

Welcome to the 76th Annual
KISPIOX VALLEY



RODDEO

“Campfires, Competitors & Community”

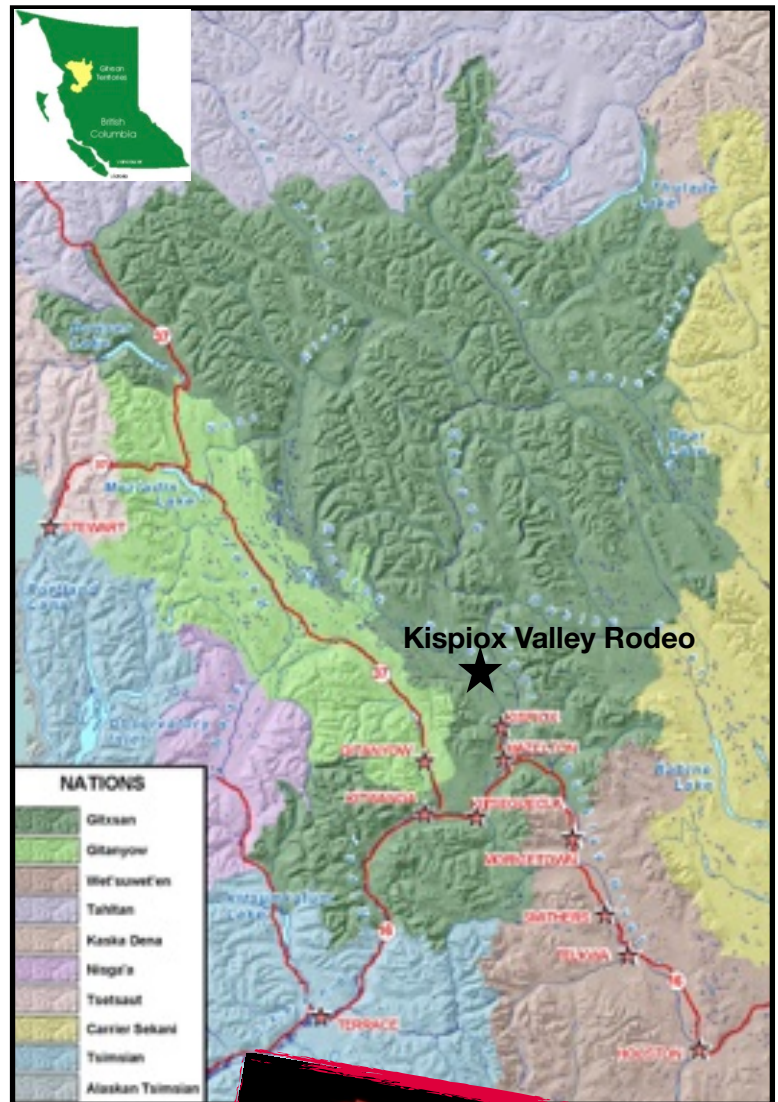
YOU'RE ON GITXSAN TERRITORY

These rodeo grounds sit on the unceded territory of Wilp (House Group) Ma-uus of the Gitxsan Nation.

Families make up a Wilp, Wilps make up a Clan and Clans make up the Gitxsan Nation!

Settler & Indigenous communities here on Gitxsan territories are linked by friendships, marriage, business and the spirit of reciprocity. That doesn't mean we always get along perfectly but what's most important is that we're trying to find a way forward for the betterment of all. This means we have to first acknowledge some dark chapters in our shared history so we can work towards a brighter future.

Thank-you to Wilp Ma-uus and the Gitxsan Nation for making our rodeo a true blend of cowboy and Indigenous culture. Please treat this traditional territory and the Ansp'ayaxw (Kispiox) River with respect.



Every year, world renown artist and KVRC rodeo club member, Roy Henry Vickers designs the most incredible KVRC apparel. Head on over to the T-shirt booth and check out this year's designs. We're extra lucky in 2023 with two!

FROM OUR PRESIDENT



The prep is done, it's rodeo day and what separates is white knuckles of rodeo dreams ready to bust out n kick a hole in the sky.

Welcome everyone to the "Biggest Little Rodeo in the West."

76 years of rodeo tradition in this valley and those dreams from yesteryear still resonate today as we behold the continued spectacle of the cowboy culture bucked and raced out on these beloved grounds along the famous Kispiox River.

This rodeo holds so many memorable memories for so many. Held annually on the first weekend in June; so many make this an annual thing. From broncs to bulls n fast timed races; to the kids' races and cowhides raced in the dirt and mud to legendary cookouts. Kispiox always promises to hold us entertained. The year of 2022 saw us finally host again after Covid and, though challenges we're faced, it was a memorable event that brought our communities together after so long a break.

This year we have lots planned. Highest added money in the country (sure to draw some of Western Canada's best competitors); to mini bronc riding of the young up n coming roughstock riders of the future; to the barrel racing jackpot Friday night before a sold out barn dance. There will be intermission performances by the Gitsegukla drummers both days; we have got one of the best announcers to have ever of picked up a mic, Al Parsons; and C+ Rodeos to bring the best bucking stock and timed event. Beef on the bun; B&T wagons; camping along the river beneath the cottonwoods; the famous cowboys' dinner hosted at Nash camp; and still numerous oldtimers who could tell you about the good old days when winters dropped to -55 and they rode horses to town and wrestled grizzly bears for fun.

This rodeo is a community event, hosted and sponsored by locals and businesses from beyond. Take a sec to check out our list of sponsors, some have been with us for decades! We are proud of this rodeo. All the folks that have been a part of its past and present make us strive to continue its legacy into the future. Enjoy the weekend; watch some great action; indulge in some savory food; and maybe have a cold one to cheer on the cowboys and cowgirls that travel the rodeo trail along with some of our locals just getting their first taste of rodeo.

Christoph Muigg

President - Kispiox Valley Rodeo Club



THE KISPIX VALLEY RODEO CLUB



This photo is but a small sample of our club! It takes 135+ volunteers to organize and run this rodeo. The 100's of hours that members put in to make this event the success it is, is a tribute to their dedication to the sport of rodeo and local community. Best rodeo committee in Canada!

