



"BOWLEGGED H" MAGAZINE

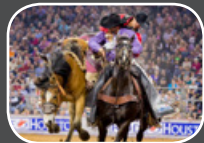
SPRING 2017 • VOL. XXV NO. 1 • HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO™



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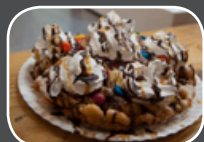


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Ready to Rodeo!
Photo by Debbie Porter

SPRING 2017

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AGRICULTURE
EDUCATION
ENTERTAINMENT
WESTERN HERITAGE



FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Can you feel the buzz? The 85th annual Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ is right around the corner, and the energy can be sensed throughout the city.

It's hard to believe that I'm beginning my final Show as chairman of the board. These past few years have flown by, and they are filled with a lifetime of memories that my family and I will always cherish. Even 36 years of volunteering for this organization didn't prepare me for what I learned during my tenure as chairman. I'll step down with a new appreciation for the undying passion of each and every volunteer who devotes his/her time and energy to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

I'd like to thank my fellow Executive Committee members for entrusting me with this responsibility. And, I'd also like to send my sincere gratitude to the 33,000-plus volunteers I've had the pleasure to represent. I look forward to working alongside you as we continue preparing for the Show. I am confident that 2017 will be another outstanding experience for our community, our exhibitors, our fans and all of our dedicated volunteers.

The year started with a bang as we announced the 2017 RODEOHOUSTON® entertainer lineup on Monday, Jan. 9. First-time RODEOHOUSTON performer and Texas-music artist Aaron Watson helped kick off our Live Announce Party and made a surprise appearance for members of the media and 60 Super Fans. The announcement also simultaneously streamed to thousands of viewers eagerly watching via Facebook Live on the RODEOHOUSTON page.

Here are some exciting events you'll want to watch for at the Show:

We're happy to announce that starting this year, the Show will organize and conduct the Rodeo Run, presented by ConocoPhillips. This 5K run/walk and 10K run event is an iconic part of the weekend festivities leading up to the Show. We're honored to continue this

29-year tradition of running for a cause that is near to our hearts, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Educational Fund.

Again this year, Boyd Polhamus and I will have the privilege of conducting live interviews with Show scholarship recipients and alumni during each Rodeo performance. These valuable members of our Show family will share their stories of success with our fans, and extend appreciation to the volunteers and supporters for making education a priority.

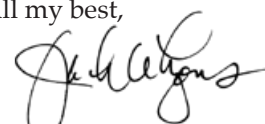
From March 7 – 21, a touching mare and foal demonstration will take place in NRG Stadium during the RODEOHOUSTON performances. The presentation will emphasize our commitment to animal welfare and reinforce the vital role these stock horses play to our athletes.

Each night RODEOHOUSTON will begin with a LIVE performance of the national anthem. We believe we've found some of the most inspiring and talented musicians in Texas to start the show during this patriotic tribute to our country.

Please take a moment to look at the full list of daily activities and events at rodeohouston.com and on the RODEOHOUSTON mobile app, available for iPhone and Android. Download it to your smartphone before arriving, and use it to schedule your day.

I look forward to the busy weeks leading up to Show and, as always, I deeply appreciate the sacrifices that each of you continue to make for this organization. The past three years have been a special time in my life. I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve alongside you as the chairman of the board of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. 🤠

All my best,



Jack A. Lyons



Wacky Wine and Food Pairings

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY STEPHANIE EARTHMAN BAIRD

If the arrival of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ leaves you licking your lips at the thought of corn dogs, fried creations, turkey legs and more, you are not alone. But, have you ever thought about the best wine for washing down those decadent midway treats? Like rhinestones and pearl snaps in your rodeo fashion, a fine wine can spice up your carnival food menu.

Since 2004, wine has been a welcome addition to the Show. The Champion Wine Garden offers the chance to sip a host of award-winning wines from the Show's Rodeo Uncorked!® International Wine Competition, while snacking on your favorite fair foods.

Carnival food and wine pairing may sound outrageous, but one classic combination — steak with cabernet sauvignon — is a good guide to finding a wine match for the carnival's many meaty foods; or try a merlot, tempranillo, syrah or red zinfandel. But what about wine for that fried butter or corn dog?

