

Chelsi Casey said after failing to not win the Miss Washington County pageant in 2011, she took 2012 off to get a break from it.

Stepping away must have paid off because she beat out eight other contestants on her way to being crowned 2013 Miss Washington County.

She couldn't hide the surprise and smile when her name was announced on June 24 at this year's pageant.

"I didn't think that I had won," she said. "I was very surprised. It was very rewarding. I worked very hard."

Casey said winning is more than getting a crown and that's the part she is looking forward to most about being queen.

"I take pride in being a role model and helping in the community," she said.

Now that fair week is over, Casey will turn her attention to another pageant -- Miss Indiana, which will be later this summer at the Indiana State Fair.

She said she has already been talking to Miss Washington County 2011 Mallory Deaton and 2012 Erica Ewen.

"They called me Tuesday morning," he said. "They have been helpful. All of them have opened their closets and given me phone numbers and e-mails."

Winning the title doesn't allow for rest. Casey and her court were back at work early Tuesday morning helping out with Senior Day at the fair.

But she did have an opportunity to celebrate, but she did so at the fair.

"We walked around and I got to take a lot of pictures," she said. "Everyone was congratulating me and it was an awesome experience."

One of Casey's favorite memories was walking off the stage and seeing her dad.

"When I walked off the stage it was the first time I had ever seen my dad cry," she said.

Casey's escort was Samantha Bowers. Her sponsors were M & D Roofing and Faulkenburg Concrete.