

HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO™

AM MAGAZINE

**Time In a
Saddle
Is Never Wasted**

**ENTERTAINER
LINEUP**
READING WITH EXPRESSION
NEW TEXAS FFA PRESIDENT

www.rodeo-houston.com

Spring 2010

Volume XVIII, No. 1





TUE., MARCH 2 Alan Jackson	WED., MARCH 3 Dierks Bentley	THU., MARCH 4 Kenny Chesney	FRI., MARCH 5 BLACK HEARTS ENT. sponsored by Kinger Mary J. Blige	SAT., MARCH 6 Jason Aldean
SUN., MARCH 7 Jonas Brothers with special guest Demi Lovato	MON., MARCH 8 Tim McGraw	TUE., MARCH 9 Darius Rucker	WED., MARCH 10 Rascal Flatts	THU., MARCH 11 Brad Paisley
SUN., MARCH 14 GO TO THE SUN. sponsored by State Farm Fesado	MON., MARCH 15 Lady Antebellum	TUE., MARCH 16 Keith Urban	WED., MARCH 17 Gary Allan	THU., MARCH 18 Black Eyed Peas
SUN., MARCH 21 Selena Gomez			FRI., MARCH 19 Eli Young Band	SAT., MARCH 20 Brooks & Dunn <i>The Last Rodeo Tour</i>

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WESTERN HERITAGE

A Message From the Chairman of the Board

Let's Rodeo! It's that time once again. Part of the preparation includes issuing badges and credentials to our volunteers and other Show supporters. Recently, Show President Skip Wagner and I presented former President George H. W. Bush with his 2010 badge and annual Show jacket. We are honored to have the former president as part of the Show family as an ex-officio board member.

The full RODEOHOUSTON™ lineup, included in this issue, features superstars

from nearly all genres of music. There is something for the whole family at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, from Disney stars to classic country, including fan-favorite Brooks & Dunn. No strangers to the rotating stage, Brooks & Dunn will perform for their 19th and final time at RODEOHOUSTON as part of *The Last Rodeo Tour*.

This issue of "Bowlegged H" Magazine features an article about the Top Hands Horse Show; in which you'll read about how its participants showcase their skills and techniques in competition, as well as the benefits that hippotherapy, or therapeutic riding, have brought to their lives. We also highlight an entrepreneurship bootcamp, designed to help our country's post Sept. 11 disabled veterans realize their entrepreneurial dreams.

Lastly, I hope you enjoy reading about current and former scholarship winners Allison Grainger and Erika Eriksson. Grainger settles into her role as the newest Texas State FFA president, while Eriksson continues her dedication to the Show as a second-year chairman of Corral Club — The Hideout Committee.

Join me in saluting our 22,000-plus volunteers who work to make each Show bigger and better than the previous year, never forgetting the ultimate goals of benefiting youth and education, supporting agriculture, preserving Western heritage, and providing affordable family entertainment.

I look forward to seeing you at Reliant Park for the 2010 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™. Bring your friends, family and co-workers for a great time and an experience like no other.

Let's RODEOHOUSTON!

Sincerely,

Butch Robinson



Time In a Saddle Is Never Wasted

By Gigi Wark



Horseback riding can be an enjoyable and relaxing experience for almost anyone who sits in a saddle. For those living with physical, emotional, cognitive or social disabilities, learning to ride a horse can be an enormously liberating experience — as well as a lot of fun.

Astride this large and powerful animal, a rider with disabilities experiences a new sense of mobility — the horse is a vehicle of transport and control. This experience not only raises self-esteem but also teaches essential skills such as improving balance and creating trust between rider and horse.



The benefits of horseback riding are as numerous as the types of disabilities and conditions it can help treat. Research shows that people who participate in therapeutic riding can experience physical, emotional and mental rewards. Horseback riding gently and rhythmically moves the rider's body in a manner similar to a human gait; thus, riders with physical disabilities often show improvement in flexibility, balance and muscle strength.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ Top Hands Horse Show is the brainchild of Sharon Oliver, former chairman of the Special Children's Committee. Oliver learned about therapeutic riding and witnessed the equestrians at work. She wanted to add that sense of personal pride and competition to the Show. Celebrating its 13th year in 2010, the Top Hands Horse Show started out as a one-day event with 40 riders and a handful of volunteers. Today, more than 200 contestants compete in the event, which now takes place over three days.

Riders of all ages and skill levels from therapeutic riding facilities from Houston and the surrounding areas are offered the opportunity to participate in this competitive horse show. It consists of six classes: showmanship at halter, English equitation, Western equitation, trail-obstacle, pole bending and barrel racing. The competition includes divisions based on the assistance needed by the rider, enabling a variety of riders with different levels of disabilities to participate.

Therapeutic riding is for individuals of all ages with a range of physical, emotional, cognitive and social disabilities. Horses are used as a tool for physical therapy, emotional growth and learning. The idea of using a horse as a therapeutic tool was made popular after Liz Hartel, who was diagnosed with polio, won a silver medal at the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki. Her accomplishment in equestrian sports showed the world how riding helped her recovery from polio. Many riders experience a connection to the horse that few sports can replicate. The North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, formed in 1969, trains professionals to support and facilitate equine therapy. It also educates the public and sets national standards for the use of equine therapy, and provides certification to these professionals and to the centers providing the opportunity for this type of exercise and treatment.

Jimm Williams, executive director of SIRE, a local therapeutic riding center that participates in the Top Hands Horse Show, shared a story about a child who uses a wheelchair due to severe cerebral palsy and has symptoms of mild autism. She trained on a regular basis for the Top Hands Horse Show, learning to take her horse through an obstacle course — stepping over logs, crossing a bridge, weaving through cones and coming to a stop at a marked spot. Her balance and posture have benefitted from improvement in muscle tone, and her motor, verbal and cognitive skills have progressed. She was driven to strengthen these areas so she could achieve her goal of pulling the reins and “talking” to her horse.

