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# First-ever Reno Rodeo Denim Drive to help area kids

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The 88th Reno Rodeo doesn't start until June, but volunteers of the city's longest-running special event are rolling out their chuckwagon a few months early to help abused, neglected and at-risk children in Washoe County.

The Reno Rodeo Association and its charitable arm, the Reno Rodeo Foundation, are teaming up with local businesses this month for the first Reno Rodeo Denim Drive.

The drive is an effort to collect new clothing: denim jeans, shirts or jackets, plus new cotton socks and underwear for children at the Kids Kottage, McGee Center and in the county's foster care system.

"A lot of these young kids don't have anything," said Marie Baxter, Reno Rodeo Foundation coordinator. "It will be nice for them to have something to call their own. The clothes are going to go out through Washoe County Social Services."

Drop-off boxes will be at more than 25 areas businesses and people can make donations through Dec. 15.

On Dec. 16, the Reno Rodeo will be sending its chuckwagon, pulled by a team of horses, to the various drop-off locations to pick up the donations. The procession will start near Damonte Ranch Parkway at the offices of Solari and Sturmer (across from Wal-Mart) at 10 a.m., and continue up South Virginia Street before cutting over to Kietzke Lane for stops at both Bill Pearce Motors locations.

"We'll have a Reno Rodeo truck, the chuckwagon and two more Reno Rodeo trucks," Baxter said. "We'll just be creeping along in traffic with flashing lights and banners. It's really going to be a cool thing."

The final stop will be at the Reno Gazette-Journal office at 3 p.m.

Two local radio stations, Cub Country 94.5 FM and Alice 96.5 FM, will broadcast from various sites during the drive, telling donors where they can drop off items.

The Reno Rodeo Foundation donates thousands of dollars each year to local charities and college scholarships and is in the process of raising

\$1.4 million for the construction of an indoor recreation/classroom facility at the Washoe County Family

Campus.

The campus serves more than 1,000 neglected, abused and at-risk children each year.