

Tyson's dentist celebrates 40 years on the job

■ New technology has transformed profession, he says

BY ANGELA WOOLSEY
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

Dr. Farshad Farhoumand has been practicing dentistry for 40 years and has no plans to retire anytime soon.

"I hope I can do it for many more years, if possible," the Great Falls resident said. "It's very exciting. I cannot see people retiring when you can be productive."

Currently based out of Tysons with Avanti Dentistry, Farhoumand prides himself not only on the longevity and success of his career, but also on his ability to adapt to both new patients and the advances in technology that have transformed the field since he first entered it in 1977.

Born in Tehran, Iran, Farhoumand followed in his father's footsteps to become a dentist. After graduating from dental school in Iran, his father practiced in Ethiopia, where Farhoumand attended American and Italian schools.



PHOTO COURTESY AVANTI DENTISTRY

Dressed in a suit and yellow tie, Dr. Farshad Farhoumand, who currently runs Avanti Dentistry in Tysons, celebrates 40 years in the profession at his Great Falls home with former patients and his family.

Though he moved to the U.S. when he was 17 to attend college in Pittsburgh, Pa., those childhood years in Ethiopia have proven unexpectedly beneficial to Farhoumand in his dental career.

Fluent in six different languages, including English, Farsi, Italian, French, Spanish, and Amharic, he takes advantage of his linguistic skills to build strong relationships with his patients. This

can be especially useful in a multicultural region like Fairfax County.

"Building a relationship with the patient is one of the most challenging things," Farhoumand said. "We're living in a society that is not homogenous. It's heterogeneous. We have different cultures, different languages. Some people don't speak very good English, but somehow we manage to communicate."

Farhoumand has also made a point of hiring doctors from a variety of backgrounds for Avanti Dentistry, which he moved to Tysons in 2013 after working for years in McLean.

The practice's resident orthodontist Dr. Ignacio Blasi Berain Jr., for instance, originates from Barcelona, Spain, and Dr. Fotini Chrisopoulos, a prosthodontist, first went to dental school at a university in Greece.

This diversity of perspectives, both from a cultural standpoint and a dental one, is by design.

The idea to revamp Avanti Dentistry from a more typical practice into what it is today, where specialists work alongside general dentists, came to Farhoumand indirectly from a colleague.

"A good friend of mine - a

periodontist [a specialist in gum disease and dental implants] - once told me, Farshad, don't do everything. Do a few things, but do them well," Farhoumand, who is a general dentist, said. "I think it was the best advice that anybody could give me."

Because he is most well-versed in doing restorative work with crowns and bridges, Farhoumand had to send patients to other offices if their particular case demanded input from a specialist, such as an orthodontist or oral surgeon.

However, he realized that this process could be inefficient, expensive and time-consuming for patients, who would have to schedule multiple appointments, so he wondered what would happen if all of those specialists worked under the same roof.

First, Farhoumand hired an endodontist, a dental specialist who focuses on root canals, and he says the difference in results was immediately noticeable.

"We're getting much better results here, because they're trained for that work," he said. "Even if I did thousands of root canals in my lifetime, it will never be at the level of someone who's a specialist."

Avanti Dentistry now has eight doctors in addition to Farhoumand. There are also two oral surgeons, two orthodontists, a periodontist, an endodontist, a child specialist, and a cosmetic dentistry specialist.

Since they are in the same practice, the specialists can all consult and collaborate with each other to figure out what a specific patient needs.

"Here, all things are done in one visit, so it saves people time and money, and our patients really love it," said Farhoumand's wife, Sima, who manages Avanti Dentistry's office.

For example, Farhoumand recalls one patient who came in needing all of her teeth fixed so that she could have a good smile in photos for her wedding, which was scheduled for the following week.

"In five, six hours, we restored her entire smile, and she went to her wedding," Farhoumand said.

That relative speed is also made possible by the way that dentistry as a profession has evolved from a technological standpoint since Farhoumand graduated from Georgetown University's School of Dentistry in 1976.

Ceramic reconstruction (CEREC) machines use three-dimensional photography to make digital representations of a patient's mouth, which can then be used to design a crown or bridge on a computer. A ceramic tooth can be cut, glazed and fitted within 30 minutes, according to Farhoumand.

