

CATHY WURZER: Well, this weekend the North Star Gay Rodeo Association will put on its yearly rodeo in Hugo, Minnesota. The two day event welcomes members of the LGBTQ+ community to come show off their best wrangling, riding, and roping skills. Jorge Sanchez joins us right now to share the details of the event. He is the president of the North Star Gay Rodeo Association. Welcome to the program.

JORGE SANCHEZ: Hi, Cathy. Thanks for having us.

CATHY WURZER: I'm so glad that you are here. Thanks. Say, I know that the North Star Gay Rodeo Association has been around for a pretty long time since 1989. So tell us how you all got started.

JORGE SANCHEZ: It was actually part of the Imperial Court of Minnesota, and then they decided to start a rodeo. And from there, we went from there and it's been around for over 30 years now.

CATHY WURZER: How is this rodeo lumped into the National Gay Rodeo circuit?

JORGE SANCHEZ: Oh, the international one?

CATHY WURZER: Yes.

JORGE SANCHEZ: They are branched off of us. So there's the International Gay Rodeo Association and then we all have associations off of them. So there's other gay associations branched off that are throughout the United States and Canada.

CATHY WURZER: OK. You know, I enjoyed watching the PBS documentary series, *Subcultured?* It was a nice piece on gay rodeo that was on the air there. And it was a good story about how you began. And I'm wondering about the contestants that we'll see in this rodeo. Do they participate every year? Are you seeing new folks?

JORGE SANCHEZ: The good thing is right now, we're getting a lot of new faces around, which we love because we love to have new people involved with our rodeo. But you'll see people from all over the place from Texas, New Mexico, Missouri, Canada Arkansas, Oklahoma, Arizona, Colorado, California, Nevada. And we also have another one called Red River, and they are from also Texas, the northern Texas.

CATHY WURZER: So all over.

JORGE SANCHEZ: So you see people from all over the place.

CATHY WURZER: Yeah. Jorge, the mainstream rodeo world is thought of as pretty conservative, macho, homophobic perhaps. Tell me about the queer rodeo world.

JORGE The great thing about us is we accept everybody. We don't care if you're gay, you're straight, you can be anything. And with us, also, you can compete at anything. So like the straight rodeo, like women can only do horse events. At ours, if you want to be a bull rider, you go ahead and you get on that bull and you're a bull rider. And same with a lot of women's events that are in the straight rodeo, men can do. So we don't judge. You can be anything and do whatever you want to do.

CATHY Bronc riding, I see, you got barrel racing, the usual events. I've never seen calf roping on foot, to be honest with you, Jorge. What's that like?

JORGE It's roping, so almost the same thing what you would see where you're roping [AUDIO OUT]--

SANCHEZ:

CATHY I feel bad. We might have lost Jorge. Oh, no. Oh, that's too bad. Oh goodness, this technology that we have. Jorge was explaining about calf roping on foot. In case you're just tuning in, we're talking about the North Star Gay Rodeo, which has been going on now for a number of years. And it's a two-day event in Hugo. And we're talking about the various events that they're going to have. And Jorge was talking about calf roping on foot. If we don't get Jorge back, we might just have to continue on here. Jorge, are you with me? There you are. There you are.

JORGE I'm here. I'm here. I'm sorry.

SANCHEZ:

CATHY No, no, no, no, you're doing great. You were talking about calf roping on foot.

WURZER:

JORGE So yeah, it's basically on foot. And you have literally the chutes open up, the calf comes out, and rope as fast as you can.

SANCHEZ:

CATHY On foot?

WURZER:

JORGE On foot, yep. You're on foot. So you're not on your horse or anything like that. So it can be challenging because literally, you have a second when it releases, you're right there. So you have to be quick and try to-- [INAUDIBLE] entertaining.

SANCHEZ:

CATHY I bet it is. What are you most looking forward to this weekend?

WURZER:

JORGE I think the new people. I love the new participants. I love also the fans that come. We're having fun events afterwards. So we have the rodeo, and like I said, we have fun camp events too like our steer deco and then wild drag race and goat dressing. So you put underwear on a goat, whoever can do it the fastest time. So you got two teams coming down, you run down, whoever throws that underwear around and runs back the fastest, hey, it wins and you win.

SANCHEZ:

So like I love those same things. And then I think people see, wow, this is a fun rodeo. And so I want to introduce people of how fun we can really be. And also then, we also have events afterwards. We're doing a beer bust and line dancing. And we're going to have a campfire. So we're going to have a lot of things on Saturday night too.

CATHY OK. And you're at the Dead Brook arena in Hugo, right?

WURZER:

JORGE That is correct.

SANCHEZ:

CATHY All right. Jorge, thank you for joining us, and have a great weekend.

WURZER:

JORGE Thank you, Cathy. Hope to see you guys out there.

SANCHEZ:

CATHY Absolutely Jorge Sanchez is the president of the North Star Gay Rodeo Association. The rodeo is this weekend in

WURZER: Hugo.