

Press Release  
For Immediate Release  
PHOTO OPPORTUNITY  
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## ***Tired of the heat? Chill out with the Donkeys in Cripple Creek, Colorado***



*Cripple Creek, Colorado* - The Two Mile High Club (TMHC), caretakers of the Cripple Creek Donkeys, invites you to the 93rd Annual Donkey Derby Days festival, June 28-30, in Cripple Creek, Colorado. This free three-day festival features something for everyone, starting with live music on Friday night. Saturday morning begins with a beautiful old-fashioned parade at 11:00, featuring Fort Carson 4th Infantry Division Color Guard and Band, the Al Kaly Shriners, and much more, continuing with live music, beer gardens, two days of donkey races up Bennett Avenue, a fun Kid's Zone, more than 90 vendors and food trucks, and other attractions.

Get to Cripple Creek early for the Pancake Breakfast at the Fire Station on East Bennett Avenue from 7–10 am on Saturday and Sunday. You can also enjoy homemade Mexican food at St. Peter's Catholic Church Hall at 1:00 pm on Sunday.

Exercise your bidding skills at the one-day Silent Auction on Saturday, June 29, from 10 am-4 pm in the upper Mezzanine of the Double Eagle Hotel and Casino on Bennett Avenue. This kid-friendly atmosphere allows you to bid on such grand prizes as a two-night stay for two at the famous C Lazy U Guest Ranch in Granby, CO, or a week's stay at the Hawaiian Princess at a Makaha Ocean front condo in Waianae, Oahu, Hawaii. Try your bidding luck on winning free nights at local casinos in Cripple Creek, incredible professional paintings, donkey artwork, wine collections, jewelry, collectibles, and a wide variety of other treasures.

The heart and soul of this festival revolves around the famous Cripple Creek Donkeys, set free to roam from their arduous work in the Gold Camp mines back in the 30s. For 93 years, the Two Mile High Club has provided care for the original herd of donkeys and those who followed in their footsteps in the ensuing years.

In honor of the town donkeys and their rich role in the history of the Gold Camp, donkey races are held on Saturday and Sunday using donkeys provided by Bill Lee from Laughing Valley Ranch in Northern Colorado. He owns a herd of racing donkeys and other animals, including reindeer! He has been bringing racing donkeys to Donkey Derby Days for more than a quarter century. At Donkey Derby Days, he'll also educate guests with his agriculture exhibit with different animals and provide donkey rides for kids in between the races.

The race route will begin near the Cripple Creek Jail Museum, 136 West Bennett Avenue, and end in front of the Double Eagle Hotel and Casino at Bennett and 5th. Pre-registered racers will find the Registration Tent for check-in on Bennett Avenue and 5th Street near the Information tent. All racers should check in there upon arrival. Each race consists of a team of two racers and one donkey. All three must cross the finish line simultaneously to earn a proper finish. It may look easy until a donkey stops in the middle of the road for no apparent reason, or a runner realizes they are racing at nearly 10,000 feet in elevation!

## Donkey Race Schedule:

Saturday, June 29, 2024

- 12:30 pm - Qualifying Race #1
- 1:30 pm - Qualifying Race #2
- 2:30 pm - Media Race
- 3:30 pm - Military/1st Responders Race
- 4:30 pm - Trophy Race

Sunday, June 30, 2024

- 11:00 am - Casino Race
- Noon - Businessman's Race
- 1:00 pm - Fun Race

When not watching races, eating excellent food, shopping to your heart's content, or trying your luck at gold panning or axe throwing, enjoy live music the entire weekend at the Cripple Creek District main stage at 5th and Bennett Avenue and at the City Hall Parking Lot near Bennett and 4th Avenue. The musical variety featured this year is outstanding, from the world-class Air Force Wild Blue Country band, Friday and Saturday night's headliners to popular local favorites groups playing classic rock, Irish tunes, bluegrass, country, pop and even a brand-new up-and-coming artist, Maddox Ross, on Sunday late afternoon. Each concert venue is located within a designated beer garden, so an ice-cold beer can be enjoyed while listening to some hot tunes!

## Concert Schedule:

Friday, June 28, 2024:

- 4-5:30 pm, Larry's Garage Band
- 6:30-9 pm, USAFA "Wild Blue Country"

Saturday, June 29, 2024:

- 12:30-2:30 pm, Mimic
- 3:30-5:30 pm, JustUs

6:30-9 pm, USAFA "Wild Blue Country"

Sunday, June 30, 2024:

- 11 am-12:30 pm, McDeviants
- 1:30-3 pm, Tenderfoot Bluegrass Band
- 4-6 pm, Maddox Ross

## Busker Stage at City Hall Parking Lot:

Saturday, June 29, 2024:

- 2:30-4:30 pm, Maddox Ross
- 5:30-7:30pm, Luciano Varas

Sunday, June 30, 2024:

- 12:30-2:30pm, Luciano Varas

Don't forget to visit the famous Cripple Creek Donkeys in their roomy pen on Bennett Avenue, where Volunteers will sell healthy herd donkey biscuits. The official Donkey Derby Day merchandise trailer in front of the donkey pen provides the opportunity to go home with the ultimate souvenirs, such as this year's collector's t-shirt designed by Ken Keegan, which is more colorful and comical than ever.

While in town, enjoy the "Darling of the Donkey Derby Days" professional play at the Butte Theater at 139 East Bennett Avenue. Tickets for this delightful play, which will be featured throughout the weekend, can be purchased at <https://buttetheater.com>.

Donkey Derby Days is the largest fundraiser for the non-profit Two Mile High Club, caretakers of the Cripple Creek donkey herd. Outside of extraordinary healthcare issues, each donkey requires an average of \$2,500 per year in food, water, shelter, standard veterinarian, and farrier care. This hard-working group of TMHC volunteers cares for these lovable town mascots 365 days a year, and any support is appreciated.

The Two Mile High Club thanks the following sponsors for making this festival possible: The City of Cripple Creek, Wagner Rents, the Golden Nugget Hotel and Casino, Trout Roofing, ERA Environmental, Windstar Studios, Production Point, Predator 4WD, Pikes Peak Community Foundation, The Speedy Shine Brightly Fund, Coors Light, El Pomar Foundation, Double Eagle Hotel and Casino, the Butte Theater, Cripple Creek Hospitality House and Campground, Community Banks of Colorado, Creations Everlasting, Taylor Built, Ardent Incorporated, Pine Ridge Seamless Gutters, The Cowhand, Pike View, Northwestern Mutual, Blind and Shutter Guys, all who generously donated to the Silent Auction, countless volunteers throughout the weekend, The District Museum, and to the Victorian Society for always adding ambiance to Cripple Creek!

The entire Donkey Derby Day Schedule can be found here:

<https://www.cripplecreekdonkeys.com/donkeyderbydays>

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