

# Tribute

## Dr. Joe Sim

### A Remembrance . . .

By John Gordon, DMD

**D**r. Joseph Max Sim, IAO certified instructor, age 78, died at 4:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 29, 2002, at Anderson Hospital in Maryville, Illinois, of complications resulting from a stroke. Joe was born May 13, 1924, in Leavenworth, Washington, the eldest son of John Grant Sim and Margaret McPerron Sim. Joe Married Patricia Marie Vaux in Kirkland, Washington. They have celebrated 52 years of marriage. Their family includes Murray Scott Sim and his wife Nancy; Rochelle Marie Dorsers and her husband Willie; Joseph Max Sim, Jr. and his wife Holly; and four treasured granddaughters, Erica and Rebecca Sim, and Latosha and Mariah Dorsers.

Joe served during World War II in the U.S. Army Air Corp as a flight instructor and crew commander on B-17 and B-29 Bombers. After the war, he pursued a career in pediatric dentistry, but continued to serve his country in the National Guard in both Alabama and Illinois. As a member of Alabama National Guard, Joe was activated to serve during the Vietnam War, providing dental services to the children of the families at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He is credited with introducing four-handed dentistry to the Army Dental Core, a significant advance in treatment at that time.



Dr. Sim maintained private practices in Twisp, Washington; Birmingham, Alabama; and Wood River, Illinois. In addition to caring for patients, Joe moved forward as an international educator, lecturer, author and computer software developer.



John Gordon, DMD  
President, IAO

From 1966 to 1971, Dr. Sim taught at the University of Alabama School of Dentistry, in the Department of Pedodontics and as Dental Clinic Director of The Children's Hospital, Birmingham, Alabama. He was hired as Chair of the combined departments of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics at the new School of Dental Medicine at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), from 1971 until 1987. For 17 years he organized and taught undergraduate Orthodontics and supervised the undergraduate program in Pediatric Dentistry. He also taught clinical orthodontics to the General Practice Residents one day each week in the SIU East St. Louis Dental Clinic.



Dr. Sim's widely used text, *Minor Tooth Movement in Children* was brought out in two editions, 1971 and 1977. This book has been used as a text in a number of U.S. and foreign dental schools in eight countries, dealing with

computerized Orthodontic diagnosis, two-stage Orthodontic treatment for growing children, and Orthodontic treatment for young adults. He also published numerous articles in pediatric dentistry journals as well as Orthodontic journals. His computer programs include SimGordon Analysis and Bonacord Analysis, both of which aid dentists worldwide with developing diagnoses and treatment plans for children and adults with orthodontic needs.

Dr. Sim also served on the ADA Written Examination Committee (writing examinations in Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics), and on the Northeast Regional Dental Board Education Committee (Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontic examinations).

In addition to teaching orthodontic seminars in 44 states in the U.S., he also taught seminars in Australia,

Brazil, Canada, Columbia, Germany, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Spain. He was appointed Visiting Professor in universities in Brazil and in Mexico. He brought his enthusiasm, expertise, and caring to all of these countries. Joe left his students and fellow doctors with good feelings, camaraderie and a great deal of dental knowledge. He was a welcome visitor and lecturer worldwide.

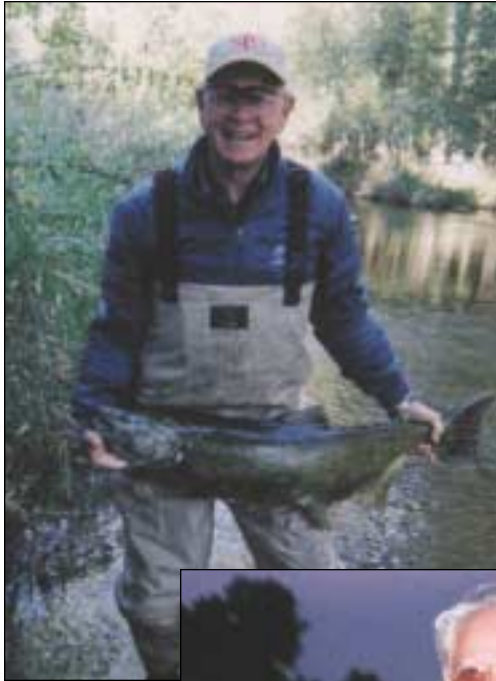
Numerous professional organizations included Joe as a member, including the American Dental Association, the Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the International Association for Orthodontics, the American College of Dentistry, the American Society of Dentistry for Children, and the Australian Association of Orofacial Orthodontics. He was a board member of both the SIUE Foundation and Catch a Falling Star.

