

DENTIST ON A MISSION

Nancy A. Maier

Dr. Dominic Verderese is living the mission of the School of Dentistry. He is bringing rewards to others and himself that money can not buy. He and his wife, Vickie, are constantly at work, making people laugh, smile, and generally feel better about themselves.



Dr. Verderese, also known as Dr. "V", graduated from the UDMSD in 1981. He and his wife are the only full-time traveling dental team in Michigan. Their mobile dentistry business treats patients across the state who are mentally and/or physically compromised and can not go to a conventional dental office. His patients are in nursing homes, hospitals, and private homes. "My patients can't go to a dentist, so we go to them," says Dr. Verderese, who has spent more than 20 years working out of his home and his vehicle. This husband and wife team routinely put over 30,000 miles on their vehicles annually. They do extractions, cleanings, dentures, and limited restorations.

"This business has been financially difficult at times, but I gain tremendous insight from my patients," says Dr. "V", the name by which most patients know him. He asks them what they would have done differently throughout their lives, and they say they would play more. Dr. Verderese used to work seven days a week, but based on that advice, has cut back.

The Verdereses generally see two patients per day, because they form special bonds of friendship with them, and that takes time. "Building relationships and trust are a huge part of our practice," adds Dr. Verderese. The drive time, informing patients of the procedures, and making sure the patient is comfortable, is part of the daily routine of providing treatment to their patients. "Because our patients have mental and/or physical disabilities, time is not an issue, treatment is. Whatever time it takes to provide the treatment is the length of the appointment," says Dr. "V".

Recently, Dr. Verderese has been working on two instruments that will soon have patents pending, and that will supplement his income. He is considering retirement in about ten years. But, even retirement is a work of giving back - Dr. Verderese is contemplating teaching his practice of traveling dentistry. This way, he can gain recruits who would like to give back to this needy population and earn continuing education credits at the same time.

Dentist "In-Home"
-Makes House Calls-



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