

Bonnie Britton Tells of Thrills in Junior Miss Contest

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bonnie Britton of Farmington Township recently participated in the national pageant to choose America's Junior Miss in Mobile, Ala. The following is her personal account of her experiences of representing Michigan in the national contest.

BY BONNIE BRITTON

It was a beautiful, sunny St. Patrick's Thursday when my plane left Willow Run Airport for Chicago—the first leg of my Junior Miss adventure. A host of friends, neighbors and classmates were on hand to see me off, and the day before, the Farmington Board of Commerce had sponsored a "Bon Voyage" luncheon. Everyone wished me luck, and I had a little extra support since four of my girl friends and one set

of their parents were coming Tuesday.

Once in Chicago, I met the Junior Misses from Illinois and Minnesota and we waited for the arrival of 18 other girls who were to gather in Chicago. Among these girls was a roommate, Alaska's Junior Miss.

"When all the girls had arrived we boarded the Stewardess Training Center of United Airlines and then it was off to the hotel to get some sleep. The first night we had our "lights out" when the switchboard rang us at 6:30 a.m. and after breakfast we toured Chicago newspaper plants. By 1 p.m. all 21 of us were on a charter jet to Atlanta, where pictures were taken and dinner was eaten. By this time the Junior Miss head count was 44.

The mobile airstrip was a fantastic, colorful fairytale when the plane touched down at 7 p.m. Friday. The aerial trail girls, in their pastel "Southerners B-11" uniforms, formed five lines through which the Junior Misses would pass as they left the plane. The last six Junior Misses to arrive had boarded the plane inconspicuously from the rear after landing so that they also would be greeted by the military cadets. We smiled as our week in Mobile began to be enthusiastic ones of the Academy band.

After meeting my very gracious host family, Dr. and Mrs. Charles Walsh, my roommate and I checked into the hotel and were off for "home." By this time all of us had been swamped by photographers and news men who had been more pictures taken of us than we had ever dreamed possible.

appearance routine while the other groups did their creative and performing arts and youth fitness routines. The judges were always on us girls.

Wednesday's schedule ran the same with more rehearsals. That night we performed the youth fitness routine.

Thursday was strictly a work day for all the groups, but I did manage a little time to sneak down the hall to have my hair done while waiting my turn to rehearse.

The auditorium was a mass of excitement and confusion as Hugh O'Brian arrived Thursday afternoon. Funny thing that Anita Bryant didn't cause that much commotion when she arrived the day before.

That night I sang "Girl from Ipanema" in both Portuguese and English as my talent presentation in the past phase of preliminary competition. We were all relaxed and exhausted by the conclusion of this performance, but could not return to our host families without being "cleared" through security and having escorts steer us in the direction of the car.

I was lucky, though, as my parents were right outside the door with a few Michigan Jaycees, so without breaking any rules, I was able to speak to them for a whole five minutes. Once at our host family's home, we rolled into bed at 9 p.m. for the third night in a row.

Friday was no exception as we rehearsed all day under the bright lights for the TV show on Saturday night. I was able to escape for a few minutes, however, when I went to the Press Room for my last

radio tape, this one with Hugh O'Brian.

When he finished his part of the interview, he quickly rose, handed me the phone and kissed me on the right temple. Talk about surprises! Both he and Anita Bryant are wonderful people and they were so warm and friendly toward all the girls.

After returning from a Sponsor's Dinner that was supposed to be over at 9 p.m., but lasted until 11:30, we made our way "home" to sleep and prepare for our really big day, Saturday.

Everyone gathered in the auditorium to begin rehearsing by 8 a.m. Saturday and we worked straight through, with just a lunch break, until 15 minutes before the 6 p.m. pre-TV show was to begin. Since we were not involved for about

another hour when the show went on the air we had time to change clothes, take our hair down and maybe grab something to eat.

All last—we were on TV, had finished two fast costume changes and Diane Wilkins of Wisconsin was announced as the all-winner of the best at the reception afterward.

Sunday a.m. we said our goodbyes and we, the nation's most exhausted girls, winged our way home to rest, our families and a lifetime full of wonderful memories.

All except Diane—the flew directly to New York City and is only now beginning her task and responsibility of America's Junior Miss—and the thoughts and prayers of 49 other girls will follow her in all her travels.

Just Chatter

Confusion reigns from White House to Livonia — Did you ever look for Clarenceville City Hall?

