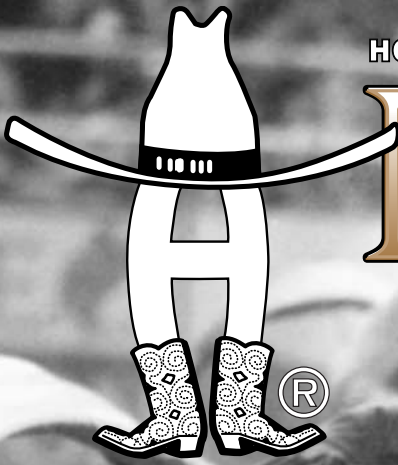


HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO February 2000 -Vol. VIII, No.1



MAGAZINE



HANG ON TO YOUR HATS!

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The Cover: With tight turns and thundering hooves, the chuck wagon races add to the fun and excitement for fans at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.
Photo by Debbie Porter.

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Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.
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Letters and comments should be sent to:
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A M E S S A G E F R O M T H E
P R E S I D E N T

The 2000 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is upon us — a Show with great expectations.

As I reflect on the incredible record-breaking performances of the past 25 years, it's obvious that in all areas and arenas of the Show, the bar has been raised year after year. Consider these facts:

	1975	1999
Rodeo Attendance	422,738 at 15 performances	1,101,547 at 20 performances
General Attendance	688,325	1,853,650
Volunteers	2,000+	12,000+
Committees	47	91
Junior Auction Grand Champions		
Grand Champion Market Steer	\$50,000	\$550,000
Grand Champion Market Lamb	\$8,025	\$160,000
Grand Champion Market Barrow	\$17,500	\$128,000
Grand Champion School Art	-	\$125,000
Grand Champion Broilers	\$8,600	\$110,000
Grand Champion Turkey	\$6,400	\$75,000
Livestock Entries	18,880	35,846
Commitment to Educational Programs	\$174,737	\$8.3 million
Students on Scholarships	109	1,329
Value of Total Scholarships and Educational Programs to Date	\$836,342	\$68 million

It is a time-honored practice to maintain historical data to track performance in many facets of our society — the stock market, the sports industry, corporate sales, passenger miles, crop production, etc. There is much acclaim when a new high is reached or a record is broken.

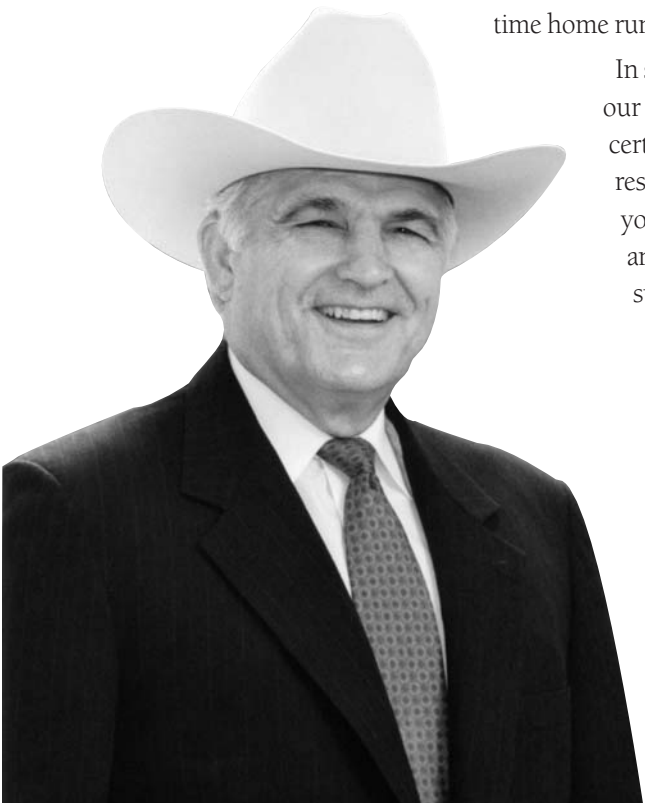
But can success be measured by broken records alone? In 1998, Mark McGwire broke the all-time home run record in baseball, but his team didn't have a championship season.

In spite of our legacy of years of individual records broken, they should not be our first or only measure of success. If we establish new records again we will certainly celebrate, but success will ultimately be measured by our aggregate results — the bottom line. If we can continue to expand our contributions to youth and education while providing our audience, contestants, exhibitors and patrons a valuable experience at a reasonable price, then we have succeeded.

Let's have a great Show in 2000!



P. Michael Wells
President



The Mark of an Artist

By Whitney Horton



Even before the first flag flies in the grand entry, the first out-of-breath youngster captures a calf or the first bronc ditches its rider, the tone for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is established. For months, Show posters have been displayed in school corridors, in local store windows and in other venues throughout the city. For more than 50 years, lifetime director Mark Storm has been the artist responsible for setting that tone by creating the artwork and the theme for the Show's publicity materials. In appreciation of Storm's work and to recognize his recent retirement, the Show has dedicated the 2000 Souvenir Program in his honor.

In years past, Storm and Johnnie Westerhaus, assistant manager; Marketing, Information Systems and Presentations Department, convened to brainstorm and to develop a concept for the poster, souvenir program cover and other promotional items. Next, Storm presented sketches, and together they firmed up the pictorial idea. Storm then painted an original painting depicting the image and followed it with painted overlays to allow changes to details, such as the color of a cowboy's shirt or the color of a horse. Then, they reworked and redesigned the painting, and Storm returned to his studio to incorporate the changes.

"Mark has taught me about ego. He walks in the office with a large original painting and says 'what do you want me to change?' These are real paintings, and he is eager to change or redo anything. Mark is multitalented and is able to read my mind and go add to it. He knows rodeo and has such humility. No computer, no laser printer — just canvas, paint and talent," said Westerhaus.

One of the hallmarks of Storm's art is the realistic way in which he portrays his subjects. "I like to show it as exactly as it is so people get the feeling of the difficulty and finer points of the event. I, like many people who are interested in the

rodeo, have a common feeling about the cowboy. I appreciate the skill that a cowboy can develop and like to see the champion in action," said Storm.

His handsome, life-sized bronze of past Show President and Executive Committee member Stuart Lang proudly overlooks a miniature Astrodome while standing in the shadow of the real one. Storm's colorful oil painting of a young cowboy with rodeo activities swirling around him hangs in the hallway of the Show offices, while other original works decorate various walls throughout the Show's facilities.

For the past few years, Storm also has contributed conceptually to the badge designs, with Westerhaus and Lori Renfrow, assistant manager of the Show, tying them to his artwork. Together, the covers, bronzes and badge designs represent a pictorial history of the Show. Storm has captured the events, the people, the animals, the spirit and the changes throughout the years from the days in the Sam Houston Coliseum to the present days in the Astrodome.

The 1996 Souvenir Program cover is a classic example of Storm's ability to record time. In that painting, Storm depicted rodeo clown Quail Dobbs, dressed in his famous red and white polka-dotted shirt, positioning himself behind the star-painted barrel, while fellow bullfighter Miles Hare stands close behind. Cowboys spur bulls, ride broncs and rope calves through the word "RODEO." Numerous other easily recognizable vignettes surround the Astrodome complex recording history.

Friends and admirers say Storm would be a wealthy man



Mark Storm, artist extraordinaire, has been involved in creating the artwork used to set the theme of the Show for more than 50 years. In recognition of his numerous contributions in capturing the history and spirit of the Show, the 2000 Souvenir Program has been dedicated in his honor.

except for the fact that he gives away much of his art. “In the beginning, we’d paint the picture of the previous year’s winning bull rider, and the bull rider would get the painting,” said Storm. In addition to bull riders, Storm has painted pictures of other event champions.

One such lucky contestant was Brad Gjermundson, who admires his painting daily as it hangs in his living room in Marshall, N.D. “I don’t know about painting, but I do know about the horse I rode in the painting, and every marking was exact, even the way the tail went during the ride. I don’t know how he does it, but everything was perfect. People think it is a photo taken on canvas,” said Gjermundson.

Having grown up in Alaska and New Mexico, Storm has a true interest in ranching and rodeo. “He is an artist who really cares very much about accuracy and details. If you look at one of his saddle bronc paintings, even the cowboy’s little finger on the riding rein will be in exactly the right position for the cowboy to ride the bronc. He’ll always have everything just perfect,” said Dan Gattis, Show general manager.

Storm also gives generously of his time to the Show. As a charter member of the School Art Committee, he considers each entry with the same integrity and attention to detail that are his standard. “He takes the responsibility of judging very seriously and studies each piece. With great enthusiasm, he will dissect an elementary student’s piece of art and say ‘look at that little cowboy coming over the hill, and there is a rattlesnake under that cactus,’” said Rita Ruffeno, School Art Committee chairman.

“Mark judges with the same temperament that he lives his life — always with an upbeat attitude and something warm and pleasant to say about everything. When discussing the quality of our judges, we always mention Mark first. He was the first judge, remains one of our shining stars, and the way he can create the anatomy of a horse with minimal brush strokes is a gift. Mark holds the title of Judge Emeritus,” said Ruffeno.

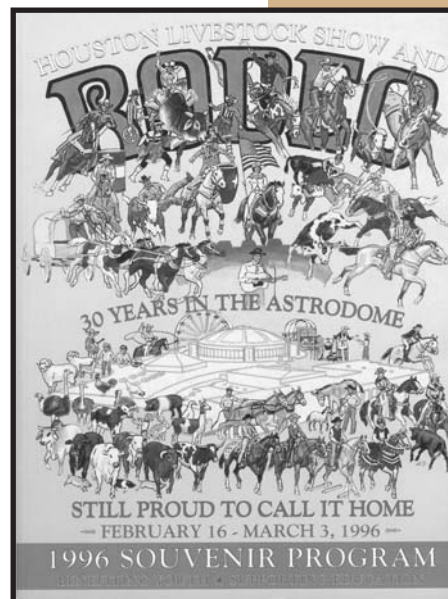
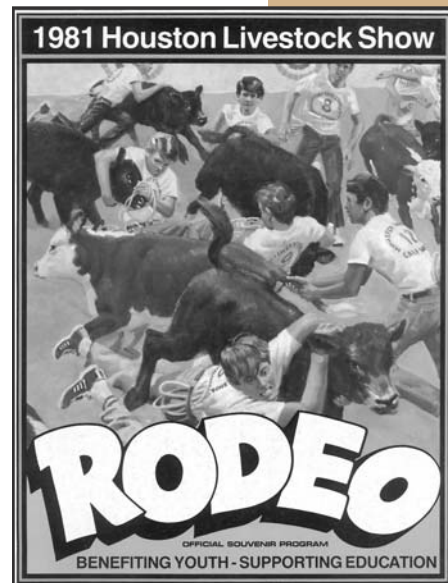
Also a charter member of the Speakers Committee, Storm has delighted many elementary students with old saddles, rope tricks, tales of cowboys and stories about the Old West. He also served on the Paint Horse Committee and became a Show director in the mid-1970s.

