A cloud of dust fills the arena as the racers round the third barrel vying against the clock for the top spot. Smells of searing turkey legs and fried Milky Way bars penetrate the sounds of contagious laughter. It’s rodeo time, Cy-Fair.

A popular time of year at Reliant Stadium, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo (HLSR) is packed with powerhouse performances, daredevil rides, tasty treats, and more. “The foodie, the shopper, the hunter, the musician – there is something for everyone at the rodeo,” says manager of marketing and media Sarah Poole. “From petting zoos to shopping, the endless activities entertain people of all ages and personalities.”

**Sensational Entertainment**
The all-star lineup for this year’s rodeo overall embodies four Grand Ole Opry members, 25 Grammy awards, and...
Kirsten Cornell is the lead associate editor for Cy-Fair Magazine. She is anxious to try the chocolate-covered bacon delicacy.

56 Academy of Country Music Awards. "HLSR is especially excited to welcome six entertainers who will make their Rodeo Houston debut," says Poole. "This includes Usher, Hunter Hayes, Robin Thicke, Florida Georgia Line, and Easton Corbin." These entertainers join the 15 veterans who have already captured the hearts of many concert-goers.

Delectable Dishes
The HLSR grounds are a foodie haven. From fried favorites to almost anything on a stick, patrons are sure to find something new and interesting to try. Be sure and sample some of last year’s Gold Buckle Foodie Award winners including Aunt Edmoe’s cookie dough parfait, Saltgrass Steak House’s pulled pork loaded baked potato, or Custom Confection’s red velvet frosty bite. “Chocolate-covered bacon and jalapeño lemonade are just a few of the intriguing foods that can be found at the show,” adds Poole. “Visitors should come with a big appetite.”

Animal Encounters
Spectators can get up close and personal with rodeo animals at AGventure. Located in Reliant Center, this hands-on barn includes a birthing center, petting zoo, pony rides, milking parlor, exhibits, and more. “AGventure and Kids’ Country are interactive exhibits designed specifically for kids to learn in a playful environment,” says Poole.

New to the rodeo this year is the We’re Small Y’all Barn, packed with pint-sized playmates. Miniature cattle, pigs, and goats will call this barn home and like their larger counterparts, provide undeniably cute photo opportunities.

Full Circle
Although the rodeo provides plenty of fun, HLSR also gives notable contributions to the art and education communities. Since the show began in 1932, more than $350 million has been committed in scholarships. “Currently, more than 2,000 students are on Show scholarships, attending more than 100 different Texas colleges and universities,” says Poole. “The value of these scholarships is approximately $30 million.” Graduating high school seniors may be eligible for a HLSR scholarship and must plan to attend an accredited, not-for-profit university in Texas.

Whether you’re looking for a great concert, culinary curiosities, farmyard fun, or just some good old-fashioned rodeo competition, HLSR is the place to be this season. CFM

Kirsten Cornell is the lead associate editor for Cy-Fair Magazine. She is anxious to try the chocolate-covered bacon delicacy.