

# Geneva alumni crowned Miss San Antonio

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A young woman who graduated last year from Geneva School of Boerne, won the Miss America San Antonio crown on Saturday night, Feb. 21.

Emma Faye Rudkin, now a UTSA Honors scholar, brought a “deaf and hard of hearing” platform with her onto the competitive stage - a cause that comes very naturally to Rudkin, given that she herself lost almost all of her hearing as the result of a childhood fever.

While doctors recommended that Rudkin move forward through deaf schools and sign language communication, she was, instead, taught to read lips and enrolled in traditional schools where, according to her resumé, Rudkin excelled in activities ranging from theater and music, to history and cheerleading.

However, so profound is Rudkin’s hearing loss that it took her longer than her fellow contestants to understand that she’d taken the crown.

“I was carefully reading the MC’s lips and looking at the other girls’ reactions to make sure I was hearing my name,” Rudkin said. “I was

beyond surprised and overwhelmed with utter joy!”

Rudkin added that her first thought was, “Thank you, Jesus,” followed quickly by two realizations: “that my nonprofit, Aid the Silent, would be shared on a large scale and that I would be competing in Miss Texas.”

Aid the Silent - found at [www.aidthesilent.com](http://www.aidthesilent.com) - has the goal of aiding “economically disadvantaged deaf children and teens to reach their full, unlimited, God-given potential and to live life more richly by providing access to hearing and speech resources, as well as ministry-related activities,” Rudkin said in the essay that comprises her Miss America platform.

Although she participated in two pageants while in middle school, Rudkin said that this particular level of competition was entirely new to her.

This was her first time competing in the Miss America USA system as an adult.

“Now I will be competing in the Miss Texas pageant in July 2015, hopefully followed by Miss America in September 2015,” Rudkin said.

Although she characterizes her-

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Boerne’s Emma Rudkin was crowned Miss San Antonio 2015, Feb. 21 at the Josephine Theatre in San Antonio.

Photo by Angie Roper Photography

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self as “severely-profoundly deaf,” she is a student of both

piano and music theory who has never allowed her disability/ability to hold her back.

“The challenges, hard times and being ‘different’ have made all the difference. After encountering Jesus at 14, I

realized He made me deaf so I could share with others about to not allow a ‘disability’ or a circumstance to hold you back. Deafness has made me who I am, but does not define me,” Rudkin said.

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million loan from Citizens National Bank in Cameron, \$200,000 in donated funds and \$250,000 from the district’s fund balance.

Jim Martin, an engineer overseeing the projects for BHS, said the track and field resurfacing and waterline work are not part of the 2013 bond projects, which he is also overseeing.

“The \$1.95 million is the maximum amount available,” Martin said. “We have to add about \$100,000 to the guaranteed maximum price to cover fees, material testing and things like that.”

Martin also said the final cost for the proj-

ects is expected to be lower than the approved GMP.

The track and field replacement consists of replacing the field turf and synthetic track surfacing at BHS stadium. The current waterline is about 40 years old, runs diagonally under the field and is in danger of breaking, Martin said.

A new waterline will be installed and rerouted around the edge of the field, so it doesn’t cause any potential problems.

MTR Engineering is doing the design work for the project, which is expected to start by the end of this month and be completed by the first week of August.

As for the bond projects, trustees are expected to decide on the GMP for the new Fabra Elementary School campus and second phase of the Boerne High School bond projects during a special meeting Thursday.

provide a habitat assessment of areas within the boundaries of the property to be enrolled and the area up to 300 feet outside of such property, the so-called buffer zone.

Tanya Summer, branch chief for USFWS in Austin, told the Star the 300-foot buffer zone was included primarily to calculate enrollment fees in the SEP-HCP and wouldn’t affect neighboring properties at all.

Summer explained, “The 300-foot buffer is for properties where they’re going to do construction. They know they’re going to clear habitat, and they know they need protection under the ESA, so they go to the SEP and pay a fee. In the calculation of that fee, they look at how much habitat is on the property, then add a 300-foot buffer that’s also calculated into the fee. It doesn’t affect any use on neighboring properties, and it doesn’t have anything whatsoever to do with preserve properties.”

allowed, and again said the 300-foot buffer would not apply.

She also noted all mitigation for karst invertebrates would happen only in Bexar County because the covered species don’t occur in Kendall County.

Lux stressed while it was important for citizens to express their opinions to the court, the most important thing for landowners to do is to contact their U.S. congressmen directly.

To see the full contents of the draft habitat conservation plan and draft environmental impact statement, go to [www.fws.gov/southwest/es/AustinTexas/](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/AustinTexas/) and click on “(January 20).”

To submit written comments, visit [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Follow the instructions for Docket No. FWS-R2-ES-2014-0053. Comments must be received before noon Thursday, March 19.

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