Since wine is tasked with cleansing your mouth and revving your palate for the next bite, a winning match-up with food will go further and enhance the attractive characteristics of the grape in the glass and not the opposite.

Give these combinations a whirl or enjoy the fun of your own experimentation: corn dogs, French fries and fried catfish pair well with sparkling wines, especially those from the Champagne region of France. Spanish cava and California sparkling also work. Bracing bubbles are fantastic palate cleansers with acidic frame that match well with crunchy creations and salty items. Pinot blanc and a jumbo corn dog are a successful marriage of flavors. Chardonnay and rosé are others to experiment with for fried foods. Acidic items such as Get Pickled's Kool-Aid pickles and fried pickles pair well with sparkling wines, too, because both are acidic. Likewise, high-acid sauvignon blanc is another to try.

The trick to pairing wine with sweets is to find a wine sweeter than the dessert because sugary foods decrease the perception of sugar in wine. Moscatos — white, pink and red — match well with many sweet treats. A red moscato will hold its own with a fried cookie-dough-on-a-stick, while a red zinfandel will pair well with sweet and savory chocolate covered bacon.

And that fried butter? Chardonnay is the winner. The lightly salted butter ball with a sweet crunchy shell is reminiscent of a breakfast pancake. The maple syrup topping unites the butter with the rich flavors of chardonnay.

Check out your own creative pairings at the Show and see what you think. Cheers! 🍷



HOW TO BE A RODEO COWBOY:

PICK-UP MAN

BY KATE BRADLEY

Rodeo fans may be familiar with hearing the bullfighters called “cowboy lifesavers,” yet there is another set of individuals putting themselves on the line to protect rodeo athletes: pick-up men. A pick-up man can often be seen helping a rider off a bareback or saddle bronc horse after the 8-second whistle sounds ending the ride. When the whistle blows, someone such as Chase Cervi, 30, rides in to keep the cowboy from taking a dangerous tumble to the dirt.

How does someone decide to make a living at essentially catching bronc riders before they hit the ground? Cervi says he was drawn in by the action and the time spent with horses. Growing up, Chase’s father, Mike Cervi, was on the go with Cervi Championship Rodeo, currently the stock contractor for RODEOHOUSTON®. Chase chose his future vocation out of necessity — to aid with the family business — but has continued with it because he performs a vital service to his cowboy friends.

“I started picking up when I was 14 or 15 years old,” he said. “I’ve loved it ever since that first rodeo. You have to love this work because there is not a whole lot of money in it. You have to have heart and be able to ride [a horse] good.”

Cervi’s focus and dedication to his chosen profession led him to be the youngest pick-up man voted to work the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas and he was selected as the 2016 Pick-up Man of the Year. *“Bowlegged H” Magazine* met with Cervi and had him run down the essentials of how to be a rodeo pick-up man.

“You don’t want to go too early, because if you go in too soon, you can affect the horse bucking. It takes timing the ride in your head and then go in [toward the horse] at about 7 seconds, because you can’t always hear the whistle real good. The main thing is to make sure you don’t affect the horse that is bucking. How I move in depends on how a horse bucks. With some guys, it is easier to get them on the right side. But, you have to be able to work on both sides and position yourself correctly, depending on how the horse bucks.”

“This horse is Concho, a 10-year-old that I started riding when he was two. It takes a lot of heart to make a good pick-up horse. I like all my horses thick and stout, and I like shorter horses in the saddle bronc riding because it is easier to [reach down] to get a back cinch.

“At RODEOHOUSTON, you have to ride a horse that can run. You can get outrun easily in that pen and look like a fool. I will use three horses a night at RODEOHOUSTON, but at a regular rodeo, where there are only two pick-up men and more horses in an event, I will use four or five horses a night.”

“The chaps have a little padding in them. I also wear shin guards to protect me. When you get a bronc dallied up, the swells of the saddle can really bruise up your knee, so I use shin guards a lot.”

WHAT DOES A PICK-UP MAN DO?



