure, and the notes are instantly available to the people in the front helping the client as they are leaving," Ina explained. In addition, the digital radiography exposes patients to 75 percent to 90 percent less harmful radiation and requires no toxic chemicals for film development. In addition, Pockrass installed an amalgam separator before it became legislated into practice in Alameda County.

Because eliminating issues with biocompatibility of dental materials was another important goal within the practice, the Transcendentist team offers patients a Clifford Research Laboratories' Reactivity Test, which zeroes in on the patient's compatibility with 6,000 different dental



Cloth headrest and patient bib, cloth handle-cover on light, cloth tray-cover, electronic chart



Left: Transcendentist's hygiene instrument tray with biting digital image set up. Right: Ceramic cup for herbal mouth rinse; hot towel with essential oil scent custom-created for the practice.

The life-span for a towel in the practice is about three years. The retired towels are donated to ASPCA-run shelters.

materials. The team uses restorative materials – whether ceramic, porcelain or even gold, – that offer the greatest comfort, durability and aesthetics to meet the patient's goals.

When the Pockrasses' practice opened in 2003, they were soon visited by the Bay Area Green Business Program (<http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov/>), a nine-county agency in California that uses a multi-agency inspection process to qualify businesses as "green." The agencies involved review and approve a business' pollution control, recycling and reuse practices and energy consumption.

"They were hoping that a dentist would create an environmentally sound dental office because they didn't know how it could be done," Pockrass said. "They asked us if we would allow their inspectors to come in. The end result was that the inspectors certified Transcendentist as the first dental office in the Bay Area to be a certified Green Business and used the Pockrasses' innovations to set the standard for what other dental offices could do to be green. There are now four other green-certified dental

offices in the Bay Area. Transcendentist continually updates its green standing with two of the largest dental supply companies in America and an OSHA consultant who spe-

■ Eco-Friendly Recommendations

From the study, "Eco-Friendly Dentistry, The Environmentally Responsible Dental Practice," by Ali Farahani, DDS, and Mitalle Suchak:

- Implement an eco-friendly sterilization program which eliminates the need for disposable autoclave wraps and simultaneously eliminates the need for disposable patient bibs.
- Use reusable operating room cotton towels instead of disposable patient bibs.
- Use an Energy Star washer and dryer, where applicable.
- Use fluorescent instead of halogen lighting, where practical.
- Use LCD instead of CRT computer screens.
- Use a dry instead of a wet dental vacuum pump.
- Use [local] recycling program[s] to recycle separately the paper and plastic halves of one autoclave bag.
- Use digital radiography instead of traditional film-based x-rays.
- If using traditional x-rays, recycle fixer and developer solutions and recycle lead foil from x-rays.
- Consider using less harmful surface disinfectants in dental offices such as tea tree oil and thyme.
- Use linoleum as it is the environmental choice for flooring.
- Use an ultra-low VOC [or no VOC] paint.
- Use reusable and bio-degradable sundries wherever possible, including: reusable cotton towels versus disposable plastic/paper bibs; reusable stainless steel high and low volume, surgical/endodontic suction tips versus disposable plastic; reusable glass irrigation syringe versus disposable plastic; bio-degradable disposable cups versus land fill burdening cups; and chlorine-free, high post-consumer recycled paper towels, towel paper versus traditional paper products.
- Use an environmentally-friendly landscape company who will use natural growth product and procedures as an alternative to harmful pesticides.
- Use stainless steel (Hu-Friedy) prophylaxis cups instead of the disposable prophylaxis-containing cups. This means purchasing prophylaxis paste in tubes (Zircate) or tubs. This also allows one to use only the amount of paste that is needed versus a predetermined amount which is often too much and wasteful/costly.
- Use disposable, plastic/paper barriers only as truly needed. Each office is encouraged to do a one-day consumption analysis exclusively for barriers and then calculate a week, month, year and career.

cializes in dental offices to make certain they continue to follow proper protocol as they evolve.

Transcendentist's practices crossed Farahani's path during the literature review for his research article, "Eco-Friendly Dentistry, The Environmentally Responsible Dental Practice." When Farahani and coauthor Mitalle Suchak discovered the information about Transcendentist in Berkeley, the pair was delighted to learn of a dental office that had already traveled the eco-friendly road.

