I'm not sure who missed the "aging gracefully" memo in Hollywood, but the number of celebrities in the tabloids sporting inflatable life rafts for lips seems to be growing daily.

Thin isn’t in when it comes to lips, but the irony is that an overly done "trout pout" ends up advertising your age—and insecurities—rather than looking youthful.

Women may notice signs of aging around the mouth as early as their thirties (especially if they smoke or worship the sun), but the real changes occur a decade later, largely due to a loss of collagen and elastin.

"The lip border becomes blurred and less distinct, then fine lines begin to form at the lip margin," says Toronto dermatologist Lisa Kellett. "Fine, vertical lines extend from the mouth, causing lipstick to bleed, and lips decrease in size and can droop or sag."

What can you do to counteract these changes? Kellett says a hyaluronic acid injectable filler can increase lip volume, smooth out lines and redefine the lip margin. But remember, less is more! Botox can improve the downturned corners of the mouth, and a course of ProFractional laser treatments can boost skin tone and texture. (If you opt for any of these techniques, check out your doctor's experience and ask friends for recommendations.)

You don’t have to go invasive to see results. Instead, try using a one per cent retinol cream around the mouth to help rebuild collagen and soften lines, and ditch the dark lipstick in favour of a light-reflecting clear or pink gloss.

Regardless of your comfort—or finance—level, some great anti-aging products are available over the counter. They range from lip plumpers (which generally work by using a gentle irritant to temporarily create fullness) to moisturizing lipsticks with antioxidants to creams that help soften the look of wrinkles around the mouth.

Here are some anti-aging lip products to try:

- Plump lips with Elizabeth Grant Torricelumn Intensive Caviar Line Treatment for Lips ($38), which contains caviar extracts and peptides.
- Fresh Sugar Lip Treatment ($22) is a balm with SPF 15 and antioxidants.
- Chanel Ultra Correction Lift Plumping Anti-Wrinkle-Lips and Contour ($97) promises to help lift and firm the entire lip area.
- Collagen microspheres help increase fullness in FusionBeauty Colorecticals LipFusion Balm Lip Conditioning Stick ($24).
- Retinol and biospeptides combine in a lip-enhancing gloss. Alyria Intense Lip Volumizer ($60).
- Use a smoothing, non-sticky gloss to fill in fine lines. Caryl Baker Visage The Lip Lift Gloss Smoothing Line Filler ($19).
- Extend lipstick wear with Elizabeth Arden Lip-Fix Cream ($28), which acts as a primer and softens lines.
For years, Kirk Brierley fretted over the loose skin under his chin, thinking it gave him a weak and sagging jawline and made him look old.

It was particularly bothersome because he worked in the cosmetics industry, where good looks reign, and he appeared regularly on CityTV as a makeover expert. One day, while watching one of his television spots, he noticed his profile and balked.

"I had a bit of that turkey-neck thing going on," recalls Brierley, 50. "It was starting to give away my age, whereas the rest of me wasn't."

So Brierley got busy. He researched all about neck-lifts and was surprised to find they were quite common among men looking for stronger jawlines.

He didn't know any such men personally, so he canvassed his female friends about their experiences. It took him a couple of years to get up the nerve to go under the knife.

Once the incisions healed and the swelling subsided, he knew it was a decision well made.

"I didn't think I was lacking confidence when it came to my appearance," says Brierley, who maintains his $10,000 look with occasional Botox injections to eliminate frown lines. "But now that I've had it done, I feel much more confident about putting my best face forward."

In the past few years, some Toronto cosmetic surgeons and dermatologists have noticed a sharp increase in the number of Bay Street men, ages 40 to 60, asking for non-surgical options, such as Botox, filler and laser-hair removal, and more invasive procedures, such as neck- and eyelid-lifts and rhinoplasty.

Even the marketing has changed, with brochures depicting greying, chiseled male Boomers.

Dr. Stephen Mulholland of SpaMedica, who performed Brierley's surgery, says when he opened his Yorkville practice in 1996, he did just one male facelift a year. Today, up to 30 per cent of his total of 120 facelifts a year are performed on men.

"Guys wait until things are looking pretty bad," he says. "They do it for what I call B&B - boardroom and bedroom. They do it in the boardroom to look confident and decisive. They have all these younger guys chirping at their heels and, with the downturn in the economy, they can't afford to look dowdy and droopy and saggy and not confidant.

"Then they get divorced and they're in their 50s, and they want to be snacking in their 30s. If you've got a waddle and a jowl and you're looking pretty shabby, that will often motivate them to do something to play up their appearance."