BY W. W. EDGAR

Sitting with friends while awaiting the election results in Livonia the other evening the conversation got around to present economic conditions, so-called inflation and the latest suggestions and edicts from the White House.

"Have you been shopping in the markets lately?", asked one.

"Prices of meat and many other things are going sky high," he continued, "and I can't understand why LBJ doesn't do something about it. After all didn't he force the steel companies and the aluminum firms to hold the line when they wanted to raise prices. Why doesn't he do the same thing with food?"

"If I'm doing something," another interrupted, "just this week LBJ urged the housewives of America to curtail their spending a bit by by-passing the choice cuts of meat and the other high priced articles on the shelves.

"At the same time," he said, "the man in the White House called on business and industry to delay their expansion programs — hold off putting up new buildings for a while. How do you like that?—when communities like Livonia are in need of this business and industrial expansion to provide a broader tax base and ease the burden on the property owner."

"He just sat there and shook his head, sort of nonplussed by it all.

"Yes," chimed in another, "and now they want to raise taxes to halt the inflation. And, according to the story I read, the idea is to take this money out of the economy and give it to the government. What for? So they can send it over to some country that is supposed to be our friend?"

"What about the War on Poverty?", asked another. "We are spending millions of dollars on people who don't want to work and sending food all over the world from our yearly surplus and yet have folks starving right here in America."

"Yes, what about that War on Poverty. Did you see in the paper where the government gave a woman \$10,000 to open a store in Lafayette Park in Detroit — and she and her husband have an income of more than \$11,000 a year?"

"Now the store is failing and the government has a committee studying a plan to help build up the business. Is this War on Poverty? Why don't they make her give the money back? This I sell too confusing for me," he sighed.

Reminded me of the early days of my newspaper career when our editor sent one of the young reporters on an assignment out-of-town. There had been rumors of a strike and possible violence in the

Bright and early Saturday morning a red 1966 convertible pulled up to take us to Mobile's Municipal Auditorium for breakfast. Each girl had to plan a party and decorate the table accordingly for a separate judging from the pages of the magazine. A Brazilian welcome party for newly arrived exchange students and had a wonderful time creating a Brazilian reception. Each Junior Miss glowed with a special sparkle in her colored formal gown that night as she rode in a shiny new convertible under her state's name and signed autographs on hundreds of outstretched papers.

A taste of New Orleans' Mardi Gras followed, as the girls gathered and were barged by candy at the parade's end, and then were individually proceeded down the Battle House's red carpeted, winding staircase to receive honorary citizenship of Mobile.

The tone was grateful and reverent as we gathered in church Sunday morning, and then came the beautiful Belingrath Gardens and luncheon at the Isle Dauphin Club on the Gulf of Mexico. Then, back to rehearsals—yes, even on Sunday! By the time we arrived "home" it was after 8 p.m. and all we could do was wash our hair and tinkle into the

Monday morning horror struck! In all of Mobile's excitement our hair had not dried and it hung in delightful little permanent waves during all of the grueling rehearsal school. This was the day I began making radio and TV tapes which were to be continued all week.

After a half an hour to

change clothes I saw my parents Monday night for the first time since leaving Michigan Thursday. They had arrived in Mobile Saturday afternoon, but there are very strict rules about where and when a Junior Miss may see her parents during the week.

All 50 girls were divided into three groups for expediency in rehearsals, interviews, etc. and my group was interviewed by the judges Tuesday. The interview which we had hoped to be my strongest point, didn't come off nearly as well as it should have and I still wonder whether or not that would have made any difference in the final results.

Then it was "home," change clothes and back to the auditorium for the first night of preliminary competition. My group performed the poise and

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Seven Enlist In U.S. Navy

Seven Livonia men have enlisted in the Navy, the U.S. Navy Recruiting Branch Station in Livonia announced this week.

Three of them, graduates of Farmington High School are:

- Jack Benton Miller, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alma B. Miller of 8840 Mayfield; Lowell Harold Hill, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lowell R. Hill of 21522 Hathaway; and Michael Edward Gallagher, son of Mr. and Mrs. Willis V. Gallagher of 3428 Parkdale.

Four of them, graduates of Bentley High School are:

- Roger Charles Redinger, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Redinger of 15575 Brookfield; David John Seaman, son of Mrs. Melvin P. Seaman of 2141 Schoolcraft; James Edward Armour, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Armour of 28555 Hillbrook; and Gary Lee Sutherly, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jeno R. Sutherly of 38786 Jamison, Livonia.

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