Pick-up men perform different functions at each rodeo, however, they are often used to move cattle for tie-down roping, steer wrestling and team roping both into and out of the arena. At RODEOHOUSTON, they move the calf scramble calves out of the arena, as well. The most well-known image of a pick-up man is riding alongside a bucking horse to help a rodeo cowboy safely to the ground.

Biggest Horns in Texas

BY WENDY McNATT



The parade of Texas Longhorns being led by handlers into the Houston Livestock Show™ Main Arena can be intimidating since each animal weighs more than 1,000 pounds, and their majestic horns can measure 7 feet across. The showmen know exactly how to present their contestants in the most flattering way, which is similar to a beauty pageant. But, in this case, bigger is always better.

On March 7 and 8, 2016, the best longhorns in the country took their turn in the spotlight during the Longhorn Competition at the Show. However, a powerful presence in the arena stood just above 5 feet tall, and instead of horns, sported a neat blond ponytail. Despite her small stature, Longhorn Competition judge Stephanie Bradley Fryer was in complete command of the show ring, and her ability to meticulously judge each division demanded respect.

"I grew up around cattle," Fryer said. "These are trained animals, but I've learned to never take my eyes off of them. I'm definitely never worried in the show ring. I've learned to always have awareness in the arena for these beautiful animals."

In the Longhorn competition, the animals are divided into divisions based on age and gender. All of the heifers (females), bulls (intact males) and steers (castrated males) compete first according to age group. The winner of each age group then competes with the winners of the other age groups to determine a grand champion in that category, according to John Lydick, exhibitor and president of the Houston Area Longhorn Association.

Once the Longhorns entered the arena, Fryer delivered her rankings in less than 30 seconds. Her vast descriptions of the winners included phrases such as, "thick-made with a lot of rib shape" or "fit, but feminine." While the animals are the main attraction, Fryer definitely took charge of the show with her precise and eloquent delivery of the verdict, round after round.

"I look for several things while I am judging," Fryer said. "First, I look for structural correctness, like how the animal is walking. I also look at capacity. Capacity helps the female carry the calf to term, so it's important for both the male and female to have capacity. The bull can pass that trait to its female calves. Bulls should be masculine, which shows they have adequate testosterone levels — an indicator of their ability to breed. I also make sure they are square from hooks to pins, meaning there is a good line from the hip bone to the tail bone. The hip structure is important to ease birthing." In addition, judges routinely look for distinctive coloring on the cattle, and the length of the horns is always a key factor.

Lydick entered four Longhorns in the open competition, which allows all ages to participate. One of his heifers took home the award for Reserve Grand Champion Heifer. "Because of the size and history of the Show, winning means a lot of recognition for our breeding program," Lydick said. "This is a huge stage to gain notoriety for our Longhorns."

In addition to the open competition, there is also a youth competition, in which the exhibitor must be at least in the third grade or 8 years old, but not older than 18 on the day judging begins. Tarah Moore from High 5 Longhorns took home grand champion honors in the Youth Show.

"Since I started law school at Texas A&M [University], I only have time to judge two or three times a year," Fryer said. "I am honored the Houston Livestock Show keeps calling! The volunteers and the facilities are the best." 🏆



Photo by Lisa Norwood

JUDGE STEPHANIE BRADLEY FRYER



AG ROBOTICS:

Where Robots and Agriculture Meet

BY ASHLEY WEHRLY-KEARNEY

Photos by Lisa Norwood

Gone are the days of children sitting at a table making simple rocket ships and cars out of building blocks. Now, thanks to new technology, Legos Mindstorms® robotics are building products that are becoming popular with children of all ages. Add that in with the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ goal of supporting education and bettering agricultural practices, and you have Ag Robotics.

The Show served as host to the 2016 District 9 Region 4-H Agri-Botics Competition. Held in partnership with the Texas A&M University's AgriLife Extension Service, the competition brought 27 teams to NRG Center on Saturday, March 5, for what was a fast-paced, team-driven robotics challenge. Students from District 9 clubs included public and private schools in Harris and Brazos counties, with ages ranging from 8 to 18 years old. The teams competed for first, second and third place and the chance to compete in the next level of competition at Prairie View A&M University in late spring 2016.



