

### Cities Will Compete to Hold Future Pageants

## TAMPA BEAUTY IS MRS. FLORIDA, MRS. MIAMI BEACH THE RUNNER-UP AS PRIZES, BENEFITS ARE THE BIGGEST OF ANY STATE PAGEANT

**Miami** -- Sharon Polo of Tampa -- a 30-year-old blue-eyed, blonde interior designer who three years ago represented the United States in the Miss World Pageant -- will be Florida's representative in the Mrs. America pageant this year. Mrs. Polo -- wife of a resident physician Dr. Max Polo -- won the title of "1996 Mrs. Florida America" July 1 at the Four Ambassadors Hotel in Miami.

She will represent Florida in the Mrs. America Pageant to be held in Las Vegas September 21. The winner there goes on to the Mrs. World Pageant as the American representative. The selection of Sharon Polo as Mrs. Florida is one of the first times that a woman has reached such a pinnacle of beauty pageantry as both a single and married woman.

First runner-up in the Mrs. Florida America beauty pageant was another blonde beauty and mother, 29-year-old Mrs. Rona (Michael) Rose of Miami Beach.

Throughout the competition -- as television crews filmed the excitement for cable and network presentation later in 1996 -- it was evident that Mrs. Tampa and Mrs. Miami Beach would be in contention for the state title. Both received tumultuous applause as the field narrowed from 10 to 5 finalists,

Both Sharon Polo and Rona Rose are expected to play major roles in the Florida fashion modeling scene as a result of the pageant. Sharon



*'96 Mrs. Florida Sharon Polo.*

Polo will be on the way to the Atlanta Olympics, working for Xerox in late July and Rona Rose is already being singled out as a fashion star.

"The Mrs. Florida Pageant has a way of creating new careers for contestants," explained public relations professional Ron Levitt, who has represented major film and fashion leaders.

Orlando's Maria Gamble, the 1995 Mrs. Florida and first runner-up in the Mrs. World Pageant, and Actress-model Jacqueline Solomon of Miami, the pageant's executive producer and herself a former Mrs. Florida, crowned Mrs. Polo at the post-midnight finale of the three-day long contest. She competed with 30 married women, ranging in age from 21 to 82. This year octogenarian Rachel H. Beaty of Boca Raton became the oldest contestant in

the 20 year history of the pageant and won the award for Mrs. Congeniality, voted upon by the other contestants.

Others in the top five were second runner-up McKesur Johnson Green of Jacksonville, third runner-up Theresa Ferraro of Cooper City and fourth runner-up Victoria Plarr of Orlando.

The contestants in the Mrs. Florida pageant shared the largest cache of gifts and prizes ever put together for a state beauty pageant, ranging from cruises on Norwegian Cruise Lines to a holiday at the exclusive Doral Country Club Spa. The prizes included opportunities for fashion and photographic modeling and even had a \$3,500 Chris Kole evening gown which will be designed for the winner.

David Immerman, the renowned artist whose portraits are in the White House, will do a portrait of this year's Mrs. Florida. Ron Solomon, president of the Mrs. Florida Pageant and Beautiful People Productions, arranged for the noted artist to capture this year's winner on canvas. Immerman also did a painting of Jacqueline Mallery Solomon as a bride six years ago.

The portrait and additional gifts have doubled the original announced prize to a "prize package" that exceeds \$60,000.

In addition to the long list of Florida prizes, Mrs. Polo -- as Mrs. Florida -- will compete in Las Vegas for an additional \$75,000 in prizes.

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Chief Executive Gives Sharon Polo Official Send-off to Vegas

## IT'S TIME OUT FOR BEAUTY IN TALLAHASSEE AS GOVERNOR CHILES WELCOMES MRS. FLORIDA

Tallahassee, July 24 -- The governor received a much appreciated break from his busy Cabinet agenda, tobacco lobbyists and the media yesterday -- a welcome relief from the affairs of State-- and it was all for the sake of beauty!

Sharon Polo of Tampa -- Mrs. Florida for 1996 --received an official Sunshine State sendoff for the national Mrs. America contest when Gov. Lawton Chiles and his staff welcomed her to the Capitol Tuesday afternoon

Mrs. Polo, wife of Dr. Max Polo, a physician in residency in Tampa, visited the Governor's office for a photo session with the state's chief executive, one of the mandatory stops for contestants prior to participating in the Mrs. America pageant September 21 in Las Vegas.

Mrs. Polo was accompanied by Mrs. Jacqueline Mallery Solomon of Miami, executive producer of the Mrs. Florida Pageant and herself the winner of the state crown in 1993. Also in attendance was Ron Solomon, her husband, president of Mrs. Florida -



**Official Welcome:** Gov. Chiles had special greetings for these two beautiful women (l-r) -- Former Mrs. Florida Jacqueline Solomon, of Miami and Sharon Polo, of Tampa, this year's Mrs. Florida titleholder.

America and Chairman of Beautiful People Productions.

Mrs. Polo -- who was crowned in Miami earlier this month -- is familiar with titles. As a single person, she was the U.S. representative in the Miss World pageant.

In winning the Florida crown, Mrs. Polo received the top place share of some \$60,000 in prizes and gifts, the largest cache of any state Mrs. Pageant. The entire Florida pageant will be televised internationally later this year, one of only a handful of state pageants which are produced, videotaped and aired on television.

Gov. Chiles praised the new Mrs. Florida -- noting the contestant's activities in charitable causes.

The next step for Mrs. Florida will be the internationally televised Mrs. America Pageant -- a preliminary to Mrs. World. In 1995, Mrs. Florida Maria Gamble of Orlando went on to be the first runner-up in the Mrs. World Pageant in Costa Rica.



**Mrs. Florida Sharon Polo at the historic old Capitol.**