2023 RODEO CLUB MEMBERS

Gene & Joy Allen; Alana Wadley & Jim, Aurora & Phinnigan Allen; John Allen; Kaleigh Allen & Martin Wehren; Kia & Henny Beertema; Scott & Max Beertema; Debbie & Terry Bexson; Ellie Boch; Sammy Sage & Ben Carew; Sam, James, Hank & Bella Combs; Brenda Nelson & Ron Fleming; Anna Frezell & Keiran Frezell-Hayden; Karolyn Hayes; Brandi Nash, Aaron, Layla & Aiden Hendersdon; Amanda & Zach Henwood; Sandra Heuberger, Sky Jones, Callie-Lou Forsyth & Lars Jones; Jude, Zane, Claire & Lily Hobenshield; Monique Jones; Adrian, Marina, Jaro & Zora Jordi; Keifer Larson & Brittany Shopshire; Kassie, James, Bentley, Alli & Julie Loring; Jennifer, Jevan, Araya, Leeara & Emmylou Zyp; Shannon, Steve, Grant & Sara McPhail; Christoph, Carmen & Sascha Muigg; Frank, Glen & Alvin Paulin; Hud, Eryn, Jules & Falon Stokes; Francie & Lawrence Stokes; Noreen O'Hara, Tim, Eavan & Fiona Sullivan; Melissa & Olivier Simard, Abby Stevens, Roy, Andrea, Wakas & Grace Vickers; Landon & Jay Lee Vipond; Anissa, Moise, Emery & Honor Watson, Marlise Zurbrugg.



HONOURARY CLUB MEMBERS

The ones who made it happen in the early years & some STILL making it happen!

Gerry Combs, Dave Aspeslet, Patsy & Earl Hobenshield, Glen & Linda Lavery, Wilfred Lee, Ruth Mesich, Pete Ness, Dave & Lee Nash, Allan & Dorothy Weston, Les Witwer, & Willi Schmid

2023 KVRC EXECUTIVE

President - Christoph Muigg
Vice President - Sandra Heuberger
Treasurer - Brenda Nelson
Secretary - Amanda Henwood
Directors - Debbie Brexson, Andrea Vickers, John Allen & Keifer Larson
Honourary Director - Joy Allen



THE COWBOY'S PRAYER

Creator/Heavenly Father, we pause at this time, mindful of the many blessings you have bestowed upon us. We ask that you will be with us in the arena of life. We do not ask for special favours. We don't ask to draw around the chute fighting horse, the steer that won't lay, or to never break the barrier. We don't even ask for all daylight runs. We do ask that you will help us



live our lives here on earth as cowboys, in such a manner, that when we make that last inevitable ride, to the country up there, where the grass grows lush, green, and stirrup high, and the water runs cool, clear and deep, that you'll take us by the hand and say, "our entry fees are paid."

Amen/Hamii'ya

CROSSING THE GREAT DIVIDE

There have been so many losses of dear friends and family in our communities since the last Kispiox Valley Rodeo. The folks below were a part of our rodeo history, have made a difference and leave us with many fond memories and stories. This is a list of legends and legacies. The rodeo club would like to extend sincere condolences to the families of the following who have crossed over to where the 'Grass is lush, green and stirrup high'.



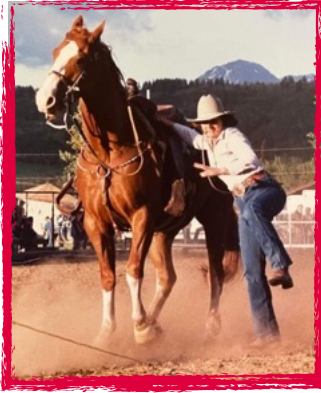
One of the most coveted awards at the rodeo is the Wally Love Memorial Sportsmanship trophy carved by long time Valley resident, **Leon Combs**. Leon carved this one of a kind award depicting two clasped hands. Leon had a beautiful voice and sang at most weddings, funerals and was a star in the Hazelton play, Anne of Green Gables. Leon built many log homes in the area over the years and will always be remembered with fondness and tremendous respect. His grandson James Combs and his family are rodeo club members that contribute immensely to our community.



June Larson Nash was a rodeo enthusiast from the first time she attended. She helped out for many years cooking in the concession, and she supported this rodeo in many ways. She was a vocal cheerleader! She began a new life when she married Bruce Nash who contracted timed event stock for the rodeo here many times and helped with roundups. The rodeo club extends sincere condolences to the Larson family, many whom have been actively involved with the rodeo for many years. June's Grandson Keifer Larson is a rodeo club director. Bruce won the team roping in 1971 with his partner, Gene Allen.

Lloyd Morrision helped start the very first Kispiox rodeo back in the mid-1940s. He's one of the last original, rodeo founders. The first rodeos were hosted by the Gitxsan at Kispiox Village in collaboration with some of ranchers from the Valley. Lloyd was also a Hereditary Chief (Sim'o'gyet') in the Gitxsan Nation and carried the name **Wii Gyet**. The photo below is Lloyd on his horse at the Kispiox Rodeo in 1949.





Dayle Soffel was an extraordinary cowgirl, born and bred. Her dad, Jim West was known throughout rodeo circles as one of the greats. Her mom, Thora never missed a rodeo and supported Dayle and her grandkids throughout their lives. Dayle was an all around cowgirl, who competed in barrels, goat tying, breakaway and team roping, a goat tier and a calf roper, she was a hand when it came to pushing cattle. Throughout her life, Dayle was instrumental in advocating the sport of rodeo. Her daughters Audrey and Stacey were two of the best all around cowgirls in Canada, including Stacey being Miss Rodeo Canada. The rodeo genetics have been passed on down to Dayle's

grandkids. Her husband Charlie still competes in roping events.

Grace McNolty from Vanderhoof, B.C. was a long time Kispiox Valley Rodeo competitor. Married to Gordie McNolty, these two western icons raised a lot of kids, Quarter Horses and left a legacy that will go down in history. Huge rodeo supporters! Their nephew, Wade McNolty (pictured below) is the pickup man here this weekend.



Buddy Napoleon from Moberly Lake was a cree Elder, trapper, hunter, storyteller, conservationist and a cowboy. In his younger days, he made the trip to the Kispiox rodeo many times with his guitar and a big smile. He was a friend to all. He passed at the age of 69.

Silas Fleming was a long time member of the rodeo club. Born and raised in the Kispiox Valley, Silas was a friend to many. He spent a lot of time in the mountains guiding, working for mining companies, was a welder, logger and loved to hunt and fish. Gone too soon.

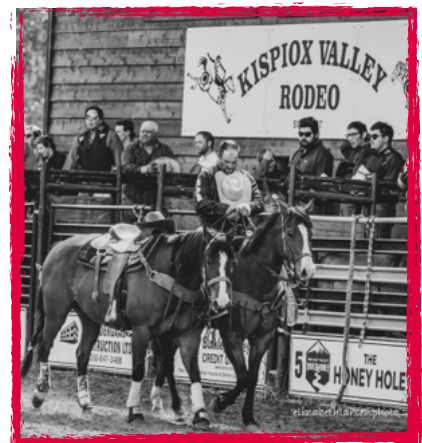


Pat Witwer has been an honorary member of the rodeo club for many years. She and her husband, Les spent 53 years in the upper Kispiox Valley on Poplar Park Road. She had a memorable "yodel" call that you could hear a mile away to let her kids and grandkids know when it was time to reel in the fishing line and come home. Her kindness and love of family is renowned. Her grand daughter, Carmen (Witwer) Muigg sings the anthem every year at the rodeo and is married to rodeo club president, Christoph Muigg.

