



Reno Gazette-Journal | March 22, 2005

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Reno Rodeo Foundation doles out \$236,000 to local charities



GUY CLIFTON - RODEO RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

3/21/2005 10:36 pm

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While the annual Reno Rodeo doesn't kick off until June, the financial impact of the rodeo on the community is felt all year round.

That's especially true when it comes time for the Reno Rodeo Foundation — the charitable arm of the Reno Rodeo — announces its charitable contributions for the previous year. That happened this past week at the monthly membership luncheon of the Reno Rodeo Association when Foundation president John Solari announced \$236,000 in grants and scholarships were being distributed this year.

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Since it's creation in 1986, the Reno Rodeo Foundation has focused on youth charities in Northern Nevada and scholarships for college-bound seniors. This year was no different.

Here's a sampling of some of the contributions:

- * \$3,698 to Girl Scouts of America.
- * \$2,000 to the Western Nevada Community College rodeo team.
- * \$3,000 to the Sun Valley Swimming Pool slide project.
- * \$4,000 to the Assistance League.
- * \$5,000 to REMSA's Safe Kids car seat program.
- * \$5,000 to Boy Scouts of America outreach program.
- * \$5,000 to Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- * \$500 to the Juvenile Diapetes Research Foundation's Walk for the Cure.
- * \$4,000 to the Angel Kiss Foundation.
- * \$5,000 to the RAVE Family Foundation.
- * \$3,000 to the McQueen High School Marching band for its trip to Washington, D.C.
- * \$28,000 in scholarships to students attending the University of Nevada, Reno.

One worthy adult charity also received funding this year — a \$5,000 grant to the Veterans' Guest House to help cover utility bills.

The Reno Rodeo Foundation has also, in recent years, focused on capital improvement projects that affect youth in the community. Three years ago, it provided more than \$100,000 to build an indoor riding facility for the physically challenged children at Marvin Picollo School.

Now it is in the process of raising \$500,000 to help build a recreation building at Washoe County's Kids Kampus. This year's contribution was \$165,450 and ground will be broken on the new facility in June.






The Foundation is funded by the annual Reno Rodeo, the sale of "Rodeo State" license plates, the annual Rhythm & Rawhide concert with the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra and through the \$1 million Reno Rodeo Invitational Team Roping Classic put on by local event producer Perry DiLoreto and his daughter, Teresa.

Solari took special care to thank the 300-plus volunteers who put on the Reno Rodeo each year.

"Without the effort of Reno Rodeo members, none of this would be possible," he said. "I hope you are very proud of all the efforts you see represented here."

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This year's Reno Rodeo is scheduled June 18-26.

The third annual Rhythm & Rawhide concert will be held May 21 and will feature cowboy musician Ian Tyson and cowboy poet Paul Zarzyski performing with the Reno Philharmonic.

Anyone who wants more information about the Reno Rodeo Foundation can call 851-3505.

SLAGOWSKI WINS HOUSTON: Carlin saddle bronc rider Ira Slagowski posted perhaps the biggest victory of his career this past week, winning the aggregate title — and more than \$15,000 — at RodeoHouston.

Slagowski, who has qualified for the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo the past two years, rode all four of his broncs in Houston for a total of 325 points, winning \$15,494 in the process.

The Houston win vaulted Slagowski into third place in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association's Jack Daniel's World Standings with \$27,593 in winnings for the season. He also collected 29 points in the Wrangler ProRodeo Winter Tour standings, moving into first place in the race to qualify for the Winter Tour Finale, which will be held in Reno in June.

JONES TAKES DNCFR BAREBACK TITLE: Elko bareback rider Paul Jones is the king of the circuit cowboys after winning the bareback championship at the Dodge National Circuit Finals Rodeo in Pocatello, Idaho over the weekend.

Jones rode Powder River Rodeo Company's bronc Broken Dreams for 83 points to win the championship round by a point of Arizona cowboy Tom McFarland.

Jones, a former Reno Rodeo bareback champion, collected \$10,144 for his victory. While the money doesn't count in the Jack Daniel's World Standings, it will go a long way to helping Jones get down the road this season.

BRAZILIAN DOMINANCE: Another Professional Bull Riders event, another victory for a Brazilian bull rider.

This time it was newcomer Fabricio Alves, who rode four bulls — including a successful \$45,000 ride in the Mossy Oak Shootout — on his way to victory in the Oh Boy! Oberto Invitational in Tacoma, Wash.




Alves won the first round with a 90.5-point ride on the Corey and Horst bull Joe Millionaire, giving him the opportunity to ride Kaycee Simpson's bull Red Alert in the Mossy Oak Shootout. He covered the bonus bull with a 91.5-point ride.

He entered the championship round in first place and sealed the victory with an 86-point ride on Painted Desert. Alves won a total of \$81,838 for the weekend.

Former Reno resident Tony Mendes finished fifth overall. After bucking off his first-round bull, he rode Toy Tiger in the second round for 86 points and then topped the notorious bull Sugar Bear in the championship go-round for 86.5 points. He won \$6,089 for the weekend.

The PBR riders now have a two-week break before returning to action at the Ty Murray Invitational in Albuquerque April 1-3.

Guy Clifton covers rodeo for the Reno Gazette-Journal. He can be reached at (775)788-6337 or gclifton@rgj.com.

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