



Celebrate Independence

Fourth of July Special Section

A special publication of the Rio Blanco Herald Times
Independent Community News Since 1885



Four days of festivities for this year's Fourth of July celebration

MEEKER | It will be a full four days of festivities recognizing the 246th anniversary of America's independence and the 137th anniversary of Range Call, all kicking off on Friday, July 1 and continuing through the annual fireworks display at dusk on Monday, July 4.

In between the Colorado Professional Rodeo Association rodeos on Friday and Saturday, and the annual 4th of July parade downtown on Monday at 10 a.m., enjoy a comedian, a ventriloquist, a concert, a barn dance, an ATV rodeo, pancake breakfast, Milk Creek Battle Site tour, the Meeker Pageant, a 5K run, a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, the re-enactment of the infamous bank robbery, and so much more. There's plenty to do for all ages, all weekend. Check PAGE 8B for the full schedule!

Please celebrate responsibly and safely!



MILK CREEK BATTLEFIELD TOUR

Sunday, July 3, 2022

Narration begins at 2:30 p.m.

Need directions? Guide car leaves White River Museum at 1:45 p.m.




COME ONE - COME ALL

ROOT BEER FLOATS

FLOATS \$5

4TH OF JULY

STARTING AT 9:30 AM

STREAMLINE REALTY BUILDING




Kilduff honored as 2022 parade marshal

Tom Kilduff is being honored as the 2022 Parade Marshal. His family will represent him in the parade. Kilduff passed away on Dec. 21, 2021, at the age of 74. He was honored posthumously in Washington, D.C. on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives during a brief speech given by Colorado Rep. Lauren Boebert. Her speech was entered into the Congressional Record. A copy of her speech and a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol will be displayed at White River Convenience. The following article was published in 2017 in the HT and details just some of his many accomplishments during his lifetime.

By Doc Watson
Special to the
Herald Times

MEEKER | The term "Renaissance Man" has been used for centuries to refer to those who sought to develop skills in all areas of knowledge: physical development, social activities and the arts. The most famous Renaissance Man, of course, was Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), who was not only an artist, but also a chemist, musician, architect, anatomist, botanist and mechanical engineer. His accomplishments still stagger the mind 500 years later.

Well, Meeker's Tom Kilduff is a different kind of Renaissance man. While not gifted in all the areas of Leonardo, his abilities and accomplishments are deeply significant to his local community and wider country.

Among the most significant periods of Kilduff's life, one that molded him in many ways, was his membership in the 237 person fraternity from Rio Blanco County who served in Vietnam. As a Force Recon Marine, he earned 16 awards, including two bronze stars and three purple hearts during his 35 months in country.

Kilduff also explained one of the legends behind the term "leatherneck": a leather neckband was worn in the late 1700s to protect Marines from the slash of the cutlass. Another legend, however (according to the Marine Corps Association and Foundation), says that the leather-lined collar was designed for discipline to keep the Marine's heads high and straight. Although neither explanation has been definitively verified, the name stuck and the legacy continues with the distinctive dress blue uniform blouse today.

When he first arrived in Vietnam, Kilduff was assigned to Headquarters Company manning an M40 106mm Recoilless Rifle, which could be used in both anti-tank and anti-personnel roles.

"But I was always in the rear," Kilduff said. "I wanted to be out in the war."

So he made a deal with Captain Dick Murphy, who made Kilduff his radio man so he could stay out of the rear area. Murphy was actually a third cousin of the legendary Audie Murphy, the most decorated soldier of World War II, including the Medal of Honor.

"My goal was to stay close to Captain Murphy, where I'd be safe," Kilduff said. With a laugh he added, "But he was Audie Murphy's third cousin! I had to follow him as he was running around at the front of the battle! I thought to myself, 'What have I done?'"

