



Downtown **Dentists** remain a **Main Street Staple**

In O'Neill, Neb., a father and daughter revitalize a 30-year-old practice together



PRACTICE PROFILE

DENTAL PRACTICE

Kersensbrock Dental Care, PC
O'Neill, Neb.

MJ Kersensbrock, DDS
Mary Kersensbrock, DDS

OFFICE

Square feet: 3,750
Seven Operatories

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- A-dec 511 Chairs
- A-dec Decade Plus 1221 Chairs
- A-dec 541 12 O'Clock Duo Delivery Units
- A-dec 1601 Doctor's Stools
- A-dec 1622 Assistant's Stools
- A-dec 6300 Dental Lights
- A-dec Treatment, Accessory and Central Consoles
- A-dec Preference ICC Sterilization Center
- A-dec Assistina Plus
- A-dec MB17 Lisa Sterilizer
- A-dec W&H Handpieces
- CAESY Patient Education Software
- Eaglesoft Practice Management Software
- Progeny Preva DC Intraoral X-rays
- RAMVAC Bulldog QT Combo 2 Dental Vacuum System
- OWL Controlling RAMVAC & Universal Compressor Combo
- Schick Digital Sensors
- Schick iPan

This practice is a Patterson Advantage[®] Gold member.



There's an undeniable sense of community in O'Neill, Neb., born of pride and responsibility. MJ Kersenbrock, DDS, knows it well. He grew up in O'Neill and has owned Kersenbrock Dental Care, PC, a dental practice downtown, since 1982.

“Caring about each other and doing what’s right for the community, that’s part of what a small town is all about.”

– MJ Kersenbrock, DDS

“Caring about each other and doing what’s right for the community,” Dr. MJ Kersenbrock said while explaining O'Neill. “That’s part of what a small town is all about.”

That attitude is also present in Dr. MJ's daughter, Mary Kersenbrock, DDS, who decided upon entering Creighton University School of Dentistry in Omaha that she wanted to come back home to O'Neill and practice dentistry with her father. The only problem: his practice didn't have the space.

“My old office was your typical downtown, 22-foot-wide, 100-foot-deep office. It was like...,” Dr. MJ pauses, before Dr. Mary finishes for him, “A bowling alley.”

Dr. MJ's office had three dental chairs in separate rooms, and they



were almost always in use: one by each of his two hygienists and one by him. There would have been nowhere for Dr. Mary to work even if the clinic was able to support her. Dr. MJ contacted Jason Schneider, his Patterson representative, who along with Patterson Equipment Specialist Steve Kampschnieder, took the doctors to a Mercer Design Seminar in Scottsdale, Ariz.

“We got really serious about building new after that,” Dr. MJ said.

Said Dr. Mary: “My parents have a chalkboard in their kitchen, and my dad started doodling. We showed the drawings to Steve and he said, ‘All right, you two, let me help you here.’ And he took those plans from there and made them presentable.”

The plan started to develop – with Dr. MJ occasionally pausing along the way to clarify that his daughter was committed to going into practice with him. The answer was always yes, and over the next few months they worked closely with Steve to develop a plan to build a new facility in O'Neill. »



"Dr. MJ was in a 70-year-old building," Equipment Specialist Kampschnieder said, "with no windows, no parking and no opportunity for growth. My only goal was to show him what's out there to help and the process he could use to get there."

Dr. MJ had purchased some land on the edge of town and was planning to move his practice there. Something didn't feel right about it, though, after the Mercer seminar. Downtown O'Neill was really Main Street, USA, and leaving it behind was disconcerting.

"He turned to me that day and he said, 'Mary, I'm a downtown dentist and that's where I want to be.' I said, 'Well, then we have to start looking somewhere else.'"

Look, they did. Dr. MJ chose a pair of plots just out the back door of his old office for the location of his new office. "It's made a big improvement for the whole block," he said. "I could've done this cheaper, I think, at a different location, but it's just good for O'Neill to have the downtown look better and that motivates me, too."

