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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

This is part of an occasional series by the Sanpete County Travel and Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance on the people and places along U.S. Highway 89.

SANPITCH COWBOY EXPO TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL DAY OF THE AMERICAN COWBOY

MT. PLEASANT, Sanpete County—The Sanpitch Cowboy Expo, one of two Utah events celebrating the National Day of the American Cowboy, will be held Saturday, July 25 in Mt. Pleasant and Fairview.

Utah observances begin Tuesday, July 21, with a reception and video presentation prior to the Ogden Pioneer Days Rodeo honoring a cowboy or cowgirl from each of Utah's 29 counties.

The recognition will occur at Ogden Pioneer Stadium, 668 17th St., at 6:30 p.m. The Utah congressional delegation, all Utah legislators, county commissioners and mayors have been invited.

The Sanpete County observance begins with a cowboy breakfast at 7 a.m. at the Mt. Pleasant Rodeo Arena, 950 W. 1000 South, Mt. Pleasant. Following breakfast, and running until about 3 p.m., there will be a cowboy photography clinic, western art exhibit, day-long showcase of western music and cowboy poetry, children's stick-horse rodeo and barbecue lunch, all at or near the rodeo arena.

The highlight of the celebration is the Versatility Ranch Horse Challenge in which working cowboys and cowgirls compete in five events measuring ranch skills on horseback.

The celebration wraps up in Fairview, 6 miles north of Mt. Pleasant on U.S. 89, with the Fairview Pioneer Days Horse Parade at 6 p.m. on State Street in Fairview, followed by the town's Pioneer Days rodeo at the Fairview Rodeo Arena, located at the south end of town on U.S. 89.

For more information, visit www.sanpetecowboy.com.

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About the National Day of the American Cowboy

In 2004, American Cowboy Magazine began campaigning for a day recognizing the American cowboy as a “symbol of our country’s character,” as Jesse Mullins, Jr., editor of the magazine, explained in a recent radio interview.

Sen. Craig Thomas of Wyoming sponsored a resolution declaring the fourth Saturday in July as the National Day of the American Cowboy. Congress passed the measure in 2005, and President George W. Bush signed it on July 19, 2005, three days before the first celebration.

“We never envisioned it being an occasion that brought out large crowds. But that seems to be what’s happening,” Mullins said in the interview.

Since 2005, communities around the country have launched National Day of the Cowboy celebrations. This year, 47 celebrations are listed on www.cowboyday.com, the celebration website.

The commemoration is catching on in Utah this year, with the Ogden program and the celebration in Sanpete County, which will occur on the National Day of the Cowboy itself.