To develop the report, the pair gathered information from five different dental offices in Ontario, surveying consumption during the care of some 2,000 patients, which they then reviewed in light of Farahani's proposed environmentally sound "Green Model."

Just one sample finding from the report was that the average number of papers included in a patient's chart was 12.3 sheets. Farahani and Suchak's "green" model would use only six papers in a typical chart by storing the majority of the patient's information in a digital format. By cutting the number of papers in half, Farahani and Suchak's green model saves 12,600 papers for a 2,000-chart dental office.

To make the green model a reality, Farahani spent hours researching sources for various eco-friendly products. He bought an older home and remodeled it to meet his vision of a green practice by sealing the hard wood floors with low-VOC lacquer and, like Transcendentist in Berkeley, used Marmoleum floor covering in other areas. He used ultra-low VOC paints and purchased a medical-grade air purifier to lower the mercury vapors.

Farahani noted that occasional roadblocks presented themselves as he put the office together. In one instance, sterilizing the cloth towels used as patient bibs required more than running them through the energy-efficient washer. It also required a trip through the Autoclave – a process that destroyed the fabric. While considering how to handle this problem, Farahani was also seeking an ecological answer for the disposable plastic coverings of instrument cassettes. He managed to work both problems into one solution, as shown in this excerpt from his report:

Once the cassettes (Hu-Friedy IMS) have been washed, operating room cotton towels (Medimart) are used to wrap the cassettes. The wrapped cassette is placed in an appropriately-sized autoclave bag (Medimart) and placed in the autoclave. This process allows the cotton towel to be sterilized as well as the cassette and its contents. The autoclave bag is necessary to ensure that the vacuum phase of the autoclave does not remove the micro-fibers from the cotton towels. These micro-fibers have been shown to cause serious damage to autoclaves. Upon completion of the sterilization, the autoclave bag is carefully opened to separate the paper and plastic portions without tearing if possible. Accordingly, the paper and plastic portions are recycled ... The wrapped cassettes are then stored appropriately for eventual usage while maintaining their sterilization status as they would with disposable autoclave wraps.²

Saving Time and Money

Over the long haul, recycling and reusing create cost savings. The Pockrasses are so passionate about communi-

cating this message that they commissioned a top environmental consulting firm to create a study to demonstrate the cost savings other dentists can enjoy.

"At first, you have to think about the real costs of things that we do," said Pockrass, offering as an example, paper patient bibs.

To supply the virgin paper bibs, he explained, trees are cut, and paper is bleached using chlorine that then enters the water supply. Then the bibs are fabricated, packaged and shipped using more resources, fuel and other transportation costs.

"It gets used once and is thrown away in a landfill where we pay for it to sit for many years," said Pockrass. "It's called the life cycle of these materials. You have to ask, what is the true cost? Who is paying for this? You might think you are paying less for a paper bib up front, but in the long run, not only are we paying more for it, but our children and our grandchildren and generations down the road are paying for it."

Farahani used a similar logic in a quick calculation of the number of plastic suction tips he saves from the landfill by using stainless steel tips. He estimated that over the next 10 years, he might save his local landfill from 100,000 plastic tips.

The second hurdle to cross, after expense, is the issue of the extra time required in completing green procedures. Is it really an issue?

Vanessa Sorrells, RDH, for Transcendentist, said no. "When I first looked at this office one of my friends who temped here as a dental assistant said, 'they do things a little different than we are used to.'" Sorrells candidly admitted that her interpretation of that was "time consuming" and "harder."

"When I got here, I found that it was easier and less time-consuming to put a little cover on the head rest and the light handle and use the neonatal-grade disinfectant to wipe down the chair as opposed to removing the barriers and throwing things away," commented Sorrells. She described sterilizing her instruments using a surgical cloth 'burrito' as a wrap instead of using the traditional, disposable sterilization packaging. As for masks and gloves,



Front Street Dental relies on reusable products. Above: prophylax paste in a tube and reusable stainless steel prophylax cup holders replace numerous disposable prophylax cups. Below: Reusable stainless steel low-volume suction

Other than the time spent washing and drying reusable cloth items – patient bibs and headrests – Farahani has found that most of Front Street Dental's practices do not take a considerable amount of extra time.



