



D IS FOR DENTIN

Researchers at McMaster University in Ontario have discovered a new historical marker for rickets – in dentin. While examining centuries-old dental remains, the scientists found that cross-sections of teeth can reveal a person's history of vitamin D deficiency, much as rings document the growth of a tree. Because dentin needs an adequate supply of vitamin D to mineralize, an inadequate diet or lack of sunshine leaves a permanent microscopic record in the dentin layers. Up till now, scientists studying historical vitamin D deficiency have had to use bones, which are always remodeling, potentially obscuring previous damage. Teeth leave a more accurate record, as dentin is harder than bone and does not remodel. "They're essentially fossils in your mouth," said author Bonnie Kahlon of McMaster's Department of Anthropology. The research was published in the *Journal of Archaeological Science*.



HE'LL TAKE A MEDIUM BRISTLE, WITH AN EXTRA LONG HANDLE

Michael Womer, who calls himself the "Gator Crusader," recently shared a YouTube video of himself brushing the teeth of Chomper, one of several alligators he trains at an alligator park in Florida. In the video, Chomper appears calm and cooperative as Womer brushes its upper and lower front teeth. Womer focuses on developing relationships with the reptiles – which were all rescued from an alligator farm – and promoting their welfare. "The gators are seemingly calm because of the bond I have developed with them," he told InsightEdition.com. Nonetheless, he said he reads their body language to assess their mood before attending to their dental hygiene.

THIS TOOTH FAIRY MEANS BUSINESS

One Philadelphia youngster has learned that even fantasy characters can drive a hard bargain. When he lost a molar and left it out expecting cash in return, his parents decided to get the Tooth Fairy's legal department involved. What they left in exchange for the tooth was not the \$5 their son expected, but rather a memorandum of agreement on letterhead of The Offices of Tooth and Fairy, LLC – Tooth Adjusters. "By leaving your tooth out for one of our Tooth Adjusters, you, the toothee, have entered into a contractual obligation to perform measured work, herein known as Chores," the note said, adding that "these obligations have gone uncompleted, and often have to be requested multiple times before they are, in fact, done." After posting their prank on social media, the parents followed up with a photo of their exasperated son holding the letter up to the camera.

