

The Gay and Lesbian Rodeo Heritage Foundation 2022 Annual Report

Financial Summary:

Donations: January 1, 2022- December 31, 2022: \$3787.00

Program Expenses, Supplies: January 1, 2022- December 31, 2022 \$3184.00

Bank Balance as of December 31, 2022: \$10,329.35 (Cash Basis, Wells Fargo Bank)

Public Benefit Activities;

Digitizing Documents:

In 2022. with Jeffrey Neal's assistance, and the availability of a very rapid scanner, we were able to digitize the following available documents:

1990 – 1993 Convention Documents and

1991 – 2003 IGRA Handbooks (Bylaws, Standing Rules, Rodeo Rules, & Attachments)

1992 – 1995 & 2004 Board and Trustee meetings and Correspondence

In October 2022 Jeffrey and I continued to digitize the following available documents:

1985 Articles of Incorporation

1985 & 1986 Convention Minutes

1995, 1997 – 2003, 2008, 2009, 2012, & 2013 Convention Reports

The preparation of these documents took many hours, and scanning took 14 hours, and there are more to complete.

Photos:

In May 2022, we uncovered a box of photos in the storage unit that had not yet been scanned for the gayrodeohistory.org website. All of these photos were taken by Bill Morris from Albuquerque. With the invaluable memory of Patrick Terry, he and I spent many days with Patrick remembering and me writing the names down. So far about 4,500 photos have been reviewed, with 2,000 more to go.

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives at the USC Libraries (ONE):

Most of the documents and photos described above have been delivered from Las Vegas to ONE in Los Angeles. More will be delivered in the spring of 2023.

In 2018 the IGRA Board voted to donate all paper documents to ONE as it has better facilities to store the documents. All IGRA Board and Convention reports are going to ONE. IGRA is keeping two copies of all rodeo programs, posters, and rule books before donating extras to ONE. When there are enough multiple copies they are also donated to The Autry.

Autry Museum of the American West (The Autry):

In December 2021, the Archivist at The Autry contacted me to advise that they were going to apply for a large grant from the California Library System. Grants were available from \$5,000 to \$150,000 for preserving and making accessible information regarding LGBTQ organizations within the State of California. I contacted Steve Wollert, President of GSGRA, and he and I both wrote letters in support of The Autry receiving the grant. In February the Autry was notified it was successful in getting a grant of \$57,056. At my suggestion, The Autry is currently reorganizing the IGRA materials that were donated to them in 2009.

In addition to cataloging and digitizing the materials, the museum plans to host public programming, a research fellowship, and install an exhibit about the LGBTQ+ rodeo community in California.

Because the grant is specific to California LGBTQ organizations, GSGRA will be the focus of a planned exhibit currently scheduled to run from May through December 2023. I have a good working relationship with the staff at The Autry and expect that I will be giving them some assistance on the history of GSGRA, as well as possibly loaning some items from the IGRA archives.

In October, 2022, Roger Bergman was invited to attend the “Grand Reopening of the Autry Resource Center,” which is where the IGRA archive items are currently stored. The Resource Center is a huge building with temperature and humidity controls. It was originally opened around 2014 but had been closed to researchers since the start of the COVID-19 shutdown. Patrick Terry joined me for an evening of hob-knobbing with Patrons of The Autry. The event was mainly outdoors, but there were a few items on display in the lobby of the Resource Center. Patrick and I were both stunned to see that two gay rodeo posters were on display:

1995 Dixieland Rodeo and 2000 Windy City Rodeo.

We also bumped into Blake Little who was a GSGRA Bull Rider in the 1990’s. Blake is also a photographer and had a photo exhibit that traveled to museums around the country for a few years. It was titled “BLAKE LITTLE: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE GAY RODEO,” and covered the years 1988 to 1992. Blake’s photos are now permanently at The Autry, and I am quite certain some of them will be part of the GSGRA exhibit next year.

General:

The most recent rodeo poster in the archives is from 2015. The archives still want any printed posters from the past, but for several years now it seems everything has gone digital. I am asking rodeo associations to send any digitized posters, so they may be presented on the www.gayrodeohistory.org website.

TRAVELING IGRA ARCHIVE DISPLAYS:

2019:	August	Calgary: Canadian Rockies North Gay Rodeo
	October	Scottsdale: WGRF
	November	Denver: Hall of Fame Display at Convention
2021:	August	Santa Fe: Zia Regional Rodeo
2022:	February	Phoenix: Arizona Gay Rodeo
	June	Pendleton, OR: Gay Pride Day
	July	Aurora, CO: Rocky Mountain Regional Rodeo
	October	El Reno, OK: World Gay Rodeo Finals (WGRF)
	November	Denton, TX: Hall of Fame Display at Convention

Possible Future Archive Displays:

2023: Feb. Phoenix, AZ: Arizona Gay Rodeo
May Kansas City, MO: Show-Me-State Rodeo
June Salt Lake City: Crossroads of the West Regional Rodeo
Nov. Reno, NV: IGRA Hall of Fame at Convention
2024: April Little Rock, AR: Rodeo in the Rock
2025: Oct. Hopefully – Reno for the 50th Anniversary of Gay Rodeo

At every display there are straights and gays who have never been to a rodeo before, or who do not know the history of gay rodeo, so the display has been very educational for them. For those already involved with rodeo it can be a walk “down memory lane.” Other than the Pendleton OR display I have received donated items to the archives at every display.

Examples of donations are: rodeo posters and programs, t-shirts. Official’s shirts, rule books, hat pins, rodeo access badges, and ball caps. This year I also received two saddles. One from Frank Elam, Jr. who was the All-Around Cowboy at the 1994 Kansas City, MO “Great Plains Regional Rodeo.” The second saddle was not from a gay rodeo, but was from Gene Mikulenska, who competed at many gay rodeos. Gene won the 1994 Gulf Coast Barrel Racing Association’s (GCBRA) Barrel Race. Gene also donated a movie poster from “American Cowboy.” I have not seen the movie yet, but Gene tells me that he comes out as a gay cowboy.

December 23rd I received a FedEx box from Anthony de Silva (Beverly DeMarco) including: MISS New Mexico crowns for 1996 and ’97; MISS IGRA 1998 crown and also a Hat Crown; a 10 Year Anniversary Royalty Crown; sashes; buckles; and more.

I hope to show the saddles and Royalty items at the 2023 Arizona Gay Rodeo, and will continue to encourage others to donate items through Facebook messages, and personal contacts. The more quality items in the archives the easier it will be to obtain Grant Money (I hope)!

Hopefully, we can take the archives to non-rodeo events to get the gay rodeo message out there. Los Angeles and San Diego used to have the two largest gay rodeo events. This is a potential source for new contestants, spectators, and sponsors.

Possible events:

2023: March Los Angeles Leather Pride
May Chicago, IL: International MR. Leather
June Los Angeles Gay Pride
July San Diego Gay Pride
2025: May Washington, D.C.: World Gay Pride

The “Gay & Lesbian Rodeo Heritage Foundation” has provided financial support to preserve, restore, and transport the archives to display locations.

In open discussion at the Social Media meeting at the IGRA Convention, an idea was presented to regularly post stories of gay rodeo history on IGRA’s Social Media group sites. A volunteer has come forward to help with this idea! I was in Colorado after the IGRA Convention and I was able to meet with Sharon Norman, who was known on the IGRA rodeo circuit as Casey Jackson. Casey began to ride Bulls and Broncs when she was 16. She also trained me to be a Rodeo Judge in 1986. I got several short videos of Casey telling stories of her rodeo career, which I hope to post online soon.

