

New president takes reins of Cloverdale Rodeo Association

By Ursula Maxwell-Lewis - Cloverdale Reporter - Published: January 30, 2009 6:00 PM



Shannon Claypool's parents,
Harvey and Marion Claypool,
were former residents of Beechy.

Shannon Claypool anticipates a stellar year for annual event

Shannon Claypool, a Cloverdale Rodeo and Exhibition Association director since 1998, was elected president of the association at the annual general meeting in January. Claypool takes over from long-time president Gerry Spielmacher who moves into the position of first vice president. New on the Board this year is Ben Wevers, former president of the Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce.

"We are looking forward to another exciting and successful year," said Claypool. "Based on last year's new format we have invited 24 of the top cowboys from the 2008 National Finals in Las Vegas and 24 top cowgirl barrel racers. They are the very best, and will compete for over \$360,000 in prize money."

Claypool said that the tough economic times may contribute to another successful Cloverdale Rodeo and Country Fair. "People may not go away for the for the May long weekend," he observed. "Maybe they will stay home and join us at the rodeo."

Penny Smythe, Canada's only female rodeo chairperson, said, "As we speak right now, we are ahead of the game. Lots of cowboys have confirmed. They have been asking us for invitations, which is awesome." The new format works in their favour, she reports. "We treat them really well, and things can only get better."

Mutton Bustin' (where the little cowpokes ride a sheep) will be on the schedule at every performance. Tomas Garcilazo, skilled third generation Mexican horseman and rope artist, has been signed for the half-time entertainment.

Garcilazo is considered one of today's finest Charro's (Mexican horseman) presenting La Charrería, a comprehensive event similar to rodeo.

Serving on the board this year will be: Shannon Claypool (president), Gerry Spielmacher (first vice-president), Rocky Rockwell (second vice-president), Ken Kachur (treasurer), Rob Marshall, Penny Smythe, Ben Wevers, Garry Hollick (Surrey Board of Trade representative), George Siudut (City of Surrey representative), Tim Neufeld (City of Surrey representative), Marvin Hunt (Surrey city council representative), Bill Reid (provincial representative),

The Cloverdale Rodeo and Exhibition Association is the non-profit organization that manages the annual world-famous Cloverdale Rodeo & Country Fair. For more information on the association and the 63rd annual Cloverdale Rodeo and the 120th Country Fair, visit: www.cloverdalerodeo.com