



"BOWLEGGED H" MAGAZINE

WINTER 2016 • VOL. XXIV NO. 4 • HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO™



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2016 Junior Breeding
Beef Heifer Show



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AGRICULTURE

EDUCATION

ENTERTAINMENT

WESTERN HERITAGE



This is the season... Show season, that is! We're just months away from the 85th anniversary of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™, and it's a rewarding time for me as I get to meet and visit with so many of you during the committee meetings and events scheduled at this time.

In September, the Show announced its annual educational commitment, and I am proud to tell you that the Executive Committee approved another facet of this commitment in late October — moving forward, our scholarships will increase to \$20,000 each! As college tuition costs continue to rise, we felt this was the right direction for our program to move in order to best support the youth of Texas. That means that our annual commitment is now more than \$26 million for 2017, and since 1932, the Show has committed more than \$430 million to youth and education. Congratulations to all of you, as this commitment represents the payoff for all of your hard work. Learn more about the annual commitment and the wide variety of programs receiving grant money from the Show on pages 10 and 11 of this issue.

The Show also strives to be an active part of the Houston community. On Saturday, Nov. 12, the Show served as a diamond level sponsor for the first-ever MD Anderson Boot Walk to End Cancer™. A short, 1.2-mile walk around the Texas Medical Center, Boot Walk raised money to support MD Anderson's mission of ending cancer in Texas, the nation and the world. A number of the Show's volunteers and staff members participated in the event and are continuing to raise funds through the end of the year.

We have many exciting events in

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

the months ahead, including the 2017 RODEOHOUSTON® entertainer announcement, which is set for Monday, Jan. 9, at 12:05 a.m. Stay up late with us and follow along with the Show on social media. Use #RODEOHOUSTON, bookmark rodeohouston.com on your browser, and set your alarm clock — it's going to be a great 2017 Show!

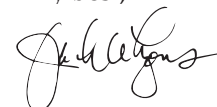
Also, the Show will once again be in Las Vegas during the National Finals Rodeo, Dec. 1 – 10 at the special RODEOHOUSTON booth located in Cowboy Christmas at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Thousands of entries for the Show's many competitions are flowing in for the 2017 event, including the Rodeo Uncorked!® International Wine Competition, junior livestock shows and mutton bustin' inside NRG Stadium. It's exciting to see the anticipation building among our exhibitors and participants!

As always, I want to thank you, my fellow volunteers and Show members, for your dedication and commitment to this organization. You represent the heart and the soul of this organization, and I am honored to lead you in my final year as chairman of the board.

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season, and I look forward to seeing you around the halls of NRG Center as we approach the best time of the year! 🤠

All my best,



Jack A. Lyons

Second Chance To Shine



BY ASHLEY WRIGHT
Photos by Meredith Flaherty

As an experienced equine enthusiast with a passion for training show horses, Amber Keller of Alvin, Texas, is no stranger to the equestrian world. While browsing Facebook one day, she stumbled upon a post about a horse named Molly that was available for rescue in Louisiana.

Due to Molly's small size, she was used for cow sorting. Once she was done with her cow sorting days, she was sent to the feed lot and had only days left to live, as she was scheduled for slaughter.

When Keller originally saw the post, she believed someone would quickly adopt the undersized mare. Several days later, when Keller realized the horse was still up for adoption and had less than 24 hours left to live, she took action. She borrowed \$650 from a friend, and within 24 hours, Molly had a new owner. It was Keller's first time to rescue a horse.

According to Keller, it took several months to gain Molly's trust, as she was severely malnourished at nearly 200 pounds underweight, suffering from stomach ulcers and was covered with permanent saddle sores. Keller nursed her back to health, and in a few months, she saw progress in Molly's ability to trust both Keller and her children. In August 2015, after extensive training and tireless commitment, Keller decided Molly was ready to be leased to

a rider.

Erin Pantalone was in the market for a horse for her 11-year-old daughter, Keelie Maier. When Pantalone saw Molly's listing, she wanted to know more. "There is something about this horse that draws you to her," Pantalone said. She knew that Molly, with her gentle demeanor, was a good fit for her daughter, Keelie, who only had recently started riding.

After training with Keller and riding Molly for several weeks, Pantalone wanted to purchase the horse for her daughter, as leasing Molly was simply not enough. In September, Pantalone surprised Keelie with the horse as a birthday gift. The two have been inseparable ever since. In late 2015, Keelie asked Keller if she and Molly could compete in the horse show at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™. "I wanted her to know it would be a tough competition," Keller said. "I tried to be realistic with her." To everyone's delight, Keelie and Molly excelled at the Show, taking home four ribbons.