Joe continued to derive personal and professional pride by volunteering to treat the special patients of the SIUE School of Dental Medicine Implant Clinic who suffer from ectodermal dysplasia.

Joe was a passionate fisherman, fly rod craftsman, and fly tier. He shared his enthusiasm with others by teaching numerous classes in fly tying over the years. Joe taught this unfortunately very addicting sport of fly-fishing to many dentists who you will find flipping their rod tirelessly in hopes of landing that ever elusive trout.

Joe was a talented photographer and writer of novels, short stories and poetry. A tireless advocate of children's health, Joe's Dental Magic Show featuring Lucille the Magic Tooth entertained children around the United States.

Like his father before him, Joe was also a very skilled pomologist, with a 2.5-acre commercial orchard with over



50 varieties of apples at his Edwardsville home. This orchard was a site for many rewarding hours for Joe, agricultural students from the local university and many kindergarten classes who toured the orchard with Joe.

As a dental school instructor, Joe took many dental students under his wing. The undying optimist, he would always find the good qualities in students and help them cultivate those qualities to become successful dentists. Many of today's practicing dentists owe their success to Joe. He was always the instructor who cared, encouraged and taught the skills necessary to succeed in school, practice and life.

As a member and Past-President of the International Association for Orthodontics, Dr. Sim collaborated on developing the Tier Advancement system that has helped to set this organization apart from many others. He served as an examiner for the International Board of Orthodontics and Senior Instructor in the Association. He organized the first Instructor Institute in 1987, followed with a very successful Instructor Institute II in 1992, and finally organized the Millennium Instructor Institute in 2000. These programs helped to develop doctors' skills in teaching as well as treating orthodontics. Many of the International Association for Orthodontics instructors have been participants in one or more of these Institutes.

When Joe moved to his home on Romann Hills Road, also known as Bonacord, (good feeling), he placed his hands into the earth to prepare it for the seedlings he planted which eventually grew into his orchard. He lovingly cared for the seedlings insuring their successful growth into productive fruit bearing trees. In much the same way, he placed his hands on our hearts, helping to guide us to become all we are today, to teach other professionals to succeed in life, to give back some of the rewards we have reaped, and continue his legacy freely giving of ourselves to the betterment of our personal lives, our profession, our community, our world. Joe told his daughter many times, "Finish Strong." Joe finished strong!

*Following are several tributes to Joe by his colleagues.*

A couple of days ago I was explaining to my eight year old daughter, Stephanie, that I was going to be leaving on Friday to go to Dr. Joe's funeral. She wanted to hear stories about him and questioned what I was going to do. That gave me great pause, "What was I going to do without Joe Sim in my life?" Yes, of course, I was coming to mourn his passing, but then what?

The Native American people believe that to truly succeed one must transform.

Joe lived in the present moment — not the past, not the future — and because of that he was fully alive. Maybe it came from being a pilot and having to be aware of the immediacy of life around him, or perhaps it came from his passion for fly fishing where the timing of the dance coupled with the understanding of the light made the moment magical. Joe transformed so many things. He transformed so many children's faces and gave them beautiful smiles and gently changed their faces. He wrote *Minor Tooth Movement in Children* which shifted not only the treatment mechanics but the thought process of our profession. That wasn't enough for Joe. He was impeccable with his word for it came from his core — and he had given his word to do the best in his profession. To Joe that meant helping others attain excellence, so he started study clubs and presented courses. Each of those had the same purpose: to mentor, to build confidence, thus he worked his magic — the constant shifting and changing of life.

Joe was so aware of the moment and understood that he had the power of choice: to take that moment and find the wonder of it or to get caught in the pain and disappointment. Joe chose the wonder. Joe had to leave the apple orchard, the mountains and the fresh streams of Washington — and once again he transformed the situation and brought Illinois a great living gift — a magnificent apple orchard.