The Riderless Horse is a ceremony to honour those who have gone before us. This ceremony dates back to the days of honouring fallen soldiers when armies relied on four-legged power rather than motorized transportation.

In this case, it's to take a moment to grieve those we have lost and to remember to live a good life for those who remain.

We ask that you rise, remove your hat and respect the moment of silence and remember those who have gone before us as the horse enters the arena.



2023 RODEO SPONSORS

Huge thanks to these incredible sponsors that help our rodeo function - by paying for or donating purses, services, food, expertise or equipment. Because of them, the Kispiox Valley Rodeo has the largest purses in the BCRA, the most buckles & awards and is a favorite of competitors and spectators alike. Make sure you give them a tip of your cowboy hat and please support them as they support their communities. We couldn't put on the rodeo without every, single one.

Diamond \$5000+

CF'TK/CJFW/Bell Media

Platinum \$2000+

Bulkley Valley Credit Union
Canadian Tire - Smithers
Dr. Jaco Fourie
Dr. Mariette de Bruin
Larson Timber Ltd
Newcrest Mining
Black Press - Interior News

Gold \$1500+

Bulkley Browser
Castle BV Home Center
Larry Bijou
Huber Farm Equipment
North of 60 Logistics Ltd
Northern Metals Fabricating & Machining

Silver \$1000+

Buck Ridge Contracting
Canoe Creek Logging Inc
Driftwood Diamond Drilling
Hoskins Ford Sales Ltd
Kispiox Band Council
KSM Mining ULC
MacCarthy GM, Prevost, and Honda Terrace.
Smithers Feed Store
Bulkley Valley Hive & Honey
Iron Spur Farrier & Equine Services
Northwest Fuels Ltd
Vandergaag Construction Ltd.
Steel Ridge Contracting Ltd

Copper \$500+

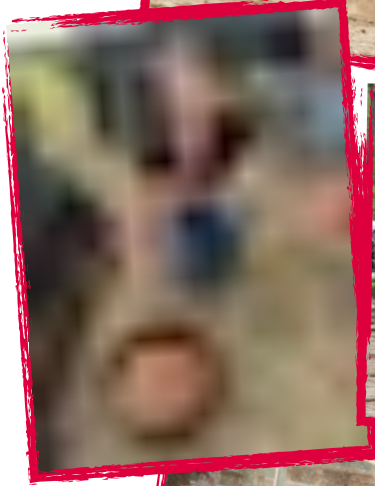
Blue Water Sushi
Bulkley Valley Brewery
Bulkley Valley Wholesale
Canadian Tire Terrace
Terrace Elks 425 Lodge
Fire Mountain Outfitters Inc.
Firesteel Ventures

Frontier Chrysler Ltd
Geraco Enterprises Ltd
Glacier Toyota
Grassland Equipment Ltd
Henwood Farms
Kispiox Gas Bar
Kispiox Fishing Company
Kitselas Band Council
KRB Industries
McDonald's Store Ltd
Mount'n View Tire
Pete Heit - Bequeathed
RTC Electric Ltd
Sausage Factory
Skeena Heliskiing
Smokescreen Graphics
Sullivan Motor Products Ltd.
Tahltan Outfitters
Tri-Town Lumber & Feed
Sausage Factory
Old Time Pub
Red Rose Ventures



Bronze - Services or <\$500

- AWG Northern Industries Inc
- All Seasons Automotive Ltd
- Aqua North Plumbing Ltd
- Bear Claw Lodge
- Beertema's Furniture & Electronics
- Coast Mountain GM
- Cybernet
- Dawson Road Maintenance
- Daybreak Eggs
- Elizabeth Larsen
- Mrs Munson
- Gitanmaax Market - The Grocery People
- Gordon Leary
- Hoskins Ford
- Jade First Aid
- K. Murphy
- KBL Contracting
- Frontier Chrysler Ltd
- Geraco Enterprises Ltd
- Landon Vipond
- Leland Jasper
- Love Bros & Lee Ltd
- Martin Wehren
- McPhail Family
- McRae Family
- Muigg Family
- New Hazelton Fire Department
- No Frills Groceries - Smithers
- Northwest Guide Outfitters Assoc
- OK Tire Smithers
- Olson Silver & Leather
- Royal B Contracting Services
- RCMP
- Safeway Smithers
- Seaton Sawmills
- Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition
- Smithers Brewing Co.
- Smithers Home Hardware
- Smithers Lumber Yard Ltd
- Steve Leary
- Subway - New Hazelton
- Tom Lee
- Tricon Truss & Millwork Ltd.
- Triple Nickel Contracting
- Upper Skeena Development Centre
- Walkat Holdings
- Wesco -New Hazelton





2023 WEEKEND SCHEDULE



Thursday
Friday

5pm-8pm
All Day

Early Bird Camping - gate entry
Rodeo Kickoff Event - BBQ, BnT Wagon Rides & Live Music in
New Hazelton at the Bulkley Valley Credit Union
Riverside Camping Opens
Dance – Main Hall (No Minors), Axes of Ego

Saturday

8:00a.m.
10:00a.m.
1:00 p.m.

Pancake Breakfast - Main Hall - With The 4 Fit & Handsome Fryers
Free Horse Drawn Wagon Rides with the BnT Wagon Rides
BCRA Sanctioned Rodeo, Grand Entry – Main Arena
Beer Gardens by Smithers Brewing Co - No Minors
Gitsegukla Dancers
BBQ Beef & Food Vendors
8:00p.m. Free Family Dance - Main Hall, Axes of Ego

Sunday

TOUGH ENOUGH TO WEAR PINK DAY - WEAR PINK TO THE RODEO

8:00a.m.
10:00a.m.
1:00 p.m.

Pancake Breakfast - Main Hall - With the 4 Fit & Handsome Fryers
Free Horse Drawn Wagon Rides with the BnT Wagon Rides
BCRA Sanctioned Rodeo, Grand Entry – Main Arena
Beer Gardens by Smithers Brewing Co- No Minors
Gitsegukla Dancers
BBQ Beef & Food Vendors

Make sure you trot on over to the Rodeo T-Shirt booth and take a piece of rodeo home with you. Long time rodeo club member, Roy Henry Vickers has custom designed some great art work to help raise money to keep this rodeo bucking in the years to come. T-shirts, posters, limited edition buckles and limited edition silk screen prints. Check out the booth and wear your rodeo pride!



