



Written by [Isabel Lyman](#) on January 18, 2011

There She Is, Miss America

The Miss America 2011 pageant, which was held in Las Vegas and aired on ABC on January 15th, celebrated its 90th anniversary. It is now the fourth longest-running live event in TV history.

Given her age, the iconic Miz A has weathered a few storms — like a decline in viewer ratings and a picket by feminists in 1968. (“If you want meat, go to the butcher,” scolded one protestor.) Then there was the scandal with Vanessa Williams, Miss America 1984. The stunning Williams, the first African-American title holder, had to resign when racy photos materialized.



And the grandmother of all reality shows has undergone several makeovers.

Today’s pageant contestants show off their gym-toned midriffs, since, for the swimwear portion of the competition, bikinis have replaced the one-piece bathing suits of yesteryear.

Political correctness can also rear its pretty head. Miss New York 2010, Claire Buffie, chose to make gay rights her platform, describing it as “Straight for Equality: Let’s Talk.” During the interview portion of this contest, Miss Hawaii, Jalee Fuselier, said she viewed herself as a “citizen of the world,” while Miss Arkansas, Alyse Eady, thinks all Americans should have health care.

But there were several newsworthy tidbits that made this historic pageant a very interesting one.

This year the public could electronically participate in the proceedings. “America’s Choice” was an online voting system that allowed the masses to select their favorite Miss from among the 53 participants. A pair of contestants from among the top vote getters went on to the semifinals, along with the eleven semifinalists selected by the judges. One of the contestants elected by “we the people” was Miss Delaware, Kayla Martell, who has been diagnosed with alopecia areata. Kayla donned a custom-made wig for the pageant, but there were plenty of endearing pre-pageant photos and videos of her in all her bald glory. The contestants themselves also got to select their favorites, so, in all, fifteen lucky gals made it to the semifinals.

The Top 15 featured another crowd pleaser in Miss Arizona, Kathryn Bulkley, who used her moment in the spotlight to pay homage to Rep. Gabrielle Giffords.

Miss Oklahoma, 24-year-old Emoly West, was among the five finalists. She was chosen by the judges (call her the critics’ choice), which included Joy Behar, of *The View*, and Tony Danza, of *Dancing with the Stars*.

Her pastimes will be of particular interest to *The New American’s* readers. She and her mother Stephanie have been active participants in the Oklahoma Conservative Political Action Committee, the Sooner State’s premier conservative PAC that supports candidates who champion constitutional government. OCPAC’s longtime president is longtime “Bircher,” Charlie Meadows.



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Emoly also hosts an annual Winter Ball which has raised tens of thousands to benefit “morally-based organizations.” Past beneficiaries have included Character First, Birth Choice (a group that helps women with unexpected pregnancies), and OCPAC.

During the question and answer portion, Emoly gave a short, sweet answer and about Internet privacy and the importance of “discretion.”

But in the end, Teresa Scanlan, Miss Nebraska, was crowned the fairest of the fair and awarded a \$50,000 scholarship; Emoly was fourth runner-up and won a \$10,000 scholarship.

Teresa, whose piano rendition of “Whitewater Chopped Sticks” for the talent portion wowed the audience, is only 17 years old, this pageant’s youngest contestant. The poised teenager is largely the product of a faith-based homeschool (as is Miss Oklahoma). She is planning to use the scholarship money toward pre-law studies at Patrick Henry College, a conservative Christian school in Virginia.

Teresa was quizzed about Wikileaks during the Q&A. Here’s a portion of her response: “When it comes to the security of our nation, we have to focus on security first and then people’s right to know, because it’s so important that everybody within our borders is safe.”

It appears that Miss America 2011 has a firm foundation. May she represent our nation well.

Photo: Emoly West, Miss Oklahoma, stands together with the other finalists during the Miss America pageant, Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011 in Las Vegas: AP Images



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