

WHEN

HAPPEN TO

Good Things Good People

Part 1: Dr. James Wright, Dentist

Phlorene Pheigh was exhausted, broke and spiritually battered, but this caregiving angel gets a miracle of her own when a team of Las Vegas medical and exercise professionals agreed to transform her at no charge

BY GINGER TAFOYA

Dr. James Wright had his first meeting with Phlorene and found her to be a kind and exceptional person. “I knew that I wanted to be on her team of experts for her complete makeover,” says Wright. X-rays and a comprehensive exam were performed. Phlorene said it had been 10 years since she had seen a dentist for routine dental care, but she had no symptoms of any problems. He took impressions for study models and set up a consultation with her.

On that consultation day Phlorene’s X-rays were placed up on a 42-inch plasma screen, and Wright explained to her that if they were to properly treat her, the cost would be approximately \$60,000, which was far beyond any cost that *Nevada Woman* or Phlorene had imagined. It was thought that the work would be minimal.

Step 1: Cleaning

As it turned out, Phlorene needed much more than a cleaning and bleach. She had periodontal disease. “The difference between a routine cleaning and the type of cleaning that Phlorene needed is that by definition a cleaning is preventive in nature and is performed when there is no disease. Phlorene had scaling and root planing



Dr. Wright begins Phlorene's restoration by first performing a cleaning, and treating periodontal disease and an infection

AS SEEN IN **NEVADA
WOMAN**



Above: The current condition of Phlorene's teeth shows the infected canine on the upper left; Above right: After bleaching, Phlorene's teeth were brightened by seven shades, from A3.5 to A2; Below right: A computer model of Phlorene's smile after the restoration is complete; Below left: A plaster impression called a "wax up" shows examples of the final restorations.



which is therapeutic and performed when there is periodontal disease," says Wright. This was Phlorene's first step, which was undertaken immediately.

Step 2: Whitening

"I wanted to keep Phlorene motivated about her oral health so her next step after scaling and root planing was Zoom whitening. Phlorene was shade A3.5 which is quite yellow. She selected a movie from our DVD collection. At whitening completion, her teeth had lightened to shade A2. Her teeth became seven shades lighter with Zoom and this is a typical result. She also received re-evaluation on her gums and surrounding tissue," explains Wright.

Step 3: Treat Infected Nerve

Wright's next step was to take care of the infected nerve on Phlorene's canine (eye tooth) and performed root canal therapy. "This tooth was infected, but had never caused Phlorene any discomfort," says Wright. "She had a large

bump (abscess) on her gum that she never realized was there until I pointed it out. I also had to clean this infected tissue as well but it is worth it. The canines are the cornerstone of the mouth, they also have the longest root, and we always try to save them," says Wright.

Step 4: Oral Surgery

Phlorene also needed an oral surgery consult because she would be having her broken-down teeth removed and replaced with beautiful, but very expensive, implants. plus a sinus lift and bone grafting in the areas that will be receiving the dental implants. Wright enlisted the help of Drs. Drongowski and Degan, who readily agreed to come on board to rehabilitate Phlorene's mouth.

Step 5: Performance Dental Lab

The next step was to have Performance Dental Lab make a "wax up" or model of what Phlorene's teeth could look like. Many of her back teeth are missing or broken, and she has an unusual bite. "I

will need to open her bite and the wax up allows me to see what the patient's teeth are going to look like prior to any preparation," says Wright. "I also had Performance fabricate a surgical stent for the surgeons (a surgical stent is an appliance that is used as a guide for implant placement). This will give us the ideal location and angulation for implant placement.

"I met again with Drs. Drongowski and Degan to show them the wax up and share my thoughts and listened to their concerns," continues Wright. "They were pleased with the wax up and stent. We agreed that we needed to get started with the oral surgery component of her treatment as her mouth is going to take some time to heal. I can then finish the restoration and beautification of her mouth. Phlorene will need regular check-ups and cleanings throughout the rest of her life, the same as we all need to do," advises Wright.

