

# Moultrie News

Section B



Smile of the Week

"I'm smiling because life's too short not to smile."

- Tate Nation

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## Cosmetic plastic surgery and procedures for the face An interview with Mount Pleasant surgeon Thomas Funcik

(Editor's Note: This is the first of a four-part, in-depth series on plastic surgery east of the Cooper.)

BY BRIGITTE SURETTE  
SPECIAL TO THE MOULTRIE NEWS

In a culture that demands that we know more, learn more and do more, it's no surprise that we want to look better while we're doing it. Gone are the days where only a privileged few or the famous choose plastic surgery as a way to enhance their appearance.

We are bombarded with media images of how we no longer have to settle for what nature gave us. Now, more than any other time in history, we are choosing surgery to enhance and improve what we were born with. Why are we doing this?

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Americans are living and working longer than ever before.

According to a 1998 online publication of The Harvard Gazette, the average life spans for women and men in the United States are 79 years of age and 72 years of age, respectively. With continuing advancements in medical technology and the increasing awareness of living a healthier lifestyle, that number will more than likely increase in 10 years.

Women make up approximately half of the workforce population. Nearly a quarter of that population are women between the ages of 45 and 54, the prime age for menopause; the phase in which the aging process accelerates for females. Those numbers are significant compared to the

workforce 20 years ago. With the ever-increasing number of 30-somethings and baby boomers comprising the majority of the workforce, it's no coincidence that the majority of plastic surgery in 2003 was performed on those between the ages of 35-50.

Over 7 million women had some type of cosmetic procedure last year. The number of men opting for cosmetic procedures is on the rise as well. In 2003, 1.1 million men had plastic surgery; a 31 percent increase from 2002. Our desire for our physical appearance to match our stamina is rapidly becoming more the norm than the exception.

As one 53-year-old female patient of plastic surgery I interviewed stated, "I wanted to look as good as I felt."

That patient was one of over 5,000 patients of Dr. Thomas Funcik, a surgeon of the American Board of Facial Plastic Surgery. Funcik, Director of Coastal Facial Plastic Surgery in Mount Pleasant, has been improving and enhancing the faces of patients for over ten years. Funcik talked about his practice and experience, cosmetic surgery and procedures, and the benefits and risks of plastic surgery.

### 'I know I've done my job'

"The rewards I get (from patients) are indescribable. When one of my patients tell me I've made a difference in their lives and they're better able to go out and face the world, I know I've done my job," said Funcik.

Patients interviewed attest to Funcik's expertise and skill. One patient stated, "Dr. Funcik is not only a skilled surgeon, but an artist."

Funcik completed his pre-

medical work at Duke University and graduated with honors from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with his Doctor of Medicine in 1989. He completed his post-graduate surgical internship and Otolaryngology at MUSC in 1994 and won the prestigious, national research award from the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

Funcik stated that in his practice, the most popular procedures and surgeries are Botox, facelifts and blepharoplasty or "eyelid lifts" and rhinoplasty or nose job. His practice is a national training center for physicians to perform Botox procedures in their own practices. Coastal Facial Plastic Surgery is the number 1 Botox injection facility in North and South Carolina. Doctors come from all over the country to train under his supervision and direction.

"There are many medical professionals that perform Botox injections," said Cyndee Cave, Nurse Administrator, "but it's important that a person make sure that the surgeon, dermatologist or other medical professional be adequately trained."

The risk of receiving Botox injections from someone who hasn't been trained can result in over or under correction, poor results and a waste of time and money. The effects of Botox usually lasts for four months. The process, which consists of injecting minute amounts of a purified form of protein, Botulinum toxin A (Botox) into the muscles of the face, temporarily relaxes them causing the muscles to lie flat and smooth. The procedure takes about 15 minutes with no downtime. Virtually all patients go in for the procedure and go back to work that day.



This patient had lashline, brow and lips done (micropigmentation/"permanet makeup").

and go back to work that day.

"I was hooked the first time I did it," said Cave who is in her early 30's, "I inherited my father's frown lines between my brows and since I'm in the profession, I wanted to show our patients the results. It's a less invasive alternative to facelifts and many of our patients in their 30s and 40s will go with Botox while deciding if they want to commit to cosmetic surgery."

The expressionless face or "stoneface" that comedians joke about, or what we sometimes see on some of the famous faces on television, aren't necessarily from Botox according to Cave.

### Bad rap for Botox

"It's (Botox) gotten a bad rap," she said, "you never know what kind of junk they've put in their face. It could be fat injections, collagen, or any number of things combined with Botox. You can overdo anything. That's why it's so important to do your research and find a surgeon or medical professional who has been properly trained."

Funcik's newest technique for Botox can also shape and arch the brow, resulting in a more youthful appearance.

Botox can also be used to help smooth out the fine lines above the mouth.

The cost is approximately \$300 per area. If you add up the costs spent on creams promising to smooth out those fine lines, you may find that a time or two a year with Botox could equal the money spent on topical products that don't always do what they claim.

According to The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, Botox ranked first among all surgical and

See Face, page 4B

### On Vacation with the Moultrie News



Dick and Ginny Foreman of Mount Pleasant went to Australia and took the Moultrie News along on a kangaroo tour of the Sydney Harbour.



STAFF PHOTOS BY BRIGITTE SURETTE

Dr. Thomas Funcik relaxes for a moment in his office.

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