Avanti Dentistry also has machines that can detect cavities before they are visible to the eye and that use lasers to make a crown restoration, for instance, painless.

Farhoumand says the most rewarding part of his 40-year career has been his interactions with patients, who come from around Fairfax County and Northern Virginia.

He hopes to expand Avanti Dentistry by adding more doctors to his current office while also opening new locations.

"What makes dentistry not boring is the patients, because every patient has their own story," Sima Farhoumand said. "If you have to do like a factory line, do the same thing every day, it becomes very boring. It's the patients and their personalities and backgrounds that makes the job much more exciting and satisfying."

Town of Herndon releases FY2018 proposed budget

■ Fairfax County holds public hearings on its budget

BY ANGELA WOOLSEY
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

The Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposed by the Town of Herndon on Mar. 31 shows a 7.8 percent decrease in expenditures from the FY 2017 adopted budget while maintaining current tax rates.

With no significant increases in revenue expected for the next year, the town plans to compensate for a slight increase in general fund expenditures with a capital projects fund that has been nearly halved from FY 2017.

"The proposed FY 2018 budget funds the town council priorities, such as the redevelopment of

Herndon's downtown... as well as continued planning for the coming of Metrorail," Herndon acting town manager William H. Ashton II said. "It also recommends continuation of the services and programs our citizens expect and enjoy."

The proposed budget for FY 2018, which runs from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018, contains \$51.2 million for all town funds, including a 1.4 percent increase in the general fund and a 48.5 percent decrease in total capital project funds.

Ashton suggests keeping the real estate tax at its current rate of \$0.265 per \$100 of assessed value, and the meals tax and cigarette tax would remain at, respectively, 2.5 percent and 75 cents per pack.

Consumer utility taxes, sewer and water rates, and the recycling fee will also remain the same, if the

town adopts the proposed budget.

According to Ashton's budget proposal, which is currently available on the Town of Herndon's website, the FY 2018 funding levels will be more in line with recent trends, with the \$55.5 million in budgeted expenditures for FY 2017 as an outlier.

Herndon will create three new general fund positions, including a police officer dedicated to schools, and the town manager also recommends that the FY 2018 budget include compensation funding for all personnel.

"It is critical for the town to remain competitive in the marketplace, which aids in attracting and retaining high quality employees," the budget proposal reads.

However, there are no anticipated increases in expenses for health insurance and retirement benefits.

About 68 percent of the \$35.6

million in revenue for the Town of Herndon in FY 2018 will come from a combination of general property taxes and other local taxes, including the business and professional occupancy license tax, the meals tax, state-shared local sales taxes, and consumer utility taxes.

The significant change in the capital projects fund, which will go from \$8.3 million in FY 2017 to approximately \$4.3 million in FY 2018, comes primarily from a 99 percent drop in designated capital.

FY 2017 saw a larger-than-usual increase in one-time capital expenditures, with about \$5.5 million dedicated to downtown street and utility improvements as well as improvements on Van Buren Street, according to the FY 2017 adopted budget.

The FY 2018 capital projects funding will be more consistent

with previous years. The majority of capital projects will be street projects, including \$2.2 million for a project at Van Buren Street and Herndon Parkway to relieve congestion at the Elden Street and Monroe Street intersection.

The FY 2018 budget proposal also contains a reiteration of the 2035 vision for the Town of Herndon first laid out by the town council on Nov. 11, 2014.

The vision emphasizes improved communication between the town and its citizens, expanded community involvement, more online access to town services, and the development of initiatives to support youths.

The 2034 vision also sets goals for how Herndon can enhance community spirit, develop its arts, culture and entertainment scene, support businesses and technology, and promote a sustainable environment.

Now that the proposed budget has been released, the Town of Herndon is now entering the public input stage of the budget process.

The town council has scheduled two public hearings at 7:00 p.m. in the Ingram Council Chambers on Lynn Street, the first on Apr. 11 and a second one on Apr. 25. Town residents can also submit comments to the town online or by email.

The Herndon Town Council is required to adopt a budget before July 1.

Herndon is not the only jurisdiction dealing with a budget, as Fairfax County held public hearings on its own FY 2018 advertised budget at the Fairfax County Government Center on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of this past week.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is scheduled to adopt an official budget on May 2.

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