

Media release, March 14, 2020

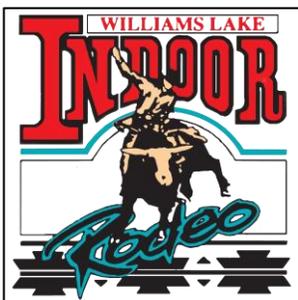
WILLIAMS LAKE, BC - It is with heavy hearts that the Williams Lake Indoor Rodeo Association (WLIRA) announces the cancellation of the 30th annual spring rodeo. “Following the guidelines of health authorities, and out of concern and care for everyone’s safety, we are exercising an abundance of caution in dealing with the novel coronavirus,” explained WLIRA President, Kelly Walls. “It is of utmost importance to limit or slow the spread of the illness in our community -- in all communities.”

Every year a dedicated group of hard working volunteers in Williams Lake come together to make this event a memorable one. The Williams Lake Indoor Rodeo at the Cariboo Recreation Complex kicks off the first event of the British Columbia Rodeo Association (BCRA) season, so everyone from the athletes and fans to the stock contractor and various vendors wait in anticipation.

The rodeo is a powerful opportunity for many local businesses who sponsor the event. “We’ve had many of the same loyal sponsors year in and year out,” advises Walls. “We do our level best to bring awareness to and promote those sponsors with our advertising, because we genuinely appreciate their support and contributions.” The loss from not hosting the rodeo will be felt amongst retailers, restaurants, hotels and fuel suppliers, Walls continued.

The annual Barn Dance has become a tradition for many – there is no other local event quite like it. “We’ve proudly sponsored the ‘Safe Ride Home’ program for several years,” said Janna Gertzen, Owner of Adventure Charters Inter-City Bus service. Their buses are parked outside the arena, and make several scheduled shuttles throughout the night, safely transporting patrons from the beverage gardens and dance to their homes. “We certainly understand why the rodeo had to be cancelled this year, but it’s sad, and a definite loss for the region.”

Walls adds, “There are always new challenges when organizing any event, but this is a unique one.” The WLIRA Board of Directors has vowed to make the best use of the additional time they’ll have this year, to continue to grow and improve the event. “We would like to thank everyone for their continued support and we look forward to seeing you in 2021.”



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