



SNOWMASS WESTERN HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

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SNOWMASS RODEO OPENS FOR 35th CONSECUTIVE SEASON

Cowboys of the past had to travel some rough roads to get to their ranches in the Snowmass Valley. Well, cowboys and spectators may have to travel a rough road or two to get to the Snowmass Rodeo this summer, but the trip will certainly be worth it. While construction surrounds the Snowmass Rodeo Grounds, the Snowmass Rodeo returns next Wednesday, June 20, alive and kickin' for its 35th consecutive year.

The Rodeo will continue every Wednesday through August 22.

"Neither road construction nor thunderstorms can slow down the Snowmass Rodeo," says Chris Kelly, executive director of Snowmass Western Heritage Association, the nonprofit organization that operates the Rodeo. "Cowboys and cowgirls don't let anything get in the way of a rodeo performance."

Kelly notes that last summer was a very successful season for the Snowmass Rodeo and she anticipates that this year will be even bigger.

"Word has gotten around among visitors and locals that there's a big party in Snowmass Village at the Rodeo Grounds on Wednesday evenings. It's not unusual to have 800 to 1,000 spectators," she says.

Returning spectators will notice a few changes at the Rodeo Grounds, including new ticket booths at the entrance. The petting zoo will return, after a two-year hiatus, with llamas, a goat or two and other animals for children (and adults) to enjoy.

New this year will be a motor-driven mechanical bull to provide spectators with a wild ride much like that real bull riders experience. Rides will be \$5.

"We'll also offer portraits on horseback and we have two new vendors joining us," Kelly says.

The new vendors include Wienerdog Kids Toys, with locations on Snowmass Mall and in Basalt, who will offer a variety of stuffed animals and western toys, including some retro items. Bright & Shiny Things, also located on Snowmass Mall, will present western-style bling bling. Collections, also located on the Mall, will be on hand for its third year with hats, knit shirts, fancy denim jackets and other western-style clothing that would also be at home in not-so-western

Snowmass Western Heritage Association is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) (EIN 90-0138524) nonprofit organization that strives to preserve and enhance the western heritage and character of Snowmass Village and the Roaring Fork Valley.

places.

“We’ll also have a new announcer in the crowd’s next joining our long-time regular Twirp Anderson,” Kelly adds. “Mike Land is an experienced rodeo announcer and will be a great complement to Twirp’s knowledge of rodeo and the local contestants.”

The Snowmass Rodeo continues to be one of the most affordable family activities in the Valley. Kids 10 and under are admitted free and adult tickets are only \$16. Tickets for children 11-15 years old are \$10.

“The children’s rodeo events – calf scramble and mutton bustin’ – are big attractions for families,” Kelly says. “The VIP seating section has also grown in popularity and is usually filled,” she adds. VIP seating is located in front of the bucking chutes for the best views of the arena action, and include a souvenir seat cushion. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$10 for children 6-15 years of age with children 5 and under admitted free.

The action begins when the gates open at 5 p.m. with a variety of free children’s activities, including roping lessons and hand-pumped bucking bronc. Pony rides are \$10. Also starting at 5 p.m. rodeo-goers can enjoy a western-style barbecue dinner, provided by the Silvertree Hotel, for \$18 for adults, \$10 for children 5 to 16, with children 5 and under free. A concession stand offers hamburgers, soft drinks and other items. The saloon also opens at 5 p.m.

The main event will begin at 7 p.m. each evening with the Grand Entry of contestants followed by cowboys and cowgirls vying for cash prizes in bull riding, team roping, barrel racing, saddleback bronc and bareback riding and dally ribbon roping.

In addition, specialty acts will highlight the rodeo, including a local drill team, the Cedar Ridge Ranch Riders, who perform a synchronized riding routine to music, and Anita Witt who performs with her trick ponies.

Tickets are available by calling 923-8898, as well as at the gate and from many retailers and hotels and lodges in the valley.

Contestants can call 923-9270 on Tuesday nights before the rodeo to sign up.

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