

Press Release

Valley Center's Rodeo Highlights Local Talent, Western Heritage, Patriotism & Youth



Valley Center's rodeo is designed with the community in mind and represents all things Valley Center. It's a place for local cowboys and cowgirls to show off their talents to their friends and neighbors; it's a place for kids to get a taste of rodeo first-hand by getting out of the bleachers and into the arena dirt; and it's a great place for community members to come together and pay tribute over Memorial Day

weekend to those that gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.

This year's rodeo lineup will not disappoint. There will once again be the ever popular bull and bronc riding, calf roping, women's breakaway roping, team roping, and barrel racing at both the Friday and Saturday performances. The Rodeo Committee has put a great deal of effort into making sure the youth of our community have a first-hand rodeo experience too. The committee didn't stop there though. They are bringing back the hilarious Wild Donkey Races during intermission for some good 'ole fashioned entertainment, which is sure to make the crowd roar with laughter and excitedly cheer on their favorite team.

There are three youth events planned for each rodeo performance designed for all ages, sizes, and talents. The Mutton Bustin' event caters to 4 to 7-year-olds and gives these brave little cowboys and cowgirls a chance to mimic their bull and bronc riding heroes. The Junior Barrel Racing event allows novice boys and girls to walk, jog or lope the barrel pattern in a non-competitive format, giving them a taste of barrel racing in a slower and safer environment. These events do require early sign-up and entry fees and both events fill up quickly each year, proving they remain popular with the kiddos.

The Calf Scramble will also be back for the kiddos in the audience that want to come on down and play in the arena dirt. There is no sign-up requirement and it's free to kids 10 and under with a paid rodeo admission. At intermission, the kiddos will be invited to come down into the arena and scramble with the calves. The first to pull a ribbon from the tail of a calf will be awarded a trophy. Each year, the kids have a great time experiencing the dirty side of the old west way of life. It's often hard to tell who is having more fun, the kids or the calves.





As mentioned previously, the Wild Donkey Race is back for a second year. It was introduced last year and brought back by popular demand. This comic-filled riding and roping event will be held at intermission. The rules are simple and strategy is key. Competing in two person teams, one person will attempt to ride a donkey bareback and bridle-less while their partner remains on foot. As a team, they race to be the first to rope a steer. Some teams try to chase the steer with the donkey, while others use the person on foot to drive the steer close enough to the donkey so their teammate can rope it. Whatever strategy they choose, this showdown of the beasts is sure to entertain and delight all rodeo fans.

Putting on a rodeo in Valley Center is no small feat and it's a true testament of our community that it has been occurring annually without interruption for 16 years. With no permanent facilities currently available, the rodeo is made possible by hard-working volunteers, a generous land use donation by the Belanich Family, the unfailing support of dozens of local businesses, the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, and the Valley Center Optimist Club. The Valley Center Stampede Rodeo highlights the tremendous community teamwork in Valley Center, with local volunteers dedicating countless hours to the rodeo and dozens of local businesses providing the much needed financial and infrastructure support.

Valley Center is also fortunate to be the home of several Native American tribes, one of which is the Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians. The Rincon Band has been a long-standing "Platinum Spur Sponsor" of the Valley Center Stampede Rodeo, donating \$10,000 each year to help defray the roughly \$90,000 price tag associated with raising a rodeo out of a dusty field each year.

The sport of rodeo was created to highlight America's western way of life and the nature of rodeo has been historically patriotic. The Valley Center Stampede Rodeo is no exception and it is appropriately held each year over the Memorial Day weekend to highlight Valley Center's western heritage while also honoring our nation's fallen.

The local group of volunteers that put on the rodeo each year are part of the Valley Center Optimist Club and are comprised of individuals that love Valley Center and are passionate about rodeo. True to the Optimist mission, they believe that our youth are the key to our future and strive and make sure that kids benefit in as many ways as possible. In addition to providing youth participation events at each rodeo, the Optimist Club uses all proceeds for the betterment of local kids year-round. They support local schools, youth organizations, and provide scholarships to middle and high school students.

For sixteen years, the Valley Center Stampede Rodeo Committee has been committed to providing a quality rodeo for Valley Center and the surrounding communities, promoting local businesses, supporting local youth, and attracting people from all over San Diego County to see what a great town Valley Center is. The Memorial Festival will have a full array of vendors, BBQ and other food booths, free jump houses for the kids, a pie baking contest, free live bands on Friday and Saturday, and a Memorial Wall honoring several of our nation's fallen service members, along with local police and firefighters that lost their lives protecting their community.

Be sure to come to the Valley Center Stampede Rodeo & Memorial Festival over Memorial Day weekend, May 26-28, for good 'ole fashioned, family-friendly, western-style fun! Rodeo tickets are available at **Armstrong Feed & Supply, Joe's Country Feed & Pet, A-1 Irrigation, Community Pharmacy, Valley Center Oil** and at the gate. General Admission to the rodeo is \$15, with kids 5 and under free. There will also be a VIP section with catered dinner each night for \$40 on Friday and \$50 on Saturday. Parking is \$5. Admission to the Memorial Festival is free!

For more information about this year's Valley Center Stampede Rodeo & Memorial Festival visit our website at www.VCStampede.com and "Like" our [Facebook Page](#).