“Accomplishments like these are showcased at Top Hands in a competitive setting,” Williams said. “I think that these athletes take the word ‘dis’ away from ‘disabled’ — they are ‘able’.”

The potential of therapeutic riding is unlimited. It has even been used as a rehabilitative tool for wounded U.S. veterans. SIRE began working with wounded veterans two years ago. European countries have long used the power of the horse to help not only people with disabilities but also victims of trauma.

Anthony Lipshitz, a third-generation horseman who visited the 2008 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, operates a therapeutic riding facility in Judea, Israel. He believes that horses possess an almost mystical effect when interacting with people, especially those with disabilities or those who have suffered some type of trauma. The comprehensive program he developed provides physical, psychological and recreational therapy.

During his visit to the Show, he shared a story about a victim of terrorist activity. A woman had lost her husband in an attack against terrorist forces, leaving her alone to raise three young children. All suffered injuries, were severely traumatized and desperately needed help. Lipshitz’s team worked with the family for several years, slowly rebuilt their self-confidence, worked through their trauma, and provided them the opportunity to experience the joy of living. The mother is now a therapist helping others in similar situations.

The participants of the Top Hands Horse Show have often been described as the Special Olympians of the equestrian world. They are accomplished equestrians who have conquered cognitive and physical challenges and mastered them as skills when mounted on a horse. These “top hands” have learned to trust, to liberate themselves from fear, and to work together with their horses, therapists, and fellow riders. This display of courage promises to not only change the life of the participant but the life of the spectator. 🏇



Trail Ride Education

By Sandy Hollingsworth Smith

Each February, all roads lead to Houston. More than 4,000 people from all walks of life take time off from their jobs, families and normal daily routines. They saddle up their horses and hitch up their wagons to participate in one of the many trail rides headed into the city to help kick off the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™. In 1952, four men from Brenham, Texas, embarked on the first trail ride to increase awareness of the Show. They were so successful that more than 80 men signed up to ride the following year, and four more trail rides were established within that decade.

The trail rides still generate awareness about the Show, but they also highlight and preserve Western heritage. Trail riders eagerly demonstrate to the communities what it might have been like for the settlers traveling across the United States.

Thirteen trail rides converge in Memorial Park, traveling hundreds of miles from as far away as Louisiana and the Rio Grande Valley. Although modern trail riders do not have to contend with stampedes and ambushes, these hardy individuals leave the comfort of their homes to ride for days, and even weeks, braving the elements and dangers along Texas highways. Trail riders cover 10 to 15 miles per day by the time they pull into camp each night. Tired and weary, they still have plenty of enthusiasm left to share stories with the folks they meet along the way.

Each trail ride participates in various educational activities at schools, churches and civic organizations during the course of the ride. The mission of the Texas Cattlemen's Trail Ride is to keep Western heritage alive. From its start in Anderson, Texas, riders visit a school every day. Trail boss Cliff Wilson said that many children today have never seen a horse and wagon, so it is fascinating for the kids to see the trail riders coming down the road.

"We ride around, hoot and holler, and the kids, all dressed up in their Western clothes, wave at us," Wilson said. "But, the best part is when we lead the kids in a big 'Yee Haw!'"

Even with such excitement, the highlight of the ride for Wilson is the stop at Northwest Baptist School. The trail riders show off their horses and wagons and tell the students stories about life on the frontier. For their part, the children sing, dance and perform skits for the trail riders. The kids even provide treats for the horses.

It takes nearly four weeks for the riders of the Los Vaqueros Rio Grande Trail Ride Association to cover the 386 miles from Hidalgo, Texas, to Houston. Fourteen years ago, the Los Vaqueros made its first stop at an elementary school on its way to Houston. They continue that tradition today, stopping at nine different schools.

"We are taking the ride back to the people," said Kent Crawford, Los Vaqueros member.





Photos courtesy of the Los Vaqueros Rio Grande Trail Ride Association and Valley Lodge Trail Ride

In addition to visiting schools, the Los Vaqueros have a long-standing relationship with Horseshoes From the Heart Charitable Foundation. They work with the foundation to provide 40 mentally and physically challenged individuals the opportunity to ride along with them for half a day, which culminates with a special chuck wagon lunch.

The foundation has two custom wagons, spring-loaded and equipped with air bags, which can carry 20 wheelchair users, allowing them to participate in the trail ride. At the end of the ride, each participant receives a certificate signed by the trail boss certifying that person as a true Texas trail rider.

Similarly, the Valley Lodge Trail Ride Association out of Brookshire, Texas, visits four schools on the last day of the ride. "There are kids at every school we go by who have never experienced our Western heritage, so anytime we can give back, we do," trail boss Mike Murphy said. "Our people give the kids a little taste of what it was like to live back then, and the kids really appreciate it. We get letters from the schools telling us how much fun the class had."

Eight years ago, Valley Lodge reached out to the Brookwood Community, an educational and residential community for adults with functional disabilities located in Brookshire to extend an offer for the residents to participate in a mini-trail ride. Each year, vans full of Brookwood residents travel to the campsite to participate in the festivities, which includes a 30-minute trail ride.

The residents also sing and dance with a country Western band, watch cowboys perform rope tricks, and get their very own straw hat to wear. Members of the Speakers Committee come out to the campsite dressed as clowns and perform skits and entertain the trail riders and their guests. "[The residents] just clap and have such a great time. It is one of my highlights to just watch them have so much fun," Murphy said.