“Mark is a true Western gentleman. He is a generous and gentle soul who has been known to spin a rope, sing, play guitar, play the mouth organ, speak reasonably good Spanish and occasionally roll his own cigarette with one hand like John Wayne,” said Bob Officer, artist, fellow School Art Committee judge and longtime friend.

Although Storm recently retired his brushes at age 88, his contribution to the history and spirit of the Show remains. “Mark has been so tied into the rodeo scene that he wants to take that and carry it forth. He has a deep respect for rodeo. Mark makes an effort in his paintings and artwork to really put forth rodeo as a very festive, celebrated, fun time and very much of a sport. He really goes at it and shows the athletic abilities of the cowboys as well as of the animal athletes. The other thing is that he has a deep love and respect for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and what it stands for — helping kids and supporting education. He is really an icon of the Show. Not having Mark do our souvenir program this year has been really hard on us, and without the original touch that Mark put onto them, they’ll never be quite the same,” said Gattis.

On the spine of each souvenir program are the words “The Show With A Heart,” and these words sum up the artist as well. Storm’s contributions to “setting that tone” for the Show will be missed in the years to come, but his perceptions and legacy at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo will last forever.

Mark Storm’s artwork is available in print form through Random Studiopress in Houston.



A STAR WAS BORN

By Stephanie Earthman

To be a star is a dream of many. Ask a group of Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo fans to identify the biggest star of the Show, and you likely will spark a spirited debate. But ask Rodeo Express Committee members that question, and their answer might be “TranStar.” You see, there is a big-name star other than the talent that takes to the arena each year. It is a behind-the-scenes traffic mobility system known as TranStar.

The star of Houston’s traffic control, TranStar is a unique collaborative effort of four governmental agencies designed to aid traffic control and to implement transportation plans. Instead of working separately, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), the City of Houston and Harris County teamed up in 1995 to develop TranStar and its many advanced traffic-management programs.

TranStar is operated from a \$13.5 million, 52,000-square-foot facility located near downtown Houston off Old Katy Road. It is one of the first high-tech transportation management centers to open in the United States. Part of TranStar’s mission, according to METRO Captain Tim Kelly, is to improve traffic control for special events. As we all know, the Show is a very special event.

Controlling traffic for the world’s largest rodeo, TranStar assists nearly 2 million visitors annually. “Rodeo traffic is especially challenging because of the carnival, livestock loading and [number of] committeemen,” explained Kelly. “With all of this on-site, you simply don’t have the same number of parking spaces, which makes the transit element so important.”

In fact, legend has it that TranStar was born out of a Dome traffic jam — a jam that forced former Houston Mayor Bob Lanier to leave his limousine and hoof it to an Oilers’ game in time for kickoff. Meanwhile, his wife, Elyse, held her horses but did not reach her seat until the second quarter. The following Monday, as the story goes, Lanier initiated studies to address traffic congestion around the Dome during special events. From this, a star was born, and, today, TranStar benefits the Show in many ways.

In general, the coordinated transit management program

helps to reduce traffic congestion during the Show. From the impressive TranStar facility, all four member agencies work together to operate several different traffic-management systems. At center stage is a contemporary command center, designed by the Lockheed Martin Corporation, from which TranStar monitors traffic mobility and responds immediately to traffic incidents. Kelly explained that “all the people that need to be able to respond to freeway problems around the Dome are sitting in one room together.” This includes Metro Traffic and Shadow Traffic Control, two private reporting services that broadcast Rodeo traffic updates through local media.

A tremendous benefit of TranStar for the Show is the on-site operation. During the Show, a satellite transportation center is located in an inconspicuous gray building near the Rodeo Express bus tent. From there, METRO police view the area using remote cameras and respond immediately to traffic congestion.

Of the nearly 190 TranStar video cameras mounted above Houston freeways to monitor traffic, 10 of these are located in the Dome area. According to METRO Police Sgt. Mike Riggs, who operates the command center during the Show, “TranStar has cut down on the time it takes to identify and clear up accidents around the Dome.”

Before TranStar, police would learn of accidents in the area via hand-held radios and send a motorcycle officer weaving through traffic to investigate. Additional assistance was provided only after an on-site report. But with TranStar on-site, Riggs can use the video cameras to zoom in on an incident and immediately send all assistance required to clear up the situation. Every minute counts, according to Riggs. Studies by traffic engineers have found that for every minute a roadway is blocked it takes five minutes to recover.

Reaction time is key for Rodeo Express, as well. Before TranStar, it took longer to identify a problem, such as a bus stuck in traffic, and initiate contingency plans. When it can take up to an hour to call in extra buses for service, several hundred or even thousands of people can stack up in line. Having TranStar on-site has helped to trim reaction time. According to Rodeo Express Committee Chairman John Sandling, “Up-to-

the-minute traffic updates are very useful, because they help us dynamically re-route buses.”

The on-site system also is used to update the giant, changeable-message signs. These signs along the routes leading to the Dome are used to alert rodeo goers to upcoming traffic congestion and direct fans to the best route for reaching the Dome.

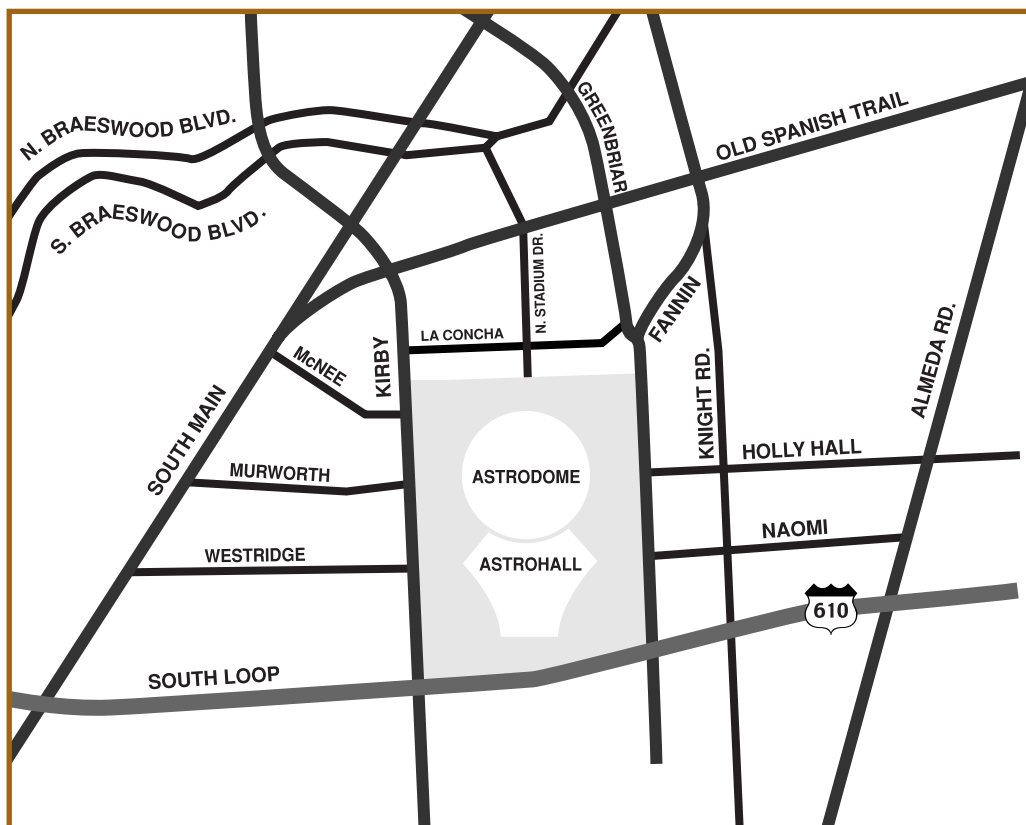
TranStar is even galloping down the information superhighway. A real-time, color-coded speed map accessed through TranStar’s Web site <traffic.tamu.edu> allows one to check out traffic congestion prior to heading out to the Show. EZ-Tag vehicle detectors are used to measure roadway speed, occupancy and flow. Based on these measurements, the colored map changes from green to orange to red in order to alert motorists of trouble spots.

TranStar is continuing to build aggressively on its success by looking to the future and examining transit-management systems that will carry it far into the 21st century. Such systems as remote-controlled traffic signals and instantaneous right-of-way signaling for buses to preempt red lights are in the works. A “smart commuter” system that could go as far as sending an e-mail message to all committee volunteers concerning the best route to the Show is not out of reach. Sandling is looking forward to the “Smart Bus,” which will enable Rodeo

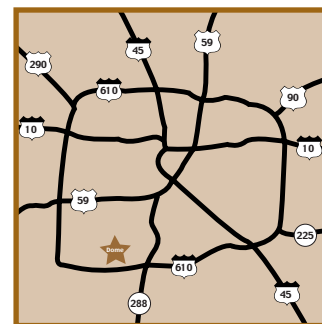
During the Show, METRO Police Sgt. Mike Riggs is one of several officers involved with the operation of TranStar’s satellite command center, which is located next to the Rodeo Express bus tent.



Express to further reduce reaction time by automatically collecting and transmitting current bus data such as location and trip travel time.



It has been said that a sign of a celebrity is that his name is often worth more than his services — but not so with TranStar. TranStar is a star simply because of the services it provides to the Show. TranStar’s traffic-management plans, video cameras and computerized traffic systems have moved rodeo traffic management to what it is today — a star operation designed to carry you along “happy trails” to and from the Show.



ALL FOR ONE, ONE

by Beverly Rosenbaum

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's decision to meld four existing judging contest committees, along with four judging contest events that previously had no assigned committee support, into one Judging Contest Committee is creating an entity whose sum is truly greater than its parts.

