

2019 RODEO HANDS

Behind the scenes: working all year long for four days of fun

Behind the four days of bare-back riding, steer-wrestling, and roping fun that Farm-City Pro Rodeo brings to Umatilla County every August, there is a year's worth of work from volunteers of all varieties.

"It takes an army to raise a family," said Farm-City Pro Rodeo board member David Bothum. "It's the same with putting on a rodeo."

This year, a group of around 15 volunteers put the finishing touches on the rodeo grounds. From landscaping and lighting, to concrete pouring for the new Chute

Eight dance floor, there is always a job for someone who wants to help.

Bothum said that volunteers usually come once a week during the year to prepare the ground, but that as the event approaches, it turns into a more intensive ordeal as tasks narrow down to the finishing touches.

"We've been putting in pretty much four or five days a week," Bothum said.

Around 80 volunteers keep the event afloat during operational hours by manning gates and distributing tickets.

Some sort cattle, and others pull gates. Local youth will be handling concessions and parking to fundraise for their sports teams.

With a team of almost 100 volunteers and nearly 50 sponsors, everyone has the same mission in mind: a bigger celebration.

As rodeo attendees step onto the grounds this year for four days of action-packed fun, they can expect an amped-up Family Night, with family photo-ops and autographs from bull riders. Those look-

ing to get their groove on when the rodeo ends for the night can head to Chute Eight to break in the new concrete dance floor.

An additional score board and some touch-ups on the bleachers will make it easier for audiences to track which cowboys and cowgirls might make it to the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas this December.

This year's rodeo marks the 31st year.

"We're trying to make it better every year," Bothum said.



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