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Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial would not be complete without the historical rodeo that accompanies the Native dancing and artistry. Event coordinator Dudley Byerley has organized a rip-roaring event that is sure to entertain the masses.

The rodeo was nearly cancelled last year. Byerley said he received a call from McKinley County Commissioner Carol Bowman-Muskett and New Mexico State Rep. Patty Lundstrom, D-Gallup.

They asked him if he could take charge and make a rodeo happen. And he did. With only about six weeks to organize it, Byerley put together a decent rodeo that made money.

The rodeo budget was increased this year and Byerley reports that with support from the community through advertising and donations, he has almost paid for the rodeo. Any income from tickets sales will be a profit.

Byerley said his anticipated participation was about 300 entrants for the rodeo, but he already has over 500 cowboys and cowgirls on their way to the show.

“That’s a big rodeo in anybody’s book,” said Byerley.

One of the event sections Byerley hopes to grow is that of the Old School Ceremonial Fun Day. Can you imagine what events like the Wild Horse Race, Pony Express Race and the Pop Race will look like?

Other events will be the Food Scramble and the Chapter House Challenge. Spectators will enjoy a taste of history when watching these events. They were popular many years ago and will surely be popular again.

The kids rodeo, Aug. 5, will feature 26 events including midget wooly riding, peewee steer riding, senior boys bareback and senior girls barrel racing. Indian Junior Rodeo Association CES Alfreda Bates said the rodeo series is averaging 90 to 110 kids per rodeo this season. The IJRA sponsors rodeos nearly every weekend in the summer.

And then there are the serious adult cowboys and cowgirls who will compete in timed and rough stock events on Friday and Saturday. Bulls, broncs, steer dogging and more will be showcased during this go round.

Sanctioned by the Indian National Finals Rodeo Tour, the rodeo will bring talent from Oklahoma, South Dakota, Montana and Arizona as well as the local contenders. The prize for high point all-around is a horse trailer! For those of you who don’t know, high point all-around is awarded to the contestant who accumulates the most points from participating and placing in the most events.

Rounding out the events will be the team roping and calf roping Aug. 9. Roping events feature cowboys with great talent in concentration, ropes and horsemanship.

As John Wayne once said, “Courage is being scared to death, and saddling up anyway.” Many cowboys and cowgirls practice countless hours, train like any other athletes and show up to perform to the best of their ability for their audiences. Any day of the rodeo will be a great day to attend.