It was during that time that Corporal Kilduff earned his most notable bronze star. According to the official report as verified by two eyewitnesses—2nd Lt. G. B. Rogers and Lance Corporal J. R. Donnelly—on 11 December 1968, he volunteered to leave the relatively secure position as radio operator to rescue Marines wounded during an

ongoing firefight. He then volunteered again to take ammunition to those still pinned down.

It was actually as a result of this event, and others, that Kilduff made "Sergeant after only two and a half years in the Marines, which is almost unheard of," he said.

After that battle, he volunteered for the 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company and was sent to Okinawa for training. Similar to the Navy SEALs, Force Recon has an 80 percent washout rate. It is responsible for operating independently behind enemy lines, gathering intelligence, performing unconventional special operations and supporting conventional warfare.

Upon his return to Vietnam, Kilduff spent most of his time among the Montagnards, the primitive tribal people of the Central Highlands. "They're the original 'Indians' of Vietnam," Kilduff said.

"Montagnard" is a French word that means "mountaineer," but the Vietnamese people preferred to use "Mi" or "Moi," derogatory terms that mean "savages." The hatred of these two peoples is infamous.

While the Army Green Berets are well-known for their involvement with and training of the Montagnards to fight the Viet Cong, Kilduff said that this was also true of Force Recon Marines, as well as Navy SEALs and Army Rangers.

"Sometimes when we crossed the border on a mission into Laos we were in a group as Marines, but usually it was just a group of Montagnards and me, or other Force Recon Marines," he said. "They took very good care of us."

Kilduff had actually intended on making the Marines a career, but his most devastating wound ended

that would-be calling. Already wounded in the leg by small arms fire during a mission, a B-40 rocket, the Vietnamese variant of the Russian RPG (rocket-powered grenade), hit the landing zone while he awaited transport. Shrapnel struck him on the left side of his head causing severe concussion and brain swelling.

After coming out of a nine day coma, "I was paralyzed from the neck down for 11 months," Kilduff said. "They turned me every two and half hours (on my Stryker frame bed). I read westerns when I was face down and could turn the pages with a pencil in my mouth."

It was more than two years later, after endless therapy rebuilding his motor skills and teaching himself to walk again, that Kilduff left the hospital.

As reported in the Herald Times back in June 2009, Tom Kilduff is now all about veterans and present military people. "No matter what your politics are, you need to be behind your troops or get out in front of them. They are the reason for our free society today," he said.

Soon after Tom Kilduff "came back to the world" (a Vietnam veteran's expression), on New Year's day in 1971, he and a friend were driving (actually creeping along) towards town in a blinding snow storm when they came upon an accident. The identity of the victims quickly became apparent.

"I was walking and saw the bright red, 1920s wool coat that my mom wore," Kilduff said. As he looked further, and to his horror, his mom had already passed away and his father lived only another 32 hours. After what he had already been through in Vietnam, this compounded the grief.

Kilduff comes from deep ranching roots, even

having a great-great uncle as another namesake. Born in 1855, that Thomas Kilduff came to Colorado 20 years later and had multiple successes both in the hotel business and retail merchandising, but tired of both and turned to something else by way of a unique twist.

As the result of a whiskey debt, the K Bar T Ranch was born in 1884. After losing both stock and store by fire, Kilduff turned to his creditors, Isaac and Adolf Baer, who sold whiskey both retail and wholesale. So he could eventually pay his \$2,000 debt, the brothers grubstaked him to settle 160 acres six miles upriver from Meeker. They chose their cattle brand for two reasons: it was Kilduff's initials and it could be applied to the animal with one straight iron instead of a stamp.

And so it was that upon his return to the world, the 20th-century Kilduff also returned to ranching. Starting as a cowboy hand for the K/K in 1971, he worked his way to foreman for the lower ranches on Highway 64 for the next 22 years. Eventually bad knees contributed to the need for a career change.

"A soil conservation job opened up with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)," he said. "It required two years of college, but I was six months short of that. My lifetime of agricultural experience made up for it so I got my two year degree and worked there for 18 years as an agricultural engineer/technician."