Such mergers of committees have occurred in the past at the Show. In the mid-1990s, a task force comprised of lifetime vice presidents reported to the Executive Committee that several committees with similar functions and areas of responsibility should be consolidated. Since that report, one such merger occurred when the Resource Renewal and the Outhouse Gang committees were combined and renamed the Facility Services Committee. In addition, the Agricultural Education Tour Guide Committee was merged into the Directions and Assistance Committee for the 2000 Show, with the sole purpose of assisting guests at the Show.

A larger merger has been initiated for the 2000 Show. In the first year of a two-year plan, the Intercollegiate Meat Judging and the Judging Contest Scoring committees have been joined to form the nucleus of the Judging Contest Committee. For now, the Junior Horse Judging Contest and the Plant I.D. and Wildlife Habitat committees will remain separate, but they will join the Judging Contest Committee for the 2001 Show.

As chairman of the newly created Judging Contest Committee, Joe Schindler will supervise seven vice chairmen and 17 captains. The leaders of this new committee consist of individuals from the four existing judging committees as well as volunteers from several other Show committees. The committee will operate initially with 85 committee members, with the final size expected to be about 200 volunteers.

This new plan will allow four contests — Intercollegiate Wool and Mohair, Intercollegiate Livestock, 4-H and FFA Livestock, and 4-H and FFA Dairy — to have committee sup-

port for the first time. The long-range goal for the new Judging Contest Committee will be to create consistencies among the contests with regard to awards, hospitality and event coordination.

"The mission of the new Judging Contest Committee is to support and promote all eight existing contests equally, provide hospitality and awards to the 4,500 4-H, FFA and intercollegiate contestants, and assist the superintendents of each con-

test," said Show Vice President and officer in charge Ed Schulz.

At the intercollegiate level, more than 50 junior and senior colleges and universities across the United States send students to the Show's contests. The Show works to provide the best possible educational experience for these students. "These contests reward the work ethic and intelligence of the competing students," said John Sykes, assistant general manager, Agricultural Exhibits and Competition Department.

"All of these contests should be viewed as career-oriented, because the practical application of the knowledge gained results in jobs in agribusiness," said Schulz. "Combining the resources of experienced committeemen from the previously separate committees should create synergies and efficiencies greater than possible independently," he said. "These contests should be equally promoted to the public to ensure that Show attendees are aware of the educational aspects of the Show's programs."

Contests that currently have committee support also will benefit from the new committee structure. Diana Miller Seale, third-year chairman of the Plant I.D. and Wildlife Habitat Committee, said, "The experience of veteran committeemen from one of the Show's oldest contests, Plant Identification, will allow the Judging Contest Committee, in coming years, to continue this contest for more than 400 students."

Another contest that will benefit under the direction of the Judging Contest Committee is the Junior Horse Judging



Contestants in some of the Show's judging contests are required to answer questions in writing in addition to presenting oral evaluations.

FOR ALL

Contest. Ava Urbanovsky, third-year chairman of that committee, said, "The Junior Horse Judging Contest can boast of being the largest in the United States. Some of our committeemen have served since the inception of the contest more than 20 years ago."

The Judging Contest Committee also will conduct the Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest. Agricultural colleges from as far away as California, Florida and Pennsylvania, in addition to several in Texas, send meat judging teams to participate in the Show's 21-year-old Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest. "With 200 participants from around the United States, this contest is one of the premier events these students will attend during their college career," said past Chairman Lyle Malechek.

Additional contests now supervised by the Judging Contest Committee include the two livestock judging contests and the dairy judging contest. In both the 4-H and FFA Livestock Judging and Dairy Judging Contests, the 20 high-point individuals are awarded \$1,000 certificates by the Show through the Calf Scramble Committee to purchase registered heifers. These heifers are raised by the winners, who return to the Show to exhibit them the following year and to compete for special awards.

In supporting these eight different contests, the Judging Contest Committee will expand its spectrum of interest so that what committee members have learned in the past in supervising one contest can be applied equally to all the contests. "Our goal is to enhance the educational experience the students receive as participants by making the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's contests the 'Super Bowl' event of the year," said Schindler. With the formation of the Judging Contest Committee, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is now in an unparalleled position to achieve that goal.

The Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest provides a unique hands-on, career-oriented experience for more than 200 participants from colleges throughout the United States.



4-H AND FFA DAIRY JUDGING CONTEST

In this event, participating 4-H and FFA teams have 12 minutes per class to judge six classes of dairy cows and heifers. More than 650 contestants competed in the 1999 contest.

JUNIOR HORSE JUDGING CONTEST

More than 1,300 junior division (ages 8 to 13) and senior division (ages 14 to 19) contestants judge four halter and four performance classes. Fully accredited breed judges make the official placings, and the participants use their knowledge to place the horses as close to the judges' decisions as possible.

INTERCOLLEGIATE LIVESTOCK JUDGING CONTEST

In this contest, junior college and senior college division participants are allowed 15 minutes to judge breeding classes of beef cattle, lambs, swine and horses, in addition to market classes of steers, lambs and barrows. After placing all classes in the contest, intercollegiate contestants appear in front of judges to give oral reasons to substantiate their decisions.

4-H AND FFA LIVESTOCK JUDGING CONTEST

While the 4-H and FFA Livestock Judging Contest is similar to the intercollegiate contest, youth in this contest have 12 minutes per class to evaluate seven classes of animals and one class of questions but do not give oral reasons.

INTERCOLLEGIATE MEAT JUDGING CONTEST

This unique contest is held off-site at the Houston Food Bank in a 40-degree meat cooler, where the participants grade and judge beef, lamb and pork carcasses plus selected cuts of meat. In addition to written reasons, contestants' knowledge of quality and yield grading also is tested.

RANGE AND PASTURE PLANT IDENTIFICATION CONTEST

In the Range and Pasture Plant Identification Contest, junior division, senior division and intercollegiate contestants have a minute or less to write the common name, genus and specific epithet for each of a minimum of 50 plants supplied by the herbarium at Texas A&M University.

WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION CONTEST

Divided into junior and senior divisions, contestants in the Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Contest give independent evaluations of food identification, habitat interpretation and management recommendations. Senior division contestants also complete a rural or urban plan and give oral reasons.

INTERCOLLEGIATE WOOL AND MOHAIR JUDGING CONTEST

In the Intercollegiate Wool and Mohair Judging Contest, junior and senior division contestants judge two classes of breed and four classes of commercial fleeces. A class of 15 fleeces is scored for grade, spinning count, length character, purity and yield. Thirty mohair-grading samples complete the contest. Contestants give oral reasons for their scoring.

Host With the Most

By Wendy Lester-Kyle

Traveling and competing in the professional rodeo circuit takes a toll on the participants. The hours are long, and the work is challenging, to say the least. Rarely does a contestant stay in one city for more than three consecutive days. What defines a successful rodeo to the contestants are the people dedicated to providing assistance to them and to their families.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo scores high marks for the amenities it extends to rodeo participants. According to 1999 Houston All-Around Cowboy Cody Ohl, "Everyone is anxious to get back to Houston. The facilities are great, the people are helpful and you have three chances to win good money. You couldn't ask for a better rodeo. I'll definitely be back this year."

"We at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo know that it is important that contestants be treated as professional athletes," said Dan Gattis, general manager of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. "But even beyond that, we want them to receive a personal, friendly welcome from the moment they arrive, and we want to ensure that their individual needs are addressed."

Contestant services for 2000 will begin before they even arrive in Houston. For the first time, the Show is providing a password protected section on its Web site dedicated solely to contestant information. With just a few keystrokes, the athletes can access directions, schedules and check in procedures, as well as information on awards, bonuses, stalling and parking.

"When the contestants get to the Show, the [Livery Team] committee takes over, and we check them in personally," said Livery Team Committee Chairman Mike Ellis. "We show them

around, and they are given a packet of information about local restaurants, hospitals, churches and just about anything else a contestant might have questions about. We want the contestants to know we are glad that they are here."

In addition to welcoming the participants to the Show, Livery Team Committee volunteers are available 24 hours a day throughout the rodeo to assist contestants with a variety of needs. "One of our major concerns is taking care of the animals. We immediately assign stalls, and we provide a warm-up arena. Organizing 1,300 horses into 175 stalls [over a three-week period] takes a lot of coordination," Ellis said. "We want each contestant to be as comfortable as possible, and taking care of their animals is a significant role of our committee."

As the Show continues to grow, the services that are requested vary, and the biggest challenge is to find resources to fulfill the increasing number of demands. "One thing that stands out about our rodeo is that we provide a little bit of everything," said Steve Woodley, manager - buildings and grounds, Logistics and Service Support Department. "We provide secure parking for the participants' trailers and trucks, as well as even a list of

Assistance with their horses and equipment is just one of many amenities afforded rodeo athletes during the Houston Rodeo.



barber shops where they can get a good haircut. We try to cover a lot of ground with the services we offer. I would say that is unique to our Show.”

Families of the contestants receive complimentary passes to the rodeo on the day the respective contestant is scheduled to compete. The contestant family room is available with refreshments, closed-circuit televisions and plenty of entertainment for the children. “Family plays a big role at the Show,” Ellis said. “We want family members to feel welcome and to enjoy everything Houston has to offer. Spouses and children are encouraged to enjoy the facilities. Some of the families are here for three weeks, and we want them to feel at home every time they come to Houston.”

Show Assistant Manager Lori Renfrow agreed. “It’s a fun place to bring the family. There is something of interest for all ages. The contestant family room is clean and comfortable. With the closed-circuit television, the families can keep up with the action while the kids play. It’s a great meeting place for the people who travel the rodeo circuit to visit and catch up.”

Contestants have exclusive use of a comfort station provided by the Show. This facility has clean restrooms, showers and a dressing room adjacent to the contestants’ stalling and parking area. While a dressing area was provided near the chutes last year, rodeo contestants will have a locker room available in 2000. The new locker room will offer a lounge area and a mini business center. This expansion will offer more room for sports medicine and training capabilities.

Rodeo athletes also have been considered in the move to the new stadium in 2003. “Because we want to be sure that the needs of rodeo athletes are covered in the new stadium, we’ve paid particular attention to contestant facilities in the design process,” said Gattis.

