

# 60-Year-Old Rules Change For Miss America Pageant

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — In a stunning departure from tradition, the Miss America Pageant has decided to let women who have been married or had abortions compete, The Associated Press has learned.

The board of the Miss America Organization voted last month to drop the 60-year-old requirement that contestants be women who have never been married and never been pregnant. The change takes effect next year.

Fear of violating New Jersey's discrimination laws spurred the change, according to court documents obtained Monday.

Since 1950, contestants have had to swear they had never been married and never been pregnant in order to vie for

the rhinestone crown and thousands of dollars in scholarship money.

The new rules would require simply that they sign a document saying "I am unmarried" and "I am not pregnant and I am not the natural or adoptive parent of any child."

That would open the door to divorced women, women who had had abortions and women who had children who later died.

Pageant Chief Executive Robert L. Beck sent new contracts to state pageant directors in August notifying them of the change. Beck declined requests for comment. Beck told the state pageants to have contestants in this year's pageant sign the new contracts as a condition of competing for the Miss America title.

## PREPARATION

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Local businesses stopped normal operations to prepare for the predicted wind and rain damage.

Frank Klober, the store manager of Harris Teeter, said the rush Tuesday night for food necessities such as bread and milk was worse than when Fran hit, with registers ringing since 6 a.m.

Today, the Red Cross will open two shelters, one at C.W. Stanford Middle School in Hillsborough and another at Chapel Hill High School. Waters said residents should arrive at the shelter

before 11 p.m. today because of the threat of fallen trees and dangerous weather conditions.

Waters emphasized the need for residents to be prepared for a possible disaster. He said self-sufficiency should be planned for each person for at least three days. He stressed the importance of packing a supply kit containing non-perishable food, a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher, bottled water, radios, flashlights and batteries. "I think that Orange County is prepared," he said. "You're either prepared or you're stuck."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

## ONE CARD

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Freeman said.

The first rejected design looked exactly like a Wachovia ATM card, he said. However, it is important that the card be recognized as a student card, Freeman said. The bank had been very accommodating with regards to shrinking the Wachovia logo on the card, he said.

The design should be finalized in the next two to three weeks. It has taken six weeks longer than planned due to several bank and state regulations that had to be ironed out.

Officials first considered a partnership with a bank a few years ago when students expressed a strong desire to use

their campus debit cards off campus, Freeman said. Wachovia was chosen based on its bid but also due to the fact that it was the only bank that could incorporate the Visa check option into the ONE Card, Freeman said.

Jane Mitchell, area sales manager of Wachovia, said she had seen a lot of student interest in the new feature.

"Traffic has been more brisk this year," she said.

"A large number of students have been coming in."

Some students have opened up accounts in branches in their home cities, she said.

Accounts can be transferred by phone, through the Internet or at the bank.

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## SAFETY

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An advisory was sent across the University via e-mail Tuesday night and latest updates are accessible on UNC's Web site.

Poarch said the site was being updated regularly and students could access links to other weather sites on the World Wide Web.

Some students said they were surprised by the strength of the storm.

Jessica Moore, a senior from Raleigh, said she and her second-floor hallmates in Carmichael Residence Hall had already stocked up on batteries and water.

"People are freaking out because it's such a big storm right now," she said.

Officials said they had already taken extra measures to ensure that living conditions in residence halls and buildings on campus would be secure.

Bruce Runberg, associate vice chancellor for facility services, said facility services was preparing for a possible power loss.

"We've been double-checking emergency generators, making sure they're topped off with fuel," he said.

Runberg said hotel reservations had been made for staff living considerable

distances from campus, so technicians are available in the case of a power outage.

John Oberlin, executive director of Academic Technology & Networks, also expressed concern for the incoming storm, although a power outage is not the only issue he is worried about.

Oberlin said he was concerned with the campus chilled-water system, which serves as a coolant for the environmental conditioning of the computer network.

If the system is left running without the coolant, networks could face permanent damage, Oberlin said.

"The Information Technology mission is critical for the University," he said.

"We will do our best to restore (the network system) as quickly as possible."

Other branches of the University are also putting forth similar efforts to minimize the damage, and speed the return to life as normal after Hurricane Floyd cuts its path through the Carolinas.

Poarch said officials had discussed plans for ensuring that students have continual access to Lenoir Dining Hall, the Student Union and Student Health Service once the hurricane hits.

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## FLOYD

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said Fred Pendley, a Home Depot clerk in Charlotte. "We probably sold 40 or more through this morning."

Ocracoke Island and Bald Head Island residents were urged to evacuate Tuesday because the islands are reachable only by ferry. About 700 people live on Ocracoke, which is just south of Hatteras Island, and Bald Head has about 80 residents and is a traditional gateway for North Carolina hurricanes.

New Hanover County officials canceled school Wednesday and said barrier island residents would be urged to evacuate voluntarily starting at noon

Wednesday, county emergency management officials said.

Floyd was expected to come ashore near the Georgia-South Carolina border Wednesday afternoon or evening and then to head for North Carolina.

"Late Wednesday night and Thursday will be prime time for North Carolina," said Scott Sharp, a forecaster for the National Weather Service in Raleigh. "At least the eastern half of the state will be impacted, if not the entire state."

Sharp predicted 4 to 8 inches of rain and possible hurricane-force winds, with the worst northeast of Floyd's center. Gale-force winds — between 39 mph and 58 mph — were expected across a broader area.

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