



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 10, 2008

Media contact: Danny Latham, Jr.  
Office: 817/509-8991  
Mobile: 817/715-2868  
[dlatham@cowgirl.net](mailto:dlatham@cowgirl.net)

### **SADDLE UP FOR COWGIRL U IN THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY**

*FORT WORTH, Texas* – Ever dreamed of being a real cowgirl? Can you picture yourself horseback riding through the open countryside? If so, then Cowgirl University's Kindle the Cowgirl Spirit Retreat on May 8-11, 2008, in the Texas Hill Country, is perfect for you. This annual weekend adventure, made possible by the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame, is not just another themed girl's-getaway with a cowgirl twist. Cowgirl U's Kindle the Cowgirl Spirit Retreat is the real-deal, bringing National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame Honorees together for one benefit – to share with you their stories and teach you skills needed for Western life. Whether or not you have extensive experience in the saddle, this retreat is for beginners and seasoned horsewomen alike. Retreat-goers are welcome to bring their own horse or rent one for the weekend.

Set on the Simmons' Ranch, a sprawling 2,000 acre working ranch in Burnet, Texas – located approximately one hour northwest of Austin, Texas; one-and-a-half hours north of San Antonio, Texas – Cowgirl U's Kindle the Cowgirl Spirit centers on horsemanship skills taught by the Honorees who embody that Cowgirl Spirit. As this is a working-cowgirl retreat, women will learn inside tips on how to assess, handle and care for a horse firsthand from some of the nation's top horsewomen. Retreat-goers will dine on gourmet-ranch cuisine and sleep in comfortable guest homes on the ranch conveniently located to activity and meal areas.

#### **This year's Honorees are:**

##### *Wantha Davis, 2004 National Cowgirl Hall of Fame Honoree*

A true pioneer of horse racing, Davis paved the way for female jockeys of today. From the Great Depression through the 1950s, she won more than 1,000 races, mostly competing against male jockeys including Racing Hall of Fame jockey, Johnny Longden and Jackie Westrope. Her feats on the racetrack were highlighted in newspapers across the country and on newsreels in movie houses. She was referred to by many major sports writers of the time as one of the finest jockeys in the country.

##### *Kathy Daughn, 2002 National Cowgirl Hall of Fame Honoree*

Growing up in San Francisco, Daughn learned to ride on horses she rented by the hour and volunteered at the Golden Gate Park stables. Eventually, she began riding and showing hunter-jumpers before moving to Texas where she learned to train and ride cutting horses. Making her mark in the cutting arena, she is the only woman to win two championship titles and is one of the top cutting horse competitors in the country. Her success in the arena is only amplified by her talent as a trainer and recognized leader in the National Cutting Horse Association.

**- more -**

*Sherri Mell, 2004 National Cowgirl Hall of Fame Honoree*

While many cowgirls specialize in just one or two key rodeo events, Mell enters and often wins an array of rodeo and horse show competitions. However, she is best known for her success as a calf roper. Mell is the only woman to win a championship at the National and World shows in calf roping – an event dominated by men. Since 1990 she has led the nation in non-pro calf roping. She is the first woman to win a National Finals Rodeo Championship title riding an Appaloosa, her only mount, and has won more than 100 world and national rodeo and horse titles throughout her career.

*Carol Rose, 2001 National Cowgirl Hall of Fame Honoree*

One of the first women to become a leader in the equine industry, Rose began competing in horse events as a child. She inherited her passion for horses from her mother, who taught her to ride and care for them as a basis for life lessons. A world champion in non-pro cutting horse competition, she has evolved into one of the world's leading breeders and exhibitors of Quarter Horses, dedicated to making a positive difference.

*Hope Varner, 1988 National Cowgirl Hall of Fame Honoree*

Born in Milwaukee, Varner always felt the lure of the West. With her husband, Tex, she spent her life promoting Western life. As talented musician and singer, Varner hosted a radio show and served as the director of a working guest ranch. She related stories and songs of the West to thousands of children and adults, also teaching horsemanship to many. She and her family produced rodeos (co-produced 1955 GRA rodeo) and Wild West shows at their own arena.

**Details:**

Cost per participant is based upon accommodation request:

- \$1,500 for shared room/shared bath with twin bed
- \$1,800 for shared room/shared bath with double bed
- \$2,000 for private room/shared bath with double bed
- \$2,200 for private room/shared bath with king bed
- \$1,200 if you bring own horse and sleeping trailer (hookups provided)
- \$300 for horse, gear and tack rental

To register, please call Brittany Bates at 817/509-8967 or download a registration for at:

<http://cowgirl.net/content/WomensRetreatRegistrationForm2008.pdf>.

**About us:**

Cowgirl University is a dynamic series of educational programs dedicated to sharing the western lifestyle with a broad audience both inside and outside the museum utilizing the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame's most important resource: the honorees. Proceeds from Cowgirl University benefit the Museum's education department.

The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame is the only museum in the world dedicated to honoring women of the American West who have displayed extraordinary courage and a pioneering spirit in their trail blazing efforts. Located in Fort Worth's Cultural District, the museum includes interactive exhibit galleries, three theaters, a retail store and a grand rotunda. Open Monday thorough Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5 p.m., admission is \$8 for adults ages 13 and up and \$7 for children ages 3 to 12. Group rates and docent tours are available. For more information please call 817/336-4475 or 800/476-FAME, or visit [www.cowgirl.net](http://www.cowgirl.net).

**For images or additional information, contact:**

Danny Latham, National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame  
[dlatham@cowgirl.net](mailto:dlatham@cowgirl.net) / (817) 509-8991

###