One of Kilduff's accomplishments while working for the NRCS was designing a ditch break for the Powell Park Ditch. Such a structure provides greater erosion control.

Many Meekerites will recall one of Kilduff's



SABLE MOUNTAIN OUTFITTERS PHOTO

The late Tom Kilduff is this year's parade marshal and will be represented by his family in this year's parade.

greatest deeds of almost 21 years ago, namely, bringing the Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall to Meeker, a half-scale replica of the Wall in Washington, D.C., that stood on the courthouse lawn from June 30 to July 6, 1997.

When he first saw the wall in Colorado Springs in 1990, it helped Kilduff put at least some of the ghosts of the past to rest. That spurred him to bring the wall to Meeker so it could do the same for others, as well as make non-veterans aware of the sacrifice of those 58,196 who gave their lives (that number is now 58,220).

While Kilduff spearheaded the project, he credits many others with their help: the V.F.W., all the Meeker veterans, the Range Call personnel and sponsors. He was concerned about how many people would actually come to view the wall but was pleased when 17,000 signed the guest book.

In that same year, Kilduff returned to Vietnam with the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines for the 29th anniversary of the

Battle of the Dia Do, which brought some more healing. He even decided to adopt a Vietnamese family. While the family stayed in Vietnam, he put their two children through college there.

Following that trip, Kilduff started working for the Military Historical Tours as a Vietnam expert. He took veterans back to battle sites to help turn them into places of healing instead of horror.

Kilduff's concern for veterans has not been limited to those who served in Vietnam. Via Military Historical Tours, he's been to Italy, Germany, France, Iwo Jima, Peleliu, Okinawa, the Philippines and Korea. He was also the commander of our V.F.W. Post (5843) for many years and has been involved in several other endeavors.

Kilduff readily admits to the missteps he took and the mistakes he made along the way, and is proud of none of them, but he is no less a Renaissance Man who has impacted many lives in our community, our country and even our world.

the
**Upstairs
Gallery**
592 Main St. #11, Meeker
Special showing of
photography and
paintings by John Haney
and Jeanne Newman
Opening July 1st

**Backcountry
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FOR SALE:
*NEW 1111 County Road 63-142 Acres of grassland, 2 story log home with basement. Big garage, barn, fruit trees, Aspens, cross fenced, spring water. \$950,000.
*NEW 1750 County Road 14-Very secluded 51.7 acres of forested land with 2 cabins, outbuildings, electricity, spring water, views, Nat. Forest access. \$1,000,000.
*NEW 617 S Little Rancho Dr.-36 acres, 3,180 sq ft 2 story log home, 3 BR, 2.5 BA, basement, 2 car garage. Water well, outbuildings, good pasture, views. \$795,000.
*NEW 780 11th St.-3 BR, 2 BA home on lg lot, fenced yard. \$275,000.
*Five 6 to 8 Acre lots in east Rangely. \$51,000 to \$71,000.
*43 Acre lot in east Rangely. \$180,000.
*195 Mesa Drive-5 Acres, large 2 story home, garage. \$502,000. SOLD!
*924 Main St. 3 BR, 1 BA home, garage. \$295,000. SOLD!
*NEW 12926 CR 8-5 acres with River, water well, yurt, views. \$300,000. SOLD!
Assisting real estate buyers and sellers in the northwest Colorado area.
Call Steve Wix - 3rd generation Meeker Native, serving buyers & sellers in the Meeker area since 1980. Cell 970-629-9990.
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**White River Dental Hygiene
wishes you a happy
4th of July!**

❖Dental Sealants ❖Digital x-rays
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Kari Brennan

Comedian, ventriloquist performances July 1

Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER | Comedian Joby Saad will perform at the Fairgrounds Indoor Arena on Friday, July 1 at 6:30 p.m. in Meeker. According to his website, Saad started performing children’s magic shows by the age of 12 in his Nashville, Tennessee, community. In high school he competed in bodybuilding and won the Mr. Mid-Central USA title at 19.

