Singing dentist helps patients erase fears

I've had compliments so I don't think I'm bad. I take requests." - Dr. Ronda Van Horn

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FEAR AND annoyance is some-thing Van Horn understands, Alter-al, she had a bad experience herself with a dentils when she was younger. That did it. She withched to a differ-ent dentils and in the process found mentor for her own career.

"Ife was very genile. He gave paniess injections. I switched fros someone who did dentistry the old-fashluned way to someone who did it the modern way."

fashioned way to someone who did it the modern way."

Music had nothing to do with Van-Horn becoming a dentist. She loved sciences and health care — and art. "There's a lot of artistry in den-tistry," said Van Horn, the mother of two children.

tistry, said Van Horn, the mother of two children.

That may surprise a lot of patients. But as Van Horn tells it, filling a cavity or making crowns or bridges is really a lot like sculpting. With a filling you've got to make sure the lines and curves fit the bite and other teeth. With crowns and bridges the art is making them look natural. What Van Horn follows — and ask her five-member staff to do the same — is that her patients are the most important people in the world. "I always try to remember that I would want to be able to sit in this chair and be a patient in my own office," said Van Horn, who has practiced in Farmington Hills since 1989. That's why making the patient

Stephen Sondhelm's show "Com-pany" will be presented at 3 pm. Sunday at Cranbrook's St. Dunstan's Theater.

The show is being sponsored by the Marian Alumnae Association. Tickets are \$25, and proceeds bene-fit the Dolores Chapman Memorial Scholarship Fund. The scholarship is

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comfortable and relaxed is so important to Van Horn. "It's not fun when it hurts patients or It's hard on them. I get a real satisfaction of helping patients over the fear."

OUTSIDE HER office on 13 Mile, just west of North Farmington High School, Van Horn has a neon toothbrush designating her practice. When you walk into her waiting and patient rooms, you won't see sterile white walls.

while walls.

"I designed the office to be relaxlag. Instead of being sterile I picked
colors that are caiming," said the
sole-practitioner. The wallpapers,
for example, have shades of plak —
a cofor that many believe is calming.
But she goes even further, Since
the only thing most dentistry patients see is the ceiling, Van Homhas pictures on the ceiling, above the
patient chairs. She also uses headphones so patients can listen to music. Visualization techniques come in
handy, too.

sic. Visualization techniques come in handy, too.

"I think a lot of it is the sound." Van Horn said, speaking of the traditional fear of going to the dentist. It's the sound of the equipment, particularly the drill, that can get a lot of patients fear and anxiety levels eracking.

of patients' fear and anxiety levels cracking.
More important than the sur-required from the sur-tist must communicate thoroughly with the patient. It's not her style to walk into the patient room after the hyglenist and other staff members

have been in. It's not her style to talk only when it has to do with teets and it's not her style to order directives to the patients.

"I have more of a discussion with the patients of the patients.

"I have more of a discussion with the patients of the Company' helps Marian

given to a Marian High School sopho-Your Future Job

more:
For tickets write to the alumnae, association office, 7225 Lahser Road, Bloomfield Hills 4830. Tickets will be at the box office or can be purchased at the door.
The theater is at 400 Lone Pine Road, between Woodward and Lahser. begins here!

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"I've never really had anyone surprised by it. I think I can sing OK.

and joints in the face and jaw. And that's not to mention the filing of any new cavities.

She also measures the guns around each tooth and if appropriate takes models or photographs on four better the face of the face of



Rhonda Van Horn's son, Sean, spends time after school in his mem's office.

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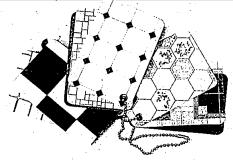


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