

Dolly Parton says hard work, surgery helped her

Wed May 23, 2007 12:24PM EDT

By Verna Gates

SEVIERVILLE, Tennessee (Reuters Life!) - Country star Dolly Parton puts her success down to hard work ("I work my ass off"), self-motivation, and good doctors, referring to few nips, tucks and lifts here and there.

Parton spoke to Reuters this week after breaking ground on the site for the new Fort Sanders Sevier Medical Center that will serve her native Sevier County in Tennessee.

Parton, 61, is honorary chairwoman of the Dr. Robert F. Thomas Foundation, which raising \$10 million for the new hospital with proceeds from a concert by Parton this weekend going to the campaign:

Q: Tell us about your involvement in your home town.

A: "I live in rhinestones, but I want to shine like a diamond when I am gone. We don't want the community to think we just come here to take all their money. I don't want to be seen as one of these selfish celebrities."

Q: How have you managed to be so successful.

A: "I just work my ass off. I do the best I can as long as I am going to be at it. That is what everybody should do. People think as you get older, you are going to do less good. I try to set them right about that."

Q: What has been your biggest challenge?

A: "Life in general."

Q: What motivated you to succeed?

A: "First of all, I love what I do and I would do it even if I didn't get paid. I was motivated by the "American dream." Since I was little, I wanted to be in show business. I wanted to travel and have fancy clothes and money and stuff."

Q: How have you stayed in the game?

A: "I don't compete with others. I try to make and break my own records. I try to be the best Dolly Parton I can be. I am a very professional Dolly Parton. I know how to run my life and my relationships with my family, business people, and with God. I work according to my rules and personality."

Q: How have you managed to keep such a sunny attitude?

A: "I have suffered. I am a very sensitive person and a deep person. When I hurt, I hurt all over. If I think I have hurt somebody's feelings, I worry about it longer than they ever would. But I have a happy heart. I get it broke sometimes, but it wants to be happy. I am like a kid like that. I wake up every morning thinking things are going to work out."

Q: Any regrets?

A: "I just regret getting caught at stuff! I could name several, but I won't!"

Q: You get teased over your appearance. Does it upset you?

A: "I don't really care what people think about me anymore. I grew up poor and ragged and wanted to be pretty more than anything. I am not a natural beauty and I have to work at it. This is just a country girl's idea of glamour. I am like a kid playing in paints and crayons. Even if I am going to be in the house all day with my husband, I get made up."

Q: Do people judge you by your appearance?

A: "People do, even a lot of fans love me because I have a big personality, a big mouth, big tits and big hair. Eventually, they look closer and see there is more. I like the adventure of it."