

## Freestyle Bullfighting To Be Added Attraction 43rd Annual Kaw Valley Rodeo At Manhattan

It'll be a celebration of 43 years of professional rodeo in Manhattan this week.

"The Kaw Valley Rodeo is set Thursday through Saturday evenings, July 26-27-28, in Wells Arena at CiCo Park," according to Sandy Chandler, treasurer of the Kaw Valley Rodeo Association.

In conjunction with the Riley County Fair, rodeo action starts each evening at 8 o'clock, with the gate opening at 6:30.

Sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA), the rodeo has many generous supporters headed by corporate sponsor Biggs Auto Group, Chandler acknowledged.

Each performance features bareback-bronc riding, steer wrestling, team roping, saddle-bronc riding, tie-down roping, bull riding and barrel racing.



Special events for kids attending the Kaw Valley Rodeo at Manhattan, July 26-27-28, include a calf scramble as well as mutton busting each evening.

The rodeo has been advertised extensively on 580 WIBW, Country 106.9 and The BIG 94.5 Country and promoted on WibwNewsNow and the Kansas Ag Network.

Rafter H Rodeo Company is returning as the stock contractor, and the announcer this year will be Racer Botkin of Cleveland Texas.

Bullfighters are Ethan McDonald, Louisburg, and Tyler Dahl, Barnsdall, Oklahoma.

Andy Burelle, Ardmore, Oklahoma, will serve as barrel man during the bull riding, and will also entertain with his miniature horses and a special trick horse.

Thursday, July 26, is Military Appreciation Night with a picnic at 5:30 for those serving for the nation's freedom. "Military and families will get in free with a ticket and be recognized for their service," Chandler said.

Kids 12 and under will also get in free to Thursday's performance with a non-perishable food donation brought to the rodeo. "Donations benefit the Flint Hills Breadbasket," Chandler said, "because no one should go hungry."

"Good news for parents of little cowboys and cowgirls ages four and under get in free each night," Chandler added.

Special events have also been planned especially for the children with a calf scramble each night. "There'll also be mutton busting, for kids five to seven under 70 pounds, with signup before the rodeo," Chandler said.

Friday, July 27, has been designated as Tough Enough To Wear Pink Night, with activities to increase cancer awareness and promote cancer research.

Finale performance Saturday evening, July 28, has been designated for presentations of the Brummett Award and Appreciation Recognition.

"This award is in memory of Bob Brummett, who was one of the original board members who helped bring professional rodeo to Manhattan in 1975," Chandler said. "The tradition continues and an award has been presented each year to those who show continued support and dedication to the Kaw Valley Rodeo."

New this year, the Kaw Valley Rodeo Association is presenting a PRCA Freestyle Bullfight sponsored by Robbins Motor Company of Manhattan. The "Dance With Danger" is to be immediately following the Friday and Saturday evening performances, July 27-28.



Freestyle bullfighting will be an added feature concluding the Friday and Saturday evening performance of the Kaw Valley Rodeo at Manhattan, July 26-27-28.

"Freestyle Bullfighting involves highly skilled, talented human and bovine athletes partaking in a dangerous battle," Chandler said. "Control, strength, aggression and courage are displayed throughout the competition."

The bullfight itself is a 60-second event with a whistle at the mandatory 40-second mark after which the bullfight can be "sold."

Bullfighters are judged on and will gain points by how well they maneuver around the bull. Working in close with the bull, staying in control, going both directions and "selling" the fight determine scores.

Bullfighters must maintain control of the barrel if the bull engages it. A bullfighter will lose points by getting run over, run up the fence or not controlling the barrel if engaged.

Bullfighters can gain extra points with jumps, barrel hops or walking down the bull's back using the barrel.

Each bullfight is scored 1-to-25 points by each judge on how the bullfighter works and 1-to-25 points on how the bull performs.

What is the difference between bullfighters and Freestyle Bullfighting? "Bullfighters," also known as 'cowboy protection,' have the primary job of keeping a bull rider safe," Chandler said. "They are present in the arena when a bull rider gets onto a bull and enters the arena for his ride. They do their best to protect the cowboy from injury by the bull."