THE WINNERS WERE:



DIVISION I

1. Wilchester Elementary, Spring Branch ISD
2. Cornelius Elementary, Houston ISD
3. The Imani School

DIVISION II

1. HR BotShop
2. Westchester Academy for International Studies, Spring Branch ISD
3. Holland Middle School, Houston ISD



"We started the robotics competition as an inner-city outreach avenue eight years ago," said Dr. Allen Malone, county extension director for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. "The purpose of this particular competition was to help show the importance of agriculture in daily life. Rules were emailed to each competing team. They had to build and program a robot to do commands and missions showing the connection between food and agriculture as it relates to farming and production. Or, the teams could program their robot to do missions showing how agriculture relates to a healthy eating lifestyle."

Each team had 10 missions from which to choose when programming its robot and the missions varied in difficulty — the harder the mission, the more points the team received. The competition required each team to program the robot, so that it would do as many missions as possible within two minutes.

Richard Chandler, 9, is in the fourth grade at The Imani School. While this is his first year in robotics, he liked programming the best. "I like building things a lot, and I

want to be an engineer when I grow up," Richard said as he readied his robot for competition.

Judging the 2016 event was the Show's Judging Contest Committee, which supports intercollegiate and 4-H and FFA competitions through fundraising, hospitality, and awards, and assists the contest superintendents in the operations of these events.

With the ever-increasing popularity of robotics building and programming, the Show has added an Ag Robotics competition to its schedule for 2017. Come watch these kiddos in action on Saturday, March 11, in the NRG Center East Arena.

"Adding an Ag Robotics competition will draw new exhibitors to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo who might not have the opportunity or resources to participate in a more traditional livestock project," said Allyson Tjoelker, the Show's executive director of agricultural competitions and exhibits. "It is a relevant, engaging way of exposing youth to agriculture, which ultimately fulfills the true mission of the Show." 🤖



HOUSTON LIVESTOCK

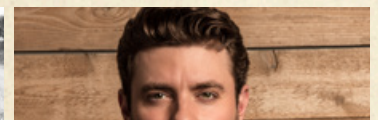
Weekday Performances 6:45 p.m. • Weekend Performances 3:45 p.m.

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY



2017

12 THE CHAINSMOKERS

13 SAM HUNT

7 AARON WATSON
First Responders Day
presented by BP

8 OLD DOMINION
Armed Forces Appreciation Day
presented by BHP Billiton

19 BANDA EL RECODO AND SIGGNO
Go Tejano Day

20 FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE

21 ZZ TOP

22 CHRIS YOUNG

26 ZAC BROWN BAND

SHOW AND RODEO™

March 7-26, 2017

Value Wednesdays include \$10 upper level Rodeo tickets, plus values throughout NRG Park.

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



CHRIS STAPLETON



ALICIA KEYS
Black Heritage Day
sponsored by Kroger



ALAN JACKSON



LUKE BRYAN



FIFTH HARMONY



WILLIE NELSON



BLINK-182



DIERKS BENTLEY



BRAD PAISLEY

Buy tickets at rodeohouston.com

#RODEO HOUSTON

HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO™

THE HIDEOUT

MARCH 7-26, 2017 • OPEN 6 P.M. TO MIDNIGHT

Weekday performers begin at 10:15 p.m. • Weekend performers begin at 8:30 p.m.

21 and up only • Free admission with NRG Park admission or RODEOHOUSTON® ticket



7

WADE ANDREW SMITH



8

MIKE AND THE MOONPIES



9

THE STRAYHEARTS



10

BLACK HERITAGE DAY



11

JOSH WARD



12

DJ RED RITCH



13

TEXAS RENEGADE



14

BRI BAGWELL



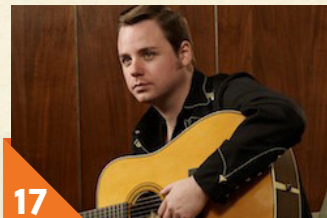
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CURTIS GRIMES



16

CAMERAN NELSON



17

JASON JAMES



18

RANDY BROWN



19

NEGAMI
Go Tejano Day



20

JOHN BAUMANN



21

NO DRY COUNTY



22

MAX STALLING



23

CONNOR
featuring Connor Christian
& Southern Gothic



24

DARRIN MORRIS BAND



25

FLATLAND CAVALRY



26

HOSS MAYFIELD & SILVERADO

What are YOU doing at the Fan Zone?

