

WEST MICHIGAN FOR ANIMALS RODEO CRUELTY COMMITTEE  
139 Langdon NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616)459-1982

Dear Sponsor/Advertiser:

As a business who was listed in the program of the Grattan Rodeo held recently, you should be aware of what was observed by several area residents who were in attendance both days. Complaints were made of inadequate shelter from the heat and lack of clean drinking water. It was observed that there was excessive beating and kicking of bulls to the head in an effort to make the animals move forward. One woman noted and photographed the use of hand held shock prods, compact or yardstick length, being used to shock the bulls and horses while still confined in the chute. She also observed bulls aggravated in the chute, some of which reared up in the chute prior to release (and would have been released under Pro Cowboy Rodeo Association Rules). A young man reported animals that were aggravated, showing stress, and one bull exiting the arena bleeding profusely from the nose. Others reported on the effect of flank straps pulled tight to make stock animals buck and kick and lead ropes that were long enough to tangle in the frontlegs of bare back bronco horses.

Besides the generic cruelty problems that have been documented at other area rodeos, you should also be aware of the regulations for keeping of animals and which define cruelty to animals in Kent County. Enclosed is a copy of these regulations along with some other rodeo information. Furthermore, complaints are being filed with Kent County Animal Control.

While it is admirable that you support charitable events, with the lack of spectators, I question how much profit will actually be donated to St. Judes. We will contact them with our concerns, and may also contact sponsors in person. There are too many problems with cruelty to animals in rodeos to allow this event to go unchallenged. We would appreciate some notice from you as soon as possible on whether you are going to allow your business to be connected to a rodeo that has been found to be in violation of Kent County Animal Control Regulations.

The position of this group is to inform the public and your customers of the problems we have noted at the rodeo. Until the problems are corrected or you withdraw your support from rodeos such as these, we will be very public with our complaints.

Sincerely,

Herb Seamons, Coordinator  
West Michigan For Animals  
Rodeo Committee

Here is a copy of the actual letter mailed the By-Laws with the copy of the actual letter mailed to Grattan Rodeo Sponsors. I hope this address any concerns.

Would you favor a short meeting soon to amend the bylaws to allow an annual meeting in September, rather than February (as the By-Laws state). At this time, all members could be elected to the Board of Directors and then we could elect officers as prescribed. We could also make this annual meeting our yearly planning/strategy meeting. Please contact Vicki, Melissa or myself.  
Thanks- Herb