No doubt the trail rides play an important role in the promotion of the Show. Individually, however, the riders are eager to reach out and share Western traditions with the people they encounter along the trail. 🇺🇸



Reading With Expression

By Rochelle McNutt

On May 20, 2009, Taylor, a first-grader at Rhoads Elementary School in the Houston Independent School District, stood in front of approximately 200 people and read the story, "Will the Old Car Start?"

"I think it went good," Taylor said. "I enjoyed reading the story and wearing a pretty white dress that my principal, Ms. Balthazar, gave to me."

The Rhoads cafeteria was filled with parents, grandparents, relatives, HISD administrators, Rodeo Institute for Teacher Excellence™ trainers, and Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ officials — all ready to celebrate a competition that encourages boys and girls to read with expression and fluency.

The décor featured daisies, which symbolized the students, said Merita Wilson-Bridges, a trainer for RITE. "We saw the children bloom into perfection as they read with expression," she said.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo launched the RITE program in 1997 as a training program for teachers with specialized reading and classroom skills who are primarily focused on pre-kindergarten through third-grade students. "The Rodeo is making a wise investment in the primary grades with their support of the school districts," Wilson-Bridges said.

Wilson-Bridges started the Reading With Expression competition five years ago, because she wanted the RITE students to enjoy reading and to have an opportunity to show their talent on stage in front of an audience. Part of Rhoads Elementary School's mission statement is to educate the whole child — academically, physically, aesthetically and emotionally.

"Our students are able to showcase their ability to read well, in addition to participating in an activity that is part fine arts," said Rhoads' principal, Debera Balthazar. "Emotionally, students are able to gain self-confidence and raise their self-esteem by doing something that is presented to the public in a positive manner. This program fulfills part of our mission."

The students carry out what the RITE program is all about, which is learning to read, to enjoy reading and to understand that reading will help them to become life-long learners.

"While RITE is the everyday classroom instruction that gives them the tools necessary to read, Reading With Expression is the stage where they perform what they have learned," said Lashonda Whitmore, a kindergarten teacher at Rhoads. "It's the public showing of what they do every day at school."

Preparations started months before the competition. Letters were sent out to the parents informing them about the event.





All students in grades pre-kindergarten through second grade participated.

“Every year, my students love it,” Whitmore said. “Kids are naturally competitive. Some want to be the kid on the stage, while others want to be the kids speaking for the group, so they set their own personal goals and work toward them.”

Twenty-six students were chosen to read onstage, while the others recited poetry with their class. “I looked for students who were eager to be in front of a crowd, eager to read and who speak clearly,” said Cheri Ivory, first-grade teacher. “The decision was actually very hard.”

The readers were selected by the teachers or voted on by their peers. “I didn’t necessarily look for my best readers,” Whitmore said. “I looked for students who had made marked improvement, students who were full of personality and students who needed to find their voice.”

Students read parts of a speech by President Barack Obama, along with other selected stories and passages that were extracted from readings far above their grade levels. Teachers, parents and students all were involved with preparation for the performances.

“I helped my child prepare for this event by letting her read her part to me several times a day,” said Shawn, parent of third-grader Sequoia. “I also read the passage to my daughter to let her know the parts she needed to stress.” Sequoia said her mom helped her to stay calm and focused.

Students practiced with their parents, teachers, each other, the literacy coach, grandparents, volunteers, the principal and the RITE trainer. “My mom helped me,” said first-grader Jose. “She helped me sound out the words when I didn’t know them.”


Students, teachers and staff came dressed in their very best — dresses, suits and ties, evening gowns and tuxedos. Parents brought outfits for students to change into for their performance and assisted the teachers in preparing for the event. Costumes included top hats, canes, gloves, masks and other props, depending on the theme.

“I felt famous, because I enjoy performing in front of others,” said third-grader Dwayne. “I enjoyed being able to perform, and I made my mom proud.”

Every student receives a certificate, a trophy or a plaque, and sometimes a gift, if budget permits. “I liked the reading part, all the people in front of me and the medal,” said first-grader Areyon. “I like medals!”

Sandra Jackson, second-grade teacher at Rhoads, said the highlight of the Reading With Expression event was the pleasure of watching the parents’ excitement witnessing how well their children could read, especially in front of an audience.

Teachers gave the children’s parents a commemorative framed copy of the program cover from the performance, which had a picture of each participant on it, and each parent was invited onstage to accept the gift. “I think the cover was very well thought out,” Shawn said. “I’m sure it made the children feel like movie stars.”

An educator for 35 years, Balthazar has witnessed firsthand the joy her students experience when they realize they can read the written word. “I am a firm believer in the RITE program and I know for a fact that it has helped Rhoads Elementary achieve our exemplary status this year,” she said. 

Meet the New Texas FFA State President, *Allison Grainger*

By Emily Wilkinson



Not every 18-year-old gets to interact with senators and representatives in Washington, D.C., over summer break, but Allison Grainger is not an ordinary teenager. She is the current Texas FFA president, and a recent recipient of a Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ scholarship.

Grainger, now 19, travels around Texas visiting three schools a day, five days a week, talking about and promoting FFA, which is just one of her duties as president. Grainger graduated from Brenham High School in May 2009. She will officially start classes at Texas A&M University in the fall of 2010. Until then, she is enjoying talking to students and teaching them about networking, the importance of which she never fully appreciated until she started her job as president of FFA.

"Sometimes we go to a school and talk to 20 kids. Then, the next school we go to, we will talk to about 400 kids. It varies every single day," Grainger said.

Variety is one of the things she loves about speaking to students, because even though she is essentially giving the same speech every day, the personal experiences are always different. "One time we were at a school in Austin and a kid couldn't pay his local FFA dues, so he offered us his iPod. It was just so sweet," she said.