BRITISH COLUMBIA RODEO ASSOCIATION



The Kispiox Valley Rodeo is sanctioned by the British Columbia Rodeo Association. The BCRA ensures that the rodeo is run on a professional level, providing top quality judges, timers, secretaries, announcers, pickup men, photographers, bullfighters, stock contractors and rodeo entertainers. Each rodeo is attended by elected directors who monitor the stock, contestants, arena conditions, facilities and help committees to produce a great rodeo. They keep track of contestants' winnings and determine who qualifies for the BCRA rodeo finals. Many of their contestants have gone on to compete and win in the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association, (the CPRA) and many of you will recognize their names as they've competed many times at Kispiox. You can always check out www.rodeobc.com

RODEO VENDORS

Are you hungry? Thirsty? Need some horse tack or clothing? Check out the tasty treats, satisfying snacks and megalicious meals in our vendor area near the bleacher entrance

FOUR FIT FRYERS PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Pancakes, bacon, eggs, juice & coffee. A solid breakfast to start your day, served from 8:00 - 11:00 each morning in the hall. A long-standing rodeo tradition!

KISPIOX VALLEY RODEO BBQ BEEF BOOTH

Barbequed beef on a bun. Our roast beef is flame roasted "low and slow" all night long in a giant boiler from an old stern wheeler ship that came up the Skeena River. Another long-standing rodeo tradition!

BEYOND BURGERS

Hamburgers, pulled pork poutine, wings, fish & chips, hot dogs, hot & cold drinks.

CINAWAY TRADING (MERCHANDISE)

T-shirts, bags, jewellery, clothing, hats, shawls, bandanas, scarves and other accessories

RED NATION APPAREL

A Gitksan Nation clothing company that gives back to community.

DEADLY AUNTIE'S TRAPPINGS

A Kispiox based business that makes and sells contemporary Indigenous fashion as a mother/daughter duo specializing in Ribbon Skirts

MERCEDES BEANS

Now owned and operated by Kispiox Band! Specialty coffees, teas and treats! Hot or cold this crew will get you what you need!

SUM SHOCKIN' GOOD FOOD TRUCK

Newfie Food. What's Newfie food - it's delicious, that's what it is! Tornado potatoes, deep fried oreos, Toutons, arse farts, burgers and fries with dressing & gravy.

BACKROAD WEAVING

Handwoven mohair products! Cinches, breast collars, dog collars, rifle straps, etc. Will take custom orders.

WOK WITH HONG & MORGAN

A Kitwanga based business bringing you some awesomely, wicked-good Chinese food





RUNNING A RODEO



Hard work! That's what it takes to put a rodeo on. Without all the services of the people and organizations below, our rodeo just wouldn't be the same. Thanks so very much to all of you!

The **RCMP** regularly patrol the grounds to help our security team keep our families, children, animals and possessions safe.



Calf Chute - At the exact moment a competitor nods their head, **Jevon Zyp** will push the lever forward while perched atop the chute to release the calf or steer.

Timed Event Chute - **Glen Paulin** heads up this crew. These are the guys you see pushing the steers, calves and other stock through the alley into the chutes. Every animal is drawn for prior to the rodeo and it's up to these hard core cowboys to ensure the competitors are matched with the right animal athlete.



Pick-Up Men - **Wade McNolty & Earl Call** are two of the best pickup men in Canada. These guys can read stock like most people read a newspaper. Their job is to ensure the rider gets set safely on the ground after the ride. They escort the bulls and bucking horses out of the arena and both are deadly with their lariats. "

Stock-Chaser - **Sara McPhail & Lily Hobenshield** are the ones you see helping chase timed event livestock out of the arena to keep the rodeo running faster.

Strip-Chute - A tough job well handled by veterans **Scott Beertema** and **Sam Larson**. After the ride, the animal is run through the strip chute where the saddle, bareback rigging and bull ropes are removed from the animal.



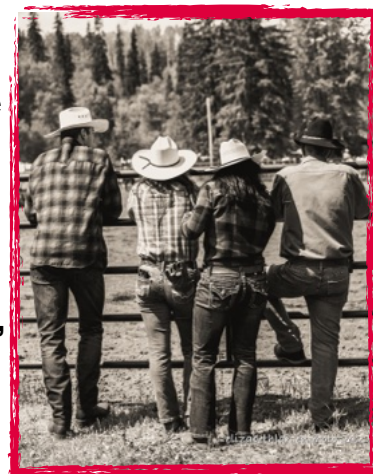
Arena Director - **Marina Davies** - One of the toughest jobs rodeo weekend. This person is responsible for keeping the rodeo running smoothly. Marina started her rodeo career right here at this arena, barrel racing and riding steers.

Chute Boss - **Jim Allen** keeps all the rough stock in order and works with the chute help to keep them bringing the right animal athletes to match up with their cowboy competitor.



Bullfighter - **Cody Call** is the man in charge of keeping bull riders safe once the chute is cracked. He helps lure the bulls away from a potentially injured rider or gets in there when a rider is hung up!

Timed Event Strip Chute operated by the **Stokes clan, Falon, Hud, Jules and Eryn**. Taking off ropes and re-directing the stock to the right pens. It's a great way to get your hands crushed if you don't know what you're doing.





Rodeo Secretaries - Cathy Sims & Patti Gerhardi - These ladies make sure everyone has paid their entry fees, signed a waiver and gets their prize money and buckle!

Quad Harrows - One of the north's best slednecks, **James Loring** will be ripping through the arena after every 5 barrel racers to harrow the trenches dug in the dirt by fast turning horses to help ensure animal athletes have good footing to reduce the risk of slipping and ensure each

competitor has good ground.

Rodeo Judges this year are **Carl Hyde & Grayson Winters**. These are guys are certified to score both animal and human athletes and ensure every competitor has a fair shot of winning the rodeo.

Rodeo Timers **Annie William & Neet Walker** are the two folks in the booth with the announcer that start and stop their stopwatches to clock how fast a steer is roped, barrels turned or the 8 seconds of a bullride. They stay focused and can't get distracted when the difference between first and second is 1/100th of a second!



Paramedics & First Aid Tent - Some of the most important people the entire weekend are the ones who are looking out for your safety and literally saving lives. **Jade First Aid** are professional, dedicated and extremely knowledgeable. **Tyler McKenzie & Danielle Gilbert** will be running the First Aid Tent near the BBQ Beef building - head on over there if you need a little extra attention for cuts, scrapes or other issues.

