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## **MS. SOUTH TEXAS SENIOR AMERICA PAGEANT SCHEDULED FOR FEB. 28**

“Celebrating The Positive Image of Senior Women” is this year’s theme for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Ms. South Texas Senior America Pageant scheduled for 2 p.m. Feb. 28 at the Harlingen Municipal Auditorium.

Last year’s pageant had an attendance of more than 900 people coming from as far as Houston, Laredo and Corpus Christi, according to Elia Lopez, pageant organizer and director.

“This is a non-traditional pageant of diversified contestants all age 60 or better,” Lopez said. “The pageant’s objective is to inspire people, and let them know that life isn’t over at 60. We see lots of established women participate who are still working in their careers and volunteering in their communities.”

Pageant categories will include personal interview, evening gown, philosophy of life and talent. This pageant champions healthy aging, wellness and mental well-being.

Lopez, 74 years young and a registered nurse, became Ms. Coastal Bend Senior in 2010. She went on to compete in the Ms. Texas Senior America in Dallas, Texas and was third runner-up out of 23 Dallas contestants. Both pageants left a life-long impact on her.

Lopez was determined to start a Senior Pageant for South Texas. She wants to honor senior women by giving them a platform to demonstrate their dignity, maturity, inner beauty and talents. According to Lopez, this senior pageant is the third one of its kind in the state and the only one in South Texas.

The 10 contestants this year are from Mission, Donna, Mercedes, Arroyo City, Raymondville, Harlingen and Corpus Christi, Texas. Ms. South Texas Senior America 2015 is Linda Gaston. She is an international educator and moved to the Valley after living in Spain. Gaston speaks six languages including sign language.

Pageant tickets are \$10 each. To purchase tickets, please call (956) 216-5991.

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