



Image Maker

Stylist to the stars **Kim Foley** of Bethesda is working on ways to brighten up the image of the rest of us

By Kathleen Neary

She's dangled from cliffs at Great Falls, perched atop a U.S. Army tank at Aberdeen Proving Ground, and crouched on a kitchen countertop at French restaurant L'Auberge Chez François—all in the name of perfectly powdered noses. When image guru Kim Foley of Bethesda clocks in for work, she's not confined to the daily grind in an office cubicle. Rather, her job takes her behind the camera where she tries to make mortals look flawless.

In the 1970s, when she was in her 20s, Foley owned a Connecticut Avenue salon. A call came to the store from WTTG's "Panorama" talk show needing someone to do Olivia de Havilland's makeup. Next thing she knew, Foley found herself nervously applying mascara and lipstick to the screen legend.

Foley did further training in makeup techniques in Los Angeles, then returned to D.C. and closed her shop in 1980. For the next two decades, she focused on raising her two children



Kim Foley transforms the look of Bethesda attorney Laurie Horvitz.

STACY ZARIN-GOLDBERG

in Bethesda while squeezing in mostly local gigs doing makeup—and sometimes hair and wardrobe—for TV shows including “Meet the Press,” “60 Minutes” and several on Discovery Communications. She once turned down a job doing Bruce Springsteen’s makeup so she could attend her daughter’s back-to-school night. But the list of cheeks she’s blushed ranges from Al Gore’s and Hillary Clinton’s to Jay Leno’s and Tom Clancy’s.

Standout experiences for Foley include working with Dan Rather (“He was such a gentleman,” says Foley. “I didn’t expect him to be so gracious”); Bill Maher (“He was the most difficult”); Jay Leno (“He kept me laughing all day”); George H.W. Bush (“I was so nervous the first time I went to the White House to do makeup for a president!”); Cokie Roberts (“Her hair does the right thing, and she’s got beautiful skin”) and Kate Capshaw (“She needed very little anything”).

When Hollywood shoots in the nation’s capital, Foley’s one of the first to get a call. She’s worked on numerous movies, including “G.I. Jane,” “Mars Attacks!” and “Minority Report.” Of course, this being Washington, on a typical day she’s more likely to be applying credibility to politicians than glam to actors. “This is really not a town about high fashion and beauty. This is a town about power,” says Foley. “The needs are a little different than if you’re out in L.A. or New York. You’re not talking about ‘make me look glamorous.’ You’re talking about ‘make me more credible.’”

At a recent meeting of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers in Las Vegas, Foley was hired to give lawyers pointers for looking believable in front of a jury. “I think that people really underestimate the power of appearance,” says Foley. “You spend all these years cultivating your skills. Then you can completely blow it with your image.” Foley’s main take-away for the attorneys? They need to be in control of their own—and that of their defendants and witnesses—attire, body language and communication style.

Thinking a bit beyond her makeup bag, 52-year-old Foley is now writing a book called *Frumpy to Fabulous: A TV Stylist Shares Her Secrets for Transforming Women Over 40* and pro-

Foley’s Picks

Where does Kim Foley go to look good herself? Foley’s a fan of Nordstrom, especially for their shoes, but also scoops up footwear at Payless and Comfort One. Her hair is cut by Elaina at Robert Lewis Salon in Westfield Montgomery mall; her makeup bag is stuffed with Lorac cheek stain, Neutrogena lip gloss and Revlon foundation. And she swears by Blinc’s Kiss Me mascara. She washes her face with Cetaphil cleanser, and uses prescription Renova for anti-aging.

ducing a series of DVDs to help women be their best, starting with one called “10&10: 10 Pounds Thinner and 10 Years Younger...Instantly.” “I hope to make a shift in how older women feel about themselves,” says Foley, who’s smartly dressed in a hot-pink sleeveless sweater and white pants.

Foley hopes to reach out to a broader scope of women through her book and DVDs. She’s also in talks with a new cable television network to have her own weekly show with fashion and beauty tips for women over 40. And she plans to offer podcasts of beauty advice through her new Web site, www.kimfoleystyle.com.

Though most of Foley’s bookings are through TV production companies or print publications, she’s occasionally hired by individual clients (with fees starting at \$500).

Shelley Gillon, a Silver Spring playwright who’s “of a certain age,” was going to be photographed for a 2005 *Washington Post* article and tapped Foley for help. “It was the real caterpillar-to-butterfly kind of thing,” says Gillon. “I was transformed in a few hours.”

“Kim has a way of making people look contemporary,” says Bethesda photographer Rhoda Baer. “She’s good at taking someone who has a tired or outdated look, and with makeup, hair and wardrobe, she makes them look 10 years younger.”

Foley’s clients aren’t the only ones getting makeovers. When Foley hit 50 she realized she was in a bit of a rut herself. With her children on their way to college, and only her husband, Matt (he owns Rockville’s Pro Video), at home with her in their Bethesda split-level, Foley took a step back and did a self-reevaluation. Then she used some of her own advice to start fresh, and new opportunities started rolling in. The book, DVD and TV projects have energized her. “Growing older doesn’t have to be about aches and pains and stray hairs on your chin,” she says. “My whole philosophy is: Life is too short to be anything but wow.”

Writer Kathleen Neary lives in Kensington. She has written for AOL CityGuide, Capitol File, Parenting, The Washington Post and *Where* magazine.