Keelie and Molly will be returning to the Show in 2017, hoping for more ribbons, trophies and titles. Molly was given a second chance to shine, and Keller is proving that horses can come back from just about anything with a little tender loving care. 🐾

THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT THIS HORSE THAT
draws you to her.

- ERIN PANTALONE



NOW

Hands up, utensils down” is a phrase heard most frequently on popular cooking competition shows. Those words were spoken at the 2016 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ during the second annual 4-H and FFA Food Challenge Contest. Similar to the shows on television, the contest gives teams of students a mystery basket of ingredients and just 40 minutes to create a balanced and nutritious dish that is presented to a panel of judges.

The competition begins in the morning with nearly 85 teams from throughout the Houston area and Texas in junior and senior divisions trying to make it to the second round, where

the best eight teams compete for first, second and third place in their respective divisions. The students practice throughout the year for the competition and take it very seriously.

“We prepare for the competitions by doing mock food challenges,” said Will Whitaker, 15, a member of the “Come and Taste It” team that won third place in the senior division at the 2016 Show. “Parents bring us ingredients and we have to make a dish using those items. We don’t know what the ingredients are, but the parents do.”

The Show’s competition strives to make it as close to chef-style preparation as possible. “Instead of canned pineapple,



WE'RE COOKING!

BY LEIGH EVANS

Photos by Meredith Flaherty

we'll give them a real one, and earlier, the teams received ginger roots instead of ground ginger," said Courtney Dodd, co-superintendent of the Food Challenge Contest.

"I think the hardest ingredient was the ginger root [because] we'd never actually cooked with it," Will said. "It was interesting to try and work through how to make a dish incorporating ginger."

One interesting twist to the competition is that, unlike most food competitions, the Food Challenge Contest is not judged on taste. Once the cooking is complete, each team has five minutes to present its dish to a panel of judges. Courtney Latour, co-superintendent of the contest, said the categories

the judges focus on the steps the contestants took, their food safety steps, their nutrition knowledge, the balance of the plate and cost analysis. The teams prepare presentations and put on quite a show for the judges, showing off their knowledge of food facts, nutrition data and the occasion at which the dish would be best utilized.

The fun-filled event is relatively new to the Show's contest schedule, and it is quickly becoming a favorite of many. Will plans to participate again in 2017, and said, "I do a lot of food-related activities and the Food Challenge is one of my favorites." 🍴





BIG

and small,

THEY CARE FOR THEM ALL

BY SANDIE MARRINUCCI

Photos by Lisa Norwood

Starting her day at dawn, Dr. Leslie Easterwood, one of the two official veterinarians for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™, rushes through the crowd to help a heifer give birth. A few minutes later, a new life enters the world looking for nourishment, joining 20 other calves born in the Oxy AGVENTURE Birthing Center. It was a happy moment in a long but satisfying day at the world's largest livestock show for this seasoned veterinarian.

Later that evening, her counterpart in NRG Stadium, Dr. Gregg Knape, is perched by the bull chutes ready to spring into action. If a horse, bull or calf needs his help during the RODEOHOUSTON® performance, Knape's response has to be immediate and safe for everyone concerned.

"As an independent [organization], we maintain a level of professional care for the animals that often exceeds other shows and rodeos," Knape said, as he watches each animal for signs of injury or illness.

For Knape, the bulk of his work occurs before the performance inside NRG Stadium. This is when his focus is on maintaining the health of these livestock athletes. Animals that require treatment are brought to his private practice located just 30 minutes away from the Show grounds, where hydraulics and specialized equipment facilitate further examination.

Such is a day in the life of a vet at the Show. From a tiny, newborn piglet to a steer that can weigh a hefty 1,500 pounds, all of the animals, both big and small, are the wards of the Show's two senior veterinarians. Easterwood and Knape both hail from Alvin, Texas, have degrees from Texas A&M University, and were each previous Show scholarship recipients.

"This is my 30th year with the Show, and I can't imagine doing anything else during spring break," Easterwood said,

as she juggles two cell phones to answer calls for assistance around the grounds. "There are many rewarding moments, but for me, interacting with the kids and their animals is the best part. That, and working with volunteers who do the lion's share of the work. It's a very positive, uplifting experience."

In addition to providing veterinary services, Easterwood verifies health certificates and conducts drug testing for all market livestock. Nearly 800 samples were processed during the 2016 Show with the help of more than 75 volunteer veterinarians and vet techs on the Veterinarian Committee. All samples are processed, sent to the lab for evaluation and properly stored according to regulations developed by the Show, which has one of the most established livestock drug testing protocols of any livestock show in the nation.

