

Rodeo gets another big boost from Rincon

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It is daunting to raise \$95,000 annually to put on a rodeo which provides entertainment to thousands and helps fund youth groups in a variety of ways. The biggest reason the event is achievable is because the Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians has donated \$10,000 for the third year in a row.

This fully answers the question why the Stampede Rodeo and Festival exists in Valley Center and has for many years. The Service Club behind this venture is the Optimist Club, which needs no introduction.

Joyce Holmes has been the long-time chairwoman for the event and Madelyn Wagner serves as the publicity chair. Ron Johnson is the festival chairman. All are Optimist Club members. All donate their time and expertise at no charge, which is to say no individual is paid.

The beneficiary of the event is the Optimist Club in its mission of service. If there are excess funds there is an Optimist member in charge tasked to distribute money to those in need, mostly youth groups.

The Stampede Rodeo and Festival is part of Valley Center Days, which is scheduled from May 21-30, and includes a parade which this year is being facilitated by Ridgeview Church. There are other events run by other individuals and groups.

All of the activities used to fall under Valley Center Western Days, but the rodeo group split away last fall to use an individual name (VC Stampede Rodeo and Festival) since it wanted full control of what is produced and organizes.

Approximately 4,000 people are expected to attend the event which covers two nights, Friday May 27 and Saturday May 28.

How does one raise \$95,000 and why does it cost so much? Mrs. Wagner provided the details.

Bleachers cost \$16,000, fencing \$3000, porta-potty rental \$5000, arena rental \$3200 and the stock contractor's fee is \$12,500 to bring in bulls, bareback broncs, saddle broncs, roping steers and calves. That's where the big money goes. There are many other smaller charges, including county fees and licensing, but the cost always reaches \$95,000.

Announcers and judges must also be paid, so lots of dollars are needed for this event.

While ticket sales are vital, so are donations.

"We appreciate Rincon becoming a Platinum Spur sponsor," says Wagner. "They never seek attention. But they do deserve all the recognition we can give them. We absolutely want to recognize what they do and thank them."

Other donations are needed, obviously, and the Optimist Club has lined them up as brass, silver, and gold sponsorships. Rincon is the only Platinum Spur sponsor.

If you would like to become a sponsor of the Stampede Rodeo & Festival visit www.VCStampede.com.

Pictured - Front Row (left to right) - V.C. Rodeo Little Miss Samantha Picot, DeLisle Calac, and Mavany Calac Verdugo; Back Row - Billy Wagner, David Verdugo, Tishmall Turner, John Lara, Ron Johnson, Madelyn Wagner, and Joyce Holmes