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**Chadrad Communications, Inc.**  
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337  
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601  
E-mail: [kcsr@chadrad.com](mailto:kcsr@chadrad.com)

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#### (Nev.)-Miss America Contestants Begin Preliminary Competitions



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 01/09/2013 08:34 AM

*Photo: Miss Nebraska Mariah Cook (Photo courtesy of [www.missamerica.org](http://www.missamerica.org))*

(LAS VEGAS)-KCSR's Chris Fankhauser is reporting from Las Vegas on the happenings at this year's Miss America pageant. Here is her first report.

Tuesday night at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas, 53 young women from across the United States began preliminary competitions for the Miss America pageant. The ladies were divided into three different groups, with each group completing one part of competition each night of the preliminaries.

Miss Nebraska Mariah Cook participated in the interview portion of the contest, as did Miss Wyoming Lexie Madden and Miss South Dakota Calista Kirby. Two awards were given at the end of the evening, with Miss Oklahoma winning the talent portion and Miss South Carolina won the swimsuit portion. The different groups will take part in those divisions on Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

Cook's platform emphasizes the benefits of adoption, and her talent, which is piano, will be showcased on Thursday evening. After the competition Tuesday evening, all of the contestants were able to meet with their supporters for a brief time before they were ushered out to rest for the following day.

Rehearsals have been taking place since Monday, but the contestants have been in Las Vegas since last week. The second round of preliminaries begins at 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time, as do the Thursday evening activities. The pageant itself will be held Saturday evening. Pictures will be posted on [chadrad.com](http://chadrad.com) after they have been edited.