

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Ruth Nicolaus

319-321-2152

For the Red Bluff Round-Up

GATE MAN

Red Bluff man 2017 Top Hand Award winner for Round-Up

Red Bluff, Calif. (April 18, 2017) – The Red Bluff Round-Up has awarded its annual Top Hand Award to one of its volunteers.

Cliff Kemen was honored with the award during the Round-Up's annual volunteer recognition night on April 15.

Kemen, who grew up in Minnesota and moved to California at the age of sixteen, began volunteering at the Round-Up alongside his father-in-law, Dean Zeeveld, forty-five years ago. He started helping Zeeveld with the fairgrounds entrance on Mulberry Street, but was moved to the gate on the east side of the arena.

As the “gate man” for the rodeo arena, he’s responsible for letting in and out a variety of people in a variety of roles: the pickup men as they change horses, the cowgirls running flags, the Ram truck that brings in the barrels for the barrel racing, the specialty act, and the ambulance, if it is needed. He’s behind the scenes and never noticed by rodeo fans, which Kemen prefers.

When Kemen started volunteering forty-plus years ago, he was “infatuated” with rodeo. Now, his interests have turned to team roping and cutting horses.

For his years of volunteer service, Kemen was awarded a buckle.

Kemen’s wife, Jolene, is a director with the Round-Up; the couple has a son and daughter, two grandsons and a granddaughter.

The 96th annual Red Bluff Round-Up kicks off Friday evening and continues on Sat., April 22 and Sun., April 23. The annual parade takes place at 10 am on April 22, and the world-renowned Wild Ride will be the final event of the rodeo on April 23. Tickets are available online at RedBluffRoundup.com and at the gate. For more information, call the Round-Up office at 530.527.1000, visit the website at RedBluffRoundup.com, or find the event on Facebook.

###

Cutline: Cliff Kemen (left) accepts the buckle as the 2017 Top Hand winner of the Red Bluff Round-Up. The Red Bluff man has worked the rodeo arena gate for nearly all of his 45 years of volunteering. Photo by Larry Smith.