

HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO™

Spring 2009



TV MAGAZINE

2009 Star Entertainer Lineup
Bucking Stars of the Rodeo
Feel the Latin Beat



2009 RODEOHOUSTON™ Entertainers .. 10

Pick your favorite entertainers and get your tickets early.

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The Cover ... *The 2009 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ is guaranteed to be another non-stop, action-packed Show with star entertainers.*

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ENTERTAINMENT



**WESTERN
HERITAGE**



A Message From the Chairman

It's that time again — dust off your cowboy boots and spruce up your hat because the 2009 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ is gearing up for another great year.

The 2009 Show will highlight its volunteers and will be "Celebrating Commitment to Community." From helping to recover from Hurricane Ike, to showing their Western heritage and Texas spirit in the community year-round, the 21,000 Show volunteers are proud to be a part of the "Show With a Heart."

The 2009 Show will feature some new excitement as well as the old favorites. Changes in Reliant Stadium include renovations to the rotating stage that allow entertainers to get closer to the audience, the new mutton bustin' event which will debut between the rodeo action and the concert, and an increase in the total Rodeo purse to more than \$1.4 million.

Changes can be seen around the grounds, as well. From the new Fun on the Farm area in Kids Country to the big tent that now houses The Hideout, there is fun for the whole family. Show volunteers and staff work to make each Show bigger and better than the previous year, never forgetting the ultimate goal — our commitment to the youth of Texas.

Hats off to our volunteer force; the Show has given more than \$235 million to Texas young people and supported agricultural innovation and research, and is still one of the most affordable and rewarding outings for any family.

Have a good time at the Show, and let's RODEOHOUSTON™!

Sincerely,

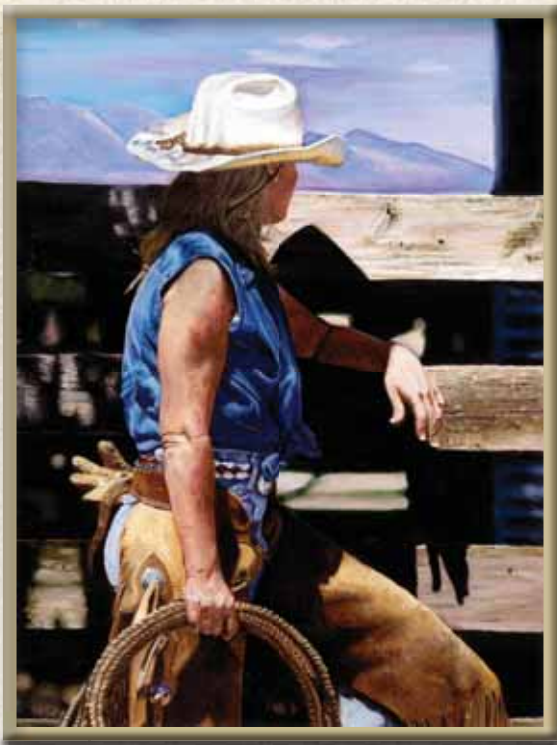
Butch Robinson



Talented Brush Strokes

By Stephanie Earthman Baird

An unnamed cowgirl leans against a wooden fence staring at the colorful mountain range in the distance. She is outfitted in chaps, straw hat and work gloves. Her muscle-toned arms look ready and able to use the rope looped through her right hand. The cowgirl appears to be living her dream. However, it was Maude Revett's dream that was being lived at the 2008 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ School Art Auction. Revett's oil painting, titled "Living My Dream," took the Reserve Grand Champion prize in the Show's School Art competition.



"Living My Dream," Maude Revett

"She appears so goal-oriented and able to achieve her dream," said Revett of the cowgirl she brushed to life. "She leans with satisfaction from living her dream, and this was my dream — to be here — and I made it," she shouted with excitement.

Now in its 45th year, the Show's School Art Program has swelled to more than 300,000 entries each year. The program generates enthusiasm among the students, teachers and parents alike — especially since the inception of the School Art Auction 15 years ago, in 1995.

The contest impacts the lives of many young, budding artists each year, allowing them to showcase their art on a grand stage. Revett got to live her dream and present her

canvas at the 2008 School Art Auction. Bouncing across the stage in her lace-trimmed skirt and cowgirl boots, her enthusiasm helped raise the selling price to a Show record for a Reserve Grand Champion work of art of \$150,000.

The Richmond, Texas, high school senior said participation in the Show has made her believe she could do anything. She plans to save her prize money for college, where she would like to study 3-D animation and painting.

Revett is just one inspirational story from the School Art Auction. She is one of hundreds of students who have benefited from the generosity of the auction buyers.

Jennifer Light, 2008 Grand Champion artist, plans to study at the Maryland Institute College of Art, a top visual arts college in the United States. "I finally made a mark for myself in art and now have a reputation," said Light. "I really appreciate the opportunity to get into a nice school."

In her painting titled "Packing Up," Light, a Spring I.S.D. student, said she was trying to capture a nostalgic feeling of an exhausted cowboy at the end of a hard day. "After being very competitive in my first few years, I decided on a more mellow approach and to go with the flow this year," said Light. It worked. Her colorful work of art



"Packing Up," Jennifer Light

fetches the Show's record bid of \$185,000, contributing not only to her own college education but to the Show's Educational Fund, supporting many other students.

When asked if her winning directly had influenced her choice of college, she said, "Yes, I don't think I will study Western art, but I want to capture other real-life situations through illustration and animation."

Also in 2008, Kevin Foiles, a Cinco Ranch High School senior, participated in the auction for the second year. He will be heading to college with confidence and a solid sense of accomplishment.

"It is cool to see that I can sell something. It certainly makes me think about studying art a lot more than I would have otherwise," Foiles said. He is not yet sure if he will major in art.

Past winners also have been influenced directly by their participation in the School Art Auction. Derek Kocich not only won Grand Champion in 2005 for his colored pencil drawing "Chaps and Charm," but he returned to capture the same high honor in 2006. "It was too good to be true," said Kocich. "When I was a freshman in high school, I challenged myself to do this and try to win once, but instead I won twice, so it was very, very gratifying."



"A Walk With Windsor," Derek Kocich

His monochromatic drawing in 2006, "A Walk With Windsor," led him not only to his second Grand Champion prize, but walked him right into studying film and television at the University of North Texas. "Even though my artistic talent does not coincide too much with my film and television major, it taught me the value of hard work and goal setting, which definitely influenced my future," said Kocich. "It also taught me that I needed to be studying something creative. I encourage all students to take advantage of the opportunity."

Inspired by a self-imagined Western scene or by photo examples presented by an art teacher, the collection of

winners presented each year in the Show's Hayloft Gallery demonstrates an array of talent in various media at all ages. The works are awe-inspiring and downright fun to view. The winners on display are selected from entries of pre-K through 12th-grade students.

