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Dr. Craig Martin and his staff will be celebrating 20 years in business next month.

# Martin celebrates 20 years in practice

By JOHN LEE

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Philadelphia native Dr. Craig Martin and staff will celebrate 20 years of his dental practice on Dec. 1.

Dr. Martin said opening his own practice had always been his goal. And his inspiration came when he was just two or three years old.

“My mother would take me to a pediatric dentist in Jackson, Heber Simmons, and over the years he became a mentor to me and was the main inspiration to my practice,” Dr. Martin said.

“I have a great staff and, as the owner, I can be flexi-

ble to accommodate my kids,” he said. “God really has blessed us for this and how great the community has been.”

His favorite part of running the practice is interacting with his patients and he really enjoys the clinical work. “Our patient support has really kept us going, and Neshoba County is such a great community,” he said. “They’re supporters of local businesses. A great community is a crucial asset.”

The support of the community has “been awesome over the years,” said Dr. Martin, the son of Ricky and Sandra Martin.

Outside of the office, Dr.

Martin loves spending time with his wife Amy, a nurse at Quality Hospice, and their three children, Meg, 21, Will, 18, and Seth, 15. Dr. Martin likes to hunt, golf, and go on family getaways, especially to Seaside, Florida.

When the Neshoba County Fair was canceled due to COVID-19, they took a trip to Blue Ridge, Georgia. They also love to follow Mississippi State sports.

“All of my kids are involved in sports,” he said. Meg played travel softball and he’s coached her team. Will is at Leake Academy and plays football and Seth plays basketball.

“We’re very active in keeping up with our kids, so it’s very busy for us a lot of the time,” he said, especially with a dental practice and three basketball games a week — plus football games thrown in too.

The coronavirus pandemic has been a challenge because they were shut down by the state for a while and currently are still dealing with pandemic protocols. However, his practice is still going strong.

“These past 20 years have flown by and a lot of that is me loving this job, and I hope I can do this for another 20 years,” he said. “I can’t think of anything else

I’d rather be doing, and I can’t think of anywhere else I’d want to live than Neshoba County. We’re proud to be here and serve this community.”

Office Manager Michelle Chandler started working for Dr. Martin in 2000 when he opened, left in 2010, and just recently came back to work for him again last year after working for the Philadelphia Public Schools.

“He deserves all the recognition he can get,” Chandler said. “He has such a great attitude and does the best job he can with his work and cares about all of his patients.”

Originally from Merid-

ian, dental hygienist Amanda Young has worked for Martin for 18 years. “I was looking for jobs in the area and couldn’t find one,” she said. “Thankfully, I decided to apply at Craig Martin DMD, and now here I am almost 20 years later.”

Dr. Martin knows the people and “he’s a people person and he’s developed a lot of good dental-patient relationships,” she said.

Dr. Craig Martin General Dentistry and Facial Aesthetics is located at 1001 East Main Street in Philadelphia. For more information, visit [craigmartindds.com](http://craigmartindds.com) or call 601-656-3366.



Pictured (L to R) Jay Eubanks, John King, Kay Kilpatrick, Allen Hardy, Susan Bobo, George Burnett, Ben Hardy, Jodi Harrison, Patricia Anderson, Scott Hines, Stephanie Gray, Jordon Sanders, Nancy Seward.

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# Thank you to our fantastic team!

Front Row (Seated) Left to right: Debbie Webb, Jo Ann Nicholson, Shannon Quinn

2nd Row Left to Right: Trent Rickles, Patrick Eubanks, Brad Gray, Sam Rudolph, Brantley Ingram, Peggy Johnson, Jason Peavy

3rd Row Left to Right: Kade Webb, Doug Bates, Jeffrey Nicholson, David Adkins, Chris Eubanks, Jody Sharp, Justin Ward, Nathan Grimes, Jeff Lee, Michael Sharpston, Richard Rickles, Taylor Irby & Justin Webb.



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# Wilkerson tapped to lead Central Water

By **DUNCAN DENT**  
 duncan@neshobademocrat.com

The man who keeps the water running in the county may be the guy you see running.

Central Water Association announced the promotion of John Wilkerson to general manager in October.