“Not every contestant arrives with a fully equipped trailer,” Ellis explained. “It’s important that we offer showers and dressing areas for the competitors. It shows that we listen to their needs, and we respond. Small-town rodeos might be able to offer their participants dinner every night,” he continued. “Some of the larger shows might not feel obligated to provide a single meal. Our rodeo offers accessible amenities every day that the participants really appreciate.”

Communication from the contestants is the most effective way to initiate new facilities for rodeo participants. “The Show reacts quickly to the concerns of the contestants. We want them to be comfortable and able to perform at their best,” Ellis said. “For example, the warm-up arena was a result of constant requests of the contestants. We listened, and they really appreciated it. It takes a great deal of communicating with the contestants to keep the Show successful. Every year we’re growing, so we must be doing something right.”

Perhaps the evolution of amenities at the Show is most apparent in the organization of the use of covered stalls for the contestants’ animals. “About seven years ago, there was no issuing of the stalls to the competitors. It was strictly on a first-come, first-served basis,” Ellis explained. “We had about 100 stalls, and whoever was lucky enough to get there first had a place for their animals. Now, it’s a completely different process. We have about 175 stalls, and they are assigned to the contestants in an organized rotation. When we see that an issue is a concern to the contestants, we work hard to come up with a workable solution.”

Another popular feature offered by the Show is Cowboy Church. On each of the three Sundays during the Show, a non-denominational service is held for contestants and their families. The service is open to anyone visiting or attending the Show. “Every year I am in Houston, the Cowboy Church gets bigger,” Ohl said. “Quite a few contestants show up, and we all appreciate it.”

Overall, the Show is constantly listening and responding to the contestants to provide the best services and amenities. As the Show continues to grow, so will the needs of the participants. “The participants are professional athletes, and we want to provide them with the facilities and resources they need to compete to the best of their abilities,” Renfrow said. “Everyone benefits when the participants are in top form. We want Houston to be a welcome stop on their tour.”

While most of the preparation takes place in the private dressing room located near the chutes, there are always last-minute adjustments before a competitor takes his turn at the world’s largest indoor rodeo.



2000 ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

2000 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Entertainer Lineup

Friday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m.	Willie Nelson & Merle Haggard
Saturday, Feb. 19, 11 a.m.	Lonestar
Saturday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m.	Jo Dee Messina
Sunday, Feb. 20, 4 p.m.	LeAnn Rimes
Monday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.	The Judds
Tuesday, Feb. 22, 7 p.m.	Alan Jackson
Wednesday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m.	Boyz II Men
Thursday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.	Enrique Iglesias
Friday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m.	Tony Bennett
Saturday, Feb. 26, 11 a.m.	Smokey Robinson
Saturday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m.	Sammy Kershaw & SheDAISY
Sunday, Feb. 27, 4 p.m.	Los Tucanes de Tijuana & A.B. Quintanilla y Los Kumbia Kings
Monday, Feb. 28, 7 p.m.	Clint Black & Steve Wariner
Tuesday, Feb. 29, 7 p.m.	Rod Stewart
Wednesday, March 1, 7 p.m.	Brooks & Dunn
Thursday, March 2, 7 p.m.	Reba McEntire
Friday, March 3, 7 p.m.	Steve Miller Band
Saturday, March 4, 11 a.m.	Robert Earl Keen
Saturday, March 4, 7 p.m.	Kenny Rogers
Sunday, March 5, 4 p.m.	Clay Walker

AGVENTURE Plaza

Astrodome Parking Lot

AGVENTURE Arena

Located in Rodeo Experience

GARY NOEL AND THE DOGGIES OF THE WILD WEST

Strolling entertainment in the Plaza daily

Additional arena performances Saturday & Sunday

RODEO EDUCATION PRESENTATIONS

Weekdays, 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. — each followed by cowboy autograph sessions

Saturdays, 10:30 a.m., 2:30 & 5:30 p.m. / Sundays, 1:30 & 4:30 p.m.

STICK HORSE RODEO

Weekdays, 11:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.

Saturdays, 11:30 a.m., 3:30 & 5:30 p.m. / Sundays, 2:30 & 5:30 p.m.

WESTERN ENTERTAINMENT

Weekdays, 12:30 & 6 p.m.

Saturdays, 12:30 a.m., 4:30 & 6 p.m. / Sundays, 12:30, 3:30 & 6 p.m.

Destination: AGVENTURE

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily

PETTING ZOOS

9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily

PIG RACES

Sunday – Thursday, 10 & 11 a.m., noon, 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6 p.m.

Friday – Saturday, 10 & 11 a.m., noon, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7 p.m.

PONY RIDES

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily

RODEO EXPERIENCE

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily • Live shows daily

SPINNING AND WEAVING DEMONSTRATIONS

Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Hideout

All ages before 7 p.m. daily • 21 and up after 7 p.m. daily

Suzy Haner, America's Hottest Hypnotist

Weekdays, 6 & 8 p.m. / Saturdays, 5 & 8 p.m. / Sundays, 3 & 8 p.m.

Talent Show

Weekdays, 5 p.m. / Saturdays, 6 p.m. (including finals on March 4)

Talent Show Championship Showcase - March 5, 2 p.m.

Native American Coalition Pow Wow

Feb. 20, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Hideout Feature Artists

9:30 p.m. daily

Feb. 18	BR5-49
Feb. 19	Gary Allan
Feb. 20	Eddy Raven
Feb. 21	Jerry Kilgore
Feb. 22	Wild Horses
Feb. 23	Yankee Grey
Feb. 24	Zona Jones and SwingWest
Feb. 25	Trailer Park Troubadours
Feb. 26	Maurice Williams & The Zodiacs
Feb. 27	Hometown Boys
Feb. 28	Rick Trevino
Feb. 29	Kelly Willis
March 1	Reckless Kelly
March 2	Wylie & The Wild West
March 3	Ezra Charles
March 4	Craig Chambers (9 p.m.), Followed by Kyle Hutton
March 5	Sherrie Austin

Auctions & Sales

All auctions and sales are held in the Sales Pavilion

Beefmaster	Fri., Feb. 25, 4 p.m.
Braunvieh	Mon., Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
Charolais	Fri., Feb. 25, 11 a.m.
Commercial Heifers	Sun., Feb. 20, noon
International Braford	Wed., Feb. 23, 6 p.m.

International Brahman	Tues., Feb. 22, 3 p.m.
Junior Commercial Steers	Tues., Feb. 29, 5 p.m.
Junior Market Barrows	Thurs., March 2, noon
Junior Market Lambs	Fri., March 3, noon
Junior Market Poultry	Wed., March 1, noon
Junior Market Steers	Sat., March 4, noon
Limousin	Sat., Feb. 19, 3,30 p.m.
Premier Horse Sale	Sat., Feb. 26, 5 p.m.
Registered Range Bull	Wed., Feb. 23, noon
Romagnola	Sat. Feb. 19, 8 p.m.
Santa Gertrudis	Sat., Feb. 26, 10 a.m.
School Art	Sun., March 5, noon
Simmental / Simbrah	Tues., Feb. 22, 7 p.m.
Texas Longhorn	Sat., Feb. 26, 12:30 p.m.

Carnival

Astrodome Parking Lot

Mondays – Thursdays (except Presidents' Day)	4 p.m. to midnight
Presidents' Day Special - Feb. 21	noon to midnight
Fridays	4 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Saturdays	10 a.m. to 1 a.m.
Sundays (except final Sunday)	10 a.m. to midnight
Final Sunday - March 5	10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Cowboy Church

Sundays, 10 a.m.

Feb. 20 & Feb. 27, Arena Rooms 1 & 2 • March 5, Sales Pavilion

Daily Show Parade

Astrohall South Entrance

Weekdays, 5:30 p.m. - Saturdays & Sundays, 4:30 p.m.

Double E Plaza

Food & Exhibit Booths

Monday - Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. – Saturday, 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Sunday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Special Children's Rodeo

Tuesday, Feb. 22, 7 p.m., Main Arena, Astrohall

Fiesta Charra

Sunday, Feb. 27, Astroarena

Go Texan Weekend

GO TEXAN CONTESTS

Dominoes, horseshoe pitching & washer pitching contests

Saturday, Feb. 12, 9 a.m., Astroarena

Hay Hauling Contest

Saturday, Feb. 12, 9 a.m., Astrodome

Team Penning Contest

Sun., Feb. 13, 10 a.m., Astroarena

Quilt & Photography Contest Winners Display

Feb. 18 - March 5, Western Heritage Gallery, Astrohall

PARADE

Saturday, Feb. 12, 10 a.m., downtown Houston

RODEO RUN

Saturday, Feb. 12, 9:45 a.m., downtown Houston to Astrodome

WORLD'S CHAMPIONSHIP BAR-B-QUE CONTEST

Astrodome Parking Lot

Thursday, Feb. 10, 4 p.m. to midnight

Friday, Feb. 11, noon to midnight

Saturday, Feb. 12, 9 a.m. to midnight

Horse, Donkey & Mule Shows

Most equine events are held in the Astroarena

Appaloosa	Sat., Feb. 26 – Sun., Feb. 27
Arabian & Half Arabian	Thurs., March 2 – Fri., March 3
Cutting Horse	Tues., Feb. 15 – Sun., Feb. 20

Donkey & Mule	Sat., March 4 – Sun., March 5
Miniature Horse	Sat., March 4 – Sun., March 5
NCHA World Finals	Thurs., Feb. 17 – Sun., Feb. 20
Paint	Tues., Feb. 29 – Wed., March 1
Palomino	Sun., Feb. 27 – Mon., Feb. 28
Quarter Horse	Mon., Feb. 21 – Sat., Feb. 26
Top Hands Horse Show	Sat., Feb. 12