I was recanting one of the many stories about Joe to a friend and I said he always saw the silver lining in each event no matter how difficult, and then I thought, "No, he saw the gold."

Joe gave so many gifts to each person he touched. He believed in the power of one and he created for each of us a place, to be challenged, to be safe, to grow, and then he encompassed us with his belief in who we really were and assisted us in transforming ourselves — into growing into that person. Joe took this Southern Boy who viewed himself as a manly man and challenged me to begin the transformation. He shared with me his view of me and then believed in me each step. He even listened to my grouching and continued to believe and challenge. He was my dear friend, he is my dear friend, and my celebration of Joe will be my commitment to continue to grow and transform and to offer that magic of Joe's to others.

I will miss you my friend.



Steve Galella

Joe Sim was a friend, colleague, mentor, father, teacher, flier, fisherman, golfer, hiker, husband. But most of all, he was the living example of what Jesus meant by giving us his two great commandments. "Love God with your whole heart and soul and your neighbor as yourself." Joe showed that "Love" every day I knew him. It was by being all those things above and then trying to get everyone around him to be the best they could be. He would look at each of us and challenge us to bring out the best of what we are. This could be getting his patients to get "A's" on their report cards to helping fliers during WWII fly B17s and B29s so that they could save the world.



He did this to many of his orthodontic and dental students over the years. Some became better dentists, some great orthodontic instructors and some were told, as I was, to become dental politicians. He did this in the first meeting he had with many of my colleagues. As for my story, he told me after my first study club meeting to "Go to Orlando and be at the IAO Board meeting. They need you." This was strange because I didn't know what the IAO was and I had never been on any board before. But as sure as the sun is above, he was right. One of my callings has been this political talent to lead organizations from the local study club to the IAO and even the Wisconsin Dental Association. How did he know? God works in strange ways and Joe, to me, was one of His angels on earth, making each one of us better! Thanks for sharing God's Love with us, Joe!



Tom Hughes



**D**r. Joe Sim was an ambassador of learning and communication that has been lost in person, but not spirit. Joe was a unique individual who could always see the good in everyone and make the best of any situation.

Dr. Sim's concept of education involved a free flow of ideas and concepts, was not limiting in scope or magnitude, and was the only way that anyone could learn at least six ways to treat any situation. It did not matter what nationality or ethnicity, everyone was equal and shared the responsibility to help continue the chain of education.

This was perhaps no more evident than the IOA Instructor's Institute. This program championed by Dr. Sim was a crowning glory in education. In this format, everyone was welcome to participate and hopefully, to play a part in developing an education format to be shared with everyone alike. Everyone who participated in this program left richer for the knowledge they gathered, but more from the tutorage they experienced through a truly great leader, teacher and ambassador of good will.

We may miss Dr. Sim in personal contact, but he has touched all of our lives. Through his dedication and energy, all of us have been made more complete. Thank God for the spirit of Dr. Joe Sim, our friend and fellow who will remain with us always.



Duane Keller

**D**r. Joseph Sim was an extremely caring and empathetic teacher. I wish to acknowledge the wonderful contribution made by Dr. Sim



Jean-Noel Lavallee

and his wife Patty to all of us and to IAQ. Dr. Sim always took time to help everybody he met. We will miss him. He has been a true friend to all.

**W**hen I first met Joe, in a dental meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1987, I fell under his spell. I saw a great and open-minded educator. He loved to share his knowledge. After his speech, I felt I had to talk to him. I knew he would be a great mentor to me. I wasn't wrong! He immediately proposed a special course for us, the Brazilian party.

Six months later we were at his hometown for an intense fifteen-day course. His wise organization and love for teaching gave us the opportunity to learn so much in such a short time. After that, he came to Brazil during many consecutive years to update our Brazilian group with his expertise. I was his translator then, and I admired his ability to find the easiest and Latin root words in his speech, to facilitate my work.

Because I had the great privilege to spend 40 days with Joe and Pat at their home, in 1993, I had the opportunity to find out other interesting sides of this man. He loved his family dearly. He loved fishing, golf and taking care of his apple trees. In our daily morning walks, before going to work, we had great conversations about life and I also found a father figure in him. His creative mind allowed him to create many different things such as ortho techniques, supplies and methods, writing books and several articles.