BY KATE BRADLEY BYARS

Photos by Debbie Porter


At each RODEOHOUSTON® performance, attendees have the chance of a lifetime to meet their rodeo idol at the Texas Farm Bureau Insurance Fan Zone. Not all rodeos guarantee interaction between the contestants and the public. However, the Fan Zone was set up specifically for that purpose.

Initially called the Contestant Autograph Area, the Fan Zone was created when the Rodeo introduced its

Super Series bracket format. According to former Chief Operating Officer Leroy Shafer, this was done to introduce fans to the contestants they would see multiple times (if they qualified for advanced rounds) over the course of RODEOHOUSTON. Today, there are two Fan Zone locations on the 100-level of NRG Stadium.

"The Fan Zone adds an intimate human interface element to a large stadium sporting event," Shafer said. "It allows young rodeo fans to get

autographs, handshakes, hugs, posed pictures and impromptu selfies with the sport's biggest stars [and]...contestants to put faces onto the thousands of fans in the seats for each performance."

Lines can get long to meet stars like rodeo barrelman Leon Coffee, the reigning Miss Rodeo Texas, or one of the nation's top-ranked barrel racers, ropers or bronc riders. So, we asked Rodeo-goers, "What are YOU doing at the Fan Zone?" 



MIKAELA & ALESSIA

"I brought Alessia to this because we are hosting her from Italy and we wanted her to have a real rodeo experience," said Mikaela from Houston. "I also want to meet Miss Rodeo Texas because I want to know how she has so much self-confidence. I look up to that."

COURTNEY & ZACHARY

"We have been following Leon Coffee since his illness," said Courtney from Hallettsville, Texas. "It is great to see him in good spirits! I had to bring my son, Zachary, so he could have the autograph and photo for his scrapbook."

JANUARY & AVA

"This is our eighth year to come to RODEOHOUSTON, and even though Ava likes rodeo, she was a little bored," said January from Dripping Springs, Texas. "We came to stand in line because she saw the rodeo queens, jumped up and had to come get their autographs!"

All Aboard!

BY SARAH BROCK

Wherever your desired destination during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™, — through rain, sleet or heat — the Rodeo Express and Transportation committees' volunteers are at your service.

With 1,639 volunteers, the Transportation Committee moves approximately 850,000 patrons annually. The committee consists of 16 teams, including a late-night team, each taking four, nine-hour shifts.

"We carry the bands, the late-night workers, the guests, people to grand entry — everybody," said Anita Mancini, a 12-year Transportation Committee volunteer. "Transportation is the perfect situation for [a volunteer] who wants to see every aspect of the Show."

The Transportation Committee runs seven trams, three tractors and 75 golf carts. Guests can board the trams and carts at designated stops throughout the grounds and at on-site parking lots. Besides moving patrons, the committee also picks up special guests attending the Show.

For guests parking off-site, the Rodeo Express Committee's job is to help ensure the safe arrival of visitors to the Show grounds, whether by bus, train or foot. The committee has 1,767 volunteers in three divisions — the satellite lots, buses and METRORail riders.

"We have absolutely phenomenal people we work with," said Jamie Whitfill, Rodeo Express Committee chairman. "You know that because you see them standing in the rain

and the cold and all the elements."

The satellite lot volunteers help guests park in the three Rodeo Express lots and board the shuttles, and even assist in selling grounds or Rodeo tickets. The bus operations division supports patrons arriving on the Rodeo Express and METRO buses, while the METRORail division of the committee assists those using the light rail. The committee's volunteers each work anywhere from five to seven shifts for a total of 50 to 80 hours.

In 2016, the Rodeo Express Committee moved approximately 1.1 million people across its three divisions.

Both the Transportation and Rodeo Express committees have one big commonality — a strong commitment to safety. "We don't ever get in a hurry. We're going to get there, but we'll get there safely," said James Mora, chairman of the Transportation Committee.