These two veterinarians selflessly give their time, talent and compassion to countless individuals and their beloved animals during their 30-plus days on assignment. It is a chance to give back to the organization that helped them launch their careers. Easterwood said, "The scholarship I received helped me to achieve my dream of becoming a veterinarian; it's a powerful motivator for me to pay it forward."

For Knape, the Show helped him with a scholarship and a life partner. "I took my wife on our first date to the Houston Fat Stock Show," he said. "It was the beginning of something great in so many ways. We've been married for 40 years, and [the Show] is still a big part of our life together. It's a rewarding experience, and one of the greatest programs in the country to benefit youth. What a privilege to be a part of." 🐾



Photo by Lisa Norwood

DR. LESLIE EASTERWOOD



Photo by Lisa Norwood

DR. GREGG KNAPE



WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR WHEN TAKING A SELFIE?

Paula, Mimi, Jennifer, Lizzie, Allison & Georgia

Spring and Paradise, Texas

Paula: "My best smile."

Jennifer: "[The] right angle to make my face look thinner."

Lizzie: "Good lighting."

Allison: "[The] right expression for how you are feeling."

Georgia: "Good partners."



The "Bowlegged H" Magazine selfie patrol set out to find out what inspires Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ attendees to take a self-picture, aka a selfie, and what it takes to get that perfect shot.

CAUGHT YOU TAKIN' A SELFIE

BY CRYSTAL McKEON

Photos by Debbie Porter

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR WHEN TAKING A SELFIE?

Leandra, Cheran & Niah

Baytown, Texas

Cheran: "I picked this spot because I wanted the bull in the background."



Lizabeth & Brandon

Houston

"We wanted a good backdrop for the selfies. We took a lot of selfies at the petting zoo with the llamas."



Maddi & Kinleigh

Pearland, Texas

"We take selfies to get what is in the background or to post to Facebook."



Annie & Taylor

McKinney, Texas

"We took a picture with our food to document our delicious food choices!"



Christian & Braiden

New Caney, Texas

"We take selfies when it feels like the right time and in the moment."



Mike & Catherine

*Concord,
North Carolina*

"I made a selfie stick... I attach it to my GoPro and take panoramic pictures, pictures over crowds, 30 pictures at a time, and selfies."



Heather & Matthew

Houston

"We try to find selfies that look exciting and fun."

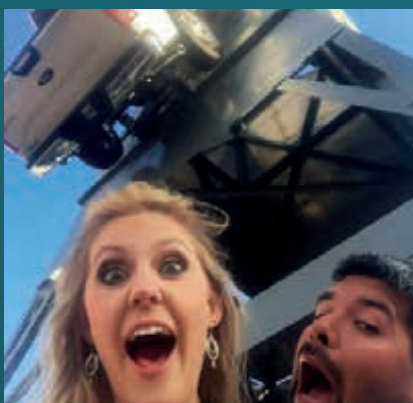


Photo courtesy of fan

Gina

Richmond, Texas

"I was taking selfies on the Ferris wheel to avoid being scared because I am afraid of heights."

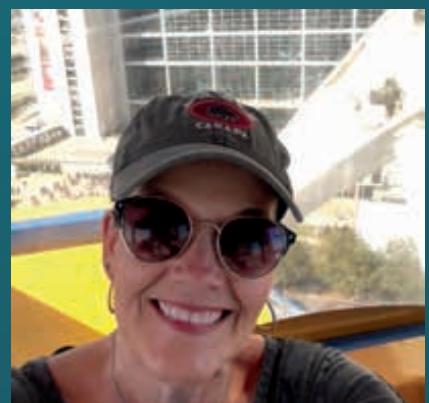


Photo courtesy of fan



2017 EDUCATIONAL COMMITMENT

SCHOLARSHIPS.....	\$14,272,000
JUNIOR SHOW EXHIBITORS/CALF SCRAMBLE PARTICIPANTS.....	\$7,653,750
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM GRANTS	\$3,614,360
GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS.....	\$525,400
TOTAL.....	\$26,065,510



