

MOVING UP

*Michael I. Barr,
D.D.S.***Founded Palm Beach
Smiles — Aesthetic & Re-
construction Dentistry****Place of business:** Boynton Beach**Recent Accomplishments:**

Just the smell of some dental offices causes some folks to break into a sweat, says Dr. Michael Barr. "Many people suffer with dental problems and avoid visiting a dentist because of fear," he adds.

That is *not* the case at his new office, Palm Beach Smiles. Barr has gone to great lengths to make sure of it. The office was designed by the dental design firm T.H.E. Design out of Austin, Texas. Every aspect of the facility was planned with the patient's perspective in mind. Colors, lighting, music and even aroma were all specifically chosen to create an atmosphere of relaxation, Barr says.

"We want our patients to feel like they are in a spa rather than a typical dental office," he says.

For example, aromatic candles are strategically placed throughout the office. No dental smell here. Commercial-free satellite radio plays New Age music. The commonly seen white walls and fluorescent lighting are conspicuously absent in the guest areas.

"Most medical and dental offices feel cold and stark because of poor choice of color and lighting," Barr says. "We were able to create a warm, inviting ambience with color and light."

Apparently, the ambience is having the desired effect. Patients love it, Barr says. Some are so relaxed they



BOB SHANLEY/Staff Photographer

Dr. Michael Barr stresses his patients' comfort: 'Most medical and dental offices feel cold. . . . We were able to create a warm, inviting ambience with color and light.'

doze off — even during root canal.

"The men don't like to admit it, but the snoring gives them away," he says.

Office visitors' senses are greeted with a pleasant reception area. There is even a complimentary juice, bottled water and coffee bar with snacks.

The office, which opened five months ago on Boynton Beach Boulevard just west of Interstate 95, also was designed to incorporate the latest in dental technology.

Barr, born in Arkansas, was a U.S. Navy dentist for three years and has had his own practice in Boynton Beach for eight years. Until he opened his current office, focusing on reconstructive and cosmetic dentistry, he shared an office with another dentist.

"It's a side of dentistry that patients enjoy," he says. "A patient can look in the mirror and appreciate the work, as opposed to root canal, and I do those, too. We can, in some cases, change a person's life."

Education: B.S. in medical

sciences from the University of Arkansas; D.D.S. from the University of Tennessee College of Dentistry.

Age: 39

Personal: Married to Chris Barr, vice president and director of Portfolio Strategies, Asset Management Advisors. They have one son, Gunnar, 1, and live in Palm Beach Gardens.

Hobbies: "I have recently gotten involved in auto racing. It is a total escape and involves all the senses. It requires total focus and is physically engaging, as well."

Career Highlight: "A turning point in my career was training with Dr. Larry Rosenthal, the most prominent cosmetic dentist in the world, and then being able to join his team as a clinical instructor."

Quote: "I once saw George Burns interviewed when he was in his 90s. Of course, he was asked about the secret to his longevity. He said, 'Do what you love for a living.' If that is true, then I should live a long time."

— Mary Thurwachter