

Part 2

a personal renaissance

In improving her appearance,
Laura Mendell also saves her life

by GAIL LOWE

THERE'S POWER IN CHANGE.

New window treatments for your home. A new spring outfit. Cosmetic surgery. All are designed to add quality and dimension to your life.

North Shore resident Laura Mendell was recently empowered – not through home improvements or new clothing – but by receiving the gift of a facial and smile makeover, compliments of Dr. Anna Petropoulos, a board-certified facial plastic surgeon at the New England Facial Cosmetic Surgery Center in Danvers; and Benjamin Polan, D.M.D., a dentist at the Center for Exceptional Dentistry in Beverly. Kerry Callahan, owner of LaBelle Femme Day Spa in Marblehead, also participated in Laura's makeover by providing her with a new haircut and color.

As introduced in the Winter 2005 issue of *northshore*, Laura was chosen out of many applicants to be the candidate for this makeover. We promised to report the results of her makeover in this sequel.

"Since Dr. Petropoulos and Dr. Polan

performed my surgery and dental cosmetic surgery, I'm much more confident," Laura says. "I feel really good about myself."

The 46-year-old wife and mother of two says she is also happy with her new hairstyle, a wavy shoulder-length cut that now glows with copper highlights.

"I couldn't be more happy with the outcome," she says.

The effects of gravity had left Laura with sagging jowls, brows and eyelids and had flattened her cheeks. Her eyelids were hanging so much, in fact, that they were obstructing her vision. Even though Dr. Petropoulos is very conservative and always strives to use the least invasive techniques possible, the degree of facial aging had exceeded what could be corrected by non-invasive means alone (such as the Thermage radiofrequency lift and the Sculptra injectible face-lift). Hence, a minimally invasive endoscopic brow lift with eyelid trim and endoscopic "Endotyne™" cheek lift was performed.

An endoscopic lift is an outpatient procedure performed with a tiny telescope through half-inch incisions placed behind the hairline with local numbing medicine. Using a special camera, Dr. Petropoulos performed the lift without having to make the extensive incisions involved with traditional lifts. Recovery time, therefore, was minimal.

"Dr. Petropoulos also performed a little liposuction under my chin," Laura said "and took away my [wrinkles] using Botox. I no longer look matronly. With my frown lines gone, I look so much more relaxed and happy."

Laura underwent surgery with Dr. Petropoulos at the Hunt Center in Danvers. As soon as the anesthesia wore off, she felt well enough to go home. Though there was some bruising, Laura's discomfort was minimal and easily managed by medication.

"The pain was nothing I couldn't handle," she said.

When Laura's stitches and staples were removed a few days later, there are no



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visible scars. Laura returned to her job as surgical technician at Addison Gilbert Hospital in Gloucester shortly thereafter to an astonished group of co-workers.

“The people I work with couldn’t believe the difference in my appearance,” she says. “They were so impressed that several of them were going to make appointments with Dr. Petropoulos and Dr. Polan that very day.”

Laura’s opportunity for having a makeover came just in the nick of time. Prior to her surgery, Dr. Petropoulos ordered a chest x-ray for her patient, although this is not a routine pre-op test. The x-ray showed a spot on Laura’s lung that turned out to be a tumor. Thus, after she healed from her makeover, Laura underwent a curative pulmonary lobectomy.

“If not for the soup-to-nuts makeover, I might never have known there was anything wrong,” Laura says. “There were no symptoms at all. Now I’m grateful to Dr. Petropoulos for two things: For bringing out my true, hidden beauty and for saving my life. Talk about a

new lease on life! I can face anything now.”

In addition to saving her life, Laura’s timely makeover has rendered a softer, more youthful appearance. Her beautifully aligned, crowned, and veneered teeth now give her a much brighter smile.

“I was in the right place at the right time,” Laura says about the makeover and her cancer diagnosis. “Someone ‘up there’ was watching out for me. My faith in medicine and God has been reaffirmed. I’m so thankful to Dr. Petropoulos and Dr. Polan for making me feel beautiful and for saving my life.” ■

LAURA MENDELL
before and after
the makeover.

Photography courtesy of the
office of Dr. Petropoulos