SCHOLARSHIPS

Metropolitan: \$4,760,000.....	238, \$20,000 scholarships
Opportunity: \$2,280,000.....	114, \$20,000 scholarships
Texas 4-H: \$1,400,000.....	70, \$20,000 scholarships
Texas FFA: \$1,400,000.....	70, \$20,000 scholarships
Area Go Texan: \$1,580,000.....	79, \$20,000 scholarships
School Art: \$300,000.....	15, \$20,000 scholarships
Exhibitors: \$600,000.....	30, \$20,000 scholarships
Hildebrand Family: \$300,000.....	approximately 15, \$20,000 scholarships
Military: \$100,000.....	Five, \$20,000 scholarships
Achievement: \$1,200,000.....	100, current college junior and senior Show scholars
Technical Scholarship Funding: \$246,000.....	Funds awarded to colleges/institutions for disbursement
Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine: \$96,000.....	Six, \$16,000 scholarships
Texas Christian University Ranch Management Program: \$10,000.....	Four, \$2,500 scholarships



Since its beginning in 1932, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ has committed more than \$430 million to education.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Angelo State University
Sam Houston State University
Stephen F. Austin State University
Sul Ross State University
Tarleton State University
Texas A&M University

Texas A&M University – Commerce
Texas A&M University – Kingsville
Texas State University
Texas Tech University
West Texas A&M University

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM GRANTS

AFA
Alley Theatre
Archway Academy
Barbara Bush Houston
Literacy Foundation
Baylor Research Advocates for
Student Scientists – BRASS
Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star
Books Between Kids
Borderlands Research Institute –
Sul Ross State University
Breakthrough Houston
Brookwood Community
Camp for All
The Center for Hearing and Speech
Children's Museum of Houston
Comp-U-Dopt
Crime Stoppers of Houston
Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory
School of Houston
ESCAPE Family Resource Center
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto
Glassell School of Art
Greater Houston Partnership –
Opportunity Houston 2.0
H.E.A.R.T – Housing, Entrepreneurship
and Readiness Training
Harris County Hospital
District Foundation
The Hobby Center Foundation
Houston Area Women's Center
Houston Ballet Foundation
Houston Grand Opera
Houston Hispanic Forum
Houston SPCA
Houston Symphony
iWrite
KIPP Houston
Medilife of Houston
Memorial Park Conservancy
Miracle Farm
NASA – Texas Aerospace Scholars

Neighborhood Centers
Neuhaus Education Center
Prairie View A&M University
Project GRAD Houston
Reasoning Mind
The Rise School of Houston
Schreiner University –
Western Art Academy Workshop
Shriners Hospitals for Children –
Houston and Galveston
SIRE Therapeutic Horsemanship
Small Steps Nurturing Center
Spring ISD Elementary Reading Program
Teach For America – Houston
Texas 4-H Youth
Development Foundation
Texas A&M University:
• Beef Cattle Short Course
• Bush School of Government and Public Service
• Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans
• Legacy of Ranching Exhibit
Texas FFA Association
Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation
Texas Ranger Association Foundation
Texas Southern University
Texas Tech College of
Agriculture Sciences
Texas Wildlife Association Foundation
Theatre Under The Stars
The University of Texas at Austin – UTeach
To Educate All Children – TEACH
United Way
University of Houston Clear Lake –
Center for Autism and Developmental
Disabilities
UTHealth
Writers in the Schools
Yellowstone Academy
YMCA of Greater Houston



EVERY TRAIL LEADS TO HOUSTON

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KEN SCOTT

Sixty-four years ago, four men and a horse-drawn wagon ventured to Houston from Brenham, Texas, as part of the Salt Grass Trail Ride. At the time, no one knew the trip would launch an enduring Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ tradition that would expand throughout the state and beyond its borders.

Every February, riders from 13 trail rides converge on Houston from every direction to ride in the Downtown Rodeo Parade held the Saturday before the Show starts. The trail rides vary in length — between 70 and 386 miles — with a different number of riders on each — between 35 and 1,400 — but they all showcase Western heritage. Each trail ride is its own entity, separate from the Show, but each shares in the mission to promote Western heritage and help kick off the world’s largest livestock show and most innovative rodeo every year. “Bowlegged H” Magazine made a visit to all 13 trail rides along their journeys in 2016 to provide a quick look into what makes each of them unique and historical.



Salt Grass Trail Ride

Founded: January 1952 • **Riders:** 1,200 • **Wagons:** 25

“We are the granddaddy of them all, as the story is told,” trail boss Mitch Morgan said. “Once you’ve participated in the trail ride, you continue to return because once it’s in your blood, you feel it’s a part of you. We all become family!”



Starts: Cat Spring, Texas
Length: 103 miles

Sam Houston Trail Ride

Founded: February 1955 • **Riders:** 100 – 125 • **Wagons:** 8

“We have a great group of folks every year,” trail boss Earl Blackmon said. “We are like family, but we welcome new people, too. We enjoy continuing the heritage of our ride, riding horses together and supporting the Show and all the great things they do for the communities.”



