



# The Experience of a Lifetime



Two doctors bridge the generation gap to build a new practice together

Dr. Lane Eddleman and Dr. Mike Nolan have known each other for years, though not always as one dentist to another. The Monroe, Louisiana, doctors are business partners now, but at one time, Dr. Nolan was coaching Dr. Eddleman in youth baseball. "He had good hands even then!" Dr. Nolan jokes.

Today, the doctors own an eight-operator practice that they built from scratch. For Dr. Eddleman, the practice is the realization of a dream he carried with him for five years after graduation from dental school. For Dr. Nolan, the practice has reinvigorated his 33-year career and given him new tools to treat his patients.

## PRACTICE PROFILE

### DENTAL PRACTICE

Lane Eddleman, DDS and Mike Nolan, DDS  
Monroe, La.

Lane Eddleman, DDS  
Mike Nolan, DDS

### OFFICE

Square feet: 3,400  
Eight Operatories; Six Outfitted

### EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- A-dec 511 Chairs
- A-dec 541 Delivery Units
- A-dec 6300 Lights
- A-dec Treatment Consoles
- A-dec Preference ICC Sterilization Center
- A-dec W&H Handpieces
- A-dec Assistina
- Air Techniques AirStar 50 Compressor
- Air Techniques VacStar 80H Vacuum System
- Brewer 9100B Doctor's Stools
- CAESY Enterprise System
- Eaglesoft Practice Management Software
- Midmark M11 Sterilizer
- Porter MXR-1 Flushmount Flowmeter
- Progeny Intraoral X-rays
- Schick Digital Sensors
- Schick USB Intraoral Camera
- SciCan Statim 5000 Autoclave
- Sirona Orthophos XG 3 Digital Pan
- SOPRO Integrated Intraoral Camera Handpiece

*This practice is a Patterson Advantage Gold member.*

## Planning for the Future

The practice of Lane Eddleman, DDS, and Mike Nolan, DDS, opened in April 2009 and is nestled in scenic woodlands between a local college school of pharmacy building and a community hospital in town. It sets itself apart with a distinct, plantation-home style exterior; a wraparound porch welcomes guests and inside, floor to ceiling windows flood the space with natural light.

While the doctors are partners, the vision for the practice space is mostly that of Dr. Eddleman and his wife, Andréé, a hygienist with the practice. They have been collecting ideas and feedback from other dentists since 2004, when Dr. Eddleman graduated from Louisiana State University School of Dentistry.

Dr. Eddleman was especially interested in finding out what other dentists did and did not like about their own practice space, and in learning what they would have done differently, if they were to build again today. "Every dentist I talked to wished they had built bigger," he says. "My plan was to build a big enough space to grow into...but I needed to bring someone in. Who better than Dr. Nolan?"

In 2008, when Dr. Eddleman approached him, Dr. Nolan was then one of three dentists in a well-established practice. Several of the older partners were looking toward retirement, which meant that the character of the practice where he'd worked for 33 years was sure to change. The offer from Dr. Eddleman, a young doctor whom he admired, would give him »



the chance to try something new. "I would help him step into technology and he would help me by being a mentor in the same building," Dr. Eddleman says.

The doctors spent five months drafting and finalizing their business arrangement. Each is his own "corporation" and the two corporations own and operate the practice. Initially it was a lot of work, says Dr. Nolan, but it has paid off with a solid working relationship and no misunderstandings between the two.

### **Southern Style in Northern Louisiana**

The physical design of his new practice building was just as important to Dr. Eddleman as the floorplan and technologies inside. He and his wife sketched the building and had a draftsman put together the exterior plans using their drawing and photos of practices they liked.



Danny Grillo, the doctors' Patterson Dental Territory Representative, introduced Dr. Eddleman to Equipment Specialist Doug Whittington, who had previously worked with Dr. Nolan. Whittington helped Dr. Eddleman determine the general size of the office and the number of operatories he wanted, and then narrow down the possibilities by sorting through a series of potential floorplans.

Dr. Eddleman considered the feedback he had received from other doctors who wished that they had built a larger space. On Whittington's recommendation, he chose eight operatories but only outfitted six to begin with. Conduits for plumbing and electrical were laid in the foundation of all the operatories to streamline future installations.

The 3,400-square-foot space features a spacious waiting area for patients, including a kids' play area, a private office for the front office business staff, and a two-car garage that leads directly into Dr. Eddleman's office.

The interior design reflects the plantation-style look of the building's exterior, thanks to the work of Dr. Eddleman's wife. She infused the practice space with homey elements, like French doors, rugs and pillows, artwork, hardware on the doors and cabinets, and a color palette of warm tans, russet and gold.

### **Equipped for Maximum Impact**

While the design of the practice, both inside and out, is understatedly beautiful, the new equipment the doctors invested in shines brightly for all to see. The doctors agreed to equip the practice with all the bells and whistles at the same time they built, rather than in stages.

