

# Suburban Life

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## Encore Melanie Churella starts her reign as Miss Farmington

For more pageant pictures,  
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By Lorraine McClish  
staff writer

**M**ELANIE CHURELLA, a 23-year-old model, singer and dancer, took the title of Miss Farmington 1986 in the pageant that drew a capacity crowd to Vladimir's Monday night and officially opened Founders Festival.

It is the second time that Churella, who has one blue eye and one brown eye, has won the title. The first time was in 1980 after she graduated from Farmington High School.

She followed that by taking the national title in the Miss Charm competition, then won the Miss Livingston County title during her years at Michigan State University. She stuck to her goal of winning the Miss America title by attending every one of the national competitions in Atlantic City for the past four years, and now is on the pageant ladder again, as a contestant for Miss Michigan in 1987.

Julie Kay Fitzpatrick, 21, a junior at Madonna College, was selected first runner-up. She sang "The Greatest Love of All" in the talent portion of the pageant.

Second runner-up is Lisa Jean, a statuesque flutist and a graduate of Harrison High School who will enter Michigan State University this fall.

In the combined Miss Farmington-Miss Oakland County Pageant, Romana Djurovic, 22, of Warren and a junior at Oakland University, took the title of Miss Oakland County. First runner-up in the Miss Oakland County competition is Susan Trump, a sophomore at Oakland University from Troy. Second runner-up is Karin Pearson, a singer from Lapeer.

**CONTENTENDERS** opened the pageant, under the direction of pageant director Pat Fallon, by mingling with the audience. They then went from the tables in all parts of the dining room to the stage for their introductory musical number.

The audience got another close-up look at the contenders with slides shown on a large screen of times when they mixed fun with the business of rehearsals leading up to pageant night.

Violinist Kelly Garver, Miss Farmington of 1985 and now Miss Michigan of 1986, received a standing ovation, in recognition of her achievement in going on to represent the state in the Miss America Pageant as well as for her talent on the violin.

Garver won the title of Miss Farmington in 1981, and came back a second time in a quest to capture the Miss Michigan crown. Churella hopes to follow in her footsteps.

Churella, who danced to win the Miss Farmington title in 1980, sang a medley of "How Long Has This Been Going On" and "It's a Miracle" to display another facet of her talent.

She says she's concentrating on the singing now and is working toward a career in television.

Churella wound up her second season as a narrator for the auto shows in June, a tour that took her to nine states for American Honda. During breaks in that tour she toured public schools throughout Oakland County with a play having to do with sexually abused children.

Interim jobs have been singing in Premier Center, the Ben-Cen, and 1 Lafayette in Pontiac.

On the same day she won the Miss Farmington crown, she was notified that she had been chosen as a contestant for TV's "Music Machine."

CHURELLA WAS sponsored in the pageant by Focal Point Studio. Fitzgerald was sponsored by Metro Bank of Farmington and Jean was sponsored by Contemporary Awards.

Other contenders in the Miss Farmington Pageant were Kathleen Keller, a dancer, sponsored by Home Planners Inc.; Tricia Alexander, a gymnast sponsored by World Wide TV and Appliance; and Jol Leo, who used her talent as a cartoonist to draw animated characters to musical accompaniment. She was sponsored by Bob Saks Oldsmobile.

Both Churella and Djurovic received educational, dance and charm school scholarships; free hair and nail care for a year; makeup consultation; a certificate for free clothing alterations and a certificate for cookware; a large studio portrait; the Miss America pin and sponsorship to compete in the Miss Michigan Pageant next spring.

First runners-up Fitzgerald and Trump received charm school scholarships, studio portraits, a cookware certificate and a commemorative plaque.

Second runners-up Jean and Pearson received studio portraits, cookware certificates and a commemorative plaque.

Churella begins her reign immediately. She has a full schedule of appearances to make during Founders Festival days, and will be riding in an open car during the Founders Festival parade Saturday morning.

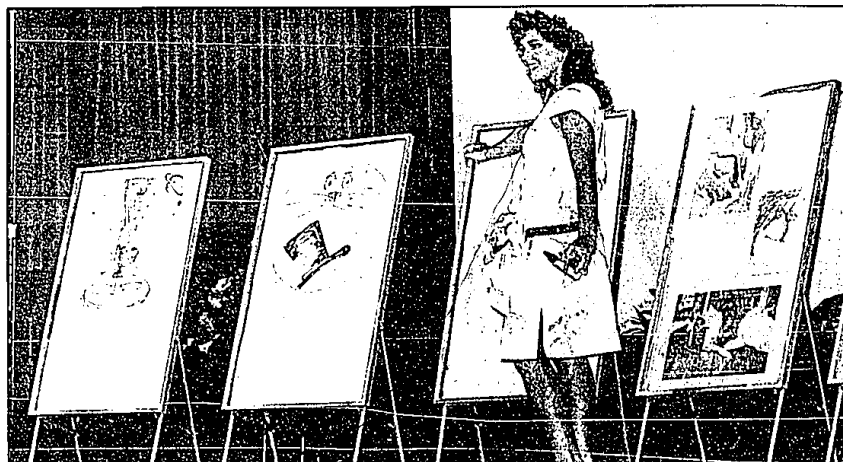


RANDY BORSI/staff photographer

Melanie Churella begins her reign as Miss Farmington 1986 with a round of scheduled appearances during the Founders Festival. She'll be riding in an open car during the parade Saturday morning.



Second runner-up Lisa Marie Jean in bathing suit competition.



Artist Jol Christina Leo printed the material to design and make her costume, then showed her skill as a cartoonist with

quick sketches she produced to music in the talent portion of the pageant.



First runner-up Julie Kay Fitzpatrick sings "The Greatest Love of All."