Even though he is not among us anymore, this legacy will always be with us. He was a very positive man. His last name says everything: Sim means "Yes" in Portuguese!

*Portuguese:*

Quando conheci Dr. Sim, em um congresso em São Paulo, Brasil, em 1987, fiquei encantada com ele. Vi ali um professor de mente aberta. Ele adorava partilhar seu conhecimento. Após sua conferencia, tive um impulso forte de ir conversar com ele. Ele poderia ser um grande mentor para mim. Eu não estava errada! Ele logo propôs um curso especial para um pequeno grupo de brasileiros.

Seis meses mais tarde estávamos em sua cidade para fazermos um curso intensivo de 15 dias. Sua sabedoria, organização e amor ao ensino nos deram a oportunidade de aprender muitas coisas em um período de tempo relativamente curto. Após isso ele veio ao Brasil por muitos anos consecutivos para cursos de atualização. Eu fazia as traduções destes cursos e ficava admirada com sua capacidade de encontrar palavras simples e muitas vezes com raízes latinas para facilitar meu trabalho.

Em 1993, porque tive o privilégio de passar 40 dias com ele e Pat em sua casa, tive a oportunidade de conhecer outras facetas interessantes deste homem. Ele amava profundamente sua família,, pescar, jogar golfe e cuidar de seu pomar de maçãs. Em nossas caminhadas matinais, antes de irmos ao consultório, conversávamos bastante sobre a vida e com isso também descobri uma figura paterna nele.

Sua mente extremamente criativa o permitiu realizar muitas coisas diferentes como técnicas, métodos e acessórios ortodônticos, escrever livros e muitos artigos. Embora ele não esteja mais entre nós fisicamente, seu legado sempre estará. Ele era um homem muito positivo: seu sobrenome diz tudo, SIM.



Regina Laureano

Joe Sim was a master teacher. He loved to teach. His payment was knowing that someone would benefit. Joe was the original mentor for our Dallas-Ft. Worth IAO Study Club. He gave us our name of S.W.A.S.O. which is Southwest Association for the Study of Orthodontics. Prior to our first meeting, when I contacted Joe to be our speaker, I asked what fee he wanted. His reply was, "Yes, I'll do it." If you have a good crowd and make a profit, give me my expenses and a small honorarium of your choosing. If no profit is made, don't pay me anything."

Joe came to S.W.A.S.O. every three to four months for 10 plus years to teach us a very practical orthopedic-orthodontic system that was thorough in record keeping, diagnosis and treatment planning. He later came one to two times a year to update our learning process.



Pat LeBlanc

I attended Joe's big production in orthodontic teaching: that was the IAO Instructor's Institute I. Joe had us reading and taking exams from five orthodontic textbooks. It was like a mini-postgraduate course in four, three-day sessions for a year. We all learned more in these Sim directed postgraduate courses with his talented, organized wife, Patty and special speakers than any other seminar.

Joe was an encyclopedia of knowledge and he wanted to share what he had learned with others, plus tell a few good jokes — to make the sessions the very best in learning, enjoyment and fun. I'll miss Joe Sim greatly.

Joe Sim, DDS, was a life-long friend and mentor. Joe graduated from the same class as I did at the University of Washington Dental School in 1957. We worked together passing the Washington State Dental boards that same year.

When Joe graduated from dental school, he moved to Twisp, Washington and practiced there for five years. Twisp is the town where I grew up and graduated from high school. It is with immense pleasure that I got to fish with him at some high mountain lakes.

Joe's great hobby of fishing and fly fishing soon gathered sportsmen from all over Washington state. In Twisp, he taught fly tying and showed many fishermen, including me, how to catch "the big ones" on flies. I am sure Joe is showing someone in heaven at this minute how to tie the flies that catch the big mountain trout.

All through Joe's professional life, at the University of Alabama and the University of Southern Illinois, Joe took time off to hike the mountains and enjoy every trail, mountain lake and glacier. He made every friend and dentist proud to be with him, know him and study under him. He was indeed a giant among dentists and will be sorely missed by all of us.



Merle E. Loudon

Wherever Joe and Pat went, in any country, they were always greeted warmly and welcomed by all. His legacy will remain in these countries and the United States forever. We will miss you Joe, and maybe some day we will still get to Duffy Lake. We just ran out of time here on earth.