Dr. Eddleman talked to other doctors about their delivery preferences in their operatories and decided on rear delivery. "When a patient walks into the operatory, he sees the chair





looking out the window, not drills or hoses," he says. "The only doctors who didn't like rear delivery were those who had a kind of homemade set-up and didn't go with A-dec."

Dr. Nolan had previous experience with A-dec equipment. Dr. Eddleman, however, was new to the company and visited the A-dec factory in Newberg, Ore., with Grillot and Whittington. "I was leaning toward A-dec, but going to the facility gave me more confidence regarding the whole purchase," Dr. Eddleman says. "It was helpful in terms of finalizing colors and surfaces."

In addition to equipping the operatories with A-dec chairs, delivery units and treatment consoles, the doctors also went with A-dec for their lab and sterilization center equipment. "I think the trip to A-dec really helped Dr. Eddleman make an informed decision, especially regarding his delivery choice," Whittington says.

### Building a Digital Network

While Dr. Eddleman and Dr. Nolan knew they wanted to update their technological offerings to the patient, they were motivated to do so by a desire to enhance the patient experience. "I think dentistry is a doctor/patient relationship first and foremost," Dr. Nolan says. "The patient has to have confidence in you. We recognize, too, that a modern office helps to lend to that confidence."

Danny Grillot and Whittington recommended Eaglesoft Clinical to network the entire office, including patient records. Dr. Eddleman »



and Dr. Nolan invested in Schick digital sensors and intraoral cameras for improved diagnostics. With computers and two monitors located in each operatory, the doctors now offer better case presentations and are seeing greater case acceptance.

The benefits of the new technologies to the practice are immeasurable, but might have been dampened had extensive training, service and support not been part of the Patterson package. Whittington helped coordinate training on the digital X-rays, Eaglesoft and more.

"When I was making the decision of who to work with to build the new practice, I knew we were going to need more service with the greater volume of equipment and technology we have," Dr. Eddleman says. "That was why I went with Patterson. There was a commitment on both our parts, and the decision for me was made easier by their [commitment to] service."

### The Greatest Change

After two years in the practice, the doctors continue to discover new benefits, both to them and their patients. For Dr. Nolan, the patient experience is greatly enhanced with the digital sensors and intraoral camera, which provide an instant picture of what is happening in the patients' mouths.

While he may have been entertaining thoughts of retirement at his previous practice, those ideas are far from Dr. Nolan's current reality. "You don't go into a new practice and start again, only to be thinking retirement," he says. "The new practice invigorates you. It's exciting and a challenge, and that gets you started again."

For Dr. Eddleman, who is practicing with brand-new operatory equipment for the first time in his career, the A-dec 500 series chairs have been game changers. "We love them and the patients love them," he says.

If they hadn't been willing to take a risk, neither doctor would be where he is today. That's part of a lesson they share with others who are looking to build or invest in new equipment or technology. "Start planning today and keep planning until you're ready to do it," Dr. Eddleman says. "Build bigger than you think you need and don't cut corners."

For a doctor in a situation similar to his own, Dr. Nolan encourages full commitment. "Don't go halfway. Jump in! We went all the way at one time, which was difficult at first, but now it's wonderful."

Dr. Eddleman believes that their full commitment to the practice they envisioned is what helps set his and Dr. Nolan's office apart from others in the area. It's also personally satisfying for him. "It's definitely easier coming to work everyday in a place like this." **PT**



From left to right:  
Danny Grillo, Chris Purvis, Doug Whittington, John Hyden, Dr. Mike Nolan and Dr. Lane Eddleman

### PATTERSON TEAM

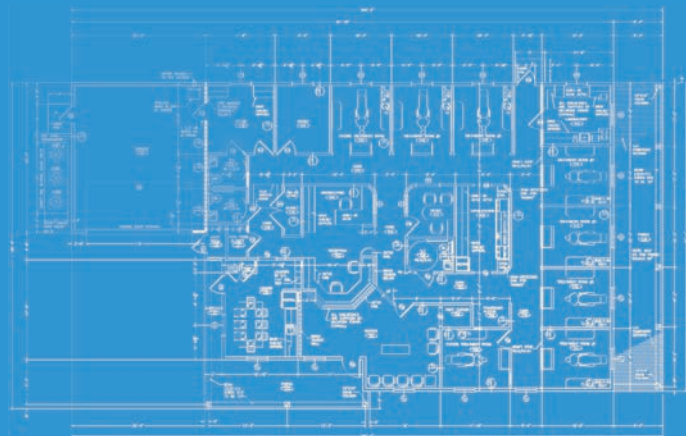
John Hyden, *Branch Manager*

Danny Grillo, *Territory Representative*

Doug Whittington, *Equipment Specialist*

Chris Purvis, *Service Technician*

Ben Sparkman, *Service Technician*



For more information on  
Lane Eddleman, DDS, and  
Mike Nolan, DDS,  
visit [www.eddlemantedental.com](http://www.eddlemantedental.com).