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Rodeo History Comes Alive in Oklahoma City: New National Rodeo Hall of Fame Debuts November 13–14

Rodeo legends, remarkable memorabilia, interactive experiences and the Class of 2026 take center stage at The Cowboy; October 30 ticket deadline approaches

OKLAHOMA CITY (October 22, 2026) — For rodeo fans, there will be no better place to spend November 13–14, 2026 than the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. The 71st annual National Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend will bring the sport's champions, families, friends and fans together to celebrate the Class of 2026, and to be among the first to experience an entirely new National Rodeo Hall of Fame.

The two-day celebration features the debut of a dramatic new home for rodeo history, newly displayed treasures from the Museum's collection, interactive experiences, a Friday evening reception, Saturday panel discussion, and the signature Saturday night Champions' Dinner, Induction Ceremony and Benefit Auction.

Reservations for ticketed weekend festivities are requested by October 30.

A new home for the legends of rodeo

Since 1955, the National Rodeo Hall of Fame has recognized the riders, ropers, stock contractors, entertainers, innovators and other figures who shaped the sport. This November, that legacy gains a new physical home at The Cowboy — a destination designed not only to honor the greats, but also to tell rodeo's story from its early multicultural roots and cowboy traditions to today's worldwide competition.

At the heart of the redesigned gallery, visitors will discover inductee display cases featuring career-defining objects, paired with a touchscreen experience that allows guests to select an honoree, illuminate the corresponding case and explore that person's story. Biographical information on earlier inductees and honorees will also be accessible. Oral histories from the 2026 class are planned to become available after the November weekend.

Overhead, a four-sided jumbotron will be capable of displaying rodeo broadcasts and other video content, with programmable tickers for information and scores. A large-scale video wall adds another dimension of storytelling, while the World of Rodeo touchscreen invites visitors to explore rodeos and associations across countries, states and cities. A roping chute donated by Priefert, colorful historic and contemporary ropes, and mounted saddles will give guests of all ages a closer connection to rodeo equipment and traditions. Additional interactive rodeo games are planned for a later phase.

Rare memorabilia — and the stories behind it

The new National Rodeo Hall of Fame will bring rodeo history to life through an extraordinary collection of artifacts from some of the sport's most legendary personalities. Among the treasures on display are items from the Class of 2026, including Jess Franks' oversized barrelman Wranglers, Hoss Inman's purple chaps, Bobby Kerr's souvenir lunchbox, Marvin Garrett's 1995 bareback championship buckle, Marvin Shoulders' first pair of cowboy boots and Linsay Rosser Sumpter's star-spangled shirt. Click here for a sneak peek at these remarkable pieces.

These objects, along with countless other artifacts, offer a fascinating glimpse into the personalities, traditions and showmanship that have shaped rodeo through the generations. Each tells a story, bringing visitors closer to the people and moments that made rodeo history.

Beyond these personal treasures, refreshed displays will tell a more expansive story of rodeo, including the sport's roots, Indian rodeo, youth and collegiate competition, rodeo fashion, popular culture and the ways communities kept rodeo traditions alive during times of upheaval. The Museum's extensive rodeo collections allow these stories to be told through authentic objects, photographs and memorabilia.

Meet the Class of 2026

Eight individuals will be inducted into the National Rodeo Hall of Fame: Jess Franks, Marvin Garrett, Hoss Inman (1929–1994), Bobby Kerr (1957–2025), Gary Ledford, David Motes, Marvin Shoulders and Gail Woerner. Their achievements span decades of competition, stock contracting, entertainment, innovation and preservation of rodeo history.

The weekend will also recognize Linsay Rosser Sumpter with the Tad Lucas Memorial Award and John Miller with the Ben Johnson Memorial Award. In a first for the National Rodeo Hall of

Fame, the inaugural Rodeo Legacy Award will recognize two historic events whose influence stretches well beyond their arenas: California Rodeo Salinas and the Pendleton Round-Up.

Fans will recognize world champions and National Finals Rodeo veterans among the honorees, including four-time world champion bareback rider Marvin Garrett, 22-time NFR qualifier David Motes and 1973 NFR Champion Bull Rider Marvin Shoulders. Rodeo historian Gail Woerner has documented hundreds of firsthand accounts, while Jess Franks and the late Bobby Kerr represent the entertainment and horsemanship that make rodeo unforgettable.

A weekend built for the rodeo community

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13 | Rope 'N Ride Cocktail Reception — Gather with old friends and make new connections in the Museum's Prosperity Junction, with hors d'oeuvres and complimentary refreshments. Separate reservation required.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 | National Rodeo Hall of Fame Panel Discussion & Jacket Presentation — Hear from the people behind the sport's remarkable stories and celebrate the Class of 2026. Open to the public with Museum admission.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 | Champions' Dinner, Induction Ceremony and Benefit Auction — Celebrate the honorees at the signature evening of the weekend. Separate ticket required.

Even more to explore at The Cowboy

Visitors can also experience the recently opened PBR Heroes & Legends Hall of Fame, adjacent to the new National Rodeo Hall of Fame gallery. Its exhibits include PBR co-founder Michael Gaffney's original $1,000 founding check, bull ropes connected to Gaffney, a PBR "shark cage" and a championship buckle that traveled on a Space Force mission.

Tickets and reservations

The requested deadline for ticketed National Rodeo Hall of Fame Weekend reservations is Friday, October 30. Individual tickets and weekend packages are available, with discounts for Museum members. View the schedule, ticket choices and reservations at:

https://nationalcowboymuseum.org/national-rodeo-hall-of-fame/

Admission to the November 14 daytime panel is included with regular Museum admission; evening functions require separate reservations. The newly renovated National Rodeo Hall of Fame opens to the public November 13.

About the National Rodeo Hall of Fame

Established in 1955 and located within the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, the National Rodeo Hall of Fame is the original, preeminent and most iconic location for honoring, celebrating and preserving the heritage and legendary names of the West's original sport: Rodeo. Regardless of an individual's background, professional affiliation or chosen event, induction in the National Rodeo Hall of Fame remains the highest honor to which a rodeo participant can endeavor.

For more information, visit National Rodeo Hall of Fame - National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum/.

About the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City is the nation's premier institution dedicated to the history, art and culture of the American West. Founded in 1955, the Museum houses an internationally renowned collection of more than 28,000 Western and Native American artworks and artifacts. Through its exhibitions, programs and scholarship, the Museum preserves and interprets the evolving story of the West, illuminating the people, traditions and ideas that continue to shape American culture. With more than 10 million visitors from around the world, it stands as a leading authority on the enduring legacy of the American West.

For more information, visit National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum - Oklahoma City, OK.

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