



GRANITEVILLE
DENTAL SOLUTIONS

Patient Newsletter

Winter 2026

Staff Spotlight

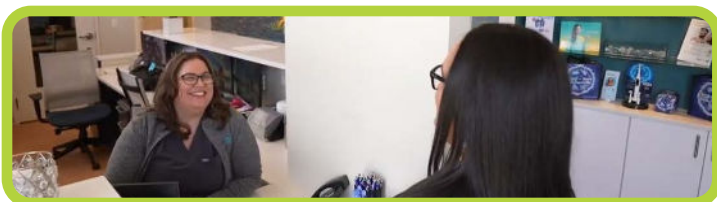
Kara Banores

Meet our amazing Scheduling Coordinator Kara. She is the first face you see when you arrive at check in. She makes sure we have all your demographics correct, paperwork and insurance information up to date to make your visit a smooth one. Kara is always on top of making sure patient follow up is first and foremost. Her attention to detail, communication skills and positivity make a difference every single day! Thank you Kara for being a valuable team member!



Smile More, Stress Less with our Smart Smile Plan

Tired of jumping through insurance hoops? We get it. That's why we created the Smart Smile Plan—our simple, affordable membership that gives you the care you need, minus the headaches. For just \$38/month, you'll get two cleanings, a full set of x-rays, one exam, and 10% off most treatments. No deductibles. No waiting. Just great care from your Graniteville Dental team.



Our Favorite Patients Come From... You!

We're excited to launch our Referral Rewards Program! When you refer a friend or family member to Graniteville and they become a patient, you'll be entered to win fun local prizes like a \$150 gift card to spots like Filomena's or Mystic Aquarium. Plus, every season brings a shot at a weekend getaway package (hello, Block Island). It's our way of saying thanks for spreading the word and sharing the love.

Share a Smile. Support Local. Win Big.

Celebrating our Team!

At Graniteville Dental Solutions, we are so grateful for our amazing team members who make our practice a warm and welcoming place for every patient. This quarter, we are celebrating some incredible milestones:

Work Anniversaries



Laura Martez Breton
2 years (Jan 29)



Terese Dunston
2 years (Feb 19)



Carmen Kievitz
5 years (Feb 5)

Birthdays



Ashley Leroux
Feb 28



Justin Swank
March 1



Katie Custer
March 24



Carolyn Murphy
March 30



Giving Back: Graniteville Hosts Mission of Mercy Day

On November 8, our Graniteville Dental Solutions team had the honor of opening our doors for something truly special—**Mission of Mercy**, a free dental care outreach in partnership with the CT Dental Outreach Foundation.

Alongside Dr. John, Dr. Swank, and Dr. Benak, our incredible team of hygienists and support staff came together to provide cleanings, fillings, extractions, and even root canals for those in our community who needed care but didn't have the financial means or insurance to access it. This year's focus was on supporting veterans and underserved individuals right here in Waterford and the surrounding area.

It was a powerful reminder of what community care really means—meeting people where they are, and making sure no one is left behind when it comes to their health. We were humbled to be part of it, and proud to live out the values that shape everything we do.



Exciting Life Updates

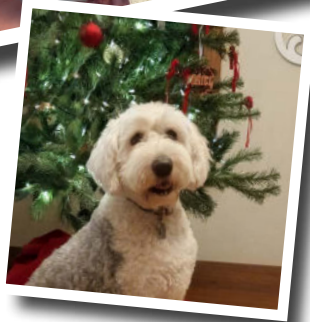
Dr. John and his wife Kirsten and their 2 children recently went on vacation to Cape May, New Jersey for family vacation. They had a great time relaxing on the beach and having fun in the sun.



Sarah, our dental hygienist recently accepted a part time position teaching at Goodwin University for their dental hygiene program. We are very excited for Sarah to further her career. Don't worry she is still working with us 3 days a week!



Big news for Analucia, she got engaged in November! We couldn't be happier for the two of them, and can't wait to see what the future holds for the happy couple!



Maggie Update

Maggie is excited for the holiday season and is ready for her photo shoot!!

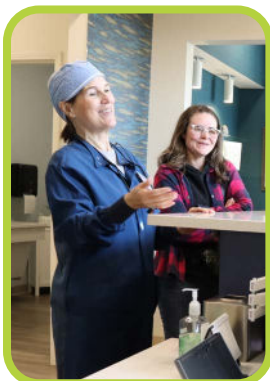
Wishing Dr. Benak the Best in his Retirement

After years of dedicated care and countless smiles, Dr. Benak is officially retiring. While we're sad to see him go, we're incredibly grateful for the warmth, kindness, and clinical excellence he's brought to our Graniteville family and the community.