While the shifts can be grueling in some weather, the volunteers say the friendship makes the experience worth it. "It's the camaraderie," said Jason Hartman, Rodeo Express Committee division chairman for satellite lots. "You've got your family you deal with day in and day out and your 'Rodeo family' you see one month of the year — and, you pick up right where you left off." 🚩



Options for getting *to and from* the Show

PUBLIC AND PERMIT PARKING ON-SITE

Yellow lot:

open to the public, entrance off of Main Street, \$20 to park

610 public cash lot:

open to the public, entrance off of West Bellfort and Kirby, \$20 to park

Permit lots for season ticket holders, exhibitors, and vendors:

Blue, Green, Maroon, Orange, Purple, Red and Teal lots

ADA Parking

A limited number of ADA parking, including van accessible parking, are available in the Miller Lite Blue, Teal and Yellow lots for \$20 per day. These spaces are sold on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to availability. Present valid state issued handicap placard or vehicle registration for access.

RODEO EXPRESS PARK AND RIDE LOTS

REED ROAD

2400 Reed Road (off Hwy. 288)
No charge to park

Round-Trip Ride Prices

- » \$7 for ages 13 and older
- » \$5 for ages 3 to 12
- » Free for ages 2 and younger

OLD SPANISH TRAIL (OST) 1

2103 S. Braeswood
(Old Spanish Trail at N. Stadium Dr.)
\$20 per car to park

Ride Options

- » Ride shuttle bus for free
- » Ride the METRORail to NRG Park for \$2.50 (round trip)

ARAMCO SERVICES COMPANY

9009 W. Loop South
No charge to park

Round-Trip Ride Prices

- » \$7 for ages 13 and older
- » \$5 for ages 3 to 12
- » Free for ages 2 and younger

METRO PARK AND RIDES

N. SHEPHERD

7821 N. Shepherd
No charge to park

Round-Trip Ride Prices

\$6.50 per person

WEST LOOP

4675 S. Braeswood
No charge to park

Round-Trip Ride Prices

\$4 per person

MONROE

8833 1/2 Gulf Fwy. I-45
No charge to park

Round-Trip Ride Prices

\$4 per person

MAXEY

515 Maxey Rd.
No charge to park

Round-Trip Ride Prices

\$4 per person

METRORAIL

MONDAY - SATURDAY

Northbound: until 1:40 a.m.
Southbound: until 3:25 a.m.

SUNDAY

Northbound: until 11:24 p.m.
Southbound: until 1:15 a.m.

Park at Fannin South, located at Fannin and W. Bellfort, for \$20 per vehicle (includes parking and round-trip rail passes for all passengers). Or, park at one of several parking locations along the rail line (parking fee applies) for \$2.50 round trip.

ridemetro.org

GOLD BADGE HOLDERS receive free rides on METRO buses and the METRORail during the run on the World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

The satellite parking lots operated by Rodeo Express are updated on the **RODEOHOUSTON mobile app** with available capacity every 30 minutes — a huge convenience factor for fans who are looking for options to park and ride to the Show.



SWEET WAYS

BY ELIZABETH SLAVEN • Photos by Debbie Porter

TO GET A SUGAR HIGH AT THE SHOW

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ is known for its tasty treats, giant portions and fried temptations. Specialty vendors flock to the Show grounds to offer their best sugary sweets to more than 2 million visitors each year. Fans have the opportunity to taste some of the most delicious desserts available, with more options than ever before. **Here are a few highlights to enjoy in 2017:**

The **FRIED WHAT!** booth is one of the most popular vendors each year, specializing in fried pickles, Oreos®, cheesecake, s'mores and more. There is almost always a line, but it is always worth the wait.



Nothing beats a cold ice cream treat on a hot Houston day. Classic cold treats from flash-frozen **DIPPIN' DOTS** to hand-mixed **MARBLE SLAB** are available every year.

COTTON CANDY is another classic treat available each year. Walk through the carnival and you're sure to spot several of vendors selling cotton candy in a surprising variety of flavors — even a bacon-flavored option!



