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**National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum and Rodeo Historical Society to celebrate
rodeo legends at annual Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend**
Rodeo legends to be honored during prestigious weekend

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK – Since 1955, the National Rodeo Hall of Fame has been dedicated to honoring and memorializing the legacy of great competitors in rodeo and its related professions. That tradition will continue as rodeo icons are recognized at the Rodeo Historical Society (RHS) and National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum’s annual Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend, November 11 – 12, 2022, with induction into the renowned National Rodeo Hall of Fame. The Ben Johnson Memorial Award, Director’s Choice Award and Tad Lucas Memorial Award recipients will also be honored. The celebration will take place at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

“The National Cowboy Museum and the Rodeo Historical Society are delighted to celebrate rodeo by honoring the incredible men and women who helped make it an American tradition,” said Museum President and CEO Natalie Shirley. “Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend offers both rodeo enthusiasts and members of the public the opportunity to come together and celebrate a sport that is important to so many individuals — and families — across the country.”

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

LIVING

- Guy Allen
- Gary Gist
- Cleo L. Hearn
- The Kirby Brothers (Butch, Kaye (1952 - 1978) and Sandy)
- Tom Reeves
- Tee Woolman

DECEASED

- Ben Bates (1933 – 2017)
- Jake Beutler (1903 – 1975)

Each year, the family of trick-riding legend Tad Lucas bestows the Tad Lucas Memorial Award upon a living female whose actions promote the values represented by Tad Lucas. The Ben Johnson Memorial Award winner is chosen by committee each year to honor a living individual who represents the Western lifestyle as exemplified by screen and rodeo legend Ben Johnson. The Tad Lucas Memorial Award honoree of 2022 is Martha Josey, and the Ben Johnson Memorial Award honoree is Chuck Sylvester. The Director’s Choice Award, which is only given out under exceptional circumstances and with careful deliberation, is being awarded to cowboy and television host Jeff Medders.

National Rodeo Hall of Fame inductions and awards are sponsored and selected by the Rodeo Historical Society, an organization under the auspices of the National Cowboy Museum whose worldwide members share an interest in preserving both rodeo history and the sport itself. The selection process begins with the Rodeo Historical Society committee and is then voted on by the Rodeo Historical Society members. Membership supports the Museum's rodeo programs, including research, an oral history project, acquisition of materials for the American Rodeo Gallery and the distinguished National Rodeo Hall of Fame.

National Rodeo Hall of Fame inductees, along with the Tad Lucas Memorial Award and Ben Johnson Memorial Award honorees, are recognized each fall during Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend, which includes an Induction Ceremony and Champions' Dinner, Inductee Panel Discussion, Rope 'N' Ride Cocktail Reception, live and silent auctions to benefit RHS and other festivities. For more information and reservations, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org/rhs.

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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. For more information, visit 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, nationalcowboymuseum.org/rhs.

Inductee and Honoree Bios

GUY ALLEN was born September 5, 1958, in Coushatta, Louisiana. He won 18 World Champion Steer Roping titles and qualified for 33 National Finals Steer Ropings (NFSR) in five decades. After joining the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) in 1976, Allen's first world title was in 1977 when he was only 19, becoming the youngest steer roping champion in history. He won a record 48 NFSR go-rounds and five NFSR average titles in 1989, 1991, 1997, 2000 and 2004. A second-generation steer roper, Allen's dad, James, and brother, Gip, joined Guy in 1983 in becoming the first three family members to qualify for a Steer Roping Finals. Allen qualified in his last NSRF in 2016 at the age of 58. Many up-and-coming steer ropers stayed at the Allen ranch and learned by practicing their roping all day and into the night. Allen remembers driving past the National Cowboy Museum as a youth, knowing he wanted to be a cowboy and wondering if he'd ever be good enough to be considered for induction. Today, Allen lives in Santa Anna, Texas, and works in the oilfields.

GARY GIST was born September 6, 1945, to a rodeo family. After receiving his RCA card at the young age of 12—which kick-started a professional roping career— at age 16 Gist, along with his dad, Byron, won the 1964 National Finals Team Roping Average. Gist also had the highest season earnings that year as a heeler. Competing in roping from 1952 through 2015, Gist put his rodeo career on hiatus to join the United States Marine Corps and serve as a demolitions expert in Vietnam. In 1968, he started Gist Engravers and, by 1970, his design talent and craftsmanship received the PRCA gold buckle contract. Gist continued providing gold buckles for the NFR and PRCA for more than 20 years, as well as a number of other major events in the Western sports industry including the World Series of Team Roping, National Barrel Horse Association and multiple major rodeos. Gist has also supported youth rodeo as a national sponsor of the National High School Rodeo Association (NHSRA) for four decades, while also serving as the presenting sponsor of the NHSRA Junior High Division. Gist resides in the Sierra Nevada foothills with his family, while continuing to impact the rodeo world through his influence and legacy at Gist Silversmiths.