Junior Livestock Shows

Most junior livestock events are held in the Astrohall

Agricultural Mechanics Projects	Fri., March 3
Breeding Beef Heifers	Fri., Feb. 25
Breeding Beef Scramble	Fri., Feb. 25
Breeding Rabbits	Tues. & Wed., Feb. 22 & 23
Cavies	Sat., Feb. 19
Dairy Cattle	Sat., March 4
Dairy Goats	Sat., Feb. 19
Dairy Scramble	Sat., March 4
4-H & FFA Dairy Judging Contest	Sat., March 4
4-H & FFA Livestock Judging Contest	Tues., Feb. 29
Gilts	Sat., Feb. 26
Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest	Sat., Feb. 26
Intercollegiate Range and Pasture Plant I.D. Contest	Sat., March 4
Intercollegiate Wool and Mohair Judging Contest	Mon., Feb. 28
Junior Horse Judging Contest	Tues., Feb. 22
Jr. & Sr. Intercollegiate Livestock Judging Contest	Mon., Feb. 28
Market Barrows	Tues. & Wed., Feb. 29 & March 1
Market Goats	Mon., Feb. 28
Market Lambs	Thurs., March 2
Market Poultry	Tues., Feb. 29
Market Steers	Wed. - Fri., March 1 - 3
Range and Pasture Plant I.D. Contest	Sat., March 4
Sheep	Thurs., Feb. 24 - Fri., Feb. 25
State FFA Tractor Technician Contest	Mon., Feb. 28
Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Contest	Fri. & Sat., March 3 & 4

Milking Parlor

Astrohall

Friday, Feb. 18	3 to 8 p.m.
Saturdays	10 a.m. to noon, 3 to 8 p.m.
Sundays	1 to 3:30 p.m., 5:30 to 8 p.m.
Mondays-Fridays (except Feb. 18)	9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 3:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Open Livestock Shows

All open livestock events are held in the Astrohall

Beef Cattle	Fri., Feb. 18 – Sun., March 5
Boer Goats	Mon., Feb. 21
Breeding Poultry	Sat. & Sun., Feb. 26 & 27
Breeding Rabbits	Sat. & Sun., Feb. 19 & 20
Breeding Swine	Fri., Feb. 25
Cavies	Sat. & Sun., Feb. 19 & 20
Dairy Cattle	Sun., March 5
Dairy Goats	Fri., Feb. 18
Llamas	Fri., Feb. 18 - Sun., Feb. 20
Nigerian Dwarf Goats	Fri., Feb. 18
Ostriches	Tues., Feb. 22
Sheep Dog Trials	Sun. & Mon., Feb. 20 & 21
Sheep	Thurs., Feb. 24 - Fri. Feb. 25
Wool to Wardrobe	Thurs., Feb. 24

Rodeo

Astrodome

Feb. 18 - March 5

Weekdays, 7 p.m.

Saturdays, 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Sundays, 4 p.m.

Rodeo Lovers' Special - Weekdays, 5:30 p.m.

School Art Display

Astrohall

Feb. 18 - March 5, Western Heritage Gallery

Dome Sweet Home



By Stephanie Earthman

Often referred to as the “Eighth Wonder of the World,” the Astrodome has served as the home of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo since 1966.

For many years, the Astrodome has been referred to as the “Eighth Wonder of the World,” placing it in the company of such awe-inspiring structures as the Great Pyramids of Egypt. Since 1965, it has been Houston’s sparkling jewel. When it opened, the designers and builders said that no other 20th century building had attracted more interest or fascination from the public. Today, the Dome continues to attract public interest in spite of having two major sports tenants vacate the complex, leaving many wondering about its future.

Well, wonder no more. Home of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo since 1966, the Astrodome is avoiding stagnation by taking on a new management structure. The recently created Harris County Sports and Convention Corporation has taken ownership of the Astrodome complex and will become the Show’s new landlord in the spring of 2000. Precipitated by the departure of the Houston Astros, the local, non-profit governmental entity will manage and develop the complex and will focus on enhancing the facility.

Rising 218 feet against the Texas sky on a once windswept prairie, the Dome made any other stadium seem obsolete the day it opened its doors in April 1965 for the first indoor major league baseball game. Inspired by another great edifice of the world, the Roman Colosseum, former Harris County Judge Roy E. Hofheinz conceived the idea of building a covered facility while touring the Colosseum in the mid-1950s. He was more intrigued by this renowned structure when learning that it had originally had a “velarium,” or awning, which was pulled by slaves and machinery to cover the amphitheater during bad weather.

Working with the inventor of the geodesic dome, Buckminster Fuller, Hofheinz learned that it was possible to cover any size space — as long as you did not run out of money. When Hofheinz later joined a group seeking major league baseball for Houston, his original plans for a covered shopping center formed the basis for pioneering the domed stadium.

Hofheinz worked persistently to make the Dome a reality. He also became president of the Houston Sports Association, a private enterprise that not only owned the Houston Astros franchise but held exclusive lease rights to the Dome. These lease rights gave HSA full rein to operate and to maintain the Dome as well as to operate subsequent buildings added to the Astrodome. Today, Astros owner Drayton McClain serves as president of Astrodome USA (formerly HSA), which will relinquish the lease rights to the Astrodome complex when the Astros move into their new downtown stadium in April 2000.

In a nod to other tenants of the complex, the Harris County Sports and Convention Corporation ends the monopoly held by Astrodome USA and provides a new opportunity for the Show to participate in shaping the future of the Astrodome. “It no longer made sense for the complex to be run by a single tenant [the baseball team],” said Shea Guinn, executive director of HCSCC, who agreed with the county’s effort to provide all tenants a larger voice in facility maintenance and development.

The Harris County Commissioners Court, with each county commissioner appointing one board member, created HCSCC, which has been granted a 15-year lease agreement with a 15-year renewal option. HCSCC will manage all Astrodome assets and position the complex for major improvements.

According to Guinn, HCSCC will subcontract the day-to-day operations of the entire complex through a private management organization. Operating under a new fee-based arrangement will allow HCSCC to realize revenues from the Astrodome operations. “The difference is that HCSCC’s only purpose is to serve the public interest versus a private entity, which rightfully serves its own holdings and interests,” explained Guinn. The profits will fund planned capital projects and ongoing maintenance.

Jim Clepper, Show Executive Committee member who also serves as a director on the HCSCC board, views this as a “clean” business approach. “It makes good sense to have a business entity run the complex without any single interest,” he added. “No dramatic changes are forthcoming as Astrodome USA has done a phenomenal job,” said Clepper, but he noted that HCSCC will reshape the complex as it “puts a lot of thrust into marketing and development to attract new profit-driven venues.”

No doubt the Show has shaped the Astrodome’s footprint since moving there in 1966. Deciding in 1963 against owning and operating its own facility, the Show agreed with HSA to build a Y-shaped building adjacent to the Dome. In addition to funding the almost \$4 million cost of constructing the Astrohall, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo built the \$3 million Astroarena in 1975. Both facilities have since been expanded.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo has constructed and donated to the citizens of Harris County more than 23 acres of buildings with a replacement value in excess of \$115 million — an incredible contribution from a nonprofit organization. With such a large investment in the Show’s home, there is great interest in the changes forthcoming from the new landlord. Some changes are visible today. More than 50 acres west of Kirby Drive have been developed into 3,000 parking spaces, which are connected to the Astrodome complex by elevated pedestrian walkways.

A \$200 million, 1.3-million-square-foot exhibition facility is scheduled for ground-breaking soon after the 2000 Show closes. New office space for the Show will be built in the exhibition facility, which is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2002. With ceiling heights up to 50 feet, the facility

will contain close to 1 million square feet of exhibit and meeting space, which nearly doubles the existing space used by the Show today. Upon completion of the new facility, the existing Astrohall will be demolished and the area used for surface parking. Other near-term capital improvements include a new cooling/heating system and electrical plant. HCSCC also will work with the Show to control certain concession costs.

With plans to build a retractable-roof stadium next to the Dome, Guinn said many alternatives are being studied for keeping the Dome in operation. It could be that Hofheinz’s original plans may resurface — a retail complex is just one of the many ideas the new Dome landlord has in mind for carrying the Eighth Wonder of the World into the next century. “A long-term vision includes plans to transform the Dome complex into a destination in and of itself,” added Guinn.

It will be exciting to watch HCSCC breathe new life into the Dome — once dubbed the “world’s greatest attraction” — and keep the Astrodome complex in its rightful place as one of the great wonders of the 20th century.

The newly created Harris County Sports and Convention Corporation will soon take over as the landlord of the entire Astrodome complex, which will include a new exhibition facility and a new football/rodeo stadium in addition to future improvements to the Dome.



New "Kids" on the Block

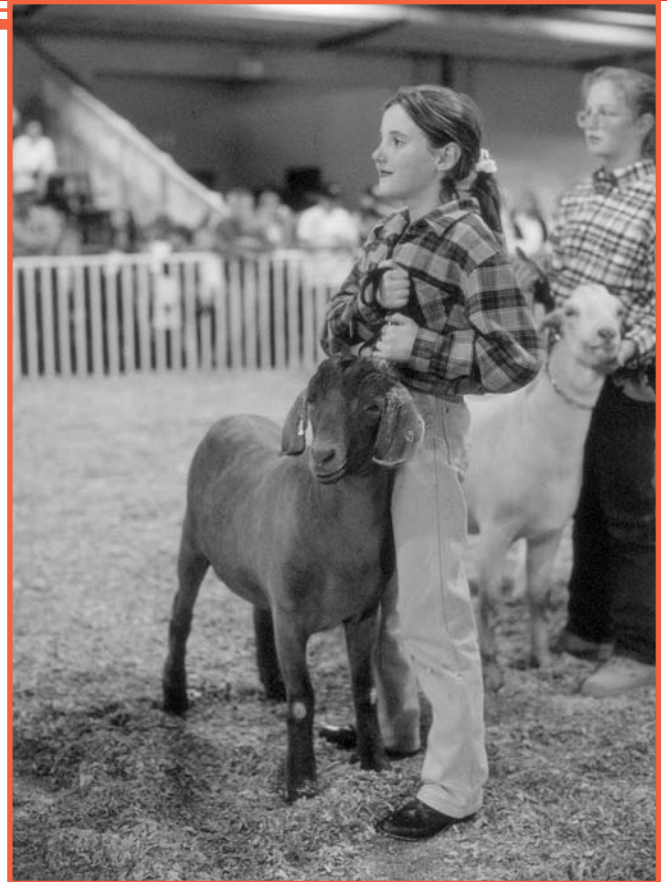
By Gordon B. Richardson II

What's the hottest thing going in show animals today? Bet you wouldn't have guessed meat goats. Meat goat popularity has skyrocketed in the past few years, and it's evident at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Not only are more Texas farmers and ranchers adding meat goat production to their repertoire, but the number of youngsters who choose meat goats as 4-H or FFA projects has grown at an astounding rate. Last year, the Williamson County Meat Goat Show was standing room only and had more than 500 goats tagged for the show. That was a 26 percent increase from the previous year. Not to be outdone, the 1999 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's Junior Market Goat Show set a record with more than 600 goats in the competition.

