



JANE LUPTON, facial prosthesis technician, makes artificial facial parts to help patients return to their everyday lives. At right, she puts the finishing touches on an artificial ear.

Some parts are artificial, but the smiles are real

By Michelle Robertson
Staff Writer

Comprehensive Cancer Center

Tucked away in a quiet basement laboratory of a small building in Duke's vast medical center complex, you can find the hideway where Jane Lupton sits diligently molding plaster and wax models of variously shaped noses and ears.

With a touch of the artist, she mixes and matches colors from her palette until she obtains the exact skin tone she is looking for. Softly chiseling, she carefully curves, shapes, smooths over and finally colors in these handcrafted facial parts.

Jane Lupton is a facial prosthetics technician in the Department of Prosthetics and Orthotics.

Despite the complexity of her title, there is a simple explanation of Lupton's work. She fashions artificial likenesses of parts of the face — facial prostheses — and fits these on persons who have experienced some disfigurement due to disease, accident or congenital defects.

Combats depression

Most of Lupton's patients are former cancer victims who have undergone extensive surgery. Most, she says, are

psychologically depressed at their loss.

Through her work, Lupton helps to combat this depression and facilitate the patient's readjustment and return to normal life.

"Considering the anguish resulting from the loss of a nose, ear or eye section, you can really understand the resurgence of hope that comes when a successful prosthesis is made and the patient is able to return to his normal way of life," Lupton said.

More beneficial if better known

But, she went on to explain, the facial prosthesis unit has had a very real problem making itself known to the people who could most benefit from its services.

"It is difficult to publicize this kind of service, difficult to get information on our availability to the patients because

their health care team might not know about us," she said.

Even with the major breakthroughs that have been made in reconstructive plastic surgery, Lupton said, there are still many cases where that procedure is either not possible or not advisable because of other medical complications. The facial prosthesis unit here offers an alternative.

Two-day process

The mechanics involved in fitting a patient are somewhat complicated but the end result is the best matched and most aesthetically pleasing prosthesis for the patient.

The process usually takes two full days of working with the patient for proper molding and fitting. This is normally done after the patient has left the hospital and may require an overnight stay for those

who don't live close enough to commute.

Before beginning any work, however, Lupton first consults with the potential patient, carefully explains the entire procedure and allows the patient to decide if he or she wants to proceed.

"It is important that the person clearly understand what he's in for," she said.

Natural and lifelike

Lupton begins making the prosthesis first by creating a plaster impression of the disfigurement. She then fits a wax mold over the plastic model. From the wax mold, she makes a plastic or silicone rubber prosthesis, which is then tinted to match the patient's skin color.

The finished product is very natural and lifelike, the technician said.

One patient remarked, "Folks who know me realize that I had work done on

(Continued on page 4)

Nurse researchers to discuss variety of topics

The Third Biennial Eastern Conference on Nursing Research will be held at Duke Wednesday through Friday, April 12-14.

The conference, sponsored this year by the School of Nursing, is designed to

bring experienced nurse researchers together with nurses who seek to improve their research skills, according to Dorothy Brundage, assistant professor of nursing and chairperson of the event.

Some 150 individuals from the eastern United States are expected to attend, she said.

Twenty scientific papers will be presented on subjects ranging from assertive behavior and chronic pain to obesity in women and the role of the nurse practitioner. Three guest speakers will highlight the conference.

At 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dr. Mary Conway, dean of nursing at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, will speak on "Clinical Research —

Instrument for Change."

Dr. Ida Marie Martinson, professor of nursing at the University of Minnesota, will discuss "Home Care, the Dying Child and the Family" at 9 a.m. on Thursday.

Friday, Dr. Susan Gortner, chief of the Nursing Research Branch of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Division of Nursing, will speak at 8:30 a.m. Her talk is entitled "Preparation of Nurse Researchers: The National Research Service Awards Program."

All presentations will be made in the East Duke Building on East Campus. Persons wishing more information about the conference should call Sheila Gainey at 684-5388.



A MOST CONGENIAL FELLOW MOVES ON — Bill Reed, captured here with his usual smile on his face, has left his post as senior project manager for the Medical Center Planning Office to assume a similar position at N.C. Memorial Hospital and the UNC School of Medicine in Chapel Hill. He'll be working with another former Duke man, Warren Howard, who is director of facilities planning there. At a farewell party in his honor, Reed shares something amusing with Bob Winfree (left), deputy assistant vice president for health affairs (planning and analysis) and Randy Bell of L.A. Downey and Son. (Photo by John Becton)

Professional news

Dr. Sue Y.S. Kimm, assistant professor of pediatrics and medicine, was a visiting lecturer at The Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health on March 3. An earlier report incorrectly identified her as an assistant lecturer.

Dr. Reginald D. Carter, assistant professor of community and family medicine, attended the sixth annual Conference on New Health Practitioners, in Las Vegas, Nev., April 1-4.

He presented a report from the Research and Review Committee which included profiles of more than 3,500 physician assistants.

Dr. Stanley Wallace Weitzner, professor of anesthesiology, won first prize for a scientific exhibit presented at the International

Anesthesia Research Society 52nd Congress March 19-23.

The exhibit, which Weitzner presented with Dr. Leslie Rendell-Baker of New York's Mount Sinai School of Medicine, was entitled "Safer Gas Machines through Standards."

This weekend Weitzner will present a lecture to the American Osteopathic College of Anesthesiologists entitled "Management of Continuous Mechanical Ventilation." He also will conduct a workshop on "Adult Ventilators."

"Ventilators and Alphabet Soup, IPPV, CPAP, IMV, PEEP," was the title of an address Weitzner gave before the Sixth Joint Conference, New Jersey Chapter, American College of Chest Physicians, March 8 in Cranford, N.J.