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For the Red Bluff Round-Up

## **A HELPING HAND**

*Red Bluff resident volunteers with sports medicine for cowboys and cowgirls*

Red Bluff, Calif. (March 20, 2017) – It’s a standing tradition in the Keffer household, that they always know where they’ll be the third full weekend in April.

For the past twenty years, the Keffers: Jamie and Tiffany, and sons Austin, Colton, and Wyatt, will be at the Tehama District Fairgrounds for the Red Bluff Round-Up.

It all started in 1997 when Jamie, a certified athletic trainer, began volunteering his time and expertise with the Round-Up. After graduating from Arizona State University in 1996, he returned to Red Bluff, where he had grown up, and started working at a physical therapy clinic and covering high school sports.

Since then, he’s worked in the Justin Sportsmedicine Trailer, taping up cowboys and cowgirls, doing preventative work as well as dealing with injuries. In twenty years, he’s missed only one year: 1998, when he was in Florida working with the Pittsburgh Pirates.

In 2000, he switched jobs, landing with the California Highway Patrol. But his rodeo work didn’t end; he keeps up his athletic training certification, so that he can continue to work rodeos.

Keffer used to work about eight rodeos a year: Red Bluff, Redding, Livermore, Santa Maria, and Clovis, Calif.; Reno, Nev.; St. Paul, Oregon, and the California Circuit Finals Rodeo.

But when he and wife Tiffany’s three sons came along, ages fifteen, twelve and nine, he cut his schedule down to accommodate for kids and their activities. This year, he’ll only work the Round-Up, Redding, and Reno.

All of his work is volunteer; he is not paid for travel expenses or his time in the Sportsmedicine trailer. But he loves it. Keffer’s roommate after college was a steer wrestler, and one of his first patients in Red Bluff was bullfighter Joe Baumgartner. He loves being involved in the sport. “Being around the people at a rodeo, they are the most honest and straightforward, the nicest people you’ll meet.” As a certified trainer, Keffer would get frustrated with patients who wouldn’t do what they were asked to do, to improve their health. Not so with cowboys. “If there are certain things they need to do to get better, cowboys listen and do exactly what you want. If they’re not competing, they’re not getting paid.”

His sons have rarely missed a performance of the Round-Up, and they love it, he said. Everybody knows the Keffer boys and teases them. “The stock contractors, the cowboys know them, so they’ll mess with them. It’s a great environment to be around.”

Keffer takes vacation time to work the Round-Up, and he loves being around the cowboys and cowgirls. Unlike other professional sports, they pay an entry fee to compete and if they don’t win, they don’t get paid. That kind of dedication appeals to Keffer. “The drive and determination of the cowboys, and how hard they work,” is what he likes. “I enjoy being around people who put out their best.”

The Red Bluff Round-Up is April 21-23 at the Tehama District Fairgrounds. Tickets range in price from \$14 to \$30 and are available online at [www.RedBluffRoundup.com](http://www.RedBluffRoundup.com), at the gate, and through the Round-Up office at 530.527.1000. For more information, visit the website or call the office.

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Cutline: Red Bluff’s Jamie Keffer with his sons in front of the Justin SportsMedicine Trailer at the Red Bluff (Calif.) Round-Up. Keffer has volunteered as a certified athletic trainer at every Round-Up except one since 1997. Photo by Tiffany Keffer.

Cutline: The Keffer family: Jamie, Tiffany, and sons Austin, Colton and Wyatt, pose in front of the Justin SportsMedicine Trailer. Jamie keeps his certified athletic training certification updated so he can volunteer at the rodeo each year.