Shay Brunson still remembers the excitement he experienced while working on his 2002 patriotic painting, "A Cowboy's Prayer — September 11th." "I knew my piece was something special. The composition was inspiring and heartfelt," he said. "It represented the feelings of both me and my family at the time. It still reflects my sentiments for the victims of Sept. 11, 2001, and my devotion to God."



"A Cowboy's Prayer – September 11th," Shay Brunson

While art was not Brunson's main course of study at Brigham Young University, he still attributes his win in the School Art Program as an influencing factor on his education. "I guess it was evidence of the old adage, if you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything, and I did," he said. "Although I was an economics major, I knew I had a passion for art and wanted to take some art-related classes in college."

While most students participating in a livestock show brush their real-life animals toward a grand prize, other students bring the Western world to life on canvas or through sculpture or other media. Either way, individual skill and accomplishment are emphasized. The School Art Program brings students to the Show beyond the traditional 4-H and FFA organizations. The concept is simple, but the rewards for the students participating in the School Art Program are immeasurable. 🤠



MARIACHI

By Rita Kirkup

No true Texas cowboy story would be complete without the *charros* of Mexico. Nor would stories of *charros* be complete without the inclusion of their culture and music. The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ celebrates Hispanic culture through Go Tejano Day, hosting a mariachi competition as part of that celebration. The 2009 Show will be the 18th year for the competition, with some of the best mariachi bands from all over the state performing.

“Mariachi has a huge following and is a tradition that celebrates the Hispanic culture,” said Mike Martinez, chairman of the Go Tejano Committee and a former coordinator for the Show’s mariachi competition. “Our competition is one of the oldest, largest and richest mariachi competitions in the United States. People who win this have major bragging rights.”

Mariachi music is the traditional music of the *charros* and originated in the town of Cocula, in the Mexican state of Jalisco. It is a lively, vibrant and colorful celebration of all that is Mexico. Mariachi band members dress in traditional garb and play dance music — most famously the “Mexican Hat Dance.” In Mexico, mariachi bands would travel from town to town, seeking to be hired to perform. The ability of each band to draw attention from a crowd was incredibly

important. All of these elements combine to play a critical role in mariachi competitions today.

Mariachi bands typically consist of at least a violin, *guitarron* (a small-scaled acoustic bass), *guitarra de golpe* (rhythm guitar), *vihuela* (guitar-like instrument, but slightly smaller), guitar and trumpet, and occasionally a harp. All members of the band sing, and most can play more than one instrument. Mariachi performers begin learning their craft at a young age, and in this competition, all ages are represented.

The mariachi competition is just one of the many events the Go Tejano Committee hosts to raise money for the Show’s Educational Fund. Bands compete for a \$7,500 jackpot, as well as the chance to play for a crowd of 70,000 or more in Reliant Stadium, and hold the honor of winning one of the major competitions in the United States.

Only six bands from around the state are invited to compete. “We travel as much as we can to personally listen to the different bands,” said Martinez. “Those we can’t listen to in person, we listen to their recordings and watch their DVDs. We don’t put anyone on stage that we haven’t seen and listened to. All of our bands are professionals, and we are focused on bringing in the finest from the state.”



2008 Mariachi Invitational winner, Mariachi Aztlan

Photo by John McCaine

COMPETITION

The 2009 mariachi competition begins March 14 at Verizon Wireless Theater and continues the next day, during Go Tejano Day at the Show. All six bands perform both days, with the judges selecting the two top groups to perform March 15 in Reliant Stadium. During the stage change-over between the performances of the star entertainers, the semifinalists take the stage and play their hearts out to the crowd, knowing that the level of audience applause will determine the winner of the competition.


“Watching the semifinals in The Hideout in 2008 was amazing. Seeing the faces of the winners was priceless,” said Juan Cantu Jr., a vice chairman of the Go Tejano Committee. “There is real emotion and excitement from the winners. People crying, they were so excited — just incredible.”

The bands chosen for the semifinals compete in front of five judges, who score on a variety of elements including the musicality and the ability of each group to engage the crowd. All the judges are amazing musicians who are giants in the world of mariachi. “Our international judge this year is from Mexico — Frederico Torres Jr.,” said Martinez. “His dad is a trumpet player with Mariachi Vargas — one of the best in the world — and our judge is an accomplished mariachi musician in his own right. He

creates a lot of music for mariachi and is a studio musician. All the judges are musicians and teachers. The judges themselves are actually drawing people to come see the competition,” said Martinez.

Dahlia Guerra is the founder of the winning mariachi band for the past two years, Mariachi Aztlan, which is affiliated with The University of Texas – Pan American. “We have a strong program at the university promoting the culture,” said Guerra, who also is the dean of arts and humanities at the university. “This group represents our student body and acts as ambassadors of good will for the university. We strive to attain a certain level of excellence and stay true to the mariachi culture. There are rigid auditions, and musicians need to be proficient in their instruments as well as be good singers.”

Guerra is proud of the fact that some of the prize money won by Mariachi Aztlan goes to the university in the form of scholarships for deserving students. Mariachi Aztlan, under the direction of Frank Loera, will return for the 2009 mariachi competition to try to win for the third year in a row.

Celebrate the musical history of our Hispanic culture and cheer on your favorite mariachi band during the 2009 Show. 



2008 Mariachi Invitational runners-up, Damas de Jalisco



Top 25 Things to See and Do at the 2009 Show

By Elizabeth Martin

1 When you arrive at Reliant Park, pick up a 2009 Official Visitors Guide, complete with color maps, indexes of exhibits and more.

2 The World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest is three days where the best barbecue teams cook and engage in friendly competition, while visitors can eat at the Chuck Wagon and dance in The Garden; Feb. 26-28!



10 Be amazed at the Tractor Technician Contest, held March 9, as Texas FFA members test their knowledge and ability to identify and correct deliberately created malfunctions in diesel-fueled tractors.

11 Pick up your RODEOHOUSTON™ Official Souvenir Program, full of

information about Rodeo, the entertainers, the Show, the volunteers and more! Local FFA chapters and other youth organizations sell these programs to raise money for their activities.

12 Check out the preliminary Mariachi Championships Saturday, March 14, at Verizon Theater, to get a sneak peek at who will be competing the next day at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

13 Enjoy many facets of Houston's rich Hispanic heritage on Go Tejano Day, Sunday, March 15, with the mariachi finals, rodeo action, and a double-bill concert in Reliant Stadium.

14 Meet your favorite RODEOHOUSTON cowboys and cowgirls in the Fan Zone, sponsored by Texas Farm Bureau Insurance, and take home pictures and autographs of your favorite athletes competing in the RODEOHOUSTON BP Super Series.

