

People

In The News

Cajun doc:
Cosmetic dentist
Hugh Flax is
a washboard
connoisseur.



BYRON E. SMALL

Dentist 'scrubs' a mean zydeco washboard

EXECUTIVE HOBBY: DR. HUGH FLAX

By Julie Bryant
STAFF WRITER

To his patients he's the smile-maker, the guy who makes a trip to the dentist a little less like a shuffle down the Green Mile — into a chair of an entirely different kind — and a little more like a visit to a jazzy spa.

But to a select group of friends and family he's something else entirely — try a wild-time washboard player with a little Cajun soul.

Yep, Dr. Hugh Flax, Emory University-trained cosmetic dentist, long-standing member of the American Dental Association and civic-minded community volunteer is, in fact, a foot stompin' washboard connoisseur.

"Well, there's no way I'm as good as those guys who play every day," said a modest Flax, referring to guys like zydeco musician and quintessential "scrubboarder" Earl Sallev.

A-lister CJ Chenier and his bandmates. "As long as they know I won't do any damage, they'll let me get up there," Flax said.

"Just don't let him sing," said Dr. Gary Radz, the founder of Cosmetic Dentistry of Colorado, and a longtime colleague. Perhaps surprisingly, most cosmetic dentists are very creative types, he said. "Some of us paint and sculpt. Others are musicians."

The nature of what cosmetic dentists do is so precise and requires so much concentration, Radz said. "A lot of people have functional teeth, but not such a great smile. We have the ability to create a better self-image and there is a lot of responsibility with that."

In fact, Flax gets downright philosophical when treating his patients.

Dentistry covers four basic "food groups," the smile, the strength of the teeth, gums and how stress is managed