Starts: Montgomery, Texas
Length: 70 miles





Old Spanish Trail Ride

Founded: January 1956 • **Riders:** 50 – 100 • **Wagons:** 0

"I have been a member [of Old Spanish Trail Ride] for 51 years," trail boss Morris Brown said. "I started riding as a teenager with my father, who was one of the original 16 riders. The trail rides are important because they continue the Western tradition of traveling by horseback or wagon to a distant destination. Most of us are three- and four- generation riders, but we do welcome new riders. One unique feature of our ride is that we do not have wagons, only horseback riders."

OST

Starts: Logansport, Louisiana
Length: 216 miles

Prairie View Trail Ride

Founded: January 1957 • **Riders:** 200 • **Wagons:** 7

"Although we have riders from every age group, we really encourage youth participation because they are the trail riders of the future," trail boss Myrtis Dightman Jr. said. "Plus, we are the only ride closely affiliated with a college [Prairie View A&M University]. We provide funds for scholarships and education."



Starts: Hempstead, Texas
Length: 89 miles

PV



Valley Lodge Trail Ride

Founded: January 1959 • **Riders:** 150 • **Wagons:** 9

"We are called 'The Champagne Trail Ride' because we try to do everything first class, and we mostly do," trail boss Jim Hubbard said. "Our ride has two priorities: No. 1 is safety and No. 2 is fun. We encourage a lot of families and children to participate each year and we think that's what it's all about."

VL

Starts: Brookshire, Texas
Length: 71.5 miles

Texas Independence Trail Ride

Founded: January 1961 • **Riders:** 100 – 150 • **Wagons:** 8

"When our riders and wagons gather for the ride each year, we all become one," trail boss Jeff Simpson said. "From start to finish, we are a family and the camaraderie is strong. We teach the youngsters about safety, scouting, taking care of the animals and also about keeping the traditions going from one generation to the next."



Starts: Brazoria, Texas
Length: 100 miles

TI



The Spanish Trail Ride

Founded: January 1961 • **Riders:** 150 • **Wagons:** 10

"The Spanish Trail ride has a real family atmosphere. We have riders that have been with us for almost 40 years," trail boss Joe Cantrell said. "We were thrilled to help one of our riders celebrate his eighth year of being cancer-free on our 2016 ride."

ST

Starts: Shepherd, Texas
Length: 109 miles

Southwestern Trail Ride

Founded: January 1973 • **Riders:** 250 • **Wagons:** 10

"I have been involved for 34 years," trail boss Rosetta Gray said. "My first ride I rode in the wagon, but it's been horseback ever since. I have served as president and trail boss now for eight years, the longest term for a lady trail boss, which makes us unique. We have been blazing the trails for 44 years and people should know that it's not just about riding a horse; it's keeping the history of the old West alive. It is also about raising money for scholarships to help kids go further in life."



Starts: West Columbia, Texas
Length: 100 miles

SWN



Los Vaqueros Trail Ride

Founded: February 1973 • **Riders:** 50 • **Wagons:** 4

"It's our people who really make our ride," trail boss David Ramirez said. "We cover almost 400 miles across beautiful South Texas scenery in 21 days. We may not [be much different] than the other rides, but we come the farthest and have lots of fun."

LV

Starts: Hidalgo, Texas
Length: 386 miles

Texas Cattlemen's Trail Ride

Founded: January 1986 • **Riders:** 45 • **Wagons:** 4

"We visit a school each day of the ride," assistant trail boss Ricky Nelson said. "Most of the kids have never seen anything like a trail ride. For us, the ride is family, respect and preserving our heritage and showing the history of days gone by. It just becomes a part of you."



Starts: Magnolia, Texas
Length: 70 miles

TC



Northeastern Trail Ride

Founded: 1990 • **Riders:** 300 – 350 • **Wagons:** 10

"We try to enlighten folks on our history and culture," trail boss Anthony Bruno said. "As a tribute to the Buffalo Soldiers' tradition of circling the wagons for protection, we circle our wagons each morning and pray for strength and a safe ride."

NE

Starts: Cheek, Texas

Length: 109 miles

Mission Trail Ride

Founded: January 1991 • **Riders:** 65 • **Wagons:** 4

"At the beginning of our ride each year we honor those members who have passed away and dedicate that year's ride to their families," assistant trail boss William Smeltz said. "We also honor those who have been a part of our past, including heroes Juan Seguin and General Zaragoza. As we journey to Houston we embrace our family connections and the friendships we have created."



