



HONORING THE LEGACY BUILDING THE FUTURE

a campaign for the National Western Center



December 2018

Editor's Note: The Honoring the Legacy...Building the Future campaign for the new National Western Center boasts a leadership team with some of the West's most prominent business leaders and philanthropists. This occasional note shares their insights and experiences as Stock Show and National Western insiders. Featured in this installment is Paul Andrews, a campaign vice chair and the president and CEO of the National Western Stock Show. He offers his inside take on the world-famous event his organization hosts each January.

Paul Andrews: *President and CEO, National Western Stock Show*

The National Western Stock Show: Much More than Meets the Eye

If you've ever hosted a kids' birthday party, you know that planning and hosting an event takes a lot more work than you thought it would. Now imagine hosting a party for 700,000-plus guests – not to mention several thousand animals – that lasts for 16 days. That's what we do, every year. In fact, we are getting ready to do it for our 113th year in 2019.

The Stock Show may be a once-a-year occasion, but it takes an army of volunteers and staff—more than 40 full-time staff working year-round – to prepare for and produce the Super Bowl of livestock shows. That term, by the way, isn't just a marketing term. We have more National Breed Association shows happening at our show than at any other place in the world.

And what breeds we have. We've got Hereford and angus cattle, sure. But don't forget the yaks, Texas longhorns, bison, mini-Herefords, llamas, Alpaca, and even mini zebu (diminutive versions of cattle with a pronounced fatty hump, once imported from India and Sri Lanka).

Horses are also a big part of our show. That includes horses for show, horses for performing, and horses reared to test our rodeo riders who dare mount them. Cervi Rodeo out of Roggen, Colo., has been our stock contractor for nearly 50 years. Cervi prepares its horses through a strict program starting at birth, all to test animals to see if they'll grow into being high-quality buckers during a future National Western Stock Show rodeo. The program includes strapping a 150-pound mannequin to the horse to see if it triggers a good buck. The horses that consistently pass the test move on to smaller rodeos to prove their mettle; only the best qualify to become the elite bucking stock at our stock show each year.

Speaking of animals, man's best friend is also a stock show mainstay. Down by the yards, stock dogs showcase their talents in herding cattle in tight spaces for potential buyers and the public alike. During the Stock Show's final weekend, the stock dogs compete against the clock to herd sheep through obstacles and into a pen in the stadium arena. It's a great event, and one that is one of the show's best-kept secrets.

That's just one of a long list of Stock Show events, of course. In addition to being herded, sheep also find themselves being shorn at incredible speed during the popular sheep-shearing competition. We've got the Colorado Rocky Mountain Fiddle Championships and our National Western Barbeque Throwdown on the opening weekend (in the 2018 Throwdown, "Getting Basted" narrowly beat "Big Poppa Smokers" for overall honors). Then also the CINCH Equicross games, a competition where youth compete in X-games style competitions on horseback.

You don't have to be an X-games type of athlete to participate in Stock Show events, either. The Exceptional Rodeo is a fun-filled event for kids with special needs. It features stick-horse rodeo events guided by cowboys and rodeo queens. They create an interactive rodeo with steer roping, bull riding, bareback riding, steer wrestling, and barrel racing – again, no actual animals involved. It's always one of my very favorites.

The bottom line is that the Stock Show is as much about having a good time and sharing Western culture as it is about convening with old friends, selling cattle and sharing the latest in animal husbandry and other agricultural techniques. It's a lot of work to put on, but it's always well worth the effort.

I hope to see you this coming January. Mark your calendars now for January 12th through the 27th and check our website, www.natioanalwestern.com for heaps more information!



For news, updates and more on the Honoring the Legacy campaign for the National Western, visit

honoringthelegacycampaign.com

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