Toronto dermatologist Dr. Paul Cohen says men are ideal candidates for cosmetic procedures, because their skin is thicker, so there's less swelling and bruising than there is with delicate female skin.
Unlike women who jump into the experience well prepared and can cover up bruises with makeup, men are slower on the uptake and need more coaching and handholding.

Cohen says men often ease into cosmetic work through Botox for a quick fix for frown lines and crow's feet.

Then they progress to injectable fillers of hyaluronic acid to plump cheeks and eliminate deeper lines.

The costs vary by patient and doctor, but range from several hundred dollars for Botox to several thousand for filler.

Cohen says other popular, non-surgical treatments for men over 40 are fat-busting lasers to banish love handles and dermabrasion to remove acne scars.

For surgery, men look to improve their neck, chin and jawline and get rid of their love handles and "the 50-year-old male booby," Mulholland says.

Dr. Peter Adamson of Yorkville's Cumberland Clinic encourages his male patients to think carefully about why they want to change their body and ensure their expectations are realistic.

Then they have to commit by "pulling the throttle back, making their work the recovery process, and putting it into their daily schedule and psychological schedule."

Mulholland agrees: "If it's about feeling fresh, confident and a little more vital, perhaps five to eight years younger in appearance, that's very achievable. But if it's to help you find a 22-year-old trophy wife and get you the promotion to CEO, that's completely unrealistic."
South Park takes on Jersey Shore louts

By Alex Strachan, Postmedia News October 15, 2010

Think of it as a marriage made in pop-culture heaven. Either that, or an unholy collision of not-so-celestial bodies. South Park meets Jersey Shore in tonight's outing, It Came from Jersey.

The allusion to outer-space invasion flicks of the 1950s is deliberate. Only, instead of Cold War apparatchiks, this time the enemy are lunkheaded, spray-tanned, hair-gelled, Botox-buffed bozos who consider New Jersey to be the centre of Everything That Counts, and anyone not from Jersey is either a "guido" wannabe, a liberal, or an industrial-grade loser.

The episode's plot -- if you can call it that -- finds the good citizens of that enlightened state on a rampage, invading "all U.S. territory east of the Rockies" in a bid to rename it West Jersey.

There's no word on where, if anywhere, Canada will fit into this terrible equation, but you can bet it won't be pretty, either way.

A clip on South Park's official website (SouthParkStudios.com) suggests it will be left to the town's resident redneck Randy Marsh to save the day, with a little help from his friends: Eric Cartman, Kyle, Stan, Kenny and the gang.

In the real world, South Park has once again managed to stir up controversy: New Jersey state politicians have complained that Jersey Shore perpetuates stereotypes, but are now terrified that South Park -- which N.J. state senator Joe Vitale recently described as "an equal-opportunity offender" -- could be even worse.

South Park will never win the Humanitas Prize, but it has proven to be surprisingly durable -- and often profound -- in its 14 seasons so far. In last week's season opener, for example, Eric Cartman, South Park's
representative foul-mouthed, bad-tempered tyke, ruminated that he doesn't like thinking about what he wants to be when he grows up. "because when I grow up I want to be something I know I can never be."

What's that, you ask yourself? A NASCAR driver.

"NASCAR is only for poor and stupid people," Cartman reasoned -- proving that South Park is unafraid to offend, well, just about everyone.

"Cartman, you are poor and you are stupid," his friend Kyle told him.

"I know you're trying to make me feel better, Kyle," Cartman replied, "but a rich, smart kid has no place on a racetrack."

NASCAR, he added, "is the fastest growing sport in America."

Now that's subversive. Clever, too. (9:30 p.m., Comedy)

- The U.S.'s crumbling public-education system is the focus of School Pride, a new, well-intended reality series from the producers of Extreme Makeover: Home Edition about community leaders and local achievers determined to rebuild schools in the neighbourhoods where they grew up. Think of it as a feel-good antidote to, well, Jersey Shore. (8 p.m., NBC)

- The made-in-Vancouver sci-fi allegory Sanctuary returns for a third season with the Sanctuary Network combating the threat of catastrophic tidal waves.

Did somebody just say climate change? Sanctuary is sci fi with real-world implications -- though, to be fair, the tsunamis in tonight's episode are the work of a race of baddies called the Kali. (9 p.m., Space)

- Smallville -- now in its 10th and final season -- features the return of Brainiac (James Marsters), who takes the no-longer-so-young Clark Kent (Tom Welling) on a Christmas Carol-like tour of his past, present and future. Can it still be called destiny if you know what's going to happen? Over to you, Brainiac. (8 p.m., CW and Space)