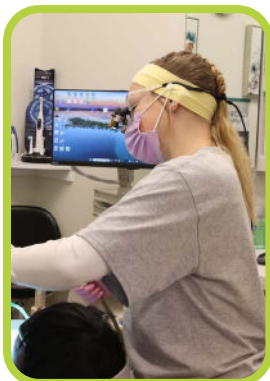
He's touched so many lives (and teeth!) over the years, and we know his next chapter will be just as impactful. Dr. Benak, thank you for everything!



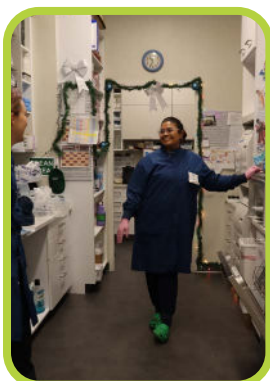
Patient Story: A Smile Restored at Mission of Mercy



During this year's Mission of Mercy event, our team met Francisco, one of the first patients to arrive. He was dealing with several painful dental concerns, including two severely damaged front teeth—issues that had made him self-conscious for years. Even so, he greeted everyone with warmth and gratitude, and his kindness made a lasting impression on the volunteers and partners on site.



After his initial triage, Francisco was seen by our team for same-day care, where we worked quickly to get him comfortable. He was later referred to Shoreline Periodontics, whose team generously donated their time to perform needed extractions for Mission of Mercy patients. Knowing Francisco would be without the front of his smile afterward, our clinicians coordinated with a local dental lab to create a temporary appliance the very same day—something that would allow him to leave with dignity, confidence, and a smile he didn't feel the need to hide.



While talking with the team, Francisco shared that he had broken his front teeth in an accident two years earlier, and the appearance of his smile had made it difficult for him to find work. When he saw himself with his temporary teeth in place, he couldn't stop smiling or thanking the volunteers involved.

Moments like this are exactly why Mission of Mercy exists—and why our team is proud to show up, collaborate, and help restore hope one smile at a time to those who otherwise could not afford care.

Fun Community Events

We love being part of this incredible community, and we want to help spread the word about what makes it so special! If you've got a local event, fundraiser, or family-friendly happening you'd like featured in our next newsletter, let us know!



January 25, 2026 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm Dungeons & Drafts One Shot Campaign at Tox Brewing

Always wondered what Dungeons & Dragons is all about? Or maybe you're just itching to roll the dice again? Check out the Dungeons & Drafts event at Tox Brewing! No experience needed—just bring your sense of adventure (and maybe your favorite dice if you've got 'em). Everything you need to play is provided, and all levels are welcome. Cheers to good games and great company! [Learn More](#)

February 18, 2026 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Dumpling Making Class with Grumpy Dumplings and Tox Brewing

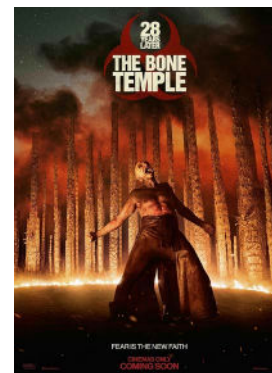
Ready to master the art of dumpling-making? This hands-on class will walk you through every delicious step—from learning about dumpling history and authentic ingredients to mixing fillings, folding like a pro, and cooking them to perfection. You'll enjoy a full 6-dumpling dinner (with pork, chicken, and veggie options), dessert dumplings like banana dark chocolate and salted Thai coconut cream, plus a drink from Tox Brewing to sip while you cook. Bonus: you'll even get an exclusive discount to keep the dumpling magic going at home. Space is limited, so grab your spot soon! [Learn More](#)



MOVIES

28 Years Later: The Bone Temple (January 16, 2026)

This one's for a date out without the kids! Set decades after Cillian Murphy's original 2002 horror film, 28 Years Later: The Bone Temple is a continuation of the epic story where the infected are no longer the greatest threat to survival ... the inhumanity of the survivors are. Dr. Kelson (Ralph Fiennes) finds himself in a shocking new relationship with consequences that could change the world as they know it and Spike's (Alfie Williams) encounter with Jimmy Crystal (Jack O'Connell) becomes a nightmare he can't escape. Will Cillian Murphy make a guest appearance? You'll have to watch to find out!