Grainger had the unique opportunity to attend the State Presidents' Conference in Washington, D.C., where she heard speeches from U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education, Glenn Cummings. Grainger also met with U.S. Rep. Chet Edwards of Texas and U.S. Sen. John Cornyn of Texas — who hinted he had a job for her in Washington once she finished school.

The theme of the 2009 Texas FFA Convention, where Grainger was elected president, was "Unwritten Legacy." Subjects on the agenda included the legacies of leadership, agriculture and service. Grainger is busy at work with her own legacy, and her top goal as president is to identify programs and activities that encourage the participation of minority members in FFA. Grainger said they currently are working with students from Puerto Rico and asking them what it would take for them to get involved and what type of programs would interest them.

Grainger travels with Texas FFA vice president Kaleb McLaurin. All of their travels, however, have not qualified them as good navigators. "One time we were in a town that only had one street in the whole town, and we still got lost," Grainger laughed.

Along with her travel and speaking responsibilities, Grainger's duties include being a state leadership conference vespers chairman and a member of the executive board and the nominating committee for the Texas FFA board of directors.

Grainger first became involved in FFA when she was a high school freshman, and her local chapter had an open spot. She exhibited registered Santa Gertrudis heifers, market steers and commercial heifers. Grainger competed at the state level in FFA contests multiple times, winning the Texas FFA Junior



Prepared Public Speaking and the Senior Creed Speaking contests. She also placed second in both Senior Creed Speaking and Senior Prepared Public Speaking. Grainger was chosen to be on the 2009 National Beef Ambassador team where she helped spread the messages that beef is a safe and wholesome product, as well as the positive

impact the cattle industry has on the economy.

Grainger said that the only downside to being president is that she only gets to go home and see her family once or twice a month.

"There are certainly a lot of people that have shaped me into who I am. My parents and my little sister have always played a huge role in my success," Grainger said.

Another role model was a best friend who knew how to make people laugh, lived life in the moment and appreciated the little things most people take for granted.

"A long time ago, I promised him that I would somehow find a way to change the world," Grainger said. "After he passed away in a car accident, I made it my mission to make him proud and not break my promise."

Grainger certainly is off to a good start on her promise. She plans to study agriculture business and Spanish at Texas A&M University. 🐄

2010



2
TUE

Alan Jackson
6:45 p.m.



with special guest



7
SUN

Jonas Brothers 3:45 p.m.

Demi Lovato



12
FRI

Ford presents

Toby Keith
6:45 p.m.



1
SAT

Blake Shelton
3:45 p.m.



17
WED

Gary Allan
6:45 p.m.



18
THU

Black Eyed Peas
6:45 p.m.

RODEO HOUSTON

Entertainers



3
WED

Dierks Bentley
6:45 p.m.



4
THU

Kenny Chesney
6:45 p.m.



5
FRI


Black Heritage Day sponsored by Kroger

Mary J. Blige
6:45 p.m.




6
SAT

Jason Aldean
3:45 p.m.



8
MON

Tim McGraw
6:45 p.m.




9
TUE

Darius Rucker
6:45 p.m.



10
WED

Rascal Flatts
6:45 p.m.



11
THU

Brad Paisley
6:45 p.m.



3
SAT

Pesado
14
SUN

El Trono De Mexico
3:45 p.m.

Go Tejano Day sponsored by State Farm®



15
MON

Lady Antebellum
6:45 p.m.



16
TUE

Keith Urban
6:45 p.m.



19
FRI

Eli Young Band
6:45 p.m.



20
SAT

Brooks & Dunn
3:45 p.m.



Selena Gomez
3:45 p.m.



21
SUN

Justin Bieber

The Last Rodeo Tour

The HideOut

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY



GARY P. NUNN



O'S...



DJ MUSIC



JOSH WARD BAND



HONKY TONK HEROES



DALE W...



FAMA/TEJANO KNIGHTS



100.3 KILT presents
GRETCHEN WILSON



TWO TONS OF STEEL



JOSH ABBOTT BAND



JAMIE RICHARDS

rodeohouston.com

March 2-21, 2010

WEDNESDAY THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



HEA



MAX STALLING



KEITH FRANK



TODD FRITSCH



WATSON



HONEYBROWNE



JARROD BIRMINGHAM



ZONA JONES



OTT BAND



CANDY COBURN



ELEVEN HUNDRED SPRINGS



SCOTT WIGGINS BAND

- * open 6 p.m. to midnight, Sunday – Thursday
- * open 6 p.m. to 1 a.m., Friday and Saturday
- * weekday entertainers perform at 10:15 p.m.
- * weekend entertainers perform at 8:30 p.m.
- * Live and DJ Music
- * Located on the east side of Reliant Astrodome

From Scholarship Winner

By Becky Lowicki

A scholarship from the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ certainly provides immediate benefits to the recipient. It also has the potential to make a life-long impact on the honoree, who in many cases will come full circle and make a long-lasting contribution to the Show, sometimes bringing along other family members as well. Erika Eriksson knows this process well. As a former scholarship recipient and current chairman of Corral Club – The Hideout Committee, she is living proof of the results of hard work, determination and volunteerism.

“I received a [Show] scholarship in 1985 and also won the Galveston County reserve grand champion with my steer, Rojo,” she said. “With four sisters in one family all attending college at the same time, the financial impact of the scholarship was a huge help for our family and gave me the opportunity to attend Texas A&M University.”

Eriksson earned a bachelor’s degree in 1989 in sociology and mathematics, as well as a master’s degree in 1991 in sociology and statistics.

“Growing up, we always had some sort of animal around us,” Eriksson said. “My daddy was raised on a farm, and we all wanted to raise animals. We started small at first, raising chickens, and then later on we were able to raise steers.”

