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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Gem State Classic Pro Rodeo Rides into Town**

***Military Night, Man Up Crusade, and Mutton Bustin' coming to the  
PRCA sanctioned event at the Eastern Idaho State Fair***

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*Blackfoot, ID* – This year, the EISF is proud to celebrate the fifth annual PRCA-sanctioned Gem State Classic Pro Rodeo. This fast-paced rodeo pairs world-class competitors from the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association with award winning stock from Powder River Rodeo and D&H Cattle on Monday, September 5, and Tuesday, September 6, at the Eastern Idaho State Fair. Monday night's show is scheduled to feature a special tribute to local military veterans and their families, while Tuesday's program highlights domestic violence with the Man Up Crusade's "Purple Night".

Powder River Rodeo owners Hank and Lori Franzen have earned over 150 awards for their outstanding rodeo livestock, and D&H Cattle Company has been supplying top-notch bucking bulls to PBR events all across North America. Named PBR Stock Contractor of the year for 2001-2006, D&H Cattle will help make this Pro Rodeo an event you will not want to miss. Each night is a unique and exciting rodeo experience, featuring tie down roping, barrel racing, bull riding, bareback riding, steer wrestling, team roping, and saddle bronc riding.

As is tradition, this year's Gem State Classic will open with a special Mutton Bustin' competition at 6:30 pm each night. This fan favorite features young kids hanging on for dear life as a sprinting sheep does its best to shake their young riders. The rider may use a rope or take hold of the wool itself as they try to hang on for six seconds. Children ages 4-7 weighing less than 45 pounds are encouraged to enter this thrilling competition. All contestants receive recognition, with the first place contestant receiving a large, four-foot trophy. The EISF is accepting applications for Mutton Bustin' now through September 1 which can be found at [www.funatthefair.com](http://www.funatthefair.com).

Immediately following Mutton Bustin', Mini Bull Riding will begin at 6:45 pm each night. Bringing in the top riders from Wyoming and Idaho, Mini Bull Riding is an event you won't want to miss. The two categories include Junior Bull Riding (ages 9 to 11 years old) and Senior Bull Riding (ages 12 to 14 years old).

Monday night's tribute to military members will feature a special presentation that draws attention to missing soldiers and POWs. This special presentation is meant to honor all of those who have served and fought for our rights and freedom.

The Eastern Idaho State Fair is proud to partner with the Man Up Crusade for the Gem State Classic Pro Rodeo – Wear Purple Night. Over the past three years, the Man Up Crusade has become a much anticipated part of the fair. On Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, all employees, rodeo participants, and fair-goers alike are encouraged to wear purple. In addition to the demonstration of support for victims, the display of purple conveys a powerful message that there is no place for domestic violence in the homes, neighborhoods, workplaces or schools of its citizens. This year, in conjunction with the Man Up Crusade, the EISF will be raffling off three items: a guitar signed by Randy Houser and Eric Church, a one-of-a-kind EISF/Man Up belt buckle, and a hand-crafted quilt made from shirts of several local cowboys that have competed in the Gem State Classic Rodeo. Raffle tickets will be available for purchase at the Man Up Crusade booth on Monday and Tuesday and the Souvenir Shop located in the Harvest Place (Agriculture Building). Tickets can be purchased individually for \$5 or in groups of 5 for \$20. All money generated will go towards the Man Up Crusade.

The Man Up Crusade was created by Canyon County Sheriff, Kieran Donahue. As Kieran's career in law enforcement progressed and developed, he saw first-hand the traumatic effects that domestic violence has on victims and their families. Domestic Violence has become an epidemic in our society and is a public health and safety issue - it is with these facts in mind that Kieran began this journey called the Man Up Crusade. The mission of the Man Up Crusade is to reduce domestic violence in society and contribute to social change by promoting safe and healthy relationships through education and advocacy.

NEW this year during the Tuesday night rodeo is "Wild Pony Riding". This is an event you won't want to miss! Watch teams of brave young cowgirls and cowboys ages 8 -13 try to ride the wild untamed ponies competing for the prize belt buckle and bragging rights of Champion Wild Pony Riders!

Avoid lines and purchase your tickets to the Gem State Classic Pro Rodeo now by going online to [funatthefair.com](http://funatthefair.com), the Ticket Office in Blackfoot, or Vickers Western Stores in Idaho Falls or Pocatello. You can also call (208) 785-2480, Ext. 7 to purchase over the phone. The rodeo begins at 7:30 pm both nights, with Mutton Bustin' starting at 6:30 pm. Tickets starting at \$15 for adults and \$10 for children 11 and under. Get both nights for only \$25 – a \$5 savings! And remember, all nighttime grandstand tickets include fair admission. \*\*Additional fees may apply.

Project Filter is proud to be the Gem State Classic Pro Rodeo title sponsor. Project Filter is Idaho's tobacco prevention and control program that strives to help people quit tobacco for free! Call 1-800-Quit-Now or log on to [www.projectfilter.org](http://www.projectfilter.org).

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*The Eastern Idaho State Fair is a 16 County Fair District. Over 230,000 people visit the annual event, making it Eastern Idaho's longest running and largest community event. The mission of the EISF is to provide wholesome, affordable family education and entertainment in a clean and safe agricultural environment. The EISF is proud to be Smoke-Free for the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. EAT, DRINK, and BE HAPPY at the 2016 fair September 3 - 10!*