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Cowboy Christmas and RMEF's Hunter & Outdoor Christmas Expo Enjoy Record Total Attendance in 2016

Retail and fan interactive area attracts big crowds to the Las Vegas Convention Center

LAS VEGAS (December 11, 2016) – Cowboy Christmas and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's Hunter & Outdoor Christmas Expo again set records at the turnstiles, bringing large crowds to the Las Vegas Convention Center. Total attendance reached **231,517**, besting the previous record attendance of 216,292 set in 2015. The overall record attendance also included five individual day attendance records set on Dec. 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8.

Cowboy Christmas and RMEF's Hunter & Outdoor Christmas Expo opened on Thursday, Dec. 1 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, South Halls and ran for ten consecutive days, culminating on Saturday, Dec. 10. The shows were open daily from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and offered free admission.

"This year's attendance reflects the energy that can only be found in Las Vegas in early December," said Pat Christenson, president of Las Vegas Events. "In addition to the outstanding list of exhibitors, the attractions held within the Las Vegas Convention Center – including the Junior NFR presented by YETI at the Wrangler Rodeo Arena and the live performances at Rodeo Live presented by RODEOHOUSTON and the Realtree Live Stage – provided non-stop entertainment. Our partnership with RMEF has been beneficial and provided even more opportunities for rodeo fans to enjoy the NFR experience."

Launched in 1986 and designated as the only official Gift Show of the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo, Cowboy Christmas featured more wares to keep even the most avid shopper entertained all ten days. The show featured approximately 350 exhibitors from across the United States and showcased unique products, including custom-made jewelry, western wear, boots and spurs, furniture, original art, handmade crafts and home goods.

RMEF's Hunter & Outdoor Christmas Expo featured interactive activities, as well as top hunting, outdoor industry leaders and other exhibitors displaying firearms, archery equipment, optics, outfitter and guide services, hunting apparel and western lifestyle gear and clothing. Attendees also were able to taste wild game cooking demonstrations, meet and greet outdoor and country music celebrities, and enjoy live performances by Easton Corbin and Daryle Singletary on the Realtree Live Stage.

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In addition to shopping and exhibits, there were numerous interactive elements for rodeo fans, including **Rodeo Live presented by RODEOHOUSTON, Coors Rodeo Saloon, Lucas Oil Rodeo Way exhibits, Wrangler Rodeo Arena, NFR Social Arena, Great Wall of Rodeo presented by Calgary Stampede** and more.

The inaugural Junior NFR presented by YETI was also held in the Wrangler Rodeo Arena, within the footprint of RMEF's Hunter & Outdoor Christmas Expo. The event featured more than 320 youth participants competing for the championship buckle in eight events.

Gold, Silver and Bronze buckle level sponsors included **Academy of Country Music, Big Tex Trailers, Bloomer Trailers, Browning, B&W Trailer Hitches, Calgary Stampede, Coors, RODEOHOUSTON, Hesston by Massey Ferguson, Impact Gel, Lucas Oil, NV Energy, Pendleton Whisky, Priefert, PrimeSport, Purina, Pro Fantasy Rodeo, Ram Rodeo, RFD-TV, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo, Total Feeds, Inc., Wrangler and YETI.**

Cowboy Christmas runs concurrently with the Wrangler NFR, which culminated its 32nd year in Las Vegas on Saturday evening at the Thomas & Mack Center. Sold out for 300 consecutive performances, the Wrangler NFR attracts the top 15 contestants in bareback riding, steer wrestling, team roping, saddle bronc riding, tie-down roping, barrel racing, and bull riding. Under the contract with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association that runs through 2024, the purse in 2016 was \$10 million. Qualification was based on the 2016 PRCA World Standings.

For more information on the Wrangler NFR and Cowboy Christmas, please visit www.NFRexperience.com or through social media at /LasVegasNFR and use #WranglerNFR.

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About Las Vegas Events

Las Vegas Events is a private, not-for-profit organization that serves as the exclusive major special events agency for the city. Founded in 1982, LVE is funded by hotel room tax. Through its Signature Event initiative, LVE has created a model to integrate all elements of special events and formally improve communication between event producers and Las Vegas' hotel properties and sponsors. Since 1991, Las Vegas Events has produced, presented or supported more than 750 events.
www.lasvegasevents.com

About the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Founded over 30 years ago, fueled by hunters and a membership of nearly 220,000 strong, RMEF has conserved more than 6.9 million acres for elk and other wildlife. RMEF also works to open and improve public access, fund and advocate for science-based resource management, and ensure the future of America's hunting heritage. Discover why "[Hunting Is Conservation™](#)" at www.rmef.org or 800-CALL ELK.
Take action: [join](#) and/or [donate](#).

About the Wrangler NFR

The Wrangler National Finals Rodeo (NFR), considered the world's premier rodeo, features 10 straight days of the best in rodeo competition, with a total of 120 contestants competing every night in seven events. Each December, the top 15 contestants, based on the 2016 PRCA World Standings, in bareback riding, steer wrestling, team roping, saddle bronc riding, tie-down roping, barrel racing, and bull riding qualify to compete at the Wrangler NFR.
www.prorodeo.com