15 Have Fun on the Farm in Kids Country. Take a self-guided tour with Farmer Joe and follow his crops from harvest to sale at the grocery. At the end of your tour, buy a souvenir at the grocery inside Fun on the Farm.



3 Add flair to your wardrobe and wear that special pair of boots and a cowboy hat for Go Texan Day, Friday, Feb. 27, and enjoy Go Texan Days throughout the Show.

4 A National Cutting Horse Association-sanctioned cutting contest will be held Feb. 28 through March 7, featuring athletic horses and talented riders in Reliant Arena.

5 Make a run for the Downtown Rodeo Parade and ConocoPhillips Rodeo Run as they kick off the 2009 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Saturday, Feb. 28, with marching bands, colorful floats, trail riders, and a 10K race and 5K fun run/walk.

6 Cougars, coyotes and backyard birds are just some of the subjects at the Ranching & Wildlife Expo, featuring continuing educational seminars related to ranching and wildlife, March 5-8, Reliant Arena.

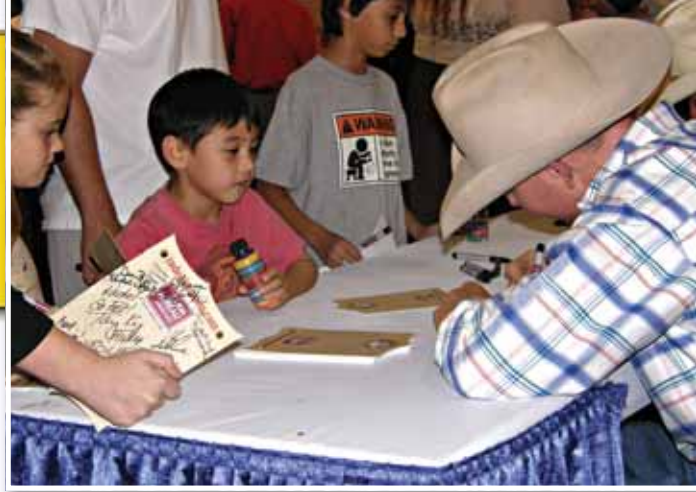
7 Celebrate Black Heritage Day, Friday, March 6, as the Show spotlights the contributions of black pioneers to the cultural achievement and heritage of the city of Houston and the state of Texas.

8 Throughout the Show, taste award-winning wines from the Show's International Wine Competition at the Champion Wine Garden, sponsored by Southwest Airlines, in Carruth Plaza.

9 Learn about milk production in the milking parlor, sponsored by Borden, in Capital One Bank AGVENTURE.



16 Visit the Chuck Wagon Corral, which showcases how cowboy cooking was done out on the range and will feature Texas Longhorns in the Longhorn Corral this year.



17 Gather at the Sheep Dog Trials, Saturday, March 14, in Reliant Center. Herding dogs from around the country compete for the championship title.

18 Let students from the Houston area win you over at the Public Speaking Contest, Monday, March 16, as they speak on agricultural topics to win prizes and savings bonds.

22 No school, no homework, no excuses — celebrate Spring Break Stampede, featuring extended carnival hours and high-energy star performers.

23 Plan to catch the wild action of RODEOHOUSTON Xtreme Bulls, part of the PRCA's world championship bull riding tour, featuring 52 of the roughest and toughest bulls around, Sunday, March 22.



19 They will steal your heart! Lil' Rustlers Rodeo lets physically or mentally challenged kids participate in steer roping, bull riding, and barrel racing with stick horses, plus meeting real cowboys and cowgirls, for a bonding experience of a lifetime. Lil' Rustlers Rodeo is held on the floor of Reliant Stadium March 4, 5 and 11.

20 Take in the action at the popular Livestock and Horse Show, featuring horses, donkeys and mules, cattle, swine and sheep, competing for champion titles.

21 Buy your official RODEOHOUSTON merchandise at booths during the Show, year-round online and at the Go Texan store in Reliant Stadium and in Hobby Airport.

24 Experience the miracle of life at the livestock birthing center in Capital One Bank AGVENTURE!

25 Enjoy the "everything-on-a-stick" diet — sausage, pizza, cheesecake, shrimp and more — at the Show's huge variety of food vendors.

And, remember to make plans early to attend the 2010 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, March 2-21. 🐾



Shopping Trends

By Sandy Hollingsworth Smith



Every spring, when the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ begins, I devote at least one day during the Show to shopping. Shopping? Yes, that is what I said. Everyone knows that the Show provides countless opportunities for fun and entertainment, but the Show also has one of the largest Western shopping malls, featuring approximately 350 booths with merchandise ranging from Western wear, jewelry, art, toys, and furniture to horse trailers, farm equipment, and even shoe polish.

In the early 1990s, my girlfriends and I spent a lot of time wandering through the exhibits in the Astrohall and Astroarena looking for wonderful things to buy. I found my first big Show purchase at a small booth tucked into the corner of the Astroarena. It was a sassy, three-piece outfit, complete with a bolero jacket appliquéd with cowboys. The vendor went on to find national success with its “cowboy chic” style of clothing.

My jewelry collection has grown over the years, thanks to the vendors selling Southwestern-style jewelry and American Indian arts and crafts. Charlie Harrell, a 29-year veteran of the Show, said that he offers better pieces of jewelry when the economy is good, but he always tries to keep up with style trends. “Silver’s popularity comes and goes, but this year [2008], coral is popular,” Harrell said.

According to veteran Show

shopper Vikki Karel, “Jewelry styles change frequently. I’ve bought lots of it at the Rodeo, some trendy that I wear one season and others traditional that I wear again and again.”

Following marriage, my shopping focus at the Show shifted from decorating me to decorating a new home with framed art and other home furnishings purchased from various vendors at the Show. Soon afterward, I also was decorating the first baby’s room in a cowboy-themed nursery, which was easy to pull together, as various Rodeo vendors supplied the basics — blanket, lamp, and light-switch cover, which still decorate the room. In addition, there were all those adorable Western baby clothes offered for sale!

With my own history of personal shopping in mind, I set out to write this article about how shopping at the Show has evolved over the years. “I have some serious research to conduct,” I told my husband as I left him at home with the three kids and headed to the 2008 Show for my annual shopping trip.

Retail vendors have been an integral part of the Show since 1941. The original vendors typically sold farm and ranch equipment, traditional Western wear, and leather goods. Today, the Show hosts booths selling things as diverse as Australian boomerangs, personalized pillowcases and even rhinestone dog



AT THE RODEO

collars. Just as visitors have gone casual, trading in their boots and jeans for flip-flops and shorts, the vendors now offer a wider variety of clothing options and styles. With spring break falling during the 2008 Show, vendors geared up to offer trendy clothes that would appeal to the younger crowd.

