

UNL seems safe, but Title IX threatens other beauty pageants

By Marian Lucas

Another of America's remaining traditions is threatened, but UNL seems to be safe.

The future of beauty contests is questionable because of restrictions made by Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972. According to Title IX, any federally-funded university, college or junior college which gives scholarships at functions limiting participation to one sex, as in beauty contests, is violating the law.

But two Alabama congressmen, John Buchanan and Jack Edwards, have introduced a House amendment, HR9308, which would allow any university to sponsor or give scholarships for beauty contests.

According to Dave Pruitt, Republican Congressman Jack Edwards' administrative assistant, Alabama beauty pageants already have been affected.

Two-thirds of University of Alabama's \$45,000 scholarship money has been cut as a result of Title IX, Pruitt said.

Can't use scholarship

Currently, women who enter university-sponsored pageants are legally prevented from using their scholarships, he said.

Although Title IX's main concern was athletics, Pruitt said, it also included fraternities, sororities and beauty contests. But pageants weren't considered when the law was passed in 1972, he added.

According to Congressman Buchanan's administrative assistant, Janean Mann, the amendment currently is in the House of Representative's post-secondary education subcommittee and will not be acted on until next March. Nebraska's beauty contests, however, won't be affected by Title IX.

Steve Myers, metropolitan field director for the local Miss Nebraska Pageant, said since the pageant receives no support from the University of Nebraska, it is not subject to Title IX regulations.

The Miss Nebraska Pageant, he said, is sponsored by merchants, banks and civic organizations. He added that this year the Radisson Cornhusker Hotel will host in March one triple-titled pageant: the Miss Lancaster County, Miss Lincoln and Miss University of Nebraska-Lincoln beauty contest.

Myers said permission was obtained from UNL to use the Miss UNL title, but the contest is independently sponsored by private donations.

Last pageant in 1971

UNL's last pageant, sponsored by the Union Program

Council, was in 1971.

Hardest hit in the Title IX controversy will be the Texas and Alabama pageants, Myers said, where scholarship programs have raised at least \$30,000 each year.

Although no court cases have resulted from Title IX, Myers said he is sure there will be some to test the law.

Although Myers said he does not think Title IX would affect what type of women enter beauty contests, he said it would affect pageants' sponsorship.

"Many people don't realize that the prizes awarded at the Miss America Pageant are solely for educational purposes," Myers said. "One million dollars is awarded annually in scholarships at the local, state and national Miss America Pageants."

And the contests are not just based on beauty, he added. The caliber of young women who enter pageants is changing, Myers said. Now, in the Miss America Pageant, 50 per cent of a girl's score is based on talent, he said, 25 per cent is based on evening gown and onstage personality and the remainder on swimsuit competition.

"Everyone thinks Miss America is only beauty," former Miss Lincoln, Annette Green, said. "It's really based on mind, body, and spirit."

Further education

Green, a UNL senior, said the contest's purpose is to further educate young women. If pageant winners were prevented from cashing in their scholarships, she said, it would hurt the contest, since it is scholarship-based.

She added that since Nebraska does not receive a great amount of financial assistance for beauty contests, Title IX will not have critical affects here.

Miss UNL for 1974-75, Cathy Fricke, said she would hate to see Title IX pose too much of a problem.

"In beauty pageants, people have a chance to see young women compete with other women," she said. "Men seem to have so many more chances, that women should also have the opportunity."

Fricke added that when she won, the Miss UNL pageant was not sponsored, so she did not receive any scholarship money. However, Fricke said, when a girl wins the Miss Nebraska title, she receives a \$500 scholarship.

Ken Bader, vice chancellor for student affairs, said he interpreted Title IX's restrictions to mean that those scholarships given to women must be tabulated, so that the same amount of money be given to men. This, Bader said, would create a pooling effect.



Photo by Lorraine Hughes

Annette Green, a former Miss Lincoln, said beauty contests promote education of young women.

Campus vacation hours

The Nebraska Union, UNL libraries and administrative offices have announced their schedules for semester break.

The Union will be open its regular hours during finals week and closes at 9 p.m. Friday, Dec. 19. The building will be closed Dec. 20, 21, 24 through 28, and 31; and Jan. 1 through 4 and 10. Regular hours will begin again Jan. 11. On other days the Union will be open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Regular hours will continue starting Jan. 11.

The Union games area will be closed until Jan. 7. The Harvest Room, South Crib and vending area, bookstore and barbershop will be available during the Union's open hours.

All UNL libraries will be open regular hours until Dec. 19. Study areas at Nebraska Hall will be open 24 hours per day during finals week. Libraries will close Dec. 20, 21, 24 through 28, and 31; and Jan. 1 through 4, 10 and 11. Library hours on other days will be 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Regular hours resume Jan. 12.

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