Dr. Farahani holding instrument cassette wrapped in reusable cotton wrap which becomes patient bib, and Mary Elejel, BS, RDH, holding natural surface disinfectant



Mary speaking with a patient wearing a reusable cotton bib

Sorrells uses nitrile-based products, avoiding latex all together.

"It has been a lot more time efficient," Sorrells said of her green dental hygiene practices. "I can spend a lot more time with my patients than thinking about how to quickly turn my room around."

In his research study, Farahani admitted that he was amazed at the number of barriers used in a typical dental practice. "Barriers on the handles of the light, on the suction tips, on our water switch. Do one thing: Count the number of barriers you use on a typical day. See what decisions you feel moved to make after that," advised Farahani.

■ The Eco-Dentistry Association

Fred and Ina Pockrass recently founded the Eco-Dentistry Association to support the growing wave within the dental community to make our practices as environmentally sound as possible. Most of us know about global climate change, but we just don't know what we can do about it in our dental practices. The Eco-Dentistry Association supports dental professionals in making environmentally sound choices, whether it is ordering re-usable stainless steel suction tips instead of disposable plastic, or switching to washable cloth patient barriers instead of petroleum-based plastics, and empowers dental professionals with information about sustainable practices.

The Eco-Dentistry Association makes it easy for its members to access information and products they need to incorporate "green" principles into their practices. Association membership is open to dentists, hygienists, dental and hygiene students and other dental professionals: everyone who wants to take a leadership role in the "greening" of our profession.

The Eco-Dentistry is transforming the dental industry by:

1. educating dental professionals about sustainable practices;
2. providing them with easy to use technical assistance;
3. giving them ready access to pre-screened "green" products and services, including the popular "Green My Office" consulting services;
4. creating a collaborative community of environmentally active dental professionals; and
5. giving the public access to dental practitioners who share their eco-friendly values.

The Association's Web site, which will be up and running by late January 2008, will have a storehouse of information for its members and the public. To join the association, or for more information, please visit www.ecodentistry.org <<http://www.ecodentistry.org/>> or call them at: (510) 841-1229.

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Creating New Products

While neither practice has been approached by a manufacturer to create eco-friendly products, both have had to innovate to achieve their green goals.

"We are developing our own oral health care products," said Pockrass, describing how the team is collaborating with the company that developed the cloth patient bibs to create a line of bamboo cloth products for the Transcen-

dentist team that they then will make available to oral health care colleagues.

"The exciting thing about bamboo is that it is a sustainable, quick-growing plant that has natural antiseptic and anti-microbial properties that make it a perfect fit for dentistry," Pockrass explained.

While Pockrass typically recommends electric toothbrushes, he also offers the products of a company called Recycline, Inc. "They make their toothbrush handles from recycled yogurt containers," Pockrass said. "When I heard this, I thought, 'This is not going to work. I want my Oral-B.' But they are really good toothbrushes!"

Ina Pockrass is working with Recycline to develop a tongue scraper. "We're about transforming this industry!" she said, adding that she would love to see a mask product composed of recycled paper and views it as possible for the future.

In some of its innovations, Front Street Dental purchases rinse cups made of 100 percent biodegradable corn, and uses tea tree oil, the only natural product approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to disinfect.

Patient Response

Front Street Dental's patients applaud the practice's eco-minded management and appreciate the lack of "dental smell," said Farahani. To maintain the purified air in the office, he reviews all Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) before any new products can be used in the office.

"We have to include ourselves in the environment," said Farahani, who gives patients the opportunity to choose, as much as possible, the materials used in their mouths.

Many Transcendentist patients feel they make a contribution to ecology simply by being patients in such a conscientious practice.

"When we first opened 2003, the consciousness in the world about environmental issues we are facing as a planet were much less than they are now," said Ina Pockrass. While patients supported the practice's routines, it was not a real market differentiator. "Over time, it has become increasingly something they are not only proud of, but also something they are looking to other health care practitioners to [provide]," she concluded.

"We started this as a scratch practice almost four years ago – meaning that my first patient was my wife!" added Pockrass, who frequently takes patients on "eco-tours" of the office. "Since then, we have been averaging 30 to 40 new clients per month."

"And we do virtually no traditional marketing at all," said Ina. "Our internal referral rate is well over 60 percent."