This diversity of merchandise is appealing to many shoppers. "I like shopping for clothes at the Rodeo because I can always find something here that I can't find at the mall," said Karel.

Michele Woods, another regular Rodeo shopper, reported, "I go because I want to find something new and interesting." Shoppers like Karel and Woods are likely to be successful in such a venture.

More than 550 vendor applications were received for the 2008 Show. The Commercial Exhibits Committee and Show staff review every application with an eye toward finding vendors who offer unique products that will appeal to all Show visitors.

There were 37 new vendors at the 2008 Show, including one that recycles small liquor, beer and condiment bottles and turns them into night lights. "We turn trash into treasure," owner Gary Dirodís said.

"I didn't realize I was being green," he added, "but the green factor seems to be important to our customers."

With several booths located throughout the venue, official Rodeo merchandise can be a big draw for visitors. "Kids who have exhibited in the Show like to have a souvenir," said Julie Wood, managing director, Exhibits and Attractions. Concert lineup T-shirts, official Show jackets, annual pins and fashion belt buckles were big sellers, too.

But, the longtime vendors can attract a lot of attention, as well. A Kansas rope company, best known for the hands-on process of making ropes while you wait, has drawn crowds for 27 years as its staff twists each new rope utilizing a unique twisting "choo choo" and celebrating the completion by ringing a cowbell.

Trends come and trends go, but, "Being customer-oriented is a trend that never goes out of style," said a bootmaker who has been exhibiting at the Show since 1952.

My plan for the next phase of my life is to be shopping for retirement. When that time comes, I am going to buy those handsome rocking chairs I saw at the Rodeo to put on the front porch! 🪑





3
TUES

Rascal Flatts
6:45 p.m.



4
WED

Alan Jackson
6:45 p.m.



5
THURS

Clay Walker
6:45 p.m.



Black Heritage Day sponsored

Gladys Knight 6:



8
SUN

Jonas Brothers
3:45 p.m.



9
MON

Lady Antebellum
6:45 p.m.



Ford presents

10
TUES

Toby Keith
6:45 p.m.



Reba
6:



13
FRI

Clint Black
6:45 p.m.



14
SAT

Josh Turner
3:45 p.m.



Go Tejano Day sponsored by State Farm®



15
SUN

Ramon Ayala 3:45 p.m. **Alacranes Musical**



18
WED

Gary Allan
6:45 p.m.



19
THURS

Pat Green
6:45 p.m.



20
FRI

Taylor Swift
6:45 p.m.



Brook
3:



6
FRI

Sponsored by Kroger Food Stores

Solange

8:45 p.m.



7
SAT

Trace Adkins

3:45 p.m.



11
WED

McEntire

8:45 p.m.



12
THURS

Brad Paisley

6:45 p.m.



16
MON

Darius Rucker

6:45 p.m.



17
TUES

Keith Urban

6:45 p.m.



21
SAT

Brooks & Dunn

8:45 p.m.



22
SUN

ZZ Top

3:45 p.m.



2009

RODEO HOUSTON

Entertainers



HEY, BARTENDER!

By Brandy Divin

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ has a team of professional mixologists who serve libations with flair. Many of these bartenders have worked for the Show for decades, but many also have interesting and distinguished careers outside the Show, completely unrelated to the food and beverage industry. How well do you know your bartender?

One longtime member of the Show's nearly 200-member staff of bartenders and wait staff is Oliver Thompson. Thompson came to the Show in 1971, working as a bartender in the Main Corral Club in the Astrodome. At the time, Thompson was teaching school and coaching while working on his master's degree in education. When his day job as a schoolteacher made it impossible for him to work day shifts during the Show, he made the move to the Astrodome, where he worked in the Sky Boxes. Outside the Show, Thompson went on to receive his doctorate in education administration and supervision in 1977, but he still continued his bartending career at the Show. Thompson has served as head bartender and has tended bar at various committee meetings throughout his 37 years with the Show.

"While I may not have received a scholarship from the Houston Livestock Show," Thompson said, "it certainly did help to pay for furthering my education." He taught history and coached at Abraham Lincoln Junior-Senior High School, which in 1980 became Gregory-Lincoln Education Center. Since retiring in 2000, Thompson has been a dedicated substitute teacher with a focus on at-risk students at the Contemporary Learning Middle/High School. He has raised five children and now is enjoying his nine grandchildren. Thompson will celebrate his 69th birthday this year, but he has no plans to retire from the Show. "I really enjoy it, and I look forward to it every year, and I plan to continue doing it for as long as I can. The 2009 Show will be 38 years," Thompson said.

In 1957, Robert L. Payne Jr. was employed as a bar-back in the Show's first official club, the Corral Club, which was located in the Sam Houston Coliseum. During that same year, Payne married his wife, Barbara. They celebrated 51 years of marriage in November 2008. Reflecting on one of his fondest Show memories, Payne said, "I remember shaking hands with Gene Autry and Roy Rogers; that was something."

Payne worked in many of the Show's old clubs, including the Astrodome Club and the 500 Club. He was head bartender in the Committeeman's Club in the mid '70s and held the same position in the Stockman's Club in the early '80s. In 1983, the Auctions and Receptions Committee was formed because of the need for traveling bars that could be brought to special events during the





Show. Payne supervises a staff of 15 bartenders for Auctions and Receptions. He is proud to be a life member of the Show and one of the earliest members of the High Bidders Club — he was the eighth member to join this buying group, which now has more than 300 members.

Payne and his wife are the proud parents of two sons. Payne has a distinguished career outside the Show. He served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War and completed his college education at the University of Houston. He worked for the Veterans Affairs Medical Center for 32 years as a kinesiology therapist and worked for the next 10 years at Bellaire Hospital. Payne also bartended at the old Fast Draw Club during the Colt .45s' baseball games. Of his outstanding 50-plus years of service with the Show, he said, "There's been a lot of changes; I've seen a lot."

The success of the Show is driven in large part by the consistently high level of enthusiasm that permeates its events and activities. Certainly, one important part of the equation is the Show's dedicated and diverse staff of professional bartenders, who always greet their guests with a smile and a strong dose of Show hospitality. 🍸

One notable member of the Show's nearly 200 member staff of bartenders and wait staff was Herman Washington, who passed away Oct. 25, 2008. He began working as a Show bartender in 1992. Washington was introduced to the Show by family friend Robert Fleming who was head of the Food and Beverages Department at the time. Washington saw this as a wonderful opportunity to earn extra money outside his normal workday. Over an eight-year period, Washington worked his way up the ranks in the Corral Club's Main Club, ultimately becoming head bartender, where he helped oversee staff and worked hand-in-hand with the club's chairman. He remained in that position for another eight years, until the 2008 Show, when he elected to become a substitute bartender — filling in when another bartender was unable to work.