So why all the excitement? It can be traced directly to the increase in popularity over the past few years of meat goats. Meat goats have increased in popularity for several reasons. Goats are tough animals capable of surviving on a diet that is not as particular as that of other sources of milk and meat, such as cattle. For this reason, goats were a common sight on European explorers' ships. These explorers brought the first goats to Texas in the early 1540s. Goats thrived in Texas, because they could adapt to the seemingly harsh environment. These feral goats became known as "Spanish goats" or "brush goats."

"Goats, when compared to other livestock, are low maintenance," says Kevin Huff, a central Texas goat rancher. "Not only are they easy to maintain, but they are very good for our land management as well. They eat cedar saplings and weeds and a lot of unwanted brush," said Huff.

Traditionally, in the United States, goats have not been considered as a meat source, but the commercial market for meat goats has grown at a steady pace in recent years. The market has experienced a cultural shift, making goat meat more popular. Across the country, and especially in the Southwest, there is a substantial demand for goat meat.



The popularity of meat goats has soared tremendously in the past few years. As a result, the number of 4-H and FFA goat projects has grown at an astonishing rate.

Management tactics of goat herd owners have changed to increase the size and meat characteristics of their animals. Through natural selection, Spanish goats had become small and lean. But goat raisers wanted to turn their herds into better meat producers. In the mid-1990s, the Boer goat from South Africa was introduced to Texas, which, when bred with the established Spanish goat, produced a larger, meatier animal. Today, this Spanish/Boer crossbreed is the predominant meat goat in Texas.

The livestock shows in Texas followed this meat-producing

trend, with more and more shows offering a meat goat competition. Now, meat goat shows are part of every major show in the state, and they are prominent in county shows in West Texas. “I have about 60 to 80 students each year with meat goat projects,” said Parks Tucker, the agricultural science teacher at San Angelo’s Lakeview High School. Tucker stated that a “level playing field” and a lower cost are some of the reasons that exhibitors choose to raise meat goats. “A 9-year-old has as good a chance to win with his goat as a 17-year-old,” said Tucker. “It is not as physically demanding as say, showing a lamb. It also seems like there is an ample supply of quality show goats, so that everyone has a shot at placing in a show.” Tucker said that his school expects to send about 10 goats to Houston this year.

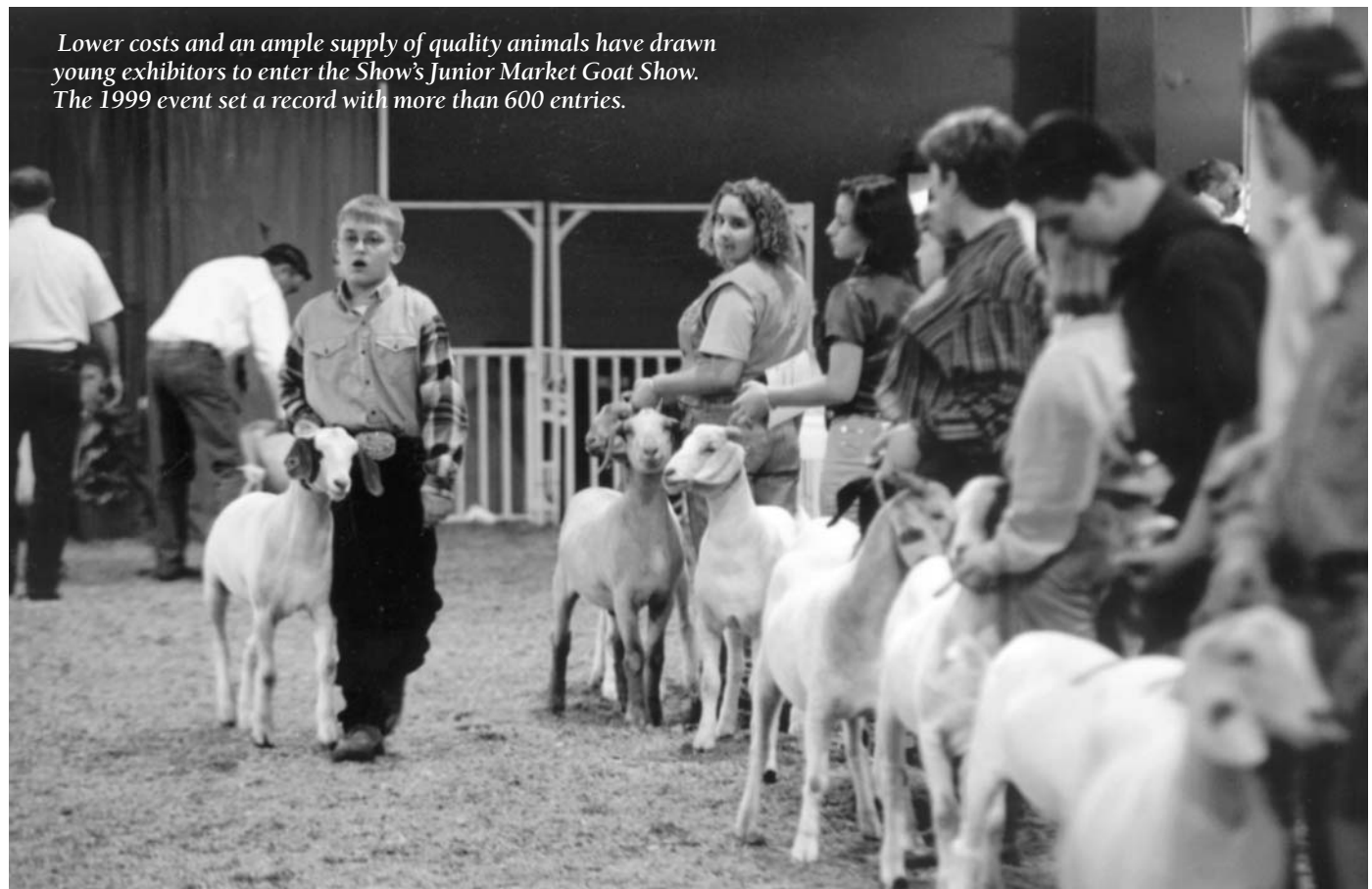
A meat goat project is also desirable because of the low cost of acquiring and raising the animal. Show goats are not as pricey as show-quality lambs or hogs might be. Allison Davis, a Midland County Extension Agent, believes that price and labor are big factors in the recent boom in meat goat projects in her county. “We have seen the goats replace a percentage of our lamb projects this year,” said Davis. “The students are attracted by the lower cost and the relative ease of the project, compared to lambs. Meat goats are definitely the hot project.”

The rise in popularity of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo meat goat show demanded some changes. In 1999, the Wether Goat Show was changed to the Junior Market Goat

Show, and the event went from an open show to a junior show. Did that slow the growth? Not quite — the number of goats almost doubled. “The participation in the Junior Market Goat Show has grown exponentially over the past three years,” said John Sykes, assistant general manager, Agricultural Exhibits and Competition Department. “One of our biggest problems is finding room for all of them.”

The Show allows each exhibitor to bring up to two goats for the show. It also accommodates students who want to bring goats and a lamb. The Junior Market Goat Show is practically a one-day affair. The goats arrive on a Sunday night and are weighed and inspected. The next morning they show, and they leave that afternoon. Meanwhile, the market lambs are in Rosenberg, Texas, at the sift. Exhibitors with both goats and a lamb are able to drop their lambs in Rosenberg, show their goats on Monday morning, and get back to handle their lambs at the sift. “Sometimes that requires a little help from their ag teacher or a friend, but it works out pretty good,” said Tucker.

The Show is not sure what changes it will have to make to accommodate future Junior Market Goat Shows. Possibly, exhibitors will be restricted to one goat each, or a sift, similar to the lamb sift, might be held. One thing is certain: the staggering growth of the meat goat’s popularity is reshaping the landscape of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo as well as other livestock shows in Texas.



Lower costs and an ample supply of quality animals have drawn young exhibitors to enter the Show's Junior Market Goat Show. The 1999 event set a record with more than 600 entries.

Buckle Up!



By Melissa Manning

Whether you are a rodeo champion, a Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo committee volunteer or even a drug-store cowboy, chances are you own a Western belt and buckle. Despite the cowboy's reputation as a rugged individualist, one thing is understood in the West — no self-respecting cowboy or cowgirl is considered dressed until he or she has laced a Western belt through the loops on his or her jeans.

“There are three things a cowboy wears that he is most proud of — his hat, his buckle and his boots,” said Robert Brandes, a historian and Western buckle collector. Brandes began collecting buckles more than 10 years ago when he realized Western buckle making was an important American art form that needed to be preserved.

According to Brandes, the Western buckle is predominantly a 20th-century phenomenon. Prior to 1900, he said, most common buckles resembled oversized shoe buckles or military styles. Western buckles today range from the simple silver buckle with few adornments to the belly-bustin', trophy variety that is replete with sterling silver, multicolored gold floral etchings, and diamonds or other precious stones.

Hi ho, Silver, mi amigo!

It is believed the vaquero, or Mexican cowboy, first introduced fine silver spurs, tack and buckles to the cowboys of the untamed American West, and perhaps to the Texas Rangers. Prior to 1935, Texas Rangers did not carry badges, nor did the members of this elite law enforcement unit have uniforms. However, they have always been distinguished by their impeccable dress. It may have been their desire to wear fine Mexican

silver buckles with a wider belt that led to the development of the popular ranger belt and buckle. A ranger buckle set includes the buckle, one or two keeper loops and a matching tip.

Trophy buckles

In the early 1900s, a few rodeos began awarding belt buckles as trophies. In the 1920s, Hollywood helped spur interest in fancy sterling silver and gold buckle sets, and during the 1930s, an increasing number of rodeos began awarding ornate trophy buckles.

While it is uncertain which year the Show first awarded trophy buckles to event champions, Harry Tompkins, a world-champion bull rider and early competitor at the Houston Fat Stock Show, remembers buckles being presented by the Show in 1949. Today, the Show awards a total of nine event champion buckles for all seven rodeo events (one buckle is awarded to each team roping champion, and one is presented to the All-Around Cowboy).

