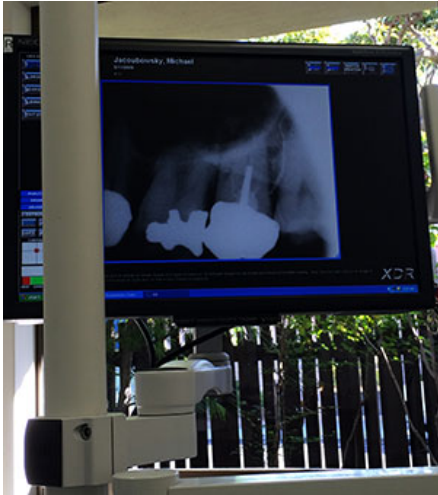


## Hand me the pliers. The ones with the larger handle.

The tooth had to go. An old root canal whose crown was breaking loose due to some decay underneath, and besides, this was a tooth that had become infected a few years ago and created a fistula with a path to the sinus cavities, requiring pretty massive antibiotics but stabilized since then. But I made the mistake at my last regular appointment of asking about the roughness my tongue was feeling back there, and that led to my first tooth extraction. If I have one extraction each 58 years, I'll be able to keep most of my teeth.



It didn't want to come out though. The hope is that it can be pulled in one piece, and it did get a bit loose and wiggle, but apparently one of the roots was curved, requiring that it be cut up in sections and pulled out piece by piece. I had the feeling that, had it been a straight pull in one piece, it wouldn't have taken much time at all. Instead, you hear the dentist asking his assistant "Hand me the pliers. The ones with the larger handle." I think he got a pretty good workout today.

And of course I rode my bike to the dentist and then afterward to work. I figured, if people drive to & from the dentist, what's the difference riding? Not that I'm much good here (at work), not because of pain (there isn't any, but I expect a bit when the lidocaine or whatever wears off) but because I've got gauze that I have to keep sticking back there and have to fight off the urge to gag. Might be a slow ride home tonight (but I did get permission from the dentist to do the regular Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride tomorrow, at whatever pace I can manage).