

Robinson Crowned Virginia Princess

STAUNTON, Virginia — Four contestants competed in this year's Virginia Dairy Princess Pageant, held in January at the Ingleside Resort.

The pageant was held in conjunction with the Virginia State Dairymen's Association Convention in Staunton, Va.

Laura Beth Robinson from Winchester was crowned the new Virginia Dairy Princess. A junior at James Wood High School, Laura is very active in school, community, FFA, and 4-H activities. She has served as president, sentinel, and historian of her FFA.

skits during the pageant. "Into the kitchen I shall creep. If there is no milk, I shall weep. Hot of cold, it's smooth as silk. My favorite drink is always milk," said Robinson during her skit, which featured a bedtime story about milk.

Last fall Laura traveled throughout Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin as a member of the 1999 Virginia 4-H Dairy Judging Team. She was also a member of the Virginia FFA Dairy Cattle Development Team, which placed fourth at the national contest. Laura also helps conduct farm tours and educate young children about 4-H activities in her community.

In addition to the skits and the interviews, the girls also answered a final question. While the contestants were preparing for their final question, Lindsay Potts, 1999 Virginia Dairy Princess, gave her farewell speech and thanked the many organizations and individuals who supported her during her reign.

Melissa Hope from Berryville was crowned the Alternate Dairy Princess. She is a tenth grader at Wakefield School. She is a member of the tennis team, a peer mediator, and a member of the service club. Melissa is involved in the dairy community as a member of the Board of Directors for the Virginia Junior Holstein Association. She has also competed in dairy bowl and participated in the youth retreat.

During her farewell address, Lindsay introduced Virginia's dairy maids. Nearly 20 girls between the ages of nine and 14 will serve the dairy industry this year by promoting dairy products in their schools, 4-H clubs, and communities.

The two other contestants were Renee Sine from Woodstock and Elizabeth Fuller from Mt. Solon. The girls were interviewed by judges prior to the pageant. They also performed

Judges for the pageant included Susan Summers from the Maryland Dairy Princess Program; Dr. Ray Nebel, professor of animal reproduction and physiology at Virginia Tech; and Crystal Lewis, Miss Virginia.

At the end of the pageant, the judges selected Laura Robinson as the 2000 Virginia Dairy Princess. Melissa Hope was named Alternate Dairy Princess, and both Elizabeth Fuller and Renee Sine were named dairy duchesses.



Newly-crowned Virginia dairy royalty include from left Renee Sine, Dairy Duchess; Melissa Hope, 2000 Virginia Alternate Dairy Princess; Laura Robinson, 2000 Virginia Dairy Princess; Lindsay Potts, 1999 Virginia Dairy Princess; and Elizabeth Fuller, Dairy Duchess.

On Being a Farm Wife
(and other hazards)
Joyce Bupp



The lawn army is on the move. Before my 61-cents worth of onion sets were in the ground this year, folks in every direction were attacking grass with their lawn mowers.

Since our garden tractor/lawn mower is currently disabled with a flat tire, the sight of the lawn army on the move sent shivers of guilt down my spine. Because our lawn is starting to look pretty "clumpy."

Somewhere along the way to modern society in this country, it evolved that a sign of civility and progress is having homes, commercial and public buildings framed in a surrounding expanse of natural green carpet. To meet our lawn society's exacting standards, that grass must forever be the color of St. Patrick's Day shamrocks and mown within an inch of its life. Literally.

To this end, countless lawn care businesses have been established and; millions of lawn owners spend untold warm-weather days and evenings mowing, trimming, spraying, fertilizing, thatching, treating, and all the other endeavors necessary to maintain the picture-perfect lawn.

Now, this is not Mother Nature's choice, mind you. Mother Nature likes diversity.

Walk into any abandoned lot or a tended one, for that matter and take note of the variety of plant species which spring up over a period of time. We tend to call them "weeds," if they are not some specific plant we want in some specific place. Seeks of these diverse species can live in the ground for years, just waiting for the optimum conditions to come along and them - whoomp! up they sprout to mess up those putting green perfect lawns.

The horizon-to-horizon prairies of the great plains of our country were a prime example of Mother Nature's lawn care philosophy. Blends of grass species, which thrived over the eons, evolved into the ideal grazing grounds for herds of native bison. Recent history, known as progress, has replaced prairie lawn with grain crops, sprawling acres of development, criss-crossed with the interstate highways and fast food restaurants.)

Despite all the "improvements" we two-legged types have wrought in her master plans. Mother Nature still single-mindedly works to revert everything we cultivate to some sort of prairie.

If you don't believe that, let your lawn grow, untouched over the next few weeks and see what sort of interesting natural species pop up there. Almost overnight. Among them, no doubt will be one of the most maligned, under-appreciated-and prettiest-plants around.

Dandelions.

In these brief few weeks of April, the dandelion is king. Or queen? Whichever. No bloom not even sunflowers more resembles the brilliant ball of sun which is climbing higher each day in the heavens immediately over us than does a dandelion. Its hundreds of tiny, needle-like petals combine to make a soft, cushy blossom almost unrivaled in brilliance of color and hardness of habit.

Besides their cheery, yellow blooms, dandelions produce edible leaves high in nutrient value for our health. And they're not particular about where they grow. But you knew that already.

Even if dandelions weren't pretty and weren't healthy to eat. I'd enjoy 'em anyway. That's because they regularly appear clutched in the chubby hands of a couple of grandsons, grins splitting their play-smudged faces.

"Flowers, grandma! "was the smiling offering brought to me a few days ago, short-stemmed dandelion blooms plucked from the abundance of the plants scattered about the yard and flower borders. Of course, we tuck the stubby stems into a small vase, ooh and aah over them, even knowing all the while their cheery blossoms will be curled and dying by morning.

Beauty truly is in the eye of the beholder—and dandelions borne in the chubby hands of little loved ones are flowers near perfection.

Besides, how could one not like a flower that is brilliant of bloom, beloved by little kids and salad gourmets, and has the good humor to develop into puffy seeds which we can blow at each other, and which than wisk away on the wind and plant themselves.

Up with dandelions.



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- I suffer from chronic fatigue
- I have poor physical endurance
- I tend to be moody and irritable
- I am susceptible to colds and flu
- I suffer from allergies
- I frequently feel tense and on edge
- I am frequently constipated
- I have frequent pain in my shoulder and/or back
- I have weight problems
- I crave sweets, alcohol or soda

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