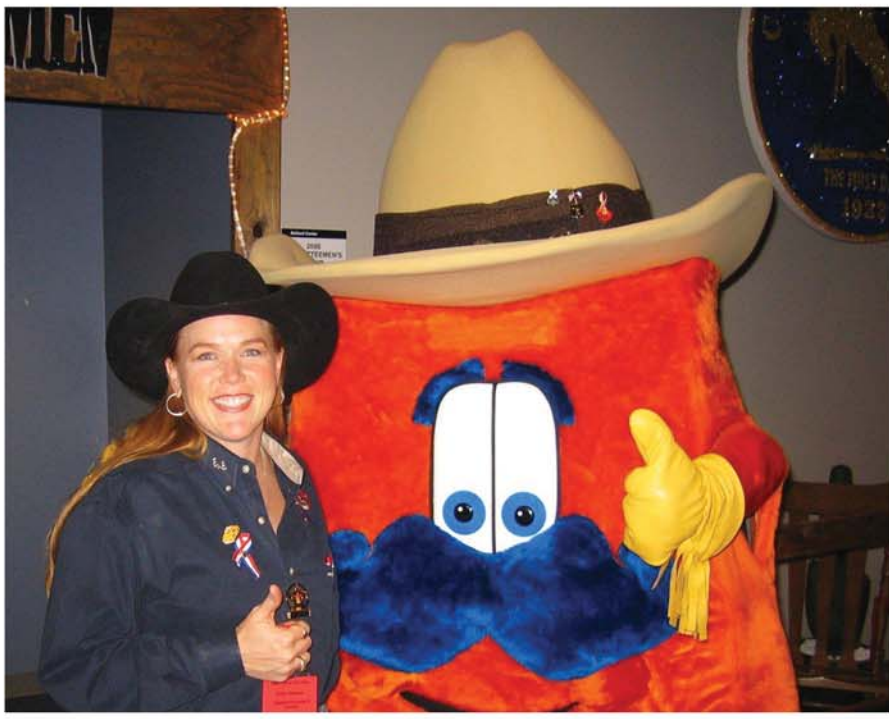
It was her strong family work ethic that instilled in her the sense of responsibility and managing multiple priorities. “We had to get up early in the morning at 5 a.m., and the



first thing we took care of was the animals,” she said. “We didn’t eat breakfast until they were fed. Then we’d go to school, come home in the afternoon after our sports practices and work with the animals, leaving just enough time for homework and then off to bed to get ready to get up and do it all over again the next day.”

The experience of benefiting from a scholarship led her to 18 years of involvement with the Show. “Because of what it did for me, I always knew I wanted to come back and volunteer — push a broom, clean a stall or be the ‘hostess with the mostest’ — it didn’t matter; I just wanted to show my appreciation for the opportunity,” she said.

Her eagerness to get involved cascaded like dominos throughout her immediate and extended family as they also have volunteered in numerous capacities with the Show over the years. Her daddy caught a calf at the 1947 Fat Stock Show. My youngest sister caught a calf in 1989 and was also a scholarship recipient in 1990,” Eriksson said. “Now my whole family is involved. My mom and dad and younger sisters are on the International Committee, my older sister is on another Corral Club committee, a brother-in-law is on the Information Services Committee, and a niece and



to Committee Chairman

Photos courtesy of Erika Eriksson

nephew are both life members — one beginning the day after birth! If you're going to be part of the Eriksson family, you're going to be involved in the Rodeo — it has been a family affair for us and started back in 1947."

As the chairman of a 253-member committee, Eriksson oversees the operations of The Hideout entertainment venue, where visitors get to dance to the music of some of the best up-and-coming country artists. When she is not volunteering for the Show, she works as a manager of risk management services, performing well control surveys on drilling rigs and maintaining statistical databases and document control.

"I have a great team who is like a big family to me, always willing to lend a helping hand, and we also have a good time doing it," Eriksson said. "They'll bend over backwards to help you out, and we have such a team atmosphere. That's why the Show is such a success."



With a maximum capacity of 1,500 people at The Hideout at any given time each night, the average total daily attendance for the 2009 Show was 2,390 people and about 48,848 for the entire 20-day period.

"We want everyone to have a good time when they come to The Hideout, whether you're a gold badge member or first-time visitor at the Show," Eriksson said. "Our goal is to meet and exceed what we did last year, have more people in the club [and] make it an environment where people want to come in, have a great time and return." 🤠



Making a Mark on the World — Fred McClure

By Kristi Van Aken

Frederick D. McClure has enjoyed an illustrious career, and a scholarship from the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ played a pivotal role.

As a student at San Augustine High School, located in the East Texas town of the same name, McClure's leadership skills burgeoned. In 1972, his senior year, Texas FFA members chose him to lead their group as state president, but, just before his election, the young leader was awarded an FFA scholarship from the Show.

When McClure received his scholarship, just 20 scholarships were awarded annually — \$4,000 each — and students were required not only to attend a Texas school but to major in agriculture, as well. McClure chose to attend Texas A&M University.

"I wanted to be a doctor, so I majored in biochemistry, which was at the time — and still is — in the College of Agriculture," said McClure, referring to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M. Though his original goal was a career in medicine, he ultimately earned his bachelor's degree in agricultural economics.

"I left A&M and came to Washington, D.C., to be a legislative assistant to U.S. Sen. John Tower of Texas. Prior to that appointment, I had already decided to pursue a law degree," McClure said.