When Washington was not serving drinks in the Main Club, or at various meetings, he worked in real estate sales and investing. Washington was a real estate broker, having been active in the business since the '70s, when he joined the family business working with his mother, an attorney, and his father who was a broker.

Though he never married, Washington was close to his niece, Melba. He made a promise to help her finish school, and working at the Show helped provide him with extra money to support his niece in her academic endeavors. Washington was very proud to say that Melba graduated summa cum laude from the University of Houston and attends law school. Of his Show bartending career, Washington once said, "It is a great job to have because you come in at 4 o'clock and are on your way home by 8:30 or 9 at night, and you get to see the same people."



Let 'er Buck

By Nan McCreary

Rodeo fans, hang on to your hats, because it is going to be a bumpy ride in 2009 at RODEOHOUSTON™. This year's rough stock events will feature some of the biggest and boldest bucking broncs and bulls on the rodeo circuit.

"I expect it to be a blowout show," said Binion Cervi of Cervi Championship Rodeo, RODEOHOUSTON stock coordinator and rodeo producer. "We have selected the best quality animal athletes from all over the U.S. and Canada, and we guarantee that they will perform."

For many spectators, rough stock events — those wild, adrenaline-filled rides on broncs and bulls that rear, kick, spin and twist their way around the arena in an attempt to throw off their riders — are the big draw at a rodeo. But, while it is the cowboy who takes home the prize money, it is often the animal that is the star of the show. If it were not for these athletes, there would not be a rodeo.

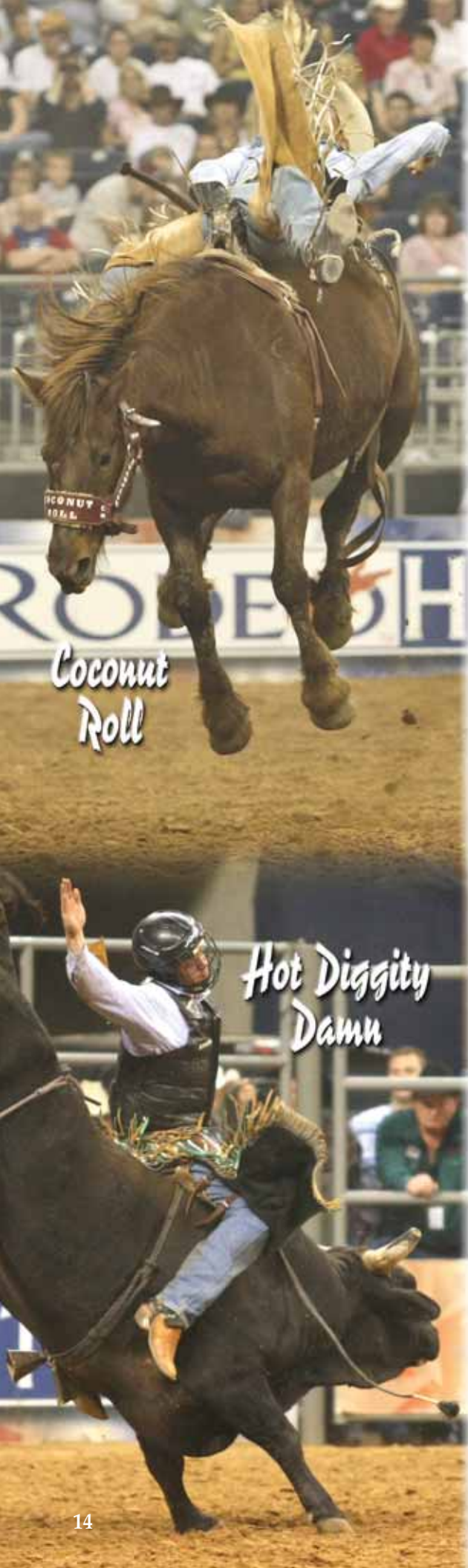
"The quality of the livestock is the key to success for the cowboy," said Cervi. In rough stock events, the skill of the animal accounts for half of the cowboy's score. While the rider is judged on balance and endurance, the animal is scored on strength, agility and consistency. In other words, the tougher the ride, the higher the score. Attitude and personality help, too. Whether rebellious and strong-willed, or friendly and gregarious, an animal athlete must not only challenge the rider, it also must appeal to the spectators. If the bronc or bull can kick high, buck powerfully and energize the audience, it is considered a winner.

At RODEOHOUSTON, the world's richest regular-season Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association rodeo, there is a lot on the line for the competitors. A cowboy or cowgirl who wins a RODEOHOUSTON BP Super Series Championship pockets \$50,000, plus previous go-round winnings. With a potential to take home \$60,000 to \$70,000 from one rodeo, cowboys want an animal with which they can win.

"We lease the wildest stock we can get for Houston," Cervi said. "We bring animals that are at the top of their game, because cowboys like stock that can roll up the big numbers." Cervi obviously knows how to pick them. In 2007, PRCA awarded RODEOHOUSTON Top Rough Stock Remuda of the Year for the best overall bucking bulls and horses.

Rough stock events originated in the Old West, when working cowboys relied on "horse breaking" skills to domesticate wild horses. Today, in spite of popular myth, rodeo broncs and bulls are not untamed, raging renegades hell-bent on ruling the range. Breeders say the best rodeo livestock have the heart, the desire and the athletic ability to buck. Bucking comes naturally to them; they will not buck unless they want to.

Today, the finest animal athletes in professional rodeo are products of highly specialized "born to buck" breeding programs, where bloodlines might go back for generations. "It's all about genetics,"



Cervi explained. "If the mother bucks, the colts will buck. I see characteristics passed on from one generation to the next, whether it's the way they buck or the way they perform."

A great bucking bronc or bull is a hot commodity on the rodeo circuit, selling for as much as \$40,000 to \$50,000. These animals are treated like rock stars. Their pens, chutes and equipment are designed specifically to ensure safety for the animals, and their feed contains high-quality nutrients that enhance their appearance and performance.

According to Cervi, today's rough stock is getting better and better in terms of bucking ability. "We've had great advancements in breeding," he noted. "In [2008's] Houston Show, a bareback bronc and rider in the finals scored 90 points out of a possible 100. A bull and rider scored 92."

The 2009 Show could be even more exciting. "We've selected stock from the best bloodlines," Cervi continued, "and all are proven athletes. They've performed in smaller rodeos, and are acclimated to travel, climate changes and the atmosphere of the arena. By the time they get to Houston, there's a 95 percent chance that they will perform."

