

# THE JOLLY RANCHER

AN OVERVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL GAY RODEO ASSOCIATION

EDITION 2

• OCTOBER 1ST, 2023

• QUARTER 4



Photo by Greg Endries • Instagram @cowboysandcattlequeens

# When Did You Attend Your First IGRA Rodeo?

*By Judy Munson*

Many things have changed since the first IGRA rodeo that was held in 1976 in Reno Nevada, but many things are still the same. The excitement of rodeo competition, fun entertainment, and opportunities to see old friends and make new friends. IGRA, along with its' member associations and participants, has continued the concept of promoting the country western lifestyle, the sport of rodeo, and charitable community fund raising.

Do you remember the thrill, excitement, and adrenaline rush of competing? Or the fabulous performances as you watched or performed as Royalty? Or the pride and sense of accomplishment as you officiated as a judge, arena crew, chute crew, scorekeeper, announcer, or any one of the numerous other positions that are necessary to plan and run an IGRA rodeo. Were you one of the many valued spectators who cheered and celebrated Gay Rodeo and made it a success?

How would you like to see some of your rodeo friends from years past and get together another time at the same location as the first Gay Rodeo, Reno Nevada. Well, you have a once in a lifetime opportunity to participate in the 50th anniversary of Gay Rodeo in North America in 2025. This is the perfect time to reconnect with your rodeo family, meet new friends, and have a fabulous time at the 50-year Reunion in conjunction with World Gay Rodeo Finals 2025.

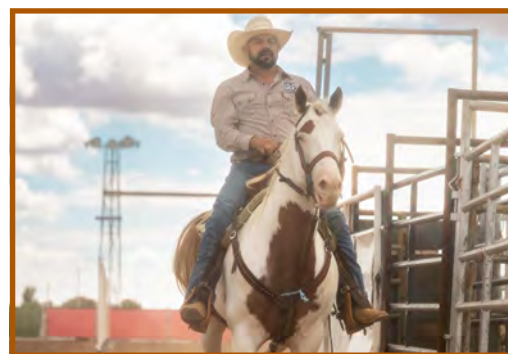
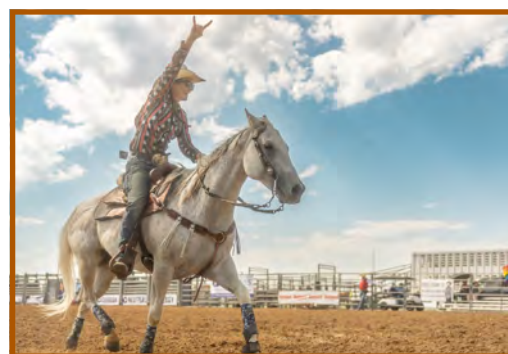
Let's make this a wild and crazy WGRF 2025 Rodeo and 50-year Reunion.

Mark the date on your calendar and start contacting those who you know were involved in Gay Rodeo.

If you were involved in any capacity in IGRA rodeo please send a note with your contact email, so we can send you updates regarding the 50-year Reunion.

Send info to: Judy Munson

Email: [runninghorseranch@platinum.ca](mailto:runninghorseranch@platinum.ca)



# IGRA Family Inspires Cowgirl to Create HIV Support

After joining the Golden State Gay Rodeo Association in 1989, Sunnie Rose Berger was profoundly touched by the many personal losses that began in the 80's with AIDS in the IGRA family. She made a decision to leave her career in law and begin a journey of service and self-discovery in HIV support.

Sunnie traveled the country with her horse, Phoenix, competed in 7 events at more than 75 IGRA rodeos from 1989 to 2003, winning many championships. She performed the Riderless Horse Ceremony a multitude of times in honor of those she and the IGRA family had lost. She has also been a Volunteer Coordinator a number of times for the LA Rodeos throughout the years.