RULES OF RODEO WEEKEND

A few years back, the KVRC partnered with the RCMP, the Kispiox Valley Music Festival and the Kispiox Valley Community Association to crack down on excessive partying. It's been a huge success with very few rule-breakers earning themselves a permanent ban from the grounds. Please remember that this is a FAMILY event and **excessive or underage drinking will not be tolerated.**

****18 & UNDER - YOU CANNOT ENTER THE GATES OR CAMP WITHOUT A PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

Our security team led by **Melvin Wright** will be doing a Sunday morning 'camp check'. If they find your camp a mess with broken bottles and garbage, you could be in **BIG TROUBLE!!!** Your license plate will be noted and the names of people in the camp. If the camp is not cleaned up by noon on Sunday, you and the people in your camp will not be welcome on the community grounds for a minimum of two years for ANY event hosted here. Please make sure your camping spot is kept clean! Kids camp here too, so remember to keep the cuss words out of your vocabulary, the drinking within a responsible limit and the late nights quiet....or else! We could even add in a "MOM SAID!" to be sure you get the message but essentially, if you wouldn't do it in Gramma's house - don't do it here. RCMP will be doing regular patrols of the grounds Friday and Saturday evenings as well as road checkstops to help keep people safe.



RODEO ROYALTY



Araya Bett-Zyp is our reigning rodeo queen and **Jorja Creyke** our Princess. Araya spent the past year acting as our representative at rodeos and parades across the Province. She is a member of the Gitksan Nation from **Wilp Gwininitxw**, a student of Hazelton Secondary School and lives up the Skeena where she helps with farm chores and operating the family business - Skeena Catskiing. Jorja, a Smithers Secondary student and former Drill Team member & mutton buster, is **Tahltan, Vuntut Gwitchin & Wet'suweten** and lives in Witset. You will see our rodeo royalty working all weekend from helping out in the arena, to handing out buckles and trophies to event winners, selling 50/50 tickets and signing autographs for kids.

GIDAHMES DANCERS @ INTERMISSION

Kispiox Valley Rodeo Club is excited to bring you the Gidahmes Dancers group this year. They come from the Gitksan reserve of Gitsegukla. Nestled beside the Skeena River, the community is en route to Terrace just west of New Hazelton. Practising and performing



together for the past 15-20 years, they have travelled all over British Columbia including a performance at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver to share their culture, songs & dances. Performers are all ages from toddlers to Elders. The banners you see in the photo pay homage to those we have lost in the past few years. Leaders & Elders who are now the Ancestors. They will be performing each day during intermission - so don't miss out!



RODEO BUILDS'EM STRONG!

At 14, **Sara McPhail** is the 2023 National Champion for women's wrestling. Weighing in at 69kg, this grade 9 student took the gold medal earlier this year in the Under 17 division. She credits her core strength and determination to rodeo, ranching, backcountry recreation and competitive rough housing with her Dad, brother, aunts & uncles.

As the granddaughter of **Gene & Joy Allen**, Sara McPhail was a part of the Kispiox Valley Rodeo before she was born. At age 3, she was the youngest performer in the Kispiox Valley Drill Team and completed her first full ascent rock-climb of Hagwilget Canyon (up the rocks under the famous Hagwilget Bridge). Her first events at the rodeo was the stick horse race & mutton busting - she did both while wearing a pink dress. She's earned herself paycheques from barrel racing, musical chairs and other events. This year, she and Lily Hobenshield are entered in the rescue race.

Sara was first coached by her cousin and former champion, **Tom Lee** alongside other local wrestling legends, **Tim Sullivan** and **Jen Zyp**. Sara got her start in grade 6 while attending Majagaleehl Gali Aks Elementary defeating a 17-year old male wrestler that first year (it was also his first year wrestling). She had to wait until grade 8 to compete officially so her matches were mostly exhibition. In her first official year as a grade 8, Sara placed 4th in Provincials against senior wrestlers in grades 11 & 12. At the BC Summer Games, Sara wrestled for the Northwest Zone under coaches **Addison Bree & Jessica Whalen** of Smithers and came home with gold. That win made her eligible to compete at Nationals but Sara wasn't taking anything for granted.

This past wrestling season, Sara was undefeated in BC and Alberta and took silver at Provincials after the final match against the national bronze medalist from Japan. She then went onto win gold for all of Canada defeating last year's gold medalist, Cassidy Pace.

Sara would like to become a veterinarian and moved to Vanderhoof for grade 9 to attend Nechako Valley Secondary School to better focus on her academics. **Travis Himmelright**, another wrestling legend from Gitksan territory, is her coach at NVSS while Tom Lee still helps tune her up during visits home. Sara lives with **Tom and Taya Silver** who are part of the multigenerational Allen-Millard rodeo family. Taya being the daughter of rodeo legends, **Toby & Carma Millard**. Sara borrowed her Grandpa Gene's horse trailer and moved with her two horses Penny (from Mel Stokes) and Shay (foal from Sara's previous mare). **Bill & Ruth MacIntosh**, neighbours and friends, traded hay for farm chores to keep her horses fed all winter and to help keep Sara fit.

Sara dreams of one day following in the footsteps of Olympic medalists from the upper Skeena, **Carol Huynh** and **Lindsay Belisle**. At the 2023 National Championships, Sara got to witness Belisle being inducted into the Canadian Wrestling Hall of Fame.

"I'm so lucky to have such amazing role models, coaches and the support of two communities and families. When I went to nationals, so many people from my hometown donated to help me go. **Yvonne Lattie & Tony Gawa, Don Messier, Geraco, Roy & Andrea Vickers, Carol & Brian Pritchard, Jim Tiviotdale, Scarlette & Brielle Guno, my Auntie Sue, Debbie Braurer & Charlie Eckfeldt** - Charlie was the doctor who delivered me and their daughter, Kate was also a National Champion! **Pansy Wright-Simms** gave me a blanket when I moved that I used for all my trips so I always have something from home with me at tournaments. My parents were there and so was Bill MacIntosh. I was pretty happy, everyone worked so hard to get me here, I cried when I won gold."





Since its inception in 2004, TETWP has empowered rodeos and western events in the U.S. and Canada to focus attention on the need for a cure. To date, the campaign has raised over \$37 million dollars for breast cancer charities, much of which stays right in the community. The grassroots movement has inspired other sports communities to mount their own TETWP campaigns, spreading a message of hope and support that reaches beyond the rodeo arena to competitors, families and fans across America.

Organizer: Jude Marshall-Hobenshield

Jude comes from a family where breast cancer runs rampant in both her mother and father's sides of the family. She lost both her paternal grandmother, Jane

Marshall and her paternal aunt (who's she's named after) Judy Wale to this terrible disease. She also has two aunts on each side, Alice Maitland and Bonnie Koning who are breast cancer survivors, which gives Jude the drive to find a cure so that when her three daughters reach adulthood, breast cancer will be a thing of the past.