Buckles for the rest of us

In 1980, Show management commissioned Award Design Medals of Oklahoma to produce the Show's first official commemorative buckle. Bubba Murphy, a local Award Design Medals' representative, said a Show buckle gives committee volunteers and fans a chance to express their pride in being associated with such an exciting event. The Show's first life-member buckle was produced in 1981 and was an instant hit, Murphy said. In 1982, the Show sold a special buckle in honor

of its 50th anniversary. “That was the most successful buckle we’ve ever had — we sold 20,000 of those buckles,” said Dan Gattis, general manager of the Show.

Murphy agreed, “The 1982 buckle is very collectible. We also expect folks to be extremely excited about the 2000 Show buckle, so we’ll see how they compare.”

Selecting a buckle

When shopping for a buckle, self-taught Houston silversmith Max Lang said to consider how you will wear the belt and how often. Do you prefer a large, ornate Western-style buckle with more silver than a Nevada mine, or do you prefer a more subdued, contemporary-style buckle?

If you have a limited budget or expect to wear a buckle set infrequently, you may be satisfied with a mass-produced buckle that has an electroplated finish. Used by larger manufacturers, the electroplating technique begins with a brass or nickel center that is engraved and then covered by a thin layer of silver and often, gold floral etchings.

Die-struck buckles are made when a craftsman places a sheet of silver or other metal on an engraved steel die. This technique enables the craftsman to strike hundreds of buckles from a single, engraved mold. Wax-cast buckles are made from wax molds that have been carved with an image.

Custom buckles

To create a custom buckle, an artist begins with a sheet of

sterling (92.5 percent pure) silver or other precious metal, which is then cut to form the buckle’s initial shape. To add gold to the design, the artist solders pieces of hand-sawed gold onto the silver plate. The artist may add precious stones to the buckle, and will often engrave, by hand, other designs into the silver. Then, the buckle is polished several times before it is considered complete.

When searching for a handmade buckle, Lang advised selecting a sterling buckle made of heavy gauge silver. A hand-engraved piece is also more desirable than a buckle engraved by machine. A craftsman tools each buckle by hand, and the engraving work showcases their talent. This unique artistry, said Brandes, is what makes a buckle a valuable work of art — not the precious metal used to create it.

Caring for your buckle

In general, you can expect your silver buckle to tarnish over time. Some buckles are designed so the tarnish, called patina, actually enhances the design. The experts suggest using a silver-polish cloth to shine your buckle. If you wish to remove all patina, a dip-polish can be used on sterling buckles but will likely remove the thin finish from electroplated pieces.

“Handmade, solid-sterling buckles are designed to last a lifetime,” said Lang. “They are often passed down to family members as prized heirlooms. If you plan to wear a buckle frequently, I recommend you consider a quality piece that is built to last.”



Bubba Murphy displays a sample of the initial artwork that eventually led to the production of a commemorative badge buckle.



Events and Functions

By Nan McCreary



Committee members Jerry Bench, Kim Schillaci and Leon Whiting review a checklist for one of the hundreds of functions during the Show that are coordinated by the Events and Functions Committee.

Many people are familiar with the special events that go on in the Astrohall and Astroarena during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. But, few people realize all of the work that's involved in making sure these events go smoothly. "That's the responsibility of the Events and Functions Committee," said Show Vice President and officer in charge Jerry Hickman. "No one hears about these people, and no one sees them, but they do a fantastic job."

The committee is a small, but mighty, force. Every year, its 25 members work behind the scenes to coordinate more than 100 events held during the Show. The job may be as simple as setting up tables and chairs for a committee meeting or as complicated as supervising a major affair like the Junior Market Steer Auction breakfast. But whatever the event is, this committee is there to help ensure its success.

In 1989, the Show began utilizing the new space made available by the expansion of the Astroarena, and the number of events mushroomed. "With so many activities and so many people involved, we needed to have some way to make it all come together," said Events and Functions Committee Chairman Terry Kalhoefer. Two years later, in 1991, the Events and Functions Committee was founded to provide the needed volunteers to support the Show's special events office.

The committee's function begins in January, when it receives the "all-activities schedule" from the special events office. The committee works closely with that department and with any committees involved in order to learn specific requirements for each event. On the day of a function, committee members arrive early for the set up. "We have a diagram of the room showing where everything is supposed to be," explained Kalhoefer. "For major events, we'll coordinate with catering, decorating, the Corral Clubs, audiovisual technicians and

electrical contractors. Basically, our job is to make sure the room is set up according to plan."

With this kind of attention, the Show's special events are inevitably a huge success. But making that happen isn't always easy. Event times and locations can change at a moment's notice, so the committee receives daily updates and adapts its schedule accordingly. "We have to be a very flexible committee," said Kalhoefer. On some days, several events may be scheduled simultaneously. And, on any given day, several events may be scheduled in the same room. "We do a lot of quick turnaround," said Kalhoefer. "Whatever is happening, we arrive on the scene to set up, stay afterwards to tear it down, then start the process all over again."

As the Show has grown, so has the work of the Events and Functions Committee. Today, it works with the Show's special events office to oversee all of the pre-sale breakfasts, receptions, and banquets that honor out-of-town dignitaries. In addition, the committee sets up the ballroom where participants register for the rodeo grand entry.

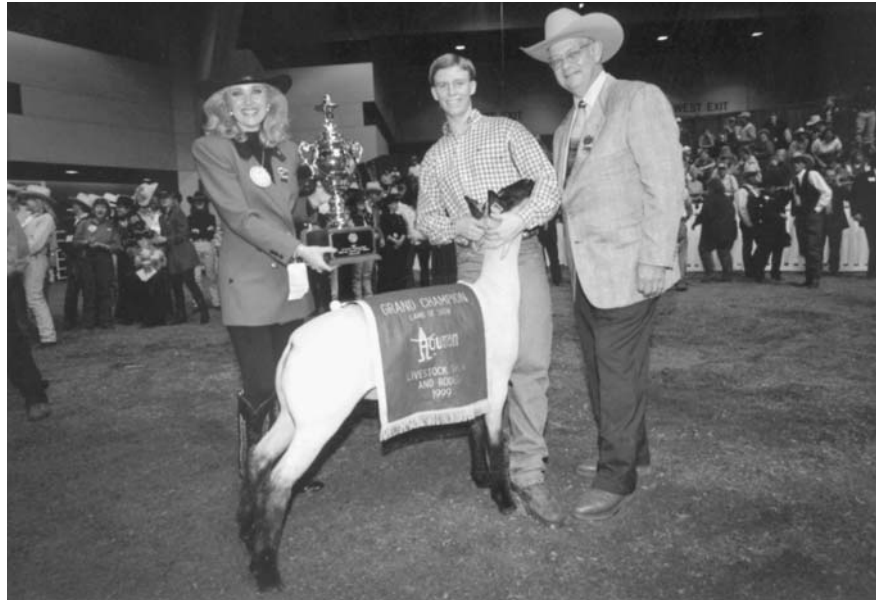
The committee works from the time the lights go on at the Show until the lights go off. The committee's chairman, its three captains and its two vice chairmen each put in 80 to 100 hours during each Show. Other committee members may work 40 to 60 hours. "It's a hectic job, but it has a lot of rewards," said Kalhoefer. "People come to the Show from all over the world, and we want to make it as pleasurable for them as possible."

Members of the Events and Functions Committee are truly among the unsung heroes of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. As the saying goes, "the show must go on." And thanks to this committee, a big part of the Show does go on, and it always goes on smoothly.



Lamb Auction

By Gina R. Steere



Committee Chairman Janet Heard and then-officer in charge Dr. Dan Lehane surround Grand Champion exhibitor Tyson Price, whose lamb set a world-record price of \$160,000 at the 1999 Show.

The history of the Junior Market Lamb Auction dates back to 1938, when the first Grand Champion Lamb was sold to a local grocery store for \$6.50 a pound. Although times have changed since then, the Lamb Auction Committee is still making history.

The Lamb Auction Committee was officially formed in 1955 to guarantee the sale of lambs entered by youth exhibitors and to ensure a fair-market value for the animals. The first committee totaled about 20 members and consisted only of men. Although women didn't join the committee until 1987, their presence on the committee has grown considerably since then. Another first for women occurred for the 1999 Show when Janet Heard became the first woman chairman in the committee's history.

Currently, the committee's mission is to presell all lambs at a preset guaranteed premium price, which is considerably higher than the current market price on the day of the sale. Other main functions include soliciting contributions from donors, hosting the buyers' appreciation party, assisting in the sift and the judging, and conducting the auction reception party and the auction itself.

Just as the mission and composition of the committee have changed and expanded, so too has its size. The committee presently has more than 110 members. Today, the committee assists not only the students bringing lambs to the judging and to the auction, but the students' families as well. Heard said, "It is a total family effort to show the lambs. Showing promotes family; that's one of the things I love about working on this committee."

The judging begins one week before the auction at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds in Rosenberg, Texas. Around 1,400 lambs are brought to the fairgrounds, and a judge sifts those lambs down to the best 324, which get to move on to Houston and advance to the auction.

Exhibitors whose lambs are selected for the Junior Market Lamb Auction are guaranteed a minimum bid price of \$1,000 for their lambs. The Grand Champion Lamb exhibitor is guaranteed \$25,000, and the Reserve Grand Champion Lamb exhibitor receives \$17,500.

Show Vice President and officer in charge Ray Hinsley stated, "This committee does an outstanding job. My responsibility as officer in charge is to provide support to the chairman and do anything necessary to help the committee be successful. I help in any way I can, which isn't often because Janet and her management team are very organized and goal oriented."

Although many aspects of the committee have changed through the years, there has been one constant — the dedication of the committee volunteers. Heard cites the dedication of the committee members as the reason for its success. "Everything we do is truly an entire committee effort. We have so many dedicated people. Some individuals have been on this committee for many years," said Heard.

The dedication and hard work have paid off. In 1999, the Junior Market Lamb Auction made history, when it broke two world records. The Grand Champion Lamb sold for \$160,000, which topped the previous record of \$140,000 set in 1998. The Reserve Grand Champion Lamb sold for \$104,000, which broke the former record of \$100,000.