Witnessing her friends lose hope and die, Sunnie was motivated to find a way to re-inspire hope in her friends, something that she felt no one should be without. Her goal was to help as many IGRA members as possible, who were faced with living with HIV through emotional support, education and resources. In 1977, Sunnie joined LA Shanti, Los Angeles' first AIDS service organization and began producing the PLUS Weekend Seminars for people living HIV or AIDS and their loved ones. She found how life affirming and transforming the seminars were and discovered that this was the perfect model to help make a difference in the lives of people with HIV, a model she could embrace. In March 2005 Shanti closed it's doors. Having been literally called upon by the community by case managers, volunteers, program coordinators and government, to 'Do something!', Sunnie decided to act. After meeting with colleagues, government officials and volunteers, and through much self-sacrifice, she chose to mortgage her ranch and co-found The Life Group LA. Her insight bridged important gaps in services for Greater LA, and now abroad as she traveled with her team to other cities and States with the newly formed POZ Life Weekend Seminar. After decades of AIDS fundraisers, walks, bike rides, gala's and more, Sunnie, as a cowgirl and rancher, was inspired and challenged in 2005 to try something new and created her trademarked signature fundraiser, 'Saddle Up LA', an AIDS benefit horseback trail ride and country BBQ. Since launching the yearly event, with her guidance and organizational skills she has been able to raise over \$1m for the Life Group LA's HIV/AIDS services and programs.

For more information, please visit their website at <https://www.TheLifeGroupLA.org>



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Greetings IGRA Association Members,**

IGRA has four big, fun, and exciting opportunities for your participation coming up in the next two years. We need and want your help and participation in the events that interest you.

**IGRA Convention 2023** in Reno, NV October 16, 17, 18 and 19, 2023 at the Circus-Circus Hotel. This event has been approved by the IGRA BOD.

**IGRA University 2024** in Las Vegas, NV January 12, 13 and 14, 2024 held in conjunction with The Sin City Classic and The Sports Diversity Leadership Council at the Flamingo/Linc/ Horseshoe Hotels. We will mingle with 8000 fellow athletes from across the country. This event has been approved by the IGRA BOD.

**IGRA at World Gay Pride 2025** and Smithsonian Institution Project in Washington, DC in early June 2025. *This event is in development.*

**Gay Rodeo 50 Year Reunion at WGRF 2025.** Date, TBD. Think 50-year High-School reunion Party. This event is in development. As IGRA President, it is impossible to reach out 1:1 to ask for your participation. Speaking on behalf of the organization, please know that we want and we need your participation. We want to hear what project interests you, if anything, and facilitate a connection to that interest.

**EVERYONE is invited to participate in the project or projects of your choice.**

Each Project has a Leadership Team in place and we are seeking committee members, volunteers and participants to participate in the development, logistics and execution of these events.

To that end, I am asking any interested members to contact Lisa Smith via email at [lisahbstan@aol.com](mailto:lisahbstan@aol.com) and indicate your area(s) of interest. Lisa will be coordinating the volunteers to work on all four events. She will communicate your interest to the event chairs and they will reach out to you as opportunities develop. In this way, I feel that no member will be left behind, left out, or left wondering about participation opportunities.

WGRF 2023, 2024 and 2025 will continue to be managed by the WGRF Committee and the BOD.

Please reach out to Lisa as you consider how you would like to be involved in these projects these projects.

Sincerely,  
*Brian Helander, IGRA President, 2023-2024*

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## IGRA SCHEDULE - 2023

**World Gay Rodeo Finals**  
**IGRA Annual Convention**

**October 27-29**  
**November 16-19**

**El Reno, OK**  
**Reno, NV**



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## Judy Munson



Judy Munson was born and raised in San Diego, California. In 1975 she relocated to Calgary to fill a teaching position. She began with IGRA there, with the Alberta Rockies Gay Rodeo Association in 1994.

Judy has held many positions within the IGRA organization, including 3 time ARGRA Rodeo Director, Assistant Rodeo Directors for the World Gay Rodeo Finals in 2015, President of ARGRA in 2005 for the first IGRA convention to be held outside the U.S. She currently holds a position on the Board of the Gay and Lesbian Rodeo Heritage Foundation (GLRHF), and as well is a Hall of Fame Committee member.