2023 proceeds to be donated to the Kordyban Lodge in Prince George, BC.

In 2018-2019, between Jude and her husband Zane, three of their Uncles, as well as many family friends, have received cancer treatment, have stayed, or used the services of the Kordyban Lodge in Prince



George. In the last few years, Jude has lost two family members, Uncle Phil and Uncle Garry to cancer and during their last days, they received great care at the Kordyban Lodge. Jude also lost her mother in law and a niece to cancer within 2 weeks of each other.

Jude handmakes TETWP quilts (this year's quilt is pictured to the left) as part of a fundraising raffle **so make sure to get over to the TETWP booth and get your tickets!!** The raffle includes great prizes from local businesses/artists/and crafters.

Over the last several years, Jude has helped raise between \$60,000 - \$70,000 for cancer research. She organizes the Candles by the River cancer luminary event at Hazelton's Pioneer Day in August and other countless fundraising competitions and initiatives to raise funds for Kordyban.

The Kordyban Lodge facility not only provides a place for patients and family members to stay, but also organizes and supplies the rides to medical appointments, provides a Pacific Blue Cross wig bank for those who lose

their hair as well as a breast prosthesis bank, meditation rooms, activity rooms and so much more.

"One person can make a difference and every little bit helps! Your efforts can help save someone's life."

~Jude Marshall-Hobenshield

Charley McClary will be auctioning off the quilt during Sunday's rodeo performance! Stay tuned!



NATIONAL ANTHEM PERFORMERS

Saturday



Carol Ponchet lives here in the Kispiox Valley. She is a retired horticulturist and is passionate about nature and protecting our environment. She also loves music and is thrilled to sing the American anthem in honour of our guests.



Willa Lee, a Kispiox Valley resident & grade 11 French immersion student at Hazelton Secondary will sing the Canadian anthem. She is the great grand-daughter of Jack and Frances Lee - some of our rodeo founders and the great niece of the very first Kispiox Valley Rodeo Queen, Bernice Aspeslet. Willa is an incredible artist, performer and loves a good book or 10. Her favourite thing is listening to music.

Sunday



Carmen Muigg is the grand daughter of two, long-time rodeo club members, Les & Pat Witwer. She met her husband and rodeo club president, Christoph Muigg in this very rodeo arena. Last year, Carmen performed the American anthem during the Grand Entry with her brand new baby boy, Sascha sleeping soundly on her chest. Now that's some mom power! Imagine the lullabies...



Aurora is the great grand-daughter of Marty & Dorothy Allen, Grant & June Nash and Margaret Clay. Her grandpa's are Gene Allen & Gord Wadley so you know she's a determined person. Aurora loves taking dance classes at the Upper Skeena Recreation Centre and lives on a ranch right here in the Kispiox. She is a grade 8 French Immersion student at Hazelton Secondary.



SHOOTING RODEOS

This entire program is made up of photos from local photographers both professional and amateur. Every photo is from the previous rodeo which speaks to how many incredible shots are taken in just a single year!

Elizabeth Larsen from the Hazeltons is amazing at capturing those precious moments. She takes the shots that tell stories about the true essence of rodeo; community, support, hard work, love, dirt, relationships, family, culture, tears and triumph. Check her photos out on [facebook.com/elizabethlarsen.7798](https://www.facebook.com/elizabethlarsen.7798) or call (778)202-1670

Gordon Leary is a small-town raised guy who looks at the world in a different way. He says photography gives him a way to show people a small glimpse of things through his eyes. While he lives in Kamloops now, he was raised in Hazelton and always doing what he can to get into the wild. "I still love and miss Haze, it made me who I am today!" Check his photos out on [facebook.com/GordonLearyPhotography](https://www.facebook.com/GordonLearyPhotography)

Each of their photos in this booklet are watermarked. If you like what you see or want to see more, check out their work online. The unmarked photos were either supplied by the person in the photo or by Kispiox Valley Rodeo Club members. If there is a photo you just need to have, please email shannon@skeenawatershed.com for a copy or connection to the photographer.



FOOTRACING - OPEN TO EVERYONE

Listen to our announcer, Al Parsons, when he calls for the foot races. Hop the fence and get in there! The races are divided into five age categories. If Brian Larson can stay on his feet, he's favoured to win the 55+ race! (Don't worry -the arena will be clear of all the livestock!)

Last year's results:

10 & under - **Tanner Sterritt**
41-55 - **Luke Hill**

11-16 - **Kaiden Wesley**
Over 55 - **Brian Larson**

17-40 - **Rick Danecker**



AL PARSONS

PROFESSIONAL RODEO ANNOUNCER



The Kispiox Valley Rodeo Club welcomes Al Parsons to the 76th annual rodeo! Al was born and raised in Keremeos, B.C. He is the youngest of 8 kids from a very fun loving family. The Parsons' are made up of farmers, guides and outfitters, trappers, and a feedlot. *"I guess I was spoiled, being the only one to get to rodeo full time on the road."* Al rode bareback horses for about 12 years, winning a Rookie of the Year along with reserve championships in Circuit Finals. That career ended happily in Lancaster, California after he married his wife and best friend, Joanie Jacobs, a trick rider that was trained and traveled with the late greats Dick and Connie Griffith.

Al started his announcing career in 1994 when a friend of his called and stated that his announcer for a rodeo failed to show up. The rodeo was 4 hours away, Archie said, "I need someone with a big mouth and a sense of humor, you've got 6 hours to get here!" Not wanting to let a friend get caught without, Al loaded up the truck and the new job was under way. After discovering his natural ability, he went to school for radio and television broadcasting. They are going into their 29th year of announcing and will enjoy another 90 performances of the greatest sport in the world.

STOCK CONTRACTOR



The Kispiox Valley Rodeo Club is proud to have **C+ Rodeos** supply the stock for our 76th annual rodeo. They are the largest and leading Stock Contractor for rodeos and bull riding events in British Columbia. Their stock have consistently won awards for over 25 years. They provide stock for the PBR, CPRA, BCRA and the BCPB. Prior to Covid, they had six bareback horses that were voted to the Canadian Finals Rodeo and they won both the Saddle Bronc and Bareback horse of the year for the BCRA!

Roy & Earl Call of C+ Rodeo Company come from a multigenerational cowboy family. Their Dad, Basil was a champion team roper. Their mom, Carol was a horse trainer and top barrel racer. This rodeo tradition is continuing through Roy & Earl's kids who help out at the rodeos with their Dads. Roy's son, Cody Call is one of the top bullfighters in the country!

