

# GOLDENTIMES

## When Reagan judged the ‘Beaver Beauties’

*Hollywood heart-throb ‘Dutch’ Reagan took a look at nine Buena Vista College girls – at least pictures of them, in 1947*

**BY DOLORES CULLEN**  
**W**e’re still feeling the love, even after Beatta Edwards has passed away. She established a relationship with Peach the News Hound, which resulted in many visits to Methodist Manor.

A Buena Vista College graduate, she bequeathed to us some of her old “Beaver Log” yearbooks.

In the 1947 book, we discovered an interesting story of the Beaver Beauty Contest, sponsored by the Beaver Log staff and judged by Ronald “Dutch” Reagan.

Page 52 describes the contest alongside a picture of Reagan, who would have been around 35 at the time: “Beaver Log of 1947 acquired the services of Ronald “Dutch” Reagan, movie star and former Iowan, to judge its first annual Beaver Beauty contest. The “Beaver Beauties” is a new section added by the Log of ‘47, the first Buena Vista College yearbook in over a decade.” (This was after World War II, which affected the student body immensely.) “The candidates were chosen by the student body, with Reagan making the final selections.”

Further research by BVU Archivist Joan Zwagerman reveals that Reagan didn’t actually come to Storm Lake, but judged the nine ladies from photos sent to him. According to an article in The Buena Vista Tack from April 21, 1947, “Reagan’s selections will have a full-page picture in Beaver Log.”

So five of the girls – Pat Stafford, LoRaine Devereaux, Lenora Hopkins, Marjorie Murphy and Donna Mae Crone – were apparently picked by Reagan because they each have a full page in

the yearbook.

The remaining four coeds – Shirley Lock, Dorothy Stevens, Marilyn Harrison and Joanne Rice – are all on a sixth page, and apparently weren’t selected by the future president of the US.

According to Zwagerman’s research “Beaver Beauties” only took place two years. The second and final year of the “annual” contest, entertainment personality Billy Rose served as judge.

### BVC CULTURE BACK IN THE ‘40S

“It’s always fun to look through at old photographs or through old newspapers and yearbooks and see the hair-styles and fashions of the era, but it’s also important to note what was important to students in a given time period,” says Zwagerman. “Belonging to clubs held great social significance back then, and that’s a contrast to a more individualistic student experience today. This is not to say that students don’t join clubs anymore because they certainly do, but there doesn’t seem to be the sort of social pressure or prestige attached to such belonging as there was in the post-WWII era.”

She adds, “While it may strike today’s readers as odd to see women in bathing suits in a college yearbook (and the school newspaper), it didn’t seem out-of-place in the late 1940s.”

The cover of a summer school brochure during that same time period showed coeds in swimming suits on a dock. “The message seemed to be about having fun on the lake more so than about studying,” says Zwagerman. “So, in that sense, some things don’t change!”



Pat Stafford of Early was one of the five “beaties” selected by Reagan.



Shirley Lock, Storm Lake; Dorothy Stevens, Early; Marilyn Harrison, Storm Lake; and Joanne Rice, Storm Lake, all appeared on one page.



LoRaine Devereaux, Truesdale; and Lenora Hopkins, Whiting caught Reagan’s eye and earned full pages.



Marjorie Murphy, Emmetsburg; and Donna Crone, Albert City also earned full pages.





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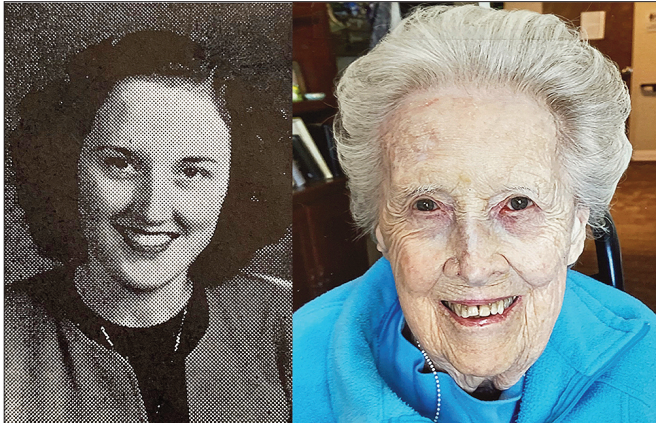
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**Ronald Reagan Will Choose Beaver Beauty**

Nine Candidates Announced At Spring Formal April 11.

Ronald “Dutch” Reagan, Hollywood movie star and former Iowan, will judge the Beaver beauty contest for this year’s publication of Beaver Log, the college annual. This announcement was made by John J. O’Connor at the college spring formal held Friday evening, April 11. Introduced at the dance were the candidates for the honor of being chosen a Beaver Beauty. The candidates are Donna Mae Crone, LoRaine Devereaux, Marilyn Harrison, Lenora Hopkins, Shirley Lock, Marjorie Murphy, Joanne Rice, Patricia Stafford and Dorothy Stevens. Reagan’s selections will have a full-page picture in Beaver Log. Announcement of the selections will not be made prior to publication.



Beatta Edwards was a sophomore in 1947, not a Beaver Beauty candidate, but a beautiful woman who kept her bright smile into her 90s. She died June 1. Left: This article appeared in the April 21, 1947 issue of The Buena Vista Tack, with the headline, “Nine Coeds Chosen By Student Body As Beaver Beauties.”



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Fun with Milo the therapy dog.



Barb Movall won the best hat day prize.



The crazy socks day winner was Carol. She wore socks with pictures of her grandson on them.

# Loving life during Assisted Living Week



Ruth Walsh won the sports day prize.

Contests celebrate everything from crazy socks to best hat

Tenants enjoyed a full week of special activities for Assisted Living Week at Otsego Place, shares Debbie Klatt, Otsego Place administrator. The week started with an ice cream social and music with Larry Heschke from Fonda. The tenants enjoyed more music, a pancake breakfast, a special grill out followed by Bingo and a trip to Jennie's Homestead in Cherokee. They finished the week with a visit from Milo the therapy dog. The tenants and staff had fun dressing up and winning prizes each day. The theme for National Assisted Living Week, Sept. 8-14, was "Inspiring Generations."

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Dorothy Mernin won the Red, white and blue day prize.



Judy Krout won the mismatch day prize.

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