Planning a warmer office

The reception area at the new Kersenbrock Dental Care, PC, is much more open – thanks, in large part, to a space that's about three times larger than at the old office. Dr. Mary said the reception area and a comforting color scheme throughout the office contribute to a much less clinical feel, which she's noticed making a positive impact on patients.

"Plus, I have windows. And I'm not talking about the computer system," Dr. MJ said. "At the old office I had the front window and that's it. Our office now, I'm very happy with how it turned out. And I credit Patterson. Steve Kampschnieder sure helped me a lot."

It was Kampschnieder who recommended another design element that helped define the entire office, Dr. MJ said. While discussing the layout of the operatories, Kampschnieder suggested a two-operator pod system in which a center console and chair are flanked on either side by a shared X-ray unit.

"That's really what drove the whole clinic portion," Dr. MJ said. "I had ideas and we worked really well together. He would say, 'I understand what you're saying and I think I have an idea of how we can do it.'"

In all, Dr. MJ decided to build a seven-operator office. Five chairs were installed during the initial build and when Dr. Mary joined the practice in December 2010, they added a sixth chair. It may not be long before they're ready for the seventh.

"One day last week, we could have used that room," Dr. Mary said. "When the need arises, we'll have the space there."

While they were deciding on equipment and cabinetry, the doctors traveled with their Patterson representatives to A-dec's headquarters in Newberg, Ore. There, they watched the assembly process and



checked out the entire product line before making an educated decision on which equipment they preferred. They selected the A-dec 500 Series and A-dec Decade Series chairs based on comfort and style. Their patients like them, too.

"I have a lot of patients who sit in the chair and say, 'Wow, this is comfortable,' and I say, 'Good. Open up,'" Dr. Mary laughed. "But those chairs go along with the atmosphere we wanted: a place people go and not feel so nervous and rigid. Our chairs are nice and plush."

The new office also features a prominent sterilization center, which is a centerpiece of the clinic. Sterilization centers can tend to be a bottleneck anyway, and with twice as many operatories now, the doctors needed a streamlined system in place.

"I had to lean on Steve Kampschnieder for that," Dr. MJ said. "This is a different flow pattern. At the old office you sometimes had people trying to reach over you at the sink. It just wasn't very efficient. The new sterilization center just fits."

The present of a different future

The Kersenbrocks' plan is for Dr. Mary to take over the practice eventually, and they have a vision for that, too. Adding the seventh chair, Dr. MJ said, will set them up to bring on another dentist.

"The plan is to get to two and a half dentists, and I'll be the half," Dr. MJ said. "Where I was at before there was absolutely no potential for that. Zero."

Dr. MJ said his attitude is different now that he's at the new clinic, and with a second dentist. His stress level is lower because Dr. Mary is able to relieve some of the pressure that he felt during the first 28 years in his practice. »



"Now he can have that freedom and he deserves it, because he has worked his whole life providing," Dr. Mary said. "He can really spend a lot more time doing the things he loves, spending more time with his family and enjoying life."

After many years of being the first one in the office in the morning, Dr. MJ has passed that torch to Dr. Mary now – and she was happy to take it. Some days it's not much later that he gets in, but usually it's enough.

"Thirty minutes doesn't seem like a lot. But it's time in the

morning when he gets to do what he wants," Mary said. "He and my mom have breakfast every morning together, and he never used to be able to do that. Thirty minutes is a lifestyle change."

There are many reasons the new office has been a lifestyle change for Drs. MJ and Mary, and they're overwhelmingly positive. He offered a piece of advice to dentists looking at building new: "I would say, don't be afraid to get professional advice. When you deal with companies like Mercer and Patterson, the money that you spend for the advice and professional knowledge is money well spent." **PT**



Top row from left to right:
William Neesen, Jason Schneider, Patrick O'Donnell, Steve Kampschnieder
Bottom row from left to right:
Dr. Mary Kersensbrock, Dr. MJ Kersensbrock

PATTERSON TEAM

Patrick O'Donnell, *Branch Manager*
Jason Schneider, *Territory Representative*
Steve Kampschnieder, *Equipment Specialist*
William Neesen, *Service Technician*



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