Roy conducts seminars at rodeos to help educate rodeo fans about the welfare of the stock. He's a true ambassador for the sport of rodeo and animal athlete health. Roy was also a good bullfighter and selected many times to fight bulls for the BCRA & the NRA finals.

Earl is one of the top all around cowboys in the history of rodeo in BC. He's been the champion bull rider of BC four times! Earl is also one of the pickup men at this rodeos and has saved many a cowboy from disaster with his quick thinking and uncanny ability of knowing what the horse or bull is going to do.





Nathan Cullen, MLA
Stikine

Dear Kispiox Valley Rodeo Club:


Congratulations on another successful rodeo weekend. The commitment and devotion of volunteers and the overall community support is unmistakable not just in the great competition and displays but in the fact that this is the 76th year for the rodeo – an incredible record for any community event!

Rodeo weekend is a time to reconnect with friends and family from all over the Northwest. For those returning to the rodeo, or attending for the first time, you are in for a treat! The ability to really get close to the action, the beautiful scenery, the camping, and the family atmosphere will make for an exceptional weekend.

Once again, congratulations and thank you to the Kispiox Valley Rodeo Club, all the organizers and volunteers for another great job.

Enjoy the rodeo!

Sincerely,



Nathan Cullen, MLA Stikine



Constituency Office:

T: 250-842-6338 Hazelton office

T: 250-847-8841 Smithers office

Nathan.Cullen.MLA@leg.bc.ca



Taylor Bachrach

MP SKEENA-BULKLEY VALLEY

Ottawa

512 Confederation Bldg
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
T: 613-992-7688

Terrace

112-4716 Lazelle Ave
Terrace, BC V8G 1T2
T: 250-615-5339

Prince Rupert

290-309 2nd Ave West
Prince Rupert, BC V8J 3T1
T: 250-622-2413

Smithers

1226 Main St
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0
T: 250-877-4140

Dear Friends,

As your Member of Parliament for Skeena-Bulkley Valley, I want to welcome you all to 76th annual Kispiox Valley Rodeo, on the unceded lax yip of the Gitxsan Nation!

The Kispiox Valley is full of some the biggest-hearted, hardest-working, most community minded people in all of Canada, so it's no wonder that it's also home to such a great annual event. From the saddle broncs to the barbeque, I hope this year's rodeo is one for the history books.

I want to thank all the volunteers who work hard each and every year to make the rodeo happen – especially those unique folks who have poured their heart and soul into it for decades (you know who you are). If you see them around the rodeo grounds, please take a moment to pass on some thanks of your own.

Here's to a great rodeo,

Taylor Bachrach
Member of Parliament
Skeena-Bulkley Valley



A MEMORIAL RODEO

The Kispiox Valley rodeo has several memorial events to help us remember and honour some of the fine cowboys and cowgirls that came before us - the people that loved this rodeo and helped make it what it is today. These aren't just names on a trophy, each individual has in some way touched our lives and those around us. The rodeo club is very honoured that the families choose to sponsor these events every year to commemorate such special people.

Memorial Events

Marty Allen Saddle Bronc
Jack Lee Bare Back
Jimmy McCrae Cowhide Race
Wally Love Sportsmanship Cowboy
Helen Campbell All Around Cowgirl
John & Elsie Wookey All Around Cowboy



CONTRACTED SERVICES

Our club is so fortunate to have these groups providing essential services during rodeo weekend. A big thank you to:

The Gatekeepers	Evelyn 4-H and headed up by Jan McClary and Stacy Dupuis
Security	Melvin Wright Jr.
Rotovating	Ernst Muigg
Beer Garden	Smithers Brewing Company - Blaine Etsby & Adin Bennett
Maintenance	Action Garbage, Nanc Hamilton & Jerry Nedlec
Wagon Rides	BnT Wagon Rides



GRATITUDE FOR SOME GOOD FOLKS

Patsy & Earl Hobenshield

Best neighbours in the Valley!! These two familiar faces are 95 years young and still living on the farm. Patsy rode in the drill team for many years. Ranchers, loggers, riders, they've always had good horses and cattle. A community minded, much loved couple are here to watch their grand and great grandkids ride.



Pete Heit: The rodeo club would like to gratefully acknowledge a **\$500 donation** from the late Peit Heit of Kispiox Village. Pete had arranged that after his death, the club would receive \$500 from his estate. He never missed a rodeo and travelled to the National Finals in Vegas many times. He always said the Kispiox Valley Rodeo was his favourite. He's was one of our favourites too!

Francie & Lawrence Stokes: Our oldest, active members in the club! Married for 58 years, they show up to every workbee with tools, mower, weed whacker, and Francie always brings apple dumplings for our club BBQ. They work the entire rodeo weekend and they're usually the first ones on the dance floor. Lawrence is one of the dutch oven cooks for the cowboy dinner on Saturday night. Their granddaughters run the timed event strip chute, carrying on the tradition of helping at the rodeo. Francie sells beer tickets every year, if you see her, tell her Happy Birthday!!



Glen & Linda Lavery: If you're headed towards the 'Watering Hole', you might run into this community spirited couple. Glen and Linda have been helping out the rodeo club for many years, volunteering wherever needed. They usually do a shift or two selling beer tickets and you can be assured Glen will share a joke or a good memory with you. A big thank you to them!!!



REIGNING CHAMPIONS

Event	2022 Champion
Bareback	Christoph Muigg
Saddle Bronc	Christoph Muigg
Team Roping	Jason Beier & Luke Muehlen
Bull Riding	Isaac Janzen
Tie Down Roping	Cody Braaten
Wild Horse Race	Cody Nikolaisen, Dave Dieleman, Blake Asp
Steer Wrestling	Wyatt McCullough
Breakaway Roping	Brittany Shopshire
Jr Steer Riding	Decker Passey
Ladies Barrel Racing	Darlene Andros
Jr Barrel Racing	Ella Mae Stevenson
Pee Wee Barrel Racing	Ainslee Meise
Cowhide Race	Keifer Larson & Chirstoph Muigg
Musical Chairs	Araya Betts-Zyp
Rescue Race	Brittany Shopshire & Keifer Larson
Ride & Lead	Kassie Loring
Open Pole Bending	Lareina Ketlo
Sportsmanship Cowgirl	Riley Beier
Sportsmanship Cowboy	Cody Call
Sportsmanship Jr	Jane Kirk
Ladies All Around	Brittany Shopshire
Men's All Around	Keifer Larson
Jr All Around	Kale Mikkelsen
Wild Cow Milking	No Winners



ROB BELL - 2022 INDUCTEE

CANADIAN PRO RODEO HALL OF FAME



Born and raised near the Bulkley River in Houston, BC - It all began when Rob started riding calves at the age of 2 at Kispiox, B.C when his Dad with the help of Gene Allen, put Rob on his first calf. He won his first buckle that day for the youngest contestant, an award he won 3 years in a row at the Kispiox Valley Rodeo.

