

Getting dental hygiene to seniors

By Diane Goble
Correspondent

As we age or become homebound due to illness, one of the things that often get neglected is dental hygiene. Even being in a wheelchair, it's next to impossible to get yourself to a dentist's office, much less into a dental chair to have any work done on your teeth.

To the rescue is Linda Robinson, a registered dental hygienist with an expanded practice permit, who provides in-home dental hygiene care. She has 35 years experience in dental hygiene, including the last 14 years in Bend. She recently branched out on her own seeing patients in Central Oregon from Prineville to La Pine to Sisters, and volunteers for the Kiwanis Dental Van with Medical Teams International.

"I always loved working with seniors," Robinson says, "and what I found was that as their health declines, especially with dementia patients, they tend to brush less often and forget to make appointments for routine dental visits. I'm here to help fill that need."

Since 1998, dental cleaning has been allowed in nursing homes, but now hygienists can go anywhere. Besides nursing homes, Robinson frequents memory care facilities, foster homes, residential care facilities and home-bound residents in private homes. She can work on a patient in their bed, sitting in a recliner or in a wheelchair.

Dental hygiene services include: dental cleanings, full-mouth screenings and exams, oral cancer exams, and application of fluoride varnish to help prevent tooth decay. She also teaches oral hygiene care to patients and their caregivers.

Early detection through screenings can deter problems in the early stages. Over 95 percent of seniors have lost some gum tissue, exposing tooth root surfaces that are susceptible to decay. There are also some medications and treatments, like radiation and chemotherapy, that reduce saliva, the body's natural defense against cavities, leaving the patient more susceptible to tooth decay.

Known as "dry mouth," it is the feeling there is not enough saliva in the mouth. Everyone has it once in a while — if they are nervous, upset or under stress. But

if you have it all or most of the time, it can be a sign of a serious health problem. It is not a normal part of aging and should be checked out.

Studies show that bacteria causing decay and gum disease may also contribute to many systemic diseases including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, liver and kidney diseases and respiratory infections. If something suspicious is seen, Robinson will recommend a dentist see the patient. If they do not have one, she refers to a dentist who will make house calls to provide an exam and limited treatment.

For patients with dentures, she recommends periodic exams. Dentures that are not properly cleaned daily can lead to several gum diseases, including yeast infections of the gums, sores due to improperly fitting dentures and some oral cancers. Denture cleaning is included with an oral exam.

Robinson is a provider for several insurance companies and will bill insurance companies for qualifying patients.

For more information, contact Linda Robinson at 541-312-3375 or lindar@bendbroadband.com.

New gallery opens on Hood Avenue

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

The saying that "one man's trash is another man's treasure" has never been expressed more vividly than it is at Grizzly Ridge Upcycle.

The new gallery, located at the corner of Hood Avenue and Elm Street, features art that is crafted out of materials that others have discarded.

"All our items are hand-made from what they call 'upcycled materials,'" said owner Rhonda Barney. "People are just being creative with things that most people throw away."

Grizzly Ridge Upcycle features art from jewelry to whimsical sculpture, from wearable art to art you would hang on your wall.

Iraienah Garoutte of Eugene took home a hanging sculpture made of cookie tins and old oil-can spouts made to look like a bull's horns.

"It's so crazy," she said. "It makes me laugh. It makes me happy — that's what I like about it."

She plans to hang it by her front door so that everyone who visits her home will enter with a smile.

Though she's only been open for a couple of weeks, and the gallery is far from full, Barney has already seen a lot of that kind of reaction to the art.

"That's the best thing about



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

Iraienah Garoutte purchased an upcycled wall sculpture from Rhonda Barney at Grizzly Ridge Upcycle.

this — it's awesome," said Barney. "It's just surprise after surprise when they see this stuff."

Barney is actively seeking artists to consign their wares in the gallery — and is looking forward to more surprises.

"My goal or my vision for this is that people will have to come back ... and see what kind of craziness is here," she says.

Barney herself creates painted, upcycled furniture, which is what led her into the gallery business. She wanted to sell her own work. She didn't realize that she was riding a growing trend toward this kind of artistic expression.

"I didn't realize it was so huge already in bigger cities," she said. "I knew I liked it."

Barney lives north of

Prineville, but decided it was worth a commute to open her gallery in the thriving gallery district that Hood Avenue has become in Sisters.

"I think this type of art will be appreciated here," she said. "I don't know that every town would be receptive to this type of stuff."

Sisters has certainly been welcoming. Barney said that many people have stopped by to check out the gallery and to wish her the best in her new endeavor.

"It made me know that I made the right choice," she said.

To inquire about consignment, call 541-588-3070 or email grizzlyridgeupcycle@gmail.com. Grizzly Ridge Upcycle is located at 123 E. Hood Ave. in Sisters.

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