Locating Coworkers to Share the Cause

Providing seamless patient care in an eco-friendly dental practice requires dentists to find like-minded dental hygienists and dental assistants to share the cause. Farahani just added a new dental hygienist in November 2007. He described Mary Elejel, BS, RDH, as an intelligent, critical-thinking and conscientious dental hygienist. From the first

■ Read More About It

A wealth of information lies at the fingertips of those wanting to research sustainable business practices, ecologically friendly products and new Earth-friendly service providers. Here are helpful organizations and their Web sites that were mentioned in this article.

3phases Energy Services (www.3phases.com) has a vision to create or stimulate the creation of 100 percent renewable energy in our lifetimes as part of a cleaner, more sustainable world. The organization's mission is to keep the planet cool and harness technology and local resources to build sound economical models.

Smart Lights Program (www.smartlights.org) Smart Lights is a program offered by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company that is especially designed to help small businesses upgrade to energy-efficient lighting. The program offers free, start-to-finish technical assistance and substantial subsidies towards installation and equipment costs. Small businesses, small institutional facilities, and common areas of multi-family buildings are eligible. The first step is a free, no-obligation assessment of your lighting needs. Please call 1 (510) 981-8955, extension 223 for details. Those interested in similar programs should contact their local energy providers.

The Sustainable Business Alliance (<http://www.sustainablebiz.org/>) is a membership organization for companies committed to greater environmental and socially responsible business practices. Members are a diverse community of over 200 sustainable business in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Teleosis Institute (www.teleosis.org) has a mission to develop effective, sustainable health care provided by professionals who serve as environmental stewards. A not-for-profit organization, the Teleosis Institute was founded by Joel Kreisberg, DC, MA, a health care practitioner and environmental educator. The Institute has three major goals:

- To educate health professionals about the principles and practices of Ecologically Sustainable Medicine
- To build a community-based network for professionals providing Green Health Care
- To provide access to high quality, cost-effective, sustainable medical services benefiting underserved populations and the environment in which we live

interview, Farahani picked up cues that Elejel shared his views of environmental responsibility.

He began his search for a new dental hygienist by carefully wording his advertisement to target eco-minded professionals. Elejel was intrigued by his choice of words in the ad, which she found through an online job resource at her dental hygiene school.

"We put Mary through a pretty tough interview," explained Farahani, who searched a long time to find a professional who shared the practice's "green" mission. He liked that one of Elejel's first questions was: What is the culture of your practice?

"I thought that this was a person who was conscious of the environment that we have, and the whole approach to global health," Farahani said.

Elejel agreed: "It was a pretty lengthy process. The first part of the interview included questions that weren't ordinarily asked in interviews. I think it was important to find out what kind of lifestyle I lived, where I was coming from, my concepts about health and the environment." The second part of the interview showed her that the practice was looking for somebody who would practice their philosophy at work and have a concern for each client's overall health.

Farahani added: "Many people in the interview told us that eco-friendly dentistry is 'interesting.' It needed to be more than interesting!"

"You have to be passionate about it to live it," Elejel continued. "You have to practice what you preach."

Getting Involved

Getting involved and staying connected to other organizations involved in green business development is key to learning about and growing an eco-friendly practice.

Transcendentist keeps close ties with its community-based East Bay Sustainable Business Alliance and both it and Front Street Dental are members of an organization called Teleosis, a network for sustainable health care providers.

"All [these organizations are] committed to what's called the triple bottom-line for businesses: people, planet and profits," said Pockrass.

"Teleosis is a wonderful non-profit organization based here in Berkeley that is devoted to greening the health care industry and raising public awareness of the importance of what they term 'ecologically sustainable medicine,'" shared Ina Pockrass, who was recently asked to serve on the organization's advisory board. "They are an amazing resource for information about the impact on our environment from the way most health care practices currently operate."

Teleosis operates the Green Pharmacy Program, which offers community-based, take-back sites for medical pollutants like unused or expired medicines or mercury thermometers.

Ina Pockrass noted that approximately 70 percent of unused or expired medication is disposed of by toilet and ends up in rivers, bays, oceans and the public water sup-

ply. Teleosis cited water supply tests that reveal traces of the most commonly prescribed medications.

Niyati Desai, MA, Green Health Care Program and editorial director for the Institute, recommended that the most effective strategy for building a sustainable dentistry practice is through observation, awareness and action.

