



Times photo by Eric Drummond

Orthodontist Voytek Bobak of the Conifer Dental Group yuks it up as he and other dentists and eye doctors along the corridor prepare for Child Dental and Vision Day. The program is sponsored by the Mountain Resource Center.

Healthy Habit

Local docs team up to help low-income families with eye, dental needs

by Pamela Lawson
Reporter

Ten-year-old Nicholas Morris will be smiling for a long time to come.

The boy was one of three to receive free treatment from orthodontist Voytek Bobak last year. His braces have just been removed.

"It would have been hard to do this on my own," said Nicholas' mother Linda, who is a single parent attending college. "It was quite a gift."

On Friday, Feb. 16, three more children may be fortunate enough to be selected by Bobak for such a gift. Last year, Bobak contributed approximately \$10,000 in treatments that range from \$1,000 to \$4,000 per child.

Bobak and Dr. Doug Wilson of the Conifer Dental Group are joining efforts for the Mountain Resource Center's annual Child Dental & Vision Day. Dr. Michael Kirol of Advanced Eyecare at Conifer will be providing eye exams.

Wilson has been a part of the MRC advocacy program for the last nine years, but he started a similar benefaction years earlier. Bobak and Kirol have been a part of MRC's program the last four years.

Those who qualify are families who do not have vision or dental insurance. Children who may benefit from the dental exams are ages 3-12, for the eye exams, ages 5-12. Additional free services can include orthodontic screenings, teeth

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cleaning, fluoride treatments and x-rays.

"I like the technical challenge of bending small wires inside little mouths," said Bobak of his dental work with kids. "I actually get a kick out of it."

According to MRC's Stephanie Ayers, Bobak is the only orthodontist in the U.S. 285 corridor.

"I think this is a great opportunity for kids," she said.

Six lava lamps adorn Bobak's Conifer office, along with numerous latex creatures that populate the waiting room complete with their own imitation braces. The handmade originals that resemble "dysfunctional Dr. Seuss-like characters" are a whimsical touch to Bobak's technical trade.

Born in Poland, Bobak finished dental school in Michigan where he met his wife,

Darlyne Loper, who is also a dentist. Loper is a general practitioner and the two have separate practices.

The couple landed in the Colorado Rockies almost by chance.

"We looked at a U.S. map for the greenest areas representing national parks," said Bobak. "It was almost like throwing a dart and seeing where it landed."

Colorado proved to be the greenest and became the couple's home seven years ago.

Bobak's 2,500 or so patients and six staff members utilize three offices, in Conifer, Bailey and Lakewood, on alternating days.

Bobak's services are not just for kids. About 8 percent of his business is adults due to the introduction of invisible clear braces specifically designed for grown-ups, he said.

In addition to the MRC Family Advocacy Program, and the dentists, doctors and staff involved with Friday's event, KIND — Kids in Need of Dentistry, will be accepting referrals.

MRC staff will be at Dr. Wilson's Conifer Dental Center, located on Kitty Drive, from 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Dr. Bobak will be at the same site. Advanced Eyecare at Conifer is in the same office complex as Dr. Wilson — directly down the driveway. MRC will be armed with crafts, videos, storytelling and entertainment for the children. For further information contact Ayers at 303-838-7552.