He became a regular at Zanies Comedy Club and set off on a comedy career with family-friendly comedy.

Marc Rubben is a “clean comedian ventriloquist” originally from Shreveport, Louisiana. He has performed regularly as a fly-on entertainer on Carnical Cruise Lines and headlined top clubs in Las Vegas. Rubben will perform at the Fairgrounds Indoor Arena on Friday, July 1 at 8:30 p.m. in Meeker.



(Top right) comedian Joby Saad will perform at the Fairgrounds Indoor Arena at 6:30 p.m. July 1, followed by ventriloquist Marc Rubben (bottom right) at 8:30 p.m.

COURTESY PHOTOS

Concert: Maddie & Tae, Girl Named Tom

Special to the Herald Times



MEEKER | This year’s Range Call concert headliner is American female country music duo Maddie & Tae, who have been making music together since high school. Their first single, “Girl in a Country Song,” was the first debut single by a female duo since “Leave the Pieces” by The Wreckers in 2006.

Since 2014, they’ve performed on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon, earned a Top 10 hit with “Fly,” and received two nominations for the 52nd annual Academy of Country Music Awards in 2017. Their single “Die From a Broken Heart” earned RIAA Double Platinum status in 2021.

Opening for Maddie & Tae is the band Girl Named Tom. This trio of siblings took their band name from a childhood nickname given to sister Bekah by her brother Josh. Bekah, Josh and Caleb were the season 21 winners of NBC’s The Voice.

The concert begins Saturday, July 2 at 7 p.m. at the Rio Blanco County Fairgrounds. Gates open at 5 p.m. (bring your own chairs) with the annual barn dance to follow.



COURTESY PHOTOS

(Top) Maddie & Tae. (Bottom) Girl Named Tom.)



Happy 4th
Celebration!



Look for us at
Smoking River Brewing Co.!
Friday ~ Monday
July 1st through 4th

HAPPY
INDEPENDENCE
DAY!



WATT'S RANCH MARKET
-Your Hometown Grocer Since 1955-
271 E. MARKET, MEEKER ★ 970.878.5868

STREAMLINE
REALTY, LLC



80 County Road 54
\$3,900,000 35 ACRES



375 Purcell Drive
\$1,400,000 6BD / 5BA



15807 County Road 8
\$834,000 3BD / 3BA



685 Main Street
\$499,000 Commercial



178 & 182 Main Street
\$497,000 Commercial



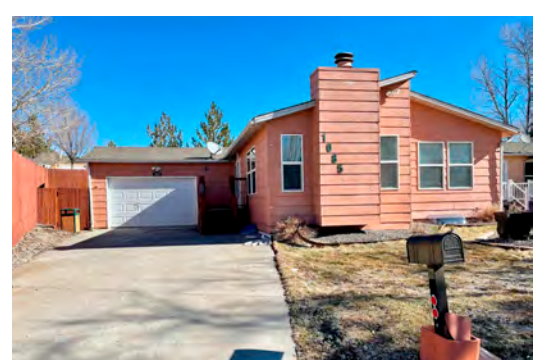
386 Cedar Street
\$419,000 6BD/3BA



795 2nd Street
\$355,000 4BD/2BA



752 10th Street
\$299,000 4BD/2BA



1085 Laurie Circle
\$253,000 5BD/2BA



1087 Laurie Circle
\$234,000 3BD/2BA



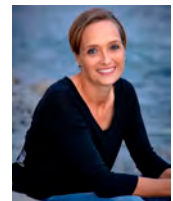
870 Water Street
\$250,000 3BD/1BA



1110 Hill Street
\$219,000 4BD/2BA

Vacant Land	TBD County Road 15 (58.37 acres)	\$700,440
	Lot 3 Walbridge Drive (58.25 acres)	\$699,000
	TBD County Road 8 (12.69 acres)	\$480,000
	TBD N 6th Street (8.45 acres)	\$249,000
	Gravel Pit (44.5 acres)	\$200,000
	TBD County Road 4 (7.54 acres)	\$188,000
	1200 Flag Creek Drive (3.28 acres)	\$80,000
	1200 White River Road (2.28 acres)	\$70,000
TBD Hill Street (0.26 acres)	\$39,000	

Suzan Pelloni
970.878.7700
Suzan@Streamline-Realty.com
Streamline-Realty.com



Happy
**4TH OF
JULY**
★

Stop by our building on July 4th for Root Beer Floats presented by RBC Historical Society and White River Museum!

