

## Miss Teen Texas Taylor Lowery gets key to city in return to Lufkin

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The city on Sunday welcomed home Lufkin's own Miss Teen Texas Taylor Lowery in a downtown celebration coordinated by the Lufkin Homecoming Committee.

The 16-year-old said Miss America's Outstanding Teen Pageant held in Orlando in August was a rewarding experience. Lowery competed as Miss Teen Plano in the Miss Texas pageant earlier this year, taking the crown.



Jessica Cooley/The Lufkin Daily News

Lufkin Mayor Jack Gorden presents Lufkin's own Miss Teen Texas Taylor Lowery with a key to the city during a homecoming celebration Sunday in downtown Lufkin. Lowery is the daughter of Mark and Brenda Lowery of Lufkin.

"It feels great to be home," Lowery said. "I didn't win, but I'm so happy to come back and represent Texas."

Lowery said she made a lot of friends through the experience and got to know the overall winner, Miss Teen Wisconsin, very well during the week of competition.

"I got to know girls from across the country," she said.

"I was also really close to the winner during the week. Knowing how well she's going to represent the country makes me feel really good about the experience.

"You grow up so much in that week — it's like everything is in hyper-speed," she added. "I learned a lot about responsibility."

Community members were also on hand for Lowery's Lufkin homecoming. Miss Texas 2000 Tara Watson emceed the event.

"Taylor, you represented the state very well at the Miss America's Outstanding Teen Pageant," Watson said. "You were elegant, charming and like a ball of energy. We're glad to have you back in Texas."

Lufkin Mayor Jack Gorden declared Oct. 4, 2009, Taylor Lowery Day, presenting her with a key to the city.

"There's a lot of great things going on in Lufkin, but to have an individual distinguished like Taylor put our community on a pedestal in the state and even the nation," Gorden said.

Lowery said she thanks the community for standing behind during her pursuit of the crown.

"I want to thank the Lufkin community for being there," Lowery said, "and supporting me for the past three years."