



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Melissa Stewart, Communications Manager  
mstewart@nationalcowboymuseum.org  
(405) 839-7812

For images associated with this release, [click here](#).

## **Rodeo Historical Society Announces 2022 Award Honorees and Nominees**

*The Rodeo Hall of Fame, housed at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, continues its 67-year tradition of honoring rodeo's greatest athletes.*

**OKLAHOMA CITY** — The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum and Rodeo Historical Society are pleased to announce the 2022 Tad Lucas Memorial Award, Ben Johnson Memorial Award and Director's Choice Award honorees, as well as the 2022 nominees for induction into the Rodeo Hall of Fame.

The Tad Lucas Memorial Award honoree of 2022 is Martha Josey. Each year, the family of trick-riding legend Tad Lucas bestows this award upon a living female whose actions promote the values represented by Tad Lucas.

The 2022 Ben Johnson Memorial Award honoree is Chuck Sylvester. This award winner is chosen by the Rodeo Committee and honors a living individual who represents the Western lifestyle as exemplified by screen and rodeo legend Ben Johnson. Sylvester was made aware of his receiving this award by Jeff Ewing, Chief Development Officer, during a special announcement at the National Western Stock Show Annual Member Meeting held in Denver, Colorado, May 12.

Jeff Medders will also be given the Rodeo Hall of Fame Director's Choice Award. Not an annual honor, this award is chosen by the RHS board in exceptional circumstances.

Rodeo Hall of Fame inductees and award honorees are recognized each fall during Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend, which includes an Induction Ceremony and Champions' Dinner as well as an Inductee Panel Discussion, the Rope 'N' Ride Cocktail Reception, live and silent

auctions to benefit RHS and other festivities. The 2022 Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend will take place November 11 and 12 at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

RHS members receive voting privileges to select Rodeo Hall of Fame inductees, among other benefits. Voting begins in June, and members must join RHS no later than June 30, 2022 to be eligible to vote. RHS members will receive ballots in the mail, and ballots must be returned to the Museum postmarked by August 1, 2022.

The Rodeo Hall of Fame Class of 2022 nominees in both the Living and Deceased categories includes:

### **LIVING**

- Guy Allen
- Jerry Beagley
- LaTonne Sewalt Enright
- Gary Gist
- Cleo L. Hearn
- Joyce Kernek
- Bill Nelson
- Tommy Puryear
- Tom Reeves Johnnie Ray "Jon" Taylore
- Tee Woolman
- The Kirby Brothers (Butch, Kaye and Sandy, all nominated together)

### **DECEASED**

- Ben Bates
- Jake Beutler
- Thelma Warner Cody
- Don Endsley

The RHS will also elect a new board member. Members of the RHS will be asked to vote on this year's nominees.

### **RHS Board Member Nominees:**

- Sharon Camarillo
- Doug Clark
- Don Graham
- Gary Parli
- Kendra Santos
- John Shipley

### **About 2022 Tad Lucas Memorial Award honoree Martha Josey**

Martha Josey's rodeo career began when she purchased a horse, *CeBe Reed*, from her family friend with \$2500 she borrowed from her mother in 1964. The pair went on to win 52 barrel races in a row, seven horse trailers, four Texas barrel racing championships, won 30 of 34 AQHA shows and qualified for the 1968 and 1969 NFRs. She and her next horse, *Sonny Bit O'Both* were also champions, with Sonny being the only horse in history to win both AQHA and WPRA World Championships in the same year. Martha was chosen to represent the United States in the 1988 Calgary Olympics. Martha and her subsequent horses continued to win championships through 2005, while she personally overcame hardships and obstacles including a potentially paralyzing injury. After her nearly 50 year rodeo career, Martha is considered to be one of the most accomplished barrel racers worldwide by many. Martha also impacted the lives of many by lending her skills to training young barrel racers.

### **About 2022 Ben Johnson Memorial Award honoree Chuck Sylvester**

Chuck Sylvester was born in La Salle, Colorado on a farm he continues to work to this day. He showed his first steer at the age of 15 at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colorado. He became a member of the Rodeo Club while attending what is now Colorado State University, and participated in the Little National Western and Skyline Stampede Rodeo. Following CSU, he was a member of the Colorado Fair leadership team. After that he went into ranching and became the Manager of the National Western Yards operation from 1976-1978. His excellent work opened the role of General Manager of the National Western Stock Show and Rodeo, a position he held for 25 years until 2013. During his tenure, he was responsible for managing the rodeo, stock show and horse show. Under his leadership, attendance tripled and the National Western Rodeo was honored as the best Indoor Rodeo of the Year in 2000 and 2001. He was also responsible for organizing the Draft Horse Show and Pull and developing the Dancing Horses Event in the horse show, as well facilitating school tours and supporting youth programs.

### **About 2022 Director's Choice Award honoree Jeff Medders**

Jeff Medders has spent the last two and a half decades hosting sports programming for a who's who of networks. He has been the television host of the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo since 1991. His passion for the "cowboy life" is a big reason why he has become synonymous with groups like the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, American Quarter Horse Association, National High School Rodeo Association and Championship Bull Riding. Medders is President/CEO of Geronimo Productions. Geronimo produces the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo (CBS Sports Network), Championship Bull Riding (Fox Sports), Wrangler Champions Challenge (CBS Sports Network), the Justin Boots Playoffs (CBS Sports Network) and the Cinch High School Rodeo Tour (RFD-TV). He lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma with his wife Diana and their four children. Medders owns a cattle ranch

near his boyhood home in Talihina, Oklahoma. He graduated from Oklahoma State in spring of 1985 and was named an OSU College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Alumnus in 2014. He was inducted into the Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame in 2016.

For more information, visit [nationalcowboymuseum.org/rodeo-hall-of-fame-weekend](http://nationalcowboymuseum.org/rodeo-hall-of-fame-weekend).

###

### **About the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum**

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City is America's premier institution of Western history, art and culture. Founded in 1955, the Museum collects, preserves and exhibits an internationally renowned collection of Western art and artifacts while sponsoring dynamic educational programs to stimulate interest in the enduring legacy of the American West. The Museum is located only six miles northeast of downtown Oklahoma City at 1700 Northeast 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. For more information, visit [nationalcowboymuseum.org](http://nationalcowboymuseum.org).

### **About the Rodeo Historical Society**

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum's Rodeo Historical Society (RHS) helps preserve and interpret the history of rodeo in the North American West for the education and enrichment of its diverse audiences. RHS membership supports the rodeo programs of the Museum, including the prestigious Rodeo Hall of Fame, an ongoing oral history project and acquisition of collection materials for the American Rodeo Gallery. For more information, visit [nationalcowboymuseum.org](http://nationalcowboymuseum.org).