"Observe your current operations in your practice and determine opportunities for reducing resource consumption and pollution prevention," Desai recommended. "Become aware of non-toxic and renewable alternatives to detrimental products and services, and develop an action plan to implement these greener approaches to dentistry."

Desai noted that Green Health Care is an opportunity to support each client's health through education, empowerment and preventive care.

"The goal is to create optimal wellness through noninvasive, safe and sustainable practices," she stated.

Teleosis' Green Health Care Program is a Web-based interactive course that serves as a platform for health providers to discuss strategies for integrating sustainability into their professional practice.

Ina Pockrass recommended that students and other dental hygienists use such resources to heighten their awareness of the simple steps one can take to improve the green operations in their own practice. Sorrells agreed.

"In dental hygiene school, we were kind of limited. We used a lot of the plastic barriers, and we are not disposing effectively or recycling," she explained. "So when we get into the workforce, that's our nature and our training – it's what we were taught to do."

For his part, Farahani has issued a challenge to several dental schools for one institution to step forward and become the first eco-friendly dental school in North America and take up the cause of educating the next generation of oral health providers.

"I don't want to be called an environmentalist," said Farahani. "My approach is not to form groups of environmentalists. I feel when one person takes on the cause of the environment, 10 others relax and say: 'That guy's doing it.' It shouldn't be one person's responsibility."

Ina Pockrass shared that Transcendentist formed the Eco-Dentistry Association in late 2007 in one convenient Web site that provides education, technical support and products where oral health care colleagues can easily gather information.

"We're recognizing that there is a hunger in the profession, and that dental hygienists and assistants and other team members in the office are often the drivers of this kind of change," Ina Pockrass said. "We formed the EcoDentistry Association in order to provide technical support, products and a collaboration where colleagues can share practices so that nobody has to go out there and reinvent the wheel."

Notes

1. Sierra Club, et al. Mercury Policy Project, Health Care Without Harm, Dentist the menace? The uncontrolled release of dental mercury. June 2002. PDF available at www.deliciousorganics.com/Controversies/mercuryinmouth.htm. Accessed July 20, 2005.
2. Farahani A, Suchak M. Eco-friendly dentistry, the environmentally responsible dental practice. University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada April 3, 2007.

Ali Farahani, DDS, is a general practitioner and an accredited member of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (I.A.O.M.T.) an organization for dental, medical and research professionals who practice mercury-free dentistry, and scientific biocompatibility. Farahani and his team have trained and continue to train in advanced cosmetic dentistry at the renowned Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. His practice is the first comprehensive 'green' dental office in Canada.



Mary Elejel, BS, RDH, is a dedicated and wellness-minded registered dental hygienist who graduated from the dental hygiene program at Fanshawe College. She has also obtained a Bachelor of Health Sciences degree from the University of Western Ontario in London, which has been an asset to her dental knowledge. She is passionate about her career as a dental hygienist and in providing patients with quality care in a health conscious environment.



Fred Pockrass, DDS, has been a restorative and general dentist for more than 25 years. He graduated from McGill University, Montreal, Canada, and began his practice in Ottawa, the capital city of Canada, revitalizing the practice of a retiring dentist. After eight years, Pockrass fulfilled a life-long dream of studying with a meditation master in India and moved to the Himalayas. While there, he created a Western-style dental clinic and until early 2000, served as personal dentist to a renowned Indian guru and provided dental care to clients from around the world. Always an avid student of the latest advances in dentistry, he has completed the acclaimed PAC-Live program in Aesthetic Dentistry at University of the Pacific in San Francisco, Calif.



Ina Pockrass is President of Transcendentist, Inc., and practiced law for 18 years. She is a branding and marketing specialist and frequent speaker on issues related to green businesses. She serves on several non-profit boards, including the Engage Network and Teleosis, and co-founded the Eco-Dentistry Association.



Vanessa Sorrells, RDH, has over 10 years of experience in the dental field and is committed to providing the finest periodontal support to her clients. She values providing gentle dental services in an eco-conscious, professional environment. She finds that the integrative approach to dental well-being offered at Transcendentist, the dental office of Fred Pockrass, DDS, enhances the quality of patient care. In her free time, Sorrells enjoys creating a solid foundation for her 12-year-old son, who is an inspiration to her, and connecting with fellow dental colleagues, family and friends.



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