Don't expect the Lamb Auction Committee to rest on its accomplishments. The committee hopes the 2000 auction will be even more successful than last year's record-setting year. With the dedicated individuals who are on this committee, those hopes should become reality.

Third-Year Committee Chairmen

P R O F I L E S

By Teresa Ehrman

Every volunteer who wears the gold badge contributes to the overall success of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Of the more than 12,000 volunteers, a distinguished group of 91 individuals holds the position of committee chairman. This continuing series features those leaders who are serving their third and final year as chairmen of their respective committees.

Kenneth Bellew — Donkey and Mule



Family tradition is very much a part of both Kenneth Bellew's professional and volunteer activities. His son, Colby, also volunteers on the Donkey and Mule Committee, and his father, Ray, has enjoyed serving on two Show committees for many years. Kenneth has been a lifetime member of the Show for more than 16 years.

After joining the Donkey and Mule Committee in 1985, he served as a team captain and vice chairman. He is self-employed with Ray Bellew & Sons, Inc.

Bill Booher — Magazine



Bill Booher's involvement with the Show has been vast and varied since he became a lifetime member in 1977 and joined the Corral Club Committee. In addition to serving as vice chairman and a member of the Magazine Committee's editorial board, he served as a vice chairman on both the Calf Scramble and

World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest committees. Bill has been a member of the Show's board of directors since 1989 and is currently vice president of the "High Bidders" auction-buying group.

Patricia A. Cook — Graphics & Signage



This year, Patricia A. Cook celebrates a decade of volunteer service with the Show. A member of the Graphics and Signage Committee since 1995, she also served as a vice chairman for the group. Her daughter, Debbie, also enjoys working with her mom on the committee. Patricia is a lifetime member of the Show as well as a

member of several junior market auction-buying groups. She is a designer with KPMG.

Chuck Davis — Corral Club - Division I



Since 1984, Chuck Davis has been involved in many areas of the Show. In addition to his service on the Corral Club Committee for more than 16 years, he also volunteers on the Steer Auction and Palomino Horse Show committees and is a lifetime member of the Show. Chuck is also a member of the "High Bidders" auction-buying group and is an avid supporter of all the junior market auctions. He is president of All Texas Fence.

Karl J. Russell — Agricultural Mechanics



A lifetime member of the Show for more than 27 years, Karl Russell has been actively involved on several committees. He served on the Corral Club-At Large Committee for six years and spread the Show's message throughout Texas as an Area Go Texan Committee volunteer. He has been a member of the Agricultural

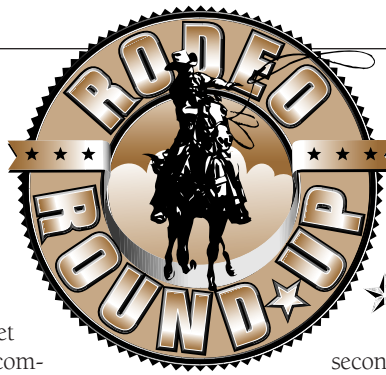
Mechanics Committee since 1982. His wife, Charlotte, serves on the Ladies' Go Texan Committee. He is an attorney and president of Russell Brothers Cattle Company.

Greg Willbanks — Poultry Auction



For 10 years, Greg Willbanks has been taking care of the Show's top-notch chickens and turkeys as a member of the Poultry Auction Committee. After joining the committee in 1990, Greg served as both a captain and vice chairman for the group. He also was honored with the committee's "Top Sales" award in

1995 and was elected to the Show's board of directors in 1999. He has been a member of the Show since 1988 and is owner of Willbanks & Associates, Inc.



★ Pay-Per-View Pays Off

What do Woodstock '99, Lilith Fair, Backstreet Boys, Spice Girls and RODEOHOUSTON™ have in common? They all produced top 10 grossing pay-per-view concerts. According to a study by Viewer's Choice, the nation's leading pay-per-view network, RODEOHOUSTON was listed in *Broadcasting & Cable* for occupying the ninth and 10th slots with two concerts broadcast in 1997.

Rodeo fans across the country can enjoy the 2000 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo through two pay-per-view events. On **March 3 at 7 p.m.**, the Rodeo semifinals will give viewers a double dose of rodeo with events from the first two go-rounds. An exciting live broadcast of the Houston Rodeo finals will be available **March 5 at 4 p.m.**

★ Dance the Night Away

Start the Show with a bang by kicking up your heels at the Show **Membership Dance, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.**, in the Astrohall. Exclusively for members and their guests, this evening of fun will feature entertainment by country music duo Montgomery Gentry.



★ Express Delivery

Don't forget that the METRO Rodeo Express will be available at six locations for the 2000 Show: METRO North Shepherd Park and Ride lot; Delmar Stadium; Aramco Building Parking at 9009 West Loop S.; METRO West Loop Park and Ride lot; Gulfgate Mall; and the newly added METRO Monroe Park and Ride lot. As an added bonus, the shuttles will run Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 10-12, during the World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest.

Again this year, the Aramco lot will serve as the committee volunteer park and ride location. With a 2000 committee parking sticker or hang tag on their vehicles, volunteers can take advantage of a designated pick-up point and extended shuttle hours. From 3:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 2 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday, committee members and their guests arriving in the same vehicle can utilize this service free of charge.

★ Take That Ticket Back

Don't forget that unused Rodeo tickets can be returned as a charitable contribution for those unable to use their tickets. There are three ways to turn back tickets:

Turn back tickets in person at the Show ticket office and receive a charitable donation receipt. **Turn back tickets by phone.** Call 713.791.9000, ext. 523. Show operators will ask a series of questions, including the name on the ticket, the seat location and a unique ticket order number found on the ticket. **Turn back tickets by fax.** Fax a copy of the tickets to 713.794.9539.

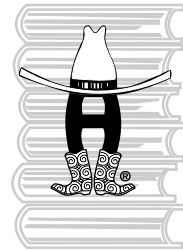
Receipts for tickets turned back by phone or fax will be mailed to the original purchaser after the Show. *When turning back tickets by phone or fax, the tickets must be secured to ensure that the tickets cannot be innocently used.*

★ RITE on Target

Even the most "at-risk" kindergarten through second grade students can learn to read, and read well, according to the current evaluation of the Rodeo Institute for Teacher Excellence. RITE is a three-year pilot-program instituted by the Show in 1997 to address the pervasive problem of failure to learn among public school elementary students.

The just-released report on the program's second year by an evaluation team from the Center for Academic and Reading Skills at the University of Texas Health Science Center concludes that all students in the RITE program's 16 schools are performing beyond or equally to those children in other active reading programs within HISD. However, those students who began the RITE program in kindergarten showed the most dramatic gains in literacy development by the end of first grade.

Now in its third year, the RITE program has grown from six schools and 77 classrooms to 16 schools and 182 classrooms. The RITE board of directors is now planning the future of this innovative program beyond the pilot stage.



★ Atta Boys

- Show General Manager Dan Gattis was elected president of the **International Association of Fairs and Expositions** during the 109th IAFE Convention in Las Vegas. Gattis joined the Show staff in 1976 and was named general manager in 1984.
- In 1999, for the eighth time in the last nine years, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was named the **Indoor Rodeo Committee of the Year** by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association.
- The Show has a long history of recognizing FFA students for excellence. But the tables were turned at the National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky., when Mike Nathanson, educational programs co-coordinator, Logistics and Service Support Department, was presented an **FFA Honorary American Farmer Degree**.



★ Joining the Team

Five new additions have joined the Show staff in recent months. In the Agricultural Exhibits and Competition Department, **Brande Miller** takes on the task of Director – Auctions & Sales, and **Stacy Scott** lends her expertise as Director – Horse Show. The Operations Department has two new staff members with the addition of **Julie Ballweg** as Special Attractions Coordinator and **Tiffany Collins** as Administrative Assistant. The newest member of the team in the Logistics and Service Support Department is **Leticia Rodriguez**, who joins the staff as Ticket Office Coordinator.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5				1	2	3	4							1
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
27	28	29					26	27	28	29	30	31		23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

FEBRUARY

4 Grimes County Go Texan Events
 4 Humble/Kingwood Annual Dance
 5 Chambers County Kick-off Dance and Auction
 5 Conroe/Willis Parade
 5 Lamar/Needville Boot Scootin' Ball
 5 Robertson County Dance
 5 Tomball/Magnolia/Montgomery Dance
 8 NASA/Clear Creek/Friendswood Mission Millennium Trail Ride Dinner & Dance
 9 Membership Dance
 10-12 World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest
 12 Downtown Parade and Rodeo Run; Go Texan Hay Hauling, Dominoes, Horseshoe and Washer Pitching Contests.
 12 Houston General Go Texan Downtown Breakfast
 13 Go Texan Team Penning Contest
 15 Opening of Horse Show
 18 Opening of Livestock Show and Carnival; Rodeo Lovers' Early Bird Special at 5:30 p.m.; First Rodeo Performance at 7 p.m.
 18-27 International Days

19 Rodeo Performances at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.
 20 Rodeo Performance at 4 p.m.
 21 Chambers County Bus Trip, Crosby/Huffman Bus Trip
 21-25 Rodeo Lovers' Early Bird Special at 5:30 p.m.; Rodeo Performances at 7 p.m.
 22 Conroe/Willis Bus Trip, New Caney/Splendora Bus Trip
 23-25 International Livestock Congress
 23 Katy Bus Trip
 24 Baytown/Highlands Bus Trip
 26 Rodeo Performances at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.
 27 Rodeo Performance at 4 p.m.
 28-29 Rodeo Lovers' Early Bird Special at 5:30 p.m.; Rodeo Performances at 7 p.m.
 28 Deer Park Bus Trip, La Porte Bus Trip, Pasadena Bus Trip
 29 Liberty County Bus Trip, Waller County Bus Trip

MARCH

1 Fort Bend/Stafford Bus Trip
 1-3 Rodeo Lovers' Early Bird Special at 5:30 p.m.; Rodeo Performances at 7 p.m.
 2 Brazoria/Southwest Bus Trip
 3 NASA/Clear Creek/Friendswood Bus Trip
 4 Matagorda County Go Texan Contests
 4 Rodeo Performances at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.
 5 Rodeo Performance at 4 p.m.
 11 Brazos County Go Texan Day
 18 Live Oak County Bar-B-Que Cook-off
 28-31 Henderson County Go Texan Events

APRIL

21-24 Show offices closed



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