

The Boots Were Made for Walkin’

~ Maine to Nashville USA ~

By Megan Beals, Miss Maine 2005

I remember flying as a little girl, with my father in his Piper Colt in Houlton, Maine and the excited feeling I’d get in my stomach as we would take off. Now, fifteen years later, I am sitting on a commercial flight bound for Nashville, Tennessee to meet with the Country Music Television staff to prepare for the national Miss America Pageant, with that same feeling of excitement in my stomach.

The title of Miss Maine has taken me many places outside of my home state. Prior to my visit to Nashville in October, I had the opportunity to spend a week at the home of Valerie Clemens, President of the National Association of the Miss America State Pageants and Miss Maine State Pageant President in Radnor, Pennsylvania, hosted annually in preparation for the nationals. The week was filled with traveling to Philadelphia, the Corporate Office of the Miss America Organization in Atlantic City, and New York City, speaking engagements, performances, interviews and (my favorite) wardrobe shopping! While shopping, I discovered the most amazing pair of boots! Perfect for any adventure. The entire week was an unforgettable experience.



Left: Wardrobe Shopping in New York City
Center: “The Queen and Her Court”, Philadelphia, PA.
Right: Miss America 1954, Evelyn Ay Sempier, Miss Delaware, Becky Bledsoe, Megan and Miss Connecticut, Dianna Baitinger in Radnor, PA.

With my beautiful new boots packed, and that same feeling throughout the flight, we were heading for Nashville, Tennessee to meet with Terra from CMT. After hearing that we were unable to immediately check into our hotel room and with only a short time before my photo shoot and radio interview with CMT, it put a new twist on being “hair and makeup ready.” I quickly searched for the nearest outlet to plug in my flat iron. Getting ready in the hallway...you always have to be on your toes! Learning to laugh at events like this helps you to understand it is what keeps life exciting! Valerie offered some timely wisdom, “When life gives you Great Boots, Start Walkin’!” The hallway experience was an opportunity to have conversations with people passing by and explaining why I was visiting Nashville.



Left: At the Nashville Airport with Terra from CMT
Center: “Hair and Make-up Ready” in the Hilton Hotel hallway.
Right: At the CMT Studio with Lynn Harr (standing) and Stephanie Reeves (seated)





CMT picked us up at the hotel to take us to the photo shoot. There we met Stephanie Reeves and Lynn Harr, along with my stylist “Joseph”, who seemed pleased with my wardrobe, not to mention my beautiful new high heeled boots! The photo shoot was quick and exciting. Each state contestant modeled props from her state. I never imagined pairing gum rubber boots and a lobster trap with my little black cocktail dress!

That evening a group of us were taken by limousine to dinner at the Palm. Fellow title holders from South Dakota, Wisconsin, Missouri, and Connecticut, along with our traveling companions, had a wonderful time having dinner with Brad Schmidt, Gossip Columnist for “The Tennessean”. Enjoying steak from “America’s first steak house,” and spending time with Brad and the other contestants is a memory I will not soon forget!



L-R: Miss South Dakota, Miss Wisconsin, Miss Missouri, Miss Maine and Miss Connecticut



With Brad Schmidt, “The Tennessean” Columnist

The following morning we arrived at CMT for my final interview. I have always loved the camera, and have dreamed of the idea of someone touching up my hair and makeup! (Every woman loves to be pampered.) The interview process was a wonderful experience and offered an opportunity to talk about the Miss America Organization, my hometown, family, platform, as well as my role models.

While sitting on the plane waiting for my flight back to Maine, I couldn’t help but reflect on my time in Nashville and the people I met while there. Although only there for two very full days, I found that each person at Country Music Television was so welcoming and excited about the step we have taken to partner with them. Moving to a new city, a new television network, and a more diverse audience are all positive changes for the Miss America Organization, and I am honored to be part of this very exciting and historical moment.



Are you ready boots?
Let’s Start walkin’!



Miss Maine 2005, Megan Beals is a graduate of Northern Maine Community College with an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education, with a goal to receive her Masters in Education. Megan’s platform is “Mentoring to Empower Tomorrow’s Leaders”. She is the co-founder of Harmony Self-Esteem Camp, a camp providing elementary students the opportunity education on self-esteem development, conflict, literacy, culture diversity and bullying. She is a spokesperson for the Central Aroostook Mentoring Program (CAMP) and creator of the fundraiser, “The Mystery Tour” to aid CAMP and is a mentor for the program. After learning of CAMP’s severe financial loss in April 2004, Megan assisted submitting legislation and lobbied for Bill LD 979, “An Act to Fund Mentoring Programs.” As Miss Maine, Megan has partnered with the Maine Mentoring Partnership and has partnered with the National Mentoring Partnership. She is also an active spokesperson promoting RJ Reynold’s Right Decision Right Now. Megan is the daughter of Terry & Debbie Beals of Houlton, Maine.