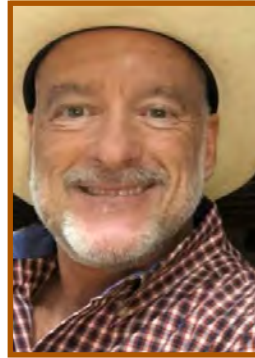
One of Judy's proudest moments with IGRA was being part of the Gay Games Opening Ceremonies at Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland, OH. She recalls 10,000 athletes from 60 nations and 37 sports. 100 IGRA competitors, plus volunteers and officials walked on the main floor dressed in red IGRA western shirts with white cowboy hats and boots. IGRA Cowboys and Cowgirls made an unforgettable entrance to the opening ceremonies and the IGRA rodeo was the talk of Gay Games 9 and the world of gay athletes. As a result of the IGRA rodeo, Gay Rodeo was included in a permanent memorial statue in Akron, Ohio with a horse and rider prominently displayed.

Judy believes the most inspirational part of IGRA's success at Gay Games 9 was watching competitors, volunteers, and officials all come together without exception to show the world our best performances, outstanding competition, and amazing camaraderie during the entire event. IGRA can do anything we put our minds to when we have the same vision, goals, and desire.

Judy is retired from teaching and lives on a 160 acre ranch with her partner Lori, where they board horses and ride in the beautiful mountains of Alberta, Canada.

Oh Canada!!!

## Patrick Terry



Patrick Terry was born and raised in Colorado on the west side. With his love of horses as a kid, he began riding at the age of 14 and has competed in multiple organizations throughout the years. He moved to Las Vegas four years ago, to get away from the cold of Colorado.

Patrick's involvement with IGRA began in 1988 when he attended his first Rodeo Finals, which as he says, 'I was hooked'. He then joined CGRA and became very involved. Starting out as a contestant, he competed in various events for 6 years. He then went on to adorn many hats in the organization including CGRA Trustee, 2x RMRR Rodeo Director, Scorekeeper, Barn Manager, Chairperson of Archives, IGRA University, Convention, 2013 Finals Rodeo Director, IGRA Administrative Assistant from 1993-2003, current chair of the 2023 IGRA Convention and 2024 IGRA University.

Outside of IGRA, Patrick volunteers at a food bank for HIV patients, in Pahrump. He is also very involved with U=U Campaign (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Undetectable=Untransmittable) in Las Vegas. He will soon be running seminars for the Chronic Disease Self Managing Program in 2024.

In Patrick's words, 'What I enjoy and why I keep being involved in IGRA and its Associations, is the comradery with people, as I have made several friends over the years, and enjoy seeing them at IGRA events. I also believe in the organization and its purpose, not just rodeos, but the proceeds that come from the rodeos, going to charities. My heart is IGRA and its Associations and I continue to be involved wherever I can, as long as I can.'

Patrick is a lifetime member of CGRA and also a member of the IGRA Hall of Fame.

LET'S RODEO!

# BENEFACTOR SPOTLIGHT:

# Foundation 1023

Foundation 1023 is committed to supporting the emotional and mental wellness of First Responders, as well as their support network who are experiencing illness, loss or stressful life events. The foundation focuses on providing confidential funding for emotional and mental wellness services, as well as access to peer supported outdoor activities and events designed for personal wellness and connection.

After seeing first hand how trauma in front line workers can effect members of their association directly, the Colorado Gay Rodeo Association began working with Foundation 1023 as a benefactor for the organization.

In 2015 Colorado and Texas experienced a large number of First Responder deaths. These deaths were due to illness, line of duty death, and self-infliction. Foundation 1023, in conversations with peers and family saw that First Responders were doing an amazing job every day taking care of total strangers, but were not finding time to care for themselves. While the average American may experience 1-2 traumatic events in a lifetime, our First Responders experience them on a daily basis; Bearing witness to unimaginable traumas, adverse living situations, dangers, and stresses. These events increase suicide rates, divorce rates, and substance misuse 3-5 times that of the average population.