CLEO L. HEARN was born May 3, 1939, in Seminole, Oklahoma. He was a calf-, team- and steer-roper beginning in 1955 at age 16. Hearn joined the RCA in 1959 and won the calf roping at the Denver National Western Stock Show & Rodeo in 1970. The first African American to attend college on a rodeo scholarship, Hearn was drafted into the US Army in 1961 and was a member of the Presidential Honor Guard. In 1971, Hearn began producing the Texas Black Rodeo; in 1995, the name was changed to Cowboys of Color Rodeo to be more inclusive of all races, including both participants and audience members. Hearn's last NFR appearance was in 2010, and he retired from competition in 2017. His honors include: Frontier Times Museum inductee; Texas Black Sports Hall of Fame; recipient of a star on the Texas Trail of Fame in the Fort Worth Stockyards; and he has been recognized with the Cleo Hearn Equestrian Trail at Bear Creek Nature Park in his hometown of Lancaster, Texas. Hearn has enjoyed a 33-year career with Ford Motor Company in sales and marketing.

THE KIRBY BROTHERS: GARY "BUTCH", KAYE (1952 - 1978), AND KENNETH M. "SANDY": In 1975, Butch, Sandy and Kaye Kirby became the first three brothers to qualify for the National Finals Rodeo in the same year. Butch was born April 24, 1955. Unlike his brothers, his rodeo career began as a bull rider beginning at age 15. He became the World Champion Bull Rider in 1978 and retired in 1989. After retiring, he became a PRCA official and Professional Bull Riders (PBR) judge. An avid golfer, Butch co-founded Cowboys for Cowboys, an organization that puts on charitable golf tournaments. He resides in Stephenville, Texas. Kaye was born May 2, 1952. He began trick riding at age 5 with the family from 1955 to 1966. He competed in all roughstock events and steer wrestling from 1967 until his death in 1978. He won the All Around at Kissimmee, Florida, in 1970; the bareback event in the 1975 Dallas rodeo and was the Frontier Circuit Bareback Champion from 1972 through 1975. He qualified for the NFR in 1975. Sandy was born April 8, 1949, and from 1955 to 1964 was a trick rider. He competed in all roughstock events and steer wrestling from 1964 to 1986. He qualified for the NFR ten times and won the 1973 Bareback Average and 1974 Bull Riding Average. He also won the Calgary bull riding and Cheyenne bareback, as well as the 1986 Texas Circuit Bareback title. He was only 5 when he joined RCA. Later he became a stock contractor for Billy Bob's of Texas, putting on weekend bull ridings and providing the stock. Today he lives in Hubbard, Texas

TOM REEVES was born September 15, 1964, in Eagle Butte, South Dakota. He is a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and grew up on the family ranch located on the reservation. He is the only American Indian PRCA World Champion Saddle Bronc Rider, a feat he accomplished in 2001. He attended Oklahoma Panhandle State University in Goodwell, Oklahoma, majoring in business and political science on a full rodeo scholarship. He had a 25-year rodeo career, qualifying for the National Finals 18 times. He served on the PRCA Board of Directors for ten years. He started the PRCA Remuda of the Year Awards and won the PRCA Mentoring Youth in Rodeo Award in 2007, the year he also coached the Ranger College Rodeo Team to the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) Men's National Title that year. He was inducted into the ProRodeo Hall of Fame in 2008 and was captain of the US Olympic Rodeo Team during Salt Lake City Olympics. Founder of Wild Horses Building Champions, a 501c3 public charity mentoring underprivileged youth, Reeves also started the first-ever human trafficking prevention program in the United States. He resides in Big Springs, Nebraska.

TEE WOOLMAN was born December 4, 1956, in Vinita, Oklahoma. He was a team roper, steer roper and calf roper in a career that spanned from 1980 to 2007 and garnered him more than \$2,000,000 in earnings. A three-time PRCA Team Roping World Champion — in 1980, his rookie year, and again in 1982 and 1991 — Woolman won the National Finals Team Roping Average five times. He showed team roping horses for Carol Rose for over 15 years with multiple AQHA world titles. In 2004 his head horse, *Megazord*, took honors as the PRCA/AQHA Horse of the Year. Some of his team roping partners were: Leo Camarillo, Clay O'Brien Cooper, Bobby Harris, Monty Joe Petska, Rich Skelton, Patrick Smith and Cory Petska. Woolman qualified for the Steer Roping National Finals 19 times: from 1985 to 2001, and in 2004 and 2005. He won the Steer Roping Average in 1998; was the PRCA Texas Circuit All Around Champion in 1996; and was a six-time Texas Circuit Champion Team Roper. Some of his other major wins include Cheyenne Frontier Days; California Rodeo at Salinas; San Antonio; Pikes Peak or Bust; Dodge City RoundUp; Salt Lake Days of '47; and the Sandhills Rodeo at Odessa, Texas. Woolman resides at Llano, Texas.

