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Join me as I
reminisce over
some events that I
thought were pret-
ty important on
the state and
national levels as
far as female

impersonation is concerned.

We started out at the beginning with Malaysia Black winning Miss S.C. U.S.ofA. Just a few weeks later, it was revealed that Norma Kristie had done the unthinkable — Miss Gay America was sold to a couple out of Mississippi who had been promoters before. Kristie had owned the pageant for just short of 30 years. Later, we saw the first ever Mr. and Miss Black U.S.ofA. which Brandyn Thomas and Daesha Richards won.

Alyson Thomas' Continental prelims were held in Myrtle Beach and we saw Alexis Gabrielle Sherrington win Miss N.C., two lovely ladies winning Miss S.C. (Gina D'Angelo and Jennifer Warner) and Tezra Devore winning Miss S.C. PLUS and Jocelyn Summers winning Miss N.C. PLUS.

In March, Jennifer St. James was crowned Miss N.C. U.S.ofA. by Greensboro's gem, Diamond, and the show was topped off by appearances of Miss Gay U.S.ofA. Layla LaRue (who weeks later went on to win Miss Gay TX America) and former Miss N.C., Kelly Raye, who reminded the kids just who she was and had been (and will continue to be, in my humble opinion).

That same month, the first Miss N.C. Black America was held, complete with the national titleholder, Tommie Ross, in Greensboro. Sasha from Augusta won. At around the same time, a new pageant was begun in Asheville called the Land of the Sky pageant; there would be two — one for the smaller girls and one for the bigguns.

In April, our very own Amaya was crowned Miss Continental PLUS in Chicago and former North Carolinian Tajma Hall made finals, too. The following night in the Windy City, Barbra Herr realized a dream and was crowned Miss Continental Elite. That same weekend, N.C. and S.C. promoter Alyson Thomas was awarded the prestigious Raphael Velasco Service Award by pageant owner Jim Flint.

Then, later that month, the shock heard round the country took place — Chevelle Brooks took first runner-up to Sasha Sommers at the Female Impersonator's Miss Florida At Large contest.

In Hickory, a new Miss and Mr. Gay Classique were crowned — congrats again to P. Jazzmyne Darnell and Mark Madison. Natasha Braxton was crowned Miss Black America and Lady Deception won the PLUS contest.

In May, the 25th anniversary Miss Castle was held in Greenville, S.C., and a sweet queen by the name of Portia de Paris was crowned; unfortunately, just several months later, she passed away.

Some time later, Dorae Saunders won Miss NC FFI at Large in Hickory. At the end of the month, in Dallas, Texas, Tamisha Iman won Miss Gay U.S.ofA., and just

nights before, LaToya Bacall was crowned Miss Gay Classic U.S.ofA.

The next month, Tamisha was on hand to relinquish her crown of the long-running Miss Atlanta to a former Miss U.S.ofA. Raquel Lord. In that

same time frame, Dena Cass passed on her title of Miss International PLUS to a former N.C. gal, Victoria "Pork Chop" Parker.

In July, Erica Andrews crowned Cassandra Colby Miss Universal Showqueen in Honolulu.

In August, at the 15th anniversary Miss Entertainer of the Year, a former star of "Showtime at the Apollo" was crowned — a gorgeous and talented queen by the name of Angelique Ali with a former Miss America, Catia Lee Love, taking first runner-up honors.

Later on, the first Miss N.C. United States was held at the Warehouse 29, complete with national titleholder Coti Collins in place, and Savannah Savage won. At around that same time, it was announced that a documentary featuring local transsexual entertainer and emcee Tamalah Taylor was scheduled to be shown at the Venice and Toronto film festivals.

In September, we had basically what was the Drag Oscars in Chicago, Miss Continental, and Domanique Chappelle walked away with more than a gold statuette, thank you. This was probably the most fair pageant I personally saw all year long.

Later that month, the Parliament House celebrated their 30th anniversary show with a showcase that would blow your mind — divas and stars from decades gone by on up to the current. Also, a local entertainer by the name of Big Mama B bowed her last time onstage at the Scorpio with a great show as well.

Down in Columbia, S.C., Malaysia Black was crowned Miss Global Universe, and Dy'mond Cartier won the At Large contest.

In November, a gorgeous Raven St. James won Miss Gay U.S.ofA. at Large and it was announced that popular and well-respected promoter Craig Henderson of Houston would take over the reigns of the national contest in the coming year.

Then there was Miss America. Lord, have mercy. Mimi Marks won the title of International Queen in Bangkok, Thailand, towards the end of the year, with Champagne Bordeaux taking the title of the Female Impersonator's Miss Florida pageant in Miami. Alexis Gabrielle Sherrington went on to win Miss Black Universe and Dorae Saunders won the first ever Sin City U.S.ofA. at Large in Las Vegas. Scarlett Dailey won Miss N.C. America and began celebrating 25 years in the business in 2005. Sasha Leigh Chambers' hard work and dedication to the art form finally paid off in Hickory when she won Miss N.C. for Female Impersonators.

To end the tale of 2005, we look back and remember friends who passed on...Charlotte entertainer and promoter Jamie Levi, San Antonio diva and legend Pauletta Leigh and local judge and bar employee Greg Stith (known a long time ago at the Durham Power Company as Kimmie Adams). Do a fabulous production for them in heaven, kids.

Drop me a line, OK? • TheTeaMissD@yahoo.com

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