The origin of their name stems from a couple of situations that blended together. “Foundation” meaning load-bearing or underlying base. The foundation wants their partners and clients to know that they can be a solid footing or safe place for them to land. 1023 comes from 2 primary different places. 1023 was the badge number of one of the well-loved First responders that worked both in Colorado and Texas who perished in an Air-medical incident on April 27th, 2015. Also, 10-23 in the old Police 10 codes means “arrived on the scene” or “safely arrived”. (1023 is also the IRS form one fills out to obtain non-profit status). Knowing that they were offering First Responders a solid safe

place to land during a crisis then the name came together, and Foundation 1023 launched forward from there. Since receiving their non-profit status in June of 2016, they have served over 2,200 First responders and provided over 6,200 hours of mental wellness care. Foundation 1023 funding is generated from donations, fundraising events, and community partnerships. Their operation staff volunteers their time so more funding can go directly to services.

If you would like to learn more, or help contribute to Foundation 1023, please visit [www.foundation1023.org](http://www.foundation1023.org)



# RODEO MEMORIAL QUILT

The Rodeo Memorial Quilt Project is moving along quite nicely. The first promotional piece was introduced on Facebook. The First Rodeo Memorial Quilt is at the Quilt-maker now. If you know of someone who has passed away, affiliated with IGRA, or you just want to donate, please scan the QR code in the flyer. It goes to the IGRA HQ in Denver, which is a 501(c)(3) organization. Please contact Mr. NMGRA David Smith or Miss NMGRA Aurora Gayheart if you have any questions. All Quilted Panels will be displayed collectively at our 50th Rodeo Anniversary at the WGRF 2025. A special shout out to Gene Fraikes and William Pederson for all expertise with fabric and thread....As well as thanks to the pioneering contributors to this project thus far. Not to forget Roger Bergmann, Jeff Bosacki & Sunnie Rose Berger for helping get this idea off the ground.



## RODEO MEMORIAL QUILT

**50 YEARS**

NEVER FORGOTTEN

*This project/fundraiser is brought to you by  
Mr. NMGRA 2023, Mr. David J. Smith &  
Miss NMGRA 2023, Miss Aurora Gayheart.*



**SCAN HERE  
TO DONATE USING**




OR YOU CAN SEND A CHECK TO  
**RODEO MEMORIAL QUILT,  
PO BOX 460504, AURORA  
CO 80046-0504**

<p><i>Cynthia Diane Dolan</i> July 6, 1979 - June 4, 2018 <b>GSGRA</b> Loved &amp; Cherished by her wife Peggy</p>	<p><i>Wayne Jakino</i> 1942-2008 "Mr. Rodeo" Rodeo #4008 IGRA Founding President Rodeo Announcer IGRA Hall of Fame 2004</p>	<p><b>BRETT BATEMAN</b> Rodeo #4415 IGRA Bull Riding Champion Loves Candy Roll</p>
<p><b>ELOY GALINDO</b> April 13, 1999 <b>GSGRA</b> IGRA Scorekeeper Loved By Roger</p>	<p><b>DAN CASSIDY</b> "Dirty Dan" JAN 2, 1950 - FEB 2, 2015 <b>GSGRA</b> Mr. Palm Springs Rodeo 2009</p>	<p><i>Erin Eaton</i> <b>GSGRA</b> Rodeo #1258 IGRA Hall of Fame Chute Coordinator Arena Director</p>

**STYLES**  
2 Styles to choose from – **Arch** or **Block**  
3 colors **Red Black** or **White** –  
(color not guaranteed due to placement.)

**DONATION  
SUGGESTION**

**\$150 PER PANEL**  
**\$375 FOR THE ENTIRE BACK PANEL OF QUILT**

**THIS IS AN IGRA FUNDRAISER -**  
*A 501(c)(3) Organization*  
**PAVING THE WAY TO 50 YEARS!**

*The entire quilt will be displayed in  
Reno Nevada, @ World Gay Rodeo  
Finals 2025 . After WGRF 2025 the quilt  
will be retained with the Gay and  
Lesbian Rodeo Heritage Foundation that  
will travel around the IGRA Circuit.*

*A big special thanks to Gene Fraikes of Twisted Embroidery  
& Billy Pederson of Desert Cowboy Quilting.*

**More Information:**  
Send a note on Facebook Messenger,  
to David J. Smith or Aurora Gayheart, Miss NMGRA.




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*Published and Edited by Charlie Colella and Brandon Volf*

*If you would like to contribute to the Jolly Rancher, please contact Charlie or Brandon. We want your ideas!*