

Beauty Pageant 6-4-78

Barbara Bowen:

Miss Santa Cruz County

By MILDRED ANN SMITH

Sentinel Women's Editor

Barbara Bowen is a tall and slender blue-eyed beauty with a big smile.

And the taffy-haired San Jose State senior who wears the Miss Santa Cruz County crown believes it is important to live each day fully and with a purpose.

Her purpose at the moment is to do her very best in the Miss California Pageant but later goals include earning her elementary teaching credential and then spending two years in the Peace Corps teaching and working with children — perhaps in an orphanage, before returning home to teach.

Barbara, the daughter of Ted and Betty Bowen of Aptos, was born in Long Beach and has lived here since she was 3 (her dad has been a physics instructor at Cabrillo College) except for two years in Central Africa in Malawi.

"I was 10 when we went to Malawi where Dad taught in a polytechnic college under the U.S. AID program.

"I never really thought that this experience influenced me a great deal — somehow at that age you just take things for granted. But now I remember the people over there who were starving. Here in America, we're so far away most of us don't have to think of that.

"But my decision to go into the Peace Corps I'm sure is directly related to my experiences in Africa and my realization that it is important to help others."

But back to her immediate goal of pageant competition. Barbara says she entered the county pageant because of its fine scholarship program and will use her \$1000 scholarship to complete her college education.

She's quick to add, however, that she appreciates the many other benefits. "I have gained so much self-confidence. I know a lot more about myself, and I've met so many really nice people."

With the hard work of all of the county pageant's board of directors including pageant executive director, Janice Todd Allegri, as well as the cooperation of local merchants, this year's scholarship is the largest yet.

Barbara also is enjoying all of the new clothes which go along with the title.

Although her major at San Jose state is in liberal studies and she is taking a minor in biological sciences ("I always have been interested in how things work from body functions to astronomy"), she earned a vocal scholarship at Cabrillo and has sung professionally. Now she is studying with Patti Macdonald and for the pageant competition will sing a ballad, "Com in from the Rain."

Among family members who will be attending the pageant will be her sister, Diana, who graduates this month from UCSC, and her brother, Gary, in Valencia Elementary School.

"I'd love to become Miss California," she says, "but realistically speaking, there will be 30 other just as attractive

and very talented girls to compete with. I don't expect to win but I'm expecting to enjoy every minute of the pageant."

This year for the first time in several years, the pageant will be televised and Barbara has a very special reason for hoping that she'll at least be in the top 10.

"My dad is ill with cancer and if I am in the top 10 he'll be able to see me on TV."

Cancer is an illness that Barbara knows all about.

In 1975 she became ill and the diagnosis was a Wilms tumor of the kidney. After a year and a half of chemotherapy, plus radiation ("I lost a lot of hair") she was pronounced cured.

"My illness has made me appreciate the little things that most people take for granted — I'm thankful for each day. And I have more awareness — a walk in the woods, running on the beach, playing tennis, seeing a flower unfold, hearing a child laugh, all mean so much."

A member of Cabrillo Assembly of God Church, Barbara says that during her bout with cancer she became closer to God and also with the people of her church. "There was a binding.

"I'm sure all of this too, has had an effect on my plans for a career," says Barbara. And when you talk to her you know too that it has added depth to her character and she is facing life with calmness and with joy.

Barbara has learned a passage from the book ON DEATH AND DYING by Eliz-



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abeth Kubler-Ross which has great meaning for her. She paraphrased it for me.

"Let me not ask to be sheltered from dangers, but to be fearless in facing them. Let me not beg to be freed from my

pain, but from my heart to conquer it. Let me not look for allies in life's battlefield but to my own strength. Let me not find God's hand of mercy in success alone, but also in failure."



Barbara Bowen loves children and her future plans are to work with them in an undeveloped country when she joins the