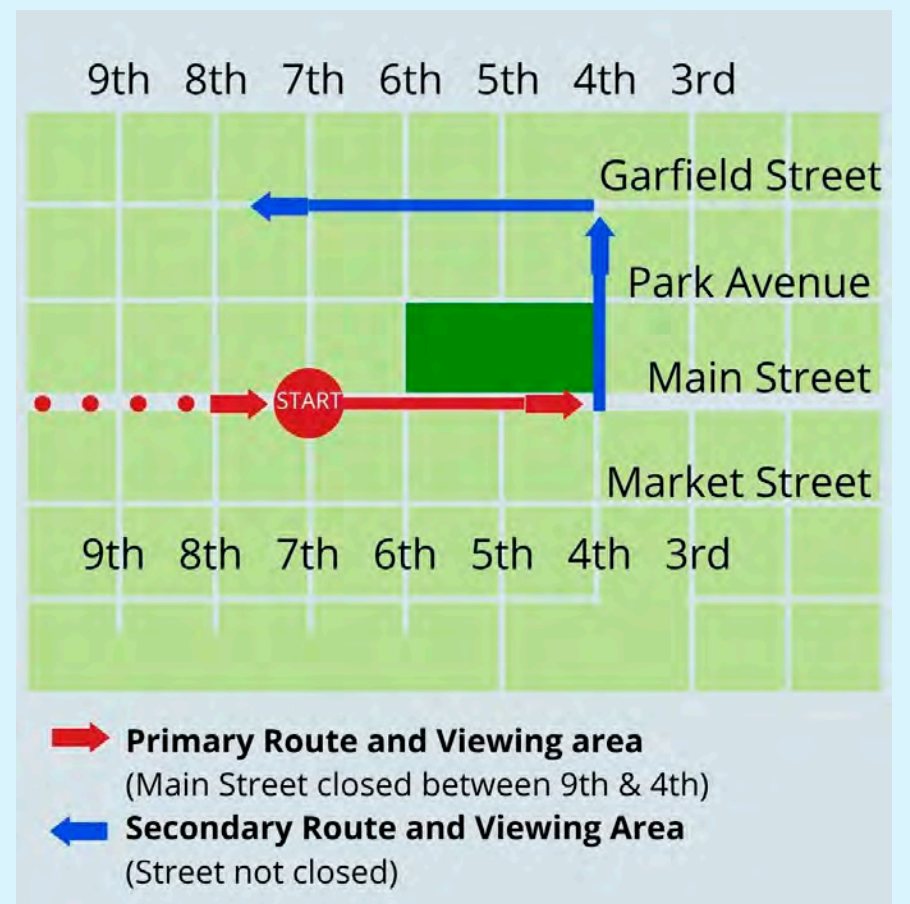
RUN FOR YOUR LIFE ...



COURTESY PHOTO

Get your sweat on this holiday weekend with the annual Run For Your Life 5K race through Meeker, sponsored by the Eastern Rio Blanco Metropolitan Recreation and Park District on the morning of July 4. Call 970-878-3403 or come in to register (no online registration this year.) \$20/person through July 3, \$30/person day-of July 4.

PARADE ROUTE ...



COURTESY PHOTO

PARADE PRIMARY ROUTE: The primary route will be along Main Street from 7th to 4th. The announcer will be in front of the Courthouse Lawn pavilion where entries will stop to perform if they want. The parade announcements will be broadcast throughout the speakers on Main street from 7th to 4th street. This area of Main Street will be closed to automobile traffic.