Cervi said the broncs to watch this year are Coconut Roll, Brown Bomber and Mighty Mary. Coconut Roll is the mother of several great bucking horses, including Grated Coconut, who won the 2008 PRCA Bareback Horse of the Year award for the third straight year, and the fifth time overall. Coconut Roll has performed previously in Houston. Brown Bomber, another veteran, will be making his 13th appearance at RODEOHOUSTON. This superstar has made it to the National Finals Rodeo every year since 1995. Finally, Mighty Mary is a young bronc who made her first appearance at the 2007 NFR. Several cowboys have won rodeos riding her, including Cody DeMers, who scored 90 points with Mighty Mary in 2008.

Bulls to look for include Comet's Gold, Lucky Strike and Hot Diggity Damn. Comet's Gold, a young bull who made his debut at 2008 RODEOHOUSTON, comes to this year's Show unriden. In 2008, he bucked off all 16 cowboys who tried to ride him. Lucky Strike, one of the best bulls in the country, only has been ridden once in the last three years. Hot Diggity Damn is the son of Hot Damn, who retired after 2008 RODEOHOUSTON with more 90-point rides than any bull in history. Hot Diggity Damn and his rider won with a score of 93 at RODEOHOUSTON last year, and the big bull is considered by many to be a candidate for the PRCA Hall of Fame.

Show fans will love this year's rough stock events. Cervi Championship Rodeo is bringing the best animal athletes in the country to RODEOHOUSTON in March. The toughest rodeo cowboys on the professional circuit today will follow them to Houston. Rough stock is definitely where the action is, and there will be plenty of action in 2009 RODEOHOUSTON. 🤠



Lucky Strike



Myrtis Dightman

By Brad Levy

Heroes are not born into greatness; they are not heroes because they come from wealth or power.

Heroes are molded from experience, chiseled from hardship, transformed by adversity, admired for their achievements, and endowed with great strength and abilities. Some heroes might have fame cast upon them, while other heroes walk silently among us. One such hero who deserved the fame but was silenced by the attitudes of his time is Myrtis Dightman Sr., a former professional rodeo cowboy who left an indelible mark in the rodeo world. Dightman was a champion bull rider who began his bull riding career in the late 1950s and continued through the early '80s. As a black man, he was bestowed the title of, "the Jackie Robinson of professional rodeo," a title he wears with honor, but that he feels came at the expense of his winning the world championship bull riding title.

Dightman grew up on a ranch in Crockett, Texas, the son of Ada Lee and O.D. Dightman, a ranch hand. Making a living in those times was not easy, nor was maintaining a stable family in light of his father's untimely death, when Dightman was only 15 years old. "I was blessed with a strong, devoted mother who kept the family going and always made us toe the line," he said.

Together with his brother, they took on the role of their father on the ranch after his death. "I credit my mother and her faith in God with providing me the strong base necessary to have chosen a road few men have traveled," said Dightman.

Coming from a ranching background, Dightman was introduced to cowboys and rodeos at an early age. It always struck him as strange that there were so few black cowboys competing in rodeos. He said that it was the main reason that he jumped into the rodeo arena. At 19 years old, Dightman worked his first rodeo as a bullfighter. A few years later, he started competing as a bull rider. His chosen path qualified him to compete more than five times in the world championship bull riding competition. Each year, another championship title would elude Dightman — not because the bulls kept him from reaching 8 seconds or because their bucking was far better than his ride, but according to Dightman, “The championship title would disappear from my grasp each time a judge put the pencil to the paper.”

During his last National Finals Rodeo in 1972, Dightman asked his friend and fellow cowboy, Freckles Brown, what it was going to take for him to win a world title. Brown replied by saying, “Keep riding like you’ve been riding and turn white.” That year, Dightman finished seventh in the world. Despite the covert racism Dightman endured during his years on the rodeo circuit, he never lost his inner drive. His incredible perseverance kept him reaching for the elusive title, his dream of winning the world title. Throughout his career, Dightman never finished higher than third in the world standings.

Dightman’s dream of a black cowboy winning a world championship eventually would come to rest on the shoulders of Charles Sampson, a young black cowboy from Los Angeles, who became Dightman’s protégé. Sampson approached Dightman in 1970, seeking his expert advice and guidance. Dightman knew that Sampson had many years to go before he would be ready to face the world of professional rodeo. Dightman encouraged him to stay in school and get his education before venturing into the arena. It was during these years that Dightman set the stage and broke the barriers for future black cowboys to compete head-to-head with white cowboys, focusing on their rides and not a judge’s pencil strokes. In 1982, Sampson reached through the gate


Dightman had opened to win the world championship bull riding title. This victory was as sweet for Dightman as it was for Sampson. “Sampson’s victory proved that the title once denied me could no longer be denied to other black cowboys,” said Dightman.

Dightman not only set the stage for black cowboys to compete in rodeos, but he and longtime friend James Frances were influential in helping create the Prairie View Trail Ride Association, now in its 52nd year. Both men went to the administrators of Prairie View A&M University seeking their assistance in setting up the trail ride and rodeo.

Administrators gladly agreed under one condition: that they never have alcohol on campus. Once organized, the black rodeo and trail ride became part of annual activities held at Prairie View. The Prairie View Trail Ride is one of the 13 annual trail rides to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™. Dightman also hosts an annual Labor Day Weekend Rodeo & Trail Ride in Crockett, Texas, now in its 21st year.

Dightman retired from bull riding in 1989, a career that spanned more than 30 years. Less than 10 years later, the rodeo world recognized Dightman as a champion and hero, and he was inducted into three rodeo organizations: the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in 1997, the Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame in 2001, and the National Cowboys of Color Museum and Hall of Fame in 2003. Also in 2003, Dightman received one of his greatest honors — induction into the Professional Bull

Riders Ring of Honor. The ceremony was presented in front of thousands of rodeo fans in Las Vegas.

At the age of 74, Dightman has not slowed down. He continues to speak to students throughout the community about the importance of staying in school and staying away from drugs. He continues to teach his children and grandchildren that success is not given out on the corner; it is earned by hard work and self-determination. Myrtis Dightman Sr. is a true hero to his family and to the rodeo world. 



OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Agriculture, education, entertainment and Western heritage are the four main focuses of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™. Undoubtedly, education has made the greatest impact on young Texans.