After graduating with a law degree from Baylor in 1981, McClure started practicing law in Houston for several years, then returned to Washington, D.C., in 1983 — this time as Tower's legislative director. The next year, he became an Associate Deputy U.S. Attorney General. No stranger to Washington or the White House — he had interned for President Gerald Ford in 1975 — McClure proved to be adept at navigating the political terrain. In 1985, President Ronald Reagan appointed him as the Special Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs (Senate). In 1989, McClure secured the position of President George H. W. Bush's Assistant for Legislative Affairs.

Not only did he graduate summa cum laude from Texas A&M in 1976, but also 15 years later he was named a Distinguished Alumnus — the highest honor the school bestows upon a former student. The same year Texas A&M honored him, he became only the 34th person to earn the equally prestigious Outstanding Young Alumni award from Baylor University.

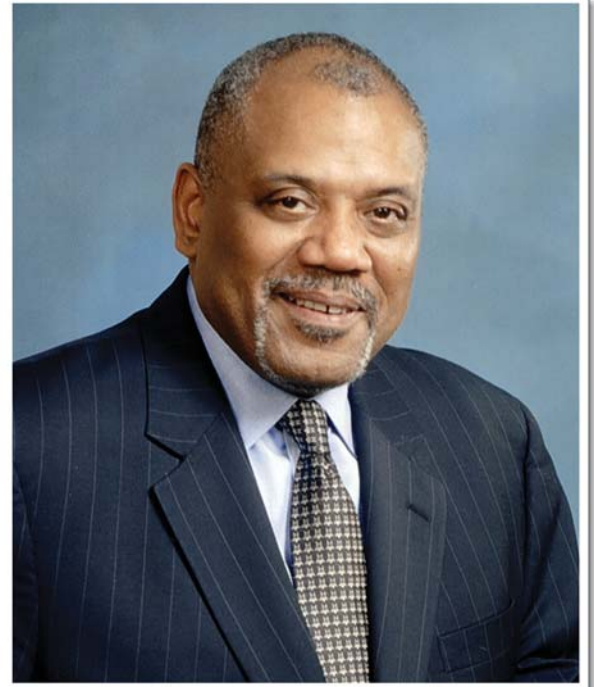


Photo by Elson-Alexandre. © University Club of Washington, D.C.

His public policy experience and political acumen have earned him influential positions in government and the private sector. Then governor-elect, George W. Bush appointed McClure to the State of Texas Inaugural Committee in 1994. In 1995, Bush named him to the Texas A&M Board of Regents to serve a six-year term — two years of which he spent as vice chairman. McClure was chairman of the Cotton Bowl Athletic Association, belonged to the Secretary of Energy's Advisory Board and currently sits on the board of the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation. All of this is in addition to his day job as the managing partner of Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP's Washington, D.C., office.

McClure is a Show life member and an ex-officio board member. He also finds time to publicly acknowledge the organization and advocate its mission.

"I love what the Show represents. I just don't know of another organization that causes a community to come together — from a senior executive in corporate America to a cafeteria worker at an elementary school. There's no other volunteer organization that is so diverse and yet so united in a common goal," McClure said. "I can say this for sure: The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is what I'd consider a stellar citizen of this community."

His own service to the community and the accolades and achievements he has amassed over the years are exceptional. Once a promising, small-town student hoping to make his mark on the world, Fred McClure blossomed into a prolific citizen and volunteer who started out as just a young Texan, like so many others, who had a need that the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was able to meet. 🐾

Business Bootcamp Turns Veterans Into Entrepreneurs

By Scott Bumgartner

Returning from military service overseas can be an adjustment for any soldier. Returning with an injury or wound that has left the veteran living with a disability can present additional challenges. For some veterans, however, these physical disabilities encourage them to take on new business ventures. Thanks to a consortium of universities, including Texas A&M University, and in conjunction with a sponsorship from the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™, a few deserving veterans have developed their ideas through a business boot camp.

The educational support programs of the Show have once again expanded to sponsor a program that embraces Americans who have given of themselves in service to our country. In 2008 and 2009, the Show sponsored the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans With Disabilities through the Texas A&M University Mays Business School. Veterans with disabilities are admitted to this intensive program with hopes that it will kick start their entrepreneurial dreams.

The Mays Business School is one of five select business programs in the United States that offer the EBV programs. Richard H. Lester, the executive director of Texas A&M's Center for New Ventures & Entrepreneurship at Mays Business School, is extremely proud of this program, which

began at Syracuse University in 2007. "I have remained in touch with a number of the alumni and believe there are shining stars among them who will go far in the business world," Lester said.

The 28 graduates of this intensive course have marched forward, better armed to tackle their entrepreneurial dreams. Those dreams have included construction contracting, a dance studio, real estate, an ice cream emporium, private investigations, military pre-enlistment training, a veterans chamber of commerce startup and many more.

The course is completely free and includes transportation, room and board. Veterans with disabilities who have served on active duty in the armed forces since September 2001 are eligible to participate.

"Bootcamp" is used in the program name because of the challenging and intensive course of study. Prior to an eight-day classroom residential portion, each student participates in a three-week online course, complete with textbooks. The 2009 residential program kicked off with a ceremony featuring keynote speaker retired Lt. Col. Tim Maxwell of the U.S. Marines. Maxwell survived a severe traumatic brain injury after being struck by mortar shrapnel while serving in Iraq. His stirring story of perseverance and the importance of



Photos by Center for New Ventures and Entrepreneurship Communications Staff



teamwork were fitting to the challenges the veterans would face in both the classroom and business world.

"It is important that our returning troops feel they are still a part of the American team," Maxwell said. The team concept came from the Texas A&M family that produces the course: staff, students, administration and the Corps of Cadets. The course covers many aspects of business development and management. Part of the ongoing teamwork aspect of the course includes mentorships.