## To Speak of Shelley

*To speak of Shelley  
is a silly thing...  
Better by far to watch the mercurial  
girl smiles  
and tears  
as brightly fleeting  
As a mirror winking sunbrightness.*

*To watch Shelley  
is to see restless eager feet  
tapping toes to remembered notes  
Flung out  
and caught in part  
by imprinting ears  
In life's dancing class.*

*To hear Shelley  
is to listen to a voice  
piping a song of youth  
out of the past where  
Barriers of  
broken wings  
mental smogs  
Dare not delay the flights of joy she brings*

*To know Shelley  
is to feel the half-blanket  
that age will give  
and pride may steal  
Of pleasure  
and youth  
and folly,  
For her shining frock of truth  
is love-love...*

*Dr. Joseph M. Sim  
Written December 13, 1966 Mountain Brook, Alabama*

**J**oe Sim was truly one of the most significant dentists who ever joined the I.A.O. His academic background served him well and soon after joining, he suggested, and indeed instituted, the Tier Advancement System. Soon after that, he and John Gordon produced a cephalometric analysis, which has benefited hundreds of dentists and their patients. Joe was an outstanding teacher who encouraged many dentists to offer orthodontic services to their patients. He also stressed the importance of study clubs as a way of encouraging dentists to continue their education in orthodontics.

Joe always had a smile on his face and was one of the I.A.O.'s greatest ambassadors. He made all members feel welcome and he touched the hearts and minds of the many dentists with whom he came in contact. Joe always believed in the team approach and he worked diligently to bring about unification between the two major general practice orthodontic organizations: the I.A.O. and the A.O.S.

Joe certainly made an outstanding contribution to the IAO, he was appreciated, and he will always be remembered as a truly great person.



Brock Rondeau

### the leaving poem

*it was a long drive last night  
the car was silent  
and the noises outside clamored to get in  
the lights turned green as I passed them  
my mind scattered  
profound confetti  
the windshield was dirty  
as I left, the trees loomed over me  
silent temples  
quiet as death  
I am Alice  
in a Wonderland where everything  
is mutable, everything changes  
before my fingers can grasp anything,  
they slip  
and the facts stand on their own  
each one is an eye  
blank and unblinking  
so this is goodbye; this  
is where you and I come to threads  
all written before me like a play  
when you leave, remember this:  
come back some day,  
call and write  
but don't ever look behind you*

*Dr. Joesph M. Sim*

**B**orn May 31, 1924 in Leavenworth, Washington. This is about a man that never ceased giving his all to his fellow man throughout a lifetime.

Joe was never without a witty but intelligent comment or greeting towards others that made his friends and acquaintances remember him with a smile. I know two little girls that will never forget when he stopped them in the hall of a resort hotel in Orlando to kiss their hands and greet them in French. This is only one way that his life has been transferred onto others throughout the world.

Joe and Pat graciously helped those they did not even know. Friends of mine were recently stranded in St. Louis secondary to a motor home breakdown. Even though Joe and Pat were out of town, their home on the Lake was left open for our friends to use while their motor home was being repaired so that they could continue their trip.

Joe also had the ability to bring out the real person in all of us and add to that person in a positive way. His whole life was dedicated to educating and building up his fellow human beings. We will remember what he has done for our lives and be thankful that we had the opportunity to know him.

For his student doctors and fellow orthodontic practitioners, Joe had the uncanny ability to transfer his knowledge and abilities, thereby enriching their lives for a greater future.

Many of us that knew Joe will always remember the fishing and canoeing around his home lakes, the walks through his apple orchard, the social gathering after the many strenuous but educational meetings he directed and (for those fortunate to stay overnight) the before bed brandy — enjoyed while reflecting upon the day's activities.

Joe, we thank you for sharing so much of your life with us and will now pledge to share our lives with others so as to continue your legacy of excellence.

*Your student and friend forever . . .*



Billie Wilson

**Memorials for Dr. Sim can be made as contributions to the Dr. Joseph Sim Library, a historic collection of orthodontic texts located at the IAO headquarters office at 735 North Water Street, Suite 617, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202 USA. A tribute to Dr. Sim will be held April 4 at the 2003 IAO Annual Meeting in Tempe, Arizona, USA.**