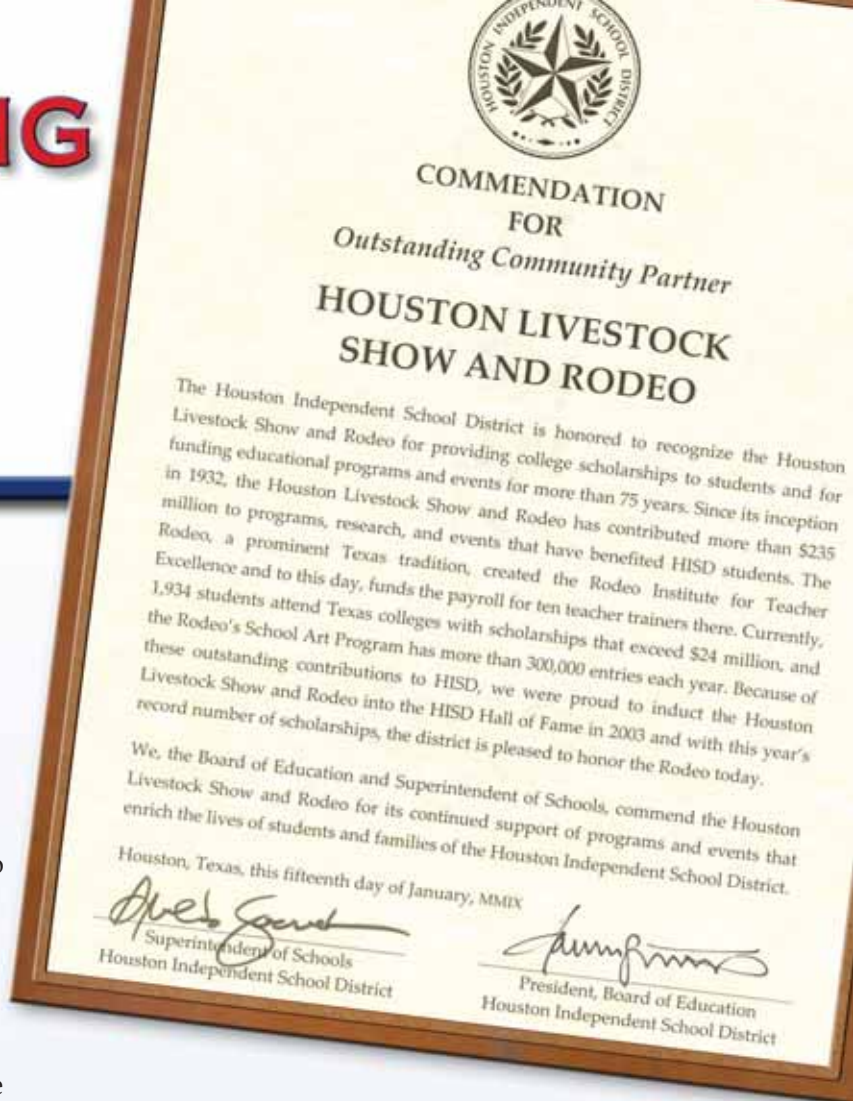
Since the Show's beginning in 1932, it has committed more than \$235 million to scholarships, research, endowments, calf scramble participants, junior show exhibitors, the Rodeo Institute for Teacher Excellence™, School Art participants, and other educational and youth programs.

The Houston Independent School District has seen firsthand the impact of scholarship monies awarded by the Show to its students. In 2008 alone, 93 HISD students received a scholarship from the Show; these scholarships are valued at \$1,395,500.

In addition to scholarships, the Show has partnered with HISD through the RITE™ program. RITE serves 22 HISD elementary schools, and has impacted thousands of pre-K through third-grade students and teachers.



President Skip Wagner; Chairman of the Board Charles R. "Butch" Robinson; HISD General Manager Caleen Allen; COO Leroy Shafer; and Show General Manager Joe Bruce Hancock at the presentation of the Outstanding Community Partner Commendation.



"Students of all ages have reaped the benefits of monies won or awarded through Show funds," said Skip Wagner, Show president. "Programs such as RITE offer a unique opportunity to see the impact the Show can make on individual students' lives. Working with HISD through the years has strengthened ties between the Show and the community."

Thursday, Jan. 15, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was honored at the HISD board meeting for its significant contributions to education and HISD. Show officials, including Chairman of the Board Butch Robinson, President Skip Wagner, Chief Operating Officer Leroy Shafer and General Manager Joe Bruce Hancock, were on hand with several Show vice presidents to receive the honor from Caleen Allen, HISD general manager, strategic partnership.

As the 2009 Show approaches, students continue to ready their livestock, School Art pieces, public speaking speeches, and other projects to attend and compete for their chance at the life-changing opportunity of winning a Grand, or Reserve Grand, Championship, and a monetary award that could help them to attend college. 🏆

Classical Music With a Texas Twist

It's time to Go Texan with a classical twist when the Houston Symphony salutes the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ Saturday, March 7, 2009.

Associate conductor Robert Franz will conduct an exciting program of music and special Rodeo guests, including real cowboys and cowgirls, as part of the Houston Symphony's family series. Music will range from Aaron Copland's ballet "Rodeo" and Rossini's "William Tell Overture" to "Woody's Roundup" from the movie *Toy Story*.

Two programs, at 10 and 11:30 a.m., will allow for plenty of family seating at this unique take on classical music. Doors open at 9 a.m. for special activities for children.

The Houston Symphony will continue this fascinating collaboration with the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo during the Show. On select days, an instrument petting zoo will be at Reliant Park. Kids of all ages can touch and play a variety of musical instruments with help from Houston Symphony volunteers.

"This is an incredible partnership," said Skip Wagner, Show president. "It perfectly combines the Show's commitment to our community with our continuing efforts to educate young Texans. And, it's great fun!"

Franz is known for dressing up to fit the symphony's family theme, such as donning the red-and-white-striped hat in homage to the "Cat in the Hat" for the Houston Symphony's Dr. Seuss day.

"Don't be surprised to see him [Franz] all decked out in cowboy regalia," said Matthew VanBesien, executive director and CEO of the Houston Symphony. "Robert enjoys these family concert days as much as any of the children there for the concert!"


Franz is considered one of the most talented conductors of his generation, and began his tenure as associate conductor of the Houston Symphony with the 2008-09 season. 

Photo by Sandy Lankford



GO TEJANO Committee

RANCHING & WILDLIFE Committee

By Kate Gunn

As the fourth largest city in the nation, Houston has a highly diverse population and one of the largest and fastest growing Hispanic communities. The Go Tejano Committee raises awareness of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™'s purpose within the broad spectrum of the Hispanic community, all while raising scholarship dollars.

The Go Tejano Committee began in the 1980s as Reata, a subcommittee of the Houston General Go Texan Committee. Originally, it had less than 25 members. In 1990, the subcommittee, playing on the "Go Texan" theme, became the Go Tejano Committee. Today, the committee has 205 members and helps the Show host Go Tejano Day, which features Latin music, a mariachi contest, Fiesta Charra, and other fun, family-friendly activities throughout the grounds.

The Go Tejano Committee also hosts several events throughout the year, including a golf tournament, a fashion show and dance, and a scholarship dinner and dance. During the Show, the committee also hosts the nationally renowned Mariachi Invitational, the largest event of its kind. The Go Tejano Diner, a completely volunteer-run, fund-raising enterprise, serves delicious fajitas, quesadillas, tacos and other Mexican food to visitors during the Show. All net proceeds from the diner benefit the Show's Educational Fund.

