



# Media Release

## Summer Celebration Comes to an End: Westerner Days 2023 Wraps Up Another Memorable and Successful Year

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**July 24, 2023 | Red Deer, AB** – The highly anticipated Summer Celebration, Westerner Days 2023, has concluded with resounding success, leaving attendees with unforgettable memories and experiences. Held from 19 July to 23, this year's event witnessed an overwhelming turnout, cementing its reputation as a must-attend summer fair.

The Midway was a major highlight of Westerner Days 2023, as crowds flocked to enjoy a thrilling array of rides that were up and running in full force. Among the most popular attractions were The Zipper, Rockstar, Tornado, and Drop of Doom, providing exhilarating moments for thrill-seekers of all ages.

An exciting addition to the ride lineup was the "Area 51," a heart-pounding ride that captured the imaginations of both adults and children, providing them with an otherworldly experience.

Attendees were blessed with perfect fair weather, as sunny and hot conditions prevailed throughout the event, creating an ideal atmosphere for all the festivities.

A standout and much-anticipated highlight of Westerner Days is undeniably the Pony Chuckwagon Championship, and this year's event surpassed all expectations. The "Best Dressed Wagon," generously sponsored by SpeedPro Signs Red Deer, was awarded to B Bar C Simmentals from Bowden, owned by Tyler Walton, and skillfully driven by Tyrell Miller.

Throughout the thrilling five days of racing, the competition was fierce, and the final results are as follows:

Claiming the title of the 2023 Champion Chariot buckle, proudly sponsored by Westerner Park, was D & R Cattle Co., driven by the talented Bob Leach, with an impressive time of 460.59. The top four chariots were rounded out by equally remarkable performances from Westerner Park Past Presidents driven by Zach Hubl (464.05), Camrose Machine & Welding driven by Greg Bell (467.23), and M & R Safety Ltd., driven by the skilled Laura Talbot (468.62).

In a thrilling display of skill and determination, Bettenson's Sand & Gravel, driven by the exceptional Riley Braaten, emerged victorious as the 2023 North American Pony Chuckwagon Champion. Their outstanding performance in the Dash for Cash, sponsored by Marshall Construction, secured him this prestigious title. The top four wagons also featured commendable performances from Parkland Nursery & Landscape Services, driven by Bob Leach (469.11), GenTex Industries Inc., driven by Marvin Hubl (472.80), and Norstar Agriculture, driven by Adam Waldner (475.12).

Heartfelt congratulations are in order for all the winners, whose incredible performances kept the audience on the edge of their seats throughout the competition. Special thanks to the always popular Agri-Trade Stars of Tomorrow, who showcased their mini chuckwagons to delight young and old fans alike.

The Market served as a bustling hub for visitors, hosting crowd-favourite attractions like Extreme Dogs and featuring over 50 vendors offering a diverse range of products and services. Meanwhile, The Patio provided a delightful musical experience, with 17 talented musicians, including Randi Bolton and Shalaine Stebner, captivating the audience with their performances.

In agriculture pavilions, AGventure provided guests a closer look with many farm animals, machinery, and interactive displays on our vital agriculture industry. The indoor arena had a busy schedule with Ultimate Bull Fighting, along with Gymkhana demonstrations, captivating show jumping, and a variety of charming animals to admire, such as the adorable Mini Yaks, Sven and Ana.

The Community Corner delighted attendees with a variety of entertaining options, including the Backcountry BBQ, Aces Flying Pig Races, Lockdown Escape Room, and the Hula Hoop Circus, creating a vibrant and fun-filled atmosphere for all ages.

KIDventure provided some respite from the heat with free admission indoor attractions and performances such as: Doodoo the Clown, Hula Hoop Circus, and the Junior Fire Fighters. The Wildlife Festival presented "Living Dragons," offering an up-close and personal view of fascinating reptiles. Many local charities chipped in by operating the Dunk Tank, which not only helped to raise funds, but also provided entertainment, and the opportunity to cool off to the many "dunkees"!

And new for 2023, 14 energetic bands rocked the outdoor stage of The District, providing a fantastic backdrop to the Fair. Over 30 food truck vendors offered a delightful array of delectable food and beverages, satisfying every palate. The nights at Westerner Days were brought to a spectacular close with massive fireworks displays, leaving attendees in awe and adding an extra touch of magic to the event.

The Rotary Club of Red Deer Sunrise 50/50 draw successfully raised an impressive sum of over \$95,000 in ticket sales.

"We are thrilled to see the overwhelming response from our community and visitors for Westerner Days 2023. The tremendous success of this year's celebration is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our team and the support from our sponsors and partners. We are already looking forward to planning an even more remarkable experience for next year," said Ian Allan, Interim General Manager, Westerner Park.

As the curtain falls on another fantastic summer celebration, Westerner Days 2023, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made this event possible, from volunteers and sponsors to performers and attendees. It is your unwavering support that has made this event an iconic part of our community's culture.

***About Westerner Park***

*Westerner Park is central Alberta's largest tradeshow, agricultural, sports, entertainment and convention facility. A not-for-profit organization and agricultural society, Westerner Park typically generates \$150 million annually in economic activity, hosting over 1,500 events and 1.5 million visitors each year.*

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