A native of Faulkner in Tippah County, Wilkerson moved to Philadelphia in 2004 to work for Farm Bureau Insurance and be closer to his wife's family.

He started at Central Water in 2014 as a well operator trainee and progressed to a certified well operator, manager trainee and assistant manager in 2019.

"I am excited to start a new challenge with Central Water Association and look forward to working with the team," Wilkerson said. "I am fortunate to work with such a respected company that prides itself on producing quality water and cus-

tomers service."

Wilkerson studied insurance and risk management at the University of Mississippi and holds a bachelor of business administration degree.

He said that he was drawn to Central Water by its essential properties.

"I like providing a service that means something," Wilkerson said. "Water is something people live on and use everyday. They don't always know we are here but sometime we will have a crew out all night making sure that those customers have water in the morning. Everybody needs it."

He's active in the community and serves as vice president of the Chamber of Commerce and treasurer of the Sertoma Club.

In his free time, Wilkerson enjoys running, an activity he discovered in order to shed a few inevitable pounds after college.



John Wilkerson with wife Laney and children Ryals and Arly.

"After college you tend to pickup some weight so I thought I would try it to keep the weight off but it has really become a stress reliever for me," Wilkerson said.

Wilkerson runs between four and five times a week clocking between 15 and 20 miles in that time.

Since taking up running, Wilkerson has completed three full marathons, run five or six half marathons and competed in the Sertoma Club's Heart O' Dixie Triathlon during the Neshoba County Fair.

"That's a tough event," Wilkerson said. "You could say I participate rather than compete in that. I did the full thing two years ago."

Wilkerson is married to Laney Ryals of Philadelphia and she is employed with Horn Family Dental as a dental hygienist.

They have a son, Ryals, a fifth grader at Leake Acad-

emy, and a daughter, Arly Ruth, who is in K-5 at Leake Academy.

Wilkerson said he enjoys spending time with his family. His son recently began playing baseball and he said travel ball games have become a favorite activity for the family as well as following the Ole Miss Rebels Athletics.

The general manager is responsible for managing and directing the operations of CWA to ensure compliance with state statutes, association goals, policies, resolutions and applicable governmental regulations to support high-quality, cost-effective and dependable water service.

"We are excited about the promotion of John to general manager," said board president Steve Breland. "We feel confident with John's business management and leadership skills he will lead Central Water in serving our members."

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Left to right: Robin White, Laurie Johnson



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**Thank you to our wonderful staff!**

William Craig Martin, DMD • Amanda Eason, RDH  
Teela Woodson, RDH • Michelle Chandler, Office Manager  
Not pictured: Beth Moss, Dental Assistant.

**DR. CRAIG MARTIN**

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**Thank you  
to our  
hard-working  
staff!**

**Left to right: Paulia Chunn,  
Kim Clark, Wanniese Whitehead,  
and Juanita Williams**



Thank you to the best team in town!



Front: Chloe Boykin, Sarah Howell, and Jonni Anderson  
Back: Suzanne Hansford, Jeannie Eubanks, and Bobbie Kay Waddell

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We appreciate all of your hard work.

OUR TEAM: (L to R) Junior Collins, Thomas Walton, Trent Williams,  
Kim Hollingsworth, Triston Vance, Ryan Kilpatrick, Patricia Phillips, Robert Tolbert,  
Cathy Tolbert, Eilon Stovall, Gene Tolbert, John Keith, Not Pictured: Ron Ferguson

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**TO ALL OUR TEAM MEMBERS THAT ARE HELPING US  
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The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way healthcare workers take care of our patients and our employees. Protecting our staff and our patients is a priority!

In an effort to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and Flu, Neshoba General continues to take extra steps to protect our patients, staff, visitors and community.

**We have guidelines in place to keep everyone as safe as possible.**

- + Screening everyone at entry, including our physicians and team members.
- + Everyone wears a mask at all times, including our physicians and team members.
- + Required social distancing in all waiting areas
- + Limited visitation policy in place
- + Using UV-C lights to clean and disinfect our patient rooms for added assurance

We have increased other daily cleaning and sanitation to sterilize patient rooms in our clinics and waiting areas.

  
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