"Fundamentals of freestyle bullfighting and 'cowboy protection' are basically the same. The object is to get the bull to focus on the bullfighter either to protect others or to 'freestyle,' akin to dancing," Chandler clarified.

"In 1976, when the Riley County Fair Board needed evening entertainment, a group of rodeo enthusiasts looked into bringing their sport to Manhattan," Chandler reflected. "A fairgrounds arena, established through a federal grant, provided a location, and organizing the rodeo was soon underway."

"Today, more four decades later, the Kaw Valley Rodeo continues to bring cowboys, cowgirls, champion livestock and rodeo fans, young and old, together each summer at the Riley County Fair for Manhattan's premier outdoor summer sporting event in Wells Arena.

"We'll see you there," Chandler invited.

Randy Holle serves as the rodeo president, with Blake Area as vice president. Jessica Holle is the secretary.

Other directors include Brenda Area, Ryan Borg, Neil Boyer, Aaron Holle, Dustin Holle, Dick Petersen, Kari Wilson, Reid Shipman, Garrett Wilson, and Jennifer Wilson, Riley County Extension Direction, ex-officio member.

## Council Grove Is Hosting Morris County Fair This Week

"It's the favorite time of the year for many, their county fair is underway."

Of more than a 100 Kansas fairs this summer, the Morris County Fair is in session at Council Grove.

Appropriately themed "Blue Jeans And Country Dreams," activities kicked off Saturday, July 21, at the fairgrounds east of town, announced fair board president Clifford Carroll.

That was the dog show, and judging continues Tuesday morning, July 24 with clothing and style revue judging. A family consumer science judging contest is that afternoon.

The fair is advertised extensively on 580 WIBW, Country 106.9 and The BIG 94.5 Country and is being promoted on WibwNewsNow and the Kansas Ag Network

The Public Style Revue highlighted by a Talent Showcase is Tuesday evening, 7 o'clock, at Council Grove High School. "There'll be comfortable seating in the cool air conditioned auditorium with everybody welcome to attend at no charge," Carroll invited.



Cats and hand pets come before judges' evaluation Wednesday morning, July 25, and everybody is welcome to come watch.

"The well trained, pampered cats are interesting, but those hand pets sometimes create most excitement of the day," Carroll insisted.

The horse show is Thursday, July 26, starting at 9 o'clock in the morning. There'll be 4-H and open divisions throughout the day including halter, performance and racing classes.

Entries are accepted on Friday, and fair activities go full steam ahead Saturday, July 28. Home economics, agriculture, gardening, woodworking and a wide array of exhibits are to be displayed and evaluated for ribbon placement.

"It's really fun to see what the youth and all residents of Morris County can do," Carroll declared.

The swine show is Saturday morning, dairy show in the afternoon and the cattle show in the evening. Longtime most generous fair supporter, the Farmers & Drivers Bank will have root beer floats to cool down.

Judging of photography, shooting sports and poultry highlight the agenda Sunday, July 29. Special afternoon activities are also scheduled by the 4-H Cloverbuds, the 4-H Ambassadors and the Morris County Farm Bureau. Santa Fe Parish Churches will host an ice social at 4:30.

Sheep are to be evaluated Sunday evening at 6 o'clock, followed by the meat goat show, and a costume class.

Round robin showmanship featuring all livestock species exhibitors kicks off Monday morning, July 30. There'll be an open and youth livestock judging contest at noon.

Relaxation time for many young fair participants is the Barnyard Olympics Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

A buyer appreciation supper begins at 6 o'clock Monday evening, with complimentary tickets to livestock buyers at last year's fair.

Pay time for youth fair exhibitors will be the foods and livestock auctions at 7:30.

Concessions are to be open on the fairgrounds throughout most of the weeklong activities.

### Padre Says:

**"Never give up on what you really want to do. The person with big dreams is more powerful than one with all the facts."**

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