



*January 24, 2024*

*BELATED HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE*

## NVRA WINTER NEWSLETTER

***“Get ‘er done!”***

*Some of you may remember that it wasn't that long ago that this motto accompanied our logo and signage ...until, that is, we learned it had been copyrighted by another organization! However, while we have abandoned the phrase in our logo, it continues to apply to everything we try to do during the year to improve our facilities and our organization with a view to our community.*

### THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS, SPONSORS, AND OTHER SUPPORTERS

2023 proved to be a hugely successful year for us. We had a record number of events, terrific help and support from members and the community, and a wonderful Labour Day Weekend Pro Rodeo. That event is the only one of the season that the NVRA produces itself. All other events are organized by other groups such as Little Britches, High School Rodeo, the NV Kennel Club, the Cutting Horse Association, etc. who rent the grounds from us, and our task is preparing the facilities and ensuring that everything required is ready for its event, including clean washrooms, tidy grounds and stalls, and a ready arena. It's a very significant responsibility for a small group like ours and we must rely heavily on help from our volunteers to get everything ready for these events and then to clean up afterwards.

We estimate that for the Pro Rodeo alone, we had approximately 50 volunteers working with our core group, and many others during the season who showed up on call to help us prepare and clean up for the other events that were held. To all of you who were able to give us your time and energy, thank you once again.

Similarly, this past year saw a record number of sponsors help us financially in putting on the Pro Rodeo. We depend heavily on our sponsors as it's not possible to put on an event of this size and quality without that additional financial support. Indeed, over the past 4 years, our production costs have increased almost 50 per cent. Spectator attendance at the Rodeo has grown over the past few years and 2023 may have had the largest crowd watching the best production Merritt has seen in a very long time. All of this would not have been possible without the sponsorship provided by the Nicola Valley business community. While we try our best to thank each of our

sponsors personally, it's important we use every opportunity to express our appreciation and urge our community to buy locally from the businesses who give to us each year.

## **YOU ARE INVITED: NVRA SOCIAL EVENING AND AGM**

### **Annual General Meeting & Social Evening**

**February 29, 2024  
6:00 pm**

**Canadian Country  
Music Hall of Honour**

The Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 29 at the Country Music Hall of Honour. This year, we promise something different! Instead of just a meeting, we will host a social evening with appetizers and refreshments. Members, friends, and sponsors are all invited to come and enjoy some time with us prior to the meeting. We promise to make the AGM itself short and it will be followed by music and more social time.

The annual meeting requires the membership to elect the board of directors for the coming year and receive financial results. We invite you to use this opportunity to come and meet the board and others who support the Association. Learn what we have planned for 2024, tell us what you like that we are doing, how we might improve. We hope you will set the evening aside on your calendar and join us!

## **MEMBERSHIPS**

It is time to renew your membership or, if you are not currently a member, to take out a new membership. Forms are available on our website and will also be available at the Social Evening and AGM or you can email us at [nicolavalleyrodeoassociation@gmail.com](mailto:nicolavalleyrodeoassociation@gmail.com).

Purchasing in advance saves time at the meeting. Please note, only current members may vote at the AGM.

**MEMBER PERK:** Members paid up by midnight February 29, 2024 will receive a pair of free weekend passes to the 2024 pro rodeo.

***You can get your 2024  
membership online at  
our website  
[nicolavalleyrodeo.com](http://nicolavalleyrodeo.com)***

## **NEWS FROM RECENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS**

- **Pro Rodeo** - Mary MacGregor will again serve as head of production for the 2024 Pro Rodeo, arranging for stock, rodeo and arena staff, entertainment and all the other pieces that must be put together. Planning has begun!
- **Exploring synergies within the community** - We are making a concerted effort to better collaborate with the City, the Chamber, Experience Nicola Valley as well as other organizations and non-profits in Merritt in order to better share resources.
- **Contingency fund** – Following two years of positive financial results, the Board has resolved to set aside some funds into a contingency reserve. Recognizing that some of our structures and equipment are aging, the long term objective is to ensure that the Association is able to meet any significant maintenance requirements that might arise in the future.

- **Animal shelter** - A livestock weather/shade shelter is needed in the bullpen. Director Randy Rogers has agreed to manage this construction. If any of our members or friends believe they can assist with the project, please let us know. The aim is to get it done as soon as weather permits.
- **User fees** - Also discussed during recent board meetings has been the matter of our fee structure. In the end, only the stall fees were increased by a small amount for 2024, to \$20 per day from \$15 and the refundable stall cleaning deposit to \$30 from \$25.
- **Website** - Our website is getting a facelift! Directors also resolved to modernize our website. Watch for the redesigned site, which should be up and running before the start of our season.

### OH YES, THERE'S STILL FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS AND UPGRADES TAKING PLACE

While the major electrical upgrade has now largely been completed, there remain finishing touches still to be carried out, such as improved lighting at the entrance gate. Other features include a new security system with cameras and lighting.

One particularly necessary improvement is the resurfacing of the concourse area to make it more stable for people using walking aids, wheelchairs and baby strollers. Quinn Pooley is the project manager and we expect that this work will be completed in the spring, once the weather and ground conditions allow.

The other ongoing work is the conversion of the present equipment and tractor shed into a western styled guest entry/admission plaza with an office and display hall. While we had hoped to get started on this work in the fall, several issues including contractor availability and supply problems arose, which prevented that from occurring. At this time, however, we have received tentative approval from TNRD, which is funding the project, and a contractor has been selected. The goal is to have the work largely completed by the beginning of May.

### THE 2024 CALENDAR IS FILLING UP!

Be sure to check our website [nicolavalleyrodeo.com](http://nicolavalleyrodeo.com) for this season's scheduled events hosted by various groups from the Nicola Valley and beyond. We are continuing to receive inquiries and bookings and 2024 promises to be an exciting year at the Rodeo Grounds, with lots for everyone.

**Volunteers** - We always need help at the grounds for events throughout the season, as well as pro rodeo. If you want to be involved please email us at [nicolavalleyrodeoassociation@gmail.com](mailto:nicolavalleyrodeoassociation@gmail.com), fill in the form on our website, or talk to one of our directors.

**QUESTIONS?** . . . . . email us at [nicolavalleyrodeoassociation@gmail.com](mailto:nicolavalleyrodeoassociation@gmail.com).

Please follow us on Social Media [@nicolavalleyrodeo](https://www.instagram.com/nicolavalleyrodeo)

Check out our website at [nicolavalleyrodeo.com](http://nicolavalleyrodeo.com)