He gradually transitioned to Steers at 7 years of age. At 15, Rob entered his first High School Rodeo in Merritt, B.C. His ability to practice was nonexistent so entering a rodeo was his only way to try Bull Riding. Rob not only rode his Bull that day, he won first! To say he was hooked was an understatement.

Rob went on to win 3 Canadian Bull Riding Championships in 1999, 2000, & 2004. He has qualified for the NFR 3 times in 1999, 2000, & 2001. And he qualified twice for the PBR World Finals earning the Glen Keeley award in 2003 & 2004 which is given to the top ranked Canadian Bull Rider. Rob Bell is a member of a very select club as one of the very few cowboys to have qualified for the CFR, the NFR and the PBR World Finals.

In 2002, Rob had the honor to represent Canada at the Olympic Rodeo in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Rob & his wife Shelly, along with their 2 sons Collin & Hayden & his stepson Hunter, live in Stonewall, Louisiana. Rob is a welding inspector in the Oilfield.



The Village of Hazelton is pleased to congratulate the Kispiox Rodeo Association on the 76th Kispiox Valley Rodeo. It has grown over these many years to be a defining event of our region. It draws visitors and competitors from far and wide to witness not only the talent of the Upper Skeena's wranglers, ranchers and equestrians, but also the awe-inspiring beauty of the Kispiox

Valley. Welcome to our home in the Upper Skeena, where you will find fun, friendly people, and fantastic views. On behalf of the Village of Hazelton, I wish to thank all the volunteers who donate their time to make the rodeo such an engaging community event. Thank you!

Mayor of Hazelton ~ *Julie Maitland*



BBQ BEEF - SLOW ROASTED IN HISTORY

Imagine a delicious beef roast cooking on a rotisserie over some beautiful campfire coals low and slow all night long in the boiler from an old stern wheeler. Well - you don't have to imagine because you can head over to the BBQ Beef Booth and taste the delicious history for yourself! Don't forget to give a tip of the Stetson to Frank Paulin and Nathan Deilman for sitting up ALL night Friday and again on Saturday to keep the fire stoked and the beef basted with their secret, mouthwatering recipe of herbs and spices!

The Paddle Wheeler ~ *Inlander* Boiler



From 1891 to 1912, twenty paddle wheelers plied the waters of the Skeena River, ferrying freight, passengers, and mail to Hazelton. Upstream travel from the coast to Hazelton took 40 hours and an average of five cords

of wood. Both crew and passengers stoked the boilers to keep the vessels heading upriver in the strongest current.

The downstream trip took 10 hours.

The *Inlander* – the only river boat built for Skeena trade – was owned and operated by Hazelton merchants. Built in 1910, it operated for three seasons before being beached at Port Essington in 1912.

In 1986 a salvage crew retrieved the boiler from the *Inlander*, later bringing it here to its final resting place. It is now used to roast beef for the annual Kispiox Valley Rodeo.



By Marnie Pole

THOSE NORTHERN BOYS

Jared Marshall, Christoph Muigg, Keifer Larson - the trio that hail from the Hazeltons. It's not hard to see why these guys are such good friends and travel together. They enjoy hunting, the great outdoors and most importantly, rodeos and bucking horses! Between these guys lies almost forty years of competing, probably thousands of bucking horses and endless miles spent on the road.

Snorts (Jared) is the veteran of the group. He's ridden for 20+ years. When asked why he still rides at his age, he answers with a gleam in his eyes, "For a few moments after you ride you're at peace. Your mind is calm, not telling you what's next...and your soul is full with happiness. I can't explain it, you can only feel it. Plus, it doesn't hurt when they pay so well and the horses are so good." His plans for this year are to only go to his favorite rodeos - says, "Maybe 5, unlike the 18+ in a season like years before. Go to the good ones with the best horses and that pay the best." He's retired before but Christoph suggests Snorts is like the famous cowboy, Larry Mahan who infamously said, "They don't give you a retirement check when you hang er up, so why not get on when they put up the money."

"Snorts is all natural talent," Christoph says, "I only wish he was younger and he'd join me in the states chasing them pro rodeo lines, but we'd probably get into trouble if he did, so it's probably best he stay home."

Rodeo to Christoph is more than just competing, "It's a lifestyle to me. I'm a cowboy foremost. I treat my events seriously but man do I love it when April rolls around. I load the rodeo rig with my gear and I hit the road. I guess it's a sort of nomadic way of life. From late spring to fall, I'm gone hitting every rodeo I can, big or small. What holds me in its vice still is I've got goals I want to hit and reach. That level in my riding that I'm pleased with. Bucking horses are my first love, and freedom I feel. That first pitch out of the chute, followed by the second when your body reacts as you've trained it to do, is an amazing feeling." Though, with 40+ Rodeos planned throughout the summer months the bangs and bruises mount up.

Keifer Larson, 'Young Grasshopper' as Jared calls him, is indeed the youngest of the three. Growing up in the Kispiox watching the rodeo, he knew he wanted to be apart of it too. Fast forward 8 years and he has come close to a season leader saddle (his main focus for 2023).

"I rodeo because there's just simply nothing like it. I've learned in life that **nothing good comes easy and nothing easy is good**. Learning to hang on to a bucking horse for 8 seconds is by no means easy! I have learned so many valuable things in rodeo and have met an endless amount of kind, giving people along the trail. One day I hope to give back as much as I can to my rodeo family."



The two older chaps in black felt hats hope Keifer gets a saddle this year. Not too many roughstock riders giving er', but as Jared commented, "Young talent is still in BC. Young Chase Siemens is a talent on the rise. He will go far in rodeo."

Most importantly, though, these northern boys are excited to compete in Kispiox. "It's our hometown, we love it. The fans, families and the atmosphere. You just don't find this kind of rodeo anymore. It's a special place for sure."

From Left to Right: Keifer, Christoph, Jared and Andrea Nelson (who sometimes hops in with the trio)

Let's Talk About Economic Development that Supports Land, Water, Wildlife and **Culture**



A healthy Skeena economy is dependent on a healthy Skeena watershed. Our economic future relies on our region's ability to provide (and sustain) resources and the things we need for a good life in the north. If you wanna work on economic solutions built on the principle that our economy and our environment go hand in hand - come talk to us! The health and wealth of northern communities is important!

REVITALIZATION ECONOMY



phone 250-842-2494 / email: info@skeenawatershed.com
www.skeenawatershed.com