Lester said that one of the standouts of the program is Robert Lee Aiken III, a Marine who was wounded twice by small arms fire while serving in Iraq. His injuries required the insertion of titanium plates and screws in his foot; however, these have not slowed him down since returning to civilian life.

"I had begun to host meetings to draw veteran businessmen together in Dallas when I met John Raftery, a graduate of the course," Aiken said. "John told me about the course and convinced me to enroll."

Raftery owns a construction company in Dallas and had attended the 2007 EBV course held at Syracuse University. "I had most of the skills needed to begin my construction business, but the entrepreneurial course brought all of the pieces of planning and management together into a more understandable and cohesive package," Raftery said.


Aiken said, "The greatest benefit I think the course offered was the introduction to mentors and resources." He said the course has aided him immensely in the early stages of helping to launch the U.S. Veterans Chamber of Commerce, an organization that seeks to advance the economic potential of veteran business owners and entrepreneurs. Aiken does not think his involvement as one of the founders and as the current executive vice president of the chamber will be his final venture in business.



Other praises came from Frank Shaw, who is trying to re-establish his New Orleans-based investigative and protective services company. He had to leave it behind when he was called to active duty. While Shaw was away the business was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

"Upon my arrival, I had predetermined expectations, but, boy, was I amazed," Shaw said. "Not only with the Texas A&M campus, but the caliber of instruction, guest speakers, the open friendliness and warmth shown to me by all. The program offered me not only quality information and training, but a new insight into today's marketplace."

Shaw is one of more than 6 million Americans who served in the military during the Gulf War. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as many as 17 percent of returning veterans will have some disability. The EBV consortium hopes to grow larger to better fill some of the educational needs of returning troops as they enter the business world.

Lester and his staff are planning to hold the course again in August 2010, which will be sponsored by the Show for the third consecutive year. To find out more about this innovative program targeted to help veterans achieve business independence, visit <http://wehner.tamu.edu/ebv>. 



COMMITTEE Spotlights

FEED STORE

By Jodi Sohl

The 2009 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ was a year of “firsts” in many ways, one of which was the innovative addition of the Feed Store Committee. This committee has proved to be of invaluable assistance to Show exhibitors and contestants.

The Feed Store Committee sells and delivers feed, hay, and ice to Show exhibitors and contestants. Frank Clawson, Feed Store Committee chairman, said, “Having the Feed Store means that if an exhibitor loaded up a trailer of livestock to travel to Houston, they don’t have to bring another trailer full of feed and hay.”

The 61-member committee was well received in 2009, handling 7,627 bales of hay; 1,497 bags of ice; 2,820 bags of feed; and 1,299 bedding cubes. It is expected that 2010 will see an increase in the use of this service as more participants become aware of its existence.

The main Feed Store is located in the Show’s warehouse, and in 2010, satellite sales points will be available in Reliant Arena for the horse show as well as in Reliant Center for the livestock show.



INFORMATION SERVICES

By Brandy Divin

Computers touch the lives of so many individuals that it is hard to believe they have existed for less than a century. Businesses rely on them for tasks that, in the past, took days or weeks to complete. Friends and families use computers as a way to keep in touch. The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is no exception. To update members on events and notices, the Show offices use computers to keep track of a myriad of activities, including membership and scheduling. The Information Services Committee works closely with the

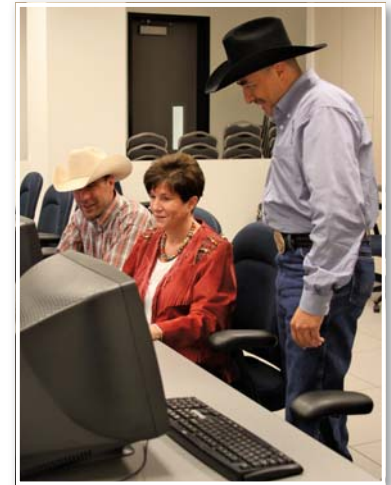
Show’s Information Systems Division to ensure that the Show has all the technology tools to accomplish its goals.

Once a part of the Corral Club Special Services Committee, the Information Services Committee had its inaugural year in 2009. This qualified team of 38 members is made up of information technology professionals from all aspects of the field, many of whom have a long history of volunteering with the Show in other capacities. The committee’s goals include seeking hardware and software solutions to assist all Show committees in resolving their operational issues.

Speaking to his team, Gaston Merino, Information Services Committee chairman, said, “We do not seek glory or recognition. We seek a job well done, and a job well done is no less than 100 percent customer satisfaction.”

Committee members are required to volunteer 40 hours of service, but many contribute an excess of 70 hours.

The committee’s goals are to provide the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and all of its committees the best information services and technology support available in order to streamline and improve their efforts.



JUNIOR COMMERCIAL STEER FEEDING AND MANAGEMENT CONTEST

By Brandy Divin

Since 1954, the Junior Commercial Steer Feeding and Management Contest Committee has been educating young men and women about the technology and the business aspects of buying, raising and selling feedlot cattle. These 4-H and FFA contestants learn skills that help them to become leaders of tomorrow. The Junior Commercial Steer Feeding and Management Contest winners receive a variety of prizes, including a Ford truck for first place, computers for second through fourth, and cash awards for all other placements. In 2009, cash prizes valuing \$90,000 were awarded.

COMMITTEE

Spotlights

The program of raising commercial steers to exhibit and sell at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ is a rigorous one. Participants learn how to manage feedlots, keep meticulous records, and learn about animal health, welfare, and nutrition. They also participate in interviews and quizzes that test the knowledge they have gained. The real-world experience they achieve is invaluable. The members of the Junior Commercial Steer Feeding and Management Committee are there to help them each step of the way.

