

February 24, 2021

It has been an honor to lead the WPRA these past several years but I have decided to end my tenure as the WPRA President/CEO effective March 31, 2021. This decision was not made lightly but due to family and personal obligations it is time to shift my priorities to put my family's needs first. As the WPRA has been my passion, the biggest part of my life, I am looking forward to my retirement and spending quality time with my family.

When I first joined the Girls Rodeo Association in 1975, I knew it was a special Association but never dreamed I would have the opportunity to be entrusted with carrying on the principals the Founding members set forth in 1948. Like the majority of the membership, competing for a world title was not in the cards for me but I was able to bring my business background to an Association that has molded strong women both inside and outside the arena. In 2011, I took on the role as the WPRA Southeastern Circuit Director with a mission to grow membership activity and opportunities within the circuit.

One of the first tasks I undertook was putting together a rodeo committee to resurrect the PRCA rodeo in Indiantown, Florida. This was a twofold adventure to not only provide another rodeo for members of the PRCA and WPRA to compete in but to also gain a better understanding of what it takes to put on a professional rodeo. I put together a great team that was able to get this rodeo off the ground in 2012 and personally I gained so much knowledge in what a committee goes through to put on a successful event which has been very beneficial to me in my role on the WPRA Board of Directors. My second goal I set for myself as the Southeastern Circuit director was to introduce a WPRA Junior program to the circuit in an effort to provide a pathway for young cowgirls to become WPRA members when they turned 18. This was a very successful program in the circuit and has since expanded to other circuits under the WPRA umbrella.

During my tenure as the Southeastern Circuit Director, I was also honored by becoming the first WPRA director to have a voting position on the circuit board. Prior to this, the WPRA had a position on the circuit board but was never extended voting rights. This was a big breakthrough and I worked with the circuit board to provide a circuit banquet for both PRCA and WPRA members that continues today. I was also a big advocate for safe and sound ground in our circuit and worked with committees and contractors to introduce dragging in the middle of a section, which had not been the case prior to this. I have continued to be a strong advocate for safe and sound ground throughout my involvement in the Association.

As a member of the WPRA Board, I was able to learn from some very strong women in the industry serving under two Presidents including Jimmie Munroe and Carolyn Vietor. During this time, I was able to hone my skills and determine where my strengths could benefit the Association to make it stronger. In 2016, having been inspired and encouraged by those I served alongside, I stepped up to the plate and ran unopposed for the position of WPRA President. My goal was the same as when I first became circuit director – to grow membership opportunities and to strengthen the WPRA brand.

Strengthening a brand takes a commitment by an entire team moving in the same direction to build relationships toward overall growth. As President, along with the entire WPRA Board of Directors, we evaluated the ongoing business elements and challenges that come with running a \$3 million in assets non-profit organization serving over 3,000 members. After lengthy discussions, it was decided that the timing was right to implement a pilot program to revamp the Association executive structure to

better handle the WPRA brand in the rodeo industry. It was overwhelmingly agreed to have a President/CEO position that would be a steady and consistent voice via the WPRA Board of Directors to handle the business and rodeo elements faced daily by the Association. Since it was a pilot program, the WPRA Board of Directors asked me to take on this role to see how this position change could benefit the Association. I felt this was an important step for the Association as much of the business of rodeo had changed from even when I first joined the Board as a circuit director and believed this was integral in moving the Association forward.

I am very proud of what I have been able to accomplish during my tenure with the help of a strong team working alongside me to advance the Association to where it is today. At the top of my list of accomplishments is:

- Inclusion within the ProRodeo Hall of Fame: While this was a long time coming, I am honored to have gotten the baton across the finish line on this one with our first class of WPRA inductees honored in 2017.
- Building a bridge with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and working out a six year agreement, the first of its kind, to ensure that the Association remains as the ONLY governing body for women in professional rodeo. With the agreement, the WPRA kept their governance and independence while strengthening the WPRA brand in professional rodeo.
- WPRA revenue has continued to grow throughout my tenure and we have consistently reached or surpassed 3,000 members each year while continuing to grow opportunities for our members – the biggest being introducing women's breakaway roping to professional rodeos as a second all women's event. This significant accomplishment was spotlighted with the first-ever Wrangler National Finals Breakaway Roping in December. I am excited to see what the future holds for this rodeo discipline.
- Ground condition improvements throughout the rodeo industry with the biggest coming at the 2020 Wrangler NFR. Throughout my tenure we have put an emphasis on the ground at our WPRA World Finals and have been in constant dialogue with rodeo committees across the United States. This has and will continue to be a team effort from the Association, circuit directors, members and rodeo committees.
- Utilized committees on a higher level for the WPRA Board to elevate each board member to become more involved and take ownership in the business of the Association.
- Building a solid foundation and growing our relationships with our corporate partners to develop additional member opportunities. A couple of the largest include:
 - In 2019, I worked with Wrangler and the Wrangler Network to form the Wrangler Network Tour for both barrel racers and breakaway ropers in which \$50,000 in bonus money went directly to the membership through this Tour.

- In 2020, Wrangler was instrumental in getting the Wrangler National Finals Breakaway Roping off the ground supplying \$100,000 and marking one of the largest sponsorship in the history of the Association.

I pride myself in having worked hard over these last five years as your WPRA President to build relationships within the rodeo industry starting with the WPRA Board, WPRA membership, WPRA Office staff, the PRCA, rodeo committees and personnel and our partners that allowed the Association to move forward on solid financial ground. It was always my goal to leave the Association better than when I was handed the baton and I feel like I have. It is now time for me to hand over the reins to the next woman to lead the Association into the future.

It is time for me to focus on enjoying the best of life with my family, friends, horses and of course my dogs, too! I will always cherish my time serving the WPRA as President/CEO and knowing that with the help of so many of you we were able to draw on our strengths to make great strides for the WPRA. I wish the Association all the best of luck in the future and will always stand ready to help where needed.

God Bless,



Doreen Wintermute
WPRA President/CEO