

Bring back a Pacifica success!

Pacifica is going through a traumatic period right now. The Devil's Slide is closed. Business is going down. Our town is in the midst of a crisis.

I think it's time Pacifica revisits one of its major successes and renews a popular tradition started the year we incorporated, 1957. Bring back the Miss Pacifica Pageant.

As I've said before, the Miss Pacifica Pageant was neither immoral, illegal nor fattening. Pageants are fun for the contestants, the spectators, and those great volunteers involved in the production. For several years the Miss Pacifica Pageant was the top such production in California, so much so those who judged such things created a special hall of fame category for Pacifica, so that other local pageants would not have to compete directly against us.

We don't have to aim that high. Pageants *should* be amateurish. That's part of the hometown feeling. Fantasy can be enriching. What is more of a fantasy than a hometown young woman competing for the privilege of wearing a crown and "reigning" as Miss Pacifica for a year?

It also gives plumbers or mechanics or bankers a chance to put on tuxedos, pass out programs, escort contestants, take tickets, and be part of the fun. It gives a chance for some shy and awkward teenagers to learn how to stand before an audience and develop their poise, personality and talent.

The Reactor

Paul Azevedo



Pageants are hometown. Pageants are hoky. Pageants are contestants getting up on stage and freezing up. Pageants are your friends and neighbors screaming encouragement and cheering you on.

Pageants are like Dr. Rorschach's ink blots, providing insight into the minds of those who feel they must criticize, tear down, and belittle others for getting involved. Pageants are like the Devil's Slide. Everybody has an opinion.

Pageants are voluntary. No one is coerced. I've talked to many pageant participants. Perhaps somewhere former contestants are bitter or disillusioned. I've never met them. Without exception, participants told me how much they got out of pageants, how much they enjoyed them. Whether they won or lost, they came out feeling winners. They valued and cherished their experiences.

Some complain young women should not compete on the basis of looks, poise or talent. Some of these same folks pay premiums to see the

49ers play. You could use the same kinds of arguments to cancel the debating club, eliminate A to F grades, and ignore IQ scores. Life is a competition. But the great discovery pageant competitors make is that they get their greatest pleasure helping each other. The ruthless competitor is always the loser, even if she is the momentary winner.

The last pageants in Pacifica were sponsored by Rotary as the Pacifica Dream Girl Pageants. Hazel Billmire was in charge, and she did a great job. Who puts it all together this time around is less important than that we need a return to a success for Pacifica. That doesn't mean we have to slavishly repeat the exact formula from previous years. What do you think? Want to get involved?

Editor's note: Columnist Paul Azevedo has often suggested the Miss Pacifica Pageant be revived. His personal column does not represent the Tribune's editorial position on this topic.