Starts: San Antonio

Length: 239 miles

M



Southwest Trail Ride

Founded: January 1993 • **Riders:** 275 • **Wagons:** 14

"I have been trail riding over 35 years," trail boss Alex Prince said. "One of the best things has been watching kids as young as 4 and 5 years old grow up trail riding. Our ride gives the entire community the opportunity to see people participate who look like them because we have riders from all walks of life — doctors, lawyers, educators, ranchers, business owners, politicians, you name it — and all titles are dropped and everyone is equal."

SW

Starts: Rosenberg, Texas

Length: 123 miles

13 Trail Rides

Keep an eye on rodeohouston.com for more information on when the 2017 trail rides will make their way to Houston. You can find out when they will be in your neck of the woods and be sure to wave as they mosey on by. All trail rides will converge on Memorial Park, Friday, March 3. Come help us welcome them with a big smile and a friendly face.

BY THE NUMBERS: SHOW-TIME VEHICLES

BY SANDY HOLLINGSWORTH SMITH

It takes a lot of vehicles and even more organization to help thousands of volunteers do their jobs during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™. And, that job goes to the 225-member Asset Distribution Committee.

In the weeks prior to guests arriving at NRG Park, the Asset Distribution Committee is hard at work ordering, receiving and processing the hundreds of requested golf carts, ATVs, utility vehicles and courtesy vehicles needed by staff, volunteers and contractors.

Leasing companies start delivering vehicles the first week of February and continue until the week before the World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest begins. Each vehicle must be accepted, inventoried and

tagged so that the committee knows who has possession of the vehicle and its location, and to confirm that the requested vehicle is available at the time it is needed. Even vehicles that do not belong to the Show are tagged to ensure that there are no lost carts. Each volunteer on the Asset Distribution Committee must attend inventory training and work four shifts, totaling 34 hours, during the 49 days the committee operates.

According to Freda Guzman, the most recent past committee chairman, in 2016 the committee received requests for 877 carts from more than 100 different committees, vendors, contractors and Show staff. Each request was placed into a matrix to determine the actual

number and type of carts needed, since a cart requested for use in the first week of the Show can be used for a different purpose in the final week. Ultimately, 633 carts of 10 different varieties, including ATVs; light- and heavy-duty carts with two, four, or six seats; and even carts that are raised higher off the ground, were ordered. The carts were used by security personnel, as ambulance carts, as transportation for goods and materials, and for Show officials who are on-site daily.

In addition to golf carts, the committee is responsible for tracking 120 courtesy vehicles from Ford used to transport entertainers, Show dignitaries and special guests to and from the grounds. 🚗

225

VOLUNTEERS

49

DAYS

877

CART
REQUESTS

633

CARTS

10

TYPES OF
CARTS

120

FORD
COURTESY
VEHICLES

7

TYPES
OF FORD
VEHICLES

18

SHOW
DEPARTMENTS
SERVED



101

COMMITTEES/
VENDORS/
CONTRACTORS
SERVED

12

POLICE
SCOOTERS

5

AMBULANCE
CARTS

WHAT'S IN A DAY'S WORK





Canaan Dreibrodt

His alarm clock rings loudly at 4:30 a.m., but there is no time for snoozing. It is the day he and his students have been working toward for months...show day.

For Canaan Dreibrodt, agricultural science teacher at Cypress Falls High School in Northwest Houston, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ represents more than entertainment. It is the culmination of his students' hard work and devotion to raising livestock projects for months, as well as an opportunity to bring agricultural education to life outside the classroom.

"Livestock shows and raising animals instill lifelong lessons into kids that can serve them well throughout their lives," Dreibrodt said. "They learn how to be responsible, self-disciplined and how to work hard to accomplish goals they have set for themselves."

Dreibrodt supervised five FFA students at the 2016 Show, including steer, heifer and swine exhibitors. He was on the Show grounds for 10 days, including during the school's spring break when most of his colleagues enjoyed time off. However, that did not trouble Dreibrodt, who has been passionate about the agriculture industry his entire life.

"I grew up on a farm in Zorn, Texas, and was always involved in agriculture," Dreibrodt said. "I was an FFA member myself in high school, competing in livestock judging and exhibiting steers and barrows at shows like the Houston Livestock Show™. My undergraduate degree was in animal science, but I decided to pursue my passion of helping others understand the industry I love, so I got a master's degree in agricultural education before starting my career at Cy-Falls."

Suburban Cypress, Texas, looks quite different from Dreibrodt's rural roots, and the students in his classroom are much more disconnected from the agriculture industry than he was at their age. However, he sees that as an opportunity.

