

Beauty Pageant

# Miss California Pageant

## Organizers may move week-long event elsewhere

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SANTA CRUZ — Miss America has given Miss California the freedom to leave Santa Cruz for a better life elsewhere in California.

If she does leave, Santa Cruz feminist protesters have vowed to follow her and continue their counterpageant demonstrations — wherever she goes.

Organizers of the Miss California

Pageant said today Miss America officials in Atlantic City, N.J. have agreed to allow the Miss California Pageant to be moved from Santa Cruz where the event has been increasingly plagued by well-organized protests and cramped facilities.

Santa Cruz has hosted the pageant since 1924.

The event — televised each year from the Civic Auditorium — will go as planned on the weekend of June 24, with a battalion

of police on hand to try to keep the peace between pageant participants and demonstrators in the Myth California counterpageant.

No decision about the potential move will be made until the conclusion of this year's event, said Miss California Pageant President Charlotte Randolph.

Randolph said organizers have been thinking about a move, not only because of

disruptions from the demonstrations, but because of inadequate facilities.

If the pageant wants to grow, the Civic as is, cannot accommodate it, she said. "The stage size limits us to 42 contestants when in fact there is a demand for at least another 15 contestants from different parts of California. For a state our size, we should really have 70 to 80 contestants in the finals."

It had been a requirement of the Miss Please see back of section

## Miss California

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California franchise agreement with the Miss America Pageant that the pageant be held in Santa Cruz.

But Miss America organizers have agreed to lift this requirement and to give Santa Cruz organizers the option to move, said Randolph.

"If the pageant is disrupted again this year like it was last year, we would certainly strongly consider finding another site," said Randolph.

Commented Myth California organizer and former fashion model Ann Simonton: "It makes me sad that we would have to organize a bus or buses to follow them, but we will."

"Having the pageant moved was never one of our goals. We are using it as a forum to educate people about alternative viewpoints to the beauty standards."

If the pageant is moved, Randolph said administrative headquarters would continue to be based in Santa Cruz.

The new pageant site would most likely be somewhere in Northern California, Randolph said.

Even if the Miss California Pageant leaves Santa Cruz, it could return to Santa Cruz later, she said.

"The city — the hotels, the motels and restaurants — have been marvelous to us," she added.

Randolph said "15 to 20 cities have called" with an interest in hosting the pageant in their towns.

She believes the pageant will not be plagued by protests in other cities the way it has been in Santa Cruz.

There are "many other pageants" held throughout California without being plagued by demonstrations, she said.

Last year, many pageant participants complained to the City Council that their rights were being stepped on by counterpageant demonstrators and they feared violence.

Counterpageant participants, in turn, said their safety had been threatened.

At the direction of the City Council, Police Chief Jack Bassett has been meeting with pageant and counterpageant organizers to smooth a plan for this year's event.

The number of police officers will more than outnumber the number of beauty contestants, according to the plan.

"We have approval and funding for additional police. We hope to staff about 80 officers," said Chief Bassett.

Council members had considered two sites for this year's counterpageant.

They approved a site directly across the street from the Civic Auditorium entrance that requires more police security — because protesters come face to face with pageant participants — but allows a more effective demonstration.

The other site under consideration was down the street from the auditorium.