BEN BATES (1933 – 2017) was born September 4, 1933, in Mexia, Texas, and died October 4, 2017. During his lifetime he competed in bulldogging, calf roping and team roping. A stuntman and business owner, Bates served in the Korean War with the US Navy Sea Bees. He joined the Rodeo Cowboys Association (RCA, later PRCA) in 1959 and, in 1962, set an

arena record of 7.9 seconds in steer wrestling at Cheyenne Frontier Days, which stood for 12 years. Bates set another record at the Denver National Western Stock Show & Rodeo by winning both go-rounds in steer wrestling with a time of 8.2 seconds on two head. He qualified for the National Finals in steer wrestling in 1968 and 1970. His rodeo years spanned 1959 to 1987. Bates spent 25 years as a stuntman, which included being James Arness's stunt double in 1972, and in 2016 he received the prestigious Silver Spur Award at a ceremony in Hollywood, California. In 1967 Bates became the Marlboro Man and received the Addy Award 1970 Honorable Mention for excellence in advertising. As Larry Mahan said, "He was a great representative of rodeo in and outside of the arena." Bates was buried in Port Lavaca, Texas.

JAKE BEUTLER (1903 – 1975) was born February 15, 1903, near Okarche, Oklahoma Territory. Later, the Beutler family settled just north of Elk City, Oklahoma. In 1924, Jake and brother Lynn saw their first rodeo in Canadian, Texas, and decided the pageantry and excitement of it was what they wanted to do. The brothers' first contracting experience was trailing ten horses to the Custer County Fair Rodeo in Clinton, Oklahoma, where they earned \$150. Jake, Lynn and Elra Beutler built one of the largest stock producing companies in rodeo and were innovative in their selection of stock and production of their rodeos. Jake was in charge of the stock and transportation. Although his responsibilities were behind the scenes, his role ensured the Beutler Brothers Rodeo Company would become one of the most successful rodeo stock contracting companies in North America. Beutler Brothers' rodeos were some of the biggest and best, and their stock was well known — one of their most famous animals was *Descent*, considered one of the greatest broncs in the history of professional rodeo, receiving Bucking Horse of the Year honors six times. In 1968, the Beutlers sold their company to Harry Vold and Mike Cervi. Jake Beutler then ranched near Carpenter, Oklahoma, until he passed away on March 23, 1975.

Tad Lucas Memorial Award 2022 Recipient MARTHA JOSEY. Martha Arthur Josey, born in 1938 in Marshall, Texas, is one of the most accomplished barrel racers in the world. She began her rodeo career in the mid-1950s as a barrel racer, but competed in and won many events including calf roping, goat tying, bronc riding, bull riding and cutting. In 1956, during her senior year in high school, she and horse *Cebe Reed* won 52 consecutive barrel races and seven horse trailers, and qualified for their first National Finals Rodeo (NFR) in 1968. From 1978 – 1981, Josey and *Sonny Bit O' Both* dominated the rodeo world and became the only team to ever win both the AQHA and WPRA in the same year. Josey is one of the only women in the world to qualify for the NFR for four consecutive decades.

With honors too numerous to list, some of Josey's accomplishments include induction into the National Rodeo Hall of Fame at the National Cowboy Museum in 2011; the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame in 1985; the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame in 1988; the Texas Rodeo Hall of Fame in 2007; and the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame & Museum in 2020. In addition, Josey was selected as Citizen of the Year by the Marshall, Texas, Chamber of Commerce in 2016.

Today, Josey continues to instruct barrel racing schools for students of all ages, teaching more than half a million students thus far. Many have gone on to be rodeo performers and world champions.

2022 Ben Johnson Memorial Award Recipient CHUCK SYLVESTER. Born in 1937, Chuck Sylvester was reared in La Salle, Colorado, on the homestead — founded in 1866 — where he continues to live and farm to this day. At 15 he showed his first steer at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colorado, and went on to attend Colorado A&M (now Colorado State University) where, as a member of the rodeo club, he won the 1958 collegiate bull riding event at Logan, Utah, and placed in the Pocatello, Idaho, saddle bronc riding. Following college, Sylvester worked for the Boulder County Extension Service, then transitioned to the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo as assistant manager.

Following a brief stint ranching, he spent three years (1976 – 1978) as manager of the National Western Yards operation, then was named general manager of the National Western Stock Show and Rodeo for 25 years until he retired in 2003. During his tenure, Sylvester tripled attendance at the National Western, and expanded the show from 9 days to 16 days. He was instrumental in starting tours for school-aged children. He also became a respected member of the PRCA Board of Directors and led the National Western Rodeo to be named Indoor Rodeo of the Year in 2000 and 2001. In 2005, one of Sylvester's last official duties as retired general manager was to chair the National Western Stock Show's 100th anniversary. For 30 years, Sylvester has been a member of the Roundup Riders of the Rockies, where he has received both the Colt of the Year Award and the Roundup Rider of the Year Award and been named a director emeritus. In 2002, Sylvester was inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame.

The 2022 Director's Choice Award honoree is JEFF MEDDERS. The Director's Choice award recipient is chosen by the RHS board in exceptional circumstances. 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 University 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.