



University psychology, journalism major and track team member, Endia Abrante will be competing in the preliminaries for the Miss USA Pageant on Nov. 26. Catharine Kendall Emerald

Abrante poised for pageantry

■ University junior looks forward to showcasing her many talents at upcoming beauty pageant

By Lisa Toth
Oregon Daily Emerald

Instead of her normal sweats and track gear six days a week, Endia Abrante will be slipping into a purple chiffon, sequined evening gown for a night in the spotlight.

Abrante will compete in this year's Millennium Pageant Nov. 26, the state preliminary for the Miss USA Pageant and the Miss Teen USA Pageant.

The junior from Honolulu, Hawaii, grew up admiring the composure, poise and intellect of previous winners on television, and she said those women sparked her interest in entering the contest.

Abrante said candidates will be judged on poise, athleticism, intellect and personality. She said experiences traveling abroad, modeling, acting and breaking records on the track make her a well-rounded candidate.

"Of course I want to be first. I want to win, but I will be just as happy with second, third or fourth," Abrante said. "Just to be in it is an accomplishment and a new challenge."

Abrante's family moved from Hawaii to Eugene to support Abrante's schooling and dreams of being an Olympic athlete. Abrante and her roommate live in the same apartment complex as her parents, which allows her parents to attend her track meets.

Her mother, Eleanor, said Abrante was the first public school athlete in Hawaii to receive a Division I track and field scholarship.

Abrante's mother, a colon and

ovarian cancer survivor, said her daughter supported her during remission despite Abrante's educational commitments and Olympic aspirations.

"She truly inspires me. She is always on the go and always smiling," Eleanor Abrante said.

Abrante is a double major in psychology and journalism with a minor in Spanish.

"It seems like I do a lot, but to me it is an everyday process, something I have to do," Abrante said.

This won't be Abrante's first shot at fame. She appeared in a Sprite commercial when she was 12, and recently appeared in Haunted History, a ghost story reenactment series on the History Channel.

Abrante said she is confident her muscular body, which she has developed from rigorous athletic training, will be reflected in the swimsuit portion of the competition. Abrante runs the 400-meter dash for the Oregon track and field team.

During the swimsuit portion of the contest, Abrante will be modeling a bright, exotic orange swimsuit donated by one of her many sponsors, Pineapple Kiss.

Preparing for the pageant, Abrante has enjoyed being pampered in make-up sessions, nail, pedicure and teeth whitening appointments and learning how to wax her eyebrows. Abrante said she hopes viewers see her femininity through what she described as her tomboyish appearance.

Lately she said she has been practicing not falling in her four-inch heels.

"Poise isn't something you always get to see on the track," Abrante said, adding that she's "usually in that aggressive mode competing."

Maurice Greene, a family friend, is on Abrante's list of sponsors. Green is the 2000 Olympic champion gold medalist and world record holder in the 100 meters and the 4x100-meter relay. Abrante said contests, such as the Miss USA Pageant, don't perpetuate negative stereotypes toward women. She said the women answer intense questions about society today.

"To say that the pageant exploits women is not true, because they have you show your poise and answer questions," Abrante said. The pageant "really showcases women's intellect."

Shanelle Rose, a junior journalism major and Abrante's roommate, is confident Abrante is the best candidate to represent the University and Oregon at state and national levels.

"She has an inner strength and a confidence that most people don't have," Rose said. "When she wants something, she goes out and gets it."

Rose said she thinks Abrante is one of the prettier contestants, aside from being smart and athletic.

"There is a poise necessary for anyone putting themselves on display, and she has that poise," Rose said.

Lizabeth Nold, director of Northwest Pageants, Inc. in Oregon and Washington, said the pageant has offered young women the opportunity to launch careers in broadcasting, acting and modeling while receiving guidance in runway presentation, poise and speech since it began in 1952.

This year's state preliminary pageant will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Portland. The national Miss USA Pageant airs Feb. 4 on CBS.

from the beginning," he said.

Owning turkeys hasn't turned either Rose or Bush off of eating the meat.

Turkey meat and a pet turkey are completely different, Bush said. He plans to have a traditional Thanksgiving dinner, but when it comes to Tina, Bush said, "I would never eat her."

Bush and Rose agree that to owning a turkey requires a lot of space for it to wander.

"I think the most important thing would be that they have enough room to move," Rose said.

"Turkeys do roam," Bush said.

And they do fly as well, which is why Rose recommends raising a turkey in a rural area. Turkeys are not forbidden in residential areas in Eugene, as long as they are restricted by a cage and do not exceed two per residence, according to the city code.

Bush said as long as they're well behaved, turkeys make good pets. In fact, he has even considered getting a new one. But for now, he's coping with the loss of his latest pet.

"She was kind of nice to have around," Bush said. "We sure miss her."

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Turkey

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posed to other meat turkeys, including bronze and white turkeys, which are "more like dumb cows" and don't make very good pets.

Although several of Rose's turkeys are raised for meat, he considers the others his pets.

"If you don't eat them, they're your pets," he said.

Rose said he's less affectionate toward the meat turkeys and would never change his mind about turning a pet into a meal.

"If it's going to be meat, it's meat