Made up of seven subcommittees, the committee has come a long way in 55 years. Starting with 10 members, it now consists of 119 hard-working volunteers. Each subcommittee has duties that keep this well-oiled machine on track. The record books subcommittee is responsible for teaching the criteria for keeping record books and answering contestants questions year-round. The interview subcommittee posts sample questions online, and its members are available to answer questions. The quiz subcommittee posts examples online so exhibitors can practice. There also are subcommittees for fundraising, Show-time logistics, public relations, and grading and weighing. Each of these subcommittees is essential to putting on the massive three-day competition.

Ernie Davis, committee chairman, said, "The committee has a proud heritage, and the volunteers are very proud of the contest and the products that have come from it." Many committee members were past winners and contestants.

"We take great pride in the citizens, the men and women, this contest produces. If you look around the Texas agriculture community, you will find many of our former contestants in prominent leadership roles," Davis said.



CORRAL CLUB - RELIANT STADIUM COMMITTEEMEN'S CLUB

By Jodi Sohl

The latest addition to the Corral Club family is the Reliant Stadium Committeemen's Club. Formed in 2009, this club provides a place within the stadium for all committee members to relax and enjoy the Show. The club is located on the north end of level 5 in Reliant Stadium and is open daily from one hour before RODEOHOUSTON™ performances until one hour after the concert ends.

"Being a part of the inaugural year of the Reliant Stadium Committeemen's Club in 2009 was exciting," said Victor Castaneda Jr., committee chairman. "With our 2010 management team in place, our vision is to be the Corral Club of choice for its members and guests by providing high-quality service in a comfortable environment, supporting the overall mission, goals and purpose of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo."

The club's ample seating and video monitors allow committee volunteers wearing gold badges to see the Show, while also offering them an opportunity to enjoy food available for purchase. This is one of the few clubs where food is allowed. It gives volunteers a chance to eat, socialize and relax without having to miss the Rodeo or concert action.

Currently, the Reliant Stadium Committeemen's Club Committee has 75 members but hopes to grow in 2010.

"We encourage and invite all [Show volunteers] to come up to visit us and enjoy the atmosphere and the city's skyline view offered by our club," Castaneda said. "Working with [Show] staff and based on committeemen feedback, we anticipate implementing changes to continuously improve our guests' comfort and experience in the years to come, taking Corral Club to a new level."





RODEO

Roundup

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS INFORMATION & UPDATES

➔ Carnival Warehouse Names Show North America's Top Event

With an attendance of 1,890,332, Carnival Warehouse named the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ the top fair in the continent for 2009. This is the first time the Show took the number one spot on the list, which has previously been held by the Texas State Fair. Overall, the Top 50 North American Fairs welcomed 40,316,926 guests in 2009.



➔ Houston History Magazine Spotlight

The Fall 2009 issue of the University of Houston's "Houston History" celebrates the history of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. The issue chronicles the numerous rodeo and livestock exhibition events, scholarship recipients, School Art winners, past Souvenir Program and cowboy artist Mark Storm, and the superstar entertainers. The issue can be purchased by e-mailing houstonhistory@uh.edu or calling 713.743.3123.



➔ Show Wins Awards From Texas Association of Fairs and Events

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo received several awards from the Texas Association of Fairs and Events. The Show won first place for the Best Web site; first place for the Best Newspaper Insert/Supplement; first place for Best T-shirt design; first place for Best Pin, Badge, or Button; second place for Best Promotional Poster; first place for Best Newsletter ("Bowlegged H" Magazine); first place for Best Program/Brochure/Flyer-4 or more colors; second place for Best Other Merchandise (School Art note card and envelope set); first place for Best Premium Book; and second place for the Best Miscellaneous Printed Material for the 2009 Visitors Guide.

➔ Great Day for Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was featured on Great Day Houston, KHOU Channel 11, as part of the Dec. 3 "The Best of Texas" episode. The show featured select wines from the 2010 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo International Wine Competition, plus several junior livestock exhibitors from Texas FFA chapters, and their animals. Two heifers, a goat and a lamb were live in the studio! The show highlighted how the Show gives back to Texas through scholarships and promoting agricultural practices.

➔ 2010 Downtown Rodeo Parade

In celebration of Texas Medical Center's 65th anniversary, Richard Wainerdi, P.E., Ph.D., president and CEO of Texas Medical Center (corporation), and James H. "Red" Duke Jr., M.D., trauma surgeon, professor of clinical sciences at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston, and founder and medical director of Life Flight at Memorial Hermann - TMC, will represent the 48 institutions of the Texas Medical Center as the parade kicks off the 78th Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Two children from each of the four children's hospitals in the Texas Medical Center will join them along the parade route.

➔ Fox Sports Houston On Television and Online

In 2010, Fox Sports Houston will air the preview special "Trail to the Rodeo." The special will air Feb. 7 through March 2, on Fox Sports Houston and also will air on Fox Sports Southwest Feb. 7, 18, 20, 21 and 25. Check listings for times.

Beginning March 3, Fox Sports Houston will air 30 minute segments profiling RodeoHouston and the BP Super Series athletes, and highlighting each performance. Select weekdays during the run of the Show, March 2 - 21, these segments will air on Fox Sports Houston or Fox Sports Southwest. Check listings for segment air date, time and channel.

If you have to miss a performance of the Rodeo, visit www.foxsportshouston.com to see the action-packed Rodeo online. The March 2 - 16 performances will be available through foxsportshouston.com. The live broadcast will feature all rodeo action, but not the star entertainer.

➔ Send Us Your Story Ideas

Have an idea for a "Bowlegged H" Magazine story? Send a brief description of the story and contact information to rouse@rodeohouston.com with "Bowlegged H" Magazine Story Idea" in the subject line.



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