SECONDARY ROUTE: A secondary route allows viewers to spread out and view the parade. This route is optional for the parade entries, and the announcements from the speakers will be more difficult to hear. This route will not have street closures.

DON'T MESS WITH MEEKER ...



LUCAS TURNER PHOTO

Three would-be bank robbers learned their lesson about crime the hard way on Oct. 13, 1896, when they rode into Meeker and attempted to rob the local bank. When it was all said and done, the three bank robbers wound up in Highland Cemetery, where they remain to this day. Every year on the 4th of July, locals reenact the thwarted robbery on Main Street just outside the Hugus Building. Support the Rio Blanco County Historical Society with a root beer float (available for \$5 at Streamline Realty) after the parade and settle in for the bank robbery reenactment.

3-on-3 basketball tourney

Special to the Herald Times

MEEKER | After the pancake breakfast, 5K and parade on July 4, gather a few friends and create a team for the Stars N Stripes 3-on-3 basketball tournament downtown. Pre-register (\$40) on July 3 at the ERBM table downtown, or register and check in July 4 between 10-11:30 a.m. at the Town Park basketball courts. Games begin at noon. For details, call 970-878-3404.



4TH OF JULY



Run for Your Life 5K (Run & Walk)

Register at the Meeker Recreation Center or call 970-878-3403.

When	July 4 Run and Walk begin at 7:45am
Who	All Ages
Where	Downtown Plaza
Cost	EB: \$20 FC: \$30 NEW PRICING!
Deadline	EB: July 3 Final: July 4



ERBM 4th of July Parade Float

When	July 4
Meet	9:15am
Depart	9:30am
Who	All Ages
Where	Admin Gym Parking Lot
Cost	FREE

Stars N Stripes 3-On-3 Basketball Tournament

When	July 4, Noon
Who	Entering 3rd-4th Grade Coed 5th-6th Grade Male 5th-6th Grade Female 7th-8th Grade Male 7th-8th Grade Female 9th-12th Grade Male 9th-12th Grade Female 18 & Older Male 18 & Older Female
Where	Town Park Basketball Court
Cost	EB: \$30 FC: \$40
Deadline	EB: July 3 Final: July 4



HAPPY
Independence Day

Historic Meeker Classic celebrates 35 years

Unique Event Celebrates Sheepdog Trials, Traditions and Meeker's Agricultural Heritage

PRESS RELEASE
Special to the
Herald Times

MEEKER | Few things are more magical than watching a Border Collie match its skill against fresh, unworked western range sheep in a large native pasture. Sheepdog trialing enthusiasts from all over the United States and Canada will converge in Meeker, Colorado at Ute Park on September 7-11, 2022, for the renowned Meeker Classic. 135 Border Collies from across North America will match up against the famous Meeker Sheep for one of the world's toughest sheepdog competitions. Celebrating the sheep industry and Meeker's agricultural heritage, the five-day event includes arts, culture, a craft and culinary festival, and educational opportunities for all.

Three days of preliminary runs will sort out the top 30 dogs to advance to the semifinals on Saturday, September 10. Each of the 135 dogs will have a blank canvas field and fresh sheep as they vie for a position in the semifinals. Judged on their ability to maneuver the tough range sheep in a calm, controlled manner, the dogs will be sent 600 yards to fetch the sheep and bring them into the infield through a set of obstacles designed to mimic actual working situations on the farm or ranch. Twelve of the 30 semi-finalists will advance to the finals on Sunday. The difficulty and number of sheep increases during the three stages of competition. A quote from the American Sheepdog Society on the Border Collie captures what you'll experience at the Meeker Classic:

"Here, one can be in touch with something useful and unspoiled, a pastoral art where three of the most admirable canine virtues, namely, intelligence, control, and obedience, are seen at their very



CAITLIN WALKER/COURTESY PHOTOS

Enjoy a variety of events at the 35th Meeker Classic this year. (Left) runs begin September 7. (Right) the Jammin Lamb will feature a Colorado grown and raised menu.

best."