"Sharing knowledge about

an industry that many of them may have never been exposed to otherwise is really rewarding," Dreibrodt said. "Agriculture is so important to our lives, but its importance is often overlooked. If my students walk away with a better grasp of how agriculture impacts them daily, then I am doing my part to help build a future with young people who have respect for the industry and hopefully a desire to work in it one day."

He thinks experiential learning opportunities like showing livestock increase chances of achieving just that, and his students' parents agree.

"We had no experience with livestock before," Sheila Cardona said, whose daughter, Gabby, exhibited a barrow at the 2016 Show. "Showing pigs exposes her to a whole different world and teaches her what country life is about."

The lessons Gabby, a sophomore, has learned at a young age are sure to serve her well beyond the show ring and into her future.

"Showing pigs has taught me that you have to work hard if you really want something to happen," Gabby said. "You have to put in the time and effort and, even if you don't win, don't stop trying."

The Cardonas are one of many families across the nation who look to their agricultural science teachers for advice on raising livestock.

"Mr. Dreibrodt tells me what I need to feed my pigs, how I need to walk them, and gives me advice on how to care for them," Gabby said. "Without him, I wouldn't know what to do."

Her mom echoes that. "If it weren't for her ag teacher, she wouldn't be showing," Cardona said.

So, while his spring break might consist of early mornings and late nights running back and forth between the cattle and pig barns in NRG Center, to ensure his students and their animals are as prepared as possible for their time in the show ring, it is worth it to Dreibrodt and thousands of other agricultural science teachers — all in a day's work to help mold a future generation that appreciates agriculture. 🐷

HOWDY,, NEW YORK!

Houston Takes Center Stage at Vivienne Tam Show

BY AMY TANNER

Photos courtesy of Asian Wives Club

As members and volunteers of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™, we know firsthand all that the Show and Houston have to offer. To put the Show's vast reach into perspective, more than 2.4 million people walked through its gates last year — that's more than one-third the population of the greater Houston metropolitan area. And, it is the opportunities available to the people who live here that make Houston one of the most diverse cities in the nation.

It should come as no surprise that the world is taking note of our extraordinary city, including international fashion designer Vivienne Tam. Chinese-born Tam first visited Houston in 2008 and was drawn to the people, food, music, museums, languages and cultures she discovered. On her last visit to Houston in June 2016, she also found the inspiration for her spring 2017 collection, which debuted at the famous New York Fashion Week in September.

Tam was a guest of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau. At a reception hosted by the Asian Chamber of Commerce, Tam met Joel Cowley, president and chief executive officer of the Show. Tam complimented Cowley's "Bowlegged H" lapel pin, which he then gave to her as he always does when someone admires the pin, and he explained a little bit about the Show. Fascinated, Tam returned to her studio in New York City and began designing fabric using the iconic "Bowlegged H," along with several other notable Houston logos. These designs were transformed into an entire collection inspired by the city of Houston. "Partnering with a world-renowned designer like Vivienne Tam and having our logo appear at New York Fashion Week was not only exciting, but it speaks to the appeal of the Show to a diverse audience," Cowley said.

Born in China, Tam moved to Hong Kong at age 3. Growing up in the former British colony, she experienced the fusion of Chinese traditions and Western influence, which she credits with inspiring her "panda cowboy" designs. "Hong Kong is the embodiment of east meets west. I grew up with it," Tam said. "The concept is a part of my life, a true representation of me." It is fitting that Tam would blend traditional elements from Asian culture with hints of Houston, which she calls "the city of the future."

Part of what intrigued Tam about Houston and the Show was the mixture of so many different nationalities, languages and foods. "My collections are always inspired by culture and travel," she said. "When I experience places, they become a part of my pieces. They become a part of me. Houston is in my blood." Part of what Tam cites as being particularly challenging about designing fashion inspired by the fourth largest city in the U.S. was combining all the contrasting elements and logos into pieces that would be cohesive and attractive to wear, not just by Houstonians, but by people around the world.

Tam succeeded in creating this Houston-inspired clothing line and revealed the elegant and unique pieces on Sept. 12, 2016, during New York Fashion Week. With hundreds of fashion and entertainment industry experts and personalities in attendance, the crowd also included Show Vice President Pat Mann Phillips, and Joel and Tammy Cowley. "Having the opportunity to attend the Vivienne Tam Fashion Show served as validation that the spirit of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the great city of Houston cuts across cultural and geographical boundaries," Cowley said. 🐼



This checkerboard jacquard jacket alternates between a panda, a significant Asian symbol representing peace and harmony, a steer head, a star, and the "Bowlegged H," a significant part of the Show's logo. It's paired with a tie-dyed T-shirt featuring many Houston logos, including NASA, Rice University and the "Bowlegged H."



