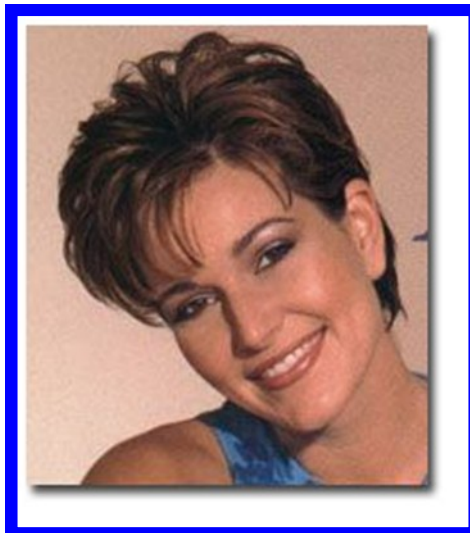


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## 2010 Mistress of Ceremonies Heather French Henry, Miss America 2000



As the daughter of a disabled Vietnam veteran, Heather French Henry has experienced the pain and suffering that can come with military service. Throughout her life she followed her father into the halls of V-A hospitals for treatments, experienced his night terrors and stood by his side in his miraculous journey "home" from the terrors of war.

After winning the title of **Miss America 2000** she traveled over 300,000 miles across the United States on a national speaking tour entitled "Our Forgotten Heroes: Honoring Our Nations Homeless Veterans." Throughout her year she not only visited veterans facilities — meeting and talking with veterans — but her platform often took her to our nation's capital to lobby members of Congress and Senate on veterans issues and legislation. During her tour veteran's healthcare issues became another serious focus and a second campaign began, "Fighting the Silent Enemy: Hepatitis C." Touring the country with Hepatitis C advocates, screenings were held and hundreds of veterans were tested and made aware of the dangers of Hepatitis C.

Even after her year of service, Heather is still seen traveling across the country to raise awareness and funding for veterans issues through the Heather French Foundation for Veterans, Inc. established during her tour as Miss America 2000. She is dedicated to raising the ideas of patriotism by educating young and old alike about the sacrifices made by the men and women who have served our nation. In Heather's own words: "I will always be the daughter of a veteran and therefore I will always honor those who fell by continuing to serve those who live."

Raised in Maysville, Kentucky, French Henry graduated from The University of Cincinnati School of Design, Art and Architecture. She competed in pageants through her teens, including the Miss Ohio pageant. She competed in the Miss Kentucky Pageant four times before winning the title on her fifth attempt in 1999. She won the 2000 Miss America pageant in September of 1999, the first Kentuckian to do so. She has received numerous awards for her work with veterans. She has also written and illustrated several children's books, with profits donated to the Heather French Foundation for Veterans. She's currently designing her own line of women's evening wear, as well.

On October 27, 2000, she married Kentucky Lieutenant Governor Steve Henry in Louisville, Kentucky. The couple has two daughters, Harper Renee (born in 2001) and Taylor Augusta (born in 2003)<sup>1</sup>. In October 2003, French Henry struck and subsequently killed a German bicyclist while driving on a Louisville street. French said that the accident deeply affected her. She subsequently shared her story on television shows such as *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

Heather French Henry participated in an episode of the FOX Television series, *Don't Forget the Lyrics*, broadcast on December 12, 2008. She appeared with Susan Powell, Miss America 1981; and Kirsten Haglund, Miss America 2008.

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