In addition to the sheepdog trialing competition, the Meeker Classic also features a variety of family friendly activities to make your time at the event complete. Focusing on Meeker's agricultural heritage, an art and photography show, well developed educational programs and a wide variety of culinary and artisan vending booths that highlight the unique nature of the event. Be it Dutch

Oven Cooking, K-9 Sniffer Dogs, saddle making, Celtic story-telling or Navajo weaving – the opportunities for enrichment and entertainment abound at the Meeker Classic.

Saturday evening after the semi-finals enjoy a farm-to-table dinner featuring Colorado Grown and Raised, Meeker-style. The Meeker Classic has partnered with the Wool Growers, Lions Club and various youth organizations to present an evening highlighting Colorado Lamb, Sides, Fruit, Honey, Brews, hospitality and entertainment. Craft, food and fiber vendors will be on hand during the evening as visitors dine and are entertained by Colorado poet and musician Caitlyn Taussig. All proceeds from the evening go to benefit the Rio Blanco County Wool Growers Scholarship Fund. To avoid weather challenges the event will be hosted at the fairgrounds in conjunction with the handlers Challenge Arena Trial.

Make it a point to visit the Meeker Classic and all the various events the week of September 7-11th. You won't be disappointed. Meeker's hospitality and countless volunteers and community members put the event, the dogs and the people first. For information, tickets, schedule of events visit www.meekersheepdog.com or the Meeker Chamber of Commerce

MEEKER CLASSIC

Sheepdog Championship Trials

SEPTEMBER 7 - 11 2022

7 SEPT	PRELIMS 45 DOGS RUN ART SHOW - VENDING FAIR DEMOS & EDUCATION 7AM - 4PM	9 SEPT	PRELIMS 45 DOGS RUN ART SHOW - VENDING FAIR DEMOS & EDUCATION 7AM - 4 PM
8 SEPT	PRELIMS 45 DOGS RUN ART SHOW - VENDING FAIR DEMOS & EDUCATION ART RECEPTION - 5:30 PM 7AM - 7:30 PM	10 SEPT	SEMI FINALS 30 DOGS RUN ART SHOW - VENDING FAIR DEMOS & EDUCATION JAMMIN' LAMB FEST 4-8PM 7AM - 8PM
JAMMIN' LAMB FEST 9.10.2022		11 SEPT	FINALS 12 DOGS RUN ART SHOW - VENDING FAIR DEMOS & EDUCATION 8AM - 4PM

COLORADO GROWN & RAISED

www.meekersheepdog.com 970.878.0111 or 970.878.5510



Maddie and Tae



SATURDAY, JULY 2

Schedule

FRIDAY, JULY 1ST

CPRA Rodeo	3:00 pm	Fairgrounds
Comedian Joby Saad	6:30 pm	Fairgrounds Indoor Arena
Ventriloquist Marc Rubben	8:30 pm	Fairgrounds Indoor Arena

SATURDAY, JULY 2ND

Rodeo Slack	8:00 am	Fairgrounds
CPRA Rodeo	3:00 pm	Fairgrounds
Girl Named Tom, Maddie and Tae	7:00 pm	Fairgrounds
Gates open at 5:00 pm. Bring your own chair.		
Barn Dance following concert		Fairgrounds

SUNDAY, JULY 3RD

ATV Rodeo	11:00 am	Fairgrounds
Milk Creek Battle Site Tour meet at Museum to convoy to the site	2:30 pm	White River Museum
Meeker Pageant Re-enactment	Dusk	Fairgrounds

MONDAY, JULY 4TH

Pancake Breakfast	7:00 am	Downtown
ERBM 5K Race	7:45 am	Downtown
Parade - "Shut Up and Fish"	10:00 am	Downtown
Bank Robbery Re-enactment	1:00 pm	Downtown
Ranch Rodeo	5:00 pm	Fairgrounds
Fireworks	Dark	City Park