In the words of first-year chairman Mike Martinez, "The volunteers really take ownership of the committee." Other committee duties include presentations to area schools about the Metropolitan and Opportunity scholarships awarded in the committee's name and speaking engagements within the community to build Show awareness.

It is not a requirement to be bilingual, nor is it a requirement to be Hispanic, but most of the members are both. The committee is open to anyone who wishes to promote the Show's mission within Houston's diverse Hispanic community. Let's "Go Tejano!"



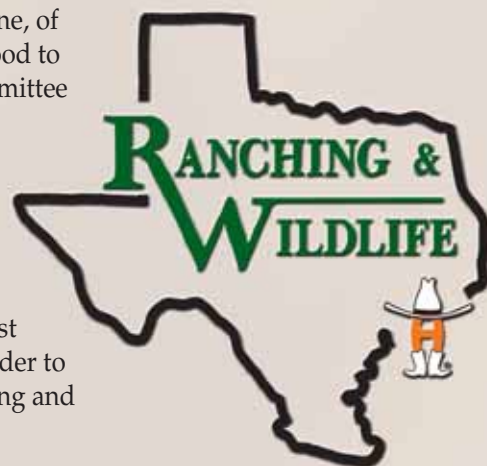
Relatively new to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is the Ranching & Wildlife Committee. The committee's mission is to blend together two of Texas' most important industries. Promoting native Texas plant and wildlife species is the committee's purpose. To achieve this, the committee maintains strong relationships with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as well as the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association.

During the first Thursday through first Sunday of the Show, the Ranching & Wildlife Committee hosts a four-day exposition at Reliant Arena. Ranching and wildlife related equipment and vehicles, jewelry, art, hunting outfitters, and even Texas universities with related programs are showcased. The committee also hosts an auction with unique items, including hunts of all kinds, commissioned artwork, birding excursions and exciting travel destinations.

With Texas' changing landscape, the committee conducts a number of seminars relating to the ranching and wildlife industries. Seminar topics have included wildlife habitats, birding, Texas wildflowers, water rights, and legal responsibility for landowners when leasing land. The last topic especially is pertinent given the number of ranch owners who currently lease acreage to hunters.

Past officer in charge Rick Green and past chairman Bill Yates organized the committee in 2007. Originally, the committee consisted of 12 volunteers; today, it has grown to more than 60 members, with plans for future growth. During its short existence, the committee has raised an impressive \$400,000 for Show scholarships.

Glenn Lillie, first-year chairman, said of the committee's purpose, "Number one, of course, it's always good to be involved in a committee with direct results in raising dollars for scholarships; two, to see growth; and three, I believe in coordination and education on how best to treat the land in order to develop both [ranching and wildlife]."





RODEO

Roundup

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS INFORMATION & UPDATES

➤ RODEOHOUSTON™ Champions Compete at NFR

Here is how the 2008 RODEOHOUSTON Super Series Champions finished the year.

Tie-Down Roping

Josh Peek, Pueblo, Colo. — 6th, \$156,475.37

Bareback Riding

Steven Dent, Mullen, Neb. — 2nd, \$210,798.50

Team Roping

Chad Masters (header), Clarksville, Tenn. — 11th, \$108,917.98

Jade Corkill (heeler), Fallon, Nev. — 2nd, \$166,672.56

Steer Wrestling

Wade Sumpter, Fowler, Colo. — 2nd, \$133,685.11

Saddle Bronc Riding

Billy Etbauer, Edmond, Okla. — 2nd, \$204,194.98

Barrel Racing

Lindsay Sears, Ropesville, Texas — World Champion, \$323,569.84

Bull Riding

B.J. Schumacher, Hillsboro, Wisc. — 5th, \$151,958.69



These top rodeo contestants, and more, have the chance to compete in the 2009 RODEOHOUSTON BP Super Series for more than \$1.4 million in prize money.

➤ Do Not Miss Value Days Wednesdays!

All three Wednesdays (March 4, 11 and 18) during the 2009 Show are designated as Value Days, with these incredible entertainment value options:

- \$10 Value Day Rodeo/Concert Ticket (includes Reliant Park admission)
 - o choose from the three Wednesday superstar entertainers
 - o championship rodeo action
- \$20 Value Day Package (includes Reliant Park admission)
 - o choose from the three Wednesday superstar entertainers
 - o championship rodeo action
 - o free Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ 75th Anniversary Commemorative Cookbook (for the first 5,000 orders of four tickets or more — available while supplies last — purchases must be made at the Show's Ticket Window only)
 - o one Prince's hamburger or one personal Papa John's pizza in Reliant Stadium
 - o one Coca-Cola product fountain drink in Reliant Stadium
 - o two carnival ride coupons, plus games, food and select ride specials
 - o \$5 off official Rodeo merchandise with \$25 purchase

- o half-price pony ride
- o half-price pony ride photo
- o one petting zoo feed cone
- \$5 Value Day Reliant Park Admission (does not include rodeo/concert admission)
- Free Value Day Reliant Park Admission (for seniors, 60 and over, and children, 12 and under — does not include rodeo/concert admission)
- \$5 Value Day Miller Lite Main Street Lot Parking (available until 3 p.m. each Wednesday)

➤ Show Wins Top Honors

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was voted Best of Category in the American Marketing Association's Houston Marketer of the Year 2008 competition. Best of Category winners were selected by a vote of AMA Houston members, and AMA Houston is the city's largest professional marketing organization with more than 1,000 members.

The Show also picked up the top honor of Best Web Site by the International Association of Fairs and Expositions at the association's convention in Las Vegas, in December.

In addition, the Show won all but one category entered in the Texas Association of Fairs and Events' Ray Cammack Shows Award of Excellence for marketing and communications competition. The awards were:

- First Place –
- Best Newsletter/Magazine for the Spring 2008 "Bowlegged H" issue
 - Best Program/Brochure/Flyer for the 2009 Purpose Brochure
 - Best Promotional Poster for the 2008 star lineup poster
 - Best Handbook – Livestock Division
 - Best Pin/Button for the 2008 Annual Pin
 - Best T-Shirt Design for the high-selling T-shirt from the 2008 Show
- Second Place –
- Best Other Merchandise for the pink cup with rhinestones

➤ Show President Honored as Top Businessman

On Jan. 21, Show President Skip Wagner was honored at the 2009 Houston Business Strategy Summit as one of the Top 150 Business Leaders of Houston. A private, select committee of several Houston businessmen and women selected Wagner from a long list of successful entrepreneurs.



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**2009 SHOW DATES
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SUNDAY, MARCH 22**

www.rodeohouston.com