CUSTOM CONFECTIONS won a handful of 2016 Gold Buckle Foodie Awards for its tasty treats, including "The Emma," a layered ice cream sundae with brownies, chocolate syrup and whipped cream. "My husband and I are always experimenting with new flavors, new combinations and completely new creations," said owner Kimberly Revis. Also on the menu, and an award winner, was the Fried Brownie Ball.

STUBBY'S CINNAMON ROLLS had two locations on the Show grounds, and it won two Gold Buckle Foodie Awards in 2016: Best Breakfast Food and Best Value Food. "This was my best year ever and I've been here for 38 years," said Stony Humphries, owner and baker at Stubby's. The Original Cinnamon Roll is just \$3, making it one of the best sugar high values on Show grounds. "We just stay with our tried-and-true rolls, but every once in a while, I come up with something new, like our cinnamon roll pancakes that won a Gold Buckle in 2014," he said.

Sugary treats aren't always meant to be eaten — plenty of vendors, including **MARGARITAVILLE** and the **DAQ SHACK**, offered sweet, sugary drinks to quench a grown-up's thirst.

GRANNY'S CHEESECAKES AND MORE is known for its chocolate-covered foods. Chocolate-dipped cheesecake, strawberries, and bananas, and deep-fried shortcake are just a few of the menu selections sure to help achieve the ultimate sugar high.

PICHE'S BEIGNETS offers the classic pastry as well as some familiar fried treats, such as Oreos and funnel cakes.



AUNT EDMOE'S HOMEMADE COOKIES

serves up hot and fresh cookies, as well as a number of fried treats such as cookie-dough-on-a-stick.

Do not forget about regular dessert options at all of the favorite Houston restaurant booths. Dessert at **SUDIE'S CATFISH HOUSE** includes brownie sundaes and banana pudding.

KONA ICE shaved ice is another fan favorite. It's the ultimate refreshing and delicious treat every year at the Show.



A trip to the Show wouldn't be complete without one of **SILLS FUNNEL CAKES**. What's not to love about hot and fresh fried dough sprinkled with sweet powdered sugar? A variety of flavors are available and their fried s'mores won a Gold Buckle Foodie Award for Best New Flavor in 2016.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SERIES: **SIRE**

BY TAYLOR MCLAUGHLIN

Photos courtesy of SIRE

A 3-year-old and an 82-year-old both seek and find comfort and growth in the same thing, because for much of their lives they have been deemed different. Their uniqueness sets them apart, stemming from multiple areas of life — one started at an early age due to cerebral palsy, while the other began to experience change later in life because of Alzheimer's and multiple sclerosis. However, both find common ground and hope in the healing power of the horse. In that moment, they forget that they have limitations and instead, they soar.

In 1983, Self-Improvement through Riding Education and its founder, Cindy Lindh, made the journey south from Connecticut and found a new home, based in Hockley, Texas. The goal-oriented company focuses on providing equestrian activities and therapy for people with disabilities, and it has spent the last 30-plus years striving to increase independence for its clients. With a strong focus on both physical and cognitive growth, SIRE now services close to 300 riders at three facilities in the Houston area, and provides some of the best therapeutic trainers in the United States.

SIRE is a recipient of a Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ educational grant, receiving \$25,000 in

support for 2016 and 2017, combined. Also, through the Show's Top Hands Horse Show, riders are able to display their newly learned skills and compete in a large arena.

SIRE is constantly evolving thanks to the steady stream of volunteers in and out of the arena, and is dedicated to creating individualized goals for each client. Through a unique assessment, the staff determines whether a rider will focus on a physical goal, cognitive goal or both.

"Every day I see amazing things: it could be a horse resting its head on the lap of a person in a wheelchair, a volunteer overcoming fears or a rider accomplishing goals," said Shayna Bolton, a SIRE site manager.

"A lot of the people we serve have conditions that will never get better, but we see through these activities that they can maintain their quality of life," said Joe Wappelhorst, SIRE's executive director. "The riders can reach their set goals."

Lisa, a 40-year-old client recently diagnosed with MS, set the goal to be able to pull on the horse's reins hard enough to stop it by herself. So often little things are taken for granted, but for this rider, something so simple could alter everyday activities. The riding experience mimics human movements

and also strengthens the ability to complete daily tasks. "If Lisa could simply pull on the reins hard enough, then she could open the refrigerator to get water by herself," said Wappelhorst.