The Pout-Pout Fish (March 20, 2026)

Based on the New York Times bestselling book, The Pout-Pout fish brings to life the hilarious and heartwarming story of an unlikely duo, Mr. Fish (voiced by Nick Offerman) and Pip (voiced by Nina Oyama), who embark on an epic undersea quest to find a legendary fish that could save their homes. This feel-good animated adventures sure to make a splash for everyone in your family.



BOOKS

The Ballad of Falling Dragons by Sarah A. Parker (February 24, 2026)

The much anticipated fantasy sequel to the New York Times bestselling book, When the Moon Hatched, by Sarah A. Parker. Find out what happens to Raeve and her thirst for vengeance. With Rekk's blood still fresh on her hands, she learns the world will face its most devastating moonfall yet forcing to either chase death or choose life. Meanwhile Kaan carries the heavy burden of saving his kingdom and time is running out. As allies merge and enemies surge with bloodlusting agendas of their own, secrets brew hot enough to burn, but none as mighty as the truth nesting within the icy depths of Raeve's long forgotten path.

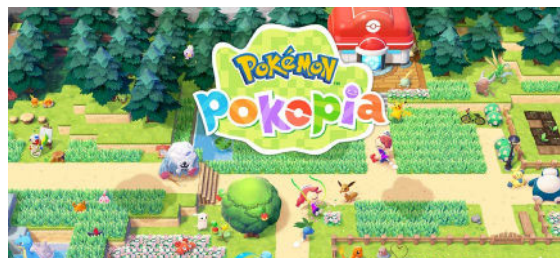
The Hybrid Prince (Wing of Fire Book 16) by Tui T. Sutherland (March 3, 2026)

The #1 New York Times bestselling series for young readers is back with a brand new tale! Discover what happens next in this thrilling addition to Wings of Fire saga. Umber was never supposed to be a hero. He had always been content with his role as the cheerful, goofy, little broth but when his sister, Sora, causes a tragedy at Jade Mountain Academy, Umber finds himself on the run and thrown into a whole new role...protector. Will he rise up and be the hero they need?

GAMES

Pokemon Pokopia on Nintendo Switch 2 (March 5, 2026)

Minecraft meetings Animal Crossing in this cozy life simulation game. Players create a Pokemon paradise by planting trees, terraforming land, and inviting Pokemon to visit. It's sure to be a relaxing, creative outlet for any age.



Slow Cooker Stuffed Peppers in Marinara Sauce

Ingredients:

For the marinara:

- 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 2 1/2 teaspoons minced garlic (5 cloves)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon dried basil
- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

For the stuffed peppers:

- 4 medium bell peppers (any color)
- 2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 cup uncooked quinoa, rinsed
- 2 medium zucchini, chopped

Directions:

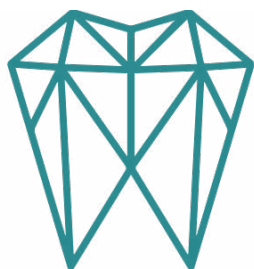
- Place the crushed tomatoes, diced tomatoes and their juices, tomato paste, onion, garlic, bay leaves, basil, brown sugar, balsamic vinegar, oregano, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper in a slow cooker, and stir thoroughly. Remove 1 1/2 cups of the mixture and set aside.
- Slice off the tops of the bell peppers, remove the seeds and scrape them with a spoon to hollow them out. Place the bell peppers cut-side up inside the marinara sauce.
- In a medium bowl, mix the black beans, quinoa, zucchini, and the reserved 1 1/2 cups of marinara sauce. Divide the filling evenly among the prepared bell peppers.
- Cover and cook on low for 6 hours.



Freshen Up Your Smile

Looking to get an Electric toothbrush or Waterflosser, we sell them here look no further!! We sell electric Oral B toothbrushes for \$95 and also Oral B Waterflossers for \$65. Reminder, you can use your HSA card for these products also!!





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DENTAL SOLUTIONS

Book Your Appointment Today!

Ready for your next dental check-up or treatment? Our friendly team is here to provide you with top-notch care in a comfortable and welcoming environment. Whether you need a routine cleaning, a consultation, or a specific procedure, we're just a call away. Schedule your appointment today, and let us help you maintain a healthy, beautiful smile. We look forward to seeing you soon!



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