

## Dental hygienist delivers early valentine to residents lacking insurance coverage

Murray Crawford, Special To The Burlington Post

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It didn't take long for dental hygienist Judy Ganis to fill up her free day of visits.

Ganis is part of 75 independent dental hygienists in Ontario who agreed to set aside Valentine's Day (tomorrow) to offer free dental cleanings, polishing and fluoride to those who cannot afford regular dental care.

Her office, at 5112 New St. in Burlington will be packed with people waiting to add that extra shine to their smile.

"I'm pretty much booked," Ganis said. "But I am taking walk-ins. For children or other walk-ins I have other hygienists to help."

"I started to advertise, maybe a few weeks ago, within a few days I was pretty much booked."

The speed at which Ganis filled her day is disconcerting. Since the free dental care is offered to those who can't afford it, the implication is that there are a lot of people in the area who are in need of proper dental care.

"It's definitely a need. There are many people without dental insurance; there are people working for small businesses that don't get the coverage they need," Ganis said.

"But they don't really seem to go to the dentist because they can't or because of charges that maybe they're afraid to incur."

The idea stems from another independent dental hygienist, in Ajax, who got her Ontario colleagues together and proposed the idea. She picked the date and the name of the event, "a gift from the heart."

Ganis has also recruited other area independent dental hygienists who do not have their own clinic. They will join her at her facility.

SunStar Butler, a sponsor of the event, is donating toothbrushes and floss.

"If each one of us is able to help just one person then we have changed the smile of 75 people," Ganis said.

"This is a rewarding experience, to be able to help those in need."



**Dental hygienist delivers early valentine to residents lacking insurance coverage. REASON TO SMILE:** Registered Dental Hygienist Judy Ganis is offering free dental hygiene care tomorrow (Saturday) to those who can't afford it. The day is part of a joint promotion by 75 independent dental hygienists across Ontario. *Nikki Wesley -Burlington Post*

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