

Miss Madison County 2017 pageant again one to remember

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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HIGHLAND - Ten contestants took the stage today at the Madison County Fairgrounds to compete for the title and the crown of Miss Madison County 2017.

Debbie McDowell, one of the pageants organizers said preparing the girls and the pageant takes a lot of time.

"There's a lot of preparation," McDowell said. "We practice for eight weeks. The girls come and we do mock interviews, they learn how to do a dance, they do a speech and we teach them how to walk on stage. There's a lot of preparation on the girls part and then on the directors part, it takes a village. We help interview the girls. We get them prepared to be confident on stage because that's our job to make sure that they're confident and they feel good up there."



The contestants are judged in several areas to determine who will be crowned Miss and Jr. Miss Madison County, but the four-minute interview portion is where the contestants get the opportunity to really let the judges get to know them.

"They have a personal interview, both of them do," McDowell said. "It's a four-minute interview with the judges. Four minutes isn't a long a time to sell yourself to a judge," McDowell said. "Then the Miss contestants come on stage and they give a speech. Then the Miss contestants also do a swimsuit and evening gown. The Jr. Miss, they do an outfit of choice, an evening gown and an on stage question. That's how the judges determine."

This year Maddalaina Halva took the crown for Miss Madison County 2017 and Brianna Anderson went home with the title of Jr. Miss Madison County 2017 replacing Emily Harzy and Adelyn Evans. But the duties of Miss Madison County don't end after the

pageant is over. There is a lot that Miss and Jr. Miss Madison County do in the year before the next winner is crowned.



"The Miss contestant, her first job is to promote the fair," McDowell said. "To go around communities within the county and talk about what Madison County has to offer, what the fair has to offer but she will also go to state and compete for the Miss Illinois queen pageant. The Jr. Miss goes along with her and they form a sisterhood. They'll go to community service events. Just to be out in the community and giving back to their community."

McDowell said the pageant instill a lot of great qualities in the contestants.



"Some of these girls can't even walkout on stage and say their name," McDowell said. "But then when you become queen you're on the stage all the time. You're meeting new people. You're learning new things. It really helps them grow and develop into the young ladies that they are."