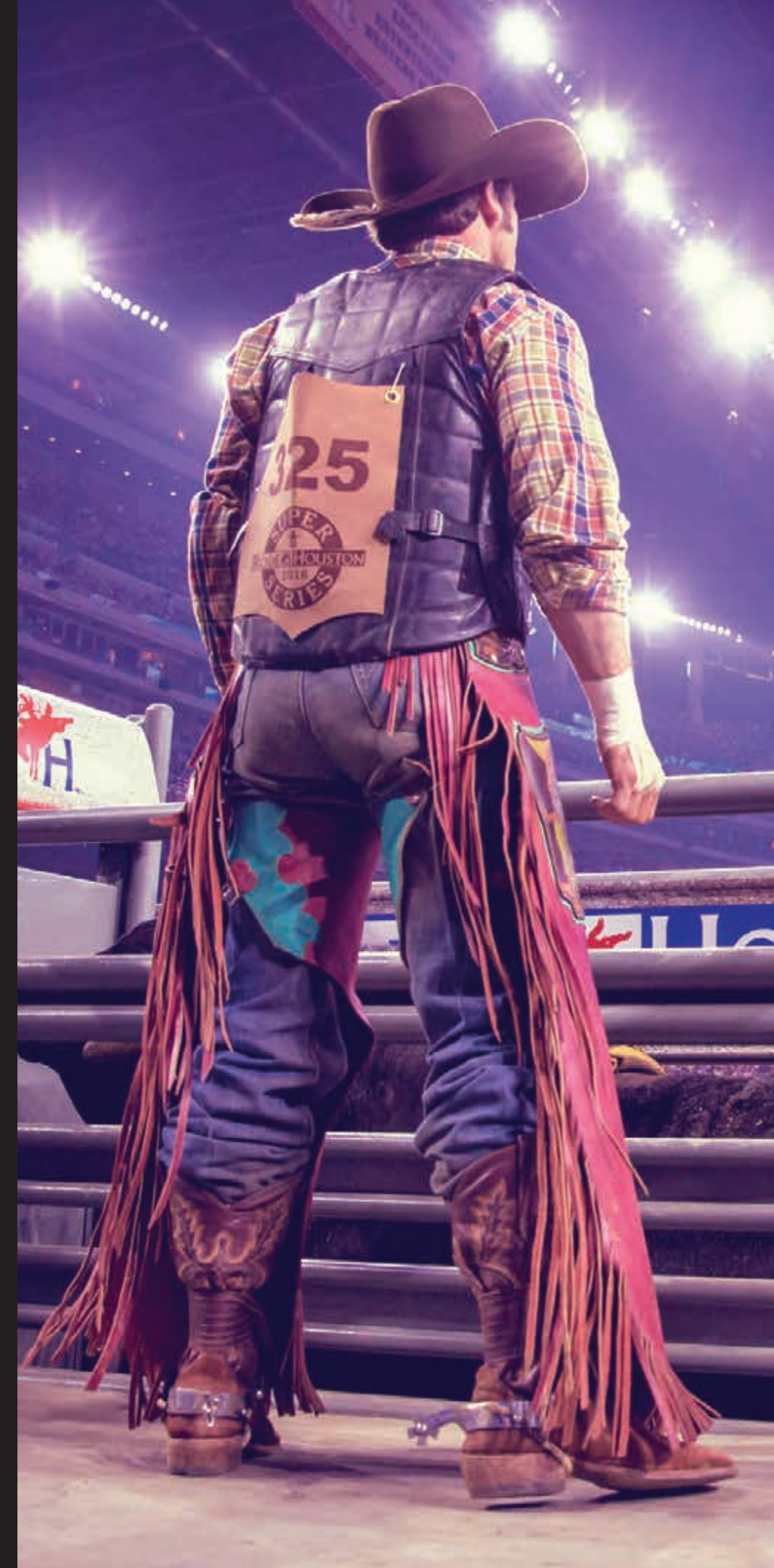
Many Houston logos meet again on this sequined dress with a Montrose tie-dyed shirt.



This lace, off-the-shoulder dress blends the panda and "Bowlegged H" in another amalgamation of east meets west. And, according to the reaction on the RODEOHOUSTON® Facebook page, is a volunteer favorite!



This multi-color metallic "H-TOWN" print dress weaves eastern elements into stripes of many logos from organizations that comprise Houston, including our very own "Bowlegged H."



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