Cognitively, SIRE's riders gain confidence through the sequencing of commands and sense of community. A teenaged boy with severe autism, came to SIRE completely non-verbal. With the support of SIRE staff and volunteers, as well as his parents, he was able to join a program and start riding. After six weeks, the young man, who was typically not social and was unwilling to acknowledge those in the room, made the connection that if he wanted his horse to stop, he would have to speak. Finally, the single word "whoa" came out of his mouth and from there, two- to three-word sentences evolved.

In the past, SIRE has primarily focused on physical limitations, but with the progression of scientific research on the benefits of therapy horses and the discovery of more physical and cognitive disability types, Wappelhorst has a vision: "We do therapeutic riding really well and see tremendous results," he said. "SIRE needs to build on that strength and rally the community to serve as many people as possible throughout Houston." In this way, everyone involved wins. 🏆



"WE DO THERAPEUTIC RIDING REALLY WELL AND SEE TREMENDOUS RESULTS."

— JOE WAPPELHORST, SIRE'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

get to walkin'




STEP IT UP

BY MARINA OLSON

For the many who wear fitness trackers, attending the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ can be a great source for meeting an important daily goal. Some trackers record only steps taken, while others include your heart rate, hours slept and stairs climbed. The Show's large grounds offer many ways to reach your step goal — you can shop for hours, spend time with your friends, enjoy great concerts and stroll next to all types of animals. The American Heart Association suggests a daily step count of 10,000. This is not an easy number to hit for many, but the Show turns out to be quite helpful in achieving this goal.

If you plan to spend most of the day at the Show, you can bet that you will get a healthy number of steps to add to your day. If you are a shopper, then you should absolutely visit NRG Center. A walk from end to end of the building adds 455 steps. While you are in the shopping mood, do not forget about NRG Arena. This trek, however, is not for the faint of heart, totaling in at 1,236 steps between the two shopping venues! (You can use the tram if you are not up to the walk.)

The carnival is something that is fun for all ages — but children also will want to see Oxy AGVENTURE. The step count between these two child-friendly points is 1,053. When the kids are tired out and it is time for the adults to relax from all the walking, you can visit the Champion Wine Garden. The total number of steps from the carnival to the Wine Garden is 534. After the last song of the concert has been sung, you may want to stop by The Hideout on your way home. This will add 989 steps to your day, not including those you will get while dancing.

As you can see, attending the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is not only a great time, but also great exercise. How many steps will you take at the 2017 Show? 

- NRG CENTER – END TO END455 STEPS**
- NRG CENTER TO NRG ARENA 1,236 STEPS**
- CARNIVAL TO OXY AGVENTURE 1,053 STEPS**
- CARNIVAL TO THE WINE GARDEN534 STEPS**
- NRG STADIUM TO THE HIDEOUT989 STEPS**



*These steps are an estimate based on the reporter's findings.



RODEOHOUSTON® MOBILE APP

Be sure to download the latest version of the RODEOHOUSTON Mobile App for all things Rodeo in 2017! Available for Apple and Android users, the app features information on all activities happening on the grounds and the concert lineup, parking information and maps, Rodeo scores and athlete bios, shopping and dining information, social media feeds, fun camera filters, and a way to purchase tickets to the grounds and RODEOHOUSTON.

New to the app in 2017 (and only available for Apple users with iOS 10.1 and above) **are our very own,**

CUSTOM RODEOJIS!

You can install these “stickers” by following the instructions below, and then iMessage or text your friends with a touch of Rodeo included.

1. Update or install “RODEOHOUSTON” app from Apple App Store.
2. Go to Messages app on your device and open up any message.
3. Click the App icon next to the message bar.
4. Click the icon in lower left-hand corner with four small dots.
5. Click on “Store.”
6. Go to the “Manage” tab and it will show new available keyboards.
7. Toggle “on” RODEOHOUSTON and click “Done.”
8. Go back to your Messages app, click on the App icon and scroll over until you see the “Bowlegged H” logo.
9. Add Rodeojis to your texts and iMessages!





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